

If I Had Stayed in Brush

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“Do you want to stay in Brush? Or move to Sterling?” My case manager asked me.

I was sitting in the living room of my foster parents house. Sitting across from me was my case manager at the time as well as my foster parents. We had just moved to Brush from Log Lane Village about a year before. At the time, I was ten years old. It was a huge decision and it would change my life.

Originally, my decision was to move. But in this story, I will explore what would happen if I had chose the other path: staying in Brush.

“I’m going to stay here in Brush.” I told her, to which she was surprised. But she nodded and told me that she would return in about a couple of weeks to check in on me. Then she left. My foster parents gave me a smile and told me how hard of a decision that was for me.

Giving them a smile, I told them I was going to the library. Opening the door, I made my way to the library about ten blocks away. I’ve always enjoyed the library. My brain enjoyed learning and having the building so close to where I lived, I would go often.

Pulling open the door to the library, I enjoyed the crisp air as it washed over me. This was my personal heaven. Making my way over to the usual section, I took a book off the shelf and sat down to read. I spent a few hours just reading. As the daylight darkened, I was happy.

Heading home for dinner, I thought about my decision earlier. Moving to Sterling would be really cool. Sterling has always been my home. It’s where I was born. But I didn’t see a reason to give up what I had.

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Several years had passed and I was old enough to go to college. In the fall of 2009, I moved from Brush to Denver. Unfortunately, I wasn’t sure what I wanted to do with my life. Interestingly, I didn’t have the assignment that lead to me being a writer (since I had not left Brush when offered). As I looked for a subject to study in college, I also was trying to find a church.

I was always a person who liked going to church. Ever since the age of four, I had always tried to go to church on Sunday. So I had to find a church that I could go to. However, since I was new to Denver, I wasn’t sure who to ask. Then, one day, on the

bus, I saw a church off Hampden Avenue. This church interested me so I looked it up online and decided to attend services.

Walking into the building for the first time, I felt a little shy. I was new and everyone there were strangers. Nervous, I went into the bathroom to splash some water on my face. My breathing was faster than normal for me. Coming out of the bathroom, I followed the signs to head to the sanctuary. Taking a breath, I walked into the sanctuary and was meet by a young woman.

“My name is Tina,” She told me. “What’s your name?”

My heart racing, I was nervous. “My name is Randy.”

Pulling me into a hug, I felt that she knew my nervousness and wanted to assure me that it was okay. Letting me go, I took my seat, waiting for the service. I wasn’t sure how it would go, however, unbeknownst to me, this church would become my home as I started my life in Denver.

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As I continued to go to the church on Hampden, I felt that Tina was like an aunt to me. Mainly since my own family hadn’t been there for me in years. I had also figured out what I wanted to do with my life and it had to do with cooking. One year of culinary school and I was working as a line cook.

My life wasn’t like I had pictured but that didn’t mean it wasn’t good. I had a church I could call home, a good job, and an apartment. Honestly, I don’t need much to feel blessed. One of the things I didn’t do, which is something I love doing, was write. Writing didn’t seem like something I could do with my schedule.

As I was working one night, I had been stung and I needed to be taken to the hospital. Luckily, my boss was not angry. He understood that I was deathly allergic to bees and so he would be happy to give me a few days off to recover. Once I was awake for a few moments, I told the doctor to call Tina.

I woke up again and smiled when I saw Tina sitting near the bed at the hospital. Her smile when she saw me awake gave me the idea that she was grateful I was awake. The doctor told me that the EMT had given me an EpiPen and I mainly had to be observed once I had arrived at the hospital. He told me that I had given them what they needed to call Tina as well.

A couple of days later, I was back to work and knew that I would be seeing the doctor soon to get my own EpiPen in case it happened again. However, it did mean I was still going to need to go to the hospital.

When I had returned to work, I noticed the special room was closed. Asking my boss what was going on, he said that they were painting it. That's when I meet Tim Rogers. He was the owner of the company that had been hired to paint the room. Shaking his hand, I said I couldn't wait to see how it would turn out.

The room was closed for at least two weeks while they painted. Since it was a big room, it would take some time. Plus, there were a few coats of paint going on the walls as well. Thankfully, there was a post on the restaurant website letting people know that the room was not available for a little while.

In my personal life, I had discovered one of the two writers that became the inspiration to my own writing in real life: James Patterson. I fell in love with his *Alex Cross* novels. As I read the books, I began to wonder if I could be a writer myself. Maybe not, it seemed like a lot of work and I didn't know the first thing about being a writer.

I had to shake the thoughts from my head. My job was cooking, not writing. Finishing the chapter I was reading, I put the book down and closed my eyes. Slowly my mind began to wander and I thought about what it might be like as a writer. Maybe I could write poetry to start. Again, I had to shake the thoughts from my head.

Falling asleep, I hoped that the room would be done soon. That room gave the restaurant a little more money since it could be rented out. My mind became blank and it wasn't long before my alarm went off the next morning.

No matter what, I loved my church, my life, and how I had a family. But I felt like something was missing. One of the things that in my actual life that I love is Movement 5280. I didn't have anything like that. Frowning, I began to wonder what something like that would be like.

I had to stop thinking about something like that. There was no reason to be thinking about that since I had a good life. Working with the chef, we began to make the food for that night. Eventually, my goal was to try to become the chef. However, that was a long way off.

That night, I started the newest book by James Patterson. My thoughts turned to what it would be like to be a writer myself. Again, I had to shake the thoughts from my head. There was no way I could be an author. Honestly, it was a lot of work and I had a job already. Writing was not something I could do.

But it did make me wonder: if I wasn't a line cook, could I be a writer? Maybe there was a universe out there that I was, in fact, an author. Finishing the chapter, I closed my eyes, and a tear fell out. It all lead back to me turning down my case manager when I was ten years old.

Would things be different if I had chosen to move? Could I actually be an author? Or would I be a line cook like I was now? Life was a series of choices and I wonder if the ones I made were the right ones. Unfortunately, there was no way to fully know what could have happened. Even in my actual life and not the one I could have lead.