

distractions



Ask Apricot

Change.

by Matt
Roherty



photo by Mary Rogal-Black

Descending frost had chilled the dew on the grass, freezing it solid and painting it icy white. Stepping outside I found it necessary to don a sweater and a pair of boots. The crisp morning air filled my lungs as the rising sun slowly warmed the earth, bringing to life beings sedated by the chill of night. We'd had the first heavy frost of the season and the leaves had begun turning a myriad of reds, oranges and browns. With their last dying strength they had flamed brilliantly to mark their passing. The colours seemed to have a pacifying effect, easing the tensions of the "real" world. A shotgun blast resounded down the valley like a thunderclap, carrying over the chilled air for untold miles. The ensuing silence was a void into which all was drawn. No cricket dared chirp, no dog dared bark, no dying leaf dared fall from its tree. I stood there scared to make a sound, scared of what I'll never know.

Day slowly banished night's masterful work as the sun shone down on my world. Filling the void with the incessant chirping of birds, taking from the grass it's elegant icy tone.

May 8 - 13

Hi Mary -
I'm nervous about teaching my first class, which begins in a couple of hours. I'm worried that I'll get to class and not know how to fill up forty minutes. I'm also worried that I will get into class and not know how to go about teaching the material. So many worries. I guess it will come together in a few days, though, the rest of the foreign teachers seem to be pretty calm about everything.

Well, I've done my first two classes. It was fabulous! I may become sick of them later on, but for now, I like it very much.

For my first class, I had to give them English names. I named one of my children after you - aren't you proud?! I gave a bunch of them my friend's names. It's kind of a weird feeling, actually.

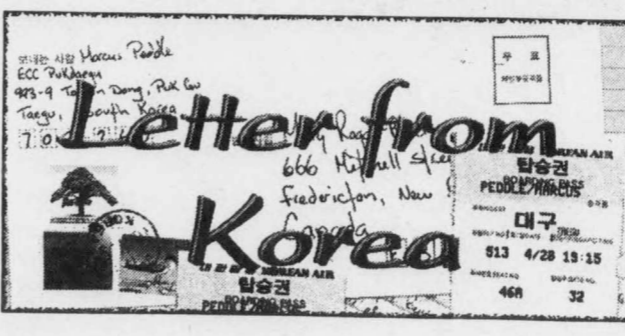
The first day is over. I really enjoyed my elementary school classes, but the adult class was a bit rough. I couldn't understand their Korean names, and I was unprepared. I feel funny teaching adults. I think maybe they were a little bored. Well, Wednesday will be better, I hope.

On Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, I begin class at 3:50 and end at 8:30, with a 45 minute break at 5:15. On Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, I begin at 4:35 and end at 7:30 with a break at 6:05. On Saturday, everything starts an hour and a half ahead, with an extra class from 7 to 8. I have the whole day to do things before I work, but I was pretty tired after my last class today, especially since it was the adult class, and I was worried about boring them.

I had an unusual dream/experience last night. When I went to bed I had an upset stomach, but fell asleep after a while because I was tired. My dream began with me looking for a room 1271 at a university. The only room I could find, though, was 1217. After some hesitation,

I walked in and was greeted by people I obviously knew by their reaction, but the only person I recognised was you, so I sat next to you. It was a pharmaceutical class, so the professor started talking about those sorts of things. What we were doing in a pharmacy class is beyond me. Anyway, because I had an upset stomach, you took two white and brown Graval pills out of a bottle and gave them to me. I couldn't swallow them at first because they were pasty and unpleasant. At that point I woke up and, guess what, my stomach-ache was gone! Crazy! I looked up medicine in the *Handbook of Dreams* that you gave me and it says:

To dream that you are taking medicine, and it tastes nauseous to the palate, implies that something will occur to you that will be very annoying and unpleasant for a little time only, and then be of much service to you... It is a good dream.



Howdy ho! I've just come back from Uncle Joe's restaurant. I had a Bulgogiburger, fries, and a large pepsi. Yummi! A Bulgogiburger, by the way, is just like a hamburger, but it has a little chili sauce on it. It's good.

Jennifer is the Korean teacher who sits next to me in the faculty room. She wanted to know if I was writing to a girlfriend? Ex-girlfriend? No, no, just my friend. Is it a male friend? No, female friend. You have male friends? Yeah.

Handsome? Yeah. Adresses! Phone numbers!

My supervisor just told me that she was speaking to Steve Park in Toronto (they guy who set me up with this job), and he says that my friend is coming to Korea next month! I assume he means both Ted [Hamilton] and Heather [Delong], because Koreans often leave off the plural 's'. Steve is going to pass my phone number on to 'my friend' so that he can call when he (or they, I hope) gets here.

Anyway, I must scoot and make sure everying is ready for my classes.

Love from over the ocean,
Marcus