

Amanda Joy Jex Sabin

by Emily Hascall

February 22nd, 2020-- It was a big day. Amanda was coming to visit me at UCSB for the first time. It was early morning, yet as soon as the car pulled up there she was, sprinting and screaming through the parking lot. "Emulu!!", she called, "Uh this is so rad I've missed you!" She looked different since I'd seen her last. Blonde streaks just passed her collar bone, and the horrid high school bangs finally grew out. Sporting a neon orange, vintage sweatshirt layered with a turtleneck, she managed to turn 80's clothing chic. I later found



out it belonged to her iconic Aunt Jane, who had also thrown in a pair of twisted sea-blue earrings. Amanda loves collecting unique items. Finding something seemingly obscure and giving it a loving home seemed to bring her a lot of joy, even when it came to people.

Amanda has met people from all around the world. She is "fortunate enough to travel each summer" as she describes it. Europe, Africa, Canada, Dominican Republic: she has fascinating stories from all over the globe. When I first met her, I pegged her as someone from a low income background. She understood if I asked to pack a lunch versus eating out, and never questioned if I asked to go thrifting instead of the mall. I simply just hadn't met anyone so inclusive, non-prejudice, or non-judgemental before. Her educated eyes-- sea green with brown specks in them-- had shaped her perspective of the world, humbling her. I think this is why she works with all kinds of people. "They were quite a character," she says, and the criticism stops there.

I was so excited to spend an entire carefree Saturday together. We went downtown to State Street for an hour. There were sales at Forever 21 and H&M, but Amanda hates "fast fashion retails". It's one of the many protests and boycotts she leads. Instead we

found an Italian Pottery shop, looking for every ceramic frog in the room. Every few seconds you'd hear, "Oh worm! What should we name this frog?" I can't put a pin on it, but there's something about frogs she adores-- almost as much as plants.

Later that afternoon we walked the bluffs. I hadn't realized how many different plants grew near Campus Point. Amanda recited every scientific name she could identify-- which was A LOT. I was supposed to be the tour guide, yet Amanda showed superior to the task as she was spouting knowledge of invasive species and leaf structure.

Eventually we walked back to the parking lot to end the day. Even though we knew we only had one day together, we both had a hard time saying goodbye. "I won't see you till next school year!" Amanda began to cry.

"I'm seeing you for spring break in three weeks puh-leeze!!" I said while rolling my eyes. That girl needs a calendar glued to the back of her hand...and a WATCH. We laughed together for a while about this forgetful fit, gave one more hug, and parted ways. From this day, I've learned a bit of advice for others: Find an Amanda. It makes every day together, even if you're just shopping or walking, a big day.