



As for life, it is a battle and a sojourning in a strange land; but the fame that comes after is oblivion. S(121-180)

Throughout my existence, many individuals have posited that infamous question: “So, what are you going to be when you grow up?” I cringe even now just to have written it. During my childhood, the answer came quickly and with assurance: “A doctor”. I don’t know quite when I settled on that profession, but there it was for all to wonder and marvel at. My high school education was organized so as to take advantage of all the honor’s courses that my school had to offer, as I knew this would look much more attractive when I applied to college and eventually medical school. I graduated top of my class with a 4.0 G.P.A. and was selected Valedictorian.

My first year at college as a pre-med student resembled not so much a pristine have of learning as bucolic romp. Even though I was attending Brigham Young University, I still found time for those late night parties, eating pizza for hours, and rarely finding time to study. I imagined that college grades would be as effortless to attain as high school grades had been. My roommate nearly called the emergency room when I received my first report card. The next semester was even worse. To further my frustration and despondency, I was also trying to come to terms with my budding sexuality, and coming out of the closet as a gay man at a Mormon University was a living

hell. In the end, due to family pressure, I left disgrace, and was later excommunicated by the church.

I drifted rather aimlessly for the next few months, until I found a job with a firm as a lowly accounting clerk, a far cry from my dreams of being a doctor. I tried to reason with myself that it was temporary set-back, and that I would attend another school later that year. It would take me ten years to realize that dream.

Finally, after many years of drudgery, I made it to the pinnacle of my career as a controller for a major engineering firm in Encino. One morning, I woke up and realized for perhaps the millionth time, that I was miserable. I decided then and there, that no matter what transpired, I would return to school. I completed my application to Northridge, and in October of 1993, decided to return to school full time.

After the earthquake on January 17th, I firmly believed that my dreams had been shattered once again, and the universe was trying to tell me to stay where I was. (a little egocentric, eh?) I could have walked on air when I heard despite all of the overwhelming odds, the university would open just two weeks late. I can remember everyone saying how they disliked attending school in trailers, and complained constantly about the mud, but I truly imagined it was heaven on earth. The very idea that I was back in school enthralled me and I still feel disbelief when I contemplate that reality.

I freely admit the time I spent working was extraordinarily helpful, as it allowed me to return to school with increased organizational skills and the intense desire to perform well. Since I have returned, I have been on the Dean's List for six semesters, achieving a 4.0 GPA Spring 1994, a 4.0GPA Summer 1994, a 3.94 GPA Fall 1994,a 3.91 GPA Spring 1995, a 4.0 GPA Summer 1995, and a 3.88 GPA Fall 1995. Having been

admitted to both the General Education Honor's path and the English Honors major, I have been given the opportunity to study under some of the best teachers the university has to offer. My educational process remains enthralling, as I realize the journey to my degree itself.

To this end, I have also dedicated myself to working with important organizations on campus. I remain involved with Consider Your Alternatives, the substance abuse prevention group on campus, as well as the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Alliance, for which I was the director Spring and Summer of 1994. I sit on the campus advisory board for LesBiGayTrs and was elected President of Sigma Tau Delta for 1995-1996. I am looking forward to taking part in the campus wide restructuring of the general education format, which will hopefully have a much broader emphasis on the gay, lesbian, and bisexual experience, as well as the honors curriculum.

I volunteer outside the university as well, with such organizations as AIDS Project Los Angeles and Project Angelfood, a hot food delivery service for home bound AIDS patients. I also spend time at the Van Ness House and Cry Help, two recovery units for substance abuse. I am extremely rewarded in myriad ways with this work, and strive to give back some of the gifts that I have been so lucky as to have been given throughout my own life.

I plan on continuing my education throughout the next few years as I endeavor to procure my doctorate in English Literature. In this way, I will be able to realize my childhood dream of becoming a "doctor", but in a much different way than I ever imagined. Of course, I don't suppose that small child would mind very much.