

June 17 to July 8. 2008 Journal Entries

June 17

My little brother's b-day. I'm having yet another surreal experience: sitting here on the floor of the family room of the Freeman's, w/a most unlikely combination of people: Dan Freeman, Tammy King, Aaron Dewey, Aaron Mortensen, Diana Lilly, Ash's husband, and another guy I don't know. What's more is we're all sitting here with Travis' Robb Report Magazines strewn about the floor, thumbing through them. It was Dan's idea to do so. It's difficult to look at the same covers that I've gazed upon in the previous months while being @ his house. It brings me right back to his kitchen, where all of the mail sat on the island. This feels like I'm going to wake up and it will be one of those random dreams filled w/random people and symbolism I could only attempt to interpret.

Tonight I went to the police station to give "elimination prints." The guy who took them is LDS, so is the main detective. I wore my BYU shirt and he asked me if I had been to the "Y". Proudly, and w/a tone of sentimentality, I said Travis loomed like a beautiful giant on the horizon today as Aaron Dewey + I drove to the church, where I was scheduled to meet Bishop Layton of the Desert Ridge Ward. We had a really good heart to heart. He didn't judge me. Aaron told me that it would be the right thing, and I'm glad I did it.

Travis once told me I would make a good missionary. I love Travis. I miss him. I just want one more hug, one more squeeze. I am so angry about all of this. I can't imagine what his family is feeling. I pray for them each day, that they may be comforted.

June 18

Travis was at my bedside this morning! I could feel his presence! I could see him briefly. He was kneeling down next to me, like when he says his prayers, but instead he was gazing up @ me w/the most beautiful expression. Despite how comforting it was, I began to cry all over again. I miss you, T-dogg.

On the plane again. This time SLC to SAC. I'm doing my best to ignore the throbs of pain in my heart. I can't stand it. (Had to switch pens). I still can't believe this is happening.

I got frisked + searched at security. It is exact seat that I sat in on one of the last flights we ever took together. 2nd to last now, middle seat. He always took the aisle. He liked that seat because it was close to the bathroom, but not the very back, because he wanted his seat to recline. We were both tired. He took a picture of me w/his phone, but I made him delete it. He was a little saddened over it, and I sort of regretted it, too. That was our last Church History trip. This seat I am in is assigned, I didn't choose it. What's more ironic, is that was June 18, 2007. Today is June 18, 2008. It's been exactly one year.

June 21

Time for more irony? Today, I'll be driving to Sacramento to get on a plane to Ontario, where I'll attend Travis' funeral + burial. The irony? Today is the summer solstice. Today is the brightest + longest day of the year, yet it is the darkest.

Aaron will pick me up from the airport. I may really lose it today, but I've got to stay strong.

Travis once said that when his Mission President told him about his father, he left afterward and then went to work. Oh Travis, to be as strong as you are... But mostly, why? It seems my eyes will never dry up. I'm for the 10 commandments. I'm for "thou shalt not kill," but is it wrong to want the perpetrator to get the needle? Perhaps. Is it wrong to want to end my own life? Depression is no joke, as it has revealed no sense of humor. Life at least, has that. But I am broken, utterly broken.

June 25

I haven't written in days. There are so many thoughts that stream through my mind and I think, hmm, I should write that in my journal.

Things are still hitting home in a big way. I can't stop picturing his neighborhood. His belongings. He was a fighter. He was so tough. How could anyone overpower such a machine?

His tree out front had grown so big by the time I'd come back. Aaron + I both went to talk w/Dave.

It was hard walking up to the house. It was like a dream. Not one of those nice dreams, but not like a nightmare either, but unreal. Like the kind where you know something is off, not quite right, and that whatever this "thing" so vague and unrepresented is, you're just glad to realize it was a dream when you wake up.

But I haven't woken up. I miss Travis. I was doing so great at moving on, but this tragedy has caused a lot of old forgotten feelings to surface, and I realize that what I had long ago laid to rest still exists somewhere in time, crystallized in the ethers and reverberating throughout eternity! I think he knows this on some level. All I've ever wanted was for him to be happy. And he always wanted the same for me, even for Deanna, as he always worried about her happiness in this life. I wonder if she will find her eternal companion soon. Travis used to worry so much about it, that we'd pray for her. Regardless of her (she has her own path to walk) I suspect that Travis is happy where he is now and that is my only solace.

June 26

A mellow day, all in all. I sold the white oak desk that I bought from Carl nearly 8 years ago. \$100.00. It was instantly eaten up by my hungry checking account.

Last night I had a good talk w/Ryan Burns. He's a great guy. I'd like to see again soon, so hopefully.

Work was hard today. I thought a lot about Travis. I've come down hard on myself for missing his funeral. I know he probably wouldn't mind, although truthfully I can hear the "T-dogg" now: "Wow...wow... that hurts." ☺ I miss him ranting. I can't believe all of this still.

I don't know if my subconscious has fully accepted it. It's really beginning to sink in though. I can't remember any recent dreams I've had of him.

June 27

I think I'm going to cease writing until I have something positive to write about. This needn't become "A Grief Observed" although I would never claim to be half as eloquent or descriptive in expressing my own process of mourning as was C.S. Lewis, who, by the way, is now undoubtedly reunited w/the one (his wife) who's death inspired such work.

I know that one day I will be reunited w/Travis as a friend + a brother, that we will embrace w/the greatest hug ever. He always liberally gave me hugs. His slogan was, "Hugs not drugs" Silly. I cannot wait to hug him again. Me, and a thousand other friends.

June 28

I found the following written on the back of an old Cielo Restaurant menu. It is dated 11/26/02. Ironic because it's exactly 4 years before I was baptized.

"Though I can't say what, my soul deeply longs for something more. I feel it constantly whispered in music, or on the wind. I catch glimpses of it in sunsets, or right before I'm fully conscious, when I wake in the morning, during meditation.

Although I've not stumbled directly upon it yet, it often touches me deep within creating a strong surge of energy that I can't ignore. I believe that w/time it will only grow stronger + evermore present."

Ha, I was so poetic. I still have those longings, but I've learned to appreciate the mundane, simple + everyday things in life, too. Being near my beloved family again has helped. It's strange, I don't know how I was able to be apart from them for so long. I feel so grateful.

June 29

Today has been one of emotional challenge. As I sit here in Sacramento, my thoughts again drift to Travis. I see him sitting here right next to me, in his BOM Blue suit, white shirt, red paisley tie. I imagined throwing my arms around him and crying tears of joy that I am able to hug him again, and he comforted me, saying there was no need to be sad. But that is not his role. I know he could, he always could cheer me up. But Jesus Christ is the Comforter. I just have to keep my faith strong. "I didn't say it would be easy, I said it would be worth it." I don't know who said that, but it's a great quote.

What is frustrating, is every time I write in my journal in Sacramento, someone is always trying to read it! I'm sure it isn't something I'm imagining, there is always someone peering over. It really bugs, but oh well. I guess I could take it as a compliment that they are so interested in the mundane details of my life.

June 30

Yesterday marked 1 year since I broke up w/Travis. If it weren't for his abrupt and tragic passing, I might be filled w/a sense of growth, progression + independence. But my moving on has actually been somewhat hindered, as I have not even begun to stop mourning.

Today was difficult. I filed an extension on my taxes, so I'd put off doing them until today. I had to sort through hundreds of receipts and many were of places we had gone together. Navoo, Niagara Falls, NM.

When something happens in my day to day existence that pertains to something he would appreciate, my first reaction still is to make a mental note to call him later + tell him. I called his phone a few times last night. Maybe just to torture myself, but to hear his voice as well. The only thing that prevents further contemplation of suicide is the unspeakable amount of pain it would cause my family.

I try my best to put forth a smile at work, but some people have noticed a change in my usually cheery countenance. Speaking of work, time to get ready.

I know I will get through this. "El tiempo lo arregla todo." Pero cuanto tiempo para arreglar esta? I fear demasiado. I just want to heal, but this is a process I cannot avoid. I cannot fathom what Mummum is experiencing. Travis loved her so much. I remember how he worried about her well-being. I can't picture or imagine what his brothers + sisters are going through. I love my family so much. I love my brothers. I would defend them to the death. I would lay down my life for them.

I forgot to write about the family reunion on Saturday. All of grandma's sisters came over and some of their husbands + children. So I got to meet all of my great aunts and some 2nd cousins. There was also a niece of my grandma, I don't remember her name. She was obviously mentally challenged in some way, but she was so very kind and sweet. I got a really good vibe from her. And this is going to sound weird, but something about her, I think it was in her eyes, bore a striking resemblance to Mimi Hall. I only met Mimi once, and it was a brief conversation. I told her that Travis thought she was a wonderful person. I didn't want to say, "he thought you were 'the one'!" Well, I kind of did, but that would have been so inappropriate. (had to switch pens). It breaks my heart all over again. I know Travis still has a chance for marriage + no doubt he is happy + progressing.

Anyway, I digress, but can you blame me? The "reunion" was great. We took pictures, then I went to work.

I don't know if I've mentioned this in this journal (and I don't feel like thumbing back through it to find out), but the guilt I've felt as a result of my impure conduct w/Travis began to weigh even more heavily upon me as things began to sink in about his passing. I confessed everything to Aaron Dewey, because I had a hunch – and I was correct – that given his lifestyle, he wouldn't judge me. Aaron is AMAZING! What a guy. He encouraged me to talk to the Bishop. He re-assured actually testified to the power of the Priesthood Authority and the positive experience I can have through the repentance process. So w/his steady assurance + encouragement, I made an appointment w/Bishop Layton of the Desert Ridge Ward. He was wonderful. Truly a man guided by the spirit. He drew out a chart detailing how Travis + I began to relate to each other on a spiritual level, + where we went each time we made choices about

our conduct. It all became so clear. He ~~said~~ also said it was important that I speak w/my bishop also. So I did yesterday. He was understanding and very cautious about how to proceed. We have another appointment this Wednesday, so I will know more at that point.

I also called Detective Flores again. We spoke at length last week. He's LDS. A nice guy. I feel like calling him everyday for updates. He said he gets calls everyday from friends + family. Everyone wants answers. I still don't even know how he died. There is a morbid curiosity that burns to know everything, and part of me that doubts I could take anymore information of that nature regarding him. I know + have faith that in time all things are revealed, and we shall know all things, just like our Heavenly Father, but we all just want to know who + why. I was afraid of insulting the detective's intelligence, but I humbly offered some idea for getting data out of Travis' camera, which was smashed to ruined somehow. He didn't sound hopeful about recovering anything, but time will tell. They got data off of the hard drives from the WTC wreckage, so who knows?

On a lighter note, I spoke for over an hour w/Steve Carroll. He's easy going. Nice. Not a whole lot of chemistry, but then again I've never met him.

I've been talking + texting Ryan at length I like him all kinds. He's a wonderful person. I just have reservations about how we would connect spiritually. I think we're on different planet entirely. But there is w/out a shadow of a doubt major chemistry. I'd like to see him again before Daniel's Summit but I'm not sure. Stay tuned on that ☺ Well, time to go to sleep. The Church is true.

July 2

Well, although, I am absolutely exhausted, I am having a difficult time sleeping tonight. Today marks the second day of the month, and I will not be sending Travis Alexander my customary text message stating, "Happy 2nd day of the month!" As had become tradition. I missed in May + June. The first time I miss a few months ago, I sent him a text on the 3rd or 4th, stating that I forgot + that I guess w/time that's to be expected. Meaning such a tradition could not carry on indefinitely in this life, and I was acknowledging such, but I don't remember his response. I think he agreed somewhat. He always agreed half-heartedly with that kind of stuff, it was like a silent resistance to moving on, although he was trying, and, in my opinion succeeding. I learned too late, that less is better when it came to the details of my own personal dating life. I wish I'd never told him about JD or AA. Even though it was last year, and neither incident occurred while we were dating, he acted so hurt + angry.

He pressed me for details, but I should've insisted we drop it. I gave him more credit than he deserved in the "moving on" department, I thought he was well ahead of me, but he wasn't. I'd take it as a compliment if it didn't cause him so much pain. He deserves massive amounts of eternal happiness, + I have faith that he will find it, and that largely, he already has.

Anyway, as I settle into bed, there's still a stinct urge to call him + say "hey". But he won't answer. I know if he were still on this plane the probability of him being awake would be huge.

I stopped wearing the CTR ring he gave me for Christmas following my baptism many months ago. But it's back on my finger. It hugs my finger and brings a sense of comfort, almost like Travis is present + near. Really, it is the Savior that we all need.

Well, tonight (technically last night) I went to see Othello w/Heather Butcroft. The Shakespeare Festival is on the list of 1000 Places. Travis would have loved it. I told him so silently. Maybe he was present. He was supposed to be here, this week in fact.

Shakespeare would have been one of his goals. So #25, I check it off in honor of him, even if nobody else knows about it. The play was moving. There were laughs + tears. And afterward Heather + I went to the Standing Stone Brewery for appetizers + we got to meet some of the cast. Peter, who played Othello, was great. A nice guy w/lots of theater experience, though tonight was his first performance in Ashland. We took our pictures consecutively w/him + eventually headed back to Yreka. I'm way, way tired now. Time to sleep.

July 4

I received a text this morning while I was still yet asleep from Brandon van Shaik. He said, "Travis just asked me to tell you that he loves you." Travis would know how to ~~get~~ send that through a channel I'd give credit to. Not that Brandon was "the" channel per se, but he communicates regularly w/Brenda, who channels for him. I don't know what to believe anymore. Travis always made fun of me for putting even a little stock in that kind of stuff, but something inside says it's true. I miss him. I pray that his family be comforted. I replied in a text saying, "I feel his presence a lot even though I'm sure he's busy doing a great work on the other side."

The repentance process has begun for my (our) conduct over the last year. Although it's true that it has been easier to resist temptation w/out him beckoning, I'd like to believe that I would've had the strength to resist either way. I ignored for so long the ~~blessings~~ potential for great blessings, blessings I could be enjoying right now. I betrayed that potential for moments of lusty passion. If I have restitution to make to anyone, it would be to Travis for not being stronger. Nevermind that he's made bigger covenants w/the Lord. Nevermind he's endowed. We both made the same covenant when we were baptized, and we both fell. I should've been stronger.

I remember so clearly the fourth of July last year. I watched fireworks on the beach in Monterey w/ a new found friend, Sean Otwell. That same week, on a Tuesday evening, Travis did an amazing training at Systems about Patriotism + our country or something. I don't remember the specifics because I wasn't there. He loved America, that was no secret.

Anyway, tonight I went to watch fireworks w/my mom + dad + Joseph. I really miss Angela. She's doing well at the Wenable House. I hope I can see her soon.

I have so much to be grateful for:

1. My family
2. The Restored Gospel

3. Photography
4. Memories
5. My Grandparents (see 1)
6. My Cat (also see 1)
7. My Job
8. My car
9. Friends
10. My life

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