

It's interesting what we find lurking in the old closets, when as adults we go exploring. Inherently, I knew, as a child, that I was NOT meant to follow in my mother's footsteps and become a midwife staring at vaginas all day, nor my father's, with his two PhDs in Applied Mathematics and Physics or, was it Rocket Science? With certainty, I knew it had to do with Writing, as no matter what I said as a child, "I want to be a surgeon. No, I want to be a lawyer. No, I want to play for the Raiders!" I knew when I read Somerset Maugham, and I knew when I read Mary Tannen, and I even knew when I journaled in the Second Grade, I knew, I was meant to be a writer. In fact, I didn't know it till I was a little older, but I had a famous writer in my family. However, I didn't think I was meant to be holed up in an ivory tower somewhere. Something else was destined to become the piece of the puzzle which would create that wholeness I was looking for.

Two things happened which became the impetus of the direction my life turned. Firstly, (and by the way, skipping all things important, my marriage at a mere twenty years of age and the premature birth of my little girl, nine and a half weeks ahead of schedule), I was not doing hardly anything creative after I married and had a baby except for a few short stories here and there, and in 2002, decided to answer an ad for a casting call at a local theatre producing one-act plays. Involving myself in that group, was a pivotal moment, as not only did I act, but I started to write, direct and produce one-act plays, as well. My daughter was six years old by this time- nearly seven, and she, after seeing one of my plays, wrote a one-act play of her own and at seven years old, the theatre director allowed her to direct it. It was a proud moment for me, although, she hates me talking about it now. The second turning point for me was when the Film Festival came to San Diego. I had never been to a film festival before and it was singularly, the most exciting thing I had ever seen, outside of my travels to Europe as a foreign exchange student at

seventeen years old. I attended as many panels as I could and had my “aha!” moment. It is true, what they say, about a calling. You can’t shake it. You can’t deny it. You can only answer it. And I did. I read book after book about filmmaking and while attending an acting class and before setting one foot in film school, I wrote and directed five short films, four of them done over a short summer break, each shot in a weekend for no-budget. I not only answered the call, the calling had me hooked, addicted and finally aware of myself as an artist.

And what did I find in my old closet? A VHS cassette, that when played on the VCR, revealed me behind the camera recording not only family vacations but my brothers doing things only a big sister, hungry to direct, would put them up to do.

- Aleisha Gore