

Christina (Seung Yeon) Park 박승연 (Korea)

I also believe that parting means a new chapter in my life. It means we are leaving something, someone, or somewhere behind to start a new journey. We will be sad and happy. We will expect things but then be disappointed. We will keep the memories of our past but will also make new ones. And from all of this, we grow.

What is life if you don't grow? After leaving my family behind in Korea and going to America to study animation, it was definitely hard because I had felt these things. I was homesick and even cried myself to sleep at times. But while I was in America, I met new people and adapted. Of course, I still wish I could go back but I know I had made new relationships resulting from my parting that I don't want to leave behind. Therefore, I say goodbye to the past and grow.

I had been coming to Korea over the summers to stay with my family. It is my last year in school which means there won't be a lot of time for me to come back. My sister is also leaving for university in the States which means she is also parting ways. Because of this, my parents moved to Gangneung from Daejeon to live their "retired" life. In a way, this summer is the biggest parting for all of us, which is why I wanted to write and send a postcard from this location.

I am currently at Gyeongpo Lake which is a big lake famous here in Gangneung. I have memories of walking around this lake with my family which now I will leave behind. I think this summer was the most memorable for me and the most perfect time to reflect and answer this question. From this departure, I will grow and hope people reading this will also learn how parting isn't just sadness but it is a symbol of growth.

8/17/2023

Sigrid Sköldberg (Sweden)

"I am 21 years old. I am home now after finishing a year at residential college because I am not sure what to do next. I have said many goodbyes and I will continue to do so the rest of my life. Saying goodbye has always been difficult. It is a sign that something has come to an end. Sometimes it is unexpected, sometimes it is necessary. Certain goodbyes I have longed for, others grow nauseously in the pit of my stomach. Life consists of so many farewells, especially in your 20s. Everyone is trying to 'find themselves' and weave in and out of people's lives. I don't like it. Sometimes farewells have been a symbol of freedom, that I, as a person, am independent - my life is my own adventure! But in the end a goodbye is always a reminder of my own loneliness."

Best of luck with your thesis. It is a very cool concept and really gave me food for thought and a moment to connect with myself.

Take care <3

Sigrid

Kiu子蕎 (Hongkong)

Many who departed Hong Kong did so involuntarily; some lacked a choice. Someone dear to me was compelled to leave, unable to return. It infuriates me, brings tears, yet even screaming aloud is now forbidden. All I hope is for those departed to discover solace in a new city, to find love and joy in their new journey. And I'll carry a piece of Hong Kong that I love, and continue with my journey.

Kiu, written in my American dorm, 2024 Jan 14th

Madi Wong 黃芯賢 (Hongkong)

2024/1/5

To me, parting is something that brings bitter sweetness to my life. The fear of not knowing if you'll be happier in a new place or ever live up to the success and memories your origin location brought you fills me with worry. I am also filled with regrets, wondering if I truly made the best of my time and energy before I depart. I always wish for more, that I had learned the language properly, that I took every moment with gratitude. But when departing from home all you can do is look forward to the refreshment a new potential home can be. To look at life as a learning opportunity at every corner big or small. I always find myself needing to relax. I stress myself too much worrying over minor details, bringing from what we know to our everyday norm is an opportunity to restart renew, and I am so grateful for them.

madi<3

Eva Cowley (Canada/Japan)

Every year, the autumn streams of the boreal rainforest fill with salmon spawning before heading out to the great Pacific to grow. Their journey is essential to the beauty of our rainforests as the returning salmon bring the nutrients of the open ocean back to their birthplaces and nourish the birds, bears, flora and fauna with their bodies. To me, this is what departing means; it's a promise to go out and grow in a wider ocean, and a promise give back to the waters from which you began. Even leaving someplace called home without any certainty of ever going back, I find comfort in knowing I'll carry with me all I've learned there, all the ways I've been shaped there, and one day will make my final home all the more beautiful with the gifts I've been given out in the salty waters of adventure like the flesh of the salmon that fill our forests with life.

This card features the piece "Honouring our Salmon" designed by Paul Windsor of the Haisla and Heiltsuk Nations. The card is depicted in front of an airplane window, through which the Vancouver North Shore Mountains can be seen. Having left home several times to live and learn across the world, this sight has always been one of mixed emotions. It hurts to know I'll miss their comforting presence wherever I end up, but at the same time I feel so grateful knowing they'll be there when I return no matter how long I take to come back.

Cheers, Eva

Christine Alhalabi (As Suwayda, Syria)

About parting

Often times, I think about parting before it arrives. I feel it before it knocks the door, 3 months in advance, so I can get ready. I feel the pain before it's time to feel it yet.

Maybe the reason is because, when I left Syria, there was no time to prepare. Parting came and took over the house. It spread its bedsheets without invitation, moved in with us. It even kicked us out.

Now I am in the "before parting" period from Rio. I still have three and a half months, and I already started parting. A small part of me is parting every day, as if I am a piece crumbling everyday and flying. Like the "taraxacum plant", dandelions, the flower whose name I forgot, but I used to blow with my breath along my walks with Marina.

Everyday, my fluff falls off a little bit, so I can undress slowly, in a way that doesn't shock me. Protective mechanism.

But Hope, everything in life is transitional. Time is strange, it always confuses me. I want to draw it.

Fear from the pain of parting. The kind of fear that bars you from entering the moment, leaves you waiting at the gate, eating while standing up, living from an open suitcase without ever moving your stuff to the closet. The fear that stands in the way of you making roots.

But maybe Hope, the fluff I want to fall off is the fluff of fear. Time is spreading its tilted arms like tree branches, embracing everything, and I am here, now.

Christinem Rio de Janeiro, Oct 2nd, 2023

Lilja Sarah Skieller (Denmark/Iceland)

To travel, or to leave, is to say goodbye, but also to be brave enough to try and experience something new. It is to start something new, a new beginning, and a new experience. You'll have to reinvent yourself, based on where you started, but not bound by it.

I think to say goodbye is to remember where you have been, and acknowledge what you are bringing with you, and what you'll have to leave behind... whether you want to or not.

A new journey, on the same adventure.

Pao Chutichirawong (Bangkok, Thailand)

Moi! Hi from Finland.

The photo on this postcard (even though it says France on the postcard), was actually taken from a computer, my laptop in Espoo, nearby Helsinki, Finland~~~

It is a project I am working on--and haven't finished it yet. I took photos from a world built in 3D programme; another world, a new map, that I made from many models from Google Earth. It turns out that an AI told me this photo is France--so let it be. In fact, I don't think we exist in only one space (in one moment), and Finland and France aren't so far from one another either :)

That's it. No more writing space. Love you and Miss you.

-Pao 2024.

Abigail Lopez Bonifacio (Peru)

The meaning of parting has changed throughout my life. The first time I had to say 'goodbye' to my family, the word parting was a mixture of sadness and excitement. I was feeling sad because I was about to leave the people I had grown up with for 16 years of my life. But, at the same time I was excited because I was about to know another country and to learn to be independent. It was tough to see my parents with their teary-eyes wishing me a good trip at the airport. But let me tell you, it was extraordinary to get to know new people, their culture, their country, learn a new language, travel and explore the world a little more. Also, I have come to realize the word 'parting' feels lighter when you know you will be able to see the people or place you left behind again. On the other hand, the word 'parting' is heavy when you are not sure if that's going to be the last 'goodbye'.

This postcard has one of the most beautiful landscapes of my beloved Peru, Machu Picchu. The landscape reminds me despite I'm far away from the place I was born, I still carry my roots and my culture wherever I go.

Aliya Salikhzyanova (Nizhnekamsk, Tatarstan, Russia)

The Return (by Marsel Galiev)

When I go to hunting on a big road,

The for lifts from the morning wind.

The horses also turn to look at the pine tree,

At the end of the village.

The sounds of herons are in the air,

The flapping of wings is heard.

Birds also have human destinies,

Going to foreign lands.

Debbie Tsai (Tainan, Taiwan)

Dear Hope,

What you've told me was so true that I could wait for a time for reflection and write the postcard then. I've postponed writing on this postcard, and now the moment of writing this card of departure happens to coincide with a real one in reality—the end of my school days. Specifically, today marks my official departure from my graduate studies in NTUA, Music Department. Leaving, departing, and saying goodbye are to me a turn of page to a new chapter of life, signaling the beginning of the next encounter. Although this M.M. Program took me more time than I had expected, the duration is transient when viewed in the context of the vast timeline of the universe. During my time in NTUA, what might have been and what has been are condensed into a few scenes, specific lines, or certain words, and yet all these encounters just happened when the timing was right. Although my memory may not retain them all, what has been imprinted on my mind is invaluable. As the Japanese saying goes, “One encounter, one chance,” they are memories once-in-a-lifetime.

I selected this postcard featuring the tourist attraction Jiufen (九份), which is allegedly the inspiration for the movie *Spirited Away* by Hayao Miyazaki. While I am not a local from Jiufen though, my appreciation of this place grows through Miyazaki's art and comments from other tourists. It is only when we see our lives through the eyes of others that we can truly reflect on our daily existence. Similarly, only when we leave a familiar place where we stay for a long time can we gain deeper insights about ourselves. A departure gives us a chance to look back while embarking on our next journey, and it wishes us another chance in the upcoming encounter!

Best wishes,
Debbie

Lost Postcards

Tingting Wang 王婷婷 (China)

Hi Hope,

I am writing this card on a train back to Changshu from Wuhan, to respond to your theme of departing. To me, departing comes in two ways: an external, physical displacement, and an internal, spiritual separation. The pain comes when the body has to travel and the heart desires to stay. While new scenes gradually, or abruptly take place of the old, we are yet to look back at the good memories or look ahead at the hopes coming our way. Rejection of departing feels like rejecting the flowing of time so that we could attempt for some sort of eternality that may or may not exist. Ironically, no one could actually reject the fate of departing. But I think it is fine to get stuck at such immersive, complex feelings in departing — to consciously realize what cannot be left behind and let them sit in our souls. Maybe there ain't departing in our spirits anyway. If we try to be more realistic about it, preparing for departing is a fair idea, to live every moment as if we are losing it the next. But then we have to deal

with constant fear and anxiety. Or to trust a futuristic narrative that we will own things that we can't imagine yet.

My Spotify is now playing Anpu's song, 'when you don't forget but also don't look back, I love you.'

And I decide to leave the letter here.

All the best,

Tingting

2023.8.23

Charlotte Heida (Canada)

Parting(05/09/20023)

To me, parting in a journey is a bittersweet thing. It often means a soft goodbye, or one that has no intent of being permanent but has the potential to be a forever change. Parting can be limited to the seasons, to a shift in person had, or simply the separation of two ideas. As much as I wish otherwise, parting often is painful to me, be it a transformative pain, or simply one that hurts of grief. I've had many partings in the past two months.

Charlotte

Special thanks to Christina (Seung Yeon) Park 박승연, Sigrid Sköldbberg (Sweden), Kiu子蕎 (Hongkong), Madi Wong 黃芯賢 (Hongkong), Eva Cowley (Canada/Japan), Christine Alhalabi (As Suwayda, Syria), Lilja Sarah Skieller (Denmark/Iceland), Pao Chutichirawong (Bangkok, Thailand), Abigail Lopez Bonifacio (Peru), Aliya Salikhzyanova (Nizhnekamsk, Tatarstan, Russia), Tako Pharsenadze (Georgia), Debbie Tsai (Tainan, Taiwan), Rin Yokoi (Japan), Tingting Wang 王婷婷 (China), Charlotte Heida (Canada), Jude Zawaideh (Amman, Jordan). for their participation in明信片 Postcards (2024).

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