My story

By Arjunna Miyagawa

Who am I and how did I get here? A single thought through my mind as I sit and listen. A song – Please, *Please, Please let me do what I want*. This brings me somewhere… Where and when is the question?

Buddhists say that all time is now. I am beginning to believe that. I believe that a person has their own time and time line in which we haphazardly meander back and forth, If not physically, then mentally. If a feeling had a time stamp or a date, when would this be? I listen to music and it makes me feel at home, a home that I am not sure where it exists or when. I am listening to Dream academy from Ferris Bueller's day off (a version from the original - *Please, Please, Please let me do what I want*, by the Smiths). I have always loved that song even before I knew who it was. Whenever I would listen to it, I would think of Terrace and growing up in the eighties. Even when I was in Terrace and listening to it in the late eighties it gave a nostalgic feeling of the eighties. I never knew what that feeling was and like I say….. when it really was. As I listen to it today I realize that it made me and will always make me feel like this moment, and it does every time. I am here in Terrace, living life: its past, its present, and its future.

I am here now, but once again the question is how did I get here?

A million words could not tell my story. Only a glimpse… here is a peek.

I've heard many times that all things in life are cyclical. I believe that may be true. Market trends, fashion and fads are all subject to this. So why should my life be any different? I like to think not.

Who am I? Externally I can be broken down like this.

½ Japanese

½ South African

- German
- French
- Dutch
- Scottish
- Chinese

This is only one layer. As we all know like a story a person has many layers. To be broken down internally is a much more difficult task.

I grew up in a society where the looks of a person may somehow shed light on what kind of a person one is. This is only a half truth. There are some of us that are free from such a thing. I now live in a world where what we are or where we came from does not bind us to any sort of pre-determined norm.

Like many great stories mine begins with a journey. My mother had decided to come to Canada after being in Japan for many years. The first stop was Hazelton where I was born and got my middle name from, Ryugan (dragoncliff) as there is a mountain that has a cliff that is in the shape of a dragon.

Within months of being born we moved back to Japan. This was the place where I died for but a brief moment before I was revived. It was a congenital defect that caused my lungs to expand to the point where it pushed against my heart so much it stopped beating. The scar on my back will remind me that everyday since has been a gift. I live it so. In Japan there was a place that I remember and think of constantly. It is a magical place. When I was about 18 I asked my mother about this place since I could not get it out of my mind. I was a bit perplexed as to this memory that has sustained itself from when I was only 4. I had thought to myself, “How can I remember this, it must be a dream”. I needed to get to the bottom of this so I explained to my mother how the place looked

- it was a sacred place, surrounded by trees with a pond in rocks at the entrance.

As is turned out it was the entrance to the temple we lived in. I will always cherish the years I lived with my mother in a temple in Japan. There are

many memories I hold; some are a haze, reminiscent of a dream. That may be what some of them are. Nevertheless they are still a memory.

The Northwest must have really had an impact on us, because for some reason out of all the places we could have moved to we decided on coming to Terrace in 1980. I was but 4 years old. I lived here for 4 years and then moved to Kitamaat Village. Being the only half Asian or as I was called many times, “white boy”, made things a bit difficult at first. Through time “the village” proved to be one of the greatest places to grow up in.

It was back to Terrace in 1989 where I went to High school and made lifelong friends. In 1995 I chose to leave my friends, life and girlfriend behind to go back to Japan. I was recruited by a Japanese company to be salesman. This was to me at 19, my ticket out of here. I was in Japan for 3 months training before I was transferred to Cape Town, South Africa. I was ecstatic as I was going to see relatives that I had never seen before. I only knew what Cape Town looked like through the random post card that my grandmother sent. Cape Town was a mix of delight, fear and wonder. Violence intertwined with beauty.

After almost 8 years of Living in Vancouver the mountains of terrace called as I listened with eager ears. I have made a journey around the world. I have called many places home. As I spiral back internally and externally I realize I have found my home again……ahhh beautiful Terrace.