



The gray squirrel holds an acorn in its mouth, taken by the author.

Non-fiction

Elf-The Squirrel

Xingxiang Zhang, China

I noticed a gray squirrel jumping around in the grass in the back yard when I moved into our apartment. I had only seen them on TV programs such as Animal World before I came to North America. It's the first time that I could see a squirrel so close.

There are three kinds of squirrels in North America. There is the red squirrel, the black squirrel and the gray squirrel. The colors correspond to their fur. The North American continent is a haven for squirrels because there are many nut trees. The majority of them are oaks. You can find gray squirrels almost everywhere.

As we get closer to winter the squirrels are busy collecting their food. I think the squirrel is one of the most diligent animals in the world. Every morning when the grass is covered with dew, they come and go between the woods and the grass in order to find more acorns and store them.

One day I saw a gray squirrel had an acorn in its mouth and it was digging small holes in the yard. The acorn it held in its mouth had disappeared when

the squirrel left after a short while. Squirrels are very clever because they bury the acorns in many different places and later they succeed in finding them. I was interested in finding out where that acorn got buried. I picked up a stick and tried to probe the holes. But there were so many holes on the ground that I had no idea which one had the acorn. Just then the squirrel ran straight at me, arching its big tail angrily. It seemed to tell me, "Don't touch it, it is my storage!" I knew it was really angry so I stopped my work and pretended to leave. I went on looking at holes when the squirrel skipped away. To my surprise it appeared again and let out a terrible sound. I didn't know where it came from. It raised its big tail higher than before and prepared to attack. I had to give up my attempt to find the acorn finally.

Several days later, a colleague told me some funny things just happened on Cornell University campus. One day a gray squirrel was digging under a big tree. A student wanted to see what it did when he passed by. The squirrel jumped quickly onto the tree from the ground as soon as he came near. He stirred up the withered leaves by his foot and suddenly the squirrel jumped on his head and kept screaming at him. I believe it is a true story judging by what happened to me the last time I tried to disturb the squirrel's storage holes.

What a lovely elf the squirrel is! I think.

Exploring the Surroundings of the Cornell Campus

DW Chung, Korea

On August 20, this year, my wife and I arrived here in Ithaca, more specifically at the Hasbrouck apartment where my daughter-in-law lives together with her son, my grandson. She is a graduate student, who studies in the class of 2013 of Professional Studies in Real Estate. Her husband, my son lives in Fremont, California working for a company. My grandson will be four years old this coming October and needs somebody's care during his mother's daytime absence even though he goes to a day care center near the apartment. That is the primary reason why we came here from Seoul, Korea.

Prior to coming here, we discussed how my wife and I could utilize our time when my grandson stays at the day care center. My daughter-in-law suggested that we play golf at the Robert Trent Jones golf course of Cornell University which is located at a five-minute-walk away from the apartment. It was a very good suggestion to us, because we like to play golf so much. Arriving here, my wife and I bought the fall season membership of the golf course at \$250 per person, which is a special rate for the student's parents. In Korea, I have to pay about \$100 per an 18-hole-round, though I am a member of the club. Compared with the very expensive cost in Korea, I would like to say, "This is a golfer's heaven."

I like to walk because I believe in the natural healing effect of walking for both physical and mental health. I found that the Cornell campus is also a paradise for walkers like me. One morning, I woke up early and went to Beebe Lake where the scenery is beyond my expectation. Genuine fresh air, the trees, the lake, the geese on the lake, the morning sunshine, the squirrels, the Beebe lake trail, and more. I was so excited that I walked along the trail more than an hour reading the metal plates of "In memory of somebody....." or "Donated by the class of any year....." attached on the wooden or stone chairs, or on the rocks. I was so impressed with the American culture that tries to memorialize any contribution or achievement for the organization and further for the society by any person. Every morning when I cross over

the Beebe stone bridge, I read the metal plate near the bridge and now I have memorized the dedication, "The Beebe Lake Trail and this Bridge were provided by a bequest which Henry Woodward Sackett of the class of 1875 made to Cornell University for the benefit of lovers of woodland beauty." What wonderful words!

The morning walk along the Lake Trail having become an important point in my daily schedule, I tried to further explore the surroundings of Cornell University. One day, I found a narrow trail alongside the Forrest Home Drive which led me to the Botanical Garden. I walked through the knoll garden to the beautiful Herb Garden, where I found many kinds of herbs such as tea herbs, dye herbs, sacred herbs, herbs of the ancients, culinary herbs, etc. Now I am able to smell the fragrance when I approach the Herb Garden. Recently, I extended my exploration through the Mundy Wildflower Garden to the F.R. Newman Arboretum.

I walked across the Wildflower Garden many times, but the Arboretum a couple of times. In the Arboretum, I found two ponds, the names of which are Houston Pond and Grossman Pond. I crossed the Houston Pond thru a beautiful wooden overpass, and found a metal plate attached on a small rock near the other end of the overpass. The metal plate reads a line of poem, "The faintest streak that on a petal lies, May speak instruction to initiate eyes", which I didn't understand. So I took a picture of it, and made an effort to interpret into an equivalent of poetic Korean even if I am not a poet, which reads,

**“꽃잎 위에 새겨진 가장 아련뽕한 한줄기의 꽃무늬조차도
눈을 뜨라고 가르쳐주는 것같구나.”**

I am not quite sure my interpretation conveys the original intention of the poet who wrote it, but would like to understand that every small feature of a plant can instruct us.

Walking along the trail, I am sometimes dreaming of myself living and studying in this wonderful environment of clean air, woodland beauty and blue sky for the rest of my life. But I whisper to myself it's too late to do that, because I am getting older.

September 29, 2012

Fiction

The Line Interview Halil Akkiz, Turkey

Hello everyone! I am Norton Winsly and my cameraman friend is John Taylor from 3C News Channel reporting to you from a chopper. I see a line in the Ithaca streets. I am sure that you haven't seen a line like this. The line looks like a snake from the air. A lot of people are in the line. All of them are waiting for what? I have a friend, reporter Mary Ant, in the line. Here is a conversation between Mary and three people: a housewife, an unemployed man and a high school student, in the line.

Mary: Hello! I have been waiting for hours in the line. I am bored. What about you?

Housewife: Me too.

Mary: How many people do you think are in the line?

Housewife: I have no idea.

High School Student: Hi! I have an idea about the number of people in the line. As far as I can see, there are hundreds.

Unemployed Man: I don't think so. There must be more than hundreds.

Housewife: I am very confused about this line. Maybe something is wrong, because all of the people cannot need salt at the same time.

Mary: Are you waiting for salt in the line?

Housewife: Yes, I am waiting for salt for cooking, aren't you?

High School Student: Is this line only for salt?

Unemployed Man: No, it is not the line for salt. It is the job line. I have been waiting for a job about four hours.

High School Student: In my opinion, you are waiting in the wrong line. This is a book line. I have been waiting for hours for the book that my teacher told me to get.

Housewife: Really? Why did nobody tell me the reason that people are waiting for? How can I prepare lunch for

my children on time?

Unemployed Man: Horrible! I guessed that only a job line can be as long as this line. I hoped that someone can give me a job. What can I do for a job after now? Do you have a job for me?

Housewife: ??? (She looks puzzled)

High School Student: And what about you? What is your reason for waiting in this line?

Mary: My name is Mary Ant. I am a reporter in 3C News Channel. I am preparing news about the line and covering someone's story in the line for my TV station. If you are curious about the number of people waiting for the line, I can say that there are more than five hundred people and no one in the line knows exactly what it is for except the person who started the line.

Housewife: So, what is it for?

High School Student: Who is the one?

Unemployed Man: Why did someone do that?

Mary: If you want to get answers to your questions, you will watch the evening news on 3C News.

You watched the interview between four people in the unknown line. If you say that there must be a reason for the line, you are right. The line is an experiment for the social behavior thesis of a Masters student. Her name is Mary Ant, our reporter. She put a sign that said, "The line starts here." in front of one of the closed shop in the early morning and she started to wait for the people. The people who saw the sign got in the line and six hours after she put the sign, there are more than five hundred people in the line. The number is increasing. To my way of thinking, it is a successful experiment for Mary. Thank you Mary for your show and interview. This line shows that you should be careful about the purpose of the line that you are waiting for. Good evening everyone.

The Lawyer In The Street Halil Akkiz, Turkey

It was a Monday night in Florida's autumn. Unusually for the autumn, the weather was cold. A man in the street, Max, a rich lawyer, who was at the peak of his career, was thinking about the law cases that he worked on. He had to work on his biggest client's, an international company called Ertix Co., lawsuit. The lawsuit against the biggest company in the USA, Marton CO., had been on his mind since the case started. After work, Max wanted to relax in the cold weather, so he decided to walk down the street.

Although the lamp at the corner of the street was turned on, the night was dark. Max didn't realized that a man had pointed his gun at him until the man with the gun said, "Hand over your wallet!"

"This must be a joke. Where is the camera?" Max thought.

"Hand over your wallet!" the man with the gun demanded.

Max was scared when he understood how serious the situation was. He knew what the name of this crime was; it was robbery. He looked for somebody to help him, but the street was empty except for Max and the gunman because of the cold night. Max wanted to escape from the situation and asked the gunman, trying to look calm, "Will you let me go, if you take my wallet?"

"No question. Hand over your wallet!" the man replied.

Max had no choice and gave his wallet in which there was a thousand dollars to the gunman. The man with the gun took the wallet and put the wallet in his pocket. Max thought that he could escape from the robbery by depriving from the money in his wallet, but it wasn't over yet.

"Stand against the wall!" the robber demanded firmly.

Max didn't understand why it wasn't over, but he did what the man said. "You got all of my money. What

else do you want?" asked Max.

"You don't remember me, do you?" asked the gunman firmly.

Max didn't answer the question because he couldn't remember this guy. He didn't know and want to know who he was. He only wanted the gunman to let him go.

"I was a one of the employees of Ertix before they fired me and sixty employees without a reason six months ago," the man said.

Suddenly Max remembered the lawsuit that the employees started against the Ertix. He defended his client Ertix against the plaintiffs in the court of law although he knew that his client was wrong. At the end of the courtcase, Ertix won the case and the plaintiffs didn't get any compensation. The man who pointed his gun at Max was in the court as a plaintiff. He was angry because of losing his job.

"I get the money in your wallet, \$ 1000, for my compensation of last six months." The gunman said and continued, "You have no idea about my life after I got fired. I can't find a job. My wife divorced me. I have to find a new apartment but I have no money. I live in a warehouse with fifteen homeless. I am not a criminal but I have to do this."

There wasn't much left to say. Then the gunman disappeared in the dark. Max was standing against the wall and thinking about the gunman's and his life in the six months. He could call the police to report the crime because he was a victim, but he didn't. He got into his car and went to his house. He couldn't sleep. He thought the rest of the night but he couldn't decide who was wrong or who was the criminal.

The Line At The Airport Mayuka Yasui, Japan

There were the ridiculously long lines for check-in at the airport because of weather delays. Two married couples stood in line for 2 hours. Olivia and David had just got married the day before and Emma and James had got married the day before, too. They were heading to Orlando on their honeymoon.

Olivia was too tired to stand up. She accidentally stepped on Emma's toe with her high heel.

“Ouch!” Emma screamed loudly, “What are you doing to me? You have to apologize!” Emma was also tired of waiting and very irritated. However, Olivia didn’t have the energy to say anything.

Emma grabbed Olivia’s hair, kicked her knee. “What are you doing?” Olivia yelled out and she scratched Emma’s face with her long nails. They started fighting.

“Stop fighting, Olivia!” “Emma, break it up!” Their husbands David and James were surprised and tried to stop the fight, but two crazy women lost control and just kept fighting.

James slapped David’s cheek by chance when he interrupted the fight. “Oh, I’m sorry,” James said.

As David was excited, he didn’t hear his apology. “What the hell are you doing, man?” he said and got so upset. David grabbed James’s neck and threw him to the ground.

James shouted, “Get your hands off me!” They started wrestling with each other. The 2 couples fought viciously for a while.

Eventually, all of them were hot, dirty and exhausted. Their clothes were torn off, and they looked miserable. They sat down on the floor and were out of breath from the fight. “Where has the line gone?” James murmured. Nobody was there, the flight to Orlando had left the airport.

Our Unfortunate Trip To Angkor Wat

Thuy Ha Dinh Vu (Anna), Vietnam

Five months ago, I had a trip to Cambodia with my husband. It is really the worst trip that I have ever had. I found the information about the trip in an advertisement on a website. The price of the tour was very cheap because we were given 30% discount for the traveling fee. So in the beginning, I thought that it was very lucky for us to register for this tour.

We had a four day and three night trip. However, we had limited time for sightseeing because most of the time we spent on traveling by bus. We departed Saigon at 5 a.m.

Unfortunately, we got stuck at the Vietnamese and Cambodian border gate because there were a lot of people, the passengers of other travel agencies, coming to Cambodia on that day. We had to spend over 3 hours standing in a crowded queue for customs officers formalities. Finally, we went through customs. However, after getting on the bus, we crawled along because the bus route was very crowded and sometimes there were traffic jams. After passing about 200 miles, finally we came to Phnom Penh, the capital of Cambodia at 11 a.m. We stayed there for one night to visit some famous places in the city. After having lunch, we came to a small hotel for a nap. We had 4 hours in the afternoon to visit some places. However, it was not lucky for us because it rained cats and dogs all day and night. The rain soaked through our rain coats, and it made any thought of taking photographs impossible.

The second day, we departed to Siem Reap, which is famous for Angkor Wat temples, one of the World Heritage sights. This city was over 200 miles from Phnom Penh. It took us all day to get there. Because some roads were under repair, we bumped along at a snail’s pace. We came to Siem Reap at 6 p.m. After having dinner, we had free time for sightseeing somewhere in the city but we felt too weary to do anything. We came back to the hotel to take a rest and prepared for the trip to visit Angkor Wat on the next day. Nevertheless, my husband and I couldn’t sleep a wink all night. At midnight, my husband got a stomachache. He vomited a couple of times during the night. I thought he ate some food that was bad for his stomach, so I had to take him to a doctor on the following day. The doctor told me that maybe he got food poisoning from eating some kinds of mushroom. I had to stay at the hotel to take care of my husband all day. As a result, we couldn’t visit Angkor Wat as our plan on that day.

The last day, we returned to Saigon. The route was very long so most of the time we sat on the bus. My husband’s stomach was still unsettled, so he didn’t dare to eat anything on the way. After coming back home, he continued taking medicines for some days.

In the end, we both really thought that it was the worst trip.

Almost “Green” Viviana Deslandes, Brazil

The first time I stopped at The Amit Bhatia Libe Café, at Uris Library I got impressed with a huge quantity of garbage falling off all the four containers. However, soon my wrath was gone because I thought the phenomenon could be a sporadic mess due to one very crowded day, in view that all the things works efficiently well here. It happens that we cannot say the same about the garbage. I have tried not to compare the consumer patterns between my country and the USA because I know that I need to understand the differences between cultures. Anyhow, this is not a cultural question but an environmental problem that affects everybody and I guess that we really need to do something and not just think about it.

When I was younger I considered that the reason for this same problem in Brazil was the lack of information by most people, because in many cities in my country we don't have recycling programs and the government doesn't have a true program to encourage people to recycle. And of course, I thought this was directly related to the educational level of people, which means as less educated a person is in terms of schooling, lower the probability that person recycle. So I went to the University I and realized I was wrong. The same four containers with explanations about which type of garbage you should put in each one and the same situation that I described before about the USA: a mess. Absolutely all the things mixed!!!

After this first day at Libe Café I came back other five or six days and the situation was exactly the same, which means that in one of the best and more renowned Universities in the world, with the best students and levels of research, the people yet don't recycle! I'm really sad and I guess the situation is a little bit worse here, because of the quantity of packing and the fact people consume much more fast food makes the garbage production most impressive. I'm not saying that in other countries this not happen. On the contrary, I guess the trend of fast-food and small packages with individual portion for all things is growing up in each place in the world.

To illustrate my view, let me cite just one example: I found a little box with organic raisins with just 1 1/2 oz (42,5g)!!! When people buy it they don't think about the processes production of that small box that they will gobble in two minutes and to throw

away in the wrong container that, of course, will not be recycled! The contradiction is: you are buying an organic product, which means you are trying to be “green” eating healthy food and being sustainable buying from locals or without pesticides. But after you eat your “green” food what do you do with the package???

Now that I'm seeing that this is not a problem in developing countries and also not an educational question, I sincerely believe that the governments (in all the countries) should to regulate the production process of companies. They could offer some incentive to companies that not produce small packages, for example, lower fees or something like this. Because if we will wait just for the consumer's consciousness, we are lost. Or maybe Cornell could start a revolutionary Program and show to the rest of world that the scientific community can to learn to recycle and give the example what this is pretty easy, once we already have the containers and everybody know to read.

Fall 2012 Adv 5 class: Cinquain

A cinquain (pronounced sin-kane) is a type of 5-line poem that is defined by specific rules. The poems our class wrote follow the rules of the American cinquain, with 5 lines that are comprised, in order, of 2, 4, 6, 8, and 2 syllables. The title can sometimes act as a 6th line with additional meaning.

Diary 1 by Xiaochuan (Angela) Zhao

I lost
my treasured voice
after a high fever
which is the most horrible thing
ever

Diary 2 by Xiaochuan (Angela) Zhao

Big hug
is what Mom gave
before going to work
which the cute baby thinks is just
a game

Joke by Xiaochuan (Angela) Zhao

True love
will never die
until she finds the truth
he is a millionaire is just
a lie

The Lion by Eric Qiu

Lion
lifts up his head
like a powerful chief
holding within his big body
the king

The Taunting Birds by Connie Xu

The birds
twitter with joy
show off their native sound
toward a Chinese newcomer
taunting

Slyly by Dovile Blozneliene

We sit
on the sofa
like squirrely kids do
all unaware of time if you're
not here

Loneliness by Wen Ni

See me
with tears and joy
captivated by wine
losing myself in the deep night
poison

Winter by Rosario Donoso

Winter
and her friend snow
are now coming to stay
to cover land and let us play
snow fights

My Love by Rosario Donoso

Like sun
you shine for me
there is no sunset here
no dark, you are always like dawn
my love

Autumn in Ithaca by Candy Hua

The tree
being depressed
painting gorgeous colors
can't help dancing with falling leaves
is scared

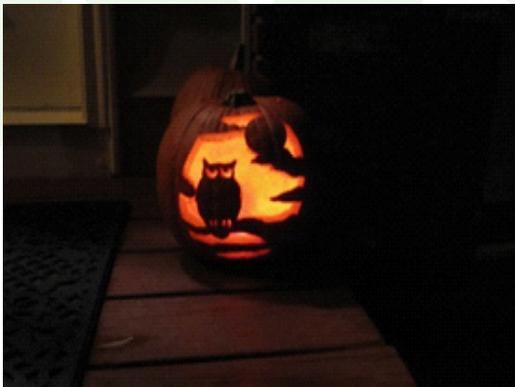
November 6, 2012 by Cheryl

Relief
the choice is made
the power struggle ends
no sound bites, disrespect or lies
for now

Halloween Adventures

Thuy Ha Dinh Vu (Anna), Vietnam

In Viet Nam, I heard a lot of stories about Halloween but I couldn't imagine how exciting and enjoyable it was until I came here. I really had a great Halloween time in Ithaca with my friends. We spent time carving pumpkins, telling scary stories, baking Halloween cupcakes and taking kids "trick or treat".



Our carved pumpkin

Carving pumpkins is one of the most interesting experiences I had in Halloween time. Two months before Halloween, I saw a lot of stores selling decorations, costumes, masks, candies and pumpkins for Halloween. Everything in the stores was covered with Halloween colors, orange and black. I was especially impressed by delicately carved pumpkins put beside the front door of many houses for decorating, and I always wondered how they did it. Two days before Halloween, our teacher brought some pumpkins to our class. We spent an interesting time carving them. My friends and I chose one pumpkin and started carving. Although the pumpkin was very hard, it was very easy for us to carve it delicately. We had a pumpkin carving book containing many pumpkin template pictures. We chose one template, taped it onto the pumpkin and outlined the picture of the template. We used a small sharp knife looking like a saw to carve the pumpkin and a mini scoop to clean out the pumpkin seeds and pulp. Finally, we finished carving an owl pumpkin.

It was very kind of my friend to let me take the pumpkin for decorating my house. I put it at the front door of my house with a candle inside in Halloween night.

Beside carving pumpkins, I was very excited to take children "Trick or treat". In Halloween night, my friend's daughter dressed like witch with a long black dress, a mask and a witch hat. She carried a round orange Halloween bucket to put her treats in. She and some of her friends eagerly ran to knock on the doors of the neighborhoods. The doors opened. "Trick or treat," they said and the hosts were very happy to give them candies. We stopped at a dark house. Maybe, there was nobody inside the house. Surprisingly, we discovered a bowl of colorful candies put on a chair beside the front door with a note "Please take 2".



A bowl of candies

In the end, the Halloween bucket of my friend's daughter was full of treats. We got a lot of candies. One house also gave out a toothbrush and toothpaste to remind the kid that they should brush their teeth after eating candies.

It made me very excited to enjoy the first Halloween in Ithaca. Although the weather was very cold, it was a warm and happy Halloween night for everyone, not only for the children but also for the ones giving out candies. I really had a wonderful and memorable Halloween time.

Monday craft and storytelling group

