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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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Making a foreign place your home away from home is an important part of acquiring a second language. This section offers articles about students' experiences and cultural perceptions here at EPI.

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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 Ads
Check the personal ads scattered throughout the magazine and you may discover that someone is looking for just what you have to offer. Ads by Wilaiaphan Penny Phattaro, Thailand; Brian Kim, Korea; Karine Khachatryan, Armenia; Seung Chan Lee, Korea; Yasuhiro Hori, Japan; Dick Holmes, USA; In Seon Jeon, Korea; Andry Razafimanantsoa, Madagascar; Hiroko Nagai, Japan; Tuy Sheung Cristina Chiang, Venezuela; Natsuki Nakamura, Japan; Maria Fernanda Gallardo, Ecuador; Minako Ogura, Japan; You-Na Kim, Korea; Davide Franzoni, Italy—among other contributors who wish to remain anonymous.
Editor’s Note

It’s been a great pleasure working with the writers and artists of this issue. Like every other issue of Sunrise, this one has become special to me, both for its creative individual expression and its fruitful mingling of minds. We hope you’ll enjoy reading it!

Dick Holmes

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Around the World

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In Seon Jeon  Korea
I live in a very lovely historical city called Puebla, Mexico. Puebla is a modern city with antique colonial buildings, lots of nice restaurants, and very popular cafes where intellectuals and friends meet to talk. The downtown area is always crowded with people shopping, tourists wandering around, and students skipping class.

For some tourists, especially for older, peaceful, intellectual people, my city is ideal. But for the more adventurous, there is a tiny, picturesque indigenous mountain town 183 kilometers from Puebla city in the sierra of Puebla called Cuetzalan, which means “the land of the Quetzal birds.” This small town lies at the heart of many indigenous villages in the region. Cuetzalan is for outdoors people who enjoy hiking and discovering places full of nature and culture.

Situated in the middle of the wet, tropical mountain forest of the sierra, Cuetzalan has many impressive natural sites, such as long, beautiful waterfalls. To get to this warm little town, you have to hike through the forest and climb some big hills. However, it is worth it when you get to the waterfalls. There you can swim in clear, fresh water, admiring the beautiful majesty of nature and feeling the peace of the water endlessly falling. And you can explore long, natural caves with their interior rivers, stalactites, and stalagmites. There are a lot of strange, interesting legends about these caves.

Cuetzalan is also a town full of color and traditions. The streets are paved with stones, and the houses are white with red roofs. There are also some houses made of stone and furnished with traditional wooden furniture. The houses of the indigenous people are made of modest wood or sticks.

Indigenous Totonaca men wear the traditional white suit and sandals called *huaraches*. Women wear a white suit with an embroidered blouse and belt; a white or blue huipil, an ornamental over-blouse; and a colorful turban.

Every year in October, all the neighboring villages meet in Cuetzalan to share their traditions. The most representative event held at this time is a traditional dance called “the flying dancers.” Five dancers climb a tall tree trunk, at the top of which is a small platform where one by one they dance. While the fifth one dances and plays a drum and flute, the other four tie ropes around their waist and then jump off the trunk to fly like birds pending from the ropes until they reach the ground.

This extremely dangerous tradition, along with all the other special features of Cuetzalan, attracts a lot of tourists to this small, interesting town.
A Goukon is a special kind of mixer party common among Japanese people in their 20s and 30s. The aim of a Goukon is a little different from that of an American mixer, in that the explicit purpose of a Goukon is to match men and women. Especially on Friday nights, after finishing class at the university or work at their companies, a group of young Japanese people sometimes plan a Goukon and then go out together to downtown night spots.

A Goukon is organized by a couple who, in the process of getting acquainted with each other, gather together some interested friends of theirs for the party. The rule is that the initiating couple have to select the same number of men and women to join them. For example, if the man invites three other men to the party, the woman in turn invites three women. If the number of men and women were unequal, the situation would be awkward.

The first part of a Goukon takes place in an Izakaya, a kind of Japanese bar without music or dancing space that provides only food and alcoholic drinks. There we introduce each other. In general, everyone is a little quiet and shy at first, but after spending some time together, we become acquainted and more comfortable with each other. We keep talking and drinking in the Izakaya for a couple of hours. Since all the invited participants hope to get a boyfriend or girlfriend at the party, the time spent together in the Izakaya is very important.

After leaving the Izakaya, we go to a Karaoke, which, as many foreigners know nowadays, is a place where we can sing along with music. In the Karaoke, we can get better acquainted by singing together. Around midnight, as the time to go back home approaches, we leave the Karaoke.

At this time, if some of the men have found women they like, they ask them for their phone numbers so that they can make another date with them.

At a Goukon, there is always the potential for new couples to get together, though it's not common that they actually materialize. As you know, it's not easy to get a boyfriend or girlfriend, even if you like someone.

Japanese people are said to be very shy and quiet, and I can agree with this characterization. At parties, many of us hesitate to talk or dance with someone we've never talked with before. So, a Goukon is an effective way for Japanese people to meet and date each other, whether it brings about new couples or not.

I've been to lots of parties with my friends since I came here, and every one of them has made me very happy. Unlike a lot of other Japanese people, who tend to feel out of place at foreign or American-style parties, I enjoy dancing, talking, and drinking with my friends at such parties. But like everyone else, Japanese people want to enjoy themselves. So, if you have Japanese friends, please plan a Goukon with them, even though it may seem a little restrictive.

If you're still single fifty years from now, will you marry me? Let's get engaged.

Alex@epi.sc.edu
I come from Romania, an ex-Communist European country in which the Communist party held all the power until December 1989. Ceausescu, the Romanian president during the Communist era, dreamed of constructing one of the largest buildings on Earth. Like any other dictator, he loved to make grand decisions, and somehow this dream of his has become a reality.

Right in the middle of Bucharest, the capital of Romania, was a famous, wealthy residential area, Uranus. Under the president’s orders, Uranus disappeared in only a few days. What was left was just a huge vacant space. Soon afterwards, construction of the new building, known as The People’s House, got underway. Since then, the project has proceeded rapidly.

Today, this building—still partially under construction—is the second largest in the world after the United States’ Pentagon. I do not know if The People’s House is visible from the moon’s surface as the Great Wall of China is, but I do know that this was Ceausescu’s intention.

The exterior of the rectangular building is strikingly impressive, featuring grand entrances, each in a different style, on three of its sides. The underground part of the building has a depth similar to that of the Thomas Cooper Library here in Columbia, and the four upper tiers are of varying heights.

For a few years during the initial stages of construction, every other construction project in the country was put on hold, and The People’s House became the National Project. The work force has consisted of hardworking civilians and soldiers, including specialists in the fields of architecture, engineering, decoration, geology, physics, construction, plumbing, etc. This massive building was meant to be a symbol of the victory of socialism, strongest glass that Romania has ever seen. Nuns in their convents have woven and embroidered by hand hundreds of thousands of meters of curtains. Corps officers have used the most advanced military techniques to fortify the building so that it can serve as a shelter in the event of a nuclear attack or a powerful earthquake.

Everything about the building is unique: the work plans; the strategies, techniques, and materials used; the efforts; the enthusiasm; the genius. As staggering as the exterior is, the interior, with its beautiful combination of architectural styles, space, and light, is even more amazing.

The People’s House was designed to be an incomparable work of architecture, and it is. Today, it is no longer a symbol of communism at its highest level, socialism; it is a symbol of the power of the people.
At last, my sister and I were packed and ready to set out on our trip to Jindo, a place in the southernmost part of Korea where many of Korea’s traditional artists reside. A little tense about the trip, we left for Gimpo airport before the sun set. It was only my second time to travel by airplane, but soon my sister and I were flying through the sky without fear. My thoughts began to focus on where we should go first when we got to Jindo.

As soon as we arrived, we got into a taxi and headed for my mother’s friend’s house, where we would be staying in Jindo. Along the way, we got to see some small street performances in which people who looked like actors were selling medicines. Seeing such quaint scenes intrigued me.

We took off our traveling attire at my mother’s friend’s house and headed for the Jindo museum. There on its walls, we found lots of pictures and documents expressing the rich culture of Jindo. The majority of native Jindo people think it is highly valuable to preserve their ancient heritage, and the Korean government encourages preservation efforts, designating the various heritages of the country as cultural assets.

Our second destination was a national theater, where we saw some plays and traditional Korean musicals. Traditional Korean songs are very difficult to learn in big cities. Many of the traditional Korean artists live like hermits in small provinces because their place of residence affects their inspiration. Of course, I had heard a lot of traditional Korean songs before visiting there, but I hadn’t become really interested in such music until I had entered the university, when I started recognizing the nobility of our unique traditions in Korea and became more curious about them. It was this interest that had led me to Jindo.

During our stay in Jindo, we met a lot of the native people through my mother’s friend, our guide. Meeting them became one of my most important memories of Jindo. One of those people, a relative of our guide’s, was a traditional Korean singer named Jinsuk Park. We met him at an international ocean-side park, where we were planning to take a ride on one of the steamboats coming and going intermittently. We couldn’t get on a boat for a while because a heavy fog had set in, so we sat in the park drinking raw rice wine with Mr. Park while we waited.

After lunch, the weather finally cleared up and we boarded a boat. Mr. Park talked about the corruption of jindo culture and of Korean culture in general. After a while on the boat, we arrived on one of a cluster of small islands where a group of Jindo families were living. My sister and I enjoyed meeting them and taking pictures.

Suddenly, one of the elders there closed his eyes and started singing a Jindo folk song. In a moment, everyone gathered around him and began loudly singing along with him. They looked so wonderful, spontaneously singing like that. Most of them were farmers. All the people there except my sister and I had been born there. Even though their voices were not sophisticated, they were full of the passion of their Jindo culture. From arrival to departure, I could hear these good-hearted, artistic people singing continuously. They didn’t seem to care about anything else when they were singing, as if they were actors.

As we were leaving Jindo, my mother’s friend gave me a CD made by one of the traditional Jindo singers. After getting back home, I listened to that CD and was impressed all over again by the depth of his husky voice, and of the Jindo culture in general.

Need information about London and Paris. Have you ever been there?
minakorody@yahoo.co.jp

Tennis, anyone? Terrible player searching for extremely patient partner.
nouagassi@worldnet.com
It's commonly said that Italy is a beautiful country where art, history, and nature come together in an irresistible way. Ever since I started to travel around in my country, I've always found this sort of elegant combination, and I really mean always. From the East to the West, from the North to the South, lots of interesting, historical places can be found in Italy.

Recently, I visited Siena, a graceful little town with less than ten thousand inhabitants. Here nature and history blend in a magnificent hilly scene where rustic eighteenth-century buildings hold a commanding position overlooking the plain. Looking around in this impressive place, I felt that I was breathing almost the same air that the Sienesi of the past had breathed, and I could see for myself the unique way that the Sienesi had lived since the Renaissance.

I was especially interested in learning more about Siena's famous traditional horse race. This annual race, called "The Palio of Siena," is run to determine district superiority in Siena.

Siena is divided into various districts called contrade. Each contrada is represented by a jockey born within its borders. The race consists of riding through the town's dark, narrow cobblestone streets to arrive, in the end, at the concave central square, where the participants complete the race by making five dangerous laps around it. In the past, every kind of aggressive tactic was allowed in the race, and the riders held nothing back because victory meant attaining prestige and power for their contrada during the following year. Nowadays, the Palio is held mainly for the entertainment of tourists, but it remains the desire of each contrada to win a kind of symbolic right to dominate the town.

Picturesque towns like Siena are scattered throughout Italy, and each town has its own history to tell. I want to learn more and more about the lifestyle of ancient Italy, even though I know this is a very difficult goal, because this is my passion.

Looking for spectacular soccer players and dancers like me.
salsa_kid@epi.sc.edu

Pitiful Korean Chinese language student searching for a Chinese conversation partner to avoid getting an "F" in Chinese.
satomi0307@hanmail.net
Spring in My Hometown

My hometown is a mountain district surrounded with flowers—peach blossoms, apricot blossoms, azaleas... They make a picturesque village of flowers. I really miss playing there when I was young...

Have you ever heard these lyrics to the Korean nursery song entitled "Spring in My Hometown?" Most Koreans love this song throughout their lifetime. It's such a sweet and cherished memorial song, composed by a middle school student who lived in Korea during the colonial period. I know a village just like the one in that song, and I invite you there.

I was born in Nam-San-Dai, Korea, in 1980, and I grew up there for twenty years. I can't think of my hometown without thinking of spring. It's not a beautiful village like one that has been beautified for a movie, but it's more valuable to me because I have so many sweet memories of it.

When you hear about Nam-San-Dai, maybe you'll think it's a strange place since it's so old and yet still composed almost entirely of people who have Jeon as a family name. The people of the village don't belong to the same family in the eyes of the law, but we call our neighbors aunt and uncle without hesitation because we know each other in detail just like family or relatives. All the children of the village grow up together like real blood brothers and sisters. During Korean national holidays such as New Year's Day and Ch'usok (the harvest moon festival on the 15th of August by the lunar calendar), a lot of people originally from our village come home and enjoy a "family" reunion with us. Everyone in the village thinks of them as relatives, too. We're always delighted to be reunited with them.

All my memories of Nam-San-Dai are related to my grandfather, whom I love so much. I've been a fortunate recipient of great love from my grandfather. My village friends and I all have beautiful memories of him. Every year in the summer, we often went fishing in the brook that runs around the village. Although we didn't use any special fishing tackle, we always caught a lot of fish, and then my grandfather would cook them up for us in a pepper-pot soup. We would all eat it together outside. What a beautiful memory!

Behind our village, there is a big stone in the heart of the mountain called King Stone. Nobody knows how this stone got its name, but everybody calls it that. It's a beautiful and also strange site, a kind of an outing place for the children of the village. My friends and I went there so many times and enjoyed playing there without any disturbance from our mothers, who were always calling us home to eat dinner.

One day, my friends and I went deeper inside the mountain and found a beautiful, serene place to take a rest. It was so calm, shining, fresh, clean, and undisturbed by human activity. We decided to call that place Garden of Secrets. I often went there by myself to take a long, uninterrupted rest. Whenever I visited Garden of Secrets, I could clean my mind perfectly.

There are a lot of apple trees and peach trees in Nam-San-Dai, just as there are in the song "Spring in My Hometown." I have a recollection about one apple orchard in particular. When I was six years old, my friends and I made a roadside raid on our neighbors' apple orchard. Two of my friends gathered apples while the rest of us stopped cars on the road and handed out apples to the drivers, people we'd never even seen before. I can't understand now why we did such a thing, but that incident remains in my mind as a good memory.

I have so many beautiful memories of my hometown. After moving to a city to enter a university, I often told my college friends about Nam-San-Dai, and they began to yearn for it along with me because they'd all come from big cities. During the summer vacation, they visited my hometown to enjoy it with me. We slept outside in a place where we could see countless stars in the summer sky, and we all felt we were such lucky girls. We saw lots of shooting stars every night. It was hard to close our eyes and go to sleep.
Around Here

Camilo Suarez  Colombia
Hsiu Feng Ou  Taiwan
Ajlan Al-Mansouri  UAE
Camilo Villafrade  Colombia
Gonzalo Gallegos  Peru
Margaret Perkins  USA
Wilaiphan Penny Phattaro  Thailand
Maria Fernanda Gallardo  Ecuador
EPI from the Point of View of a Latin American Professional

Camilo Suarez
Colombia

Studying English abroad has been one of the main objectives in my life ever since I graduated from the university eighteen years ago. After graduation, however, time passed, I got married, and children came. Every day the chance to pursue my goal of studying English lessened. But then one day something happened that helped awaken my goal from its slumber: I got a job working for a huge American company (Cargill). Once again, it became clear to me that I had to improve my English. That was more than five years ago, and now at last I’m making my dream come true, studying English here sponsored by my company.

At first, my new life at EPI wasn’t as easy as I’d thought it would be. As in undergoing any other important change, there were things that I had to adjust to. And the most difficult sacrifice to be made wasn’t mine but my family’s. My wife and my three children, who stayed behind in Colombia, had to adapt to their new situation without me. My wife had to learn how to take care of household financial matters that I had always managed. Of my children, the one who had the most difficulty was my seven-year-old son, whose problems were soon reflected in his school work. However, my wife and children were eventually able to adjust and to resume their normal life.

But why did I want to study English? Why didn’t I just stay in Colombia, doing my job and my usual activities? My main reason in coming here for English development was to enable myself to get better job opportunities in my company, perhaps even in its foreign branches. For my family and me, English is an important tool in attaining a better future, just as it is for many other people around the world.

At the present moment, I’ve completed more than 60% of the term and I can say that the experience couldn’t be better. I’ve returned to my studies after eighteen years and managed to find again the way to study efficiently, achieving the proposed academic goals. I’ve been able to take a break from my usual work routine in Colombia.

I’ve had a unique opportunity to share with people of different cultures. I’ve enjoyed practicing my Catholic religion here, going to a beautiful Mass every Sunday. I’ve gotten to know interesting places close to Columbia in the cheapest possible way. I’ve practiced sports here more than I did in my country, where my daily work routine restricted my leisure time. I’ve done my best to learn English. And I can feel the results of my efforts: after fifty days of study and practice, it’s easier for me now to talk and write.

I encourage all current and future EPI students to do their best. Studying at EPI presents a good opportunity for learning English with people of different cultures looking for a better future for themselves.

Seeking recipes for tasty dishes. Please help this terrible-cooking wife.

minakoroddy@yahoo.co.jp
Community Service at EJI

Hsiu Feng Ou, Taiwan; Ajlan Al-Mansouri, UAE; Camilo Villafrade, Colombia; Gonzalo Gallegos, Peru; Margaret Perkins, USA

We were looking for a special place with special people where we could do a community service project. Margaret Perkins, our Communication Seminar teacher, proposed that we visit Birchwood High School, meet the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) students there, and consider the possibility of doing our project with them.

When we arrived at the school, we found a brilliant group of people waiting for us. From that day on, we began to work hard preparing to hold a festive international event for the DJJ students.

On the third of May, each student in Margaret’s class demonstrated a special activity related to his or her country. We got the DJJ students involved in Chinese calligraphy, Colombian dancing, Korean language, Middle Eastern culture, the art of using Asian chopsticks, and various other international arts and customs. We all had a great time that day with our new friends at Birchwood High School.

Ajlan shares information about the Middle East and invites the hosts of Birchwood’s International Day to visit UAE someday.
Community Service at EPI...

Ajlan and Abdullah demonstrate the way friends and family greet each other in the Arabian Gulf, saying "Marhaba" and touching noses.

Joshua explains Korean hand acupunch, a healing therapy in which the practitioner applies pressure to strategic points on the hand.
Community Service at EPJ...

Mina offers instruction in the Korean writing system and in the art of using chopsticks.

I really want to have a female conversation partner. It’s okay if she’s not an American. The only requirement I have is that she speak English better than I do.

USCIger@yahoo.com

Looking for someone who’ll drink beer with me and then fight me after I’ve drunk too much and started a fight.

lovelydrinker@hotmail.com

Looking for someone who can explain the situation. I want to understand.

thepossibility@TOEFLsan

Handsome Korean guy would like to talk with beautiful German model about Korean reunification.

germaneconomics@yahoo.com
Camilo and Melissa Boyd, a Birchwood teacher, demonstrate the yallenato, a typical Colombian dance.

Kim explains the symbolic meanings of traditional Chinese handicrafts. Hsiu Feng demonstrates traditional Chinese calligraphy, writing DJJ students' names in Chinese.
Multiculturalism: Interviews with Camilo, Khaled, Doris, and Davide

Willaiphan Penny Phattaro
Thailand

I'm from a country that is very far away from here, and lots of things there are totally different from things I find here. As a result, some American habits seem strange to me. And from talking with my international friends here at EPI, I've discovered that because of their different cultural backgrounds their views of American culture differ from mine.

In hopes of better understanding American culture and other cultures represented by EPI students, I decided to interview a few of my EPI friends from various parts of the world, asking them to contrast their perceptions of American culture with their understanding of their home culture.

An important thing I've learned from these interviews—and from all the multicultural interaction I've had at EPI—is that since we all come from different cultures and have different perceptual foundations we need to keep an open, accepting mind about cultural habits that differ from our own.

with Camilo Villafrade, from Colombia

Penny: Camilo, I'd like to get your viewpoint about some differences between Colombian culture and American culture.

Camilo: Well, people here in South Carolina are very kind. When I'm in a grocery store, for example, the clerk always helps me when I need help. On the other hand, some people seem reluctant to talk with me because of my lack of fluency. I've found various kinds of people here. Some are intelligent people who know a lot about their country and other countries. Others don't have much knowledge about even their own country and don't seem to care much about other people around the world. Colombian people are kind, too, but in a different way. We don't usually say "hi" to each other on the street, but we are very hospitable with each other and we socialize a lot.

Penny: What about education? Any differences in this aspect of society?

Camilo: Yes, the facilities here, like the ones at this university, for example, are perfect. Everything that's important for education, such as good libraries, gymnasiums, computer labs, student health centers, etc., are provided.
Multiculturalism...

In Colombia, we have the same facilities but on a smaller scale. Another difference concerns the relationship between teachers and students. Here, it's more informal. Teachers try to establish a friendly relationship with their students. In Colombia, though, teachers keep a distance between themselves and their students so that they can be more strict with them.

with Khaled Al-Abdouli, from UAE

Penny: Khaled, what are some differences between Middle Eastern culture and American culture?

Khaled: Well, in some Middle Eastern countries, boyfriend-girlfriend relationships aren’t permitted. In fact, traditionally, a boy and a girl can’t even sit in a room alone together.

Penny: Are there any special rules about women in your culture?

Khaled: Yes, there are. Traditionally, women can’t leave the house alone. If they want to go out, they have to bring someone with them, such as their mother, brother, father, or girlfriend. And when a couple become engaged to get married, the husband-to-be is allowed to see the face of his wife-to-be just one time before they get married. Women usually cover their body with abaya and cover their face with a thin black veil. But these are all traditional practices that nowadays aren’t strictly followed in many parts of the Middle East.

Penny: Are there any cultural differences related to religion?

Khaled: Yes. For example, drinking alcohol, gambling, and prostitution are all prohibited by our religion, Islam.

with Doris Ende, from Germany

Penny: Doris, please tell me about the lifestyle of the German people.

Doris: Okay. Germans follow the rules, and there are more rules than there are here. And, unlike Americans, Germans don’t question the rules.

Penny: Why not?

Doris: Because we know the reasons for them. We Germans are so rule-oriented and focused on the future that we tend to become like robots and forget to have fun in the present moment. On Sunday, though, stores are always closed and people take a rest. If you walk around on Sunday, you won’t find a single store open. Sunday is a day for us to clean our street in front of our house. This custom makes our towns cleaner than the ones here.

Penny: How about the lifestyle of students?

Davide: One difference is that Italian university students usually go to a university near their home and continue to live with their family, but here a lot of students go to school far away from home, live by themselves, and earn their own money.

Penny: Any other cultural differences you’d like to tell me about?

Davide: The food! Italian food is the best in the world. It’s delicious, various, and nutritious. It offers a complete, balanced diet.

with Davide Franzoni, from Italy

Penny: Davide, tell me about a few differences between Italian culture and American culture.

Davide: Okay. First, about seniority and authority, the relationship between teachers and students is more formal in my country than it is here. We don’t call teachers by their first names, like Russ or Kathy; we call them by their last names, like Mr. Harless, Miss Bledsoe. The teachers here are friendlier than the ones in my country.

Penny: What about the lifestyle of students?

Davide: The food! Italian food is the best in the world. It’s delicious, various, and nutritious. It offers a complete, balanced diet.

Hope to get some good suggestions for Japanese people about how to become more internationalized.
yasuhirohi@gmail.com

Sun on the cover of recent issue of Sunrise magazine needs special comb.
sunsky@epi.sc.edu

Want to share my knowledge about different cultures with people who like to enjoy themselves by talking.
whoisspeaking@hotmail.com

Desperate girl looking for a portable fan.
Penny@redsan.com

Looking for someone to turn the fan on.
fan@ventilator.com
Going to Indiana and looking for a road companion. Girls welcome!
andry_razafimanantsou@epi.sc.edu

Looking for someone to clean Cliff apartments.
notdirty@hotmail.com

Are you looking for a girlfriend? Please write me because I can help you find one.
Maria@hotmail.com

Desperately need portable air conditioner for long, hot walks to class.
hotnsweaty@columbia.com

Do you want a friend? Just click and send e-mail. I will be there for you:
Kxxx999@hanmail.nee

Electronic dictionary needs Energizer batteries.
crazyenglish@hotmail.com

Anyone who can tell me how to lose weight without exercising?
youna_kim@epi.sc.edu

Interested in discussing topics related to the Civil War. If you have a similar passion, please contact me.
davide1974@yahoo.com

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The Necessity of a Friend
Maria Fernanda Gallardo
Ecuador

There are days when I feel so lonely or sad, but you have always been there to help me, not because you have to as an obligation but because you just want me to be happy, because you are a really good friend. It's going to be difficult to find another friend like you.
Stories & Poems

Stories
and
Poems

In Seon Jeon
Hiroko Nagai
Tuy Sheung Cristina Chiang
Natsuki Nakamura
Karine Khachatryan
Lisa Madrazo Capuano
Andry Razafimanantsoa
Ryan Yoon
Dick Holmes
Yuko Yoshida

Korea
Japan
Venezuela
Japan
Armenia
Guatemala
Madagascar
Korea
USA
Japan

You-Na Kim
Rie Miyazaki
Minako Ogura
Blanca Ramirez
Hwa-Soo Son
Judy Choi
Masashi Mikami
Amy Wu
Davide Franzoni

Korea
Japan
Japan
Colombia
Korea
Korea
Japan
Taiwan
Italy
In the middle of the night, I'm sitting on a small, uncomfortable chair in my university library, thinking hard about something, probably looking as if I'm really thirsty for knowledge. These days, all of the students studying here look crazy about studying as they intensely prepare for their year-end examination. If someone sees me now, she/he no doubt assumes that I am cramming for the exam.

But all of my feelings—and my sense of smell—are concentrated on some stimulating fragrance in the air.

"HUGO DARK BLUE!" the name of the cologne suddenly flashes upon my mind.

The sweet-smelling fragrance is coming from somewhere behind me. I turn around and glance at the guy sitting behind me, back-to-back, and now I know why I became nervous when I began to smell that delightful scent.

"It's him!" Recognizing him, my heart goes pit-a-pat. My memory is already jumping back to that time that I spent with him.

Last summer, almost a year ago, some students living in my dormitory made camp on a small island located in the middle of a river near our university. All of us were the same age, so we could enjoy learning together how to dance, paddle a canoe, play volleyball, and so on. To participate in one of these activities, we each paired off with a partner.

I glanced at my first partner, who had a well-set frame, a white face, and bashful looks, though I couldn't see his face clearly.

Throughout the camp, he always wore a cap that hid his face. We were to be just temporary partners for one activity, but we ended up remaining partners until the camp ended. Because of his shyness, he couldn't ask other girls to be his new partner, and because of my liveliness, I could lead him to enjoy our camp.

We learned how to dance together, paddled a canoe in the river. Even though we spent so much time together, I can't remember his face as clearly as I can remember his fragrance. It was a nice smell that was not too strong.

The day before the camp ended, we were allowed some time to write a letter to one of our partners. We had to choose just one of the many partners we had met during the camp. For my camp-long partner and me, there was no choice to make.

In my letter to him, I mentioned his fragrance, so after he'd read my letter he let me know the name of his cologne, HUGO DARK BLUE. Although he gave off a nice scent, it was so faint that I hadn't realized he was wearing cologne.

The letter that he gave me (so shyly) mentioned my liveliness. "I'm really thankful to you. Your liveliness led me to enjoy our camp. I want to learn your liveliness. Would you teach me?"

As I was reading that part, my heart started pounding. I folded the letter up and turned away from him to hide my face, which had already turned red.

Our enjoyable camp had come to an end. After getting back to the dorm, I unfolded his letter again and my eyes fixed on the end of it. His phone number stood out so clearly!

"Where is my liveliness now?" I ask myself in the library. "Where is my positive attitude?" Almost a year has passed and I still haven't called him, though my heart has certainly wanted to.

Now, here he is, sitting behind me, still giving off that nice scent, just like he did when we were camp partners. He's still wearing a cap that hides his face.

Can he feel that I'm sitting just behind him, staring at him, trying to inhale all of his lovely fragrance?

I wonder how I happened to find him today just because of his cologne. I've smelled HUGO DARK BLUE on other men so many times during the past year. Why today did I sense something different?

So many thoughts are crowding my mind. The library is filled with the heat of studying, but only I am radiating the heat of being on the pins and needles of HUGO DARK BLUE.
Say to You
Hiroko Nagai
Japan

I can say
I'll never forget you
I can say
I am where you are
I can't say
Good-bye

If I Were Your Phone
Natsuki Nakamura
Japan

If I were your phone
I wouldn't let you get lonely
I'd always stay with you

If I were your phone
And you wanted to hear your mother's voice
I could bring it to you

If I were your phone
I could hear your voice every day

Remembering
Tuy Sheung Cristina Chiang
Venezuela

You are always there,
like my heart
inside me,
sparkling like a star,
even laughing,
especially in my mind.

I Belong to You
Karine Khachatryan
Armenia

Among the stars your face shone brightly,
Among the flowers you stood alone
And blossomed like none other,
And when your scent flowed into my life
It turned it gracefully around,
And from that moment on
My life belonged to you.

The Distance
Lisa Madrazo Capuano
Guatemala

Sitting here alone in my room,
I'm thinking as always about you.
It's as if you were here with me now.
Then I remember that we're apart.
But I know that you love me, and I love you,
because to know you is to love you.
Just like a beautiful morning in springtime. After a fresh night, nature is waking up. Birds are singing, the sky is blue, and the sun is already shining over a typical little village in the highlands of Madagascar. Coming from all sides, smiling faces. Cries and calls break the silence of the valley. After three months of vacation, the little boys and girls of the village are going back to school. This is a special day, an exciting one for them—going to a new grade, getting a new teacher, and, especially, getting a chance to show off their new clothes.

School is not far from the village, just a five-to-ten-minute walk. They all meet at the public square surrounding the threshing rock and then go en masse to school. A group of very well organized kids, though they have not invented this practice of doing things together; it is a kind of village tradition.

The bell rings. Suddenly, a deafening silence is observed in the school courtyard. Nobody talks again until the principal makes his first speech, greeting the new students. In the middle of the crowd stands little Lesabotsy, a bit shy and apparently all alone. He is eight years old, the youngest child of a farming family.

In the classroom, Lesabotsy is assigned a good place, right in front of the teacher’s desk, and he is very happy with this place.

The teacher lives near their village, and she knows their faces and some of their names. She taught at this school last year. She is very friendly, a good teacher, and students really like her. This year, she spent her vacation with her family in the capital.

The class begins. After telling her students the main directions for succeeding in this new school year, the teacher gives them some work to do. Since today is the first day of school, it is not a very busy one. Toward the end of the day, comes the reading class.

“Open your Lala sy Noro book to page 2!” the teacher says.

All the kids search for the book in their shiny new bags. This book is a famous one. All Malagasy start learning to read from this book. They pull the book out of their bags—all except Lesabotsy, who, after looking around, finds that his book is an old one compared to the others’. He is very embarrassed. Even the teacher has a new one this year. He decides to change his place, to the very back of the classroom, where nobody can see him with the same old book that his brothers have learned from.

He does not change his place for the rest of the day, and he keeps sitting there in the following days.

He becomes increasingly anxious every day. He feels ashamed, having an old book. He works and plays alone. In class, it seems that he is forgotten by the teacher, the one whom Lesabotsy counted on to support him. It seems that he does not even recognize his presence. She no longer calls on him or asks him questions.

A few weeks later, Lesabotsy stops going to school. His friends see him playing or fishing by the river. When they ask him why he does not go to school anymore, his answer is so sharp that they decide to leave him alone: “I don’t want to go to school since I have a used book.” And he continues not to go. He never gets a new book, and never goes back to school.
Who Are You?
Ryan Yoon
Korea

"Hey, long time no see! What? You guys still want to meet my roommate? Huh. Well, as I told you yesterday, I'll introduce him to you, but I don't understand why you're dying to meet him. You know, he is such a good guy, but he is weird. I mean, he doesn't pay attention to me at all. Yes, it's very strange. He does a lot for other people, but during our many years together, he's never done anything for me. And I know he's not going to change for me. Well, that's the building. That's where he and I live. The second floor is... ours. I mean, he and I live together. Even though it's poor-looking, it's a good apartment. I'm going to warn you, though, guys. Don't expect anything. He won't give you anything. What? That's right, he gives a lot of people money and does things for people, but I'm not sure he'll like you. Here we go. That's my sweet apartment. Let me open the door. Hey, my sweet roommate! Have a look at my friends. You know, they wanted to see you, so I invited them up, even though I felt strange about it. So, why don't you greet each other? Yes, yes. How are you today, my roommate? Huh? Good? That's good. This is my roommate. And these are my friends. I was concerned that you might not like my friends. Are you busy? Okay. You know, my friends, my roommate actually looks very kind, huh? Yeah. That's right. What? What did you say? You already know him? Are you serious? When did you meet each other? And how come? No? Don't tease me. Hey, my friends, let's go to my room. I'll show it to you, even though it's a mess. Sorry about that. Hey, roommate! What are these books? Are they for me? Again? I told you, I don't need these books. What are they about? I don't know.

Probably just some stupid books. Maybe psychology books. I don't know. What? Have I read them? No, of course not, not at all. Come on. I don't need them. Why? I think I have so many better things to do than to read these books. Yes, I have been acting this way the whole time we've lived together. Why, doesn't it make sense? But I... Yes, you're right. He gives me a lot of books. But, you know, I don't need his books. Are you interrupting me? What?

Do you have a question? Okay, what's your question? Why didn't I tell you his name? Hmm. Because I don't know his name. I'm sorry, but I don't know. Yeah, that's right. That's the reason I think he's weird. In all the years we've been living together, nobody has ever called him. But, you know, he has done things for a lot of people. And yet nobody's called him. Do I know what he does? I don't know. Why are you asking me such things? It's not your business, is it? By the way, I don't even know your names. Who are you and who is he? I don't know you guys. What are you doing here, anyway? You aren't really my friends, are you? Maybe this was a bad idea, bringing you up here to my apartment. I guess I didn't really want to introduce you to my roommate, after all. Hey, roommate! Are you my roommate? Are you sure? When did you move into my apartment? Ah, I see. You lived with my parents. My parents liked you very much. That's right. Yeah, you were very familiar with my family. That's why I hated you so much. Do you know why I moved to this apartment? Because of you. But then you told my parents that you wanted to live with me. I was upset. Why did you decide that? You loved everyone in my family except for me, right? Yes, you did. Whenever I was in trouble, you didn't help me. You just overlooked me. So I wanted to escape from you, but here you are. What? You knew that I didn't like you? Are you crazy? What's wrong with you? Did you love me? So you are here? Who could believe that? What have you done for me since we've been living together? Did you say you've been with me? Even in difficult situations?
Who Are You? . . .

Okay, if what you say is true, what did you do when I had a problem? You didn’t do anything for me . . . But I remember that whenever I was in trouble I did hear a voice. It was very faint, but absolutely lovely. That’s why I remember it so clearly—it was so lovely . . . Ohh! It was your voice, wasn’t it?! Why didn’t you help me?"

“I was with you because I loved you so much. I love you because I love you. I wanted you to see me at that moment, so that I could help you. Thank you for finally asking me who I am. I’ve been dying to hear that question from you for so long. I am the one who loves you. Thanks. Do you remember the time you became a part of my life? I remember. You confessed you were weak. That’s why I couldn’t let you leave me. And I never will let you leave me. I love you.” □

The Flood
In Seon Jeon
Korea

The river must have decided forcefully, heard that an open field was so wide and, wondering how wide it was, wanted to explore land.
When it couldn’t take anymore, it must have pushed against the levee.
“The field is covered with water . . .”
The morning when my mother woke me up early, I saw muddy water advancing toward an entrance to my village.
Although I was thrilled by it, realizing the world through its body,
I was afraid that my life, too, would suffer heavy, unseasonable rain . . .
There were so many things that I unbearably wanted to see, would have to endure again and again without fail to grow up.
I was sore at heart all the time . . .

To Hope, to Love, to Believe
Karine Khachatryan
Armenia

To hope, to love, to believe.
What do these words mean?
These are the words that guide us through life,
That help us in our ups and downs.
These words are all around us,
And we can always feel their meaning.
In the most difficult moments of our life,
We always have hope for better times,
We always believe
In super powers that will help us,
In the coming of a time of feeling love.
The greatest of the feelings
Human beings have ever had—
Those feelings are in these words.

This Life
Dick Holmes
USA

Somewhere between words
Is what I want to say
About this life, breathing,
You. Somewhere between
Letters, in the tiny spaces
Within letters, in the
Lines they make, too,
Each fleeting stroke
Of ever-moving thought.
"You don't do a spelling check when you e-mail someone?" my friend asked me.

If he hadn't asked me that, we wouldn't have started talking about each other's character.

I told him that I didn't, that I was too lazy to pay attention to my spelling.

Then he told me what he thought about checking spelling. He said he always did a spelling check before sending an e-mail message. He thought that this was very important, that even though his English was not as good as an American's, everybody could understand what he wanted to say with correct spelling. He thought it would be rude of him to send a message without first doing a spelling check.

I asked him whether he thought I should do a spelling check on my e-mail messages, too. I expected him to say that I definitely should, but he didn't do that. He responded so indirectly that I thought he was indifferent to my situation. I'd hoped he would give me a straightforward answer, his honest opinion, so I was disappointed in his response. It seemed he was being mean to me, and I was a little mad at him. I asked him why he'd given me such a cold, indirect suggestion.

He fell silent for a while, and then he started talking about his personality. He hadn't been cold to me, he explained. It was just that he was afraid of being hurt by someone. He usually wanted to give advice to somebody if s/he asked for it, but s/he might reject it and then he would get hurt. He wanted to avoid putting himself in a vulnerable position.

I'd totally misunderstood him, and now I was sorry that I'd jumped to a conclusion about him. Talking things over after our interaction about spelling check, we realized that we had different personalities and that as a result we might easily misinterpret something the other was trying to say.

Then I started thinking about my father, whose personality is like my friend's. In the past, I'd felt my father was indirect and impersonal to everyone, but maybe I just hadn't understood him, either.

I remember disliking my father, due to his personality, when I was a child, even though he was my father, but I've warmed to him recently. I think my character has been growing up, and now I'm really getting to know both my father and my mother. I'm happy to be coming to this new understanding of them, and of people in general.
No Choice
You-Na Kim
Korea

I was on the run between my bedroom and my bathroom. The long hand of my small clock on the table was moving step by step toward 9 p.m. I stood before the mirror several times, wondering why he wanted to see me so late in the evening. When I heard a ring at the door, I looked at the clock. 9 on the dot. Gratified, I headed toward the door.

I was a little nervous. He was just driving, not saying a word. I looked at him questioningly. He looked tired.

"Where are we going?" I asked cautiously.

"You'll find out in a few minutes."

When I got out of the car, I saw a beautiful lake and heard a murmuring stream. Fireflies winked in the cool night air, keeping good time with the sound of the stream. As I stood there absorbed in this beautiful scene, a warm voice reached my ear.

"Shall we sit down here?" he asked, pointing a finger at a bench set under a luxuriant tree.

We just gazed at the lake, listening to the singing of insects for a while. The silence made me more nervous than ever. I was looking intently at my fingers when he suddenly let out a sigh.

"I'm having a very hard time these days," he said.
"But I think you can help me."

"What's the matter with you?" I asked him with an anxious look.

He sighed again.

"Please, give me your hand first."

I just stood up in confusion when I heard that. But he pulled me down, grasping my hand tightly. My heart was beating violently.

"I'm having a hard time because of you. As you know, I'm going to go to Seattle next month. But I don't want to lose you. So, I want to propose this very prudently, because I know it will be very hard... Please, be my girlfriend."

My hands suddenly became wet with sweat, and I flushed to the ears. I couldn't say anything.

"You have no choice," he said when he saw that I couldn't stir a finger.

Those words touched me. So when he asked me again, I answered in a low voice, "You don't need to ask. As you said, I have no choice."

Now, he's in Seattle. But we're always together even though we're apart.

Looking for someone who’ll agree to eat the meals I cook.

terriblecook@hotmail.com
"This is the season that I've been waiting for," I mutter to myself.

The weather in Tokyo is getting nicer and nicer, and plants are growing again. I've just gotten back home from a walk with Grandmother. It isn't so cold out as before, and the morning sun is so beautiful. It's the best season for a walk. And you know what? I like to lie on the front lawn, especially after a morning walk.

Each found a new house, that it's time for them to become independent. I think they're going for time is a better time to call, don't you? Anyway, Mother usually has a cup of coffee and some toast, makes herself up, watches TV, and talks with her all at the same time. I've often heard Mother say certain words to her that give some clue to her whereabouts: "America," "English," "weather," "school." Unfortunately, though, I only know "weather" and "school." I don't know what "America" and "English" are. What are they? I guess she's in some place that has nicer weather than Tokyo does. I suppose it's somewhere far away from here. She must be going to school to study something, maybe America or English.

Oh, what did Mother just say? Now they're talking about me again.

"She's doing fine," Mother says. "You know, she's always going her own way and doesn't care about anything."

Hey! I care about everything! And I understand what people are talking about!

Oops, I haven't introduced myself to you yet, have I? I'm sorry. Well, I'm a cute brown dog of mixed origin, and I've been living here in Rie's house for around ten years. I really love this family, and I miss Rie a lot. ☞
Like A Dream
Minako Ogura
Japan

The sun casts its golden rays. The sky is as blue as a lagoon. The ground is covered with grass like green velvet. A cool breeze softly passes through. Solemn music sets the mood of the scene. The air is filled with the sweet smell of fresh flowers. A September day that feels like a warm spring day. I'm standing beside my lifelong partner, and the preacher's voice sounds like a voice in a dream; I'm listening, but at the moment I can't respond. I'm drifting into the past.

"Monica, what kind of wedding do you want to have?"
Emily asked me on the way home from elementary school.
"I don't know," I replied. "How about you?"
"Well," she said, "I want to have a traditional wedding like my mother had."

From that day on, my dream of having a unique wedding grew.
"Do you take her to be your wife?" the preacher asks.
"Yes," he responds.
Again I become lost in the past.
"Monica, what kind of wedding do you want to have?" Emily, wearing a white, Western-style wedding dress, asked me.
"I don't know, I haven't decided yet." I recalled our childhood chat about our wedding preferences. She was an adorable bride, even though the reality of her wedding was quite different from the dream of it she'd had in her childhood.

"Do you take him to be your husband?" the preacher continues.
"Yes," I respond.
The past keeps on appearing before my eyes.
"Will you marry me?" he proposed under the stars.
Like a precursor of the wedding, "Yes" came my answer.
"What kind of wedding shall we have?" he asked.

As the preacher says, "I pronounce you husband and wife," I realize this is my dream wedding. A garden wedding in the mountains on a wonderful day with congratulations from our families and friends. Just like a dream. ☀

Shadow
Tuy Sheung Cristina Chiang
Venezuela

I meet you in my loneliness.
Without seeing your face, I realize you are there, in the darkness, my best friend always.

Being a Woman
Blanca Ramirez
Colombia

Being a woman is a gift of God, because being a woman means the pleasure of giving life and love.

Being a woman is a kind of protection for others, especially for children, because they best understand the deepest love a woman can give.
My Romantic Story
Hwa-Soo Son
Korea

I grew up on a small island far removed from refined city life. One day about twenty years ago, my teacher came into my elementary school class with a new student, a pretty girl from a big city wearing an elegant dress and nice shoes. She immediately stood out among the students in the classroom. I could see that everybody liked her and wanted to talk with her, but nobody had the courage. I liked her, too. She always wore pretty dresses and brought delicious food for lunch. We envied her a lot.

Time passed and Fall Field Day was coming. This special event was held twice a year—once in the spring and once in the fall. On this day, street stalls were set up to sell such things as ice cream, toys, cotton candy, fruit, donuts, etc. All the students wore the same uniform except that half of them wore blue hair bands, while the other half wore red. There were flags of all nations flying in the sky and refreshing songs filling the air. Everybody was so happy because we didn’t have classes and there was a lot of food—besides the treats sold at the stalls, there were tasty dishes and morsels our parents brought. The whole day was a big party, a holiday for students and also for their parents.

My romantic story unfolded on that day. When I arrived at school, the event had already started. The street stalls were open and there were a lot of students on the playground, some buying ice cream, which looked so delicious, and some just running around. While I was looking for someone I knew, the pretty new girl came over to me and asked me, “Would you like an ice cream? I’m going to buy one for you.” My heart was shaken to the core and my pulse was racing.

“Really?” I asked her in disbelief. And then I couldn’t say another word. I just stood there in front of her.

“Sure!” she said. And then she caught my hand and pulled me toward the ice cream stall. She bought one of the most popular kinds of ice cream, handed it to me, and soon disappeared.

Why had she done that for me? I didn’t really know. Anyway, I was so happy. I carefully peeled the paper wrapping off the ice cream and bit into the delectable treat. Ah, it was so sweet!

At that moment, two younger friends of mine, a couple of other girls, came over to me to ask how much the ice cream was. To get my attention, they shook my arm, and unfortunately my ice cream fell to the ground. When I saw it lying there melting into the dirt, I felt so sad, as if I had lost everything.

Imagine that. I had taken just one bite of the ice cream the pretty girl had bought for me. I was so self-conscious. Afterwards, I felt gloomy for quite a while.

One year later, she moved somewhere else, and I haven’t seen her since. I haven’t even heard about her life. I miss her sometimes. Even now, whenever I eat an ice cream, I usually think about my beautiful memory of that day and that pretty girl. I hope she is fine always.
What I Feel from Mariah Carey’s Songs

Hiroko Nagai
Japan

I hadn’t thought much about the meaning of Mariah Carey’s songs until I decided to write this review, but when I read and pondered her lyrics I was amazed at the depth of meaning in her songs.

Most of Mariah’s songs are love songs explaining how much she loves her boyfriend. She sings that once she has fallen in love she becomes crazy about the guy and can’t think about her life without him. I don’t think I can fall in love as deeply as she can, but I too want to be in love in a way that makes me crazy.

I also like Mariah’s songs that inspire courage. I like all these songs of hers, but my favorite one is “Hero.” I have listened to that song so many times that I have memorized its lyrics, even though at first I couldn’t understand what they meant. Now that I understand them, I have more courage than I had before coming to the United States. Here, I have to use English when I want to explain what I want, and I also have to live in a different culture. This situation is so difficult for me, so sometimes I just want to give up.

Hiroko Nagai

everywhere that I expect from my present life, but whenever I feel that way I recall a few lines from the lyrics of “Hero”...

So when you feel like hope is gone
Look inside you and be strong
And you’ll finally see the truth
That a hero lies in you

From these words of Mariah’s, I get new courage and try again to overcome the difficulties.

Any Way I Go

Hiroko Nagai
Japan

Any way I go
It’s difficult to get to the goal
I want to give up
But I can’t
Because I have to get there

Where Am I Going?

Judy Choi
Korea

A cloud sleeps in the sky, and it embraces everything of humanity and nature.
What my life was.
Where my life was.
How my life will be going.
Just keep going, and don’t think about it.
Don’t look back.
That cloud might take my life to the sky in its dream.

Close Your Eyes

Masashi Mikami
Japan

I close my eyes and I can’t see anything.
Suddenly, something appears in my mind.
Since it’s like a cloud, I can’t touch it, but it gives me a wonderful, peaceful image. It comforts me.
Being Alive
Amy Wu
Taiwan

What's it like,
being alive? I asked
the person in the mirror.
She smiled at me
without feeling.
She'd been asked this question
thousands of times.
It's like performing in a drama,
she said. You express your character
as well as you can.
Everybody looks at you and
hopes to get something from you.
When they get what they want,
they leave.
You are not you anymore.

The Necessity of a Smile on Your Face
You-Na Kim
Korea

There are days when you meet someone
you want to show your beautiful face,
but you have to look at him with an expressionless face,
like a doll, because you've forgotten how to smile.

Happy Birthday
Amy Wu
Taiwan

H ot dogs, candy, and cake.
A pple pie, Pepsi, and chips.
P repare everything before you come.
P arty for you. Surprise!
Y ou are the superstar today!

Blue
Andry Razafimanantsoa
Madagascar

Did you ever listen to
A flower blooming
In a deep blue sea?
Did you ever see
A shark flying
Through a vast blue sky?
Did you ever try
Even for a second
To change your vision of life?
What's that? I asked myself. It was a quiet night and I was gazing at the stars when I saw something strange. At first, I thought it was just an ordinary light of some kind, but then it started coming closer. I won't lie; I was really scared.

Finally, I decided to walk—almost run, actually—home. On the way, I noticed a little piece of paper lying on the street and I picked it up. There was a puzzling note written on it: "If you see the light, if you feel the light, you are the one, so change now." I felt strange after reading this note, but I continued on my way home.

The next day, I woke up thinking about the meaning of the note. When it was time to go to school, I came running down the stairs and saw my family having breakfast. Suddenly, it struck me how important they were, and how sometimes I didn’t appreciate them.

I took the bus to school. When I got on, the only seat I could find was a spot beside a girl that everyone in school hated. I didn’t have a choice, so I sat down beside her. I took out my book and started reading. Feeling as if someone was watching me, I turned and saw her looking at me. I disliked her and I didn’t want anyone to see me with her, but I was bored, so I decided to talk with her. It turned out to be a good decision. All the way to school, we kept talking, and I found that we had a lot in common. She told me that it was hard not to be appreciated by people, that sometimes she wanted to run away and change schools, but that she never gave up because she was happy with herself and with the few friends she had, who were real friends. When we arrived at school, we got off the bus and went in different directions, but I felt that we’d just embarked on a new friendship.

Later that day, I went back home and reread the note that I’d found the night before: "If you see the light, if you feel the light, you are the one, so change now." I started thinking about how people like to talk about and judge other people without actually knowing them. I did that, too. Then, trying to see the relationship between the note and the girl that I’d met that day, I came to a conclusion: The light is each individual person, and if you give that person and yourself the opportunity, you see her/him as a person, not as an object without feelings, and that’s the moment that you start feeling and caring about her/him. And the part saying "...you are the one, so change now" means that every person has the opportunity to change, that everything in this life depends on the attitude we have toward people, work, life.

Ever since that day, I’ve tried to keep a positive attitude because in this way I can enjoy life more.

So, how about you? Do you want to be the one?
Personal Messages
We hope that when you return to your home country you will share this magazine with your friends. And if any of them express interest in studying at EPI please copy or cut out the application form on the next page and pass it along. Thank you!
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US Immigration requires EPI to have a letter from a bank to prove that there is enough money to pay for tuition, fees, and living expenses for one (1) term. This amount of money must be at least $3800. You may not need to use all of this money, but you must prove that it is available. If your sponsor is a school, company, or other business, please attach a letter of support on official stationery.

Name of student

(family/last) / (given/first)

Name of person responsible for providing money for the student

(family/last) / (given/first)

Estimated costs for one term: $1725, tuition; $75, fees; $150, books; $850, housing; $1000, food and miscellaneous expenses.

Please read the following statement and sign below: "This is to confirm that I will financially support the student named above. I certify that I am aware of the costs of EPI and living in the United States, and I guarantee that the money shown in the bank statement will be available to this student during his/her studies in EPI."

Signature of person responsible for providing money for the student

Date

Name of bank

Address of bank

Official bank seal

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ENGLISH PROGRAMS FOR INTERNATIONALS
University of South Carolina, Byrnes 207
Columbia, South Carolina 29208, USA
Telephone (803) 777-3867
Fax (803) 777-6839
epi-info@epi.sc.edu
http://www.epi.sc.edu

APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION

Please complete this application and return it with a $75 non-refundable application fee.

When would you like to start?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Winter 2000</td>
<td>January 9 - March 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2000</td>
<td>March 19 - May 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2000</td>
<td>May 28 - July 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall I, 2000</td>
<td>August 6 - October 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall II, 2000</td>
<td>October 15 - December 15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Orientation first Sunday only; Classes Monday through Friday.)

Program costs for each nine-week term:

- $1725 Tuition
- $75 University fees

The program costs include instruction, activities, academic counseling, computer laboratory/listening laboratory fees, health insurance, and services of the campus health center. The student will have to pay for housing, food, and textbooks. All fees are subject to change without notice.

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How did you find out about EPI?

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Housing Information

Average EPI apartments have one bedroom and one bathroom, providing space for four students. All bedrooms have two beds. All students share a bedroom with a roommate of the same gender. Kitchen facilities include a stove and refrigerator. The apartments are furnished and all fees for electricity, water, cable, TV service, and cleaning supplies are included in the housing fee. You will need to bring your own linens for cooking and eating. Linens are available upon arrival for $35. Please note: EPI housing fees are as follows:

- $25 maintenance fee (required)
- $25 apartment fee
- $600 two-bedroom apartment fee
- $35 housing fee per term

Please note: One of the two bedroom preferences can be required, however, preferences may not be available upon arrival.

Mail: Housing Office

If yes, what is your visa status? Circle one of the following: FI, PI, IF, J1, J2

Visa are you in the USA now? 

Yes No

School name

City

State

Zip code

If you are currently a student at the University, please give the name and address of the school you are attending:

yes no

Are you currently a student in the USA?

yes no

Are you currently a student in the United States?

yes no

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