

## **Flying into the World**

by UnJin Park

Have you ever imagined going abroad on the first day, you losing all of your stuff in the airport? You really want to talk with your family about that and get some help, but you cannot contact anybody, because they are enjoying a trip in another country. You are just wearing a shorts and a T-shirt in the night, and you are freezing and dye in your nightmare. (What a strong air conditioner system America has!) From that day, you live like a refugee for about twenty days, because you have lost all of your baggage and you do not have anything. Somebody stole your baggage in the baggage claim office and there are no documents about your stuff and no clues about where to find it. You are struggling with the airport's supervisor about this situation, which does not make sense, and report it to the police officer by yourself with your poor language. Every night, you cannot sleep because of bad dreams.

This is a part of my real story, which happened six months ago. It was the third time to going abroad and I had been several countries for trips, but this time, it was the most special and shocking welcome that I ever experienced.

Every time when I go abroad, I can feel I am growing up. My thinking is getting larger and deeper, my view of the world changes. I can experience what I never

imagined. In addition, I can meet new people and share my opinions with them. Hence, I can learn many things through the life of another country. Even though starting my life in the U.S. was not typical- at that time, I felt like I am in a survival adventure game- I also learned something from this experience. I learned how to live in another country without anything, and also learned patience and positive thinking.

Before I went abroad, my view of the world was not realistic. Everyday, I heard the world news- I could see the war, interesting inventions, political issues, and so on. I was surprised and curious about some of issues, but I always thought that this news is not my business, that is just a faraway country's thing. I knew that the world was changing every second, but I thought that I was standing in the center of the changes. I mean, it was very important what is happening around me, even though it was quite small thing, but I did not care that much about the events in another countries.

Sometimes I heard one country had a natural disaster and hundreds of people died, but it was not as serious as just a person who was sick near by me. That big disaster was quite sad news, but I felt like, just as a story in a novel, I could not feel how serious it is and I could not believe it is a real event.

After going abroad, my view of the world has totally changed. I really care about the world news. I learned that people all around the world have relationships with

each other, and one country's events can affect to other countries as well. In addition, I found an interesting point about reading newspapers from different countries.

Sometimes, every country cover the same topic in their newspapers, but the articles' contents and point of view are very different. Through the newspaper, I can see which values are the most important in their society. It is an interesting and funny experience.

Furthermore, I learned many things from the people who I met in America.

Every week, I have a chance to discuss social issues with my classmates who are from several countries. Sometimes I am surprised that, our opinion and point of view is very different. I also have three American roommates, through whom I see American's lifestyle and way of thinking. We have not only similarities but also differences in our lifestyle, and sometimes it produces a culture shock.

'Diversity' is the biggest thing I learned about after I came to America. In my country, there is just one race and all citizens have the same roots, except immigrant and nationalized people. As a result, in my eyes, American society is a very interesting and curious community. All kinds of races live together in this country. Sometimes, I hear about racism, but I think America's situation is better than many other countries. It is more generous about diversity in society- race, life style, fashions, thinking and so on.- than most other countries. In some parts of society in the U.S., it is much more open

than my country. I can see more varied range of diversity in U.S. and I am excited by those points.

Through living in U.S., I learned important things. I saw the diversity of the world and future of the world. Furthermore, I learned how strong relationships are controlling the change of the world and how important exchanges and relationship can be. I have gotten out of a small world and I have gotten a broader view. My view of the world has totally changed wider and deeper than before.

In the future, I want to work in Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) or International Organization for Migration (IOM), which has related to refugees and immigration. After I came here, I felt like I can understand more about those people's feeling, and I can know what they really need. Maybe that horrible twenty days which I experienced when I made a first step in U.S. will be a great experience for my future.