

Kendall Oshima

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Torrance Crossover

“Why do you live so far away? It is so inconvenient to drive all the way to your house because we always end up coming back to my area anyways.”

“Bruh, there’s plenty of things to do in my part of town.” As I reply with pride.

My friend from South High says in a snarky tone, “Like what? It’s so ghetto.”

“Just give North Torrance a chance. It’s not so bad.”

As my 3 South friends and I were walking, step by step on the grey pavement under the “405”, around the corner, along the freeway, we passed “La Carretera Park”. Us “North Torrancers”, often refer to this park as “Freeway Park” because of its proximity to the infamous “405” freeway. Some would say the location is bad and that the park looks run down. However, for many of the kids in the neighborhood, this was our childhood park that provided everything that our seven year old self could ever need. It wasn’t like “Lago Seco Park” or “Wilson Park”, but it did its job.

As us four catch a glimpse of the towering, rusted chain link fence surrounding the beaten up basketball court my friend is genuinely in shock as he says, “Whoa, that looks like those courts in movies where a kid works their way all the way to the NBA.” I start busting up laughing, but the rest of them are nervously giggling until it is silent. I could sense them tensing up, and we sped up to my friend’s house.

The next time we hung out in my “ghetto” neighborhood is still yet to come. These friends are new ones that I recently made over last school year, and I think I love hanging out with them so much because of the differences between me and them, and them to my school

friends. The hangouts with my North friends are so different than with these South friends. Never does a day go by without me thinking how different my life would be if I never branched out of my little sector of Torrance. Even though these guys can be a little bit spoiled, I love their energy and different lifestyle.

Even though we are only about four miles apart, we live such opposing lives. However, when we combine our lifestyles it births something so eccentric and unique. “Do you want to go swim and go to my spot in PV after?” This was my South friend’s and I’s go-to hangout. It felt like I was living the life, swimming whenever, and walking around late at night not worrying about the dangers of the neighborhood.

“Do you want to go to my house and play *Overcooked* on my Nintendo Switch?” Now this sounds more familiar. When I hangout with my North friends, this was the go-to hangout. It wasn’t safe for us to walk around outside at night, and none of us had pools so this was the best option. I still enjoy both activities, but it was nice to now have options.

After enough hangouts and getting closer with my South friends, while still maintaining my lasting friendships with my North friends, the groups began to mesh. I slowly introduced my friend groups to each other, and the negative view of North Torrance gradually faded from my South friend’s minds. We started to study at the cafes around me and my North friend even invited some of my South friends over to chill in his backyard, and they were pleasantly surprised by how nice and similar to their backyard hangouts it was.

Now, we are all closer than ever and have expanded our little explorations to outside of Torrance. We went to see “Will Smith” at his signing at Dick’s in Cerritos. We went to Disneyland in Anaheim. We went to The Weeknd concert in Inglewood. We all have meshed together. The egos of the “better part of Torrance” were placed to the side, and were forgotten.

This just demonstrates how when people are optimistic and open to change, it can lead to so many good relationships and experiences. By opening up to new people and things, one can be introduced to different ways of life, and build upon it to create a one of a kind life for oneself. The diversity in Torrance is what I love because I can create this life for myself and probably even my future kids. This crossover in Torrance doesn't happen often, which is such a shame but when it does it brings so much unity to our city. This unity is important for the youth in creating lasting relationships and open minded individuals.

“So, your house or mine?”