

"Ja a Polska"

I do remember myself sitting in the kitchen when my father told to the family that he has to leave to Poland in order to work... my sister crying, sitting behind one of the sides of the kitchen's table and mum doing the same, just opposite to little's Patri. In that moment my mind disconnects from half a minute... and suddenly, without noticing it, my mouth let some words go out of it: I'll go with you, Dad. That's how this beautiful love story between me and Poland started 5 years ago. Because, sometimes, people fall in love with other people and some others, people just fall in love with places and I was the lucky one falling in love with such a colorful and vivid country.

I have to admit that before that moment in the kitchen, I had only heard about the history of Poland, the suffering of its people and its strategic location in the center of Europe. But, once those words buzz in my ears, my inner curiosity arouse in the same way that the spring blossoms in the Tatra Mountains.

One month and a half later, just after finishing my second year of BA, the forth of us took a plane that had one of the pearls of the Baltic Sea as its destiny: the city of Gdansk. Almost 24 hours after leaving Spain, between changes of Airports and waiting hours in different terminals (even one flight missed) I stroke the floor with my fit and, in that same moment, I realize that I had found what I have been looking for long time ago: HOME.

Unfortunately, Summer passed by like a thunder... and the leaves of the calendar started to fall one after the other lying in the floor of my bedroom like tree leaves lie in the streets of this Amber City, drawing a path that ended up in the corners of the stairs of Mariacka Street.

September arrived and, after taking a flight in order to return to La Coruña, a new year of my BA started. Dad miles away, Mum trying not to lose her mind while missing him, little's Patri being spoiled in a desperate need of avoiding her missing Dad too, and me... what to say? Just trying to act like the man of the house... trying to behave like Dad, acting like him... only to not lose the magic of his presence but also because this was my way of not missing him. Between all the pains of being far from those we love, we receive calls every day and little chats on Skype that worked as placebo for our suffering and four our soul. And after a month, living with Dad miles away, we realize that Christmas was coming and that Dad will arrive in the middle of Christmas carols and presents. However, Christmas wasn't as longer as we expected it to be. And, after two weeks, Dad was taking a new flight in order to return to Poland flooded of tears.

It was a long-long winter... and Dad just had time for Skype and not to come but, this time, we no longer suffer because we knew that Christmas and Poland bring us something we were missing... and that was the true meaning of FAMILY. I'm not saying that before Poland we weren't a family... But, what you want me to say? Few years before all this, I notice that we were lacking something as a family, we were lacking certain values that I love my family to have... and Poland gave it back to us because the country together with its traditions and its people taught us how to become a true family: the one we are today.

However, if something made us to be even closer as a family, it was the moment when I decided to go to Poland too and stay there for one year... the pity of the story (or maybe

not, because it depends on the side of the reader) it is that I couldn't do my Erasmus in my father's town. I had many other options but none of them was the Languages University of Gdansk. Haunted by capital cities because they are so big and I'm more the kind of a village girl, despite I love cosmopolitanism and get lost to find myself in these savage jungles, I apply to Adam Mickiewicz University and nowadays I think that it was the best decision I could have ever take.

Living far from the sea wasn't easy, and during my first months in Poznan I craved the smell of the sea as much as I craved the taste of good and fresh fish... Sometimes, in order to avoid these cravings, I took one of the old-fashionable communist style trains and visit Dad. And, once I arrived in that city that made me felt at home for the first time, we took the car to go to the beach. Lucky us... Normally the beaches of Gdansk seem to be taken from an Impressionist Painting. The sea, so calm... extremely calm... that you can't even distinguish it's limits from the sky... that reddish, pinky sky that with its form of candy floss takes you back to childhood.

After walking through the seafront we arrived in the small town of Sopot, crowded of students getting out of their after parties and some tourist trying to get the best picture of its white wooden promenade. But, the best of all? Karmazin fresh fish and the "long" ride home talking with Dad about nothing as important as life.

However, I did not always have those cravings of fish & sea salt in my skin but I did have other ones: cravings of knowledge, of getting to know people from different countries, of walking through the streets of this new city that turned to be my home for one year. A city that I miss everyday more a more. I have to admit that, at the beginning, be an anti-party Erasmus (one of those endangered species of Erasmus that prefers to sleep all night long to go fresh to class the following morning) it wasn't easy. But, as time passed and the months of my Erasmus were decreasing, I had the great opportunity to know two of the most important people in my life: one of them open my eyes to this chaotic world in which we live today, she gave me wings and the strength to overcome the stereotypes in which society make us believe. Today she's my non-blood sister and despite she lives in the other side of the Mediterranean sea she was one of the best gifts Erasmus gave me. The other, is the sweetest girl I have ever met and you know that what she is saying is sincere because you can look through her crystalline polish eyes. She taught me the true essence of being polish. The taste of its traditional cuisine homemade by her "matka" and opens for me the heart of her house and family. She also infected me with her hobby towards that exciting sport called "Speedway" and, nowadays, I'm a follower of Leszno Speedway too. And today, I even miss my dusty skin and hair after the race.

My first year in Poland gave me plenty of things apart from a -26 degrees snowy winter and more than one cold and fiber. If anything gave me Poland, it was happiness. The happiness of learning to say my first words in this hilarious beautiful language that sounds like music to my ears, the gift of having the opportunity of learning from the best, specially, Marcin Krygier because he taught me the love for the old languages specially that of English and that you can be a good teacher managing the class with jokes, putting on Viking helmets and loving the act of teaching at the same time. And last but not least, the happiness of finding myself and learning how to love others, specially my other half. A guy

that despite looking like a polish dude with blue waterfall eyes, pale white skin and blond hair is even more Galician than me.

Snow disappeared, and the crazy hot and sunny days arrived toning my skin under a tree while studying for my finals. Always with Adam looking over my shoulder trying to make me remember those verses that say:

“Across sea-meadows measureless I go,

My wagon sinking under grass so tall

The flowery petals in foam on me fall

And blossom-isles float by I do not know.

No pathway can the deepening twilight show;

I seek the beckoning stair which sailors call,

And watch the clouds. What lies there brightening all?”

Finals end, and with my plane tickets in one hand and my reports in the other I took a new flight that brought me home again after months far from my home country. I have to admit that at that moment, I was excited about returning home but at the same time that I climbed the stairs of the plane I knew that I was leaving part of myself behind and that it would always be in Poland.

Fortunately, September 2015 I had the opportunity to work in a language school in Poznan for some months... but, this is another long-long story.