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INTERVIEW: Youth Interview

NAME LIKE TO BE CALLED: Michelle

COMPANY: Park Teen Center

HOMELAND: Pusan, South Korea

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(WHERE DOES YOUR FAMILY COME FROM, MICHELLE?)

Korea. Actually South Korea.

(SOUTH KOREA? UM, WHICH TOWN IN SOUTH KOREA?)

Pusan. Pusan.

(HOW DO YOU SPELL THAT?)

Well there is two ways. Uh, you know, just type it as P-u-s-a-n. (OK)

(WHAT LANGUAGE IS SPOKEN THERE?)

Korean.

(KOREAN. UH, HOW MUCH OF YOUR FAMILY LIVED CLOSE TO YOU THERE?)

What do you mean?

(YOUR FAMILY)

All.

(ALL OF YOUR FAMILY LIVED THERE?)

My mom, dad, my sister and me. Or like other..

(ALL OF EM, ALL THE RELATIONS)

Well really (inaud) cause my dad's parents lives at the Table(?) the other, other town. And my mom, my mom's part, my mom's family lives like way out there, it's like Seoul. It's like capitol of Korea. And like we are the only family that is like really living (inaud).

(IN THE SOUTH PART? SO MOST OF YOUR FAMILY LIVES IN THE NORTH PART?)

Um hum. (yes)

(AND YOU GUYS LIVE IN THE SOUTH PART. HOW OFTEN DID YOU GET TO SEE THEM?)

Um, we went there like a lot cause it, it takes like five hours to go there. And you just can stay there forever.

(YEAH. HOW BIG WAS YOUR TOWN?)

Um, not much.

(WAS IT AS BIG AS LINCOLN?)

Um, maybe like kind of more bigger than Lincoln but it's like kind of, I don't know, it's like, it's like not that big, but it's like not that small.

(SO IT'S A LITTLE BIGGER THAN LINCOLN?)

Yeah. (YEAH)

(BUT IT'S NOT AS BIG AS LIKE SOLE, THE CAPITOL.)

Um, um hum. (yes)

(OK. WHAT WAS THE MAIN MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION, IF YOU GUYS WANTED TO GO SOMEWHERE, HOW WOULD YOU GET THERE?)

Uh, usually we take cars. But when our mom is kind of tired, we just take trains.

(TAKE TRAINS. UM, WHAT WAS YOUR HOUSE LIKE?)

Um, huge.

(IT WAS REALLY BIG)

Yeah, it was. And actually I kind of was like really surprised when I got here, cause I live in apartment kind of with my sister. And the highest room, highest apartment was like 3 floor. In Korea we have like 30 floors and we live in 30. It's like top of the house. So I was kind of scared cause I really lived really high and we are living really down.

(YEAH. SO YOU LIVED IN AN APARTMENT COMPLEX)

Um hum. (yes)

(BUT THE APARTMENT WAS REALLY BIG)

Um hum. (yes)

(AND, UM, WERE THERE LOTS OF APARTMENT COMPLEXES IN YOUR TOWN?)

(inaud phrase)

(IS THAT WHAT MOST PEOPLE LIVED IN?)

Yeah. There is not like houses. Maybe in country.

(YEAH. BUT IN YOUR TOWN MOST PEOPLE LIVED IN APARTMENTS)

Um hum. (yes)

(WHAT WAS THE TALLEST APARTMENT?)

Well, the other, we, I heard that they're making this apartment, its like 64. But I don't know if they're really gonna make it cause (YEAH) they'll get a fire and they're all gonna die.

(SMILE. YEAH THAT WOULD BE REALLY DANGEROUS IF YOU LIVED ON LIKE THE 60TH FLOOR AND THERE WAS A FIRE)

And it's really (inaud) there's gonna be tornados there. They're gonna fall into pieces. They're gonna die. Ah!

(SMILE – DO YOU HAVE TORNADOS IN KOREA?)

Yeah. And earthquake. Cause like we are really close with Japan. And Japan have a lot of earthquake because they're (inaud). They're not like connected with other... We are connected with China but they're not. So we are really close and they're gonna, if they have (inaud) that it takes the oceans take the waves and they come to our country and they have really huge earthquake and we had last time.

(YEAH)

But it was like not really big earthquake, but it was pretty huge.

(SO, UM, WHO, WHO TELLS MOST, WHO TELLS YOU MOST ABOUT KOREA IN YOUR FAMILY? WHO TALKS ABOUT KOREA THE MOST?)

My sister.

(YOUR SISTER? WHAT STORIES DOES SHE TELL YOU ABOUT KOREA?)

Um, like what?

(LIKE WHAT, WHAT ARE THINGS THAT SHE TALKS ABOUT WHEN SHE TALKS ABOUT KOREA?)

Um, she talks about what happened up there at Korea, which I don't know, cause she knows, cause she's adult. I don't know, I don't know. She knows everything.

(WHAT TIME PERIOD DOES SHE TALK ABOUT? HOW OLD IS YOUR SISTER?)

She's senior at Lincoln Southwest.

(AND SO SHE TALKS ABOUT NORTH KOREA?)

Yeah. Sometimes, but most of the time it's south.

(SO WHAT ARE SOME THINGS THAT SHE TELLS YOU ABOUT SOUTH KOREA? THINGS THAT SHE DID OR...)

Oh, she...

(THINGS ABOUT SOUTH KOREA?)

Yeah, she tell, she, well Korea is like really, like computer. You know, like they use computer a lot. But in America they doesn't a lot. I mean like Korea have like really, we were really like... I don't know how to explain but like Korea is, there is a computer a lot but here they don't. I'm kinda like surprised here cause I was like how can they live without computers. I asked somebody and they, I asked my friends and they said "oh, we don't have computer at my house". Like in Korea they all have like they have like computers at house. So anyways, my sister is going to this Korea web site and she all

these things, what happen in Korea. She sees like crimes, what happen here or, or what happened to (inaud) stars or I don't care.

(YEAH. DO YOUR PARENTS TELL YOU STORIES ABOUT WHEN THEY GREW UP IN KOREA?)

Well I don't know, because when my mom and my dad was born there was like huge war and she really, she, my mom and dad really don't wanta talk about it. (YEAH) But I really, really interested in this sort of but she doesn't wanta talk about it.

(REALLY?)

Yeah.

(AND YOU'VE ASKED QUESTIONS AND SHE JUST DOESN'T WANTA...)

Yeah. She said "you don't want to know".

(SMILE – UH, WHEN PEOPLE ASK YOU ABOUT KOREA, WHAT DO YOU TELL EM? WHEN FRIENDS ASK YOU AT SCHOOL, WHAT DO YOU TELL THEM ABOUT KOREA?)

It's a nice country and, and (pause) and I don't know, they don't ask me.

(THEY DON'T ASK YOU THAT MUCH)

No.

(UM, WHEN YOUR FAMILY TALKS ABOUT KOREA, IS IT MORE POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE?)

(pause) Negative.

(IT'S MORE NEGATIVE)

Yeah.

(WHY WOULD YOU SAY THAT? WHY WOULD YOU SAY IT'S MORE NEGATIVE?)

Cause, well, there is, when we saw like internet newspapers, they just talk about really bad happenings. So they don't really talk about good things that happen in Korea. So I don't know, I just, my sister always told me about bad things.

(BAD THINGS – SMILE)

Yeah. There is murder and he's psycho(?) and I don't know. (inaud)

(YEAH. UM, WHAT GOOD THINGS DO THEY TELL YOU ABOUT KOREA?)

Good things? Um, um, good things... Hum... Sometimes they told me about Korea inventing something. Invented a row boat or something that can tell (inaud). I don't know. (YEAH)

Yeah, maybe. (smile)

(UM, WHAT KINDA FEELINGS DO YOU HAVE ABOUT KOREA?)

Well I just feel proud of my country. I don't feel like "oh, (inaud) with my country". I don't really feel like that. (YEAH) Sometimes I do, but sometimes not really.

(SO YOU LIKE, YOU LIKE KOREA.)

Um hum. (yes)

(YEAH. UM, WHY DID YOUR FAMILY WANT TO COME TO AMERICA?)

Um, well, the reason that I, we came here is my father was, was in here for like exchange, exchange, exchange teacher. (UM HUM) At UNL. So and me and my sister was born here so we have citizenships. So we came here with my father. But my mom had a job at Korea and she could not come here. So we just like dad and me and my sister just came here. And after I really missed my mom so I just when my dad is and when my dad al-, uh, (inaud) his business I just decided to go back to Korea so I can meet my mom. And my sister didn't, cause she just want to stay here. And Korea they have like really, really huge, when you get older you have to study really hard to go to really nice school. Like they have really, really, really, really, really hard. And like they sometimes (inaud) because I didn't go to the really good schools and now so my sister was afraid of that so she just decide to come here. You know, they, like in here they hang out even though they are in high school. But in Korea they just like live, live at school. They live, they sleep at there, they woke up and they study. And they sleep there.

(REALLY)

Yeah. So that's why I came here, cause I was scared.

(YEAH. YEAH, THAT'S A LOT OF PRESSURE, HUH?)

Hum. And sometimes they just (inaud). And I was like (inaud).

(YEAH. WOW. UM, SO WHAT THINGS DID YOU DO TO PREPARE TO COME HERE TO AMERICA?)

Hum?

(HOW DID YOU PREPARE TO COME TO AMERICA?)

(pause) Um, (pause) hum? what do you mean?

(HOW DID YOU, WHEN YOU KNEW YOU WERE COMING TO AMERICA, HOW DID YOU GET READY TO COME HERE?)

Like what?

(DID YOU TAKE ENGLISH CLASSES?)

Oh.

(DID YOU READ BOOKS ABOUT IT? DID YOU LOOK, LOOK AT THINGS ONLINE OR TALK, TALK TO PEOPLE ON THE PHONE WHO HAVE BEEN HERE? HOW DID YOU GET READY FOR THAT?)

Oh. I just came. And my mom was, I, I was like really nervous to come here cause they were like all different. Different language, different place, and I'm gonna leave with my sister without my parents. So I was just so scared and I was thinking to tell my mom that I just don't want to go back to, uh, to come here. But I just knew that I have to be there so I can, you know, I, uh,... Ah. Well I didn't like talk to something or read a book about here cause I just think they're the same as Korea. But, you know, (inaud) is gonna be kind of upsetting. (YEAH) I don't think they are like really opposite as opposite (inaud). But my mom was telling me that you're gonna learn languages up there. You're gonna (inaud) that there. So I just didn't, well my sis-, all my friends was like going to academies. But I didn't. It was like real nice.

(PAUSE – OK. HOW DID YOUR FAMILY DECIDE ON LIVING IN LINCOLN?)

Um, well, first of all my dad and my mom was graduate students at UNL. And she, and we were born here at like, my sister was born here at 88 and I was born in, um, 94. And I don't know why my mom and dad came to UNL, but after when we go back to Korea then my dad was like they have all these, you know, all these, uh, teacher....

(DEGREE?)

Yeah, certi-... Ah, certificate. (YEAH, CERTIFICATES. YEAH) She just decided to go back to Korea. And after when my dad has chance to, you know, the exchange teacher (UM HUM) (inaud) teacher, my dad was like oh we were like UNL before so we should go there. (YEAH) So he just came here. But I, and that's why we went to Lincoln. And I don't know why my dad first choose it when he was young. So I don't know. Cause he lives here.

(WHAT WAS THE, WHAT WAS, WHAT WAS GOING TO SCHOOL LIKE IN KOREA?)
Hard.

(WHAT WAS HARD ABOUT IT?)

Everything was hard.

(HOW LONG DID YOU GO TO SCHOOL? HOW LONG WERE THE DAYS? HOW LONG WERE SOME OF THE DAYS?)

Oh, six days.

(YOU WENT SIX DAYS A WEEK)

Um hum. (yes)

(FOR HOW MANY HOURS A DAY?)

Well, in Monday I went to this, I was in school for (pause) for like yeah, same as here, until 7th period. At start at 8 and, yeah, we end up at like 3. But I have to go to this academy so every day, so when I get home I was like 8 and like and yeah, Monday and Tuesday and Thursday are same. They, I, I just go home at 8. But Wednesday and Friday we, the school dismissal really, uh, really earlier so we go home at like 2 or 1 kind of time and on Thursday we go home at 12(?).

(AT NOON? AT 12?)

No. Yeah, at...

(AT 12 IN THE AFTERNOON?)

Um hum. (yes)

(SO ON MONDAY AND TUESDAY, 8:00 AT NIGHT...)

Yeah. (...IS WHEN YOU GET DONE)

(NOW THE ACADEMY IS DIFFERENT THAN REGULAR SCHOOL?)

Um hum. (yes)

(SO YOU GO FROM SCHOOL TO THE ACADEMY. WHAT DO YOU DO IN THE ACADEMY?)

We learn.

(IT'S MORE LEARNING)

Um hum. (yes) Like there is kind of problem in Korea cause teachers, there is like when they're teaching their students are already learn those things at academies and they just like go to sleep and they just playing and sometimes they just like playing with their cell phones and my teacher was like really upset. And that time I didn't go to the academies cause I just got there in, from the USA, and I didn't know they all go to the academies. So I really, I was like, I really I was like the (inaud) my teacher was saying and she was saying "OK, fine, we just gonna get over this cause you guys already learned this at academy". I was like I didn't. (smile) And so like that's a real problem cause yeah.

(SO THE ACADEMIES IS LIKE A SECOND SCHOOL THAT YOU'LL GO TO FROM... WHAT TIME DO YOU GO THERE? RIGHT AFTER SCHOOL?)

Yeah. Sometimes like that, but sometimes, yeah, so you know, we go right away. Um hum. (yes)

(AND WHAT HAPPENS.... SO IF YOU DON'T GO TO THE ACADEMIES THEN SOMETIMES YOU FALL BEHIND IN SCHOOL BECAUSE THE TEACHER SKIPS OVER STUFF?)

Well, yeah. Yeah. So like that's the tough... I didn't know anything so I was like, so I told my teacher and she was like "OK then you wanta learn more?" and I was like "yes" and she was like ask the other students or your friends. And I was like

you're not gonna teach it". And she was like well I have, she have work to do. And I was like "OK, fine".

(HOW MANY KIDS PER CLASSROOM?)

Usually there is 30, yeah, in one class.

(THAT'S ABOUT THE SAME AS HERE)

Um hum. (yes) (THAT'S ABOUT THE SAME)

(UM, WHAT WAS, WHAT WAS THE DISCIPLINE LIKE?)

Hum? (WHAT WAS DISCIPLINE. HOW DID THEY, UM, PUNISH KIDS OR...)

Uh, it...

(WAS THERE, WAS THERE PUNISHMENT?)

Yeah.

(THERE WAS)

Uh, it's kind of bad things in Korea. Yeah. But in here they don't hit kids, but they do (smile) in Korea.

(SMILE- THEY HIT KIDS)

Yeah, they hit kids. And sometimes teachers hit kids so bad, like they just hit kids with this kind of stick, it's like made with some really weak things, so they just hit hands or hands. But sometimes when you get to the high school, teachers get really creepy. (smile) You know, they not nice. Even though the students are nice. So when I saw this news, that this high school teacher hit his kids with foot, he was hitting kids (inaud). So she, so the kid, the students was, she was like hadding, have, she went to the hospital and the other, other kids they took a video that the teacher was hitting here. So it went to the police and the girl died. I don't know.

(OH YIKES. THAT'S BAD)

Yeah. So and teacher, that one teacher was like really, I don't know, he's just like...

(YEAH, DID HE GET IN TROUBLE?)

Not really.

(NOT REALLY?)

Not really.

(THAT'S TOO BAD. SO THE DISCIPLINE IS A LITTLE DIFFERENT)

Yeah. Well, it's so creepy(?) at Korea. Uh, teachers so bad.

(YEAH. UM, WAS EVERYBODY ALLOWED TO GO TO SCHOOL? TO MIDDLE SCHOOL, TO LIKE HIGH SCHOOL? DID EVERYBODY GET TO GO OR DID YOU HAVE TO TAKE LIKE A TEST TO GET IN?)

Oh. Actual there is like, um, there is like high level school. High level middle school and low level middle school. So in elementary and kindergarten they're the same. The levels

are the same. But when you get to the high, middle school they're gonna really different. There is like really, they have this test and they're gonna say well you did, if you get like (inaud) this like, if you wanta go to this really good school and it's like really smart kids and you're just really naughty kids, you know, they're not studying, they always go to hang out, and yeah, that's really bad. And they just go (inaud). And these kids, they don't go to the college, they just get job right away. And however but I am, yeah...

(SO IS THERE A LOT OF PRESSURE TO GET INTO THE HIGH LEVEL?)

Yeah, a lot. (YEAH) That's all so scary. It's like (inaud) is so scary if I go to the naughty(?) school... Ooh. (SMILE)

(NOW IF YOU'RE IN THE LOW LEVEL MIDDLE SCHOOL, DO YOU GET TO GO TO HIGH LEVEL IF YOU PASS THE TEST, CAN YOU STILL GO TO HIGH LEVEL HIGH SCHOOL?)

No.

(NO. YOU STAY IN LOW LEVEL HIGH SCHOOL)

If you work really hard and if you change where you're living, you move to other country, uh, other town, you have to take a test again, maybe you can move. But I don't know. (YEAH)

(DO, UM, DO KIDS HAVE TO THEN TAKE TESTS TO GET INTO COLLEGE, OR DO HIGH LEVEL HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES GET TO GO TO COLLEGE?)

Oh, yeah. There is one that have high school and college, this test between those things. And it's like kind of same with SAT, but SAT they took like a lot in one year. But in Korea they took only one in one year. So that they're really hard working. So if you, if you do really bad at this test, you have to wait like one year to get into the school. So yeah, and they switch that a lot at that time in high school.

(WOW)

But I saw this movie on, I saw this newspaper and, and like tiny kids already suicide. Cause like last, last, last September was the day they took this test and sort of like "oh"....

(THAT'S TOO BAD. UM, SO NOW THAT YOU'RE HERE IN THE AMERICAN SCHOOLS, HOW DO, HOW DO YOU LIKE, HOW DO YOU LIKE AMERICAN SCHOOLS? WHAT'S GOOD AND WHAT'S BAD?)

Um, good thing is they don't really press, uh, pro-, uh, punish the kids. Yeah, they don't hit kids. (smile) And they're really nice, teachers are nice. And I think they cared a lot about, lot, lots about those kids they teach. And but, and the bad things, like they start school early. In Korea they start at like 9. And here they starts 8. And they only have like four minutes to rest. In Korea they have like 10 or 15 minutes.

(BETWEEN CLASSES?)

Um hum. (yes) And that's bad. And the foods, and the lunch, they, it's kind of like they're (smile) it's really kind of weak at there, uh, here. But in Korea they like really care about this food and they like make huge things. Yeah.

(SO THE FOOD IS BETTER IN KOREA THAN... THE SCHOOL LUNCHESES ARE BETTER?)

(laugh) Yeah.

(SMILE – I REMEMBER EATING SCHOOL LUNCHESES. LAUGH – UM, HOW DID YOU, HOW DID YOU FEEL YOU WERE TREATED BY FELLOW STUDENTS WHEN YOU CAME HERE?)

Treated good or treated bad? Good or bad?

(WERE YOU TREATED GOOD OR BAD?)

Well, I think I treated really bad at that time when I just got here, cause nobody was talking to me. I was like thinking that because I was different than them. By by now it's like (inaud) already and they're kinda, I have like this kid who is really nice, I don't know. They're not really friendly but I, I am friendly (smile) to them. (SMILE) Yeah, OK, whatever. (YEAH) It was really hard time when at first we, when I got here. I was like telling my mom that I want, "I'm not gonna go to this school!". (SMILE) But right now I just, I, sometimes I don't, I don't wanta go, come here, cause I'm really tired (smile) but most of the days I just woke up early and I (YEAH) (inaud) and come here. And thinking about my school.

(THAT'S WHY YOU FELL ASLEEP SEVENTH PERIOD?)

(laugh)

(UM, HOW MUCH ENGLISH DID YOU KNOW WHEN YOU CAME HERE?)

I was here before, you know, in fourth grade. That's how I didn't know really nothing. Nothing, nothing, nothing. I was like "I didn't, I don't, I can't believe that I learn English cause when I was in four per-, uh, four grade, I didn't like (inaud) was so hard. Uh, I didn't know what teacher was saying when I just got here at that time, and I didn't do anything. I was like OK, what? (smile) And I was at the time ELL too so I was... And I didn't, I don't know how to explain her that I don't know how to do this. So it's just like you shall talk, talk, and I was just like "oh no, no, no". I don't know, I don't even know what I was trying to say. But yeah, I got really bad score at that time, cause I didn't do anything. (WOW) I didn't do it. I just didn't (smile) know. And like I just learn and learn and maybe I'm learning really easily cause at that time I was really young. (YEAH)

(AND SO YOU, YOU THINK THAT YOU LEARNED IT EASIER NOW THAT YOU'RE A LITTLE OLDER?)

(pause) So and I know everything. (laugh)

(SO, SO HOW MUCH ENGLISH DID YOU KNOW WHEN YOU CAME BACK THE SECOND TIME?)

Well I, I know how to understand what people was, were, what they're talking about. And I know how to do the work, I know how to write. So when I take this test and find what level I, and I got a B in the ELF(?) and I took a test and they said I'm gonna be in the level three. I was like level three? (inaud) I was like ah, I couldn't... Well, then I was like, when I was here before I was like being fifth, level five when I was in the, in the kid school. So I was like OK (inaud phrase) and they're like well it's kind of good cause they're saying that I had really good scores cause most of kids they will be level one or two (YEAH) when they just got here. So I was like I wanta be the (inaud).

(WAS THERE ANY ADJUSTMENTS THAT YOU HAD TO MAKE? WERE THERE ANY ADJUSTMENTS THAT YOU HAD TO MAKE WHEN YOU CAME HERE? LIKE, UH, THE MUSIC, THE TYPE OF MUSIC YOU LISTEN TO OR THE CLOTHES THAT YOU WORE OR HOW YOU BEHAVE? WERE THERE ANY...)

What do you mean?

(IS, WAS THERE A DIFFERENCE, UM, THE WAY THAT YOU DRESSED OR THE WAY THAT, THE FOOD YOU ATE OR THE MUSIC YOU LISTENED TO WHEN YOU MOVED FROM KOREA TO HERE?)

Oh. Clothes.

(CLOTHES?)

Yeah.

(CLOTHES WERE DIFFERENT)

Um hum.

(WHY?)

Korea, they have these uniforms. I hate that uniform. It's like so ugly. I hate it. (SMILE) And like ah, I really hated, I really don't wanta go to school because of that stupid uniform. So I was like wearing this big huge coat. It's like...

(WHAT WAS THE UNIFORM?)

It was like so ugly.

(THE COLORS OF IT OR JUST THE WAY THAT IT WAS MADE?)

Well, in, in the elementary it was just like really, really, really blue. It's like oh, just like ah...

(THAT, LIKE THE RECYCLING TRASH CAN?)

Yeah. It was so ugly.

(REALLY BLUE)

Then it's, and it was like so huge for me when I just got there. The uniforms are wearing this huge one. I don't like it. And we have like in, in, in, in summer we have like this short skirt and I hate to wear that. I just hate to wear a skirt, it's so disgusting. So I was like "ah, I don't wanta wear this skirt". So like we always ask teacher if, can we just wear other clothes (smile) (SMILE) than this one, but my teacher said "ah, do you wanta die? Ah, you can't do that". I was like (smile) I don't wanta die. (SMILE) And when, and well, let me try it this, um, when I got to the (inaud) I just don't wear uniforms. (YEAH)

(DO YOU STILL LISTEN TO THE SAME MUSIC?)

Well I don't really, seriously when they're talking about the, the stars, the singers, I really don't know what they're talking about. Like there is so many singers and I can not remember all those people. So it's like "OK, who is that". (laugh) (SMILE) And it's so a lot, there is so a lot, there is so a lot.

(LOTS OF SINGERS)

Yeah.

(IS THERE THAT MANY SINGERS BACK IN KOREA?)

Not really.

(NO)

No, no.

(SO WHAT KIND OF MUSIC DO YOU LISTEN TO?)

Right now I listen Korean music. (YEAH) Yeah. And it's kind of (smile) hard to... I don't know. Maybe sometimes here music's, but... (YEAH) (inaud) Korea.

(WHAT ARE SOME TRADITIONS THAT YOU AND YOUR SISTER STILL DO THAT YOU DID BACK IN KOREA?)

Eating rice.

(EATING RICE)

But we don't do like celebrating some things (smile) cause, you know...

(DID YOU CELEBRATE THINGS BACK IN KOREA? IF YOU WERE IN KOREA WOULD YOU CELEBRATE THOSE THINGS?)

Um hum. (yes)

(WELL, WHAT WOULD YOU CELEBRATE THERE THAT YOU DON'T HERE?)

Chinese New Year. Yeah, Chinese New Year. We were just like dressed in these really soft clothes, like kind of, it, it was like really old clothes before and it was (inaud). And they're not really (inaud) but yeah. I used to wear it but right now at school I (inaud). And my mom is like "oh it's down there, oh you will look so cute in that dress". And I was

like “no I’m not gonna wear that”. So I always like, my, when my mom take the clothes for home and put them in the car it’s like (smile) (inaud) and I was like “ah, I forgot to bring the dress” (smile) and my mom was like “I thought I put it in there”, “no, you didn’t”.

(WHAT OTHER HOLIDAYS ARE THERE?)

Um, (pause) Chosau(?).

(WHAT’S THAT ONE?)

It’s like, oh it’s kind of same as Chinese New Year but we eat really different. We eat different foods. Yeah. And that’s all. Yeah, they were pretty same. They wear same clothes.

(ARE THERE THINGS THAT YOU DO HERE THAT YOU DON’T DO THERE. DO YOU CELEBRATE HOLIDAYS HERE THAT YOU WOULDN’T...)

Um, Christmas.

(YOU CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS HERE?)

Um hum. (yes) Well, last time, uh, I was here when, in the Christmas so we had this tree. But like my friends, my sister’s friends house told us to pick up tree with us so we came, we, we go with them to choose a tree. But like and I saw lot of people (smile) choosing a pine, pine tree. (UM HUM) Pine tree. And but like every time when we pass by the houses they all have like lights, celebrate lights. And there they don’t really celebrate. You know, they don’t buy trees at all.

(DO THEY HAVE CHRISTMAS?)

Yeah, they do. But they don’t really like celebrate. (NO) Celebrate.

(WHAT DO THEY DO THERE?)

In Christmas?

(UM HUM)

They just like, I don’t know, like kid they, they came to school and they celebrate. You know, kids. (KIDS, JUST KIDS THOUGH?)Yeah.

(AND MAINLY JUST AT SCHOOL?)

Yeah. Cause like friends, just they wanta (inaud) out. (YEAH) Yeah, for Korea they don’t really celebrate Christmas a lot.

(WHAT ABOUT HALLOWEEN?)

(pause) (DON’T DO HALLOWEEN) Yeah, maybe like, um, English Academy they do. Cause it’s English. So and it’s... Sometimes they do but not like they go to these apartment and say “trick or treat”.

(CAN'T HAVE CANDY. DO PEOPLE COME TO YOUR APARTMENT AND ASK FOR CANDY?)

No.

(NO. OK.)

All different.

(DID, UH, WHAT ABOUT RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS? WERE THERE ANY RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS THAT YOU BROUGHT OVER THAT YOU STILL PRACTICE HERE THAT YOU WOULD PRACTICE THERE?)

Ah, God, believe in God. (YEAH) Yeah, church is still (inaud). (YEAH)

(UM, HOW OFTEN DO YOU GET TO TALK TO YOUR FAMILY BACK IN KOREA?)

(smile) Oh, like my dad and my mom call her, call, call us, call us like 10 times a day.

(LAUGH) I don't know, maybe they think like, they just worry about us because we are kinda young, you know. (smile) It's really kinda funny cause like when we tries to do anything just call us and we're like talking to them and you forgot what to do. And it's like (inaud). Kinda funny.

(SO WHO, WHO DO YOU STAY WITH HERE?)

With my sister or my guardian sometimes.

(UM, WHAT LANGUAGE DO YOU GUYS SPEAK AT HOME?)

Well, like we use Korean most of times, but sometimes like, you know, Korea we use English. You know, it's not like really small words (laugh) like mix it up, just mix it up, you know. You try to say "that's because you're stupid" you say like, like Korean then we put stupid in (inaud). (LAUGH)

(SO HALF YOUR SENTENCE IS KOREAN AND THE OTHER HALF IS..)

Yeah. (THAT'S FUNNY) (inaud phrase)

(THAT IS FUNNY. UM, HAVE YOU EVER TRANSLATED FOR SOMEBODY?)

What?

(HAVE YOU EVER BEEN A TRANSLATOR FOR SOMEBODY?)

Oh, you mean like talk...

(SOMEBODY, YEAH,...)

Um, in here or there?

(HERE)

Here?

(OR ACTUALLY EITHER PLACE)

Either place. Um, (pause) no, I haven't. (NO) Yeah, but I use adults. Who, who use kids to doing that? (SMILE)

(THAT'S TRUE, THEY SHOULD USE ADULTS. UM, SO WHEN YOU TALK TO PEOPLE IN KOREA, FRIENDS OR FAMILY, WHAT DO YOU TELL THEM ABOUT AMERICA? IS WHAT YOU TELL THEM MAINLY POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE OR BOTH?)

Yeah, both.

(A LITTLE, A MIXTURE OF BOTH?)

Um hum. (yes)

(WHAT ARE SOME POSITIVE THINGS YOU TELL THEM?)

We don't go to the academies and we don't hit kids. And yeah, kind of like that.

(WHAT ARE SOME NEGATIVE THINGS?)

Uh, you have to like, the kids are kind of like ignore you maybe sometimes. There are bad kids, they're not nice. And you just have to get over those kids. You just have to hit(?) them. (SMILE) And then they told me if they, if they were like, my friends ask me are there any time that they're kinda mean to me. I was like, and they told me how they did, how they didn't do anything to them. I was like I just told them bad words in Korea. (laugh) And then they're like, and I just told them and they were like "oh, and what did they say". And I was like they said "what does that mean". I was like "it means nothing". It was good, I mean I'm sorry. (laugh) (LAUGH) It's how I got through(?).

(IT WOULD BE A HANDY TOOL TO BE ABLE TO SPEAK ANOTHER LANGUAGE AND THEY WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO UNDERSTAND.)

Well I just feel bad about that they, that I jus told them that, and they don't know. They say "she's nice, that is nice". (smile)

(IF THEY WERE TO COME VISIT YOU, WHAT ARE SOME FUN THINGS IN LINCOLN YOU GUYS WOULD DO?)

In here?

(IN LINCOLN. WELL JUST LINCOLN)

Lincoln?

(YEAH, IN LINCOLN. WHAT WOULD YOU DO?)

(laugh) Fun things? There is no fun things!

(THERE'S NO FUN THINGS IN LINCOLN?)

Korea is like so America. They like copy all those things from America. They copy the shows they do. They copy all of these like all of these things they do. They all copy these foods they do. So like if you go to the (inaud).

(SO IT'S REALLY THE SAME WHEN YOU, LIKE IF YOU WERE TO GO... THEY HAVE SHOPPING MALLS IN KOREA?)

Yeah.

(AND MCDONALDS)

Yeah! (laugh) Like, like seriously I heard this news that Outback, you know, or TGI Friday or... (YEAH) It's like Korea have that a lot, you know. That store and they say like Korea is most, most, most store that people goes.

(REALLY)

So Korea people say "oh we're gonna go to the Outback". OK, whatever. Who cares. (SMILE) Like they, nobody goes to Outback at here. (HUH) It's kind of funny.

(ARE THERE KOREAN PLACES THAT YOU GO HERE?)

Yeah, maybe church or oriental food store. Or (pause) or, well in here they don't really have so much Korean stuff. Cause they don't know, when they tell them (inaud) in Korea like hundred times they (inaud) Chinese, that's it. (inaud phrase) Stop calling me Chinese. OK, I'll call you Asian American. I'm Korean American. Where are you from, ah, ah,... (smile) They thought that Korea was like (inaud) of China and they would call it China.

(PEOPLE HAVE THOUGHT THAT? PEOPLE HAVE THOUGHT THAT KOREA WAS A TOWN IN CHINA?)

Yeah. And it's a country. And they were like "OK".

(DOES THAT FRUSTRATE YOU?)

Um hum. (yes) But I don't, I don't, I don't know I always tell them when they see Asian people and they always think that they are all Chinese. They all Chinese. Why? Why? They're not, they're not, they speak really different words. I wanta, I wanta see their face. (laugh) (LAUGH) I wanta (inaud) and see it.

(AND, YOU KNOW, IF YOU PUT SOMEBODY FROM GERMANY NEXT TO ME, WE'D PROBABLY LOOK A LOT ALIKE, BUT WE'D STILL HAVE DIFFERENCE AND WE, WE WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO COMMUNICATE AT ALL) (laugh) (CAUSE THEY SPEAK SUCH A DIFFERENT LANGUAGE THAN I DO AND SO THERE IS A DIFFERENCE AND PEOPLE SHOULD REALIZE THAT THERE IS A DIFFERENCE IN COUNTRIES. THAT'S TOO BAD. UM, IF WHEN YOU GROW UP, UH, WOULD YOU LIKE, WHERE WOULD YOU, WHERE WOULD YOU LIKE TO LIVE?)

(pause) Hum... (pause) Uh, well I just wanta go back to Korea. I don't know, I just feel comfortable there. (UM HUM) Cause I can speak, I can speak and they can understand

what I'm trying to say. You know, I can, like I'm Korean and they're not gonna see my face and they're not gonna think "OK, she's Asian". They're gonna say "oh, there is Michelle". And here, I don't know what they're gonna say if I'm gonna make a mistakes. (YEAH) (smile)

(I BET THAT WOULD BE REALLY HARD)
It is. (I BET) It is, it is.

(I DON'T UNDERSTAND THAT)
What? (WELL, I HAVE NEVER BEEN THROUGH THAT, AN EX-, LIKE HAVING TO LEARN A NEW LANGUAGE LIKE THAT. I TOOK A SPANISH CLASS IN HIGH SCHOOL) (smile) (BUT I DIDN'T HAVE THAT TYPE OF PRESSURE WHERE I HAD TO LEARN THE LANGUAGE TO ACTUALLY COMMUNICATE AND SO THAT WOULD BE, THAT WOULD BE HARD, LOTS OF PRESSURE. HOW LONG DO YOU THINK YOU WILL STAY HERE?)
In Lincoln or United States?

(UNITED STATES)
Until I grow older and go to college and graduate.

(SO YOU WILL PROBABLY GRADUATE COLLEGE HERE. AND THEN MOVE BACK TO KOREA?)
I just feel like here is kind of more safe. In Korea there is some like they kill people without know (inaud). Like also this news they (inaud) this boy, there is some kind of boy, he was, he broke (inaud) and his girlfriend has like really long hair. And he was like having this pipe made with iron. And was like (inaud). And he was just like hit girls with, she had has long hair so he, like her, like his girlfriend and one kid died cause he hit her with this pipe. It was so ridiculous(?). How could they, like that's, ah, that's just like, they just don't get over it (inaud). (YEAH)

(SO YOU FEEL LIKE IT'S A LITTLE SAFER HERE?)
Um hum. Yeah. There is (inaud)... (tape ran out)

(WHAT ABOUT WHEN YOU HAVE KIDS AND THEY GO TO SCHOOL?)
In here or there?

(THERE, IN KOREA, WHEN YOU MOVE BACK TO KOREA)
I'll just come, bring them to here. Cause I just, cause I say, cause I, cause I experience that they are going to school and going to academy and, and it's really hard. So and I just want my kids, if I had my kids, I do want them to have a good life. So I just want to send them here. (YEAH)

(IF SOMEBODY WAS GOING TO MOVE HERE THAT YOU KNOW FROM KOREA, WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE THEM?)

Um, I would tell them to not afraid of something you're gonna do. Yu know, I am still doing, talking about English so that when my teacher asks me something (inaud) I don't know, even though I know (inaud) just say "I don't know". And the other kids say something if, if there is right and mine is right, I was like (inaud). (YEAH)

(SO THE ADVICE IS DON'T BE AFRAID IN SCHOOL)

Yeah. Just tell them, just speak out. That's all I would tell them.

(WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE THEM IF THEY GO THROUGH ELL?)

Um, (pause) um, that I don't (inaud). I, I just, if I, if I, I will tell them to talk, talk a lot. Even though you don't know what you are saying. But just talk. Cause, cause that, yeah, that helps you move into like a higher level, you know. Talking is one of the ELL things. (YEAH) So talk, talk, talk, talk, talk, even (inaud). That's all I tell them. Ah...

(WELL WHAT ELSE, WHAT ELSE COULD YOU TELL ME ABOUT, UM, YOUR EXPERIENCE MOVING HERE?)

Hum?

(WHAT ELSE COULD YOU TELL ME ABOUT MOVING HERE?)

Like what?

(ANYTHING)

Like what? Give an example. (inaud)

(ANYTHING YOU WANT.)

What? Like what?

(I DON'T KNOW. I ASKED, I ASKED IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE THAT YOU WANT TO TELL ME ABOUT?)

No. I talk a lot. I talk a lot. Ah!

(OK, WELL THAT'S GOOD. YOU JUST SAID IT WAS GOOD, YOU GOTTA TALK A LOT) (smile) (YOU LEARN ENGLISH)

I, I'm not, I just always think that in Korea I was like so (inaud) outgoing. (OUTGOING? UM HUM) Yeah, outgoing. And here I was like so, I just feel so small. Yeah. Like I don't know, until I saw this Korean kid in here, his name is (inaud), and I just want to tell him to talk, like what I just said. But I can't just, you know, if I, if I just got here and if I see him, I just, I still have that outgoing, that thing so I just kind of talk, tell him go (inaud). But I just feel small and I just (inaud) things that I do.

(AND HERE IS YOUR CHANCE. YOU GET TO TALK ABOUT WHATEVER YOU WANT. IS THERE ANYTHING THAT... BECAUSE OTHER PEOPLE ARE GONNA READ THIS. IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU'D LIKE TO TELL US ABOUT KOREA OR LIFE IN KOREA?)

Um, (pause) I would tell them that Chinese and Korea is like whole different, whole different experience, separate, separate. I would tell them that (inaud) and Korea, they don't know, they don't know. And that's kind of what. (YEAH) (smile)

(WELL, UM, IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU'D LIKE TO TELL EM?)

Anything else. I don't know. Like what? Like what?

(ANYTHING)

Um, I would tell them Korean people or Asian people can talk, can talk, they can talk, they can speak English. So I just want them to tell that they can, of course I was, I was even though I can talk, I just don't speak. I just like... (pause) (YEAH) And I, I, and the first time that I talked it was weird. These girl ask me, like I talk when somebody asks. And some girl like I, I'm not the person who talk first, I'm the person who answers. You know, so... Yeah. So I just want them to (inaud phrase).

(OK, WELL, MICHELLE, THANK YOU FOR INTERVIEWING WITH ME. I RELAY, REALLY APPRECIATE IT. I REALLY ENJOYED IT. I HOPE YOU DID TOO.