

“THE FUTURE BELONGS TO THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN THE BEAUTY OF THEIR DREAMS...”

“Ceasius World”

This story is dedicated to all the dream fighters.....

This is not a story about a dolphin or a seagull, nor a story about finding a philosophic stone, this is my story.

I don't have any idea what is going to happen with this story but if it can help at least one, just one person to not give up his or her dreams; to keep dreaming and fight with all their heart it will be worth it...

Letter to a friend

Well I'm back in Sydney - welcome to reality - ready to confront 2004 full of energy.

This year is really important to me. I really want to achieve several goals and most of them are decisive for my future life.

I'm going to apply for residency in Australia. Yes!

I have been working really hard for this, almost three years and I am almost there. Well it is a long story but I feel like writing it down now, to encourage myself for this New Year.

It is just that I don't know how to start but I'm remembering how hard it was to leave my country, how difficult it was to leave my family, to leave my friends and a really stable economic situation.

I remember that I sold all my stuff, everything that I really liked and all the things that took me time and effort to collect; things like my plants, my truck and my dog Draco. I had to start again with nothing, just a dream in my pocket. (This reminds me how good it was to read the Alchemist by Coelho)...Wow what years!!!

The first year was really hard, especially because nothing was certain. I just knew that I didn't want to be in Peru anymore. It is not because I don't like my country, I love it! But, I couldn't stand to be there any more...well, not for now.

My country is one of the most beautiful countries I have ever been to. It has beautiful beaches, huge mountains and the amazing Amazon. Rich in natural resources, culture and beautiful people. It has everything; minerals like gold, silver and copper - plants like Uña de gato and a bunch of medicinal plants that maybe could be the cure for the most horrible disease. It also has the most amazing animals in the world like the pink dolphins, pumas, monkeys and cholos con revolver. More than that, its ocean is rich in sea animals too, and also has the most variety of and perfect waves in the world...wow what waves...

I remember going backpacking with my brother and friends up the mountains... just with an old map, hungry for adventure.

In Peru, you can be in the middle of nowhere in just five hours and see people who live in the mountains far away from civilization. They even live without electricity, just in small primitive houses. You will see some chickens around and maybe some mountain goats... Sometimes these Serrano's people cannot even speak Spanish, just the kechua that is one of Incas languages and you will be just as surprised to see them as they are; amazing people...

Peru is a beautiful country but the system and the mediocrity of some people make the country

a place where poverty is a national symbol and frustration is its loyal partner. There are not many opportunities in Peru. You have to create your own. Being creative is a big part of the culture.

We grow up being creative: Being creative can be confusing sometimes especially if you think about survival skills.

It is very interesting that you can go to the street and always find something that makes you think; wow that's creative...I love it.

I love it when you are in a bus and suddenly these small kids jump in from the back door without being noticed by the driver. They locate themselves strategically and when they get in the right position, they start their show.

First they start with a short speech in order to capture the attention of the passengers... "Ladies and gentlemen while you are having a trip I WOULD like to sing a song that I really like and I hope you will like it to"

They take out of their pockets a couple of objects and hold them with their hands like holding a big grenade and start to rasp them making a rips, rips, rips sound and then sing. If you really look close the objects are just a couple of shells from the beach... the sounds are magic - it is magic my friend.

I have friends that come from the best private schools in Peru, with bachelor degrees and masters from the best universities not only from Peru but also overseas, with a lot of very good connections and contacts, but still looking for a job after almost two years.

Peru is not like other countries where you can get a job as a waiter or in a cafe where you can get some money and survive...only poor people do that in Peru because that kind of job does not pay much money. It is working your head off for nothing, and at the end you can afford just to buy your lunch and dinner for the day...

I have a lot of friends desperate, depressed and frustrated: It is really sad just looking at them. It is difficult to explain to you, you have to be there and live there to understand how it is. I just reached a stage where I could not stand seeing all that poverty and the frustration without being able to do anything.

I remember going to work every day, and at every traffic light there were easily, 10 small five-year-old children begging for money. I'm still remembering their faces; all dirty from the smoke of the cars. It looked like they had not had a hot shower in their entire lives.

Some people are used to this; some people are more sensitive than others and some people are very hard. Unfortunately I am not a good example of the last one and I could never get used to it. It was like watching a sad movie every, every day my friend...every day.

I remember arriving at my house exhausted after having passed all these children. I felt im-

potent, unable to do anything. I tried one day to give one dollar to every child who knocked on my car window. I spent \$100 dollars that day. It was nice but they were there again the next day, same children, same traffic light, and same dirty faces.

So I decided to look for my own happiness and then try to help all the people who were around me. I read that no-one can help anyone if they are not happy with their own lives first. So here I am reaching for my dreams.

But believe me, leaving my country wasn't easy. As South Americans, we are not used to travelling much, not because we don't want to but because we are not a rich country. So everything is more expensive for us. It is not only difficult economically but also because of the close relationship and attachment that we have with our family and friends. So the impact of leaving home is almost double compared with people who come from other cultures or developed countries.

My father was one of the main opposition. He didn't want me to leave and he constantly tried to discourage me as much as he could. He tried so many different ways that you could never imagine. I had one of the biggest fights with him before I left. We hurt each other so much that day that the injuries in our hearts took long a time to heal.

Some of my friends didn't help either. I remember words like "are you crazy, you have everything here, a beautiful flat, nice car, excellent job - you are even your own boss and with an excellent salary.

What are you talking about, why do you want to leave all this; you do not know how many people would love to be in your shoes"?

I just flatly refused to believe that this was all that life could offer. I knew, and I constantly day dreamed, that there must be another kind of life out there, better than that one I had.

Please do not misunderstand me, I am really thankful to have all this but I want more. I read this one poem that I believe can help to make you understand a little better, it goes something like this:

"I know that all men dream; but not equally.

I know that those who dream by night in the dusty recesses of their minds,
awake to find that it was just vanity;

But the dreamers of day are dangerous men,
that they may act their dreams with open eyes to make it possible... "

One of the things that stills sticks in my head, came from one of my relatives. He left his country when he was 35 and ended up in Peru. He said once with some wine in his blood;

”If I could choose again between staying and leaving my country 30 years ago, I would choose to stay”. Even if you make good friends again, you will never have the same friendship as with your friends back home...”

Sometimes, I’m still listening to all the words in my head, and sometimes I feel like going back, especially in the days when I have not spoken with anybody all day. I just know that I was not happy there though and everybody is different, and I know that every man has the right to decide his own destiny.

So I left Peru to look for my own truth.

I went first to Florida, USA, while I was waiting for the result from the Australia MBA program. I didn’t know if they were going to accept me in their business school, so you can imagine how stressful was the uncertainty; horrible - but it was a good experience.

I took one month off and partied my head off with some mates in Miami. I was staying in one of the nicest suburbs with a couple of really good friends. Wow, party time! We really partied hard that time. We were used to going out almost every day, lots of fun... After a month, I moved away to Deerfield Beach to improve my English. Miami is almost a Spanish country, and with my friends, I could not practice English at all. I also got tired of partying.

Just by myself I ended up in a small surfer town. I worked doing everything from giving some computer lessons to old rich ladies to cleaning and waxing yachts and boats and washing cars with full-black people. It was the first time in my life that I worked as a labourer. It was scary sometimes but I learned so much from all these jobs, especially washing cars - crazy.

I just was one more immigrant in the lower, lower class in America at that time. My father would’ve died if he had seen me there...I kept the secret from him for some months - crazy.

I ended up living with a classic middle low-class American family. It was amazing, not only because I could practise my English every day but also because I lived with a grandmother and her four incredible grandsons: Christian (12), Natalie (10), Sebastian (6) and Ian (4-years-old). All were sons of a surfer girl, Claudia - who I met surfing in Deerfield Beach one day.

Claudia is a really cool girl. We used to hang around a lot so we ended up as really close friends. Her girlfriend Jessie used to rent me a room. Unfortunately, she fell in love and got obsessed with me so I ended up living in my car for some days to escape from her. She used to break into my room late at night and that was really uncomfortable; to have to lock my door every night. That is the problem to be very ugly. That’s what you get when you are very ugly!

Living with Claudia’s mother was really cool. All her grandsons were surfers but Ian, Ian oh Ian...the cutest-coolest kid in the world.

I used to look after them all after school every day, amazing times. But Ian, Ian ooh Ian... He used to call me Master Diego (well, I taught him that)...was so cool. I taught him the secrets about “how to fly with a towel tied on your neck” and he taught me “how to fight with

swords”...

We used to run together really fast, with our towels around our necks as capes, with open arms, like birds... and screaming our head off “uuuuooooouuu”!!!....It was magic...especially when the wind was offshore against us. We really flew my friend - we really flew.

After some months, one day I checked my email and it was there.

I ran into the street and I did not stop running, screaming and jumping for minutes. The Australian business school accepted my application, I was so happy. I stayed just two months more to save money and studied English in an institute. I left USA almost running away and really scared. The New York Twin towers weren't there any more...

I have been in Australia since then, almost the last two years, and believe me, it has been different and really hard for me but still amazing, really amazing. I got through the culture shock; home sickness; with no friends at all and without speaking English and no job security: Just nothing - just me and my dreams. I had to learn English in one year, having classes every day from 8am to 3pm and then doing essays and homework every night - crazy. I was studying with a class full of Asian people in the English school. They are so different that it was really difficult to make good Asian friends, but I learned a lot from them. I do not know why but they always stay together on the breaks speaking Chinese or Japanese while I was trying to make conversation with them. Maybe because I was the only one who wasn't Asian?

(My flatmate is playing his guitar and singing some blues in his room now. I can hear him from my room perfectly, loud and clear. He is awesome; bloody good!)

After four months in that school, I remember going out in the breaks desperately looking for new friends around the university without any success. Well I had an adventure with the librarian but nothing more, no friendship at all... Believe me hard times ☐

my first goal was to pass the English test. That was really difficult as I needed 6.5 over all. (This is bloody high and tough). This was really stressful too because without this test, I would not have been able to start my masters and I would have to go back to Peru without my dreams with me. Fortunately, I passed that test after some really hard work. I took seven tests before I made it.

I cried that day...

Now I'm studying my masters in one of the BEST business schools in Australasia; “MGSM”

Top 10...but this is another story...

The first term I couldn't understand anything. Not only couldn't I understand the lecturer but also the students. Their accents and the speed when they spoke were too much for me. I ended every lecture with intense headaches. It was horrible. ☐

During the first two terms I struggled to pass every unit. I remember calling some people asking if they had the same problem. I was really worried. This was so stressful too because without

my Masters, I wouldn't be able to work in the profession that I wanted and enjoy my job because without any background in Australia it is almost impossible to get an interesting position. Also working in something that I liked was one of my main dreams.

To Have an Australian degree was also so relevant to get the points for residency. Believe me, hard times my friend...hard times...

To arrive in a new country and start again was more difficult than I thought. I remember days when I used to go for walks down in Coogee beach just to talk with the owner of the Italian restaurant, Mario- just to have a chat with someone.

I used to have days without speaking to any one...

Sometimes, I still have days like that. I get depressed for a while in but then good surf is always the best solution.

I used to go out at night just by myself too. It was really weird but really fun too. Lots of adventures meeting new people (Australian chicks love South American guys.)

I'm still going out by myself most of the time. Even if I have some friends around everybody is with their boyfriends or girlfriends or doing their own thing. For example Paul, who is one of my best friends here; I hadn't seen him for about two months. He is in love! I'm so happy for him.

I miss my buddies from Peru so much but I'm happier than ever here. Actually I have never felt this happy before...it is so cool! But I know that there is not any happiness without any sadness. Unfortunately they come together hand-in-hand, inseparable, just the duality in its maximum expression.

Here in Sydney it is really difficult to make friends. It is not like Byron Bay that I found so easy to make good friends. Maybe because it is so small that you start to catch up with a lot of people very often that, at the end, everybody gets familiar with you. In just one week, I made really good friends up there that I think are going to be the kind of friendships that last forever.

I met the Spanish guys, Oscar and Shabby...so cool and The Norwegian, Andres with his crazy and sexy girlfriend Teresa... incredible connection, really high, and in the last week the German guys... specially Phil...

I learned so many things from everybody, like the importance of sharing and accepting the difference between cultures, the magic to give without expecting anything, and the strength and courage of someone who doesn't have one Arm (Peter). I'm still so surprised at how he handled everything and tried new things with extreme determination. He surfed, skateboarded, skydived, played the guitar, fixed the van and even rolled joints with just one hand - admirable - I cannot roll a joint even with two.

Now I am back to reality, full of energy from all the beautiful people I have met. I think all of

them made me stronger, wiser and happier ...thanks guys...

This New Year is full of challenges too. Not only professional challenges but also a lot of things about myself that I would like to improve. I wrote them down on paper on New Year's eve. I burned it and did my own ceremony after the fireworks in Byron...

I'm going to apply for residency after have been fighting like crazy to obtain all the points that I need - 115 bloody points!!

I had to lead and struggle for every point. Moreover, every time I thought that finally, finally, I had the points, the bloody Australian government change the rules, making it harder and harder. It was like swimming against the current... so stressful and frustrating. Lots of nights without sleeping and my teeth are out of place now from the stress. Maybe I will need some braces or fix them and put them back...sucks!!

I had to write a report to the Australian Institute of Management in order to prove my past management skills.

Firstly, I talked to a lawyer in order to get some advice but all I got was discouraging words like:" This report is one of the most difficult, 80% of the people who apply, fail...I don't think you have any possibility to get it", he said...

I worked my head off in that report without having any idea how to do it. It was like having another additional course in my masters; really hard and lots of pressure.

I sent the report the 20th of October 2003 one Saturday morning, and I was supposed to get the results after two months. I got a letter from them the next week. I was so scared just to open it that, my hands were shaking.

I didn't cry that day...I just laughed and screamed, and... jumped and screamed again... and jumped again and screamed and jumped at the same time... like I would've won the lottery or something like that...ha!, just remembering right now, while I'm writing, makes me feels almost the same wonderful feeling.... Yoouuuuuuuuu!!

In April, I will finish my studies and I will be "Master in Management with a specialization in Marketing Management...that's so cool!!...but I need to find a job really soon. My savings are almost gone after investing all of them in my dreams... after 3 years this is quite stressful too.

But I'm a fighter, a rebel and a warrior, and after all these years, I have learned so much about life and about myself that I could write pages and pages...

Now, I know how strong I am, and also, I know better all my weaknesses. Knowing more about my self is magic my friend, is magic, but self-awareness is just one step, just to be awake and conscious about what is going on around you and understanding all your moods, emotions, and drives, as well as their effect on others. But self-regulation is another story. It is something that I find more difficult.

Just to have the ability to control or redirect your crazy impulses and moods and to suspend judge-

ment - to think before actin - wow that is really tough. But we will be learning about our selves until we die and also, I know that there are many rivers yet to cross.

So let's keep on moving!!!

I'm telling you all this history not only because I need it to encourage myself for the New Year, even if I decide not to send it to you, I would've done it anyway and I would keep it to read on the rainy days. But, the real reason is just because I believe in the importance to always, always have a dream my friend...always... Small or big, it doesn't matter the size and how impossible it seems.

Even if that dream changes with the time or never comes true, it doesn't matter because "die slowly who do not risk the certain for the uncertain to chase a dream", and

It is precisely just the possibility to make your dreams come true that makes the life more interesting and exiting...so, even if you have reached your dream now, keep on moving my friend, and go for the next one. It does not matter how hard the times are...even if you are feeling like you cannot make it any more...just keep breathing and pushing because who knows what the tide could bring at the next day?

Anyway, keep on moving my friend and keep following your dreams...

Greg, my flatmate is still playing; can you hear!? He has composed two new songs...bloody good... kind of funky music, like "Red Hot Chilli Peppers".

Tomorrow night I will take the German guys, Phil and Peter to the concert that my flatmate is doing in the city... you will love it! Especially the bass - they are so good.

Hey! The other night, I think my Grandpa- No-no came at night to visit me. Well, maybe that was just a dream but it was so real - I could feel him hugging me and telling me that he was fine up there - I woke up crying like a baby. I miss him sometimes.

Wow I really wrote lots of pages. You don't have to read them all; I did it more for myself - so don't feel bad if you get tired reading but this is something that I would like to share with you.

Getting sleepy with the red wine, I'm almost drunk after almost two bottles...but I was hungry for writing...

My friend, I'm going to sleep.

Keep in touch.

Ceasius

Today I feel like this
is the best thing I have
ever done. This is good;
remember this moment
for the rainy days...this is
just a stage and be careful
to trust in yourself. Be
confident.