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One of the great things about studying in an international English program is the opportunity it presents to get to know people from all over the world. Here, you can get the inside story on various countries around the world and their special places, people, customs, and viewpoints.

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What would life be without the inspiration that stories and poems provide? This section features the creative talents of some fine storytellers and poets here at EPI.

Personal Messages
You may have a secret admirer and not even know it. In the personal messages throughout the magazine, here's your chance to find out.
Editor's Note

Like a holiday feast, this double issue of Sunrise has been a long time in the making, but as you enjoy the meal, I think you'll agree that it's been worth the wait. Thanks to all the cooks (and farmers) who have made it possible! And if you're going back home for the holidays, please give your friends a taste! Happy holidays!

Dick Holmes

Sunrise Staff

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Around the World

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The Green Desert of Saudi Arabia

Khaled Al-Zailaie
Saudi Arabia

When people hear the name Saudi Arabia, they immediately associate it with the word desert, a word that suggests high temperatures, drought, sand, mirages, and only a few plants and animals. And this is an accurate image of most deserts around the world.

The Saudi desert, though, has been changing in recent years, and now you can see there a vast green land, modern roads, and thousands of agricultural projects producing an abundance of grains, fruits, and vegetables.

Saudi Arabia is a large country with the largest desert in the world, called Al-Rub Al-Kali. The average rainfall there is the lowest in the world. However, the Saudi government has understood the importance of agriculture, not only for its role in food security, but also for its role in the economy, so it has wisely undertaken a massive agricultural development of the desert.

The Saudi plan began with water as the key to agriculture. Programs were implemented to provide the vast supplies of water necessary for desert agriculture. Dams have been built to control seasonal rains. Vast stretches of underground water have been tapped through drilling deep wells. Desalination is utilized to produce fresh water from the sea. Each of these measures has contributed greatly to Saudi agriculture, industry, and other aspects of Saudi society. In addition, the government encourages agricultural investors and farmers by providing them with a variety of facilities: loans without interest, equipment, electricity, etc. All these factors helped transform eight million acres of Saudi desert into fertile farmland by 1993.

Recently, Saudi Arabia has become the number one agricultural country in the Middle East, thanks to its many programs in modern farming technology and its production of basic foods.

Saudi Arabia now exports wheat, dates and other fruits, and vegetables. During the last ten years approximately twelve million tons of wheat were exported. Saudi farmers also grow several other kinds of crops, including corn, millet, banana, oranges, watermelons, tomatoes, and green peppers. Consequently, Saudi food imports have declined by 50 percent.

Saudi Arabia will continue to promote its agricultural programs in the desert because this is the right way to develop its food security and economy.

Dear Christine,

My friend Clara fell in love with a man. She often talked to me about him. One day this guy invited her to his house, and she was happy. For dinner, though, his mother served liver, a dish that Clara hated. Unexpectedly, his oldest brother called from France. The whole family stood up and ran to the telephone. Clara thought, “This is a good opportunity to get rid of the liver.” She saw the window, picked up the liver with her knife, and threw it. She had seen the window but she hadn’t seen the windowpane. The liver landed against the glass instead of going out the window.

David

Juan Carlos,

Nobody has been as happy as you during this term because you have been the only man that has had four women around you, sometimes bothering and sometimes loving you. We will miss you a lot. Don’t forget us, because we will never forget you, or the night that you didn’t want to buy ice cream for us!!!

Alessandra, Anabel, Mariju, and Geraldine

P.S. Be careful with your telephone bill, because if you continue to control our lives, you are going to go broke.
Osaka is a very interesting city with spirited people. I have lived in Osaka since I was born, and I like this city very, very much.

The people of Osaka are a little different from other Japanese people. In the USA, everyone speaks English, but some people who live in the Southern and Eastern areas speak dialects of English that are a little different from standard English. Similarly, Osakaans speak in their own way, a direct way that is a little different from standard Japanese. Some people who speak standard Japanese say, "Osakans' directness sounds strange," while others describe the Osakan way of speaking as "sweet." Almost all Osakans speak fast and loudly. To people who speak standard Japanese, the direct style of Osaka sometimes sounds angry, but the Osakan speakers are usually not actually angry with each other; they are just arguing. On the other hand, sometimes Osakans have words with each other seriously because of their different opinions. I think they tend to grasp at everything seriously and have a lot of pride in themselves. So, if they are talking and find that they have very different opinions about something, they might start to quarrel at once.

Osakans are emotional and get excited easily.

In general, though, Osakans are very kind and friendly. If you are lost on a street in Osaka and you ask a person who lives there about the place you are trying to find, she/he will kindly give you directions or take you to the place. Especially, middle-aged women are very kind. When they take you, they will talk with you and ask you some questions, for instance, "Where are you from?" "How old are you?" "What's your job?" "What does your family do?"

Also, Osakans, especially middle-aged people, like bargains very much. In Osaka, there are streets where you can buy electric products on sale. When Osakans want to buy a TV, CD deck, washing machine, etc., they always go to the streets. And they never fail to ask the salesperson, "Can you make it cheaper?" Or they say, "In another shop, it is $100." Or, "I have only $90." Etc. Then, even though the salesperson says, "No, I can't cut the price," they persistently repeat the same questions over and over again. In the end, after lengthy negotiation, the salesperson gives up and cuts the price. This is a very common way of buying things in the streets of Osaka. If you visit Osaka and go to such a street, you will be able to buy some very cheap things. Try it!!

To CS10/20,

It hasn't been easy to keep you all talking, but I think we've managed to get a few words, some sentences, and even a paragraph or two expressed in an interesting manner. Thanks for being such a dynamic class.

Best wishes to all of you in your future,

Bronia
Traditional Japanese Meals

Yukiko Iijima
Japan

In recent years, Japanese food has gradually become well known around the world. For example, sushi, tempura, and teriyaki are popular among many foreigners. And these dishes are also popular among the Japanese people. But these aren't the only typical Japanese foods. For each of the four seasons in Japan, we have some typical traditional foods connected with traditional events.

On New Year’s Eve, we listen to the boom of a temple bell and recall the many things that we have experienced in the past year. A simple meal of buckwheat noodles, symbolizing long life, is customarily eaten on this holiday.

On New Year’s Day, most Japanese people visit a shrine and pray for their good fortune throughout the year. Every year on this day, we eat osechi, a traditional New Year’s meal with a lot of symbolic meanings. For this meal, we usually cook beans, herring’s spawn, sea tangle, and boiled fish. The bean dish symbolizes good health in the coming year. Herring’s spawn symbolizes abundance of descendants in the future. Sea tangle symbolizes our happy life. Boiled fish symbolizes celebration. All these dishes are decoratively placed into jyuhako, tiers of lacquered boxes with a lid on top. We eat this meal with celebration chopsticks. Also on this day, we also usually eat ozouni, a Japanese vegetable soup with rice cakes in it.

Throughout the four seasons, we have some special events in addition to those we celebrate on New Year’s Eve and New Year’s Day. And along with these events, too, we have special meals to which we attach many of our hopes connected with the events.

How do we Japanese people feel about these meals? Of course, we like good-tasting meals. But I think that in addition to this we put great importance on the visual pleasure of decorated meals. And we try to make these meals beautiful in the traditional form and manner that has been handed down to us since ancient times.

If you have a chance to eat some traditional Japanese meals, please enjoy not only the taste but also the atmosphere of the old days.

To Emir Rojas,

I think that I won’t forget that night when we sang for almost six hours. I would like to do that again. That was such a funny experience. But next time maybe it would be better if we had more than twelve cans. Good luck with your English.
And please don’t forget this: I’ll see you in Margarita.

Your Colombian friend
Dario

Alessandra, George, Moon, and Ugur,

Thank you all for trying so hard! I have so enjoyed our classes. We have laughed a lot together, haven’t we? Best wishes to all four of you. I’m sure you’ll all be successful in whatever you do.

Love, Karen

To RVBW,

For homework, I want you to read every page of this magazine and send me a summary of every story, article, poem, and message by December 31st. Have a wonderful Christmas break, relax, and enjoy your time off—because when you come back, I’ll give you more homework!

Your teacher,
Bronia
Today, France is at the middle of the world’s attention. Its main cities are hosting thirty-two teams that are playing to win the 1998 World Cup of soccer.

Eduardo Galeano defines soccer as a religion, with churches, saints, angels, enemies (sins), and rules. Soccer is not just about kicking a ball around; it means an opportunity to become somebody; it’s a mirror of the various cultures and people of the world. And soccer is no longer just a sport; it has become a great business.

When you are born in a country where people love soccer, the second name that your father gives you is the name of a famous soccer player. Soon, you are out of the house, playing this sport every afternoon. Some of my friends wanted to become professional players, but to do that they would have to train four hours in the morning and three in the afternoon. Eventually, they had to make a decision: to study or to play. Of course, their parents forced them to choose the former.

When I was fifteen years old, I went to the stadium, the soccer temple, for the first time. The stadium is a different place. Rich people are separated from the poor by a single stair. If their team scores a great goal, they fuse themselves into one entity. The fans use caps, flags, shirts, and drums with the colors and signs of their team. Some paint their faces, as if the game were a ritual or a war, in which their weapons are their voices, drums, and hands. The enemies are the fans of the other team. Soccer fans, like soldiers, prefer to be on the battlefield and not in the TV room. Once the teams are on the field, the war begins.

Most of the players come from poor regions of the country, where they chose training rather than studying. Some of them are going to be stars, earn a lot of money, and have a successful career, but most of them are going to be forgotten after they finish their careers. Some are portrayed as idols, but in reality some of those celebrities are only images to sell. The days when the players played only to enjoy the game are over. Some of us remember Garrincha, one of the best players of all time. He was thin and had a twisted foot. He once deliberately kicked the ball out of bounds on a penalty kick, as an act of courtesy, because the defense hadn’t really committed a foul. Today, what kind of coach can accept such behavior? Only one kind—the kind who loves soccer.

Soccer reflects the character of the players’ country. Disciplined like the Germans. Happy like the Brazilians. Modest like the Argentines. One thing stands above all social tendencies: the respect that you need to have for the players, of both teams; for the referee; for the fans; but especially, for your religion—soccer. If you can dribble through the twenty-four people on the field, you are a genius, and the people in the stadium are going to thank you. If you don’t cherish the time you have with the ball—if you just kick it around—you are a sinner.

Unfortunately, the big business aspect of soccer threatens the purity of the game more and more. Many of the people representing the institution that dictates soccer laws and regulations think only about how they
More Than a Game...

can get more money from the game. One way they can do this is to try to ensure that the same teams keep making it to the finals of the championship. Who can forget the game between Argentina and Ecuador in the first round of the America Cup, ten years ago, in which the referee decided to give fifteen minutes of reposition, enough time for Argentina to tie and advance to the second round? Another way is to torture the players. In the U.S. World Cup '94, the games were held at noon and played in temperatures close to 40° C, only because this time coincided with the Triple A schedule of TV in Europe. Under such conditions, the party is over. We can't enjoy a game among twenty-two fried chickens. Of course, the TV rights were the biggest in the history of television and that meant that a lot of money was involved. Another kind of corruption can sometimes be found within the soccer teams themselves. This is the dirtiest kind of corruption of all. The coach of the most powerful soccer team of my country collected money from the players in exchange for playing time. Sadly, many people in the soccer world want to make money selling something that doesn't belong to them, the rights of the fans to see good soccer.

As long as there are people who still cherish, respect, and love the game, though, the magic of soccer will continue. I just hope that the party keeps on going, so that we can forever enjoy practicing our great religion. □

O-Bok

If you have a gift from Heaven when you are born, what a great life! In my country, Korea, there is an ancestral faith about this. My ancestors considered five things as the best of God's blessings—longevity, health, wealth, love of virtue, and a peaceful death. These are known as O-Bok (the five blessings). This is not a matter of religious belief but of faith in mind.

First of all, if God gives you longevity, you're lucky. In all ages and countries, so many people have striven for longevity, and at present we still want it, too. In the case of my ancestors, they didn't want to live too long. They just wanted to live long enough to get the chance to realize their desires.

If you have longevity, you must be healthy. Nowadays, this is the most important element in life, just as it was in the past. My ancestors thought of health as the best blessing in O-Bok. If you are unhealthy, you can't do anything.

The third blessing is wealth. It doesn't mean luxury; it just means not having to worry about the essential elements of life so that you can live well and do what you really want to do.

My ancestors have passed on the love of virtue to us Koreans as a part of our mental heritage. This blessing means to really want to help somebody, with no desire for rewards. Most of us love just our own family and friends. But my ancestors were different. They always helped poor people and shared their property with others. I think most of my ancestors had the love of virtue.

On the closing day of life, people want a peaceful death. To die while you're sleeping with your children at your bedside is the ideal way to depart from this life. You don't feel pain and aren't seized with the fear of death. And your children keep close to you. In addition, if you don't have any lingering affection for this world, what more could you want?

If my ancestors didn't have any or all of these five blessings, they weren't disappointed. As I've said, these blessings are not religious principles. They are nothing but the belief in life. My forefathers tell us, "Don't rely on gods." The most important thing is to do your best. If you give life your best shot, you'll have no regrets no matter how it turns out. Do your best!!!! This is the great heritage from my ancestors. □
Carnaval, the most popular of Brazilian parties, began in the mid-sixteenth century, imported by Portuguese immigrants, who called the party Entron. At that time, Carnaval consisted of throwing all kinds of liquid and powders on unsuspecting passersby.

In the nineteenth century, the elite, wealthy class introduced other means of enjoying Carnaval with masquerades and float parades. It was a Carnaval for the rich. At the same time, though, groups of middle class and poor people, Ze Pereiras, began to form and follow the parades, dancing to the rhythmic, African-influenced sounds of bumbos and other percussion instruments.

Eventually, the wealthy and the Ze Pereiras in Rio de Janeiro somehow—nobody knows how to explain this—completely merged in the parade. Originally, these combined groups were called codoes or blocos and, finally, samba schools. The first samba school, formed in 1928, was called Deixa Falar.

Today, the most well known Carnaval celebration occurs in Rio, where the people organize a grand parade, The Parade of the Samba School of Rio de Janeiro. It is so colorful, lively, wild, contradictory, harmonious, and contagious that it is hard to explain in words! This parade involves a kind of competition among the various samba schools, which are divided into several groups according to their importance. The main group is called the Special Group, and the schools of this group parade on two of the last days preceding the Lenten fasting season—Fat Sunday and Fat Monday (traditionally Christians fast during the forty days before Easter, the holy day commemorating the resurrection of Jesus). Normally, the entire parade takes around fourteen hours per day and ends on Fat Tuesday, the last day before Lent begins.

There are fourteen samba schools in the main group. Each samba school is judged by a commission of experts in various categories, like costumes, music and lyrics, choreography, and so on. The schools are divided into sections, called alas, wearing coordinated costumes. The most famous alas are those of baianas—generally old women dressed in big round skirts, a typical kind of dress from the state of Bahia—and the alas of children, who all have identification tags with their personal information and address and the authorization of their parents and the government authority. At the end of the parade, the champion is chosen. The two worst samba schools from the Special Group drop down into the second-ranked group for the next year’s parade, and the two best samba schools from the second-ranked group move up to the main group. The same kind of exchange takes place in all of the lower-ranked groups.

Each samba school has its own representative colors, which predominate in its parade. Also, each school chooses a theme to present. For example, native folklore, historical facts, hypothetical situations, etc., may be presented. There have been wonderful parades with stranger themes, too, like “The World in 2000,” “Martians Arriving from Space,” etc.

For the chosen theme, each samba school composes music and lyrics addressing it. This kind of music is known around the world as samba. Wearing the most exquisite and original
Carnaval in Rio...

costumes illustrating the theme chosen, the participants of a samba school parade with their floats, singing and dancing to their special samba, played by a band featuring a huge group of drums called the bateria.

Until 1983, the parade took place along the main thoroughfare of Rio. Then in 1984, a new permanent space for the parade was built called the Sambodromo. The Sambodromo is divided into various seating sections, including boxes, chairs with or without tables, and bleacher seats, with each section positioned at different levels from the street. There are concession stands where you can buy food and drinks, or you can bring your own food and drinks from your home. There are bathrooms here and there. In the boxes, the most expensive seats, you can see VIP people like actors, actresses, politicians, soccer players, etc. Some places are reserved for tourists, and there you can hear every language—from Japanese to Serbo-Croatian.

To give you an idea of the magnitude of this spectacle, each samba school in the main group has around five thousand participants marching and six to eight floats of incredible size. In the bateria alone, there are five hundred musicians playing various instruments. Many of the floats feature special effects, like a bird with flapping wings or a dragon exhaling smoke and carrying special guests wearing the most luxurious costumes. Each samba school’s parade lasts up to eighty minutes. Generally, a samba school represents its community, where thousands of people prepare throughout the year in order to parade at Carnaval. Most of the participants marching down the street have to work very hard to pay for costumes they will wear on just this day for only a few hours. Samba schools are big businesses, very well organized. Thousands of tourists from all over the world come to Rio to watch the parade. It is a magnificent show that cannot be compared to any other festival in the world.

It is important to remember that Carnaval in Rio is not just the parade in the Sambodromo, but a four-day party from the Saturday before Lent to Fat Tuesday (Mardi-Gras in French). All four of these days are filled with events. Big balls are held in clubs during the night. Bands (bahn-dush) play on the streets during the day—streets loaded with fun and freedom. And you don’t need to pay to participate in these activities. The bands are followed by hordes of enthusiastic samba dancers dressed in costumes (simpler ones than those worn in samba schools), bathing clothes, official band T-shirts, drag clothes (worn by men who during Carnaval dress in women’s clothes), usual clothes, or whatever. Many bands march at the same time on different streets and randomly meet at intersections. The most famous band in Rio is the Banda de Ipanema. Carnaval is also celebrated in other Brazilian cities, with some differences but with wonderful, fun times, just as in Rio.

Rich and poor people alike participate in this fantastic event. At Carnaval time, people forget about their wealth or poverty and get into a cooperative spirit. It is unfortunate that Carnaval happens just once a year!

Diego,

You are the most responsible student at EPI, although we have tried to corrupt you. We are going to miss you a lot!!! And don’t forget us!!!

Alessandra, Anabel, Mariju, and Geraldine
Fond Memories of Indonesia

Patrizia Silvestrelli
Italy

friends, I went traveling around the island of Java in ramshackle buses. We were so absorbed by the beauty of the places we were encountering that we didn’t think about the danger of our means of transportation.

Surrounding the towns were huge, terraced rice plantations. Here and there clumps of banana and coconut trees cut off our view of this beautiful landscape as we rode through it. With its location in the tropical zone, Indonesia’s environment is incredible. We spent three days in the jungle, where a guide led us through the thick, luxuriant forest.

During my stay in Java, I got to see Bourobodour, the biggest Buddhist temple in the world, located near Bromo Volcano. I visited a lot of wonderful Hindu temples, too. It was so exciting to get to know different religions and different ways of praying and performing religious ceremonies. For example, I attended a funeral that looked like a feast, with a lot of people gathered together dressed in colorful clothes. One of the beliefs of Hinduism is reincarnation, and the people at this funeral seemed to want to take their dead to another life by means of this joyous ceremony.

Another important thing I can remember about this trip was the Indonesian people’s joy of life. Even though many of them live in poverty, they always have serenity in their eyes and a smile on their lips. Only a few can speak English, so it was quite difficult to communicate with them, but people were so kind and hospitable that we could understand each other, anyway.

My trip in Indonesia represents a magical, important moment in my life, because in my travels there I could confirm to myself that there is no right or wrong lifestyle, just different ways of living. Now I am in the United States and I hope to get to know American culture, too. I realize that it is impossible to pick up every single aspect of an unfamiliar culture, but just a little bit is enough for me to acquire some knowledge and to open my mind more and more.
Have you ever wished to travel around the world so that you could get to know such different kinds of places as Hawaiian beaches, the Egyptian desert, the Andes mountains, an African savanna, and a tropical jungle? That's a big dream, isn't it? But even if you don't have a chance to travel around the world, you can experience what such places are like by visiting just one country: Venezuela, my home country. Venezuela isn't a big country, but it has a great variety of attractions to visit.

Venezuela's many kilometers of coastline offer a wide selection of beautiful beaches to enjoy. Morrocoy, located in the state of Coro in the Northwest of Venezuela, has some of the most beautiful beaches in the world. This place is a national park composed of a series of small islands situated very close to one another, where fine sand, blue water, spectacular coral, and special flora and fauna are abundant. Morrocoy is one of Venezuela's main attractions for tourists and divers.

Not far away from Morrocoy, also in the state of Coro, is a stretch of sand that forms a small desert, Los Medanos de Coro. This desert isn't big compared to the Egyptian desert, but it seems huge when all around you are nothing but sand, sky, and sun.

Venezuela also has beautiful mountains. A portion of the Andes mountains is located in the states of Merida, Trujillo, and Tachira in the Southwest. These places are all special, but Merida City, the capital of the state of Merida, has a particular charm. This city is located in a valley, and one of the mountains on the edge of the city is El Pico Bolivar, the highest mountain in Venezuela (5007 meters).

The best way to visit this mountain, especially when it's snowy, is by taking the longest cable car lift in the world, El Teleferico de Merida. Other interesting places to go in the city of Merida are Los Aleros and Venezuela de Antier, which show the history and customs of Venezuela in a fun and original way. Charming people, excellent food, and welcoming weather are also good reasons for visiting Merida.

And then there are La Gran Sabana—Venezuela's savanna—and Canaima—our jungle, located in the Southwest. Canaima features the highest waterfall in the world, El Salto Angel. A poet might use many adjectives and other words to describe the Venezuelan jungle, but I think that her/his words would seem very small in face of that awesome beauty. The abundance and variety of flora and animal life in Canaima and La Gran Sabana make these places natural treasures.

I hope that you can visit my country someday and experience firsthand the variety and beauty of Venezuela.

To all the friends I've made at EPI, it has been great fun knowing you all.

Dana Al-Abdullah
"How old are you?" This question is so sensitive, but we Koreans ask it at the first meeting with a person. Americans think this is rude, but Koreans, considering age to be very important, ask this question to be respectful.

Respect for elders in Korea derives from Confucian ideas. There are many kinds of expressions of respect in Korean society. The most important is our set of three language forms we use in speaking. The first of these forms is used in talking with equals or younger people. The second and third forms are both used in talking with older people, the third form being the more honorific of the two. Which form we use depends on the age of the person we are talking with and the degree of familiarity we have with each other. We want to know a person’s age so that we can make a decision about the appropriate language form to use. When we meet a new person, we normally use the second or third form at first, even though we can guess s/he is younger than we are. As we get to know each other and become more familiar with each other, we can use the first form, even if s/he is older, after s/he gives us permission. If you don’t keep this rule, Koreans think you are rude.

Handshaking also illustrates our attention to age, although this customary way of greeting a new person is not actually a Korean custom but a Western one. Traditionally, Koreans bow as a sign of respect and as a greeting, but nowadays shaking hands is normal behavior in Korea. However, if you want to initiate a handshake in Korea, you have to be careful. If you initiate a handshake with a person who is older than you are or with a woman, you might offend her/him. Handshaking in business relations, in which age and sex don’t matter, is an exception to the rule.

The Korean family consists of two more generations, including children, parents, grandparents, etc. There is a rule about eating together that also reflects our respect for elders: only after the oldest one starts to eat can the others eat. People think a person who doesn’t keep this rule hasn’t been well educated by her/his parents. I am sure this traditional custom seems very strange to foreigners. Some Koreans don’t keep it anymore because the number of family members is decreasing, but many people still follow the rule, including my family.

You can feel the respect for elders wherever you go in Korea. The most common thing you can notice as you travel from one place to another is that the young offer their seats to the old in buses or in the subway. If you don’t keep this rule, it doesn’t result in a fine of not less than $25 nor more than $100 or 30 days in jail. It is just an ethical problem. But you can be a lady or a gentleman if you follow this custom.
The Italian Lifestyle
Patrizia Silvestrelli
Italy

To understand just a little bit about the recent changes in the international environment, it is important to consider the different cultures of the various countries. The traditions and the lifestyle of a country help explain a people's behavior. Used to differentiate one country from the others, they can be a strong point in the process of nations' development. Three main characteristics of the Italian lifestyle are especially important in distinguishing Italy's unique culture: the attitude towards work, the attention to fashion, and the love of good cooking.

Concerning the value of work, it is important to emphasize that the stereotype of Italians' not being good workers is not true. We just have a different concept of time. We usually say, "Take it easy!" and "Time doesn't fly, it just walks!" This means that we are not superficial people, that we consider time as a space in which it is possible to organize our ideas and actions freely.

In comparison with the peoples of some other countries, I can see that Italians have more fantasy, and our optimism and positive thinking help us tackle every problem without too much stress. If something doesn't go as we have scheduled it, we can find innovative alternative ways to operate. One of these ways is to resort to teamwork. This behavior shows the importance we give to the "group." In Italy, the value of the group is very strong and widely acknowledged. The Italian society believes in the relationships and interactions among people, which are considered an instrument of knowledge.

It is quite difficult to find someone who doesn't know Italian fashion. In Italy, the term fashion can be used not only for clothes, but also for furniture, travel, and all the aspects of our everyday life. Fashion permeates the Italian way of life.

Italy has clothes styles that are known in every part of the world, and the Italian fashion show is one of the most important meetings in the fashion world, as it is in Paris, London, and New York. There are many Italian firms that produce furniture and other home accessories that express special refinement through their beautiful design. Even the Italian way of traveling is connected to fashion. We usually look for refined places to spend our holidays. Sometimes, we go to an "in-fashion" location. In this way, traveling becomes a "fashionable moment of life." In addition to aestheticism, fashion means good business and therefore wealth for the national economy.

Italian cuisine: who doesn't know pizza, pasta, Italian-style fish, etc.? The ability to cook well is certainly a strong point for the image of my country. This ability derives from a very long tradition according to which the recipes and love of cooking have been handed down from mother to daughter. It is impossible to generalize Italian cuisine because the ways of cooking vary in relation to the different regions, which take care to maintain their own traditions. So, Italy can be defined as "the country of good eating." This is certainly one of Italy's main competitive advantages in the tourism business.

Of course, there are many other aspects of the Italian lifestyle that contribute to Italy's distinctive culture, but I think it is better to get to know them firsthand. Visit Italy and experience the richness of the Italian lifestyle for yourself!
When people ask me where I come from and I reply that I’m from Argentina, many of them say, “Oh, tango!”

Tango was born at the beginning of the century and it quickly became our national music. Although many provinces in my country have their own special folk music, the success of the tango at that time was so great that it has been considered our national music ever since. In the past, tango was listened to mainly by middle-aged people, but now it is also very popular among the younger generation, who want to know the history of this musical genre.

The lyrics of tango express the feelings and emotions of the common people. You feel that your own life is described in this music, in a particular melancholic and pessimistic way. Despite the negative aspect of its lyrics, people love tango because they know that the story narrated is true, and that maybe someday they might be living the same situation. Tango is performed by an orchestra, the most remarkable and important instrument of which is the bandoneon, which emphasizes the tango’s melancholic mood.

Tango dancing is picturesque and passionate, performed by a couple wearing typical clothes for the dance: a black suit, white handkerchief around the neck, and black hat for the man and a long black dress with a long slit and a red handkerchief for the woman.

To dance the tango is not very easy because it involves a great variety of movements, especially of the legs. The man’s legs are constantly inter-crossing with the woman’s, and the movements required to manage this make the dance a thing of beauty to watch.

The dance begins with the man gazing at the woman, and then if he decides to invite her to dance, he takes off his hat and nods his head at her. This nod means he wants to have a dance with her. If the woman wants to dance with him, too, she stands up and walks toward him. He puts his hat back on, takes her by the waist, and the dance begins. As they dance, they never talk with each other; they communicate only through their eyes.

Many tango performers take their shows abroad. In Japan, tango is so popular—even though most Japanese can’t understand the lyrics—that a number of dance institutes offer tango lessons with Argentine teachers.

The most famous tango singer was Carlos Gardel, who, at the peak of his career, died tragically in an airplane crash fifty years ago. No other tango singer has been so loved and admired as he was. Nowadays, there is a famous saying that I think best describes the admiration tango lovers feel for him: “Carlos Gardel: he sings better every day.”

I hope that some or all of my classmates can hear this music someday, and maybe, at that moment, they will remember the words and the feelings that I wanted to express in these lines.

To Tatiana Valbuena,

Oh, my little friend! I hope that you can improve your English skills, but don’t be worried about it. I swear to you that you are doing well. Que viva Brazil, Venezuela, y Antioquia (Colombia)!!!!

Your friend Dario

Regarding the best roommates in Columbia: Maria, Alessandra, Anabel, and Elisa-on-weekends,

I live in a crazy apartment. My roommates are always ill or on a diet. They go out every night, and during the day they sleep. I never see them. Perhaps for these reasons I love my roommates!

La francesita
Mazatlan, situated in the state of Sinaloa, is one of the most beautiful places in Mexico. There you can enjoy a great variety of things and activities.

If you go to Mazatlan between January and February, you can experience Mazatlan’s famous Carnaval festival, the most important event of the year in the city. At this celebration, you can watch a very exciting laser beam war—an event held on the high seas of Mazatlan—from the balcony of a restaurant, and while you are watching you can enjoy a great Mexican dinner. You can also see a wonderful parade of highly decorated floats during Carnaval. This event is held on the road along the coast. And then you can go to the Stadium to participate in choosing the Queen of the festival, who will become the most important young woman in Mazatlan during the year, since she will be responsible for a lot of activities that will help improve the living conditions in the state.

If you cannot go to Mazatlan during Carnaval, you will enjoy your visit anyway, because there are a lot of special places there that you can experience, such as the Aquarium, which has many strange marine species and also a big amusement park where you can see bird and seal shows.

There is a great variety of restaurants in Mazatlan that offer all kinds of special foods. The most famous restaurant is Cuchupetas, which features the freshest seafood. Its specialty is aguachile and zarandeado fish. Aguachile is a plate of the biggest shrimps stewed in lemon sauce and spiced with a lot of chili pepper. Zarandeado fish is the most typical plate, consisting of whatever kind of fish you want, fried and stewed in a secret sauce.

If you are interested in sports, you can enjoy golf, skiing, jogging, bungee jumping, and fishing in Mazatlan. The latter is the most important sport in the area. Every year a marlin competition is held. (A marlin is a huge fish that lives along the coast of Mazatlan.)

The winner of this competition is the person that catches the biggest and heaviest marlin.

This is just a brief introduction to Mazatlan. There is so much to enjoy there that you will never get bored, and the people there are very warm and hospitable.

Hi to my friends at EPI!!!
I’ve tried to translate for you this Brazilian poem that I like so much. I like this poem because it says how important friends are in our life. Since I arrived here, I’ve often heard the following words: I’m homesick, I miss my parents, I’m sad, I’m happy, I feel like crying, I feel like laughing, I want to go back . . . But I think that throughout this time everybody has learned a lot—and not only English. We’re all learned about life through our various experiences. I want to offer this poem to everybody at EPI—to the teachers, the staff, and the students. But I need to offer it especially to my dear sister-roommates: ANABEL, MARIJU, AND GERALDINE!!! Thank you for making me a better person here. I’ll never forget you!!! Good luck!!! I hope all your dreams come true!!!

Alessandra, from Brazil
:0:0:0:0:0:0
P.S. Don’t forget my laughter!!!

COUNT THE GARDEN

Count the garden through the open flowers, but never through the falling leaves.
Count your day through the golden hours, never through imperfect hours.

Through the stars, count the night. And life, count through the smiles, not through the trials.
Don’t count your age through your years, but through your friends!!
I grew up in downtown Tokyo, a huge city with a lot of exciting attractions, and I think it is one of the most interesting places in the world.

The Japanese government is located in Tokyo, and the Japanese emperor and empress live in an Edo-era castle in Tokyo. Also, most of the famous Japanese companies and highest-level universities are in Tokyo, and as a result young people who want to study in prestigious universities and get high-paying jobs come to the city from all over the country. I think this fact explains the youthful spirit that has blossomed so quickly and individually in Tokyo, especially in art. There are many kinds of art to enjoy in Tokyo, such as painting, sculpture, cinema, and music.

In the city’s numerous museums, you can see many interesting works by the younger generation of Japanese artists as well as older Japanese works and famous pictures from other countries. Tokyo’s cinema is also interesting. Three Japanese directors have received awards in France and Venice for their works. There are a number of important—though not really famous—young directors working in Tokyo now. And besides Japanese movies, you can see Hollywood, French, and Chinese movies whenever you want.

The music scene in Tokyo is very active, too. Techno, a new kind of electronic music, is popular in night clubs now. One of the Japanese techno musicians is really famous in Europe.

I hope that Tokyo continues to give birth to a lot of great artists and to attract a lot of people from other countries. If a number of different countries' cultures are mixed in Tokyo, a new, hybrid culture will arise from the mixture. As a result, English will become more and more necessary for most Japanese. Personally, I want to be a graphic designer, and I am studying English because I want to learn as many different cultures as I can. If the international population in Tokyo increases to around thirty percent, Tokyo will become an even more interesting, exciting city.

To all EPI teachers, staff and students,

I have really enjoyed my time at EPI. To be honest, the day after I got to Columbia, I wanted to go back home. I thought that living in Columbia was going to be hard, but I managed to do all right, thanks to everyone here. I'll miss you all, and I'll never in my life forget this experience.

Sugar from Turkey
(Ugur Isik)

To all who want to succeed.

When it wants to build a new epoch, humanity has to leave the past completely behind. It has to act according to the principle that all that has existed so far in history equals nothing. It's in acting in this way that it will find the force and the elation to launch itself into novel creations. If, on the other hand, it insists on remaining attached to what already exists, humanity will paralyze the source of its energy. Humanity has to be just, and justice requires an alternating evolution of action and criticism. From time to time, humanity has to undergo a catharsis, cleanse the infant with clear water.

Soufyane
Around Here

Kadiatou Diallo  Guinea
Jeong-Hye Min  Korea
Luz Amparo Sanchez  Colombia
Mio Ito  Japan
Dario Andres Victoria M.  Colombia
Monica Mendez  Costa Rica
Elisa Duran  Spain
Fabiana Tavares  Brazil
Sang-Ui Kang  Korea
Anabel Romero  Argentina

Salem Al-Mansouri  UAE
Sun-Ha Shin  Korea
Juliana Tavares  Brazil
Patrizia Silvestrelli  Italy
Hwan-ah Lee  Korea
Ryuji Misuda  Japan
Masako Horikawa  Japan
Claudia Bobe  Germany
Kana Sumiya  Japan
Geraldine Malauzat  France
I'm learning English in the USA. I'm learning how to listen, speak, to read, and to write in English. I'm using new words, in their various forms and functions. I find myself being accepted by my fellow classmates as well as by the many other people that I've been fortunate to meet. I've met many people since coming to these United States of America, and I've become very close to a lot of them. I'm also learning the culture of America and other countries around the world, and I find the people here to be very friendly and most helpful.

At last, I'm learning how to carry on a conversation in English. I still don't know the meaning of some words, but from my homework, some books, and the people I talk with, I'm getting some explanations about those words that I don't understand. English is very important to me. Until I began to know how to speak and write English fluently, I wasn't able to feel successful in my studies here in the United States, but now I can enjoy the fruits of my efforts. Here at EPI, I'm learning so many things from the other students; from all those people who so readily say hi to me in such a friendly way on the streets; from HIS, who offers us a free lunch twice a week; and from those who teach us so lovingly and will remain in our memory forever.

And with my fellow students at EPI, I'm not just learning English; I'm also learning how to share with people of different cultures. Although we come from different places, we have a lot of things in common. We have the chance here to build close cross-cultural friendships, and we have to cultivate these friendships each day. Who knows?—maybe someday we will be able to be together again.

Throughout my time at EPI, I've had more happy than sad moments, more positive than negative experiences, and more gain than pain—thanks to you, EPI teachers. 

To my dear students in GW60a, RVUL, and TOEFL class,
I've really enjoyed getting to know you and working with you. May the future be bright for each of you!
Dick
Some of Us

A complete Who’s Who at EPI would require pages and pages of information about everyone in the program, but here at least, thanks to several *Sunrise* reporters, is a little information about some of us.—the editors

Akiko Nagayama
When I asked Akiko Nagayama, from Japan, what she would like to change at EPI, she said that she would like for EPI to have a “resting room” where students could take a nap. Hmm, an excellent idea! She also told me how she came to believe in ghosts. A few years ago, when she was sleeping, she felt her soul flying out of her body. Her soul flew into the air for about three minutes and then came back into her body. She said she had seen herself lying on the bed. How scary!
—Jeong-Hye Min, Korea

Kazuki Kasahara
Kazuki Kasahara is from Japan and is a well-known EPI student. If he were an animal, he would be a lion because the lion is the strongest animal. He wants to be strong. If he won a million dollars, he wouldn’t want all the money. He would make a lot of donations because money is dangerous and can change the personality. He wonders about U.S. law. Why can’t people under twenty-one years of age drink? And how do the police know if an ID is fake? If anyone knows the answers to these questions, please tell him.
—Mio Ito, Japan

Sandra Ramirez
If Sandra Ramirez, from Colombia, were an animal, she would be a rabbit because this animal is very quiet and similar to her personality. The most interesting teacher at EPI for her is Mr. Rice because he is an intelligent and formal person with a lot of experience. If she could be born again, in a country other than Colombia, she would like to be born in the USA because here there are more opportunities for work and study and a more comfortable, less dangerous life. If she won a million dollars, she would travel throughout the world and give money to poor people.
—Luz Amparo Sanchez, Colombia

Emir Rojas
Emir Rojas, from Venezuela, chose EPI because he was searching for a university that could offer him a fast, formal method of learning English, and EPI was said to have the fastest one in the USA. It was expensive, but of the highest quality. Oh, poor Emir! After many weeks at EPI, he says, he still speaks almost no English! Though he’s improving, it’s very difficult for him to have a conversation with an American. Maybe that’s the reason he hasn’t fallen in love here yet. But he’s going to continue to improve his skills in English and in looking for love.
—Dario Andres Victoria M., Colombia
Some of Us . . .

Yoshi Shinozuka
Our “almost Latin” friend, Yoshi Shinozuka, from Japan, says that if he could be born again he would like to be born in Venezuela. He thinks that Venezuelans are freer and more developed personally than the Japanese are. If he won a million dollars, he would spend most of it traveling and donate the rest of it. He would like to be a tiger because then he could eat all the time.
—Monica Mendez, Costa Rica

Richard Lugo
You don’t know who Richard Lugo is? He’s the well-known EPI student who is always happy and maybe a little crazy. He loves reading books, so you can talk to him about lots of different things. He’s from Nicaragua and a good Latin American guy who thinks that all the women at EPI are beautiful! He says that the biggest difference between his culture and American culture is language.
—Elisa Duran, Spain

Huseyin Kont
Huseyin Kont, a Turkish guy, broke his nose when he was playing with his friends in high school. He was snow skiing with his normal shoes on when he fell and broke it. He didn’t have to go to the hospital because his nose looked normal. He just went to the school doctor to get it fixed. However, now he wants to have surgery on it because he thinks that it wasn’t fixed well.
—Fabiana Tavares, Brazil

Naoko Furumi
Naoko Furumi is a cute young Japanese woman who likes American parties very much. I think she is the exception! She wonders why the music is so loud, though. She says that it’s so loud that she can’t even practice her English! Columbia’s noisy trains, however, don’t bother her. She must be a deep sleeper! Naoko’s number one desire is to go to Hollywood to meet Leonardo DiCaprio.
—Elisa Duran, Spain

Alessandra Santos
Alessandra Santos likes to cook, especially the kind of food she loves to eat in her home country, Brazil. But this is impossible here in Columbia! In Brazil she usually uses natural products to prepare her food, but she can’t find these products here in Columbia. So, she always ends up eating the same thing: rice, macaroni, and tuna. She’s sure of one thing, however. When she returns to Brazil, she’s not going to eat any rice, macaroni, or tuna for a very long time!
—Anabel Romero, Argentina

Myong-Eui Song
I met Myong-Eui in September. She is my classmate and neighbor, so I have gotten to know her easily. When I heard that she has a son who is a high school student, I couldn’t believe it! But it’s true. I think highly of her because she made a very difficult decision to come here from Korea, and now she’s doing her best. I wish her excellence and success in her work.
—Sang-Ui Kang

Diego Carvajal
Diego Carvajal is from Colombia. His most interesting teacher is Kathy because she is smart and teaches very well. If he wins a million dollars, he will help people. He has a very kind personality! He believes in ghosts, having once had an experience of them. When he was a university student in his country, he usually studied in the library. One day he saw his aunt and cousin there. But this was strange since they lived very far away. Later he found out that at the moment he had seen them in the library they had died in an accident. He thinks maybe they wanted to say good-bye to him.
—Mio Ito, Japan

Dear CS40a,
I have been so happy to know you and teach you! English takes time, but I see real improvement in you! Thank you for a good quarter together. I hope I will see all of you again.
Mr. Rice
To Christine Discio,
Thank you for your help and
your support because I always
dreamed about teaching grammar in
the future. You are such a respect-
able teacher, and I hope the baby that
you are carrying inside you now is
listening to you all the time (^_^). I
was delinquent, but you always
reminded me to study hard. I hope
that you succeed in every step.
Anonymous

To GW50b and CS 40,
You have all been wonderful this
semester! You have improved your
English, worked hard, become more
fluent, and also had lots of fun while
you were at it. The BABY and I
would like to thank you for all your
love and good wishes! He/She
especially appreciated all the crazi-
ness and wild times we had in our
class. Good luck to all, and I (we)
hope to see you again.
Christine Discio

To Emir Rojas,
Hello, Mr. Camburr! I hope that
you continue the next term with new
jokes. I’m sure that you’ll enjoy your
short vacation in Venezuela while
I’m in Ecuador. I would like you to
bring me some “cambures” (ba-
nanas).
El loco Javier

To everybody,
Attention! Doctor White decided
to change his clothes to pink next
term.
From ?

Dad,
You know what? You are
sooooooooo good and stuff like that. A
special kiss for you and thanks for
everything.
The Green Toothbrush

To my neighbors Francisco, Diego,
and Juan Carlos,
You live in the apartment across
from mine, but sometimes I wonder if
you live in my apartment. You are
like my three new brothers. Don’t
forget your French sister when you
leave.
La Francesita et non la
francesa!!!

Dick,
Thank you for all the time,
energy, and feeling you put into your
teaching and Sunrise. You are a
dedicated person.
From someone who knows
how hard you work

Big Wolf,
Stop attaching yourself to me.
You think that you’re strong because
you’re a big wolf, but don’t forget
that I’m a wolf, too. Even though I’m
a little wolf, I’m still a wolf.
Little Wolf

Jose Luis,
What are you going to do? Will
you leave your girlfriend here, or will
you take her with you to Peru? Think
about that, because she might be the
woman of your life.
A guy from Brazil

Dr. Dhabia,
I will miss you when you go
back to your country. I will never
forget the time we ate together and
talked about stuff. I’m going to visit
you in your country during my
vacation. Congratulations on your
Ph.D.!!
Aseer Al-Kaabi

29,
I have enjoyed your company a
lot in our great apartment, especially
when you hit your head against the
wall, when you were twisting around
on your bed, and when you were
throwing all your books to the floor
getting ready to sleep.
55
Stories & Poems

Dana Fida Mohamed
Y Trou Aleo
Myong-Eui Song
Claudia Bobe
Johnson Ishengoma
Azra Alimajstorovic
Diana Ruiz
Mio Ito
Papon Silphiphat
Maria Eugenia Villalba

Oman
Vietnam
Korea
Germany
Tanzania
Bosnia
Colombia
Japan
Thailand
Argentine

Dario Andres Victoria M.
Anabel Romero
Jose Puche
O-Jin Kwon
Richard Norwood
Dick Holmes
Maria de Fatima Matos Pereira
Yurema Isturiz
Daniel Cavalcanti

Colombia
Argentina
Colombia
Korea
USA
USA
Brazil
Venezuela
Brazil

35
One day not long ago, the local newspapers in my country, Oman, wrote about an amazing thing that had happened. I didn’t believe it, and I still can’t imagine how something like that could ever happen.

Everyone talked about it a lot, and the news spread, even to our neighboring country, the UAE.

When I first heard the story, I just got a little summary of it, but because I found it exciting and amazing I called a friend of mine and asked her to tell me the whole story in detail. My friend had gotten the story directly from the old man whose wife had been involved in it.

So, this is the story...

In a very old traditional village where everyone believes in magic, there is a wealthy family who lives in a big house, compared to the others around, furnished with lots of modern things. The most important thing in this story is the satellite dish installed at the top of their house.

The night the amazing thing supposedly happened, it was very windy, stormy, and dusty, and despite the wind the air was burning and no one could open her/his eyes, not even the witch.

Did you say witch??!
Yes, the witch that lives on the south side of the village and wanted to visit a friend on the north side that night.

She had never flown in such weather, but as a witch she didn’t expect anything to happen to her because even though she couldn’t see well she knew her way very well, thanks to her magic flying broom, and she also knew that there wasn’t anything in the way that could interrupt her flying.

But did she forget about the big modern house that had been built in the village recently? Did she forget about the satellite attached to the top of the house?

Anyway, she set out on her journey, flying happily and as quickly as she could to avoid the dust, when suddenly she was knocked unconscious. In an instant, she vanished from the sky and landed on the roof of the big new house.

The next morning, when the weather had cleared, the old man’s wife remembered the laundry that she had laid out on the roof to dry two days before, and she went out to get it.

“Oh, my God, what is this?!” she shouted as loudly as she could.

Her son came running to see what was happening, but the witch had already disappeared!!

The police, the neighbors, and reporters from all over the village rushed to the house when they heard about the story. And then the story became well known throughout the whole country and started spreading all over the region.

So, that’s my story of the reckless witch of Oman. I find it funny and think of it as a legend, but a lot of people believe it’s a true story!!
It was a wonderful day for those who wanted to travel around the world on a dreamy train with plenty of humor, self-confidence, and cleverness.

In the warm, atmospheric morning, a train was about to begin its long course from Moscow to Germany through Boleros and Poland. Peacefully sitting in their seats and cheerfully getting to know each other, the passengers were expectantly dreaming of their destination.

And then the train was on its way. Rolling easily along the glittering tracks, it lulled some of the passengers into a sleepy feeling, while others chatted, laughing, and still others discussed serious matters. On both sides of the railway, the passengers looking through the windows saw fantastic wheat fields and green trees; here and there in the distance were houses scattered across the landscape. No wonder Russians love their plains, having such attractive scenery surrounding them.

One of the impressive tourist attractions in the USSR was Boleros, where the train stopped for hours after the long journey from Moscow. This stop was the beginning of all beginnings for a few passengers in the seventh car of the train, where among the Russian, Polish, and Chinese passengers were three Israelis and two Vietnamese.

"Hey, guys, let's have a bottle of Russian vodka," one of the Israelis said with a fearful face, keeping an eye on the conductor.

Mr. Gorbachev, the president of the USSR, had signed a decree banning the production and drinking of alcohol. In reality, however, black markets still existed with their diverse, uncontrollable entrepreneurs.

"Why not, of course, got it! Here we go!" he replied. One of the Vietnamese guys got out a bottle too. As they drank, side by side, the Vietnamese and Israelis introduced themselves to each other. They all drank so much that they couldn't control themselves.

As a result of overdrinking, drinkers sometimes spill the truth about themselves, sing to themselves, and become very blunt. One of the Israelis became quite talkative and conceited.

"Do you know what we are, sir?" he mumbled, staring at the Vietnamese. "We are cleverer and cleverer. Even in this train, we are never as shy as Russians. I bought only one ticket for three persons. Clever, huh? And the rest is for alcohol only. Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yes, sir, that was clever," one of the Vietnamese replied in a worried voice.

The Israelis sang the praises of their nation, extolling their people to the skies under the influence of alcohol.

The two Vietnamese were weak, thin, and feeble. They were getting very nervous listening to these boring songs. But knowing that two of the Israelis were there without a ticket, they kept the secret.

"Hey, boy," one of the Vietnamese said to the other. "I hope this gamble of ours works, but just keep calm until I handle the situation, okay?"

"Okay," his friend replied.

The conductor was coming to check the passengers' tickets. The two Vietnamese dashed into the rest room. A couple of minutes later, the conductor knocked on the door.

"Is there anyone in there?" he asked.
Cleverness . . .

“Yes, sir,” one of the Vietnamese replied.

“Show me your ticket!”

“Here you are!” the same Vietnamese replied, slipping his ticket under the door. The conductor pushed it back to him and continued on his way. When his back was turned to the rest room, the two Vietnamese emerged, victorious in their scheme.

The Israelis had curiously observed what the two Vietnamese had done. One of them whispered, “Look, ah, a smart invention there!”

Now the conductor was making his way toward the Israelis. Seeing him coming, all three Israelis, imitating the Vietnamese' trick, hurried off to the rest room. But this time one of the Vietnamese knocked on the door before the conductor came up to it. The Israelis shoved their ticket under the door, but with no one there to collect it it flew away. Then the conductor came up to the door and knocked.

“Who's there? Show your ticket!” There was no answer, only a nervous mood in the air. Fearfulness filled the whole rest room.

Nobody would have known that two of the Israelis were stowaways if the conductor hadn’t knocked on the door.

The situation had changed, and now cleverness belonged to the two Vietnamese.

In the end, the three Israelis, with red, disappointed faces, were led away by two policemen.

“Good-bye, our clever friends,” the Vietnamese said with a sarcastic smile. ☞

Selfishness

Myong-Eui Song
Korea

We were four couples touring Southeast Asia. Arriving in Saipan, we checked into the Hidach hotel. That night, a heavy rain and an earthquake hit the island.

All of a sudden, the TV fell off its shelf, the chandelier hanging from the ceiling crashed to the floor, and we were in complete darkness. I was in the bathroom when the shaking began and my husband was in the bedroom. I was so scared. I had never experienced an earthquake before.

Groping through the dark, I made my way out of the bathroom to the front door of our room. I stepped out and saw a lot of people rushing down the stairs, trying to get out of the hotel as fast as they could. Then when I tried to go back into the room to get my husband and escape with him, I found that the door was locked.

I couldn’t move even a step because my husband was inside. I thought that the ceiling might have collapsed and hit him. Oh, no! I was crying and trembling like the earthquake itself. And I thought of my children in Seoul, too. I really didn’t want to die here!

And then I heard my husband yelling at me, “Calm down! I'll open the door!”

When I got back into the room, I found that my husband had made a rope of the curtain.

We were about to get out of the building through the window instead of the stairs, he assured me.

Fortunately, our room was only on the third floor and we managed to reach the awning safely with our makeshift rope. And then from there, some people helped us down to the ground.

The next morning, one of the couples in our party started arguing with each other. The argument ended with their leaving our tour group and going back to Seoul separately. Selfishness was the reason for their fight. During the earthquake, they had fled the building separately, not caring about each other. In an emergency, as we all know, people reveal their reality. After the earthquake, when they encountered each other in the hotel lobby, they were both disappointed in their worse half. Ultimately, they ended up in divorce.

Now, remembering that night, I am trembling again for another reason. What if I had run away alone? My husband might never have trusted me again. ☞
The most important class I have ever taken was in the first year of my study of architecture. It was a big class with about 250 students in it, and the subject was the history of architecture. I suppose that most of the students, including me, expected a normal, maybe somewhat boring class, with the professor lecturing in the front and the students quietly listening in the audience. But after the first lecture I knew this would be not a normal class.

The professor was quite young, about 35 years old, and he didn’t wear a suit. As he entered the classroom for the first time, nobody noticed him, because he looked like a crazy student, with his jeans, T-shirt, and wild blond hair. Later, we discovered the reason for this funny hairstyle. While speaking and explaining things, he used his hands a lot, and from time to time he had to pass his hands through his hair or to put a hand on his head. His odd body language often made us laugh but also feel sympathy for this strange guy.

He had come from Finland and he would stay at our university for two years. Besides teaching at our university, he also taught in Chicago. Once a week he had to go there. I couldn’t understand how he could live with permanent jet-lag.

His entire behavior was strange. In class, he was like an actor—very animated and charismatic. Outside class, he seemed very shy and introverted, often walking across the campus with his head in a book. Because of walking and reading at the same time, he sometimes lost the right direction. Then he would suddenly stop, look around, turn back, and walk again absorbed in his reading.

He was not with a high feeling. He never used a script, although he couldn’t speak German perfectly. His way of teaching and explaining the history of architecture wasn’t straight and easy. Never did he tell us only facts and names. It was often not easy to follow him, but he kept our minds open by joking, asking students questions, and jumping around. He motivated us to read more and to find our own point of view about architecture. In his opinion, nothing is set and there are always a lot of possibilities in explaining and viewing history. He gave us the various definitions and opinions of several historians and architects. By explaining the relations among art, philosophy, linguistics, society, and architecture, he demonstrated that architecture isn’t an isolated field. You always have to see the whole thing and then find your own point of view.

To Dr. Bernadette de Oliveira,
I don’t know what I can say to you. There is not enough ink and paper on the earth for me to write everything that I want to say, so I will just say thank you for all that you have done for me and I will never forget you.

Ahlam Al-Subhi

To Sang-Chan Kim,
Hi, guy. I’m sorry I call you “Mr. King,” but I think you enjoy this name. You’ve brought laughter to our CS class. Everyone appreciates you. Do you know that?

Jun Xiang
The Cry of an African Forest
Johnson Ishengoma
Tanzania

Sustaining human life and the ecosystem
has been my job since time immemorial.
I provide human beings with the necessities of life,
with oxygen, water, firewood, shelter, and food.
But what do human beings do in return
for my generosity and kindness?
They burn me mercilessly,
and all my children, grandchildren, and relatives.
Or they chop us down
in the most cruel and savage manner.
They rape and mutilate us
because of their insatiable lust for money.
Money, money, money!
What money maniacs human beings are!
Their wanton destruction greatly affects my posterity,
but apparently they don’t care.
What if I stopped
providing them with oxygen and water?
They would all perish, that’s what.
Why then don’t they respect and treasure me?
It Was Not a Dream

I am not dead! I am not dead!!
I repeat this sentence again and again, louder and louder, but without any results. Why don’t they listen to me?
I look at them.
Why is my mother crying? Don’t they see that there is no place for panic? My face is so calm. Don’t they see a smile on my lips? Why is my father crying? Do you hear me? There is no reason for panic. I feel so nice, such softness.

It’s strange: I can see them and myself, I am out of my body, I am just feeling mind. I try to understand why they don’t want to hear me. Why don’t they allow me to sink into that softness all around me? But I have to return

because they don’t want to listen to me. I must tell them that I am still alive, still with them.

Reluctantly, I open my eyes. My parents, my grandmother, all my family are standing around my bed.

“I’m thirsty,” I say to my mother. My grandmother offers me a spoon of sour milk. I want to take it, but I can’t. My hands are fettered.

I feel cold. “Why did you wrap me up in this wet sheet?” I ask my father.

“It will be best if you all leave the room. Grandmother and I will dress her and tidy the bed.” My mother’s voice sounds somewhat strange.

A few minutes later, the operation of tidying the bed, which has been repeated every three or four hours the last seven days, starts again. Although I am standing it more easily than before, I miss the floating, which is so peaceful.

Everything is so well known. Every year since I was eight years old, every year, I’ve fallen ill during the summer holidays in Bijeljina, a small town in the Northeast of Bosnia. And every year, the same: after some perfect carefree days full of fun, I’ve woken up with a high temperature and a terrible headache. The doctors helplessly raise their hands because although the results of all their examinations turn out good, I feel worse and worse day after day.

I can’t eat anything. My temperature goes higher and higher. My mother tries to help me with natural remedies, but they have no more effect than the doctors’ drugs. Then comes the urgent transport to the best hospital in the country. And again the same picture: the doctors are helpless, my parents are desperate, and I am tired, very tired and a little frightened. There is no difference between days and nights. During my slumber, I listen anxiously to the whispering of my mother and father. Every year, the same. In the end, I always suddenly, inexplicably recover. It’s strange that my family get so panicked because they all know these stages of my condition by heart.

“Can you take a little soup?” It’s the voice of my mother returning to me this night.

“You’ve been unconscious since this morning. The doctor is here. He said that it would be dangerous to move you then.” She is assisting the doctor, who is measuring my blood pressure.

“The ambulance will be here very soon,” the doctor says. “It’s necessary to take her to the hospital and perform some examinations. As you know, we couldn’t hear her heart beat for almost two minutes.”

“You really frightened us,” the doctor says to me. He still seems worried.

“But why? Why didn’t you want to listen to me? And where is Amra? She was sitting beside my pillow caressing my hair. She ran out. She didn’t believe me when I told her that I wasn’t dead. And why didn’t you believe me, mother? I told you that there was no reason for panic. But you didn’t care for my words. You prayed. It’s the first time in my life I’ve seen you pray.”

Today, twenty-five years later, I still preserve that feeling of softness. I have never again seen my mother pray, and I still think that there was no place for panic.
It was St. Martin’s Holiday, a special day honoring the saint of miracles. The day before, most of the townspeople had gotten together to decorate the town square with globes and colored paper and to prepare a big banquet. On the big day, they woke up early, full of emotional devotion, to go to Mass. As Father Montes began his sermon, everyone paid special attention because he could express feelings that other people could not.

Also on that day, those who were twenty-one years old or over had to vote to elect the mayor of the town. In front of the church, in the town square, was the place for voting. The first to vote, after Mass, was Dr. García, the official candidate of the Conservative Party. Anyone could win this election, though for years the Conservative Party had been in control of the governmental administration and resources.

But this time something unexpected was happening. A lot of people were voting for Father Montes, the town’s priest. García was enraged. He was a respectable and very self-confident doctor. No one could forget that the landlord of the banana plantation had given the order to vote for him. Otherwise, the townspeople would lose their jobs. And without plantation work, their families would go hungry. There were no other job possibilities.

The night before, Father Montes had dreamed of becoming a great leader, of alleviating a lot of the town’s social problems. In his dream, St. Martin appeared and told him about a place where he would find a money-printing machine. That morning, Father Montes woke up very early and walked around thinking about his dream. Shall I try to find the machine, he asked himself, and will it really work? He knew the place St. Martin had shown him in the dream, so he decided to go there and have a look. And BINGO, there was the machine!!! He was very glad because now he could eliminate the town’s poverty.

Father Montes’ sermon during Mass that morning was wonderful. He explained some new rules about the church’s giving money to the people. Things had changed. Now, the church did not need the people’s charity. In fact, it had become a big bank. So, each person could make a sincere, repentent confession, and then Father Montes would give each of them a certain amount of money.

Of course, at the end of Mass, the people were very happy. Because of their desire to see such social programs implemented, they wanted the priest to be mayor. So, when they voted, they cast their ballot for Father Montes. St. Martin’s Holiday turned out to be a big party rejecting the Conservative Party.

Since that day, the townspeople have no longer been following the orders of the landlord. However, without a job and going to confess every day, they have begun to realize that money is not enough for happiness. The overworked Father Montes is pleased, of course, to see this realization dawning among his parishioners, but on the other hand it has made his already challenging job even more difficult since he is committed to the people’s right to pursue happiness.

To Jae-Woo Kim,
I think you can become a famous doctor.
Jun Xiang

To all my friends in EPI,
If you guys weren’t here with me, I wouldn’t be that successful in my education. Special thanks to my friends. Keep in touch with me. Send me e-mail, okay? My e-mail address is <buisik@hotmail.com>
Ugur Isik
The Mysterious Pedestrian Overpass

Mio Ito
Japan

When I was a child, I was very interested in mystery stories. Sometimes, my elementary school teacher told stories to my class, and the most interesting and frightening one she told us was about a mysterious pedestrian overpass.

One of the mountains in my home city, Nihondaira, Japan, is very popular for its view at night. This mountain isn't so high, but it's very beautiful, so many people live near it and you can get to it by city bus. At the top of the mountain is a sightseeing place with a lot of souvenir shops and restaurants.

One day, a boy took a city bus to go back to his house on the mountain. When the bus arrived at the bus stop, he got off and saw his mother waiting for him on the other side of the street. He was so happy, and he immediately tried to cross the street. Unfortunately, he wasn't paying attention to the traffic so he didn't realize that a car was coming right at him. His mother saw the car hit him, killing him instantly. She couldn't believe what had happened. She tried to forget about the accident, but she couldn't get it out of her head. After a couple of days, she killed herself at the same place.

A few days later, someone else had an accident there. The police tried to determine the cause of the accident, but it remained a mystery. And then several more accidents happened there, almost one a month. Every time, no cause could be found. It was like an X-Files episode.

Consequently, the number of travelers in the area began to decrease. People knew of the accident involving the boy and his mother and thought that their spirits were perhaps the cause of all the accidents that had occurred at the location since their deaths. Eventually, a pedestrian overpass was built at the site of the boy's accident because if there had been a safe crossing there in the first place the boy might not have been killed. After the overpass was built, no more accidents happened there.

When I first heard this story, I couldn't believe it because I had been to this place many times before and I hadn't realized that there was anything unusual about it. After hearing the story, I went there again and paid attention to the overpass. I was so surprised by what I experienced there. The overpass was very old, and I could tell that nobody used it. The surrounding area was overgrown with weeds. It felt eerily cool there.

After that experience, I believed the story about the spirits of the boy and his mother, even though I had never seen a spirit. I was still somewhat doubtful, but that pedestrian overpass was definitely mysterious. I don't want to believe the story, but I experienced the weirdness of the place and I have to believe it.

□
One Day in Bangkok

Bangkok, Thailand, is one of the busiest cities in the world, with traffic jams, pollution, skyscrapers, pubs, bars, parks, temples, shopping malls, and anything that people might want. The residents of Bangkok have to hurry, hurry, hurry because time waits for no one. They must compete with time.

Chaos, rush, swindle, stratagems, deceit, sincerity, kindness, aid, generosity are all features of this city. Jumble is the exact word to describe Bangkok. Everybody there—rich or poor, white collar, blue collar, or pink collar—has to accept the social rules of the city.

In one of Bangkok’s poor little shantytowns, Somchai was a person who lived in a jumble. Born in a rural area in northern Thailand, he didn’t have much knowledge, so he couldn’t find a job that paid a lot of money. He had moved to Bangkok two years before. Now, he was a clerk in a little company.

Every day, he had to wake up at 4:00 a.m. to go to work because he didn’t have a car and had to wait for the 5:30 bus. After 5:30, the bus would be full, and he had to get to work before the 8:30 starting time.

This was life in Bangkok.

And the morning rush was only the beginning! At 5:00 p.m., he had to hurry again to wait for the bus because there was another rush period beginning at that time. And then once he was on the bus, he had to endure the slow-moving vehicle for over two hours every single day after work.

His life never changed. It turned around and around and straight toward him. For some reason, he felt afraid of the policeman and ran away from the bus stop. The policeman called out to him to stop. He must have done something illegal. He ran like Ben Johnson competing with Carl Lewis in a championship race.

Finally, he lost the policeman. He stopped at a corner of a building for a moment to catch his breath, and then he took off running again because the beginning time of his work was coming soon.

It seemed that God was punishing him. Now, dogs were barking at him and chasing him down the street. He had to speed up. He ran for his life until he finally managed to lose the dogs. Sweat was streaming down his body. He felt as if he were dead.

Looking around, he realized that his running had taken him back into his neighborhood. He decided to go back home. People were still staring at him as he walked by. Never mind, he didn’t care about anything now.

At last, he was safely at home. He let out a big sigh of relief and lay down on his bed. “What a day!” he thought. Something had changed. Everyone had looked at him so strangely. He decided to get up and take a shower.

Before undressing, he looked into the mirror.

“Oh, no!” he screamed, seeing that below his waist he was wearing only his underwear. “I forgot to put on my pants!”
Reports to Planet Zeno: Exploring Planet Earth

Is there any truth to the rumors floating around that Earth is currently being explored by aliens from a distant planet called Zeno? Apparently so. Copies of the following reports to Zeno’s Earth Exploration Commission were discovered recently by three GW60a students. —the editors

Report on Planet Earth #1

Maria Eugenia Villalba
Argentina

After arriving on Earth, we immediately began to study human behavior. We had never imagined that the people and things here would be so strange.

Especially amazing to us is the variety of shapes people have. Some are pretty small, while others are really big. The differences are not only in height, but also in width. We wondered if there might be a relationship between this size differential and people’s behavior. After several days of observation and analysis, we arrived at the conclusion that if people don’t behave well they grow larger. Growing appears to be a kind of punishment for bad behavior.

Another thing we were curious about was what people did inside their homes, so we decided to spy on one of their houses.

During the day the house was empty; we don’t know why yet, but we are going to investigate this on another mission. During the afternoon, people started arriving at the house, one or two at a time. When a total of five people had gone inside, it seemed that nobody else was coming. There were three small people there and two big ones.

First, they sat down at a table in the dining room and ate something, and then they went to the living room and sat down on some couches facing a box-like machine of some sort. We were really curious about this machine because the people became very focused watching it, so we decided to enter the house to get a better look at what was happening.

We jumped through a window and hid ourselves in good places to observe them. At first it was difficult for us to understand why they were laughing all the time, since they were not speaking with each other, but eventually we figured out that their laughter had something to do with the machine, which had people you could see inside it who were talking, laughing, and doing various other things.

This machine-watching event seemed to be a meeting involving some kind of advanced form of communication. The best thing was that the people on the couches could choose with whom they wanted to communicate in the machine by using a small, hand-held control device. For us, it was a very interesting way of meeting and communicating, so we decided to bring some of these machines back with us to Zeno. ☐
Exploring Earth...

Report on Planet Earth #2

Our xwy-ray was scanning Area 243—Columbia, South Carolina, USA—for humans when there appeared on our screen something really amazing. Around 10:00 p.m., a lot of humans started to concentrate in a special zone of Area 243 known as “Five Points.” An interesting thing about the people flooding into this area was that all of them were young, averaging only 23 years of age.

They had funny ways of displacement, using strange machines as well as their own bodies. Some of these machines, called “cars,” were big boxes with four wheels, and others, called “motorcycles,” were smaller, open-air vehicles with only two wheels. We guess that with these kinds of machines humans are trying to improve their displacement, solving a big problem that they have, lack of speed.

It was very interesting to us to see how all the visitors to Five Points had the same behavior. They stopped their machines, left them on the street or in “parking lots,” and entered the buildings near their cars.

We decided to find out what the humans were doing inside one of those places. We turned on our non-detection system so that the humans would not be able to see us when we followed them in.

Inside, we saw some amazing behavior that we had never seen before. Some of the humans, for example, were making very strange movements (“dancing”), as if a strong electrical current was passing through their bodies.

It was a dark, peculiar place, illuminated only by a lot of tiny red, blue, green, and yellow lights.

The noise was horrible. For us, that was the worst characteristic of the place, but we guess that humans think completely differently about such irritating sounds, that noise may even make them happy. We are not really sure, but it is possible that the strange movements of the dancing humans were being stimulated by the noise. We think that the dancers may have been identifying a rhythm in it and then trying to move their bodies to that rhythm.

No one was eating there, but almost everyone was drinking a lot of an odd-smelling yellowish beverage called “beer,” which appeared to make them very happy.

To my friends from all over the world,

Thank you very much for giving me a lot of opportunities to talk with you. It was meaningful for me to learn about your cultures. I’ll take my good experiences with you back to Japan as my special memory.

Hiro

To Russ Harless,

You are a really excellent teacher. You are like a candle that burns itself to light the way for others. Your smiles keep me happy and hopeful. I will always be proud to say that I was your student. Thank you for all that you have done for me. I will never, never forget you. I wish you all the best and a happy life.

Ahlam Al-Subhi

Darío Andrés Victoria M.
Colombia
My spaceship landed in a strange place, a large spot divided into two colors: blue and white.

The blue area was composed of a liquid called “water,” and it was constantly moving. In the white zone, there were a lot of people lying on the ground looking up at a yellow ball in the sky. They seemed to be waiting for something, but nothing happened.

After waiting for thirty minutes, everybody rolled over and put some kind of white lotion on each other’s backs, apparently trying to attract the unknown thing from the ball in this way. But nothing happened...

In the meantime, some of the people in the water shook their arms and shouted to catch the attention of the bright circle. Still nothing happened...

Others in the blue area kept standing up on long flat boards and riding them very fast across the water. What strange behavior these creatures have, I thought.

All of the people in both the blue and the white areas looked very tired and disappointed. I’m sure it was because none of them could accomplish what they wanted.

I couldn’t establish what kind of stuff the weird thing in the sky would have to send to the people, but since they remained there for hours waiting for something from the bright object, I think it must have been very important.

Time passed, but I never saw anything different from the behavior described above.

Deciding to help them, I went to a wooden house with a sign that said “First Aid” to inform the people there that since the yellow ball apparently didn’t have anything more to share it was time for everyone to leave this place and return to their houses.

A few minutes later, a car with a red light on top and having the same colors as the surroundings—blue and white—arrived at the scene. The driver got out, invited me to get into his car, and took me to a hotel.

As we drove away from this strange place, I couldn’t understand why some of the other people there hadn’t asked to come along with us—there was space for more passengers in the car—but after spending a night in the hotel room the driver took me to I realized that others hadn’t come along because they knew that that room wouldn’t be big enough to share. Obviously, they were being very nice to me, wanting me to feel comfortable and spend a good time on this planet. ☀️
"Cooooourt!" thunders the baby-faced but unsmiling court clerk to signal the arrival of the Honorable Sina Mchezo, the most feared resident magistrate of Kiwalani District Court. Kiwalani is the headquarters of the Bongo district in the Republic of Pesa Mbele.

Today is judgment day for the former general manager of Mabogini Fish Processing Factory, who is accused of embezzling 1bn Tshs. of his employer's property. He is also accused of unlawfully and fraudulently obtaining an unspecified amount of property located in all the major towns in Pesa Mbele. Of course, such offenses are not uncommon in Pesa Mbele, where every politician and bureaucrat has accumulated massive amounts of property.

Mr. Tupatupa’s case has been widely publicized, and the courtroom is unusually full. Every corner of the courtroom is occupied by a multitude of people eager to hear the sentencing of the most notorious man in town. Among these eager people are Mr. Tupatupa’s several mistresses and concubines, popularly known as “nyumba ndogo” in Kiswahili, his two wives, relatives, friends, and other ill-wishers. There are even some people who had no opportunity to secure seats in the courtroom standing outside, regardless of the scorching afternoon heat, characteristic of Kiwalani in the month of August.

As the people sit down, the Honorable Sina Mchezo takes his mighty seat. The skeleton of Mr. Tupatupa stands on his left.

Everybody is deadly quiet, so quiet that the heartbeats of the accused can clearly be heard from the main entrance door.

Suddenly, one of Mr.

Judgment
Johnson Ishengoma Tanzania

Tupatupa’s concubines, who is carrying a three-month-old baby on her back, begins to weep loudly, and a nearby policeman threatens to charge her with contempt of court if she does not immediately stop weeping on the court’s premises.

And then two fat black cats appear from nowhere, jump up, and sit down on the magistrate’s table! As if this were not enough, the cats sit right on the case files lying on the table. This shocks the bespectacled magistrate and his assistants, and they run off in different directions to save their lives. South of the Sahara in Africa, black cats are usually associated with witchcraft. It is no wonder, then, that the learned magistrate and his assistants flee upon seeing the cats. However, some people in the courtroom can’t help bursting into laughter, and a policeman threatens to throw them out of the courtroom.

Eventually, order is restored and the reading of the long awaited sentencing begins.

"Mr. Tupatupa," thunders the Honorable Sina Mchezo, adjusting his gold-rimmed spectacles, "the prosecution has submitted to this court overwhelming evidence to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that you have committed offenses contrary to Section II, No. 5, of the Republic of Pesa Mbele. Do you have anything to say in mitigation before sentencing?"

Tupatupa, visibly shocked and trembling, begins to sob pathetically and blubbers through his tears, "Your Lordship, have mercy on me! I have two wives and several children to take care of!"

The magistrate raises his small, round head from the forest of files he has been pretending to read, firmly fixes his small, red eyes on the trembling Tupatupa, and roars at him, "Tupatupa, on the basis of the overwhelming evidence submitted to this court by the prosecution, and on the basis of your own plea of guilty, I sentence you to five years’ imprisonment and hard labor. Upon completion of your sentence you will refund to the government the money you embezzled, and the property which you unlawfully obtained while in office will be confiscated. Let this sentence serve as a lesson to other public officials and civil servants who use their positions for personal aggrandizement."

"Cooooourt!" thunders the court clerk again. And then Tupatupa is roughly and mercilessly handcuffed; thrown into the prison lorry, popularly known as "karandinga"; and driven off to Mkome Maximum Security Prison. ❑
High Grown Antigua
Richard Norwood
USA

Like wine
Milk chocolate hue
Translucent—
Shimmering—

Slowly the tiny orbs
Ranged in the arc of the rim
Vanish
One by one
Sepia-tinted—
Transparent—

Formed by the churning
Teapot tempest
Raised by the dripping
Drop
Drop
Drop
Of the liquor
Streaming—
Steaming—

Into
The
Cup

Like wine
Translucent—
Shimmering—

Blue Sky
Dick Holmes
USA

Between
Leaves
Still on
The trees
Blue sky
A car
Speeds by
Dry leaves
Clattering
Down the road
In its wake
These words
They are

Peacefully, Birds
Maria de Fatima Matos Pereira
Brazil

birds like yellow in the garden
turn gracefully, serenely
flow into my dream and disappear
one by one dance free
each tree is found
how strange a voice inside my head
everything turns into darkness
gone in a minute
the possibility of crying among stars
I see you but neither I nor you are
big enough to stand alone
as words find ways to be born and live . . .
where is it going?—
clear the half moon
bring back the whole landscape
as real as your face
slowly the heart comes to them
and in the real story
birds like yellow, peacefully in the garden
Loneliness
O-Jin Kwon
Korea

Where am I?
Who’s there with me?
I can’t smell anybody’s scent beside me.
Why am I here?
I can’t see anybody’s footprints behind me.

When I get home,
I feel like my home is a desert.
When I go to bed,
I feel like my bed is a spaceship.
When I watch TV,
I feel like my TV is a movie screen,
But I’m all alone.

My body’s here,
But my heart’s gone to my young boy.
My hands are here,
But my fingers touch my young girl’s hair.
My eyes are here,
But I see my woman’s face,
So far away.

You
Yurenma Istoriz
Venezuela

You were something strange in my life
You appeared magically
You changed my thoughts
You kept my mind busy
You woke up feelings in me I’d never felt
You confused me—

But who was I for you?

A Good Life
Daniel Cavalcanti
Brazil

I can be produced
in whatever color or size people want.
I can be big or small, thick or thin.
My appearance doesn’t matter
as long as my contents are good.
Reading me, people can travel and dream.
Sometimes I get bored,
mainly in the middle of my stories,
but like all good books
in the end I’m happy and understandable
or at least interesting to those who read me.
I love my life and my job
because I can make people think
about the same subject
in so many different ways.
I love it when people use their imagination
to create characters and simulate situations.
It gets me excited and makes me proud.
If I’m ever reborn,
I’d like to be a book again
and keep on sailing in the minds of people.