



Mirror Mirror, on the wall

Let's jump back in time this week - around thirty-five years - to take a peek at the 20-year old David, and hear about yet another of those 'life-changing' episodes ... of which he seems to have had more than his share!

I entered university when I was 17 ... and lasted just a bit short of a year, leaving without quite completing the first year of study. I had very mixed feelings about university; on the one hand I enjoyed the environment - campus life was interesting, living in the student residence was fun, and what a fabulous library there was! But the other hand - of course - was the classes, and these were quite a disappointment to me. The fault was mine I suppose, because I had expected university to be something different from 'school', but it was just the same - we had to be in a certain classroom at a certain time, sit in little desks in rows, and listen while some teacher up front droned on about something ... just like high school!

So bit by bit I lost interest in the classes, stopped attending some of them, and thus when exam time rolled around at the end of the year the results were predictable. My parents were disappointed at my failure, because they had quite high expectations that I would become 'educated', but there were no recriminations, and they stood back to see what I would do next.

What I did next was not much of anything. Over the course of the next two years, I built (and sold) a few classic guitars, taught folk guitar to adult night school classes, and took care of the flute students who attended my father's local music shop. Although I still nominally had a dream of becoming an orchestra flute player, in reality I wasn't doing much to move toward that goal.

I wasn't lazy though, so never just hung around the house doing nothing. At one point, I had the idea to make a tall wall mirror for our house. Perhaps my parents had mentioned that they had no mirror in their bedroom or something like that, I don't remember now. I designed and built a pair of them, one for their room, and one that I hung in the furniture store next to the music shop, to see if anybody was interested in buying it. Nothing much happened, and the incident was forgotten.

My parents were patient with me, and didn't lecture or hector me about my future, but behind the scenes, they were thinking about what to do to get me 'on the move'. They finally decided on a course of action - they chipped in money for me to purchase an air ticket to England ... a one way ticket. Did I really want to be an orchestra flute player? Well then, get out of this little town, and head for London, one of the global centers of orchestral music study. I started to pack.

And then, a couple of days before I flew, the owner of the furniture store called me. A local company that was building a new hotel in the area wanted to place an order for my mirror - a huge order ... one for every room in the new hotel! It was the perfect chance for me to get started with a new business. Rent a workshop, buy some tools, fill the order, and then get started on a career of 'quality' furniture building ...

But the die was cast, the expensive ticket to London was already in my pocket, and so off I flew, the entire course of my life changed by the timing of a single phone call.

What would I be doing now if that call had come *before* they bought the ticket?

David Bull
Seseragi Studio
Nagabuchi 8-4-5 Ome City
Tokyo Japan 198-0052
<http://astoryaweek.com>