La Cigale

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Institute for American Universities

Aix-en-Provence  France

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Cover  Le Pecheur - Mari Margaret Kacey
K,

You must come here. Incredible people are everywhere. There are a hundred of them sitting in the cafes and buying baguettes at the boulangerie. A thick-coated mother will bustle by you in the supermarche, then stop, turn, and ask you what you think of some mauve color of stockings. Come over and eat with them. They will talk about "us" (including you) and how "we" know the real secrets of health, good eating, and where to buy the best quiche. Come and stand in front of any of the ponderously sturdy Hotels de Ville. Even the young girls may turn at your shoulder and smile through those dark mascara eyes. You must come here to float in a fog of foreigners, then to fall from it and begin to understand an overwhelming culture. Come, now.

Yours,

F.
"Certains symptômes du choc culturel sont le souci maladif de la propreté, le sentiment que tout est sale: l’eau potable, la nourriture, etc... c’est aussi la peur du contact physique avec les indigènes; un sentiment de désordre, un besoin de dépendance vis-à-vis des étrangers de même nationalité que soi; irritation devant les retards ou autres sources mineures de frustration, sans proportion avec les causes, refus d'apprendre la langue, crainte excessive de "se faire avoir" ou d'être blessé; exagération des douleurs mineures ou des problèmes esthétiques; enfin cette terrible nostalgie de l'environnement habituel.

Neanmoins, c'est une maladie qui se guérit par chaque rencontre amicale, chaque nouveau mot appris, chaque journée bien passée. Lorsqu'on part finalement, on est triste de quitter un pays et des gens auxquels on s'est attaché."
What does everyone do around here for kicks on weekends? -- We take attendance at home to make sure no one has more than three absences... I swear this library was designed by Toulouse-Lautrec... If they redid the frescoes, the Seminar Room would make a great Italian restaurant... The vanity of learning may lead a man to forget that he be a blockhead... What time is it? Oh, my word. Right, let's get to it then... Damn the absolute (and endives)... Where is Miss IAU (when you need her most)?... I'm not sure exactly what I ordered, but if it's brains or blood sausage... I think someone should propose a non-agression pact between buses and mopeds... It's cheaper in Marseille.

France is out to lunch from 12:00 to 2:30, no, from 1789 to 1979... Eurafrique is where French people go to take lessons in rudeness... The tackiness of life is best exemplified by France.

Les étudiants sont priés de parler français entre eux... Ah bon, ben... disons que... mais bien sûr... c'est une idée, quoi... on ne fait pas cela... effectivement/carrément/absolument pas! ce dont j'ai envie, c'est d'un bon verre de bière... pas de question... ah je sais pas, moi... le thème de l'absurde... bavardage... entrée libre... service compris... il faut attendre, hein... c'est chouette, ca... c'est vachement sympa, ce truc.

Wanted: One Capable Husband. Please. Condition desperate. Leave a note for Martha in the F box or contact my agent Lorie Thomas. Must speak English. Gringos need not apply. -- Interested: One Gringo. C'mon Martha, gimme a chance. Ian... And in the darkness there was a lamp, but the lamp finally fell, and who the hell can see in the dark?
I was standing outside of a fish market on the Rue de la République, bored as hell. Like nothing new, a young kid whipped his trail bike off the street, buzzed it up the sidewalk a few meters and stopped in front of this little market. An old man that rubbed by my shoulder didn't like the punk razzing his quiet walk and he was going to let the kid know it. Pretty soon the fat old man and the kid were yelling and struggling with each other up against the cycle, screaming what sounded like augmented Greek. Then the shop lady at the fish market went out and hauled the man off the boy. Apparently she was the mec's mother of all things. The whole bunch was brewing up a greasy cloud that smelled like two-stroke engines, sweat, and wet fish. The stubby woman pulled the
Kim Broderson  Alison Stanley

man off, slapped the boy for cursing, and then it started all over again. Unfortunately, I was missing most of the juiciest phrases the cycler was spitting out. I did see him make some odd gestures with his fingers though. Pretty soon, even meagre passers-by were taking sides and pushing each other around. One vieux type couldn't get his hands on anybody, so he just bent over and pushed on the fish rack, bumping it up against the wall like a beer barrel on a rocking ship. It was an honest commotion.

You know, I think those people just didn't eat well that morning before they left for work. Always on edge like that, eyeing one another as if they've got the plague. Maybe some bacon, eggs, and less of that god-awful coffee would have prevented the scene. Anyway, those goof balls made standing at a bus stop more interesting than it would have been back in Pittsburg.
December 8, 1978

We don't see our French host family very often. The father is usually away on business and we don't arrive home from the Institute until dinner time, but those are the times our Madame guests the occasion to engage my roommate PJ and I in conversation. Once we are seated for the evening meal we are in for it till she has exhausted herself. Naturally, our conversations are all in French. Madame F. knows a little English but after a few attempts usually gives up. Unfortunately, PJ speaks only a little French and understands a lot more, but not enough to follow a woman with Madame F.'s gifts of speech. I don't always follow her myself. Every now and then I have to halt the flow, ask her to repeat what she has just said in simpler language, then translate it to my roommate. Only on an occasional over-embroidered monologue do I lose her completely. Sometimes I deliberately let go my attention, facilitate the process of getting lost, in order to better enjoy the music of her words. At her best she is a one-woman orchestra.

It makes no difference, when she is in the groove, what she has chosen to talk about -- food, costume, ritual, local mountains, or the history of Aix. Any theme serves to exploit her virtuosity. In love with all that is subtle and intricate, she is always lucid and convincing. She has a feminine flair for precisiosities, can always produce the exact timbre, shade, nuance, odor, taste. She has the slam of a magician and the tonal musicality of a composer who explores the waffing state of dreams.

It is a wonderful hypnotism that I go through every night. Her conversation is like a work of art, educational as well as revealing, and warmly engrossing.

Love,

S.
Front row l. to r. Marilee Thompson Susan Davis Lisa Badway
Karen Miller Kitty Martha Kathy Sarah Jackie 2nd row far rt. Lise
Hinman

Sainte Philippe Joan Bitterman
There are nights when the light creeps up
like an old man with a face dipped in flour.
Creases, shadows for eyes,
and a wet ring of hair.
I have seen old women go out and glance up
before the multitude of eyes were open
and spread out on rocks as large as mirrors
the rough dough of bread and grease
that cakes in the sun.
My kitchen too has accepted the bad breath
of the ageing glow, and
formed the aching bricks of habit
that confine the imagination.
There is an odd glow beneath the pages
of a book, or the small canvases of leaves and grass
that makes one think of her future
and the close one she is made of,
the ones that ask for the word love.
My kitchen, the dripping faucet, bitter coffee, bread,
and the light in my study still on.
They are the reflection of a consistent
pain that asks me to go on
to be part of their unobstructed day.
Jorge Alvarez

Yamina

Kathy Forslund  Mark

Mary Rachel from the Biblio.
Dearest Steffie,

Oh WOW! It was utterly fantastic to hear your voice. I can't believe it. I'm just sorry we lost contact so soon. What happened? Did you have to hang up? Your mom told me you talked with her too. Guess who I saw at the malt shop yesterday? It was Dong saying how much he missed you - to a horde of females ready to console him. I wouldn't worry about his lonely nights. Just be sure to relax and enjoy yourself while you're over there. Sue is doing pretty well but she misses Greg an awful lot. She was kicked out of school and ROTC after last semester. However, she was allowed to return to U. of M. but she is not a full member of ROTC yet. She doesn't mind that too much because she doesn't have to wear her uniform or march. I just hope she can bring her grades up or she might get kicked out for good. Oh well, that is the Susie we know and love.

I guess I have babbled enough for one letter. Do you notice that I write almost as much as I talk? Well, take good care and remember I'm here. Miss ya!

Love,
Candy
Voici ma bouteille à la mer. C'est l'espoir qui la jette, pas du tout la logique--elle s'enfonce et se lève, tenant une demande, une question, une pensée solitaire.

Les ondes la tournent, la renversent; tout me tourmente: ai-je précisé mon espérance pour la voir cassée sur les rochers? Avais-je raison de la laisser échapper?--on me dit que ces choses doivent se cacher, même des âmes dites sympathiques.

Je regrette. Je m'inquiète. Je n'ai pas le rythme lent des vagues.

Recevrai-je une réponse? Pourrai-je la reconnaître?

Chaque jour je regarde fixement l'horizon. Chaque soir le soleil se couche devant mon île.
Since September I've been fascinated by Jean Mandola's relaxed and entertaining way of teaching art history as well as by her amazing ability to get lost in Aix, but only recently have I come to know her as a friend. In all these aspects she is exceptional.

In class, "Use your eyes" urges the same distracted but somehow logical voice that announces the hour-by-hour schedule for today's field trip, while Yamina counts heads on the bus. Later, Jean shares her unique interpretations of all the great works we see. Someone asks the style of a Roman bust at Arles: "You know, it looks like that little girl on The Flintstones who wears a bone in her hair." We have to admit it does.

Apart from teaching, Jean paints, draws, and invents: her apartment is filled with conversational fantasies of overlaid words and pictures. "Being an amateur is fun. I'm always afraid that if I became a full-time artist I'd find out that I really have no talent." Maybe it's that insecurity that endears her to us idle 20 year-olds who wander up to visit. We find the reassuring company and advice of someone who has kept a fresh, youthful perspective on life and art throughout the simple joys and sobering questions of both.
A. Mathis - Grammar

Mme Rolland - French Theater

Monica Maza - Housing Director

L. to rt. Sheila Brizell - Sec. to Mr. Maza
Mary Szlauer - Office
Betty Howell - Registrar
Susan Shaw - Office

Mrs. Dunart - Psychology Mary nume
L. to R. Lizette, Sheila Fitzgerald, Steve, Lloyd Collins
Joe Waltz, Walt Krzos, Jorge Raegan, Fernando Praca

Ferm and Ferm
Front-Carol Hordecai

2nd-
Cathy Girrier
Lynn Lubowicki
Julie Fiene
Walt

3rd-
Jim Blum
Trish

Left to right-
Jane
Jorge
Steve King
Paul

Patricia Culliton

Steve Andrew
May 26, 1979

The Picnic

The day started slow.

"Hey you guys, where are you going?"

"To a picnic, two days before exams, why not?"

"It was just a beautiful day and the sun shining bright," commented Carolyn after the whole thing was over and she sitting complacently sipping her demi-véritable ... so what did we do?

Edie started us out showing her champion skills at frisbee while Carolyn and Leeann

"Hey Carolyn, what's that?"

"Oh just something I learned when I was five."

... did back handsprings and roundoffs. Then Mari Margaret showed Brian something she learned in cheerleading school (ha!) ...

"Brian, it's simple - my feet are going to land on your shoulders and then you flip me over."

"Yeah right, right into the ground face first."

Stephen Walden sat on a log playing the guitar. Ian taught us the bunny hop while Brent played with Clay ... er, at backgammon. Amy kept hanging upside down from the jungle gym.

Christian came over and said "Garçon, comme je suis perdu" (Boy, do I feel lost) as there weren't enough "frenchies" and he had to learn the game.

"This is a box."

"A what?"

"A box."

"Oh, a box!"

... all in English - he had trouble with the word "can." "No, it's peanut butter," he kept insisting.

Stephen fell off the seesaw. In our pyramid, Carolyn fell off Stephen. Amy kissed Brent. Leeann swung her tooshie as the frogs and the bunnies went sauté-ing across the field ...

Just a bunch of 20 year-old kids - playing our hearts out -
FIRST SEMESTER

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KOUNTZ, Paul Dominac (Wofford College) 627 Parrin Drive Spartanburg, SC 29302
*KOURIS, Cynthia (Univ. of Denver) 5159 W. Colgate Pl. Denver, CO 80296
ASTERIX(*) DENOTES NON-PICTURED

Coca Cola lined the walls with Critiques of Pure Reason. Wow! Do you see how green that tree is? Is it our bleary eyes or the crisp Provencal air? Eight hours in that smoky room we well deserved our pain du chocolat. 2:00 AM. Mari Margaret and Trish begin to proofread the student directory. Trish prefers the table of contents. Ian sings another song. It seems our defenses are gone, hidden humor arises, it is all for the book.

What happened tonight? We put a book together - Incredible - Twelve hours in our butt-festered den. Typewriters bombard the air. We got punchy at two. We saw the graffiti on the men's room wall. Someone said Nietzsche was dead - God - Someone said God was dead - Nietzsche – Someone said God was Nietzsche - Dead - But we had a book to write. At 2:45 your skin gets oily. Trish's hair gets knotted. She's a layout editor with long hair. Ian's a Salinger who crucifies his typewriter. His are hard, long, and rough. Mari Margaret drank. She says it's in her blood. All I know is we finished a book twelve hours into Friday.

It was 6:00 PM. The doors were closed to the Institute. We were hard at work on the book. There were pages to be typed, photos to be centered. There was a hell of a lot to do. We shot the bull and we worked. The time got away from me. At eight I took a chow break. Back at nine. Did more typing. Told some jokes. I laughed. It was that or break. But I couldn't break. We had a book to put out. It was 12:30 AM. Smoke filled the air. We were putting the Cigarette to bed. Trish was arranging the photos. Mari Margaret was typing, "Where the hell is the white-out?" Ian was typing and swearing. We had a tough assignment. We had a book to put together; and we had the pressure of a next-morning deadline. The decision was made. It would be pain du chocolat. Then we got back to work. It was 3:00 AM. Smoke still filled the air. Trish was still working and Ian was still swearing. The night wore on. Page after page. It was boss. Mari Margaret made a remark. Someone said it was base. Mari Margaret finished her typing. The tapping ceased. She started to draw. It was a grasshopper. Trish sighed and looked at the table of contents.
WANTED

Janice Warren
Alias: J W

Roberto Passariello
Alias: Kid Kalamazoo

EXTREMELY DANGEROUS

Sue Miller Alias: Bunny

Mlle Bartoli
Alias: Belle

Lorie Mimner
Alias: Blondy

Chuck Orabutt
Alias: Mad Dog

Have you seen this man?
Alias: Stephen Conger

John Marbach
Alias: Mugsy

Sharon Noces
Alias: Shady

Nanette Hedgen
Alias: Happy