**What Traveling Taught Me**

I am pleased to inform everyone that I have officially survived my first week abroad--and what a week it has been! It feels as though I have explored so many parts of London, and yet, there is still so much for me to see. One of the beautiful things about this city is that no matter how long I stay, or how many times I revisit, there will always be something new to be discovered. Based solely on the fact that they speak English here, I thought that I would quickly become accustomed to living here. On the contrary, there are so many things that are different than what I am used to back in California. I am quickly learning the do's and dont's of London. For example, I very quickly remembered, thankfully before it got dangerous, that cars drive on the left side of the road in the UK. And that asking for the ‘restroom’ instead of the ‘toilet’ is a laughable concept. That being said, there is always something new to learned and mistakes to be made. Without those experiences, you cannot grow.

I feel extremely lucky that I have been given an opportunity to explore a world outside the little bubble I have grown so accustomed to in the past 21 years. That bubble seems to be growing smaller and smaller the more I learn and explore. As I have been traveling, I am very intrigued by a certain concept: sonder. Sonder is defined as the realization that each random passerby is living a life as vivid and complex as your own—populated with their own ambitions, friends, routines, worries and inherited craziness—an epic story that continues invisibly around you like an anthill sprawling deep underground, with elaborate passageways to thousands of other lives that you’ll never know existed, in which you might appear only once. The person that served you your burger the other night, the child riding his bike down the street, or the person angrily talking on her cell phone at the airport terminal. You may never see this person again in your lifetime. Or maybe you will 50 years down the road, when smiles and sunshine have weathered your skin and memories of all sorts have been made. Maybe you won't recognize them; maybe when you meet again 50 years down the road, you won't realize that they were the person that served you that burger. And think of all the things that must have happened to you in those 50 years, the happy and the heartbreaking alike, and now think of everything that could have possibly happened to them as well. This world has over 7 billion people in it--each living their own lives that are as complicated as yours. And now don't you feel lucky to know everyone in your life out of those 7 billion people? It is if by some fate that your significant other, your friend, your coworker, and your neighbor all came into your life for a reason. To give you something, to teach you something, to be some sort of influence to you. 