

How to Survive in a Strange World

After Sliding into an Alternate Timeline

12

**A brief survival handbook by “S.M.” of the Outlaws
System**

Man of Mystery and Fictional Bad Guy
(ret)

*To the woman who always told
me*

*I needed to get out
more.*

Change Log



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So you've slid into an alternate timeline...

Maybe you're dead, or you've been sent away from another realm, or your time machine stopped working a little too early. Maybe memories of your other life suddenly came rushing back to you one day at the drop of a hat, leaving you confused and disoriented. Whatever the cause, the important thing to remember is *not to panic*. Sometimes life just doesn't go as planned; sometimes, no matter how hard you try to avoid it, you end up getting sucked into a strange and foreign universe. Shit happens.

As a fellow traveler on this beaten and eccentric path, I cannot offer much advice on how to get back to your own timeline, homeworld, day, week, month, or century. I can, however, offer certain key observations and words of advice that may prove useful in the field until you find a way to get back, or at the very least offer some sense of solidarity against the absurd forces that brought you here in the first place.

For the sake of comprehensibility, this guide will make use of the following terms:

Outsider: Any individual who has arrived from a different timeline, world, or universe.

Timeline: I use this term in the loose sense to refer to any timeline, world, or reality. *Home timeline* and *current timeline* will be used to provide maximum contrast between life "there" and "here".

Local(s): This refers to anyone who knows their way around your current timeline. They don't necessarily have to have been born there—they could even be outsiders like yourself who are on the up- and-up.

It should also be noted that this guide is primarily written for those who have ended up in wildly different timelines or realities than the ones they're used to instead of subtle variations of the same one. If you're looking for ways to spot individual timelines or realities or logs of what they may contain, this guide will be of no use to you. This is a survival handbook, not a textbook, and I ain't no professor!

The advice herein uses "modern" Earth as the base template for the "current timeline". To put it another way, as I write this the year is 2017, a man named Donald Trump is president, Canada exists on the map, and society as a whole is, from my perspective, flawed but functional. This

may not be the case for you if you've been sucked into a wormhole or miscalculated a dimensional jump. If any of the above makes no sense to you whatsoever, fear not! The advice I have to offer should be helpful no matter what reality you find yourself in, barring certain specific sections.

Be aware, however, that while I've tried to keep this advice fairly universal, there will be limitations to this guide in the sense of language/cultural barriers and the variance between worlds, realities, and timelines. This is because interdimensional travel is an immense and complex subject to cover, especially for a guy like me who came from a more "simple" reality where reading and writing were privileges and not rights. Nevertheless, it's my hope that even if I can't help everyone, I may be able to help at least someone. Maybe that someone will be you. So, let's go exploring, shall we?

First Things

First...

You're going to want to get to know your surroundings. This includes any individuals who may be near, as well as the general environment. What language does everyone speak? What time of day is it? Does it look safe, or is everything on fire? All these are imperative to know before moving forwards—you've got enough problems from getting sucked into another reality to begin with, you don't need any more. Here's a set of simple DOs and DON'Ts that will help you navigate your current timeline safely and effectively.

Do... • Stay quiet, but not *too* quiet. Observe the locals: what are they up to? Are they peaceful, or

hostile? Do you recognize your surroundings?

- Be friendly. Smile and nod and try not to be creepy about it. In fact, unless otherwise provoked, be on your *best* behavior. When you get down to it, you are a guest in this place, so act like one. Besides, the locals will be more likely to show you hospitality that way.
- Be aware of yourself. Are you in your regular body, or another's? Are there others in your body with you, or are you alone? More on this in the following section.

Don't...

- Panic or cause a stir, unless you're in immediate danger. You may be suitably frightened and lost, and you may think asking for help would be the sensible thing to do, but not so fast, pal! People don't just slide into other timelines every day! At best, you'll cause a scene and the locals will think you're crazy, at worst you could be institutionalized or killed.

- Be a “tourist”, especially without a tour guide. It can be tempting to fuck around right away since this world isn’t “your” world, but that can damage things in the long run! There’s no telling how long you’ll be staying here, and anything you do out of ignorance could cause trouble in the long run. Use your better judgement, keep your mouth shut, and learn.
- Wander off without direction. Should be self explanatory; keep an eye out for landmarks and memorize them, or ask the locals where to go if they’re friendly and speak your language.

If It’s a Shared Vehicle...

...in that, your spirit, mental image, or what have you has been, by some cruel act of god or nature, bound to a body that isn’t yours with one or more other people sharing control of it (AKA a *plural system*), there’s a few things to keep in mind. First of all: *lucky you!* These people will be indispensable in getting yourself oriented. I’m telling you, they may not exactly be “your kind” of people at first, but they will be your new best friends when the culture shock hits in full force. Do not anger them. Do not be shitty to them. Don’t point fingers or blame them for your predicament or demand your “real” body back; like it or not, this is the only body you have to go to right now and there ain’t much the others can do about it! Trust me. Me and my group have tried.

This setup can also make blending in a lot easier if you’re not a member of your current timeline’s dominant species. It might be a bit awkward and a little intimidating, but from a survival standpoint you’ve lucked out big time. Do your best to get used to this situation and use it to your full advantage— there’s not much else you really can do.

The First Few Days

The first couple days can be exhausting and extremely overwhelming. Try to take it all in stride. One attitude that helps is hard to explain, but it goes like this: Think of the patience people have around small children who sometimes say weird and nonsensical things. Foster that kind of patience in yourself, and hold onto it during your everyday life--your current timeline can’t help being weird.

You will see a lot of strange things and have a lot of strange conversations. You’ll probably embarrass yourself more than once. Some locals may even laugh at your expense! Be aware that you aren’t the first person experiencing what you’re experiencing, and you probably won’t be the last. They won’t be laughing so hard once you’re blending in like a pro after a couple months, but for now, it’s going to be a slow and steady learning curve.

Reminders of home can be bittersweet for many outsiders, but I've found that familiar sights, sounds, and foods can help somewhat with adjusting to your new surroundings. Having familiar things in your life, no matter how small, takes the edge off your mind as it goes about processing all the unfamiliar things you're experiencing.

If Your Home Timeline was Less Advanced...

I'll say this, coming from a less advanced reality to a more advanced one, in my experience, has been pretty great. However, if you're in a similar predicament, it's not always fun and games.

To put it simply, you're gonna have some survival instincts you need to curb. No scrounging for useful shit, no living in constant anticipation of disaster, no bad table manners. It's time to clean up and live by a new set of rules: this is the price you'll have to pay for this level of advancement.

This isn't to say you can never put that side of yourself to good use, but be sure to do it in a controlled way. It's one thing to make a hobby out of disaster preparation. It's another thing entirely to pull out a pocket knife and gut and cook a dead animal by the side of the road when there's money in your pocket and restaurants nearby. It might seem a bit snobby, but the people in put-together societies like to think they're above all that stuff, and you and me will have to settle for having the last laugh when they get theirs!

If Your Home Timeline was More Advanced...

Sorry pal, looks like you're gonna have to go camping! I'm less well versed in this area, however I may be able to offer some perspective:

What you're walking into is a challenge, and like any challenge you can either let it break you or you can overcome it. Maybe you don't have superhuman strength and speed, or space travel, or bigfoots armed with cool laser guns. Maybe the food here really sucks in comparison, or the medical technology is completely primitive, or the locals are nothing but wobbly buffoons compared to the intelligence of your time or place. You might not be able to change any of that, but you can control how you approach your new life.

Think about it: you're carrying with you a vision of the way things *could* be. All sorts of wisdom and perspective regular people in your current timeline are blind to. Why not put it to good use, and find some way to move society that much closer to those things?

You may be thinking, "Well that's no fair, why bother if I don't get to enjoy it myself?",

and look, I can't force anyone to be altruistic with this stuff, but all the things this current timeline has were things people hundreds of years ago wouldn't have even dreamed of! And I'd rather you ensured your current timeline came closer to being a society like yours than a society like my original one, let me tell ya.

Know Your Stuff

Quick, think fast! What's your address in your current timeline? What city or country are you in? Does the body you inhabit go by a different name? You're gonna have to learn all this and more as you readjust.

I'll be blunt: you'll probably never fit in 100% of the time. It's no different than immigrating to a foreign country and settling down there, your background is different than others' and there's no changing that. But, with practice, you can get used to the culture around you. For instance, my current timeline has an "internet" through which individuals use machines to communicate with one another through text and "emojis", small icons that can convey a certain expression or meaning. In my home timeline we had nothing like this, and yet here I am, sharing my words of wisdom over the world wide web!

My point is, no matter how insane something may seem in principle, it can become habitual, even if your perspective on that thing is a little different than most people's. It takes time and a lot of repetition, but it's doable.

Getting In with the Locals

This will take a lot of time, patience, and persistence. You're going to mess up, I'll lay that on the table right away. You're gonna mess up, but hopefully most of those mess-ups will be minor things at non critical moments, around locals you know and trust.

Your current timeline has its own language and way of life. Learn it. Respect it. Even if you think it's weird. Err on the safe side: if you're told not to haggle, don't haggle. If people start snickering at something you say, shut your mouth and dissect why that happened when you're able to.

A lot of this varies on just how much patience your current timeline has for eccentricity. I'm lucky that the copilots of this body know the ins and outs of this place, and know where and how to find other eccentrics to mesh with. If you're not so lucky, you may have to feel your way out the hard way. Books and movies, if set near the current time, can help you gauge how the locals

act, but you may simply have to observe them in the wild to get the full effect. Take it from a guy whose home timeline was in ruins: pictures and fiction don't tell the whole story!

Know the laws and don't break 'em. Keep a journal, make lists, take notes on what works and what doesn't. They'll be indispensable in working your current timeline's culture out and fitting yourself into it.

Through the Looking Glass

Adjusting to a strange world is a strange process. You could feel perfectly fine for days only to run into something everyone else thinks is normal that turns your entire worldview on its head. Even the most familiar things where you live will still have a degree of unfamiliarity—that's okay. It just means that finding a comfortable place in your current timeline will require a little ingenuity.

Home Turf

Do you know that feeling you get where you're a guest in someone else's house? Odds are pretty high you may experience this feeling, whether in your new home or while existing in society at large. To some extent, this guest feeling is a helpful reminder to be aware of yourself and others, and to play by their rules. However, when it comes up at the wrong time it can bring with it a sense of deep loneliness and emptiness.

A Space of Your Own

So what can be done about this? Well, simply put, carving out a space that's completely yours, organized according to your standards, can help mitigate the sense that you're a permanent guest in your current timeline. It also helps with self discovery, allowing you to figure out exactly how you want to relate to this new world. My space in our system's room is a writing desk I'm still in the process of cleaning off, since I've found a hobby in writing very bad poetry.

Traditions

It also may be helpful to hold on to some old practices you did in your home timeline, provided they're small and harmless enough to be considered "eccentric" by residents of your current timeline, rather than something looked down upon. Was there a certain

holiday that everyone recognized that you could observe in your own personal way? Maybe there's something you like to collect in your current timeline that remind you of people back home. To give a very on the nose example, creating this guide is carrying out my family's long standing tradition of surviving adversity. What can you do? Get creative.

Flesh and Bone

Unless you got really lucky, you're probably living in an unfamiliar body right now. Maybe its hair, eyes, or skin are a totally different color than what you're used to. Maybe it's a completely different sex or species! Even subtler changes, like how the body smells or how it's built can result in no shortage of distress for the occupant who's been suddenly ripped out of their own body and placed into a foreign one.

Adjusting to a new body is a very long process. Maybe you'll never feel one hundred percent at home in it. However, unless you're in a timeline where you're a transcendent hive-minded being, you only have one body, and like it or not it's what you do with what you got.

The Body is a Tool

This by far has been the most helpful thought process in coping with body dysphoria for me. As sad as it is that no one in this timeline will ever see my handsome visage in the flesh, I am no stranger to working with tools, and sometimes, in a pinch, you don't always have the most fitting tool provided for the job, so you have to make do. While I'm often at odds with our body, I respect what it does for me, and I'd rather have a body I can eat and drink and be merry with rather than have no body at all.

To put it another way: the body isn't you, any more than a fork you hold with it is you. It's just the tool you have to use to interface with the world, for better or for worse.

Find a Style

This method takes a lot of time, as well as trial and error. If you share your body with others, you may note that they each have their own, unique "style" of using the body. They may have different posture, or different styles of dress, or ways of gesturing that are uniquely theirs, yet still different from how relaxed they can be in the mindscape; it's as though the body and the person driving it are two halves of a whole operation, the same way some car drivers may be cautious while others may have lead feet. Chances are high that if you're another species, or someone like me who's pretty far removed in shape and stature compared to the body, you're going to feel a bit weird at first as you carve out a method

of wearing the body that doesn't feel like a bad charade, one that suits both it and you. Push through it, don't overthink things, and in time you'll be puppeting that thing like a champ.

Decorate It

Tattoos, clothing, piercings, hair styles, hair dye, hormones, gender surgery... human bodies are surprisingly customizable when you examine all the options, and this can prove beneficial to you if you're looking for ways to make the body feel more like yours. However, also be aware that if you're not alone in this body, you will (and should) also be expected to honor the wishes of your system mates. Things like tattoos and surgery are permanent, and not everyone in the system may share your creative vision.

The Body is a Friend Container

A thought process unique to systems, but: if you absolutely abhor the body you're stuck in, and you see no possible way you can ever enjoy being in it, just remember that you don't have to face these feelings alone. Talk to the others, and, if only for their sake, *honor* the body you're in, because if you trash it for yourself, you'll be trashing it for everyone else too.

The Existential Issues

Almost every outsider I've met faces some variant of this. Sliding into another reality can fuck with your sense of self in ways that are too varied and creative for me to list, but just off the top of my head there's the problem of homesickness, regret, and alienation. Sometimes you can counteract these things, sometimes you just have to ride them out, but hopefully the following suggestions may make your situation appear a little less bleak:

Fresh Start

Let's face it, we've all fucked up in one way or another, and had problems in life we've wished we could run away from. Well, now's your chance! Run wild! This ain't your world, it ain't your old life, and you ain't obligated to tell anyone else about your history. While letting go of the past is easier said than done, you've now been presented with the perfect opportunity to reinvent your entire future, which is one very few people are given. That embarrassing thing you said eight years ago? That asshole you hated? The time your brothers forced you to eat something gross after losing a bet? Guess what!

None of it's real in your current timeline, and therefore, none of it matters to anybody else! Whatever's been weighing you down, now's the time to forget it and move on.

On Vacation/Early Retirement

I'm gonna be a hypocrite here, and go back on the advice I gave you in the first section: once you've situated yourself, *be* a tourist. Take in all the sights, laugh at the weird shit (who puts their milk in *bags*, anyway), enjoy the food. Fuck it! This ain't your reality, so you might as well have fun. Have that second slice of cake. Eat the whole thing if you want! Who cares!? The multiverse, if it exists, sure as hell doesn't if it's gone and dumped you in a strange and unfamiliar place like this.

That's not saying you should go getting yourself in trouble with the law! Easy there, cowboy. Been there, done that, it ain't as glamorous as it looks in the movies, trust me.

(That's what you're supposed to say to avoid law suits, right?) I'm just saying, the whole situation is kind of ridiculous to begin with, so might as well have fun with it while you're here.

Put Your Middle Finger Up At God

If you're truly in a hellhole compared to your home timeline, or if there's absolutely nothing positive to be found in this arrangement, then maybe living for the sake of joy isn't an option. But you know what is? Spite! Pure, unadulterated spite! Who does god (or nature) think he is, just rippin you out of your happy home like that and depositing you in this dump!? Does he think this will break you? C'mon, don't give him the satisfaction pal, you're stronger than that! You show that guy who's boss!

You may not be able to get your friends and family back, or right all your past wrongs, or find some kind of universal closure—that's not something that's in your control. What you can control is your reaction to those things. Whatever positivity you can find in your present situation, hold onto it! (To all my fellow past-hellhole-dwellers: ain't working bathrooms great?) Or, if you wanna go the spiteful route, let it all go.

So You're Fictional in this Timeline...

Congratulations! You've got a bum deal. Not only are you in a whole new reality you may only half understand, but now other people in said reality have been given a window into what was,

in your home timeline, your private, personal life!

There may or may not be art of you out there. There may be stories, or music. It may or may not have fans. Maybe they've included you in a smut piece or two. Whatever piece of work you're depicted in, it may or may not be a faithful telling of things from your perspective. You may just have strongly held opinions of things from said work of media you can't find an easy outlet for! All this invasive bullshit, existential angst and more comes with being depicted in a work of fiction, and it ain't going away any time soon.

So, what do you do about it? That depends...

Congrats! You're (In)famous!

This helps a bit with the invasive feeling. Think of yourself in terms of having accidentally become famous overnight. It happens to plenty of people now, with the internet and all. Remember that famous people can't control everything their fans do, and have one or two creepy admirers (*at least*). You're probably not the only person who feels weird about being seen by thousands of eyes, and you're *definitely* not the only person with weird fans (or haters) they could not control.

The point is, none of this is personal! These people aren't out to getcha. In fact, most of them would probably think you're an absolute crackpot, claiming to be X person from Y thing. So don't say so! Live your life in quiet bliss away from all the noise, or...

Own It

Stop having shits to give. Look at weird fan art, read the worst fan fictions, laugh at yourself. Pass off your memories as elaborate fan theories, or write your own Tumblr callout post just for the irony!

Whatever perspective you take depends on what type or person you are, and what you find most comfortable.

On "Sourcemates"

AKA people who show up in the same work of fiction you do. The internet can be a great tool at finding other outsiders like yourself. I haven't hunted for sourcemates without one, so I'm afraid if your current timeline lacks one, I can't help you there, but for posterity's sake I'll give a few pointers. You may even get lucky and run into canonmates: individuals who share your same timeline—or things could get weird, and you might run into another you. Weird shit

happens when timelines collide like that. Or, maybe you're repulsed by your canon and anything (or anyone) to do with it. This is fair. Don't feel pressured to find people if it's what everyone else is doing. Maybe you're the mysterious type like me, who enjoys bein' all enigmatic like and tricky to sleuth out. B)

Whatever your approach, keep these important things in mind:

- The past is in the past. Your canonmates could be how you remember them... or they could be completely different people. The individuals you once knew and loved so dearly might even hate your guts now! Time and sliding into different dimensions can change a person considerably. It's also possible that...
- Your memory may be flawed or incomplete. It happens. Nobody has a perfect memory! Don't hinge your entire self worth on what memories you may or may not share with people, if any. It won't lead anywhere friendly.
- You don't have to be "on brand" all the time. Hell, I sure ain't the bastard criminal I used to be. If I had my way I'd be driving a happy little yellow sedan on a picnic with my date, you catch my drift? Don't let assholes pressure you into being a certain way. Whatever way you are, that's the way to be you.
- Be wary of people who try and screw around with your own memory of events, or who try and make you part of an "OTP", or expect a certain level of intimacy from you up front. New world, new life, remember? This could be a complete asshole you're dealing with. Sure, it can be tempting to be around certain people who understand your home timeline in ways that locals don't, but don't let that cost you your personal autonomy or safety.

*"Wait, I'm the **Bad Guy!**?"*

Just between you and me: we villains don't have it easy. A lot of folks are quick to forget about the whole "new world new life" thing once *your* villainous ass turns up, regardless of how malicious you may actually be in the moment! But as I said, time and a change of scenery can completely change a person, that goes for you too. This doesn't mean that what you did was okay, but it also doesn't mean that you'll never amount to anything other than capital-E evil, either. If anybody tries to sell you that, don't waste your time on them! Make amends to the people you hurt, say you're sorry, and move on with your life. If they won't let you do that easily, well, I guess you ain't the villainous one in that scenario, huh!?

The Bird Principle

In short, if you're from fiction in your current timeline, and you wanna find others like you, keep the bird principle in mind. The bird principle is this: birds don't care how their singing sounds;

whoever flocks to them flocks to them, and whoever doesn't, doesn't. You be that bird.

Real philosophical, ain't it?

On Disclosure

In both my home and current timelines, saying you came from another universe sounds absolutely nuts! But nuts as it may be, it's still a huge part of my life and the lives of many others. As you explore this new reality, you may begin to wonder, *who should I tell?*

Unfortunately, I can't give an easy answer to this question. In fact, nobody other than you can decide who to tell what about your identity to. However, these pointers may be worth keeping in mind:

- See how well they respond to other weirdos. Or to put it less bluntly: sit down and evaluate how open minded this person has been in the past. Some people just don't care, others do. While there's no telling how it will go, you can look for signs.
- Test the waters. Throw out feeler phrases, things like, "Y'know I heard some people believe they come from other worlds! What do you think of that?" Don't be overly negative, or show one opinion on it or another, because your friend, lover, etc might take the cue from you that this is a bad thing. You don't want that.
- If you're fictional and feeling brave, see what they make of your source. It's no guarantee they may accept you, but they could be more inclined to respond favourably if you're from a work of fiction they enjoy.
- When you have "the talk", do it in a medium you're comfortable with. It doesn't have to be a grand, face to face announcement, and you don't have to be put on the spot or stand on a fucking soapbox in order to get the message across. Just be you. If they don't like it, fuck 'em, but...

Lastly, and most importantly, be careful who you tell. Things could go sour real fast if word gets out to your parents, doctor, or boss. If there's a chance it could reach someone who's in control of you, have an exit strategy. However, also be aware that sometimes people do shitty things, and that someone being a dick about your personal history is not "your fault". It's them who betrayed your trust and failed you as a friend!

A Word to the Dead

Everyone who ends up in this predicament, in my opinion, goes through a unique grieving process that most people aren't fully equipped for. However, it's worth noting that the outsiders among us who can be certain their lives are over—not a coma dream, not a diversion until ones time machine gets fixed, but really and certifiably over—have an especially unique scenario to grapple with. For them, there is no hope of returning home, and the odds of finding proper closure with people from their home timeline who are currently out-living them are slim to none.

So how does someone mourn when their life is over but their soul is not? It's no easy task. Due to stigma, conventional methods such as speaking to religious leaders or grief counsellors won't be as safe or effective. Chances are high you're going to be feeling around in the dark for the first few months as you internalize everything. However, I've found a few practical methods for coping with grief that can be adapted to almost any situation. While this section is primarily tailored for those who are dead, anyone coping with severe homesickness may find some use in the following practices:

Attack of the Feelings

Unless emotions are an entirely foreign concept to your species, you're probably going to feel something about your present situation that may or may not fit under the label *grief*. Actually, scratch that, you're going to feel a LOT of different things as a part of undergoing a *process* labelled *grief*, and that's okay! It's not a fluke. You'll probably be sad, or angry, or homesick, or nostalgic, or even happy it's all over. Maybe you'll feel everything all at one time like it's some horrible emotion stew. It will take some getting used to (and I would know), but it's important not to fight this stuff. The Feelings are not holding you hostage, they're there as a perfectly natural reaction to a fucked up situation. Ignoring them won't help you move forward here.

Express Yourself

Whether you were a talented artist in your last life or you could barely read, self expression is a highly underrated method of offloading difficult emotions. The best part of it is, you're in charge of whatever you create, it's all private, and none of it has to be good. You're allowed to write bad poetry, or draw pictures of loved ones so you don't forget their faces, or keep a memory journal, or make voodoo dolls of your enemies and tear them up. Whatever you do to process the emotions is your business, and there's no shame in it.

Write Letters

Even if you have zero creativity at all, you can still write letters to people back home, and if you didn't get full closure with someone, or perhaps not the kind of closure you

wanted to have, I would urge you to try doing so. While a letter that goes unanswered may feel impractical, it's helpful as an emotional outlet: whatever thoughts or feelings were wandering around loose in your head are now embodied on the page.

You don't even have to keep the letter, either. You can chuck it, or burn it, or make paper cranes out of it. Whatever you do with it is up to you.

Light Candles

After going through a long, long list of grief counselling resources on the internet, none of which appealed to me or fit my particular situation, I landed on this one. Lighting a candle is one of those simple expressions of remembrance that can go a long way in the heat of the moment. There have been nights where all I really do is light a candle and sit around and feel sad, because it's all I can do. But you know what? I feel better once it's done.

I have two candles. One for my brother Vic, and one for a man named Charlie Green.

Keep in mind that, whatever you do to cope with grief, do it at your own pace. It's not a contest or a race to some finish line of normalcy or functionality. It's okay to be screwed up for a while as you readjust. However, always be aware that you are not a graveyard just because you died in your previous timeline. There's more to you than that.

Moving Forwards

You might reach a point, in months or years, where you feel pretty much normal. Then again, you might not. I've met some outsiders who were able to take on completely new identities, leaving their old selves like a cocoon. My advice is not to bank on just waking up one morning to find yourself fully integrated into your current timeline, without a care in the world. You will be homesick, you will be angsty, you will suffer. You will also, at some point, have the time of your life.

Learn the difference between remembering the past and obsessing over it; this can be hard if you're the sentimental type, but worth it. Grieve, light candles, but don't wallow in misery. Let yourself be angry, but don't be cruel—isn't worth it. Remember the people you knew and loved, but don't put them on pedestals your current company must aspire to reach.

Above all, find something that maintains your will to keep waking up in the morning, and hold onto it. As long as you can manage that, you'll survive just fine.