SUNRISE

Spring 1999
Contents

Around the World ...................... 3
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, foods, and viewpoints.

Around Here ............................. 17
EPI is full of interesting people. This section offers personal portraits focused on several students' favorite things.

Stories & Poems .......................... 25
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

Spring—a time of the year when creativity abounds. Flowers bloom, young leaves unfurl, birds sing, hibernating animals emerge from their dens, and people too step out and take a fresh look at the world. Creativity certainly flowered here at EPI this spring, as these pages amply testify. We think you’re going to enjoy the many fine writings and drawings in this issue of Sunrise.

Dick Holmes

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Around the World

Alexandra Zapata  Colombia
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Francisco Preciado  Mexico
Akiko Inamura  Japan
Ayumi Hamanaka  Japan
Jee-Young Park  Korea
Eun Young Baek  Korea
Jung Yun Park  Korea
Lingga Xiao  China
Some people say, "It's not necessary to leave your hometown to learn about other places in the world; just reading a book, you can find out about everything you are interested in." But for a person like me who loves adventure, traveling is the best way to learn about the world.

I am twenty-one years old. I am from Colombia, South America, and I am currently studying English at USC in Columbia, South Carolina. Thanks to God, I found a good English program, which has permitted me to interchange experiences with people from various countries around the world, to talk with them about my country and theirs.

One day in my apartment, I began to talk with one of my roommates, Maria Fernanda, who is from Argentina. I have a wonderful remembrance of that moment. We were in our living room, and Maria Fernanda showed me, on a map of Argentina, the place where she had grown up, a beautiful place near the border of Argentina and Brazil. Then I began to speak about one of the most beautiful places in my country, Providencia Island.

Providencia is one of the most important islands in San Andres and Providencia Archipelago, the principal archipelago in my country. Only a few miles long, Providencia emerges from the clear blue water of the Atlantic Ocean, which in that area is exuberantly rich in life and beauty.

This enchanting island features natural scenery of great beauty—gray sand beaches contrasting with the blue water of the Atlantic Ocean; woodlands with lush vegetation reminiscent of continental vegetation, with green trees and palms swaying in the soft oceanic breeze; and numerous coral reefs that form strange submarine landscapes.

The people of Providencia are very friendly. They have an interesting, diverse cultural tradition, which comes from their colonial Dutch, French, and Spanish influences. Hence, besides Spanish, they speak a special dialect, Patiamento, which has its roots in the languages of its three European colonizers. And their darkly colored wooden houses, clustered in small groups here and there on the island, reflect a European style.

Three places in Providencia are especially attractive to visitors: Morgan's Head, The Pier of Lovers, and Crab Island Reef. Morgan's Head is a head-shaped rock formation surrounded by water. At its base is an underwater cave. The Pier of Lovers is an artificial construction made of wood and painted various colors, like a small bridge from the island to the ocean. Couples like to spend full moon nights walking along this pier enjoying the seascape and landscape. Crab Island Reef, located in one of the corners of the island, is accessible by boat. This place has special importance to people who like to dive. It has the most beautiful coral reef and marine fauna in the area.

If someone asks me what are the most beautiful places in my country, I will surely include Providencia Island on the list because of its incredibly beautiful mosaic of natural resources, people, and buildings.
Oh, My Buddha!
Chihiro Kosugi
Japan

Obon is a week-long Buddhist event held during the hottest days of the year in Japan. My father is a Buddhist priest, and Obon is the busiest time of the year for him, while most other people are on a break.

But what exactly is Obon? I called my father yesterday to ask him about it. He was so mad at me because as a daughter of a priest I was supposed to know the meaning of Obon. I knew roughly what it was, I excused myself to him, but I wanted to know more.

According to my father, Obon is the one day of the year on which the deceased can go home and the living honor their memory in special ways. It is the time most Buddhists go to the cemetery and take the opportunity to pray at home. During Obon, my father goes to the houses of the adherents of his temple and recites a sutra. We need a set time to think about our deceased ancestors at least once a year, my father told me, because we are in the world because of them. Unlike Americans and people from many other countries, Japanese people are generally irreligious, and they are also so busy all year round. If there were no Obon, people might never think or pray about the deceased. This is sad, but true.

After we pray, we have a big dinner to welcome home our deceased ancestors. Obon is the time of the year when the living go home, too, to be with their families, as people do here in the U.S. at Christmas time. Many festivals and fireworks displays are held to celebrate the Obon holiday. So, it is a fun week for me, and I get to see many cousins I don’t usually see.

There is a funny superstition about Obon. Even the deceased who have gone to hell can go home on the day of Obon, and since the gate of hell, thought to be under the ocean, opens on this day, it is believed that people will die and go to hell if they swim in the ocean at this time. So, nobody swims in the ocean on the day of Obon, even though it comes during the full swing of summer.

At the end of the day of Obon, we make a small boat and throw it into the river with all our hearts. This means we are sending our deceased family members back to their spiritual home, heaven or hell. Then the deceased will be able to come back to their earthly home the next year. Especially people who have lost somebody during the current year perform this ceremony. They put a picture or a treasure of the deceased on the small boat and set it off on its journey down the river.

After talking with my father about Obon, I was ashamed that I hadn’t appreciated the full significance of the event. Of course I pray at Obon, but I have never really thought about my deceased ancestors. Finally, my father asked me, “How can you learn about another culture when you don’t know about your own?” I couldn’t answer that question.
The two countries with the longest history in the world are Egypt and China. Consequently, I am very proud that I am Chinese. Various customs, cultures, and traditions have developed throughout our long history of twenty-five dynasties, and in Taiwan we still maintain much of our heritage today.

Chinese food is an important part of our lifestyle and one of the biggest attractions for tourists in Taiwan. There is a saying that the Taiwanese eat anything with two legs except chairs, with four legs except tables. This is a joke, of course, but it does reflect how much we love to eat. The methods of cooking depend on the area of the country. In northern Taiwan, people prefer salty, spicy food, while in the South people enjoy food seasoned with a sauce containing sugar and Ta-Pi powder. There are so many kinds of cuisine, even though Taiwan is a small island country. If you want to taste all kinds of Chinese food, you can go to the night-market, where vendors line both sides of the street and the business hours are from 6:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m. At the night-market, the food is more traditional than it is at restaurants.

The main religion in Taiwan is Taoism. There are a lot of similarities between Taoism and Buddhism, and the Taiwanese tend to mix these two religions. As Taoists, we go to the temple and prepare fruit and other kinds of food to worship our ancestors and gods. We pray that they protect us from disease, danger, natural disaster, etc. The most interesting thing about Taiwan is that there are various gods who stand for different aspects of life. For example, if a couple hopes to have a baby, they may worship a female god and pray for a safe pregnancy.

When walking along a street in Taipei, the capital of Taiwan, I always wonder why it is so difficult to own a residence there. Not only I am bothered about this situation, but most other young people in Taipei are, too. Everyone has to work very hard every day to pay for a residence. There is very little leisure time to enjoy life after getting married. Both members of most couples have to work long hours to make payments on their house and car. However, we understand that we have little time to enjoy life, and we consider this fact of life a Chinese legacy. We must accept this even though life is getting harder.

Our Chinese heritage is very important to us Taiwanese. We have always tried hard to preserve our heritage even though not all aspects of it are positive. Taiwan wouldn't be Taiwan without its Chinese culture.

**Taiwan**

Chen-Hsien Pai
Taiwan

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To Aylan Al-Mansouri,

Congratulations, Aylan. I hope you can keep studying hard without someone helping you. I hope you don't forget someone who loves you and don't think too much about him or her. Don't love anybody until you know him or her very well. This is just my advice.

Your friend,

Abdulla Al-Kaabi

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To Lisie, Paola, and Leti,

You are my best friends in the world. You have been there when I needed you the most, and I can't thank you enough for that. Whenever you need me, please call me, and I will always be there for you. Please come and visit me in Bogota. I love you guys.

Adriana

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To my teacher,

I will never forget your smile.
You are so nice, and I always enjoy meeting you and talking with you. From your class, I learned not only English but also various other things, such as jokes and American traditions and culture.

I really want to say thank you.

Lingna Xiao
Do you want to visit the best place in Korea? Then I suggest you go to Nam-san. This great mountain is located near Seoul station and Nam Dae Mun, the symbolic gate of Seoul, so you can find it very easily.

As soon as you arrive at Nam-san, you should go to Pal Gak-Jung, where you can see various kinds of ancient monuments, such as beacons to notify us of foreign invasions, old castle ruins, and temples.

Next, go to Nam-san tower. This is one of the highlights of Nam-san. To get to the top of the tower, take the express elevator. Eating and talking with your friends in the sky lounge at the top, you can look down at the impressive cityscape of Seoul, with its wide river, its many types of bridges, its various colors of light emitted by street lamps and cars, and its many buildings. But you may not want to order any food there because it is expensive. In that case, just drink some beverages there. Nighttime presents even more fantastic views than daytime. You don’t need to change your seat for a different view because the sky lounge revolves continuously.

After sightseeing from the top of the tower, come back down and take a walk down the street rather than catch a cab. You will enjoy the fresh air and beautiful scenery, especially when everything is covered with snow in the wintertime.

You will find many kinds of restaurants near the tower, including French, Japanese, and Swiss restaurants. You may have to spend a lot of money at one of these restaurants, but if you want to treat a special friend don’t save your money on this occasion. At the French restaurant Petite French, you will feel as if you are actually in France.

If you want to go to an even more beautiful place than one of these fine restaurants, you can go to the nearby Hyatt Hotel, where you can drink various kinds of cocktails and talk with a person you like, listening to the live music of excellent singers.

Although I have been to Nam-san many times, I have always been fascinated by its various scenes, great restaurants, and romantic songs. If you ever go to Korea, especially with your lover, be sure to visit this special place! ☟

I live in Seville, a city in the South of Spain. The people are very friendly there and love to get out of the house, go for a walk, and mingle, especially in the springtime.

The weather in Seville is never very cold, and spring arrives early. Already in February, the orange trees become filled with fragrant flowers, meaning spring has arrived.

On weekends, people usually go out all morning to a park where their children can play, or walk along the narrow streets of the downtown area. Before going back home for lunch (around 2:30 or 3:00), we usually have something to eat and drink in one of the many cafés and bars in every quarter. This is a fun thing to do because they have a lot of tables and chairs set up along the street and we can sit there reading the newspaper, talking with friends, or just watching people across the street.

In Seville, offices and shops are closed Saturday evening and all day Sunday, so there is nothing better to do than to take a walk, visit family or friends, or just sit talking with them in a café or bar. On weekends, the downtown area is closed to traffic so that we can easily walk around.

One of the things that I miss most about my city is just hanging out and watching people walking around and talking in the streets. In my opinion, this is a healthy, enjoyable way to live because after a week of work you need to go out and socialize. ☟
Hallacas
Maria Leticia Andueza
Venezuela

In many places all over the world, Christmas is a very important time of the year. In Venezuela, my home country, we do many special things at Christmas time to bring the family together. One thing we do is to cook a lot. Hallacas, for example, is a special dish we make for Christmas.

To make hallacas, first you lay out two dry banana leaves. Over them you spread flour prepared with various condiments. Then on top of that you add the meat of pig, rabbit, cow, etc.; the kind of meat selected depends on the preference of the people who are cooking. Finally you top off the meat and flour mixture with beans, olives, cayenne, raisins, and various other things, as you like. (The exact ingredients vary according to the region. In some places, for example, people include eggs in their hallacas.) Then you fold the banana leaves into a rectangular shape, tie a thread around the package, and cook it for around four hours.

Though the ingredients may vary, the idea behind making hallacas is always the same: to share with your family while you are cooking and then eat this excellent dish together. It is very common to share different kinds of hallacas with our friends.

I think each country has its own culture, and hallacas is an important part of Venezuelan culture. We share hallacas as a symbol of friendship, just as we share other things as symbols of other aspects of our lives. Christmas in general is one way to share with our family and friends. This period of the year is very important to us, a time when we show our feelings for and interests in each other.

A Mexican Funeral
Francisco Preciado
Mexico

In my home country, Mexico, people die as they do all over the world, but Mexicans have different ways to commemorate and bury their relatives and friends.

In Jalisco, the state I live in, all the relatives of a person who has died hold a funeral at the house of the deceased. Friends, neighbors, and many people from all around the area come to the funeral to be with the loved ones of the deceased. They bring various presents and dishes for the surviving relatives, such as sugar, coffee, water, tequila, wine, pozole, tostaditas, tacos, and chili con carne.

The relatives and friends at the funeral keep a vigil with the deceased, staying awake for nearly two days. Then they carry the body to the cemetery. Some families invite mariachis—a group of musicians who play various instruments, including guitar, violin, and trumpet—to accompany the funeral party to the cemetery. After the burial, friends and townspeople visit the house of the deceased every day over a nine-day vigil period. During these days, the people gathered together pray and sing in memory of the deceased. On the last day, the relatives of the deceased hold a huge party for everybody to show their gratitude for the time their guests have spent with them.

Dear Kathy,
How are you? I’ve really, really, really enjoyed your class. When I started your class, I couldn’t read anything, but now I can. Thank you so much.

Kazuko Sasaki
When I watched TV in America for the first time, I was surprised to see that some Japanese cartoon shows are broadcast here. I knew that in some Asian countries people could watch Japanese cartoons, but I didn’t know that we could watch them here. I have watched three popular Japanese cartoons in America.

It was about forty years ago, when my parents were children, that animation began progressing. Most Japanese people have grown up with this progression. Today, we can watch a lot of renewed animation programs. I have two favorite cartoonists, Fuziko Fuzio and Hayao Miyazaki. To me, they are geniuses. Their animation has given me a lot of hopes and dreams.

I think the most popular cartoon show in Japan is Doraemon, developed by Fuziko Fuzio. This program began to be broadcast about thirty years ago. When I was a child, I always watched it. Almost all Japanese people have watched it. I have some Doraemon comics, too.

Doraemon is a blue robot modeled after a cat. But as his ears were eaten by a mouse, he doesn’t have ears. So, he hates mice. He has come from the future in the 21st century and he lives with Nobita, a weakling boy. Nobita fails in everything. He can’t do anything without Doraemon’s help. But he has a very innocent heart, so Doraemon can’t ignore him. Doraemon has a lot of instruments from the 21st century in his pocket, and he uses them to help Nobita. For example, they can become as small as beans with the “small light,” go anywhere they want to go via the “dokodemo door,” and slip from time to time using the “time machine.”

When this cartoon first appeared, the 21st century was in the remote future, and we dreamed of having such instruments. Now, the 21st century will arrive in less than a year. Doraemon’s instruments, however, are inventions that remain interesting to us, even at the end of the 20th century. Doraemon is still broadcast today, appearing regularly on TV and in comics, and occasionally in full-length movies. He is still my hero, as well as my niece’s.

The imagery of Japanese animation and comics has a realistic quality. I especially like to see the landscapes. A vast number of cuts are needed to make one action and to apply a character’s voice. Recently, cartoons are drawn with the assistance of computer graphics, and the action in these cartoons is surprisingly smooth and clear. But I still think the handmade cartoons are better.

I’m also very impressed by the messages expressed in Japanese cartoons. Sometimes, our cartoons warn us about something or criticize society. I’ve learned a lot of things from them. I think we Japanese people are generally weak in expressing our opinions or feelings about things. So, we express our feelings indirectly through our wonderful cartoons.

To all the EPI staff,

I’m very proud to be one of your students. I have really enjoyed learning with you. I know my English is getting better because of your encouragement. Maybe I will leave EPI at the end of this term, but I would like you to know that I appreciate everything all of you have done to make me happy.

Thanks,

Elvira Bunduku-Latha
Have you ever watched kabuki? My university is in Kyoto, a city famous for being an ancient capital of Japan, for its many traditional buildings, and for its kabuki theater. Sometimes, I go to the theater and watch a kabuki performance. Kabuki is a fascinating classical form of Japanese theater with a long, rich history.

Kabuki is often compared to the Parisian opera and the Broadway musical. Kabuki actors, men only, perform Japanese song and dance wearing kimono, traditional Japanese clothes. Actors who play women's roles are called oyama. Their manners and appearance are very elegant and stylized to make them look like real women. In fact, oyama look more womanly than real women.

The reason men play women's roles in kabuki is connected to the social values of the time when kabuki emerged in Japan. Created around 1600 by a woman, Okuni, in the ancient capital of Kyoto, kabuki was originally performed by women.

The spectacle of women dancing in public performances, however, caused a sensation, and the government worried about the influence kabuki was having on society. This bold new form of theater was regarded as vulgar entertainment at that time. Finally, though kabuki was very popular, the government banned women from the stage to protect social morals.

Ironically, this ban on women created kabuki as we know it today, with men performing women's roles. It became necessary for men to be made up and to portray either manliness or womanliness, and this made kabuki a highly stylized form of theater.

Now kabuki is regarded as representative of Japanese culture. But it is difficult to understand the old language used in kabuki plays. Most young people in the audience can't understand the story without explanation.

Moreover, kabuki is considered so noble and costly that many young people hesitate to go to a performance. Recently, however, there has been a kabuki boom, and once again this interesting Japanese art form is becoming an entertainment enjoyed by a wide range of people.

Dear GW50a,
I have really enjoyed teaching all of you guys (weeds) and our one Turkish flower! Most of you have studied pretty hard, and I think you are making progress in the complicated task of learning English grammar. We have laughed a lot!! I will miss you and all of our jokes together. I really mean it when I say I have enjoyed your friendship!! I hope I will see you next quarter.

The oldest weed,
Mr. Rice

To my dear roommates in Whaley's Mill #103,
Yoshiko and Akiko, I don't have words to thank you for everything. You are my sisters. I'm proud of you. I owe it all to you. You took care of me in many difficult situations, especially when I got sick. You always expressed your kindness to me. Thank you for that delicious Japanese food, my favorite meal here in Columbia, and for those soft pancakes. You will always be in my heart. I wish you the best in your lives. I love and miss you a lot. I will be waiting for you in Mexico, okay?

Marisela

To all the teachers who taught me at EPI,
Thank you for being so nice to me. You will all be in my heart forever.

Love,
Ahlam Al-Subhi
Hosu Park

Jee-Young Park
Korea

Seoul, the capital city of Korea, has become so crowded with people, buildings, and cars that there is no longer enough space to live there. Consequently, people are moving from the inner city to suburban areas. Ilsan, a new city built in the Seoul area as a result of a government policy to solve Seoul’s overpopulation problem, is well known for Hosu Park.

Hosu means “lake” in Korean. Hosu Park features a big human-made lake with a road around it exclusively for bicycles. There is also a place where we can borrow bicycles, including bicycles built for two riders. During the weekend, I see many couples riding two-person bikes in the Park. It makes me jealous! Among the Park’s other facilities are a botanical garden, a small zoo, and an outdoor theater. Sometimes concerts are held at the outdoor theater.

Two years ago, a special event, the International Flowers Exhibition, was held in Hosu Park. Representatives of a number of countries participated in displaying their flowers. This spectacular event was designed and organized by Kyungki provincial government. It was very successful, and Hosu Park became more famous due to this event.

Because it was constructed only recently, Hosu Park is clean and modern. Many people and their pets can be seen exercising and jogging there in the early morning. My dog likes to go there because she can meet many other friends and run around in high spirits. Hosu Park is a really energetic place with very pleasant scenery.

Consequently, Hosu Park is no longer the possession of just Ilsan’s residents. Many people like to go on picnics there, and even people who live far away enjoy spending their free time at the Park. If you ever visit this place, you will probably want to come again and again. Imagine that you’re sitting at the lakeside one evening talking with a friend while a jazz concert is taking place at the outdoor theater. Then you look up at the sky filled with twinkling stars. How exotic! How nice!

To all the EPI teachers,
I feel so sorry that I won’t have the opportunity to say good-bye at the end of the term. As you know, I had to leave early. I just want to express great thanks for all your support. You helped me a lot, gave me good advice, and made me feel relaxed. I will never forget you. You are wonderful teachers. Thank you for everything.

With all my love,
Marisela

Kathy,
Good luck in Colombia. You will need it!
(just kidding) (but seriously),
Diego

Dear Wael Al-Fayez and Khaled Al-Bulouushi,
I’d like to thank you for everything that you’ve done for me. I’m so glad to have friends like you. Khaled, I know that I’m bothering you with rap songs, but I’m sure that you’re going to like them in time. I strongly believe you will.

Wael, I guess you’re my type of friend. We share a lot of interests. Anyway, I wish you the best. We know that you’re going to enjoy the university. I’m so happy about that and I wish you success with your studies there. Ba-bye!

Your friend,
Ahmed
If I have a chance to travel, I like to go alone because it gives me a lot of time to think about myself and explore a new place. Traveling together with other people is more like going on a picnic! However, I haven’t taken many trips by myself since my parents worry so much about my traveling alone.

Anyway, I chose Sri Lanka for my first trip abroad. Why Sri Lanka? A lot of my friends wondered why I picked this country for my first trip outside Korea, but actually I had no choice about where to go if I wanted to go abroad. My uncle lived there, and I couldn’t get permission from my parents to go anywhere else. Also, this small island country in the Indian Ocean was enough to stimulate my curiosity. In fact, I was very excited about going there.

When I arrived in Colombo, the capital of the nation, it was really hot and humid. I could see a lot of signs with writing like pictographs on them. The characters of the Sri Lankan language were so cute! The people were kind and smiling, and I felt very comfortable among them. The streets were calm and dark compared to those of Seoul, my home city.

During my one-and-a-half-month stay in Colombo, I learned several things about the Sri Lankan lifestyle.

Two languages are used in Sri Lanka—English as well as the native Sri Lankan language. Most of the people use their native language, while some upper class Sri Lankans usually use English. English is spoken with a British accent because Sri Lanka was colonized by England for many years.

Sri Lankans usually wear their traditional costume, called sari, a kind of loose robe. Their custom, especially among women, is to veil their bodies as much as possible. Even foreigners must wear sari to veil themselves when they go into a temple if they are not sufficiently covered.

I will never forget the time I spent in Sri Lanka, with its blue ocean, palm trees, and kind people enjoying their afternoon tea.

Most Sri Lankans are Buddhists. In fact, the phrase Sri Lanka means “Tears of Buddha,” and it was for religious reasons that Sri Lanka became independent from India, which is predominantly Hindu. There is a big Buddhist temple in Kandy that many people from all over the world visit every year.

I will never forget the time I spent in Sri Lanka, with its blue ocean, palm trees, and kind people enjoying their afternoon tea.

To Earth and Sea,
You are the one who created and filled my life. Even though it has been short, I have had a wonderful time in my life. I don’t have enough words to thank you and show you how happy I am to know you. Now, there is nothing more to say—just “See you later.” Right?!!!
Your best friend

To my Brazilian friends (gatinhos Tavares),
I’ve had a great time with you. Really, I appreciate everything you’ve done for me. I’ve really enjoyed the time we spent together at the movies, Sharkey’s, McKenzie’s, and Latino parties. Julianinha, thanks for everything. You are one of my best friends in Columbia, and I hope to see you soon. I’m gonna miss you, but we will keep in touch, okay? If everything goes well, I’ll see you in Recife, and I’ll see you on Margarita Island. . . . BELEZA!!!!!!!!
Jose Alberto

Jessica,
You have been the life and fun of EPI. Thank you for being just the person that you are. Please, never change. You make me laugh so much, and with this little thing you have made my life here happier. I’m sorry that if sometimes because of me someone has scolded you. Thanks for all the favors that you have done for me. Most of all, thank you for just being my friend. I LOVE YOU. And I hope to see you in Bogota.
See you—
Adriana
Kimchi Stew
Jung Yun Park
Korea

Kimchi, made of spicy, marinated Chinese cabbage, cucumber, radish, or other vegetables, is a Korean side dish that is also often used in main dishes. We Koreans say, “I can’t live without kimchi.” We always eat kimchi with our other foods, and we cook many kinds of food with kimchi, for example, kimchi grilled food, kimchi fried rice, and kimchi stew. Kimchi stew is great for warming you up on cold, rainy days.

Ingredients
- 1 batch of kimchi
- 1/2 tablespoon of sesame oil
- 1/2 tablespoon of powdered sesame mixed with salt
- 200g pork
- 1 tablespoon of minced onion
- 1 tablespoon of minced garlic
- 1/4 tablespoon of ground pepper
- 1 tablespoon of soy sauce
- 200g rice cake
- 50g small green onion
- 3 cups of meat stock
- a little bit of salt
- 1 egg

Preparation
Cut the kimchi into one-by-five-centimeter rectangles and mix with sesame oil and powdered sesame. Cut the pork into one-by-five-centimeter rectangles and mix with minced onion, minced garlic, powdered sesame, ground pepper, soy sauce, and sesame oil. Cut the rice cake into one-by-five-centimeter rectangles and mix with soy sauce and sesame oil. Cut the green onion into five-centimeter lengths. In a shallow pot, layer the kimchi, pork, rice cake, and green onion (as in the illustration below), pour the meat stock over them, sprinkle with salt, and cook on the stove until the pork is done. Add the egg to the center of the pot just before eating, being careful not to break the yolk. Enjoy your kimchi stew! ❤

Illustration Key
- 1 - green onion; 2 - rice cake; 3 - pork; 4 - kimchi; 5 - egg

To my Venezuelan friends Emir, Leo, Kepa, Patricia “Tapita,” and Carla, Tapi and Carla, I’ve really missed you this term. YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN. I’ll see you in Caracas on June 2, okay? Emir, Leo, and Kepa, I will never forget all the American Polarcita that we took to the bottom. To all my friends at EPI, I’m gonna miss you but life continues. If you want to come to my island, Margarita, you’re all invited, okay? See you soon. Leo, the force is with you . . .

Jose Alberto

Mohammad,
How are you, Mohammad? I would like to see you. Where are you going after this term? I may go back to my country to visit my family and friends. Please write me a message.

Ahmed Al-Mazrouei

To all the EPI teachers,
Thank you for the effort that you have put into teaching me and helping me to improve my English. I really appreciate it. You are all so nice and wonderful.

Salma
Chinese Sweet and Sour Chicken
Lingna Xiao China

Sweet and sour chicken is one of America’s favorite Chinese dishes. Although I am Chinese, I had never tasted this dish until I came to the United States because it was early Chinese immigrants running Chinese restaurants here in the U.S. who invented this dish.

Ingredients (for four servings)
oil for deep frying
1 cup of all-purpose flour
1/2 cup of corn starch
1 teaspoon of baking powder
2 teaspoons of salt
1 cup of water
2 teaspoons of vegetable oil
1 pound of chicken breast, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
1 large green pepper, cut into 1-inch pieces
sweet and sour sauce (see below)
3 cups of hot cooked rice

Preparation
Pour oil into a deep frying pan (a deep fryer also works well) to a depth of 1 to 1 1/2 inches. Heat to 375°F, or until a 1-inch bread cube browns in a minute. While the oil heats, prepare the sweet and sour sauce (see below). In a small bowl, beat the flour, cornstarch, baking powder, salt, water, and vegetable oil with an electric beater until smooth. Dip the meat into this batter and fry until golden brown. Drain and keep warm. Stir the green pepper and onion into the sweet and sour sauce. Cover and simmer until the vegetables are a little crisp on the outside but tender on the inside, about 5 minutes. Serve the meat and sauce over rice.

Ingredients for sweet and sour sauce
1/2 cup of packed brown sugar
4 teaspoons of cornstarch
water
1 16-ounce can of pineapple tidbits, drained (reserve syrup)
1/2 cup of vinegar
4 teaspoons of catsup

Preparation of sweet and sour sauce
In a 2-quart saucepan, mix the brown sugar and cornstarch. Add enough water to the reserved pineapple juice to measure 2 cups. Stir the juice mixture, vinegar, and catsup into the cornstarch mixture. Cook, stirring constantly, until the mixture boils and thickens. Stir in the pineapple. Keep warm over very low heat.

Korean Curry
Jung Yun Park Korea

Curry is a traditional food of India, but Koreans also enjoy curry, and we make it to suit our Korean taste. Try this recipe, and you can enjoy both Indian and Korean food.

Ingredients
200g curry powder
1500cc water
300g meat (beef, pork, or chicken)
600g onions
400g potatoes
240g carrots
4 large spoonfuls of margarine

Preparation
Dissolve the curry powder in 300cc of water. Cut the meat, onions, potatoes, and carrots into pieces, and sauté them in the margarine. Next, boil them in 1200cc of water until they are well done. Then, mix them with the dissolved curry and cook again for 2-3 minutes until the curry sauce thickens. Eat your curry with rice or bread. Enjoy!
To Dick Holmes,
You are a really good teacher and a very quiet person. Thank you for helping me learn hard vocabulary. I wish you luck, and your son, too, in pursuing his music major.
Ahmed Al-Rumaithi

William,
You have been my roommate for ten weeks. Although we have often had some uncomfortable times, we have overcome them well.
I hope that you achieve your goal to enter USC. Good luck!
Joon

To my Colombian friends and Leti,
(Leti, you are Colombian, too, because we've adopted you). I just want to say thank you to all of you. We have spent the most amazing moments together. In EPI, we have gone through everything together, and I will never forget any of you. Without you, this term wouldn't have been the same. See you again when we can all be together in Colombia!
Adriana

To my friends (Col, Vzla, Arg),
I just want to tell you that I've spent a really good time with all of you. I'm never going to forget these months here. I'm going to miss you all a lot. All of you are welcome in Merida whenever you want to come. I hope to see you again—and soon! I love you.
Leti
Around Here

Bundit Wongsaisuwan  Thailand
Jung Yun Park  Korea
Jee-Young Park  Korea
Lingna Xiao  China
Jong Wook Sung  Korea
Akiko Nagakura  Japan
Maria Leticia Andueza  Venezuela
Ji-Hae Park  Korea
Alexandra Zapata  Colombia
Personal Portraits
— a few of our favorite things —

Jong Wook (Jack) Sung

Jack, from Korea, is my classmate in Grammar/ Writing class. We often sit next to each other in class, so he is sometimes my partner. One day, we interviewed each other about our favorite things.

Increasing his body weight is Jack’s favorite thing to do. What? Was I hearing correctly? He told me that since he has been here in Columbia studying English he has lost weight. He wants to gain about ten kilograms. He tries to eat a lot of rice and corn flakes, which he thinks will help beef him up. He eats corn flakes for breakfast and rice for lunch and dinner every day. I think this favorite thing of his is very interesting and no doubt surprising to anyone who hears about it.

Another of Jack’s favorite things to do is drawing cartoons that reflect his opinion about things. Unlike most other people, when he finishes reading a book, he summarizes its information by drawing cartoons about it. He also draws cartoons just for fun. When he has time, he spends about thirty minutes a day drawing for his enjoyment.

I hope Jack will continue to enjoy his favorite things.
—Bundit Wongsaisuwan

To Zaid Al-Mutari,
You are such a good friend. I’ve enjoyed studying with you and hanging out with you every day. Thank you, my best friend.
Ahmed Al-Rumaithi

To Manal,
We’ve had so much fun with you, and we hope that you’ll come back again someday. We’re going to miss you. We wish you all the best in your life.
Love,
Salma, Dana, Ahlam, Najla

Shintaro Harada

Shintaro, a new Japanese student at EPI, loves basketball. “Basketball is a very important part of my life,” he told me when I asked him why he liked this sport. He started playing basketball when he was ten years old. He was crazy about the game, so he played every day. Whenever he plays, he feels instinctive and happy. He likes college basketball in the USA. He especially likes the University of Kentucky’s team. He has often gone to sports arenas to watch basketball games here in the USA.

Shintaro majored in physical exercise in high school and was a member of his school’s basketball team. He wanted to continue playing as a university student and as a professional, but he wasn’t tall enough. He isn’t disappointed about that, though. He plans to have his own basketball shop someday.

While I was interviewing him, I could feel from his face that he loves basketball with all his heart.
—Jung Yun Park

To my lovely Arab guys—Mohamed, Hamad, Saad, Rashid, and Abdulla,

My life in Columbia was so marvelous. I’m lucky to have met you. You have made me appreciate the beauty of friendship, and you are a true example of that. I will never forget you and the time and the trips we spent together. It was all unforgettable. You are and always will be my friends. I love all of you.
Marisela

Mr. Rice,
When I saw you talking to American people at church, I was so surprised to find out that you can talk fast, just like any other American. Thank you for your special care for EPI students. I love your way of talking!
Pokey Mokey
Personal Portraits
— a few of our favorite things —

Akiko Inamura

I interviewed Akiko Inamura, one of my Japanese classmates. I asked her several questions about her hobbies and her favorite things to do. When I first saw her, she looked shy and quiet, but this impression turned out not to be true. As the interview began, she started talking about her hobbies very passionately, and my first impression of her abruptly disappeared.

Akiko likes driving a car. She especially enjoys driving in her hometown because it is a very small, quiet place and there are few cars on the road so she can drive very freely. She likes to listen to music and sing along loudly with it while she is driving. I hope that I get a chance to listen to her sing someday.

Besides driving, Akiko likes to cook, especially Japanese food. She also likes hot and spicy food, like Korean food. During our interview, we promised each other to go together to Blue Cactus Deli, the Korean restaurant in Five Points.

Akiko seems to have a genius for art. She studied modern dance for two years, and she has played the piano for ten years. Whenever there was a festival at her college, she played the piano in front of the audience. How nice!

After interviewing her, I recognized that Akiko is very talented and has the potential to be whatever she wants to be. I’m happy that I have such a nice friend in my class.

—Jee-Young Park, Korea

Elvira Bunduku-Latha

Elvira’s favorite thing is shopping. She told me she usually likes to spend time in malls or in supermarkets. She enjoys looking at everything. When she’s shopping, she likes to stroll through the various isles and explore all the new things. This is what excites her.

Elvira thinks of shopping as a learning experience. It’s interesting for her to observe the creations that people in different places sell. Through shopping, Elvira discovers the culture of the new place that she’s visiting. “Shopping is like a class,” she said. “It helps me understand the lives of people in different countries. When I look at the various items for sale, I get a feeling for the people, their habits, interests, economy, and lifestyle. An awareness of the people helps me decide what I need to buy.”

Elvira is from Gabon, Africa, but she was born in Paris. She speaks French fluently. She’s tall and thin, young and active. She likes singing, dancing, listening to music, watching TV, and eating American food. She also likes to travel, but at this point in her life she’s ready to stay in Columbia for a while and study. She plans to study business and hopes to become a successful businessperson.

Elvira has traveled to many places. She told me that every time she visits a new place the first thing she does is to go shopping. She likes to buy a lot of things, but sometimes she doesn’t have enough money. When money is tight, she doesn’t mind doing some window shopping, which she enjoys, too, because every shopping experience is a lesson for Elvira.

Without a doubt, Elvira thinks that Paris is the best place to shop. She fondly remembers her shopping experiences there. In all her travels, she hasn’t found another place that has as many gorgeous things to buy as she has seen in Paris. Someday she hopes to return to Paris with lots of money to spend.

—Lingna Xiao, China

To CS30,

From boxes to DJJ, with Chris and Dennis, it’s been a fast ten weeks! Keep talking English and keep solving the mysteries of this language!

Margaret

20
Personal Portraits — a few of our favorite things —

Bundit Wongsaisiwun

Bundit likes to play with the Internet. Almost every day he enjoys this activity. He especially likes entertainment web sites, which he visits for two or three hours at a time. When he was in Thailand, his home country, he enjoyed using the Net at the university or at the library. The Internet is probably his most intimate friend.

Bundit also likes solitude, which allows him the feeling of freedom and the chance to think about things by himself. He likes his room as the most comfortable place to be alone. There he enjoys watching TV or reading a book. Because he is playful and young, he is also very interested in doing exciting things such as playing computer games and watching movies during his solitary free time. He is an aficionado who likes to use his head during his solo breaks and to pursue engaging experiences.

Bundit avoids thinking about things too seriously. His appearance and way of speaking are redolent of familiar comic virtuosos. He is an avid fan of show business.
—Jong Wook Sung, Korea

Valentina Klavane

I first met Valentina on the Horseshoe. There were squirrels, birds, and pigeons all around her. She was happily feeding these small animals with a smile as bright as a spring flower. She told me that she had bought a large bag of food so that she could feed them every day.

The next time I talked to Valentina, she showed me some pictures of her dogs. She told me that she really loves animals, especially dogs. She can’t imagine living without a dog. In Latvia, her home country, she has two dogs, and both of them are very special to her.

This is Valentina’s first quarter at EPI. Valentina is a quiet person who enjoys reading books and listening to music. She loves classic Russian literature and classical music.

Valentina is such a beautiful woman that I would never have guessed that she is a lawyer. Before coming to the United States, she worked primarily with criminal cases. Her job involved investigating cases at the police station and other places.

Valentina told me that someday she hopes to have a horse and learn how to ride it. I guess she likes big animals as well as small ones.
—Lingna Xiao, China

Dear Barbara Kubodera,

Before coming to EPI, I had a very big problem memorizing English words. In your class, I think I’ve learned lots of useful words. The most important thing is that I’ve learned how to study in order to improve my vocabulary. Thank you for escorting me in the ocean of English.

Aylin Parmaksiz

To all the teachers who taught me at EPI,

Thank you for teaching me and being so nice. A special thanks to Kathy.

Dana Al-Abdullah
Personal Portraits
—a few of our favorite things—

Ana Munoz

Ana Munoz is from Spain. Recently, I interviewed her and found out about her favorite things.

Ana usually goes to a theater once a week because she prefers watching movies to watching videos at home. She loves movies, especially European ones that focus on relationships between couples, friends, and families. She doesn’t like American movies because they contain so many violent images.

Ana also enjoys music. She admires all kinds of music, from traditional Spanish music to American music. She likes to listen to the radio and sometimes goes to a concert. She enjoys South American singers Silvio Rodriguez and Pablo Milanes in particular, and her favorite American bands and singers are REM, Aerosmith, Bob Dylan, and Dire Straits. She enjoys a lot of others as well.

Ana is fond of traveling, too, and taking pictures during her trip. She has been to Paris, Rome, Florence, and London. She is planning to go to Greece because she is very interested in Greek literature and history. She has studied the classical Greek language at the university.

I love Ana’s favorite things myself so I think she and I can be good friends.

—Akiko Nagakura, Japan

Chihiro Kosugi

This morning I interviewed Chihiro, one of my classmates. She is from Japan, and she is twenty years old. I asked her about her favorite things and what she likes to do.

Chihiro likes to travel without planning. She likes to go to different places to get to know them, traveling with her friends. She has traveled without prior plans to New York, Florida, New Orleans, and California. She just goes to a place, looks for a hotel, and then asks the people who live there where she should go and which cities are good to visit. She said that every time she has traveled like this she has enjoyed the experience a lot.

Chihiro also told me that she likes to talk a lot, no matter where she is or whom she is with. She can talk in public and she isn’t shy. From my experience with her, I think this is true. She can talk about anything, and it is nice to talk with her.

The last thing Chihiro told me that she likes to do is to meet new people and make a lot of friends. She likes EPI because here she can meet people from all over the world and learn about other cultures and lifestyles. She likes to learn words in other languages. She told me some Spanish words that she knows, and she sounded so funny, but she is trying.

Chihiro is a nice person. You can talk with her for a long time and you won’t get bored. She can be a good friend.

—Maria Leticia Andueza, Venezuela

To Saad, Rashid, and Abdulla,

You have been my friends, no matter what. Together we have had lots of good times. I hope that you never forget me. I certainly will never forget you. Also, I want to say thank you for everything. I won’t ever be able to repay you for all the little things that you have done for me. So, the only thing that I can do is to say THANK YOU. And of course you are more than welcome to come and visit me whenever you want to (but please call first).

Adriana
Personal Portraits
—a few of our favorite things—

Patrick Greuter

There are so many students from various countries at EPI, but most of them are from Asia and South America. Have you met an EPI student from Europe? If you have, maybe it was Patrick, a 27-year-old guy from Switzerland.

One of Patrick’s favorite things is mountain biking. He started practicing this sport three years ago when his friend recommended it. He really likes it. He also likes jogging. He can often be seen jogging and walking around the campus. Reading books, especially fantasy books, is another of his favorite things.

Patrick came here to study English, which is very important to his career. He studied telecommunications engineering before coming to the U.S., and he wants to get a job in this field.

While studying in America, Patrick has discovered some differences between Switzerland and America.

For one thing, the food is very different. As you may know, Switzerland is very famous for cheese and chocolate. After our interview, Patrick gave me a chance to taste Swiss chocolate, and I can still taste its delicious flavor.

Another difference concerns the meaning of friendship. It takes some time before people can be called friends in Switzerland. But here in America people are called friends easily. Patrick feels somewhat culture-shocked by this aspect of American culture.

The shopping situation is different, too. Patrick was surprised when he discovered that he could go shopping here in the evening and on Sunday. The Swiss think of Sunday as a holiday, and they can’t buy anything on that day. But here, people often go shopping on Sunday.

The landscape here is also very different from what Patrick is used to in Switzerland. The Columbia area is relatively flat, while there are many hills and mountains in the Alps of Switzerland. After our interview, he showed me some pictures of Switzerland, and I was really impressed by the majesty of the Swiss mountains. Patrick is very proud of his country, and I can certainly see why.
—Ji-Hae Park, Korea

Jung Yun Park

“My favorite things are designing and making ceramics,” Jung Yun told me when I asked about her favorite things, things that she really enjoys doing.

Jung Yun is a young woman from Korea, a junior at her Korean university studying furniture and product design. Her passion for ceramics was born when she was a sophomore. For her major, she needed to choose an elective subject, and she chose ceramics. Her ceramics teacher encouraged her to continue working in this special field of art.

“It’s an excellent way to change my disposition,” Jung Yun said. “If I’m angry or sad, I can help myself just by designing my next ceramic work.” These words reflect Jung Yun’s positive attitude. Her passion for ceramics allows her to change and improve her feelings. She doesn’t need to do anything special or difficult or to look for a special place with special things; her mind can be transported in her ceramic world.

Jung Yun likes to work in a particular style. She makes ceramic dishes reminiscent of traditional Korean tableware. She uses various materials and colors, but her favorite material is clay and she likes to make her own colors to decorate her pieces.

I have never had the opportunity to see and enjoy her work as some people have, for example, her mother, who displays her daughter’s work in her living room, but I would like to see it.
—Alexandra Zapata, Colombia
Personal Portraits
— a few of our favorite things —

Mauricio Morocho

After I knocked on his door, I heard him calling out my name. It was Mauricio, from Ecuador. His pronunciation of my Korean name was perfect, so I started our interview with a smile.

Mauricio likes to climb mountains. He has enjoyed this sport for seven years. The highest mountain he has climbed is 7000 meters high. (Wow!) Like many other South Americans, he also likes soccer. Other sports he enjoys are mountain biking, squash, and swimming. Here in Columbia, he is especially enjoying playing squash with his EPI friend Fatih. He also likes to watch movies. He recommends the movie Life Is Beautiful to everyone at EPI. He said that people can cry and laugh at the same time watching this movie.

Mauricio lives with three Asian roommates (Korean, Japanese, and Chinese). He said that they always eat rice every day and that they like spicy food. They are kind to him, and he likes them. He really seems to enjoy life with EPI’s international students.

For four weeks after coming here, Mauricio experienced a little culture shock. When he greets a woman in Ecuador, he always kisses her on the cheek, but here, he can’t. He can just say “hi” or shake hands. And he has found that American students are so independent. In Ecuador, students usually spend a lot of time with their family and live together with their parents to stay close to them. Here, however, the situation is very different. Many American students want to distance themselves from their family as soon as possible. This is amazing to Mauricio. I was also struck by this difference in attitude toward the family because the family situation in Korea is similar to that in Ecuador.

Mauricio wants to get his master’s degree in business at a U.S. university, so he is studying hard. Hearing how fluent his English is, I think that he will be successful in achieving his goal.
— Ji-Hae Park, Korea

Eun Young Baek and Hong Suk Ahn

One day, my classmates and I were receiving a lesson from Dick as usual when into the classroom came two new faces. They were two new students who were joining us a few days after the beginning of the term. When I first saw them, I could tell that they were from Korea, but I didn’t know that they were husband and wife.

Eun Young and Hong Suk have come here to study in graduate school. Eun Young has already gotten an admission and Hong Suk is waiting for his. Eun Young, who wants to be a professor, was teaching college students as a part-time lecturer before coming here. Hong Suk was working for a financial company. After EPI, they are going to move to Indiana to study at Purdue University.

Eun Young and Hong Suk first met when they were introduced to each other by a mutual friend in 1997. They soon realized that they had a common goal: they both wanted to study in the USA. So, they could understand each other well. They got married just nine months after they met.

Eun Young told me that Hong Suk’s good points are that he is kind, gentle, and not conservative. He always prepares breakfast and lunch for her. What a nice guy! She complained, though, that she had to take care of him because he can sometimes be careless like a child. But she looked happy as she talked to me about him. When I asked her about their happiest moment together since they had gotten married, she told me about a memorable evening last winter. After work, she went home, and Hong Suk came out to greet her as she arrived. It was not any special anniversary day, so when they stepped into their apartment she was surprised because he had prepared wine, candlelight, and a bouquet for her. The special occasion was just that it was the first day of snow that winter. She said that she was really happy and that she would never forget that day. No wonder Eun Young and Hong Suk are each other’s favorite person!

In a few years, Eun Young and Hong Suk plan to have a baby. If the baby resembles them, he or she will be really lovely!
— Jung Yun Park, Korea
Stories & Poems

Jee-Young Park    Korea
Ana Munoz         Spain
Ayumi Hamanaka    Japan
Tomoko Tokunaga   Japan
Chen-Hsien Pai    Taiwan
Akiko Inamura     Japan
Alexandra Zapata  Colombia
Dick Holmes       USA
Gizelda Morais    Brazil
Daehun Lee        Korea
Akiko Nagakura    Japan
Jung Yun Park     Korea
Yoshiko Koga      Japan
Khaled Al-Bouloshi Kuwait
Eun Young Baek    Korea
Maria Leticia Andueza Venezuela
Break Your Rule
Jee-Young Park
Korea

When I was a young girl, I was shy and quiet. At school, I sat in the classroom so quietly that my presence was hardly noticed. I never talked to people until they spoke to me first. One day, though, I made something happen.

It was Children’s Day, and I went to a department store with my cousin and my aunt. Inside this department store, there were some small, elegant fountains and an open stage where events could be held. We had arrived just in time for a special event being held there that day. “Horangnabi Dance Contest!” a poster announced, and on the stage were a few entertainers that I had seen on TV. At that time, Horangnabi was the most popular dance in Korea. It had been made famous by singer Hung Guk Kim, who sang “Horangnabi” and accompanied the song with an awkward dance. It wasn’t a nice, charming dance; the movements in it were ridiculously odd and clumsy—one of the reasons that everybody liked it.

Suddenly, as I passed by the stage, it occurred to me that I was supposed to take part in the contest. My participation seemed mandatory to me, though I didn’t know why. So, I told my aunt that I was going to join the contest. The competition was limited to children, and I was a middle school student, but I just ignored the eligibility rule because I felt a kind of destiny compelling me to dance. Even though I felt ashamed and strange and I didn’t know what I was doing there, I just knew I had to show my original Horangnabi dance.

Gathered around the stage were a lot of spectators looking at me and the other participants, mostly young boys. I was the only tall girl on the stage. I felt timid, but I was determined to do my best. At last, when the music was turned on, I began my struggling dance moves. In one part of the song, especially, I danced as if I was about to fall down, and people gave me big cheers.

When the contest was finished, I was awarded first prize. I received several gifts and took some pictures with the entertainers, including Hung Guk Kim. I will never forget that day when I smiled shyly among those celebrities, my face turning red for a long time.

Now, as I recollect that special moment, I still don’t know where all that sudden courage came from to a bashful girl like me. Afterwards, I didn’t tell anyone about the contest for two years—even my best friend—because I felt embarrassed about it. But I am sure that I gained a little confidence in myself from the experience.

What happened to me that day shows that people may have some potential that even they themselves don’t recognize. I think my situation was like many similar situations that could emerge or have already emerged in your life. If you face a challenge at the proper time, your hidden ability will come out and surprise everybody, even you! Don’t prejudge yourself. Don’t limit your ability in advance. Don’t say, “I am this or that kind of person” or “I know I can’t do it.” Why not break your prejudice about yourself? Nobody knows what kind of person you are. ☐
As usual, Carlos finished his work at noon and headed for the small café on the corner. On the way, he looked at the people who were crossing the street. He liked to observe them and imagine what their problems, their work, their lives were like. Every day, he took the same way to the café, so he often met the same people again and again.

He arrived at the café at 12:15 p.m., as he did every day, and sat down at the same table, with the same person, his girlfriend. They had met each other ten years before, in their first year of high school. They had been a friendly, fun-loving couple during high school; a passionate, loving one while studying the same major at the same college; and now they were just one more couple with a busy, routine life. They worked at the same bank but in different offices, but every day they kept their appointment for lunch.

Carla would always already be sitting there when he arrived. As usual, he kissed her as she smartened up his tie. But on that day, Carlos was distracted and felt a little uncomfortable. He couldn’t stop thinking of what had just happened to him on the way to the café, something out of the ordinary. He had taken the same way he always did. As usual, he had left his office at noon and started to walk along the street. He was crossing the second street when something hit him in the face. It was a page of a newspaper that, blowing in the wind, had flown into his face and stuck to it. He was startled, but he soon recovered his composure and thought that it would be good to have something to read along the way.

When he stopped at the traffic light, he took a look at the piece of newspaper he had happened upon. It was the last page, the personal ads section. He didn’t usually read this section, but today it seemed to be the easiest way to entertain himself while he waited for the light to change. He fixed his eyes and read: “Hello! Are you bored with your life? Do you do the same things, at the same time, every day? Do you have a routine life? I have just discovered that I’m this kind of person, and now I’m trying to avoid this boring way of life. So, I propose that you too escape to another place, to another life, and just try to find some good reasons for living. If you want to escape with me, just send a message to this desperately bored woman.”

When the light changed, he threw away the newspaper and continued walking. But for some reason the words of that ad he had read, especially the words routine and bored, kept coming back to mind. All through lunch, he couldn’t think of anything else. Suddenly, all his life was passing before his eyes. The last three years seemed like a photocopy. He couldn’t remember the last special day, the last party, the last meeting with friends. He and Carla’s lives had become like those of fifty-year-olds, though they were just twenty-six.

After lunch, back in his office, he returned to his thoughts on the same matter, and finally, before leaving work, he decided to go for it and sent a message to the woman who had written the ad: “Yes, I have a routine life. Every day I do the same things, in the same places, with the same people. I have just realized that I’m not very happy with my life, so why not try to find new things that will make it better? I would like to meet you. Let’s have coffee this evening.”
Routine...

He hadn’t thought out any of these words. He had just begun to write and this was the result. Of course, immediately after he sent the message, he realized that he had just thrown all his values out the window and greatly complicated his quiet, peaceful, and...yes, he remembered, his **boring** life. He decided to go through with it.

Nearing the café that evening, he was very nervous and felt as if there were a dozen small animals jumping around inside his stomach. At the door, though, he stopped thinking about what would happen or how he would explain things to his girlfriend. He just entered the café, and as he and the woman had planned in their second round of messages he found her waiting for him at the corner of the bar. Seeing her from behind, he could already tell that she was beautiful. As he walked over to her, he began to feel that the situation was strangely familiar to him.

Suddenly, all the little animals stopped jumping. His mind flashed white. The woman turned, and he hurtled back in time to ten years before. His beautiful mystery woman was none other than his girlfriend Carla!

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**To Ahlam,**

**Ahlam, trust me. You can do what you’ve been planning to do for a long time, and I still challenge you.**

**By the way, thank you for being our alarm. Without you, I would’ve missed all my classes!**

Hoping that you get better soon,

: ) (me)

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**Today is the first day of the ballet performance, and morning sunshine calmly streams through the windows of the drill hall, where it finds a lone ballerina. In the bright halo surrounding her, particles of dust slowly drift. It is as if time has almost stopped.**

**Sitting on a wooden chair, she is putting on her toe shoes. She wears a practice white tutu and has her hair tightly done up as usual. She has come here to collect herself and practice before the performance. Although her role is small and her turns are few, she feels a lot of pressure because no matter how many times she tries she always makes a little error at the same point. Her failure is so small that no one but her notices. In others’ eyes, she dances perfectly. Nevertheless, she is still not satisfied with her performance.**

**Though the audience might not notice her failure and might not pay much attention to her small role, she is going to continue practicing in this quiet drill hall so that she can do her best.**

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**Dear CS50,**

I am really proud of this class!! You were nervous but you worked hard, made some beautiful posters and gave excellent speeches to the elementary school students at Conder Elementary School... and the kids understood your English and asked questions!! You should be proud of yourselves! Giving a speech is hard enough in your own language, but you did it in English! I have really enjoyed you, and I will miss you!! I hope I will see many of you next quarter, but if not, I hope we can keep in touch through e-mail. Don’t forget your password sentence!

Your teacher,

Mr. Rice
A Small Pink Petal

Tomoko Tokunaga
Japan

One day as I left my house to go to school, I felt something unusual in the air. The breeze was so warm and touched my cheek softly. Closing my eyes and taking a deep breath, I realized, without even looking, that the cherry trees had bloomed. Winter had gone, and a new wonderful season had come.

There are so many cherry trees in my hometown, especially in my neighborhood. Cherry blossoms have delighted Japanese people for centuries, and I am an eternal lover of these special flowers. Clustered together, they form big pink balls on top of their trunks. They are truly gorgeous.

I think one of the reasons I love cherry blossoms so much is that my birthday comes during cherry blossom season. My mother told me that maybe the first scene I saw leaving the hospital in her arms after my birth was a cherry tree full of sweet-smelling blossoms.

With a start, I opened my eyes and checked the time. 7:30, my watch said.

"Hurry up, Tomoko!" I prompted myself. "You are always daydreaming."

I rode my bicycle to my best friend Chiaki's house, and we rode our bikes together to the train station, trying not to get our new uniforms dirty. The previous winter, we had graduated from elementary school, and that April we had enrolled in junior high school. We loved our new uniforms. Their combination of a dark red bow with a dark blue one-piece dress made us look like little women. We weren't little kids anymore!

By this time, after the first week at my new school, I had gotten used to my new school life, though at first the difference educational system surprised me. In elementary school, only one teacher had taught us all subjects, but in this new school we had a different teacher for each subject.

It took about twenty minutes by train to get to our school, located at the top of a hill. I glanced at the name of the station as we got off the train: "Skylark's Hill and House of Flowers."

"What a nice name for such a beautiful day!" I thought.

During math class, I was struggling to get my poor brain to solve some difficult problems when one of my classmates handed me a folded piece of paper. I opened it very carefully and read the message inside. It was a note from Chiaki, sitting in a back corner of the classroom.

Dear Tomo,

It's such a wonderful day isn't it? We should do something don't you think? After school, let's go on a picnic, okay? And let's not forget to bring along my favorite cookies and potato chips (plain flavor)!!

Bye,
Chiaki

The dancing words of her note expressed her excitement so perfectly. I turned around and winked at her. She smiled back. I didn't care about pluses, minuses, and percentages anymore! My feelings had already flown away to our after-school picnic.

After school, we bought cookies, potato chips, and juice and headed for a place we knew very well. There was nothing special about the place, but it was one of our favorite spots. It consisted of a small bench beside a road with a big cherry tree overhanging the bench as if to protect it. We went there every time we had something to share with each other. I had cried under that tree when I was broken-hearted about my boyfriend, and
A Small Pink Petal...

she had listened to me with her tears. Another time, when she had run away from home after an argument with her parents, I met her at that place. It may have been nothing special to other people, but it was dear to us.

"Wow!" we said in unison.

We held our breath as we gazed at the cherry blossoms from inside the huge soft pink ball covering us. There was a lot of bad news in the society around us at that time, and everything seemed tainted. But at that moment we felt that this wonderful natural refuge had cleansed us of everything unreasonable in society. We didn’t talk much. We just enjoyed the silence and peace together. We felt so pure and clean.

"It’s time to go to bed!"

I had just finished doing my homework when I heard Mom’s voice from downstairs. She had never told me, “Study!” but she liked to say, “Go to bed!”

“Okay, okay,” I murmured.

“Even if I go to the USA someday, I’m sure my mom will call me every night to say that.”

I sighed and looked over at my bed. There was something on it. I went over to it and found a small pink petal of a cherry blossom.

“How did this get here?” I wondered. “I didn’t open the window today.”

I picked up the colorful petal and kept looking at it for a while. My heart warmed, and I thought, “Well, this is the perfect ending to the day!”

I smiled and placed my mysterious petal in my secret diary.

Mueller has been a weaver for forty years, the best one in his hometown. Proud of his excellent skill and products, he intends to continue doing his weaving until the end of his life.

Tonight, however, after working hard at the loom for ten hours today, he feels anxious for some reason about the work that has accompanied him for the last forty years. What is his purpose, his motivation, he asks himself, in working so hard at this monotonous job?

He stops working and lights a cigarette for the first time since he quit smoking a couple of years ago. Standing beside the window and looking out into the darkness, he searches for an answer. The world keeps changing, but his life, like an unwound clock, doesn’t. Suddenly he feels very distraught about his life. But what can he do about it?

He refuses to think about it any longer and retires to the bedroom. There he lights a candle and gazes down at his wife and children, sound asleep, snoring in their beds.

His eyes fill with tears now that he has once again understood the purpose of his struggle.

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The Weaver

Chen-Hsien Pai
Taiwan

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It is 1892 and there is a dance party at the Moulin Rouge in Paris. People have gathered there to talk, drink, and dance. They will be staying at the party all night long and forgetting their ordinary, workaday lives.

Two women are dancing to the music, and six old people are sitting around a big table talking with each other about the good old days.

Next to their table is a woman sitting by herself. She is well-dressed and beautiful, but she isn’t talking with anyone. She is alone.

The next day, she will be going to work as usual. She is always very reliable and helpful. Everyone depends on her. So she supposes that she must be happy.

Yet whenever she visits this place, she asks herself, “What do I want? I must be satisfied with everything. I have plenty of money to buy anything. I lack only love. Nobody loves me. But I don’t need love. It bores me. But...”

She can’t seem to realize that she needs to love someone, that she is waiting for something new. In a busy place like this, she feels lonely, but she likes to come here and raise her glass to herself. A lot of glasses hanging from the ceiling reflect her image. She asks herself the same questions over and over and keeps staring at her face in the glasses.
Listening to Nature
Alexandra Zapata
Colombia

What’s it like,
listening to nature? he asked her.

She awoke from her ecstasy and slowly turned
to rest her eyes on him, whose gaze stayed
waiting for her, for her answer.

It’s like listening to God, she said.
We can understand the Love of God
if we can appreciate the beauty of his creations.
Life is a gift from God.
It has a lot of ways to manifest itself.
Sometimes the noise is so loud
we can’t feel it, can’t hear it,
but in the silence,
in the wind swinging the leaves of the trees,
God offers his concert,
and our ears can wonder at that.

Happiness
Akiko Inamura
Japan

I’m wondering what happiness is. Is it
to become rich or to realize a dream? I know
that these things are a part of happiness, but
they don’t last forever. We all want to be
happy. But when am I happy?

When I overlook a beautiful scene, I’m
purely impressed by the scenic beauty.
When I breathe in fresh morning air, my
heart is filled with gratitude for a nice day.
When I meet a wonderful person, I’m
naturally able to give some kindness to
people.
I realize that I can be happy from such
little things. So, I’m happy now.

Words Fall
Dick Holmes
USA

Words fall
from the
sky and
gather in
ripping pools
at our
feet. We
jump in
and splash
around until
the full
moon calls
us home.

Discovery
Gizelda Morais
Brazil

My hand is eternal
my fingers search in space
fish in the dark
quickly they touch one body
break the ice of the ages
burst into a million pieces
and end.

Your Eyes
Daehun Lee
Korea

Inside my head
everything turns into your eyes.
You are all the mystery
of seasons and moonlight.

Your face like spring, your eyes
like summer, your voice like fall,
your lips like winter—
all are flying in my burning heart.
I'm Getting
Akiko Nagakura
Japan

I'm getting something.
It never says hello to me.
I want to keep what I have inside me.

I'm losing something.
It never says good-bye to me.
I want to keep what I lose inside me.

I don't know what I'm getting and losing.
I don't know when I'm getting and losing.

I'm getting . . .

Hmmm . . .
Dick Holmes
USA

Okay, suppose it's like this . . .
Suppose God is some higher-order,
disembodied Brain
poring over the vast
computer screen of space and time.
For thousands of years, say,
God's been working on
a file entitled "humanity;"
and now S/he's ready for a rest,
so S/he decides to quit
and kick back in Hawaii for a while.
And so S/he hits the close box,
and on comes the question
"Save before closing?"
and the options "Yes" and "No."
"Hmmm . . . to save or not to save,"
God muses, "good question . . .
It's been a lot of work,
but I could let it all go,
start fresh when I get back,
maybe come up with some
new angles, more
comprehensive solutions . . .
But then I'd lose the chance
to see where all this is going,
what might become of everyone . . .
Hmmm . . ."

If I Were a Cloud
Chen-Hsien Pai
Taiwan

If I were a cloud,
I could go anywhere I wanted.
There would be no desert on earth
due to my tears. Actually,
I couldn't go anywhere I wanted
because my tears would flood
every place I passed through.
I would have to suppress my emotions so that
the world wouldn't suffer any more
than it was already suffering.

Ode to Love
Jung Yun Park
Korea

Your magnificent ability to see
is a perfect match
for my ability to hear
and together we'll be eyes and ears
to each other
like tree and soil.

And the Bird Flew
to my daughter on her 21st birthday
Gizelda Morales
Brazil

A little bird in my hands grew
She ate, she drank, she slept
One day, opening her wings, she flew
And the fetters only of her I kept
In the morning, the sea is quiet and calm. A few sailboats haven't had their sails put up yet, and only one big vessel has sailed far from the port. White buildings line the other side of the bay.

Several men are working in this small port. All of them wear caps or bandannas on their heads. Some are carrying hemp bags, and others are bent over at the waist to deal with some especially heavy bags. Still others are just standing around, talking with each other about their work and families. They are getting ready to go to work, but at the moment they aren't busy. They are simply enjoying themselves in the beautiful morning.

The sunlight is not strong, but it is bright, imbuing the scene with shades of orange and purple. The sky is light blue and the sea a darker blue. The blue water and the white roads are shining.

The port is not crowded yet, but the sounds of the men's work and talk slowly crescendo. It is going to be a very hot and busy day.

A summer night. The moon and the stars trying to make people forget the heat and the power of the sun, who until a few hours ago was so intensely present. Little by little, people come to forget the hard day of work and heat, and they begin to relax, to feel free.

Everything seems quiet, but at the same time you can hear and feel the night. You can hear the cicadas, the sound of people's steps and voices.

It would seem that the day is dying, but actually you can feel that people are coming alive. It would seem that it is dark, but actually you can feel the light of the moon and the shining of the stars illuminating people's eyes.

On the corner is a small café terrace. Inside, many tables, many chairs, many people, many dreams, many worries, many stories. Just a few meters away, along the street, life is running. Everybody has a place in this night. Everybody has a star to share happiness or sadness with. You cannot feel alone.

Facing the terrace are a lot of houses. And one little shop window, contemplating, in silence, how life in that street changes.

... For one short moment time seems not to pass. You can feel that this scene will always be like this. However, only a few hours later, the moon and the stars leave, and with them all the dreams, all the hopes...

A new day has begun. The heat and the work have returned...

It's the end of freedom.
I was watching TV without any interest and thinking how boring my summer vacation had become when my mom cheered me up with some good news. She was going to travel to Back-Du mountain in North Korea, she said, and she wanted me to go with her. I wasn’t particularly excited about the destination she had in mind, but I was happy to leave home to go anywhere, so I agreed to travel with her.

Because of the political situation dividing South and North Korea, we wouldn’t be able to enter North Korea directly by crossing our mutual border. We would have to enter through China. And once we were in North Korea, we wouldn’t be allowed to go everywhere in the country. We would be able to go only to certain parts where visitors were permitted by the North Korean government. Many South Koreans want to go further into North Korea, especially the people who have hometowns there, but this is prohibited.

After we arrived in Youn-Byun, China, we headed for Back-Du mountain by bus. The bus trip was terrible. We were traveling through an undeveloped area of North Korea, so there was no paved road. We had to suppress the churning in our stomachs. And the filthiness of every rest stop along the way made me angry. The only thing I liked about the place was the people. They were so pure. They were poor, but they worked very hard.

At last, we arrived at Back-Du mountain. I hadn’t imagined how beautiful it would be. We walked up to the top of the mountain, where a majestic vision awaited us. Chun-ji, the mountain’s crater, was so amazing that I couldn’t breathe. Everybody there was breathless.

I saw tears on the faces of the older generation present. They said they had waited for this moment for thirty years. Some of them had been parted from family and friends because of the Korean War. They were no doubt thinking of them as they tearfully gazed at Chun-ji.

I could understand their feelings. Chun-ji’s atmosphere made us all solemn. It was like magic. The crater disappeared and reappeared suddenly in the fog, so we had to catch the moment to take a picture. Standing before Chun-ji, I realized again nature’s greatness. Anything made by humans can’t compete with the purity and mystery of nature. Chun-ji’s calm, breezy silence filled us with awe. Perhaps I will never forget that sight and the feeling it inspired in me.

As my mother and I walked down from Chun-ji, I hoped for the unity of our country. And now I am still hoping that someday South Koreans will be able to go to Chun-ji freely, whenever they want to go there.
The Plunge

Yoshiko Koga
Japan

Most people’s image of the homeless is of people who suffer from starvation, exposure, and isolation; who never have a conversation with other people; who just stay on the street not thinking anything or thinking only about food and money. I had the same image of the homeless before going to Washington D.C. with a group of USC students to study homelessness and do community service for the homeless, but I found that the homeless are very different from the stereotype people have of them.

The first thing we were to do in this group project was to live like homeless people for a few days—to take “the plunge,” as it is called, into homelessness—so that we could understand the situation of the homeless. We all agreed that this part of the program was crazy. “We already know how terrible homelessness is,” I thought, “or we can guess.” But I knew that we couldn’t really understand the situation and feelings of the homeless without having any actual experience like theirs, so I decided to go along with the program.

Before becoming “homeless,” we received orientation from the National Coalition for the Homeless (NCH), which organizes the plunge experience. The organizer warned us that we might be arrested by the police or be sexually harassed by the homeless. After hearing these warnings, I was scared and hesitated to go through with the project. But I felt that I had no choice. I just had to do it.

Wearing old clothes, our group rode the subway to the place where we would take the plunge. How weird it was! The other passengers on the subway stared at us as if we were very strange. I was so ashamed. I wanted to quit already.

After arriving at the place, we followed a homeless man who knew the town very well and was a kind of leader among the homeless. He introduced us to his homeless friends. I was nervous because I had never talked with homeless people before, but they were very nice to me, as if they were friends of mine. “Nice to meet you,” they said. “What’s your name?” “Where are you from?” etc. One of them even embraced me. I was so surprised by them. I couldn’t believe that these people were homeless.

Then they took us to a place where we could get some food. It was like a scene on TV in which the homeless are waiting in line for food. As we waited in line, I felt an indescribable emotion. I was not actually homeless, but there I was waiting for food with the homeless. An organization for the homeless gave us a cup of hot soup and enough bread to keep us from getting hungry that night.

After our meal together, we went back out into the street. Smiling, my new homeless friends told us a lot of stories—where they were from, how long they had been in D.C., what they had done before they became homeless, etc. As we were talking with them, I realized that they were not depressed by their situation. They preferred to feel proud of themselves. They often repeated their motto: “I refuse to have a bad day!” They also got us to repeat the sentence, so I’ll never forget it. I was so impressed with them. If I were a real homeless person, I wouldn’t want to talk with anybody. I would be depressed by the situation, just as I had always assumed homeless people felt.

When it was time to sleep, my homeless friends gave me some blankets that I could make a bed with. In spite of those blankets, it was too cold to sleep. And remembering what the organizer had told us at the orientation—that it was dangerous on the street at night—I was very scared. Even though a homeless man watched over us to ensure our safety while we tried to sleep, I couldn’t sleep. I just hoped for dawn to come quickly. At almost 6 a.m., another homeless man woke us up and told us it was time for breakfast. I was so glad to hear his voice. Now I really understood how horrible homelessness was. I didn’t want to sleep on the street again. I had had enough of the homelessness experience to understand it.

At the breakfast center, we found a large assortment of foods
awaiting us—corn flakes, cakes, juice, coffee, milk, pancakes, hot dogs, green beans, etc. I was surprised at all the food available. The homeless could have a heartier breakfast there than most people had in their homes.

The night before, a homeless man had shown me a card listing the many places where the homeless could get food, clothes, blankets, and medical care. I think that despite the underlying horror of homelessness the lives of the homeless in D.C. are absolutely fulfilled. They can live there without homes and jobs because of all these satisfying services. Of course, support services are good and the homeless need them to survive. But I can’t agree with the practice of providing such fulfilling street services; this only makes more homeless people. Rather than overdoing street services, the government needs to organize projects that don’t encourage homelessness. For example, it should increase employment opportunities for the homeless and provide inexpensive shelters and apartments for them.

To keep warm during the wintertime, as it was then, our homeless friends usually headed for museums and libraries after breakfast, they told us. We had to do the same that morning because it began to snow and it was too cold to stay outside. If I had had a house where I could stay and relax during the snow, I could have enjoyed it. Usually, I like snow because it’s very beautiful, but on that day I couldn’t get myself to appreciate it. And I didn’t know where I was going to be able to sleep that night. I was definitely homeless and hopeless. How could I enjoy the day? When I went to museums, I just stayed there to keep warm and take a rest. I fell asleep in one museum because I was so tired. I must have looked like a real homeless person.

In the evening it was still snowing. We decided to spend the night in a shelter for the homeless. Before going there, I thought it would at least be more comfortable than being outside. In fact, it was warmer and we did get a delicious dinner there, but it was a terrible place. Another homeless guest in the room we were to stay shouted at us as we entered, “Don’t come here! Stay over there!” I didn’t understand her territorial attitude. She wanted to draw a line separating her space from ours. It was really disturbing to stay in that place. We stayed there just to sleep, without talking with anyone.

Despite that terrible experience, I learned one thing: I understood why the homeless don’t like to stay in shelters. How uncomfortable it was to stay there! The homeless want to enjoy their lives and have a good time with their friends, so they prefer to stay on the street even though it’s too cold to sleep.

The next morning we walked and walked to keep warm because there was still snow on the street. And again we went to museums to warm up. Fortunately, in D.C. there are many museums that people can enter without paying. I was very thankful for them. If it hadn’t been for them, we would have had to stay outside. I realized that if there weren’t such places to go, the homeless would probably die from exposure, especially in the wintertime.

After visiting several museums, I was exhausted, physically and mentally. “I don’t want to be a homeless person anymore!” I thought. It was so hard. And yet after my little plunge into homelessness, I would be able to go home and eat anything I wanted. I would be able to relax in my room. But the real homeless can’t do these things. They don’t know whether they will ever have a home and enough money to really enjoy their lives or not. They might be permanently homeless. I really feel sorry for them.

Now that I’m back home again, I often reflect on my precious experience among the homeless and wonder what I can do for them. Maybe one of the best things I can do is to share my experience and conclusions with those who haven’t had such an experience so that they can get beyond the stereotype and see the real people that homeless people are. When people imagine the homeless, they often think of them as dirty and stinky. Some people may think they are lazy because they don’t work even if they are able to work. This image may be true in many cases, but they are also human beings. They have the same feelings the rest of us do. They need the warmth of our feelings because they are isolated. They don’t have family to support them. Even though they have good friends among other homeless people, they need our tenderness—especially homeless children. Please don’t discriminate against them. If you have a chance to meet them, don’t be afraid of them. They are probably friendly. Please give them your smile and sweetness. And if you have money, please give them a dollar or even a penny. They can use the money to buy at least a hot drink that can keep them warm for a while.
The Necessity of Wholeness
Eun Young Baek
Korea

There are days when I would like to wander around
looking for you, another half of mine to come,
but I know you have to remain hidden from me for now,
like a pearl in a shell,
because you need time to mature.

If I Were Water
Akiko Nagakura
Japan

If I were water,
I would like to gush from a spring.
I would run through the forest
singing with the birds.
I would continue traveling
for a long, long way,
until I reached the sea.

Where It Comes From
Maria Leticia Andueza
Venezuela

Where it comes from
is not a dream,
it is the truth.
How strange a voice is!
It is as near as it is far.

Where it is,
where it is going,
where I can find it—
all a mystery.

As real as
the trees in the garden,
the stars in the sky,
your eyes in my mind.