

Biographical Essay

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Here I am, looking through the window of my new apartment in Miami, Florida, wondering about the future. My view has not always looked like this. I can still recall my old bedroom overlooking the Atlantic Ocean, my traveling companion for so many years. Fifteen, to be precise.

The Atlantic Ocean I knew was always a dark blue, the darkest of the seas, and the water was freezing cold, even on the warmest summer day. Despite that, my father taught me to love the ocean since the moment I learned from him how to swim at three years old. A few years later, in my second year of primary school, I joined a sailing team. I began sailing in the Optimist class, and I grew up dedicating most of my free time to balancing my schoolwork and following the shifts in the wind wherever they took me. As a young sailor, I had to make personal efforts to reach a competitive level in major regattas, while at the same time respecting my educational commitments.

During this period of my childhood, I learned a very important lesson: that life is not always easy, especially when dealing with six training hours per day rain or shine, even if I was ill, even if I had finals. I gained friends, friends who became family after so many hours of joy and dedication, people I would meet at regattas who became part of my sailing world, and I realized people are not distinguished by where they come from, but where they are going. My biggest lesson was when I learned for the first time in my life that if I wanted to achieve something, I could not stop. I had to keep pushing forward.

As a teenager, I went from a smaller boat to a bigger one, Laser. Everything felt brand new for me at that age: the technique, the competitions, even the rules, but I soon realized that I could draw from the experience I already had. I had to adapt to new situations, but I knew I could deal with them. During these years, I broadened my horizons. I took my practice very seriously, joining national and international Regattas. I participated in even more championships, including the Europeans, where I finished 9th. My scores bolstered my confidence and desire to keep pushing forward, to keep improving. Even though I was confident, not everything was easy all the time. Sometimes I had to pull myself together after not being able to reach a personal goal I had set. Even though it was not always easy, because of all my learning experiences, I always found a way to pull myself out of a funk and see the positive.

In 2015 my family left our home in Spain and decided to move to the United States for a better life. At that time, I had just spent the four previous months in a British high school improving my English and, more importantly, gaining experience from a very different society. To me, making a move somewhere new could only mean better opportunities. I have been in this country for almost two years, and I already see myself as being a part of it. High school has helped me feel at home here, but I know sailing is my home no matter where I go. The lessons I have learned through my sailing experiences have shaped my personality in ways I could have never imagined, and has made me a better person