

*Travel Writings* is a companion volume to Sam Gill's *Looking Forward in the Rearview Mirror* (2021). It contains the minimally edited full journals from his 1993-1994 travels to Australia, Bali, Java, Thailand, Nepal and from his 1997 trip to Ghana West Africa.

Gill

# Travel Writings

*The Full Travel Journals*

*1993-1994 Australia, Bali, Java, Thailand, Nepal*

*1997 Ghana West Africa*

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*Looking Forward in the Rearview Mirror*  
Sam Gill  
2021

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## Travel Journals 1993-1994 & 1997

### An Introduction

In the fall and winter of 1993-1994 I traveled with my friend Emily to Australia, Bali, Java, Thailand, and Nepal. The length of the trip was around five months. Planning the trip was limited to dates to fly from one country to another, leaving all the local arrangements to be determined as the trip progressed. We had little money, so our accommodations were at or near the backpacker level avoiding most tourist-style accommodations like Western-style hotels and restaurants.

In the summer of 1997, my daughter Jenny and I traveled to Ghana West Africa for about a month. The travel style was similar planning only a general route and a few locations with only the flights to and from the USA being fixed in advance. The rest of the time we simply decided when and where to go and what to do.

Especially during the earlier trip, I wrote extensive journals almost daily that not only recorded the events of the day, diary style, but also reflected on and examined my experiences often framed in the larger trajectory of my life. I had a laptop for the earlier trip which worked at least part of the time allowing me to have electronic files of the journals. Sometimes the laptop monitor didn't work so I had to journal write by hand. During the trek in Nepal there was no power for a laptop, so I handwrote those entries. I didn't take a laptop on the Ghana trip and handwrote them all.

Now a quarter century or more later I found myself interested in recovering these journals and reflecting on them from the perspective of the present. For the 1993 trip, the original electronic files were missing, but I found a print copy. I scanned that and used OCR to produce a WORD file that I could edit and use for this project. I had only the handwritten copy of the 1997 journals, so I had to type them to create an electronic file.



The length, richness, and critical life moment associated with the 1993-'94 journals seemed more conducive to a present effort to reconsider them as a way of understanding myself then and as I have changed over the succeeding decades. I decided to make selections from those journals that were the most engaging, interesting, and occasionally insightful and introduce each selection with reflections and comments from the vantage of the present so many years later. It seemed to me a kind of *Looking Forward in the Rearview Mirror* (2021) which is what I decided to title that work.

I didn't find the Ghanaian journals as favorable to this sort of editing and commentary, so I only added a chapter summarizing the trip and making a few reflective comments on it. I also added a chapter with general reflections on other significant occasions of travel, more than I had realized. I located handwritten journals for a few of these but didn't find them worth the effort to type.

I expended much effort to produce electronic files of these two extended trips however I used only some excerpts from the earlier one in *Looking Forward*. Having electronic files it seemed important that some physical record of the full unedited journals be prepared, recognizing that over time with changes in technology electronic files are vulnerable. I decided it would be a potential insurance policy to produce a hard copy. It might also be easier way they might be perused if, at some future time, anyone has any interest.

This volume then is a print copy that has close to the raw versions of these journals. I've made a few obvious corrections for spelling and other minor changes such as eliminating irrelevant passages. The selections I used in *Looking Forward* were edited more fully for style and clarity.

## *Chapter One*

### **Australia**

#### **Sydney**

##### **September 1, 1993**

Second day in Sydney. Today we are staying home, at least until evening. Whew! So nice to be here at last and beginning to relax. My computer works on 220 watts.

Getting ready to leave was emotional and tiring, yet exhilarating and meaningful. We had to move out of the apartment and get ready to go all at once. The divorce process hit snags and the refinancing of the house was halted at the very last minute. I had two contracts to sign on the “Arts of Living” Series and research materials to prepare to bring. I had two course proposals to clear and many other things to think about.

The most wonderful part of the last week before leaving was our, Emily’s and my, growing relationship with Jenny. She spent lots of time with us. She stayed overnight several nights and was with us constantly during the last two days. She took us to the Airporter and was our last departure contact. She is such a wonderful daughter and my relationship with her is becoming one of friends and pals, though not replacing our father-daughter relationship. Jenny and Emily are becoming close friends. It is amazing to Emily and me that Jenny appears completely supportive of our relationship. In the last hours before we left, we had dinner at Piccolos and talked about Judy perhaps not knowing that I am traveling with Emily. Jenny is taking Emily’s stereo while we are gone. We all know that Judy will eventually find out and we don’t want to be dishonest with her. Jenny knew that she would soon be the recipient of some anger from Judy when she finds out. Finally, we decided that I would write her a letter explaining it. I did that in the Denver Airport and mailed it from there before we left. I

hope this goes well. I would like to develop a solid relationship with Judy, a cordial one, yet I still want to get divorced.

Just two days before leaving, I was forced into negotiation with Judy's lawyer. I also fired my lawyer. Judy's lawyer had wanted me to sign a statement of temporary orders to be in effect while I am gone. I had signed general power of attorney and had arranged for Judy to have access to everything. Judy's lawyer couldn't talk with me while I was being represented and my lawyer didn't do anything. I fired mine and talked with him. He agreed we didn't need temporary orders. He also seemed to be optimistic about the settlement taking place soon after I return.

Corbin came over to Boulder on Saturday night, the night before we left. We went out to Pablo's for dinner. It was fun. Jenny and Emily were buddies and enjoyed all sorts of private jokes and humor. Corbin seemed to enjoy being with us, but he is, by nature I think, somewhat distant and self-involved. He talks mostly about things he is doing and thinking and can't seem to get much interested in others and what they are doing. I worry about his health and about his closedness, but I enjoy being around him and think that he is, in many respects, doing very well.

Our last days before leaving were filled with pressure and anxiety, but with joy and warm feelings. It is truly wonderful to be alive. I have never been so fully integrated as a person and so full of joy and happiness, though the same might be said for feeling sadness and sorrow.

We left Boulder Sunday at 5 p.m. on the Airporter. Arrived at Stapleton well before the intended time of our departure to L.A. We soon learned that that flight would be an hour late (no worries), but then it was eventually an hour and a half late. When we left Denver, we thought we might have to stay the night in L.A. We fantasized about staying in a posh hotel at United's expense. Then we learned that they wouldn't pay for this. When we got to L.A. we had to run through the terminal to a faraway gate where they were holding flight 815 to Sydney for us. Made it! Emily had experienced some flight anxiety as we left Denver, but she mainly just squeezed my hand 'til it turned blue. Less anxiety on landing in L.A. None after that. Seems she has conquered an old and persistent personal problem.

The flight over the Pacific was not bad. A bit bumpy due to turbulence, but we had extra space in our economy seats since no one sat next to us, so we could stretch out some. I got 6 to 8 hours sleep, I think, and Emily got even more. We arrived in Sydney at 6 a.m., soon cleared customs, got some money exchanged and waited for Em's half-brother, Derek, to arrive. He soon was there, stuck us in a cab with directions to his house. We dropped him at his job with Federal Express near the Airport and came on to his flat in Marsfield, a \$40 cab fare. When we arrived, we tried to enter the wrong flat and were caught and redirected to the right one by Derek's bride of 2 months. Her name is Moni, shortened from Amoni, and she is a lovely person (Egyptian). She has lived most of her life in Australia; her family immigrating here from Egypt to flee the persecution of Christians. She teaches in a Catholic school, English, humanities, and Christian

theology, which she calls “religion”. Emily and I bid her goodbye. We put on our running duds and ran around the park behind their house. We picked up some Nutri-grain cereal, a favorite I remembered from last year, and milk and had breakfast. Then we showered and dressed and headed for Sydney on a bus, a 45-minute ride. It was interesting going to Sydney. I kept seeing glimpses of the Harbor Bridge and the Opera House. Then I finally realized, after a minute of weirdness, that we were staying on the north side of the harbor. Last summer we never even went on that side of the bridge. We got off the bus in the Circular Quay area and walked around the Rocks, the Harbor attractions, the Opera House, the botanic gardens, and Macquarie’s Point, etc. We bought a transportation pass for \$24 that allows us unlimited access to bus, train, and ferry. What a bargain. By 3 p.m. we both felt our legs were like rubber and decided to come back. We bought beautiful yellow daisies for Moni and caught our bus back.

Seeing the Harbor Bridge and the Opera House again after only a year was quite an experience. It seemed wonderful to find them familiar. I knew stories about them; I knew where to go. I had a sense of the familiar, yet many things have changed since last summer, that is winter in the southern hemisphere. Emily was very impressed with everything, and it is a joy to be with her. It is wonderful to share these things with her. We got tickets for a Chamber Orchestra performance at the Opera House for Saturday night. That should be fun.

When we got back, we visited with Moni who had just returned from her day’s work. After a little visit, we went up and napped for a couple of hours. We slept like logs not even hearing Emily’s alarm she had set. Derek woke us up for a lovely lasagna dinner and cheesecake dessert. It was nice to have a conversation with Derek and Moni. Emily felt glazed during the evening. We went to bed around 10:30 p.m. and slept soundly, waking only because it was very hot at one point and to pee at another. We are sleeping together on a single bed. It is a bit snug, but we like to snuggle anyway.

This morning, Emily ran through the neighborhood, and we showered and by that time Derek and Moni had left for the day. We had a lovely breakfast and conversation then began to do some work. I read Thom Parkhill’s intro and concluding chapters to his Leland book. Interesting responses to it. In his intro chapter he recounts the electronic mail conversation over Ron’s “posting” about whites teaching Native American religions. [This refers to Ron Grimes who was a visiting professor at CU at the time. He had written a series of emails about non-Native Americans teaching and researching Native American topics. He and I were also co-editing a collection of papers on ritual studies. I later dropped out of that project and had a falling out with Ron.]<sup>1</sup> I found myself surprised by being one of the ones about whom he referred and at the same time I began to realize how boring I had found that whole conversation. I had

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<sup>1</sup> I will insert contemporary notes in square brackets throughout these writings to provide information that at the time of writing seemed evident.

felt that I ought to have been interested in it but couldn't bring myself to take the time to read the entries. I also began to realize that Ron had been disappointed that I hadn't taken more interest. I see this morning as a sign of my shift in interest. I don't harbor resentments, or anger, or anything much left over. I just am not interested. I am bored by those who want to go over and over all this territory. I am pleased that while I have moved on, I don't have feelings that have not been dealt with. I have just said what I have wanted to say, and I have gone on. [In about 1992 I decided that I had grown weary of studying Native Americans. It was a high politicized field. I also felt I'd done what I wanted to do and found my interests shifting to Australian topics as well as dancing. The travels to Australia were part of my ongoing research on Australian history.]

Emily is a very sweet and enjoyable companion. She is a friend. I think we will be very compatible traveling companions. It was fun for me to learn that Jenny had warned her to not let me be anxious and weird while traveling, evidently based on experience Jenny had with me last summer. She told Emily that likely this wouldn't happen since I am a completely different person now.

Emily is enjoying the birds and wildlife in Australia. She is presently out on the deck whistling to birds as they whistle to her from the trees. She is thrilled with everything she sees, hears, and experiences. So am I.

Derek and Moni seem completely unaffected by the age difference between Emily and me. We had a delightful chat last night and they were very interested in both of us and with what we have done together. This too is nice for us. We don't need anyone's approval, but it is certainly nice when people don't weird out on us. So far almost no one does. My present theory is that when people see us together, they may at first think our relationship inappropriate. They see, more or less objectively, a couple who have a large difference. Then, I hypothesize, when they are with us together, even briefly, their perception immediately shifts so they see us in terms of how we relate and then they cease to see us primarily in terms of age difference. If this is correct, it is rather interesting.

Now that I am away from Colorado, I am beginning to feel the luxury and delight of being freer of obligations than I have been in such a long time. I have had so much hanging over my head. To not have a million things to do all needing immediate attention is an experience I am welcoming. Only today am I able to begin to experience this. I hope to integrate it into my life during this trip and to begin to undergo further personal transformations. Emily and Jenny both comment regularly on how different I am now from how I was even a few months ago. This is great to know. But I can still use much change. I need to relax, to be more present to everything I do. I need to see more clearly and to know myself more fully. It is thrilling that I can even see this much. I feel quickened as I continue this process.

We plan to go to Sydney late this afternoon, eat dinner somewhere in Sydney and enjoy the city at night. Tomorrow we'll get the [Karl] Strehlow manuscript [he was one of the first Europeans in Central Australia. A German Lutheran missionary. He wrote a multi-volume ethnography of the Arrernte in German.

There was an unpublished English translation that I copied.] from the University of Sydney and get it copied, then Monday a. m. I'll see Diane Austin-Broos [a scholar who studied Aborigines] for a while. I hope to get going on the Australia research soon. I did spend a half hour this morning selecting some bibliography to research while I am in Canberra.

What a lovely day it is.

### **September 2, 1993**

We went to Sydney late yesterday afternoon. Walked all over the city. Enjoyed the city as it became evening and the lights illuminated. We ate at an Italian restaurant. Good food, but the price was too high. We found out that "The Phantom of the Opera" is in Sydney. They indicated that they were sold out through February, but that they had a few tickets available each morning when the box office opened. We thought about it for a while and decided to arise early this a.m. to see if we could go this evening.

Didn't sleep too well last night. I don't think it is jet lag as much as too hot one moment and too cool the next. Anyway, we got up early, ate our wheat bickies [biscuits] and were off to the bus. Emily held a place in line at the theatre—the Royal Theatre—while I went to find someone who would cash a traveler's cheque. I got back shortly after 8:30 a.m. and when the doors opened at 9 a.m. we were 10 or 15 back. Only the first few people got tickets, but when we got to the desk, they said they had some available for Monday evening. We decided to go. \$75 per ticket or a mere \$50 US.

We decided that since we were not going to return to the city in the evening for the show, we'd go to the Surrealist Art show at the Art Museum of New South Wales. We got there shortly after 9:30; the museum was to open at 10. When 10 a.m. arrived, so had about 1,000 school children all dressed in uniform. We decided we just couldn't tolerate trying to see the paintings with all these kids. Seeing all the children in uniform reminds me of how this was so unacceptable to Jenny last year. I agree with her. It seems these kids are being trained and brainwashed without even knowing it. Wearing uniforms seems to me to destroy the individuality of the children. Of course, I place enormous importance on individuality. I guess others do not. All the school children seem polite and polished. They are all very attractive as well. Maybe I don't understand what is happening with this regimentation.

After leaving the art museum, we decided to go to the University of Sydney to see if we could get the Strehlow manuscript to copy. We took the train from St. James station, counterclockwise past Circular Quay to Central Station and walked from there. Got a muffin on the way which was tasty. Found the Anthropology Department in the main quad and got the manuscript. It is huge and the woman who gave it to us seemed a bit huffy about how much time it would take us to copy it. We went to the library to check out the copying

situation. I was remembering how at the University of Adelaide I got such wonderful copy service last year. The copy center at the library had zillions of college students using cards at \$2 for 20 copies, feeding the originals in at one page at a time. That wouldn't do. We found a copy business just off campus, Pink Panther Copies, and I fed in the originals and Emily counted the output. Six cents a copy, a total of \$60 and we were done in about half an hour. Returned the original and were off to Darling Harbor. A long walk took us past beautiful gardens and lovely walkways to the shopping area. Tacky, Tacky, Tacky. The worst anywhere. Yuck. But one must see it to believe it. The Sydney police band was playing light classical in an area of the mall. Not bad actually. Then across the bridge under the monorail to town. Now looking for a late lunch. Nothing appealing in downtown. On to The Rocks. There we ate a pizza at a funky Italian place and not finding any chocolate, which we both craved, we took a bus to Town Hall and another back here to Emily's brother's place. A tiring, but exhilarating day.

We haven't met too many Aussies on this trip. It is rather difficult to believe we are so far from Colorado. Most people here look much like the folks back home. The speech is somewhat different, but much else is the same. One thing that is very impressive is this city. It is clean and very beautiful. There is much to do, yet the city seems friendly and open. There is little that seems to frighten or even close in on one. Still, by late afternoon as we turned homeward, we both decided we didn't want to live in any city. Just too confining.

We are learning a bit of Malay language on the bus as we commute back and forth. It is going slow, but I think all language study does. We must keep this up so we will be able to begin language study more seriously once we arrive in Indonesia.

My relationship with Emily is growing. There is such rich affection and openness between us. It just melts my heart. We have little, really no, difficulty traveling together. Our tastes are very similar as is our energy level and stamina. We both have a desire to see it all and can walk miles and miles with little complaint. We are so good for each other. At least I know that she is wonderful for me. I feel so much myself, so alive.

Emily's half-brother, Derek, is a bit weird. He seems to me to be thinly veiling much anger and aggression. He lets some of this out in barbed statements and tough talk. He is reading Ayn Rand's *Atlas Shrugged* and thinks it is great. I remember reading this in high school and then again, some years later. I couldn't stomach it on second reading, while I loved it the first time I read it. Another reminder of how much I have changed and grown. Derek's wife, Moni, is very pleasant. They were on the back deck when we got home last night. Both were pleasant to visit with.

I feel I need to spend most of a day working. Would be good to read through the Strehlow book a bit along with some more serious work on the texts I brought. I'd also like to add many items to the bibliography for my Canberra Australian research. Perhaps tomorrow.

I am writing this while sitting on the bed in our bedroom. Emily is on the other end of the bed. She looks very cute. Both of us seem hungry most of the time these days. Wish we could get over that. We are trying to save money, but it isn't easy.

Would like to write more of my impressions of the city and the people, but I don't have any very well formed. It is somewhat difficult to see that this place is very much different from home. Oh, one thing we found at the University of Sydney is that it is very beautiful on the outside, the buildings are European in appearance and the "uni," as they call it, is built on quads. But the interior is shabby, cluttered, and not very inviting. The library looked a wreck. I don't really understand this.

I think that I am beginning to relax into this travel more. All day as spent just looking and enjoying whatever there was to see. I felt some anxiety, thinking I should be doing more work. Even that wasn't oppressive. I am hoping this travel will be transforming for me. I could use a nice calming down.

We thought of Jenny on many things today. Wondering what she is up to and how Judy took the letter I wrote to her. May attempt to call Jenny Sunday morning, her time. Perhaps this is enough for tonight.

#### **September 4, 1993**

Emily is attempting to call places to stay in the Blue Mountains and in Canberra and is stressing out. She gets only answering machines and can't understand what they are saying. She has made about dozen calls and we finally got a place in the Blue Mountains, but she isn't doing well for Canberra. Very strange.

Last night we took Derek and Moni out to eat at a restaurant. A treat to them for letting us stay with them. It was a pleasant evening with good conversation. After we returned, we visited and ate ice cream. I'm enjoying staying here. Yesterday, I stressed a bit at not getting work done. We spent yesterday morning, as we are this morning, talking about what we are going to do. I wanted to get some work done, reading, writing, journal writing, etc. We talked about it and I finally got to work. Felt so much better after getting several hours work in. I read much of the Strehlow manuscript and found that it has much of interest for me regarding my book. I selected about 60 pages to keep with me and I'll mail the rest to Colorado before I leave Canberra or somewhere. Then I looked at the outline for my book and revised that rather extensively.

I got in a great run yesterday afternoon. I tried to run the day we arrived, and my knee hurt after about 15 minutes. Yesterday I ran for 35 minutes, and I felt



great. I had a bit of tenseness in the muscles in the back of my knees, but no severe pains at all. When I came back, I felt so strong that I sprinted around the athletic field behind Derek and Moni's house. I did pushups and lots of sit ups and took a shower. I then sat on the bed with Emily and read her lots of my "Storytracks" paper and told her about how I revised the book plan. I really enjoyed this. [The book I was working on would later be titled *Storytracking: Texts, Stories, and Histories in Central Australia* (1998) published by Oxford University Press.]

Tonight, we are going to the Sydney Opera House to a chamber music concert. That should be exciting. We don't yet know what other things we will do other than "Phantom" on Monday night. Then we'll leave Tuesday a.m. for the Blue Mtns and Canberra. I need to get clearly outlined what research I want to accomplish in Canberra, so we'll be able to get everything done in two days. Emily will help, so we should be fairly efficient. Emily also found that Canberra is a great biking place, so we'll likely rent bikes for a day and ride all over the place.

Guess I'll give this up for now have been involved in all sorts of things while trying to write. I may go out with Emily for a run this morning to see if my knee holds up.

### **September 5, 1993**

It is a lovely Sydney Sunday morning. Sitting on the deck overlooking a soccer or ball field of some sort, laundry drying on the line below, galahs or cockeys, parrots or cockatoos, screeching in the trees. It is rather chilly this morning. Am awaiting the turn of the earth so that the sun can warm my feet. Slept quite well last night. Maybe because it didn't warm up much. We kept both heavy comforters on throughout the night. Usually, I get hot and have to toss off one or both. Also didn't have to pee during the night. That usually gets me up. Emily and I are sleeping in a single bed. Quite snugly and nice, though not much room to stretch out or turn over without fear of falling off.

Last night we caught the bus up at Epping Street, went up to Epping (a little neighborhood) and ate dinner at the Indian Star Restaurant. Had papadums (thin tortilla-like bread), a spicy hot chicken, and vegetables (medium hot) in gravy-like sauce, and a thin bread with vegetable stuffing. Very tasty. Then we caught the train to the city at Epping Station, transferred in the city to a loop train and got off at Circular Quay. A short walk to the Opera House where, in the Opera Hall we heard the Australia Chamber Orchestra perform four pieces. The first was by Dvořák. Then a couple of pieces featuring a French horn soloist: one by Mozart and another by Tillerman. The final piece was by Benjamin Britten, seven parts composed in the 1930s establishing Britten as a prodigy, I think. I liked the Dvořák piece best. It was light, yet complex. I should get the name of it in here, because I might like to buy it on CD at some point. It is "Serenade for strings in

E major, Op 22". I also liked the modern and innovative sounds of Britten. The horn pieces were okay but didn't grab me all that much. The hall was stunning. Also just being able to see the city from the Opera House, being in the Opera House was worth the admission price. The Opera Hall is huge. The acoustics are excellent. Just no words to describe that building and its power. Inside one can see these huge concrete fan shapes towering upward. I just can't get over the massiveness of this building--how heavy it seems, yet at the same time it transcends itself. It seems airy and light. Totally amazing. I also have the feeling that in the construction of this thing, at every point the builders had to improvise, had to figure something that would work to fill the space, to connect the members. This is an aspect of building I always found challenging and fun. Doubtless this building was either a turn-on or a nightmare for its builders. It seems that the interior is built inside the exterior and almost independent of it. I also wondered how they change the light bulbs and dusted the fixtures. Perhaps there is crawl space above the ceiling and the bulbs are changed from there. I'd guess there are a million secrets in that building.

This morning Emily and I were walking to the store, just across the game field. She saw a little boy and his daddy playing ball. The child was about a year old I'd guess. A small toddler. He was running aimlessly about. Very cute. Emily said that she wanted one of those. Later after we returned to the flat, she threw me on the bed, kissed me a few times, and told me that she wanted me to give her one of those children someday. How sweet. I said that would be a major shock to everyone. Will this happen?

I ran again yesterday. After about 20 minutes the muscle in the back of my left knee seemed rather weird and I could tell that it up much longer the knee itself would hurt. I stopped before I did damage. Still, I want to keep this up. If I could get in good run even three times a week, it would be wonderful.

The most beautiful bird here is the rainbow parakeet. They are big green parrots with bright red and yellow on their breasts and heads. I have decided that while I love to look at all these exotic birds, they sound rather terrible. There was a mina bird on the roof a few minutes ago doing its funny thing. Haven't heard or seen a kookaburra yet.

I am fairly ready for the research in Canberra, though doubtless I could use another day there. Bad planning put us there on a weekend. Don't know why I didn't think of that. Anyway, with Emily working with me, we can surely do much of this in the two working days we have. I am about ready to begin writing on this book. Would love to return to Boulder with a couple hundred pages drafted. I think I'll be able to write half days in Queensland and in the Interior (some days anyway).

It will soon be a week since we left home. In some respects, I don't feel it has been any time at all since we left, yet we have done much. We certainly have a great deal more to do. What an adventure!

Derek and Moni are fun people to visit with. Derek seems to me to carry a large chip, though he is amiable. He does lots of the housework and the place is certainly spotless. He talks of great ambition, yet I don't see evidence of his going for it. He seems to be waiting. For what? I sort of envy his complete leisure. When he is not working, he literally has nothing to do. To see that is such a weird experience to me. Moni is a lovely lady. Friendly and pleasant. Their lives, particularly as newlyweds, seems peculiar to me. They do very little together. They don't even eat breakfast together. They fix their own. Derek arises early and does housework, reads *Atlas Shrugged* and fixes himself breakfast. Moni sleeps in longer, arises and fixes herself breakfast. Guess it is just a different way.

Emily called her parents yesterday. Her mother asked how Derek liked me. She asked if I was working. She asked how Derek and Moni were getting on. Weird questions. I have so much difficulty figuring the time difference, but I finally think (believe) that Boulder is now 16 hours behind Sydney. I'll try to get up in the middle of the night tonight to call Jenny, so I'll reach her on Sunday morning. Seems the best time to call. I've thought of her lots and I miss her. It is true that once gone, I am getting on okay, but I still treasure her presence and miss her a bunch.

So much for this morning. Need to do some work on my texts.

It is now 7 p.m. We went to lunch at 1 p.m. at Moni's parent's house: their name is Malek (I think). Moni's twin brother Nader and his family were there. This is Father's Day in Australia. Nader is married to an Aussie girl named Jill and they have three small children: Alison, Thomas, and Hannah. Mrs. Malek cooked a lovely Egyptian dinner for us: breaded chicken, a huge casserole made of eggplant, rice, a delicious salad, and a two course dessert

All in the family were very gracious. They welcomed Emily as Derek's sister and me as Emily's friend. I saw Emily today in the environment of children. She was eager to hold the kids and play with them. I found myself seeing her as a mother. She seems a natural to me. She giggled and teased and seemed entirely natural with them. It was fun to see her in this role. Made me think of a number of things.

Another thing that was interesting, and somewhat sad, is to think about an Egyptian family coming to live in Australia 25 years ago. They bring some Egyptian customs with them: food, memories, a few customs. Their children grow up with Aussie accents, not Egyptian like their parents. The grandchildren will remember the Sunday dinners and something of the customs, but they won't know much at all about Egypt. Both the Egyptian children married non-

Egyptians and interestingly Nader and Jill's kids look more Aussie (well 2 of them do) than Egyptian

Emily and I were talking about this. We wonder how the world will look in a couple generations. Everybody wants to be like Americans (except us). They are becoming this way too. Will it not be likely that in a couple of generations the world will be homogenized to the point that there is no culture, no ethnicity, no difference. We'll all have TV and computer communications as our most fundamental cultural heritage. Even racial differences will have faded. This seems rather sad to me. Maybe in the Himalayas the people will not yet have joined the MTV generation, but I'm not sure about that.

The notion of a strong family tradition seems very important. I remember the Sunday family gatherings when I was a child. Those days are gone for me and my children never even knew them. Emily feels that there may be ways that this sort of family tradition could be reintroduced by endearing friends, etc. That would surely be worth a try. Likely the cuisine will be international: Thai one week, Indonesian another, Nepali another, Chinese and so on. That could be interesting. I really liked the Egyptian food.

### **September 7, 1993**

We are in Katoomba, actually a little village a few kilometers north called Blackheath. We tried to get a BnB from Sydney, but didn't have much luck, so we just came. After driving around a bit, we stopped at a beautiful azalea garden (a whole park really) and then decided to stay in this area. We found this funky little place with cabins for \$45 per night. That sounded okay so we went for it. The cabins are pretty bad actually and we found that if you want sheets and towels you pay \$4 extra. We learned something from this: first, look at the accommodation before putting your money down; second, you needn't take the first place that has a vacancy; and third, you can make even a ratty place a fun place to stay.

Back to Sydney. Monday, we went to Sydney in the morning. I wanted to meet with Diane Austin-Broos at the University of Sydney and try to see Tony Swain. Diane met with me for about an hour and told me all sorts of valuable things about visiting Alice and especially Hermannsburg. She has been ill and said that that was why she had been so bad at communicating with me. Then Emily and I went to the Religion Department and knocked on Tony's door. He happened to be in, and we visited with him for more than half an hour. He said he had had a very bad year this year and answered none of his mail. Seems like everyone there has problems. But I enjoyed meeting with both of them and learned something from each. We then went to the office where they publish the Oceania monographs. I bought three. Stanner's one on Aboriginal religion is the most valuable for me, but there was also one on Aboriginal dance and music that I thought worth buying.

After leaving Sydney U ("uni" as the Aussies call them), we had a pretty bad pasta lunch and went to the Art Museum of New South Wales to the Surrealism show. It was interesting, but I realize that I know little about surrealism and had

I known more I would have found it much more interesting. We bought the show catalog as a gift for Moni and Derek. We gave it to Moni when we got home. She didn't seem too interested in it. Derek was much more so. We took some pics of the Opera House and bought some post cards. Rest was in order when we got back to Derek's. Moni fixed us a delicious Thai meal which we had to eat too quickly followed by a scrumptious dessert and then she whisked us down to Sydney to the Royal Theatre where we saw "Phantom of the Opera."

Phantom was a thrill. The entire theatre was transformed to accommodate the story. The huge chandelier was lying on the floor of the stage at the beginning of the show, covered with cloth. Then in an early scene it was uncovered and raised out over the audience and up to the ceiling of the theatre. Amazing. The music was powerful and moving, the set and effects were outstanding, the story a twist on the old beauty and the beast. The phantom however was a real mean guy and never really redeemed himself.

Emily and I were just talking about our accommodations, think forward to Nepal. We decided that this was pretty good after all. At least we have a bed, a little heat, and water that we can drink and bathe in without fetching or purifying.

After we got home last night, we called Jenny. It was nearly midnight in Sydney on Monday night. It was 7:30 a.m. in Boulder and Jenny hadn't gotten up. Judy answered the phone and immediately asked if I wanted to talk with Jenny. It was so great to visit with her. She had been to Greeley to visit Corbin. That was nice. She got her belly button pierced. I'm not so hot on that but guess that is what she wants. She could do much worse things to herself. She had been jamming with Tiger. I didn't know that he plays the drums. She seemed excited about that. She talked with Emily and said that she had had a great week. I'm so happy about that. She is a wonderful daughter and a great friend.

Having left Sydney, Emily and I are both beginning to feel some new things. Being out here in the Blue Mountains and in a weird cabin likely helps stimulate them. We both feel something of our strangerhood. It is now finally like we are in a foreign country. We feel a bit displaced and unsure of what is going to happen next. These feelings are a little frightening, but they are surely essential to the real travel experience. I know that at this point I would begin to feel rather lonely and a little frightened if Emily were not with me. I think we complement each other well and that we both are pretty in touch with our feelings and our abilities to get in touch with where they are coming from. We both also feel a little concerned about the length of this trip. We are going to be gone a long time. Still, when we are back in January, I know that it will seem like a very short time. We'll wish that we had had a lot more time in various places.

This afternoon we went to a place called Glover's Leap. It is just down the road from where we are staying. We are up on a sprawling mesa. When you drive in any direction you arrive at the mesa edge, and it is hundreds of feet down. Near this leap was a waterfall. Not a whole lot of water was going over, but the fall was several hundred feet. It was quite pretty. We walked down a couple hundred steps to a vantage point for the falls. We took a couple of pictures there. Then we drove to Katoomba, found a place called Echo Point. There we saw

gobs of beautiful parrots. The Australian King Parrot was the most beautiful to us and I took pictures of a pair with my long lens. We found that there are many places in Katoomba that would have been much better accommodations for the same money (a lesson to us) and we walked down several hundred stairs below a famous rock formation called “three sisters” I took their pictures also. Then we walked around the town until we decided on a place to eat and had spaghetti and salad.

Moneywise we came out pretty well while we were in Sydney. We are both over \$200 US ahead. That will allow us to travel more in Indonesia or to buy more in Nepal, or to have money left over when we get back home. Then too, other countries may be more expensive than we had expected, and we may still run into big expenses in other Australian places.

This Blue Mountain area seems quite a tourist area. Doubtless much of Sydney comes out here from time to time, though Derek has never been here. This certainly is the off season. Doesn’t seem to be many around here. The place has something of that look of being quaint and attractive, but not burgeoning with visitors, it looks a bit shabby and in ill repair.

When we visited Mr. and Mrs. Malek (Moni’s parents) Mr. Malek told us that as an Egyptian he never visited any of the famous places in Egypt. He said that many times they camped near the pyramids and saw the tourists heading in that direction, but he never went there. Only years later as an Australian visiting there did he go to see all those places. This seems so typical. Many Australians that we visit with have never been to the Great Barrier Reef, to Darwin, to the Interior, not even to the Blue Mountains.

These mountains seem hardly like mountains to me, compared with the Rocky Mtns. I can’t imagine why they seemed an impenetrable barrier to early Australians thinking about westward expansion. I really don’t get it. That would have to have been in the early 19th century and many had crossed the Rocky Mtns in the U.S. at that time. Seems some of those folks would have come to Australia taken a look at this impenetrable barrier and had a good laugh.

Seems that I ought to reflect a bit about my feelings at this point. I am looking forward to spending more than a week in Queensland. Mostly I want to write, to think, to read, to relax. I also hope that it is warm, but not too hot. This week I have thought far less than I had been before leaving Boulder, about my divorce, about what Judy might do, about all those issues, and problems. That is wonderful to be able to let some of that go even though I know it will be there for me when I return. I have been fairly easy going. For example, this morning, I had in my mind that we would pick up the car between 9 and 10. Emily wanted to run before breakfast. We got up around 7:30. She ran, and I began to think that there would be no way we could get to Hertz by 10. I started to freak out, then discovered that it didn’t really matter what time we picked up the car. I

called them, told them we'd be late and relaxed. We had a nice breakfast and went to town and even did a bit of shopping before picking up the car. All was fine. Hopefully as we go on, I can relax even more. Emily and I are getting along fine. While on the hike to the falls overlook, I flashed on her being my student a couple years ago and this always shocks and amuses me. We are such an unlikely couple. It is amazing that we do so well together. She is such a sweetie and fun to be with. She supports me. she kicks my butt when it is needed and even when we have a disagreement, she can sometimes see that she needs to change what she is doing or thinking, sometimes I can do the same. We support each other and help each other and challenge each other. We have very little conflict, and we are both devoted to immediately facing whatever problems or even odd feelings that arise.

Tomorrow we'll hike somewhere then head in the direction of Canberra hoping to get a nice place to stay somewhere within an hour of Canberra.

At some point I hope that I can become a bit more philosophical about this trip, but for the moment, I suppose that I 'm happy with doing more of an ethnography.

### **September 8, 1993**

Now based in Goulburn, NSW, some 95 kilometers from Canberra. We found a nice Best Western motel to redeem our choice of last evening. The ironic thing is that last night I got the best night's sleep in months. After writing journal for an hour, we attempted, unsuccessfully to read. Decided to turn in early. I suppose it was 9:30 or so. We slept soundly except for a midnight pee and a few moments to search out a blanket because Emily was freezing. This morning we showered in a freezing bathroom, but at least the water was hot. We drove back to Katoomba to have breakfast at a place we saw the night before and believed it would be a healthy place to eat. We ordered fried eggs over easy and hash browns. We got two crispy fried eggs (grease dripping) with French fries on toast. Later they brought a patty of hash browns obviously deep fat fried, they too dripping in fat. We ate the breakfast but felt ourselves greased down before we finished.

We then went to Echo point and started a hike. We walked along the rim along Prince Edward's Walk (I believe) and then descended into the canyon on what was called Federal Pass. This was interesting to me that places that went down were called passes, whereas I think of passes as places one goes up over. This was a descent into the rain forest with tree ferns and lush thick growth everywhere. The path was steep and slippery. There were a number of falls, all with female names it seems, like Linda, Marguerite, Leana, etc. I could begin to see why the early Australians thought this area impenetrable. It is very thick growth with mulga, an alternative term for bush, and the paper bark gum trees grow up out of this tangle as huge, majestic towers. We saw quite a few birds:

Australian King Parrot, a Lyrebird (“standard Lyre” I think they call them), Mina birds and lots of Magpies. We heard the kookaburra laugh but didn’t see it. We did see one yesterday sitting on a sign, but it didn’t laugh.

We finally arrived at the base of the famous giant stairs. They go up 1000 steps alongside the three sisters rock formation. We sat at the base of the stairs and ate an apple. Several people came down and felt themselves worn out from the descent. We had come down halfway yesterday and back up, so we didn’t think too much about it. We ascended in about 10 minutes. At least it got our heart rates up a bit and let us believe that we were burning off some of the grease we had consumed for breakfast. The walk was gorgeous and took us about 2 hours of easy hiking. The descriptions called it a four-hour difficult hike.

We are experiencing some difficulty finding food that is healthy and tasty. It seems everything here is loaded with fat and sugar. It is about to gross us out. We feel we have eaten more fat and cholesterol since arriving here than we have eaten in the last year. We got apples and bread for lunch and stopped for yogurt and crackers to top it off. It seems that we’ll have to try to get ingredients for our lunches and breakfasts at least.

After lunch we left for the drive here [I failed to record have the identity of this location]. We’ll have to arise very early tomorrow to get to Canberra by 8:30 or so and get over to the Australian Institute for Aboriginal Studies shortly after they open.

The motel here is nice. A pleasure to have a place like this for now. Probably in Canberra the rooms will be very basic. Still, we are seeing the country, not checking out motels.

I have been thinking more about how I have left behind so many of the concerns that totally occupied me before I left Colorado. I think it is good to get a rest from them. If I can continue to let them be, that will be nice. I did think today that we should let someone of our families know where we are as long as that is possible. I just fear being out of touch if some disaster or emergency happened. We’ll hope nothing does, but then these things are never planned.

Getting more sleep last night was nice. I think I need a lot of nights with that kind of sleep. A complete and thorough rest would be wonderful.

Emily has said she is thinking about me being the only person she can talk with for the next several months. I can appreciate that, but then I never really talked about much with anyone but her anyway. To me it is just great that I have her to talk with. At the moment she is sitting beside me on the bed writing in her journal. She just took a shower and has only her towel wrapped around her. Very sexy. Also distracting.

Night is slipping in on us. It is 6 in the evening, and I am beginning to feel a bit hungry. This room is equipped with a VCR, and we looked at the selection of



movies the motel has available but didn't find anything that seemed worth the time.

Our clothes finally dried. We washed them four days ago and they were still damp this morning. We laid them out all over the car while we walked this morning. All the socks and underwear were displayed through the back window. When we got back to the car the windows were all steamed over, but the clothes were finally dry.

The Blue Mountains are lovely and the little villages along the rim are quaint and interesting. One could do a great deal of hiking in the area. It is a nice thing to have visited that area given that we'll soon be at the Great Barrier Reef and then in the Interior. Quite a nice way to experience this huge country.

We were talking today about the Night Blooming Cereus blooming just the night before we left. That was surely an omen and a very good omen for us and for our trip. We also were thrilled that Jenny and Corbin and Kari could see it along with us. So far that bloom has spread happiness and goodness on this trip.

I thought a bit about the day we return and what a weird day that will be. No home to return to. Wonder how we'll handle it.

Time for a shower and off to eat.

## **Canberra**

**September 9, 1993**

We arrived in Canberra today. Spent the day at the Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Studies. Emily helped and that was excellent. She looked things up and brought them to me and I looked them over deciding what ought to be copied. Made 360 copies today and will need to make another couple hundred tomorrow. I'll haul this junk around with me until Darwin then ship it to the US. Quite the load, but that is the life of the researcher.

Finding the right food at the right price is a difficulty. We spent \$15 each on Thai tonight and it was not very good and way too expensive. The Thai restaurant was up some narrow stairs above stores in the main shopping area of center city in Canberra. When we got to the top of the stairs, we heard this strange music coming through a closed door. Emily didn't want to enter. She said, "if there are nude dancing girls in there, I don't want to go in." I boldly forged ahead. Was I hoping for nude dancing girls? All we found was an empty place with an elderly lady, the cook, and another about middle aged, the wait person. We ordered, listening to what might have been modern Thai music, but not very pleasant. Then when our meals came the wait lady turned on the TV to listen to the evening news. The combination of noises was rather unpleasant. We thought we heard the microwave oven "in the kitchen and at that point we suspected we were in trouble. The food wasn't horrible, but we have certainly had much better. They charged \$5.75 for a bowl of soup and \$3.50 for steamed rice. We were not

happy since we are watching our budget so closely. It is weird that we are having trouble finding healthy non—greasy food at reasonable prices. One can't even find any place to have a salad. So that is one of our main challenges.

We are staying at the Macquarie Hotel very near the Capitol building. It is more like a dorm than a hotel. It is not *en suite*, and this may be the first place I have ever stayed where I have had to go down the hall to the bathroom and to take a shower. Still, it is cheap, \$42 for both of us, and clean. I think there are some 500 rooms here. Breakfast is included, but we wonder what that will be.

The other difficulty is getting proper exercise. I ran several times last week but haven't since. I should run with Emily in the morning. Perhaps that will make me feel better, though I am feeling fine enough as it is. Just remembering how important exercise has been for me for the last 6 years. Now it is so difficult to get it in.

We are both looking forward to Queensland. It is rainy and chilly here. Thank goodness I have a Gore-Tex jacket. We are sleeping in our long underwear to keep warm. That is fun anyway.

I feel good about the research I got done today. Got the weird book on T. G. H. Strehlow. Got a book on the building of the telegraph. Got material on the development and failure of the cattle industry. Got lots of stuff by and about the Strehlows and the mission at Hermannsburg.

Emily was a little upset this morning. We had a bit of an unpleasant situation last evening. Em fell asleep while we were watching TV. When she awoke, she was in a bad mood. I took it somewhat personally and responded by showing my hurt (I guess). Emily apologized for being cranky, but I couldn't convince her that that was okay. We went to sleep without this quite resolved and that hung over this morning a little. We talked about it some and that helped. Emily has had some strange feelings during the last couple of days. Some of it may have to do with her realizing that she has only me to talk with for the next 5 months. But she transformed her attitude today and was fun and playful this afternoon after we left the library. I think we'll do fine.

Need to write to Dennis Pakula, to Beth, and to Mimi. Maybe I'll write to Mimi and have her give info to Beth and Dennis. Also need to write to Jenny. Know she'll enjoy hearing from us. We remember her in much that we do. Corbin's birthday is coming soon also.

### **September 10, 1993**

Canberra, Macquarie Hotel

As we walked back from City Center after a wonderful pasta dinner we neared the parliament building, beautifully lighted with a huge Australian flag lighted brightly. We emerged from a dark area of trees to cross the long grassy mall that stretches toward the old parliament building. As we were halfway across the mall, we turned to look at the lighted building and just above the flag in the

sky was the Southern Cross. What a delightful concurrence. Emily asked if they planned it that way, then realized that it was our timing and our place that made it so. Sort of a sign like the night blooming cereus (wish I knew how to spell that word, seriously). It is cool and clear as a bell this evening.

We started the day, after a long and good night's sleep with a run around the parliament building which is just a few blocks away. I ran for 15 minutes before my knee started hurting. Emily ran on and I ran and walked back here and did sit-ups and pushups until she came back.

Breakfast here is industrial, but at least one can eat healthy. I had toast, oatmeal, muesli and weet bix [wheat biscuits, like shredded wheat], some watery juicy stuff, and a spot of coffee. At least that was good and not greasy. For lunch we had a salad and blueberry muffin. This evening we had delicious pasta meals. Emily had a prawn sauce and I had chicken and mushrooms in a creamy white wine sauce. Both were yummy. That made us feel much better. We decided to walk back: perhaps 2 to 3 miles over the bridge and all, as we walked over this morning.

My research is concluded at the Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Studies. I got everything I think I need as well as lots of materials for the study of Aboriginal dance. Bought a couple of books. Then realizing I am loaded down with papers and books I decided that I needed to buy a small bag to carry some of that stuff in. I'll mail some back as soon as we get to Queensland, but even then, I think I want to have lots of this with me in Indonesia so I can read and write on the book. I'm ready to begin as soon as I have some time. It was so good to have Emily help me. Cut the time in half and I know I'd never have had the patience to copy all the stuff she copied. I copied around 650 pages of materials, almost all of it things I'd not be able to get in the US.

After we left the AIAS around three this afternoon, we went to the shopping area near the city center and had a cup of cappuccino and watched people and visited. We talked about how we are traveling, how we are changing, how we want to change. All this is very exciting, I think. I feel very little anxiety. I have no count of how many days we have been gone or how many there are to go before we go to the next place. I think I am beginning to settle into traveling and beginning to relax a lot.

We found that the new Australian film, "The Piano," is on at a theatre near us. Though it costs \$11 bucks here, we'll likely go tomorrow evening. Oddly it stars Holly Hunter. Think it is set in New Zealand. We also want to hire (not rent) push bikes (just bikes means motorcycles) tomorrow and have a ride around the city on the many miles of bike paths. That should be very enjoyable and give us a chance for a little exercise.

I am worried that without being able to run, I'll soon lose my cardio-vascular fitness. I'll do what I can, but I don't want to permanently mess up my knee so I can't trek in Nepal or do aerobics once I have returned to Boulder.

I feel very happy now. The only anxiety I tend to feel is in being out of contact with everyone. I think about how awful it would be if someone were sick or injured and I couldn't be reached. Don't know what I'd do if that happened anyway. Still, these feelings remind me that I have responsibilities and loved ones at home. Emily and I think about and talk about Jenny often. We do the Bad Fashion Salute to people often and we say her expressions often. "Hell ya!" We both appreciate so much knowing her and being her friend and parent. Wish she could be with us for part of this trip. Maybe I'll call Corbin this weekend, then call Jenny soon after we arrive in Queensland. I may give her an address to have Mimi mail me stuff there.

### **September 11, 1993**

It is around 6 p.m. and I'm trying to keep warm by snuggling halfway under the blankets sitting in bed. I have been chilly most of the afternoon. Took a hot shower a while ago to try to absorb some heat into my body. Still, it has been a very pleasant day.

Breakfast today again raised the question of who these men are who are staying in this weird Macquarie Hotel. Many are alone and most are middle aged or older. I can't see how this could be a residence hotel but some of them look like residents. It is not that they look so terrible, though many are a bit scruffy, but we can't figure out who they are or what they do. I did hear one group of men at a table near us talking rather intelligently about movies and I know that one of them was planning on going to see "The Piano" today, which is what we are going to do afterwhile.

In preparation for going to the movie which is at a theatre near where we are staying, we walked around the neighborhood looking for it. The main street we were looking for, "Canberra," didn't have a street sign (though it was a huge street), so we missed it. But happily, we walked about a very pleasant neighborhood and enjoyed seeing what was there. Finally, we not only found the street, but the shopping area, Manuka. It has lots of nice shops and several good places to eat. The cinema looks great, though the films cost \$11. Steep, more than \$ 7 US. We had a fine, but different lunch. It was turkey (sliced, but with the dark meat mixed in with the white) and chutney on a bagel with several salads. We thought the salads would be on the side, but they were right there on top of the sandwich. So, it was quite a nice heap which we ate with a fork (the top of the bagel we ate with our fingers). It had mango on it also which was very sweet and added nicely to the sandwich. Though this was quite a bit to eat, we were still hungry and so we bought a chocolate muffin to eat. That was so scrumptious that we bought another to take back to the hotel with us to eat later this

afternoon. We knew we were going to go to dinner late and would need a bit to tide us over.

I sorted the materials I collected at the Australian Institute for Aboriginal Studies and began reading the materials about Hermannsburg and about the Strehlows. Very interesting. I am also reading a book of stories by Amy Tan, "The Joy Luck Club." These are good stories, particularly the last one I read: something Magpie. The book jacket says these stories are now a motion picture produced by Oliver Stone. I think I saw a trailer for this film, but I can't imagine it. There is little that could weave these stories together, particularly in a way that would allow Oliver Stone to do his ruination.

Wrote to Jenny and Corbin this afternoon. Corbin's birthday is coming up and I looked, unsuccessfully, today for a birthday card for him. I'll need to succeed tomorrow. If it is warmer and we can find where to rent bikes we may do that tomorrow. We have walked and walked around here and enjoyed that much.

Emily ran today. Wish I could do an aerobics class or something to get my blood flowing. I didn't try running today. I don't want to mess up my knee before I get past Nepal. I feel rather miserable about this. Wonder what I can do. Walking is decent exercise, but it certainly doesn't get my heart rate up at all. Still, if I lose fitness through months surely it won't take more than a month or two at most to regain it once I am back in Boulder. I hope. And the Himalayas should help.

Today has been kind of a slow and relaxing day. I am really looking forward to the movie tonight and to eating out.

I expect Queensland to be much warmer. I hope that it is not so much warmer that I can't stand it there. Soon see.

Seems as though I had some reflecting to do. Thought a bit about my divorce settlement today and feel that I would like to have the dome. I think it would be a great place to live. I also think that when I return to Boulder, I'll live a rather different kind of life. I am happy to be traveling for some months, but I look forward to landing and settling. And I won't be able to do that when I return.

### **September 12, 1993**

We have about wrapped up Canberra. Last night was very nice. We didn't go out to dinner until 7:30 or so. We walked over to Manuka to go to a pasta place we had seen in the afternoon. They said they were completely booked with reservations. So, we figured that we know how to choose a restaurant, but we didn't get to eat there. We looked at menus around the area and finally choose another pasta place. It was upstairs and when we went in there were Kelly green napkins at every place and in the back was this totally weird room that looked something like a cave. It was lighted with the same green light and looked most unappetizing. We asked the wait person what it was, and she explained that the

place was named after this cave somewhere and they created the room to replicate it. The cave was used mostly for special functions. Glad our dinner wasn't a special occasion because I think I'd have hurled had I have eaten in the green room. I kept expecting leprechauns to appear. Kind of an Irish pasta place. Anyway, we had eggplant basil tomato sauce on penne, and it was delicious.

Then we went to the 9:15 p.m. showing of "The Piano." This movie is directed by Jane Campion who directed "Sweetie" and though I had seen some of the advertising I couldn't believe it wouldn't be anything other than one of those great Aussie goofball comedies. But instead, it was this fabulous nearly flawless story set in what must have been mid to late nineteenth century New Zealand. The movie was engrossing from the opening scenes where Holly Hunter (Anna) and her daughter are set ashore with their luggage and piano to await being met by her new husband (by arrangement). The sea was powerful and ominous, yet beautiful and majestic. The New Zealand scenes were of forest and mud. The Maoris were authentic and believable. The story was about so many things: love, sex, passion, relationships, music, honesty, life. I couldn't believe that Holly Hunter would be capable of such a powerful dramatic role, she didn't speak a word throughout the movie. I also loved Harvey Keitel who played a white gone native. The relationship between Keitel (not the husband) and Hunter was beautiful and passionate, tender yet powerful. Emily cried through much of the end of the movie and was so moved by it that she couldn't think of another thing for hours. I was delighted at the depth of her feeling. She too has passion and that is an essential quality for life, at least the way I want to live it.

We had a very sound sleep. I am sleeping better the past few nights than I have for months and months. This morning we had breakfast at the cafeteria with our weird neighbors, then Emily called her parents and I called Corbin. It was just great to talk with him. He seemed happy and engaged in his classes. We talked easily and it was fun. He never asks what I am doing and when I tell him, he doesn't much respond, but I know that he is interested and that he likes to hear. His birthday is coming on Friday and I hope he will have a joyful celebration.

We then walked the several kilometers to the botanic gardens. There we walked around and enjoyed a half hour writing at a picnic table in the sun (well it was sunny for a few minutes). Then we walked to city center for a sandwich and chocolate muffin then walked back here. Probably 15 kilometers in all and a nice active though casual day. Now we'll enjoy a few minutes of individual activities and head over to Manuka for dinner. In the morning we are off to Queensland and we hope to warmer weather. We have nearly frozen all the time we have been here.

Some summary remarks on Canberra. The place is beautiful, clean, and empty. The streets are wide and empty. The shops are big and empty. There are no crowds at the busiest of times. This hotel has 500 rooms yet there seem so few here. The vacant character of this place is rather eerie. I also found out that I had been 180 degrees turned around. All the time I have been here I have felt south to be north. That is so strange. I don't have any trouble getting lost or knowing where I am, but I felt the directions the opposite of what they are. It was kind of a relief to get them straightened out.

Had a few thoughts about some things I want to do upon returning to Boulder: get rolfed (I feel stiff and a bit out of line), get a road bike and shoes, (I want to do that for the fun of it, as well as the exercise), work out in a major way (even train) like funk aerobics, lifting, and maybe a jazz class, and try to find myself in a new place to live and a new way of life.

I also thought that I should spend some time maybe three times a week going through the funk routines I know in my head and maybe walking through them. That would be sort of fun to have them still in my head and body when I get back in January and it would be good mental and physical exercise.

I worked on an outline for the first chapter of my book today. I am pleased with that and am ready to begin writing. I'll start on it as soon as get to Queensland.

Well tomorrow I begin a new Australia adventure. Canberra, like Sydney, was familiar and some of it reminded me of my trip here with Judy and Jenny last year. It was good to have some familiar things and to have nice memories of last year, but then some of the memories aren't completely nice and I think it will be nice to be able to experience places fresh with Emily.

So far Emily and I are getting along great. We have had no conflict and we are helping each other through any difficult feelings either of us have. We are very open and honest and able to work through everything quickly and effectively. I can't believe that we won't be able to keep this up as we continue, but I know that some areas will be much harder than Australia. About our most difficult thing now is to keep warm and we are good at helping each other with that.

## ***Cairns and Mission Beach***

**September 13, 1993**

Well, we have finally reached the ass hole of the earth.

Cairns (pronounced "Cans") is a real shit can. Thank god I am with Emily and we can get a good laugh out of this. After the worst Asian dinner, we ever ate Emily cracked up when I gave the whole town the finger. To top it off we are staying in luxury accommodations. NOT! It is the cheapest hostel in the world. We chose it because they had free airport pick up and the place is on the

Esplanade, i.e., the front street, next to what ought to be the beach, but is only a 6 ft wide grassy area before the mud inlet. This place is cheapo tourist mecca. Everyone is hawking everything, and nothing is worth buying. Our room is four pinkish brown walls, a sink in the corner, a foam on a board for a bed and a weird curtain over what I guess are windows onto a hallway. Oh, and the place is equipped with the strong smell of piss. No wonder, since this place makes me want to piss. Not only that, even before we left the airport, we both got bitten by tiny black bugs and Emily has a number of small round red places likely from the bug bites.

The flight from Canberra took most of the day. We left at 8:40 this morning and flew to Brisbane where we had a several-hour layover. Then on to Rockhampton and then to Cairns. After walking around this town looking for better accommodations and to see what there is here to offer, we both quickly decided that this wasn't the place for the week we want to spend here. We have decided to head south to Mission Beach, which is supposed to be a sleepy little town with a nice beach. We surely can get a day trip to the Reef from there and that will at least give us that experience. Other than that, we want to spend a quiet week reading, writing and enjoying ourselves. Guess we'll figure it out tomorrow.

I had many thoughts on the plane today that I needed to write about, but this place and time doesn't seem conducive to it, so I won't. I need to write about my feelings regarding Judy, and I don't know what. I needed to write about them to try to get them to surface more. I needed to rethink why I am getting divorced, to remind myself that I must leave and why I am leaving. Being away, allowing those things to settle without having to think every minute about them is leading to my change of feelings about things. Perhaps anyway. I just need time to reflect and to allow my feelings to turn into actual expressions, verbalized expressions.

Finished Amy Tan's *The Joy Luck Club* today and started Janet Turner Hospital's *The Last Magician*. Hospital's work is so powerful, and it works so nicely with what I am thinking regarding my Australia book. Reading fiction for the first time in a long time has reminded me of how enormously important it is to me and how much I have missed having it in my life. I must constantly be reading fiction, even if for a few minutes a day. In fact, I think I'll do a little reading now before going to sleep.

### **September 14, 1993**

Mission Beach! Secluded (well sort of) beach (well a block away) tropical house. After a 2-hour bus ride from Cairns arriving here at 2 p.m. we soon found this fully equipped flat to rent for a week. We awoke this morning in that horrible hostel and knew we would most likely have to face disaster today and we'd be lucky if we came up with anything at all worth our time in the Cairns area. Even before we got out of bed, we were discussing how disgusting the bed was: a thin



foam on a board. I had felt something poking me all night and I lifted up the mattress to inspect it and what did we find under the mattress but a porno mag. Yuck! We both nearly flipped out and hurried to get on our way.

First, we couldn't find anything to eat, then we began to ask some of the thousands of booking agents about areas that were quiet and had access to a beach and from which we could book a trip to the Reef. We got many suggestions, most of them part of packages. Every time we asked about Mission Beach, which we had read about in the guidebooks, they said only that there was a beach there, but nothing to do. We finally figured that they didn't encourage this because they didn't have anything to sell here. Thus, finally realizing that there were places to stay that were not part of some package we got our bus tickets and headed this way.

The flat is wonderful, and we'll enjoy it so much. We can also go the Reef from here as well as Dunk Island which can be seen from our beach. The flat has two bedrooms and a kitchen, bath, dining room, and living room. It is fully equipped. We are just a block or so from the several stores that are Mission Beach and just a short block from the beach. The beach is beautiful and stretches for as far as you can see. The tide was out this afternoon and the beach was probably 70 to 100 ft wide. It looks like when the tide is in that it will only be 15 ft wide or so. But it is still a lovely beach. The rain forest comes right down to the beach. You can see this very clearly on Dunk Island, just a mile or so offshore. We want to read, write, and enjoy some down time before we head for the Interior.

One thing we began to realize today, having to carry our bags several blocks to the bus station is that we have way too much stuff. We are going to get boxes tomorrow and ship a bunch of stuff back to the US. Of course, when we get to Indonesia, we'll not need much of any of the clothes we now have, or shoes. I also am hauling large packages of books and manuscripts, which I'll part with, I need to identify all of them before I mail them in case they get lost.

We walked on the beach a bit midafternoon and then after a tuna lunch we went there to sit and read. It was lovely. Emily even ran down the beach. She ran so far, she almost disappeared from sight. Just a black speck, like pepper. The sea is wonderfully blue, and the sights are fantastic. It began to sprinkle on us as we left the beach after 5 p.m. and now it is raining quite a shower and has been for some time.

The bus trip here was a little weird. The bus was a luxurious bus and included a video movie. The bad thing was that the movie was John Ritter in "Bad Boy 2" which must be the worst film ever made. I wanted to read the Janet Turner Hospital book, but the sound for the movie was broadcast throughout the bus. I couldn't concentrate enough on reading to block out the movie, so I had two very frustrating hours trying to ignore the unignorable. The country we drove through was sugar cane country, with some bananas. The banana trees were

different than I thought. They were only about 8 to 15 feet tall, and they had the banana clumps in bags. I don't know what that does for them. Anyway, the country was beautiful with the Great Dividing Range on the west and some coastal mountains on the east.

I have been feeling a little weird the last day or two. I think some of it is guilt related to Judy. I find myself thinking that Judy would enjoy much of what I am seeing. She would have hated the hostel experience and she wouldn't want to snorkel (though she'd like to go on the boat), but she would enjoy the experience. I may be feeling guilty that she is home, and I am here. It is very strange to me that this is coming up. I am getting a divorce and yet as I am involved in these experiences, I find myself thinking of her and how I have assumed that she would hate this when she would have enjoyed it and been okay with much of it. Then I wonder why I didn't have her come instead of Emily, which is a complete rejection and denial of everything that has gone on since March and long before that. Somehow being away has softened the bad things about my marriage and made me forget all sorts of things related to the whole marriage. Maybe part of it is not having to encounter Judy leaves me with more good feelings about her than bad ones. That places me in a position of feeling guilt and doubt about what I am doing.

I do remember the day we left when we were at Piccolos with Jenny and she affirmed with enthusiasm and assurance that I was doing the right thing in separating from Judy. I think I still see all that, but I need to reflect over the next several days on why I have been remembering selectively, recreating the past in much more positive terms than it was. Do I need to feel guilty? Do I need feel responsible for Judy's feelings? Should I think that I abandoned Judy and really should have brought her? Certainly, I should if I was planning to stay married to her, but I don't. Are these thoughts coming up because I feel less than committed to Emily? Is our age difference somehow something I know will have to be dealt with at some time? Am I frightened that if this relationship with Emily doesn't work out that I'll be alone? I haven't consciously thought about this, but perhaps I should. Could I live alone? Would I still want the dome? How would I feel living there all alone? Of course, here I am a sap again, because at this thought I begin to think about how Judy must feel living alone. Never having anyone to watch a movie with, never having someone to sleep with. Then I feel like I have done this to her and that I am off on a world trip with a friend and that I have her to do everything with. It is just very hard for me to "separate emotionally" (as Emily puts it) from Judy. I continue to feel responsible for her. I continue to have good feelings toward her. I continue to have concerns about her. I continue to want her to have a good life.

Do I want to return to live with her? If Emily and I couldn't make our relationship work, would I then think about going back to Judy? I have gained

so much since March. I am almost always myself and feel honest and true to who I am. I rarely did that before I left home. I have a wonderful new relationship with Jenny that I didn't have before. I am building a relationship with Corbin that I didn't have before. I have been free of headaches almost completely since March. I am more fit, healthier, eat more like I like now than before. I am looking forward to major mountain and road biking next spring. I am looking forward to a new life. I don't think any of these gains would survive if I went back. It would be like a kind of living death. I just need to continue to rethink these things and make certain I know what I am doing. Do I really love Emily? Certainly, I am remarkably fond of her. We get along traveling very well. Even when we both found Cairns so tedious, we were able to let that be and still make a fun and funny adventure of it. I feel completely natural with Emily and she does also with me. We also both look after the feelings of the other. We help and I feel supported completely by her in who I am, and I also know that the way she treats me, the demands she makes of me, and the relationship we have makes me a better and fuller person than I could otherwise be. We don't seem to have any problems that persist. Nothing that is difficult and continuing. Even this evening Emily asked me if I was getting enough personal space. I asked her the same. We seem to be doing fine. I just need to shuck my guilt feelings so that I can be more present with her and with this experience.

Writing about it helps and I'll continue to do that.

I'm now ready to begin writing the first chapter to my Australia book. That will be important to begin this week. I should be able to knock out a good many pages of it this week. I look forward to that.

I have also been thinking that I'd like to take black and white photos throughout the balance of the trip so that I can work with black and white developing once we are back in Boulder. Still, I could get into color developing also. That might also be fun.

Maybe I'll plan to call Corbin on his birthday (Saturday here). I should also call Jenny in the next day or two. Need to write my parents and so forth. Maybe I'll write them this evening.

A few reflections on Cairns. It is just too bad that the place has become over commercialized. It may be due to Japanese investments and tourists. All the signs are in English and Japanese. The Japanese have purchased all sorts of land and resorts in this area. They charge high prices, and everything here seems tacky. Dozens of places are hawking package deals for any and everything. It is a beautiful and incredibly diverse place, but it has been ruined by commercialism. Besides the reef, there is white water rafting, the rain forest, old train rides up into the forest including Aboriginal dance theatre. There are beach trips in both directions at all distances. There is bungy jumping, balloon rides, helicopter rides, boat trips of all kinds, island vacations, scuba schools, etc. Few places can rival

what is available here but given what one has to go through to do any of this, makes it not worth doing. It is just very fortunate that we fled the scene and won't even have to go back. Our bus trip back will get us in Cairns at 11:30 a.m. and our plane leaves at 2 p.m.

### **September 17, 1993 Mission Beach, Northern Queensland, Australia**

Corbin's birthday, but he I'm sure he hasn't arisen yet to begin it. It is 7:15 p.m. here and 3:15 a.m. there. He should have been with us today, because it was incredible. We had a lovely porridge breckie (oatmeal breakfast) this morning and read for an hour or so. Then we walked the block to the center of Mission Beach where we were picked up by a bus that took us up the road a couple kilometers to the jetty at Clump Point. From there we embarked on the Quick Cat, the same kind of boat as at the Circular Quay in Sydney where they are called Jet Cats. We sat outside on the upper deck and applied ample sunscreen, had a cup of tea and readied ourselves for the 20-minute journey to Dunk Island. There we picked up more people and headed seaward to the Great Barrier Reef. The color of the sea all the way out was a deep indigo blue. It was a smooth 50-minute ride to Beaver Cay.

I didn't know it, but a Cay is a sand formation atop the reef, like a beach 25 miles out to sea. On the way out we saw a giant sea snake. Amazing. Once at the Cay, the Quick Cat set anchor about half kilometer from the Cay. The water was the most beautiful aqua color. The reef could be seen as dark patches in the water. Several other boats were near the cay. They moved out farther to another cay that could be seen from where we anchored. We were given a quick snorkeling lesson in the salon and we were soon in the water. We had fins, snorkels, and masks. Neither of us had snorkeled before so it was an experience. When I first got into the water, I experienced some significant fear. I breathed madly through my tube as though I couldn't get enough air. But the sight was so magnificent that I soon began to relax (a little bit anyway) and slowed my breathing. We were just 10 yards off the reef and right beneath the back of the boat were hundreds of significant sized fish (probably a foot to two feet in length). We got our fins working and headed for the reef. Immediately we saw fish of every color and size up to a foot or so in length. They were swimming in and around coral of every shape, size and color. We saw fish that were bright yellow, orange, neon blue (in huge schools), zebra striped, pink and blue, black and white. At every turn there were fish of a different color and shape.

My mask leaked a bit, and this bothered me. At one point I sort of breathed in through my nose and inhaled some water. This set me in major panic, and I rolled over and emptied my mask and assured myself that I was okay then, back on with the mask and back face down in the water. The coral was amazing. There were huge beds of what I'd call staghorn. They stuck up like huge racks on deer or elk. Much of it was brown, but some was bright blue and some, my favorite,

was brown with bright almost neon blue tips on the ends of each horn. There were clumps that looked like flat mushrooms apparently sitting atop a stem. Huge brain looking clumps in many colors were to be seen. Some were giant balls, like 15 to 20 feet across I'd guess. Some were wavy, like whole beds, and bright green. Then there was other life in the reef. Huge beds of waving sea anemone and single anemone as well. One something or other was a clump of hundreds of jet-black spines. There were bright blue large star fish. These didn't look much like stars, because each of their five appendages stuck out like limp wieners. They were beautiful. We saw some huge and I mean huge clam shell things. I think they were about 4 to 6 feet across. It is interesting that Emily and I floated above these things for a long time and she saw them completely different than I did. She saw them opened out and I saw them closed up. She saw them as broad carpets and I saw them as mysterious slits upward tilted. Anyway, what I saw were half a dozen or so of these clam-like shells sticking upward. They appeared to be open about 6 or 8 inches. Looking down the lips of the shell were smooth and rounded and had bright green dots all over them. In the slit one could see the meat inside which was white. There was a tube sticking up out of this white flesh and the flesh itself parted in places and you could see deep into the mysterious innards of the thing. The shells appeared to me to gently undulate more or less open. They seemed mostly buried and I wondered how, and if, they ever opened up completely. These were the kinds of shell things that as a kid I saw in horror films. They would lie open, and thus disguised. Then when something would step or float over them, smack shut they'd go and capture their prey. These were amazing. I guess Emily saw the same creatures open and I didn't even see them in that state. But she didn't see the closed ones.

We snorkeled together. We couldn't talk, obviously, but we could point and show our excitement at what we were seeing. We went for about an hour, then beginning to freeze, we went back to the boat. They had a big layout of food. We ate pasta (which the Aussies pronounce with the first syllable like the word "past") salad and egg salad and potato salad and we had lots of fruit: kiwi, passion fruit, melon, pineapple, etc. It is funny, but Emily has avoided fruit most of her life. I got her to first taste an orange at the Chinese place we go in Boulder a couple months ago. She ate her first grape in the plane between here and Rockhurst (is that the town?). We bought a whole pineapple here a couple of days ago and that was her first pineapple. Today she tried Kiwi and passion fruit. Now all she can talk about is how delicious fruit is. Ain't that a kick?

Then after eating and warming up we took a small aluminum (which the Aussies pronounce with a long "u" and accent the first syllable) boat to the Cay, pronounced Kay but that could be the Aussie way of pronouncing Key, though they do pronounce quay as "key." Then we found that the tide was going out

and the water had fallen significantly. We had a bit of a time getting out far enough on the coral to begin snorkeling again, but we made it and saw many of the wonderful sights I have described. But the water level was much closer to the top of the coral and it was sometimes difficult to find one's way over the coral. You had to find little canals running alongside coral beds and swim them until you could find a deeper area. For much of this swim we held hands and finned along together. It was wonderful to have Emily to share this experience with. Just amazing. We made our way back to the boat again chilly and yet very excited. We warmed ourselves again and I'd have gone for another swim, but it was time to leave. The leftovers and garbage from lunch were taken to the back of the boat where all those big fish had been hanging about all day. They slung a couple of biscuits overboard and wham! the fish slammed into it and it was gone. Other pieces of garbage were thrown overboard and the fish made a frenzy of the water. Finally, the whole tub of garbage was tossed and the water was a virtual froth for many seconds until every last bit of the garbage was gone, down the fishies' gullets. No wonder they are big getting this sort of feed every day.

The trip back to Dunk Island was pleasant. We sat more in the shade and everyone seemed tired and lulled by the gentle rocking. At Dunk Island we had 3/4 hour to walk about and take it in a bit. It is a resort island. It looked very romantic and exciting. We saw a couple lying in about a foot of water making out. We thought Jenny should have been there to be fully grossed out. Later we saw the girl and she had on a thong bathing suit. Jenny would have given her the Bad Taste Salute as well as hurled on her bare foot. When we stopped at Dunk in the morning a parachutist landed on the island just as we pulled into the bay. There was a cute little island just off the beach front about one kilometer and on the other side of Dunk could be seen the Family Islands, a cluster that are mostly uninhabited, but we read that there is a very exclusive resort on one of them that costs \$400 a night. Certainly, to stay at one of these island resorts would be wonderful.

We arrived back at Stump Point shortly after 5 p.m. with the bus awaiting to take us back to Mission Beach. We felt sticky and sandy and hungry. We stopped at the tiny supermarket, should be called tinymarket or superexpensivemarket, and got refried beans, taco shells, avocado, and salsa to make a Mexican style dinner. So now we are showered, fed, and enjoying reflecting on our wonderful day. Sitting here I feel like I am still on the boat. My hands float above the keyboard from time to time. Reminds me of the experience after roller skating. The reef is amazing, just beyond belief actually. To think of this being thousands of miles long and all living. Emily read that it is the only living thing that can be seen from the moon or from satellites (she couldn't remember which). I feel so privileged to have been able to snorkel on it and to have seen and experienced it. It is surely one of the most amazing parts of the earth.

Well, to go back a couple of days to catch this journal up. These days were spent mostly with me working for some hours in this fine little flat. I have gotten several thousand words written on the first chapter of the Storytracks [later titled *Storytracking*] book. I'm excited by it and feel I have begun in a way that is fairly engaging, but I know how to preserve the enormous detail that must be retained. I think I can write this book very rapidly from this point on. Should be able to get huge amount of it written before I get back to Boulder and finish it quickly upon return. Though I realized today that when I get back, I'll have the essay for Jack's conference to write then and I'll have the Ritual Studies Anthology to finish up and the Dancing dictionary to get into. I'll also have to get a place to live and other things as well, like finish up my divorce. Anyway, for now, I am writing on this book and it makes me feel very good. [Oddly I referred to projects that I apparently had planned but didn't finish. I make occasional references to some conference hosted by Jack Neusner that might have been scheduled for spring 1994, but I never went to that. I also had a falling out with Ron Grimes and withdrew from working on a collection of articles on ritual. I also refer to a Dance Dictionary. At the time I was editing a series of dictionaries for ABC-Clio Publisher. I did a dictionary of Native American mythology. I found editor/authors for one on world theater and on tricksters. I vaguely recall beginning to collect information on dances in cultures the world over, but I never did that project. Thankfully.]

Emily and I had our first significant problems of this trip the last two days as well. I can't even describe what happened really, but we distanced ourselves from one another and we had a time getting over it. I know that I was carrying some stuff from the days before, that I wrote about, but I really didn't feel that carrying too much of that into this, though I may have. Emily felt that I was projecting some of my issues in my marriage onto her and likely I was. I did begin to see her as unproductive, as avoiding her real work. Doubtless some of this was brought by my working. The fact of my working signaled to me expectations from my marriage for these occasions and I projected them onto Emily. I don't really know. She also seemed to feel with me working that she was jealous of me having something like that in my life, her not to that stage yet. Well, we went through some difficult moments with both of us feeling less than happy. But finally, through much effort we moved past it and I'm pleased that we did that before today. It was great to have someone to share this experience with.

We are maxing out our budget this Queensland part of our trip. We may be underbudgeted in Alice, but I hope that works out. We may have to settle for something more like backpackers' accommodations there. We will have a car there and that will make a difference. Hope we can stay well within budget until we get out of Australia. We'll spend here more than we will the entire rest of our trip and then some.

I am beginning to feel more a traveler now. I don't really miss anything in Boulder, though I love so much about Boulder, especially in the fall. A wonderful mountain bike ride would be excellent now.

Oh, I figured a way to get in some physical exercise. I tried running and it hurts my knee every time. Last evening Emily went out for a run. I was so disappointed at not getting to do something physical, I began to do aerobic exercises here. I turned on the TV for the news and danced my way around the living room. I worked up a good sweat and when Emily got back, we did sit-ups and push-ups. No knee problems and I enjoyed doing the exercise. I do miss Jenny, a lot. I'll have to call her on Sunday to catch her on Saturday. It will be fun to talk with her and catch her up on this trip.

### **September 18, 1993 Mission Beach, Northern Queensland**

After breakfast this morning we walked to the shopping area and found a phone booth so I could call Corbin. It is his birthday, September 17, and I wanted to wish him a happy birthday. It was 4:30 p.m. when I reached him, and he was reading a story he is finishing. He didn't have anything to do on his birthday. Said the plans he had had fallen through. He was hoping to find someone to go to bars with. I hope he took it easy. I wish I had been in Colorado and I'd have driven over and taken him out to dinner.

While we were talking, the birthday card I mailed from Brisbane on Monday arrived at his house. Quite the coincidence. He had received a birthday card from my parents too. He seemed fairly happy, but I think he struggles with things a lot.

Then I tried Jenny. I got the answering machine and freaked out and hung up rather than leaving a message. What a bummer. I'll try her tomorrow night so it will be Sunday morning for her. I guess. Then I called my parents. Mom answered. I said "hi" and she didn't know who it was. I had to tell her. She nearly cried when she knew it was me. She said that she had never talked intercontinental before and couldn't believe that I sounded like I was in the next room. It was fun to talk with them and to know that they are fine. They sounded good. Mom asked me how you make a call from Australia. Neat to talk with them.

Emily talked with her parents too. Afterwards she felt a wave of homesickness. She has been emotionally up and down today, but mostly okay. We talked a bit about doing another reef trip. We probably won't, but we are trying to make sure that we don't miss doing things we can do.

I spent much of the morning and half the afternoon working. I'm trying to figure how to do the comparisons between text versions for the Storytracks book. I think I have a way to do it that will be reasonably straight forward. It is all very tedious, but necessary.



Late this afternoon we walked a long way on the beach. When the tide is out, as it was this afternoon, the beach is about 50 yards wide. We picked up sand dollars and a few small shells. I found one small piece of branchy coral that is sort of bluish in color. We looked at books in the newsstand on the reef and read more about it in the guidebook. It is so amazing. We bought post cards this morning of fish and coral, things we had seen. We also left a roll of film to develop. We'll get them back in the morning.

Had spaghetti again this evening. Seems we never tire of it. Then we walked to the beach again. It was just after sunset and the moon was a tiny sliver that was like a cup. Just before we got to the beach, we saw flying things in the air and Emily asked if those might not be bats. I saw one land on a high branch and turn to hang upside down. They were bats and we saw dozens of them. Most were flying just above the first row of trees next to the beach and all were flying northward. Wonder what kind of party they were going to. They were big too. I 'd guess they had wingspans of 10 inches or even more. When they flew over you could see the pointy bat shape to their wings. Then we looked back towards the moon and the western sky was aglow in a rosy pink color. The palm and gum trees were set off as fantastic silhouettes. The moon above a single huge palm tree; some sort of delicate leafy tree next to it; with huge gum trees behind them. One or two stars could be seen below the moon. A picture post card scene. We may go back there tomorrow for a replay. May take my camera to see if I can get a picture. We went on down the beach and crossed over to the shops. There we bought double dip gelati. I got passion fruit and strawberry, Emily got passion fruit and banana. This gelati stuff is delicious and we both love passion fruit. In fact, Emily is really getting into fruit and that is such fun. We went back by the beach so that we could see the stars in the darker area by the ocean. The stars were fantastic. The Milky Way was so visible, it looked like a cloud stretching across the sky. The Southern Cross was clearly visible (though it seems much lower in the sky here than in Canberra because we are further north) and it seems that there are many more bright stars in the southern sky than in the northern. It was a marvelous sight to behold. We are seeing so many of these that I may hit overload before long. How much beauty can one take? What a privilege, what a gift, what a delight all this is.

Tomorrow we'll go pick up our pictures at 10:30 a.m. and inquire about bush walks in the rain forest around here. They are supposed to have cassowaries still in the wild and I'd love to see one of them.

I finished Janet Turner Hospital's *The Last Magician* this afternoon. It is set in Australia, mostly in Sydney, but also in Brisbane and even up in this area. Dunk Island, Innisfail, Cairns, etc. were all mentioned. It was fun to read a book and be in the place where it was taking place, particularly when all that in the novel would have been unfamiliar to me otherwise. The book was quite good. It deals

with some of the sane themes I am dealing with in the Storytracks book. We never really know anything, is one of the points she is making. We construct much of what we think we know is another point she makes. Both are important to my work. The book was complex, and I feel that I need to read it again to pick up many of the subtle connections. Further, she made many literary allusions using quotations (I think) in italics. They weren't identified. But I didn't know them so missed the higher literary value of those statements. Feel my literary ignorance in a big way.

We'll be off to the Interior before long. I am beginning to feel some excitement about that. We'll have to really watch our budget while there, but the place should be amazing.

I'll be mailing a box of materials back to Colorado on Monday. It may cost me \$50. Think I'll mail another big box from Darwin just before going to Indonesia. I won't need most of the clothing I have with me there, or shoes. Maybe I'll have some books I can part with at that point too: Aussie guidebook, etc. Strip down for easier travel. I am loving having my computer here. It makes everything so much easier. I may keep it with me through the whole trip, even in Nepal. Then I can use it there and store it somewhere only during the trek.

We did laundry yesterday and you might know that the dryer didn't work. We ended up with clothes spread over everything. I put many of the socks out on the patio at the entryway this afternoon and the sun soon dried them.

I feel that I am settling into travel rather well. I don't feel any anxiety about what is coming the next day or what portion of the trip has gone by. Other than missing my kids, I'd as soon be here as in Colorado.

Emily feels that I may have some issues related to work. She was reading this afternoon and felt sleepy. She thought she hadn't ought to nap because I wouldn't like her. I know that I place high priority on work and that I doubtless judge people who don't work as I do (which is all or most of the time). Likely I do have some issues and I must continue to work on them. Emily has forced me into lots of reflection the last couple of days. This afternoon she wondered if we love each other as much as we did. She says she loves me as much; so, her concern amounted to whether I love her as much. I don't know. Sometimes in the last week, I have wondered, but I feel that I get myself in weird ways of thinking from time to time. I do love her, though I am not at all sure I know what love is. Anyway, I think being pushed into self-reflection is important and, though I have trouble being brutally honest, I think this is healthy process from which I will grow.

Emily also brought up the notion we discussed before of being friends first. That is a nice view and I want to hold to that. If we can always be friends, we'll not have much to worry about. There is an honesty and lack of fear or threat that

goes along with being friends that isn't guaranteed with being lovers, or even with family.

### **September 19, 1993**

Still at Mission Beach and having a fine time. 8 p.m. and just came in from an effort to get a picture of the palms silhouetted against the sunset. Last night the sky was better, and the moon was low enough in the sky to have included it, but I made a couple of efforts.

Speaking of pictures, we got our pictures back this morning.

They were great. I had a dozen or more from Emily's bike race on August 15. They were excellent for the most part. I think she was thrilled to see them. You can see that she was working very hard and had a muddy face and body. Neat. The pictures of Australia were excellent too.

We took a long walk today. Started here at Mission Beach and walked along the road for probably 5 kilometers to find the beginning of a rain forest trail up a hill. The hill was named Bectin Hill and was 2.2 kilometers long. The rain forest was a disappointment. It seemed so dry and though it had huge trees, perhaps fig trees and thin palms that arose perfectly straight up for 40 or 50 feet before there was the leafy green part, we somehow didn't feel the lushness and coolness that we thought we'd feel. At the end of the trail was a nice lookout place where one could look over Mission Beach, Dunk Island, the Family Islands, and the Whitsundays (with big mountains on them). A lovely sight. You could also see the many little fields of bananas. We took two apples a piece and a kiwi fruit and some crackers ("crispbreads") with us for lunch. We also tried out our food knives we bought and realized how hard it is going to be to peel fruit without touching it. Hope we don't starve when we get to Indonesia. When we walked back, there was a short rainforest walk from Clump Point. most of the way back to Mission Beach. We then walked along the beach to the town center where we went for a treat of passion fruit and coconut sorbet or gelati. Yummy.

Back there we did a bit of laundry and hung it up for its two-day dry. Went for an evening beach walk. Came back here for our Mexican dinner. Then went back to the beach to take pictures.

At the beach we ran into a retired couple walking along the beach. We visited with them for perhaps an hour. They had traveled Australia extensively. They live somewhere south of here (like 2000 kilometers) towards Brisbane, maybe between Brisbane and Sydney. They told us so much about so many places in Australia.

They told us about the bats. They are fruit bats that feed off the Eucalyptus flowers and fruits. Apparently, they don't do much harm, but there are so many of them that sometimes they break branches there are so many of them hanging from them. There are supposed to be millions of them that hang in caves during

the day and sometimes there are so many of them that come out at night that the sky is black for as much as two hours.

They told us of Darwin, Cairns, Port Douglas, Alice, aboriginals (they even told us a dreaming story and told us that aboriginals have a special relationship with the earth). They told us of the stars seeming so close out in the Interior. On and on. They have five children and told us where they live. They told us of the war and the Japanese attacks on Australia. They both talked at once and struggled with one another for the privilege of speaking. We enjoyed listening to them and learned much from them. I said “yes” “unhuh” “well, I’ll be”. Emily didn’t get in that much. At one point I snuck in that we were off to Indonesia after Australia. They said they had never been to Indonesia and quickly went on with their verbal tour of Australia. They concluded by welcoming us to their country and wishing us well.

When we got home, we sat down to watch a movie and our relationship fell apart for the rest of the night.

### **September 20, 1993**

Our last day in Mission Beach. We leave tomorrow morning. I set the alarm for 2 a.m. to go down the block to call Jenny. I wanted to reach her on Sunday morning. But when the alarm rang, I was too tired and too upset by my conflict with Emily that, I couldn’t get up to go. Didn’t sleep too well.

Got up before 7 and had a nice oatmeal. Then I took a nice long walk on the beach. Emily and I talked about our difficulties. I couldn’t figure out too much what the problem was. Still don’t, but after much talk and Emily throwing a tantrum or two, we got it back together. Seems she doesn’t think I am affectionate enough and that I may not love her. We need to work through some of these things. I hope that we can get together more effectively as we go on.

After we got back, the water was off in the flat and so we decided to walk to the town center to report it. I mailed the box I had packed. It weighted 11 kilo and cost me \$67 including insurance of \$300. That left us with about \$9. We then went to the phone booth and called Jenny. Got her. It was Sunday evening in Boulder, and they were having a birthday party for Corbin. Tiger was there. I suspect that Jenny and Tiger are getting something going. It was wonderful to hear her voice. She seemed so natural and fun to talk with. She didn’t have too much news but was excited to hear all about what we have been doing. I gave her the address of the American Express Office in Darwin to give to Mimi to send me some mail. She said, “Can I write you there?” Wow! that would be great to hear from her. Then she told me that she missed me a whole lot. That moved me tremendously. I miss her too and talking with her reminded me how much. I cried for quite a while after talking with her. I found myself thinking what mom said to me “she sounded like she was in the next room!” Funny that we say these

things. She did seem close and that made the distance I am from her seem so much farther.

We went to the store for some tuna and a little something to fix with rice for this evening's dinner. We came back took showers when the water finally came back on. Got back together and had lunch. Then Emily went to the beach to swim and to read and write. I worked on my Track's book. Got lots done but am eager to do so much more. After Emily came back, we went to town to spend all but our last dollar. We wanted some passion fruit ice cream. It was all gone at the store that was open. I settled for coconut and strawberry, Emily had coconut and pineapple. We bought a couple of buns to have as bread with our evening meal.

When we got back, we went to the beach and I taught Emily an aerobics class. It was really fun to remember the various routines and to teach them to Emily. We found a slightly empty part of the beach, we started and soon got into the routines. People walked by and gave us some funny looks, but once we got started, we kept it up for 50 minutes. It was really fun and a nice way to get sort of a workout. After we finished, we chased each other all over the beach and into the ocean for a quick dip. Home again to put on the rice, do some sit-ups and pushups and have another shower. While the rice finished cooking, I packed my pack and bags. It seems so much better with 11 kilos lighter. Everything went in my pack well. There won't be much to do to get ready to leave tomorrow. We have just enough oatmeal and bread for toast and then we'll be off. Pretty well used up our food stock.

Emily is missing Boulder a bit. I'm mostly missing Jenny and Corbin. Of course, Boulder is lovely in the fall and I know Emily would feel better if she had some of her friends to talk with. I don't really miss talking with anyone. I'll have to talk with her about this.

We have been watching TV this evening. The Emmys are on right now. We find TV interesting here, though we haven't watched much. Most of Australian TV is mostly talk stuff: crafts, travel, political. The rest is American.

Hope that Emily and I can have a solid relationship holding up through this trip as it begins to get rougher. We have lots of miles to travel and things will get more difficult, though more exciting. We'll see.

Tomorrow is back to Cairns. Get some traveler's cheques cashed and to the airport. I have mixed feelings about Alice. It should be a wonderful experience, but I think it will be difficult. That should really begin our travel experience. I really am feeling happy traveling. Ready for most any experience and eager to go for it.

## ***Alice Springs and Uluru, September 21 - 30*** **September 22, 1993**

The Alice. We arrived yesterday in the midst of a heavy rainstorm. They provided umbrellas for us as we stepped off the stairs on which we deplaned. We laughed and played as we walked to the terminal. It was chilly, very chilly in fact. We have learned that it set a record for the coldest day on record for September in the history of Alice. What a day to arrive. We were both in shorts and tees and we shivered and shook with damp cold.

It took us quite a while to get the rental car. Minor glitches that need not be remembered and found a nice clean but very basic room in "The Lodge" an Anglican hostel. It is *en suite* which is nice. We immediately began to see how much we wanted to do here in Alice and set about, almost in desperation to figure out what we want to do and how we were going to work it all in. Oh, we did this after going out to an excellent Mexican dinner.

First impressions of "the Alice": It is a clean modern lively, rather upscale, town. My impressions have been informed mostly by the early days and by Robyn Davidson's *Tracks* which was about 10 years back. The town is lovely and has very little raw about it. Our first evening we scarcely saw an Aborigine. Today we saw but a few. Separation between races seems enormous. All the whites talk about Aborigines, but we saw no mixing at all between races here. A few times we saw groups of Aborigines: usually one or two heavy set bare-footed women in house dresses with several children of many ages, or a group of teen aged boys, or several men (often inebriated). It is a sad affair and Emily and I spent lots of time talking about this situation.

Don't have time to reveal our plan, but it should merge as I report it. Today was a fabulous day. We arose early and enjoyed some intimacy. Sat down to our little breakfast. Did a bit to straighten out the rental car thing, did a little more to get a flight from Ayers Rock (Uluru) back to Alice, using our last flight coupon. All just standard travel nuisances. Then we drove north of town to the old telegraph station. This is the station I have read about for years. It is where Francis Gillen served in the late nineteenth century. It is where Spencer met Gillen. It is where he and Spencer observed the Engwura in 1896. It is where Spencer returned in 1926 for field study. The place is exactly as I have seen it in early 20th century pictures. We paid for a tour. It was more about the building of the telegraph in the 1870s and the building of the several structures. All very interesting. I was moved to be in the place I had read so much about. Took lots of pictures. Bought a couple of books. Walked to the top of Trig Hill and saw the station from there. One thing that moved me most was the huge gum tree that stood between the station master's kitchen building and the barracks. This is a huge gnarly tree that must be 4 feet in diameter. The top has been broken

and has left a big scar, but the tree still flourishes. I could see this tree, as a small tree in the early photographs. What history this lovely tree has lived through. The barracks, the first building built, was equipped with holes in the wall through which they could shoot guns (in case the Aboriginals were not friendly). They had restored the interiors of these buildings and seeing them was a wonderful experience. After climbing Trig Hill, we headed for the cemetery in which some of the very early settlers are buried (all male). Suddenly a large kangaroo stood up and hopped quickly across the field. The fields were in full bloom with flowers, yellow and red and dusty blue. A lovely, lush desert bloom. We also later saw a Euro (small kangaroo) and its joey. This particular Euro, we learned, had been attacked by dogs (evident by a permanently bent ear) and had been rescued. Through its recovery it had become so friendly that it didn't leave the grounds. We got very close to these two. The joey was so cute (well so was its mother). We were thrilled by this whole experience. One other thing we experienced during the morning that am sure we will experience much more is having flies crawl over our faces all the time. They don't seem to bite, but they do like to crawl into your eyes and other openings. Rather pesky. We have seen fly screens which are these little affairs you put over your head and, I suppose, tuck the elastic band under your collar to keep away the flies.

Then we went to the Strehlow Research Institute. Again, I have read so much about both the Strehlows. This place has been built by Kathleen, the second wife of Ted Strehlow, in his honor. It is quite an impressive building with huge walls made of compressed dirt (with a bit of cement to hold it together), the rich red dirt of the center. It has a very natural and beautiful appearance. The place turned out to be a museum. Architecturally interesting, technically sophisticated, and loaded with superficial crap about Aborigines. The Emu-footed man was represented as were other sky god figures. There was quite a lot about Ted Strehlow (including some about his first wife Bertha), but little about Carl Strehlow. An Aboriginal man, wearing white shirt and tie, told of the dreaming that "passed along" the earthen wall. It was a sophisticated slide show with synthesized music. Didn't make a lot of sense to me, but doubtless whomever created it had some sort of story to tell. Then this man showed us how weapons (and a couple tools) had traditionally been made. This was interesting and informative. Notably, in response to questions asked after this demonstration this man mentioned a number of things about the nature of Aboriginal culture (always in the singular). He indicated that he raised his children in the old way: with much hard discipline. He said every now and then he had his children fast for several days or do without water. He said this taught them appreciation, respect, and discipline. I know from Diane Bell's book that this is likely not at all how Aboriginal parents treat their children and began to realize that likely these were German Lutheran values that, like so many other things (like the theology)

have been transformed into a traditional Aboriginal guise. What a wonder it is that this Aboriginal man can speak authoritatively to a group of whites of the ancient (the 40,000-year figure is broadly used) ways of his people, and they buy it, when it is probably as much, no I'd say more, German Lutheran than Aboriginal. We stayed a long time in this museum and found that Mrs. Strehlow was to be there in the afternoon for a board meeting. I considered trying to meet her but figured I didn't have any real business with her.

Then we went to Todd Mall (a nice Boulder-like pedestrian mall) for a bit of lunch. I had a chicken pie (the wait person looked stunned when I asked her what it was) and cappuccino (you can't really get just a cup of coffee here it seems). Then we looked in a collectables type store where I had heard they might have copies of old books. I found a paperback copy of Strehlow's *Journey to Horseshoe Bend* for \$27.50. Too steep for me. Then looked in a couple shops for Akubra hats. Emily had a hankering for one. In one store they were \$75 or \$80. In the very next store, they were \$68. We figured we just couldn't pass them by, so we each bought one. Actually, the same style in slightly different colors. We'll have to ship them back on Friday next week, but we'll have them in Boulder to wear when we get there. We wore them around town this afternoon like a couple of first-class tourists. Actually, we are beginning to feel less like tourists and really like travelers, perhaps because we are beginning to engage the cultures we are encountering more fully, and we are beginning to realize that Indonesia is coming quickly. We picked up a 4 x 4 this afternoon which we'll drive for the next three days. Then Emily bought a new camera (after much looking). She got a great buy on a Canon T60 (basic old-style Canon) with a terrific 1.4 lens.

We had pasta (I had lasagna) at a little pasta place and a sinfully delicious chocolate cake dessert and sat and talked for hours. We shopped for groceries for lunches for the next couple days for our drives. Had a quick camera lesson for Emily and now we are trying to catch up on journal writing, for we know we'll be tired and forgetful by tomorrow evening when we have another chance. The young woman, Ann, who manages this hostel (and her male friend whose name I don't know) are very nice and helpful. They recommend all sorts of things for us. They didn't even want our money when we arrived. We haven't paid yet. We'll stay here one night after flying back from Ayers Rock. Tomorrow we head for Hermannsburg. That should be something. Look forward to another great day. The weather today was beautifully sunny, and the air was crisp and fresh. I had expected uncomfortable heat. I hope that getting out tomorrow will show us lovely desert flowers and landscapes, and some healthy Aboriginals.

### **September 23, 1993**

Saw a dingo and an eagle on the way to Hermannsburg this morning. We arose before seven and had a shower and a quick breakfast in our room. Then started out in our 4 x 4 for Hermannsburg. We left Alice behind us in only a few



blocks and entered the most beautiful country. I can't begin to describe this country. The road is fairly flat yet rolling. There are no bridges, just markings that indicate the road is sometimes flooded. The ghost gum trees dot the landscape and are in groves in the lower stream bottom areas. They are spectacular features in the landscape. The area is surrounded by low lying mountains, through some rise up fairly steeply, and look rugged, even jagged. The whole area is green and lush, though somewhat sparse (this is a desert), I suppose because it is spring and there has been much recent rain. These mountains have a bluish or red-grey-blue tint to them. They have such a distinct color. After driving along for perhaps an hour we had seen only two cars. As we came up a bit of a rise off in the distance was a dingo crossing the road. We slowed and it stopped just 30 feet off the road and turned around to look at us. We stopped and it remained for a few seconds to give us a look. It started on, turned one last time for another glance at us and trotted off into the bush. It was a lovely yellow and a fat healthy looking animal. A thrill to see him. Then not more than a few kilometers on down the road we saw an eagle in the air; huge wingspan. It alighted in a tree to the side of the road. We stopped alongside it and had another good look. It seemed to be being pestered by a smaller bird. It arose out of the tree and spiraled into the air all the time being dive-bombed by this smaller bird.

The road turned from two paved lanes to one with a wide shoulder on each side and finally to a wide dirt, but rather rough road. We bounced along until we finally arrived at Hermannsburg. The old mission sight has been maintained, well sort of. We pulled in the gate of the mission compound and straight across was Strehlow's house, the house built for Carl Strehlow when he took his post. The house now serves as a tea house. They sell a few crafts there as well. The lady who worked in the kitchen, a white lady, said she had been there just a few months and that she just traveled from place to place to find work. She said that she liked Hermannsburg and would probably stay a while. The Strehlow house had some interesting early photos and hymn books and testaments in Aranda [Arrernte] and Loritjara languages, the work of the early missionaries. We then looked into a long building that served as residence for a number of young missionaries and their spouses. It had four or so apartments. This building was very rustic and had not been much restored. Next, we went behind the old church in the middle of the compound to a small building. Curiously this building served as a mortuary. It was only 8 x 10 feet or so and had a slab table (body-sized) in it as the only furnishing. The sign informed us that deceased Aborigines would be laid out here prior to burial. There was a cemetery across the road which we didn't look at for reasons of both propriety and because it looked like a well-traveled path for Aborigines in the community.

The tannery once used as a source of commerce and a building that served as a school for the white children (don't recall its earlier function) were examined. Then a schoolhouse for Aboriginal children which had later become a store. Then were the meat house (or place where meat was stored and butchered) and the huge water tank next to it. This tank was built from donated funds and was filled by water piped from a spring some kilometers distant, an important Aranda-Christian site. Then we went to the church at middle of the compound. It seemed very old and had a bell supported in a weird jerry-rigged way in front. We took photos of several buildings. We also saw collection of Albert Namantjira's paintings and those of other Aboriginal artists influenced by his style. A white ground's keeper provided some stories of Albert and other artists. Emily was rather weirded out by them making so much of an Aboriginal being able to paint, as though all Aboriginies are by nature uncreative and incapable. I think that many people have thought just such things.

We drove about the residences a little and went across the Finke River to the Resource Center. Diane Austin-Broos had told me to find Ingrid Blanch here. This was a white woman, obviously German, who was an administrative assistant. Yet she clearly knows much about the society and community in the area. She introduced us to Glen Auricht who runs Tjuampa Resource Center and is, though very quietly so, the historical authority on the relationship between Aranda and the mission. He spoke with us a few minutes, talking about how he was learning about Aboriginal traditions and using them as a way to communicate between cultures. He thinks that Spencer and Gillen were seeing only from the white fella's perspective. He thinks the missionaries were better observers and interpreters of Aranda traditions. Of course, Glen is Lutheran. We stood outside this resource center and saw many Aboriginies come and go. They seem an interesting people. But social contact in short time is impossible. I feel sad about this. I'd like to break down the distance that is assumed between whites and blacks. It would be nice to sit and have a chat, but I don't know about what. Even in close physical space, the distance seems so far. Very sad.

We got information from Ingrid about Palm Valley and other areas to drive to and left. The road to Palm Valley is just across from the resource center. It is about 17 kilometers to the valley. We had to use four wheel drive all the way. There is a lot of deep sand and places where one has to clamber over big rocky places. Palm Valley is a remarkable and quite beautiful place. It is distinctive for having a large number of red palms that survived from ancient times when the area was very different. This has been possible because in this gorge water runs through the rocks to either side of the gorge and into the thin soil beneath these trees. It is a wondrous sight: huge palms amidst ghost gum trees. The rains had left lots of pools of water and it was all quite lovely. Well not quite all. The pesky flies were particularly bad when we stopped there. They land on you by the

hundreds and many try to get into your eyes, mouth, nose and ears. They don't seem to bite, though I was bitten by something, and just have to be waved away frequently. We were going to sit under the palms for a picnic but gave up because of the flies. We drove away with Emily preparing peanut butter crackers. The road to Palm Valley goes through Finke Gorge. On the way to Hermannsburg, we stopped at a monument alongside the road before Hermannsburg. It said that this is where Albert Namintjima was first inspired to paint. The landscape came to focus on a beautiful gorge some distance. It was dark green against the dark red stone. Just spectacular. It was this canyon that we were driving through. The trail crossed and recrossed the Finke river several times. I thought of Carl Strehlow's journey down the Finke when he was attempting to save his life. What a trek that must have been. This evening I read a bit of Ted Strehlow's *Journey to Horseshoe Bend* to remind me of that event. It was wonderful to follow the same route.

We had wanted to go to Boggy Hole and then on down the Finke River to Running Water then over to Tempe Downs. This is the area of the events I am writing about. It is accessible by 4 x 4, but at this point we are learning of the possible dangers of going to areas where few travel. These are stories of bogging down in sand and not being found for days. After hearing about this we have decided not to try this route. Tomorrow we'll go to Ruby Gap which is to the east of Alice. It will be a fine drive and I'm sure we'll enjoy it. I am a bit disappointed, but the risk is not worth it to see the slight ruins of a couple buildings that existed in the early part of the century.

Back in Alice around 4:30. I freaked out a bit about whether or not we were taking fullest advantage of this area. Then after Emily helped me calm down, we went out to dinner again at the Camel's Crossing for Mexican. It was again delicious. I could have eaten more of it because it tasted so good. We ended with yummy chocolate fruit cake with a brandy sauce on it. Wow.

Need to get to bed, but a word about the Aboriginies. I feel so sad that I can't make contact. Is this yielding somehow to my own prejudice? Do I assume, falsely, that they don't want to talk to the likes of me? Why isn't there any forum for intercourse? The only place I see any communication going on is in stores and at the Tjuampa Resource Center. The latter is the only actual communication, the other is done rather blindly. It is also interesting that the Aranda maintain something of their cultural ways even in the dire straits of Alice. One sees women and children together (usually more than one woman and more than one kid). One then also sees men together. Other groupings are teen aged boys. I haven't seen groups of teen aged girls. Most are barefoot. One popular attire among the men is a western style suit. I notice that particularly the older men, and often they are very thin, like these suits. The women seem often overweight. I don't know what to make of this, but I am saddened that there is so little contact.

A lovely, yet tiring day.

### September 24, 1993

Wow! What a day. The area around “the Alice” is proving to be endlessly exciting. We arose early as usual and set off in our 4 x 4 to explore the area to the east of Alice. After heading a few blocks in the wrong direction, we found Ross Highway and we were off. Shortly after getting used to driving on the left side of the road we came to Emily Gap where we stopped, well we just had too, for a picture of Emily at Emily Gap. Gaps seem to be common geological features here. The MacDonnell Range of mountains stretches east to west just south of Alice. These aren’t really huge mountains, but they are impressive. A gap is just that, a gap in this range. It usually is in the form of a narrow passage through the mountain with high rock walls on both sides. Most gaps have pools of water in the bottom and likely the presence of water as well as a rather distinctive way--the gap in the mountain--of identifying it accounts for them being remarkable and named. Emily Gap is several kilometers west of the next gap called Jesse. We read that these gaps were likely named by the builders of the Overland Telegraph after women they knew, but it isn’t known by whom or when exactly. Interesting.

A few kilometers on east we turned off to a pillar rock formation popularly named Corroboree Rock. It is a towering pillar of rock in which there is a tiny rock window and below it is an area that used to be a cave, a storage place for tjurungas [wooden objects decorated with totem-specific markings]. We hiked up to the cave and took a few pictures. One of these pictures was taken specially to show what spinifex (a wiry prickly and very distinctively desert plant) is. The road soon turned to single lane and about 80 kilometers out we came to the turn off for Arltunga which was another 40 kilometers on dirt road. Now an amazing thing about all this country is how remarkably it changes with nearly every kilometer. The MacDonnell Range is so varied, and the vegetation seems to vary not only in type but in thickness. Some areas, particularly those along the dry creeks, are dense with the beautiful ghost gums. At least one area we were in had almost no vegetation at all for a long while. The colors of the stone, the colors of the vegetation all change.

On the road to Arltunga, Emily and I had a most wonderful discussion about “Knowing what you already know.” This was an idea I picked up in Janet Hospital’s novel *The Last Magician*. The topic came up with me trying to talk about me always having to have measurable results from my experience. This causes me anxiety and I worry that I am not getting enough done. I was suggesting that it is odd that after having experience like just driving along this road, that when students ask questions in class later on that somehow, I draw upon knowledge I have gained without really knowing it. Then I realized that this is a wonderful understanding of the experience of teaching. That is, as a

teacher I learn through reading, but also through driving down a road in Central Australia. While I am doing these things, I know that I am learning, thus that I know, some things, but actually I am coming to know many other things that, until someone asks me about it, I don't know that I know. Teaching is then a way in which we come to know what we already know. With great excitement I began to realize several things. This is why I love to teach. This is why I teach the way I teach, that is, using such interactive methods, for it only when students inquire of my knowledge and experience that I come to know what I know. Those who lecture without interaction only know what they know they know. Ha! What a loss for them. I also found myself beginning to relax to let the experience of being in Australia (and this principal extends far beyond this) have its way with me. I may not know now what I have come to know being here, but I may when I teach about it (and certainly when I write etc. which are also methods of coming to know what I already know). I can see all sorts of applications of this. We related this principal to the psychotherapeutic method. That is the therapy attempts to allow people to know things about themselves that they don't have the tools to connect so that they can know that they know and, more likely, that they have hidden reasons for keeping themselves from knowing what they know. When a patient comes to know this moment is often experienced with an "Aha!" Isn't that exactly how we respond to the experiencing of coming to know what we already know?

On we drove and arrived at Arltunga. This is the first community formed in Central Australia. It began because of the discovery of gold. We stopped at the visitor center and our car was the only one in the lot and though the building was open no one was on duty. We read about the place and for \$1 bought a guide map and drove around looking at the old buildings and mines. This interested us far less than the telegraph station or the mission compound. Neither of us really knows why. Maybe we simply know less about it. We found ourselves covered by flies the instant we stepped from the car. What a misery those flies are. After several short hikes to see these ruins we headed on down the road. We had planned to go on to Ruby Gap, but at the Arltunga visitor center we learned that it was an hour and a half on before entering the gap area and then it was a number of kilometers through the gap. It described deep sand and the chance of becoming bogged in sand. It asked if we had told anyone where we were and suggested that people rarely go through the area this time of year so to be sure you had water enough to last for several days in case we had to wait for someone to come by to help. We said, "no thanks" and went in a different direction.

Our objective was the Ross River Homestead which is a still operating cattle station. We drove the 40 kilometers back and found the road to Ross River. Tooling along this road, Emily spotted in the bush on her side of the car a camel. She, particularly, had wanted to see a camel. We had passed a camel ranch (or

whatever you call them) just as we left Alice but didn't even see camels there. There are some 15,000 camels roaming wild in the Centre and we had hoped to see some in the wild. We pulled the car to the side, I mounted my telephoto and squeezed off a couple of pictures. Then we began to see there were more camels and decided to risk getting out of the car. We had no idea how frightened they would get. We took a couple more pictures and decided to enter the bush for a closer look. Closer and closer and they seemed to pay us no attention. I was shooting away at one group while standing on a path when Emily pointed out that other camels were coming down the path. I turned to see two large camels just a few yards away coming directly toward me. I shot a couple more pictures then moved over to let them pass. More and more came by. They were different sizes and colors. Suddenly we heard a terrible sort of bellowing in the direction from which the camels were coming and Emily ran and leaped back in the car. I made some distance but awaited to see if we were going to be charged by an angry male camel. We both have read Robyn Davidson's *Tracks* and know how nasty these old guys can be. But though the camel was large, it simply sauntered by just a few feet from me. I took more pictures (I may have overdone it, but it was so exciting) and decided as this one passed to try to get its attention. I was near the car. I spoke to it. No response. I spoke louder. No response. Finally, I hollered at it and still it just made its way along. We were both just ecstatic about seeing these camels. They had to be wild, there were no markers, no nose plugs, no saddle sores. They were beautiful and very healthy looking. We wondered at how Emily even saw them, much less how remarkable it was that we were passing along there just as they got that close to the road.

When we got to the Homestead, we weren't all that impressed, but it was nice to stop by. They had camels to ride and rooms to rent. We soon drove on, having learned about the beautiful N'Dhala Gorge, a four-wheel drive accessed area. Though we still worried about bogging in sand we figured we weren't all that far from help and ventured on. It was an 11-kilometer drive through beautiful canyons and through the same stream bed many times (dry and full of sand). We got to the gorge in great shape and learned that there are thousands of Aboriginal pictographs in the gorge. I was excited to see them and again we donned our new Aussie hats and headed on the trail. We walked about a kilometer into the gorge and found several pictographs. These were complex and are supposed to relate to "dreaming" stories. One had a sign identifying the elements with a story. I photographed both the sign and the rock for use in teaching. However, we had to fight these damned flies all the way. Emily took to calling them "Little pieces of shit." And we had a good laugh despite the almost unbearable nuisance they cause. Back in the car we ate our one passion fruit, nectar of the gods, as a reward for braving the four-wheel drive trail and the hiking trail. We wonder at how anyone can learn to endure the flies without going nuts as not only the

Aborigines, but so many others, have. We decided that because of the flies the Center will never be developed for mountain biking or hiking, both of which one could do endlessly. We decided that to call someone a fly was an insult with completely new meaning. I tried it out remembering the woman who waited on us in renting our car. I said that if it was a contest between her and these flies, I'd rather take the flies. That seemed insult to the extreme.

Heading out of the canyon we admired the ghost gums so much. When we were nearly out, I looked high atop the canyon and saw one right up on top. It was backed by a dark blue sky and I thought this would make a fine picture, especially with a telephoto, this stark white tree against the dark blue sky. I pulled over (we had seen only one car all afternoon) to stay out of the traffic and when we got out, we noticed that the moon (half-moon) was visible in the sky near the tree. It took only a few steps to place the moon close to the tree and we both took some photos. What a lovely sight.

We headed back to Alice stopping on the way only at Emily Gap for another photo of Emily by the "Emily Gap" sign with the gap in the background.

After a shower and a moments reorganization we headed for Todd Mall for a cuppy (or a "cuppy cappi"), that is, a cappuccino. We enjoyed this immensely and it refreshed us after a day of traveling. Emily was interested in getting some post cards and we ducked into a shop or two. When I saw her head for the cheesiest souvenir place in town, I cringed thinking that I didn't even want to dignify the place by my entering it. But I did and we were soon enthralled at their wall of books on Australia. Emily has been interested in reading Diane Bell's *Daughters of the Dreaming*. It was there. I found a book by W. E. H Stanner that I was interested in. Then I saw a new book by Robyn Davidson that we are both interested in reading and that we'll likely read out loud together starting in a few minutes. Then I saw a book on William Willshire that I didn't even know existed. What a bookstore. We saw many other books that we wanted to buy but resisted. We also found cheap blank books for journal writing (I bought one for Nepal when I won't have my computer with me). We also found a cheap scratch pad we want to use for vocabulary slips for learning Malay (which we both hope to get to before long). We had another great pasta dinner with a lovely chocolate dessert (which we split). Did our grocery lunch and breakfast shopping ritual now we are enjoying the day through journal writing and sharing a cup of tea.

The people who run this hostel are so nice to us. Last night they told us that they were giving us an even better price: \$180 for the week. This puts us in way under budget and let us rationalize buying the books.

Over dinner we talked about how remarkable this place is and how we have settled in to traveling. I certainly feel differently than I have ever felt. I am enjoying every day to the fullest and have little anxiety about being away or about what will come in the future. We'll be in Darwin in just a week, but for now we

have this country. I can understand much more how Aboriginals are connected to the land and why so many refer to this land as magical. It is so grand, so huge, so beautiful. But it is also harsh, rough, dangerous, threatening. Many poisonous snakes, scorpions, lack of water, heat, and, most of all, size. It must be approached with the utmost respect and it commands nothing short of awe. One knows that there is no way possible to begin to grasp the fullness of what is here. One feels deeply one's infinite smallness in this land. I understand now more the statement that the people belong to the land than the other way around. Possessing this land is unthinkable.

We ventured into one of the Aboriginal arts galleries. I quickly got weirded out. The arts all look the same and are way overpriced. I doubt that many of the things are made by Aborigines and those that are are made by Aborigines in a factory working for whites. The whole thing disgusts me. Emily noticed one Aboriginal man and woman (actually the only male female couple I have seen) attempt to go into this gallery only to be told to go away. Ain't that something? I wonder what these people think when they walk past these white run galleries. It must disgust them to the core.

Tomorrow we head for Glen Ellen. What surprises will be in store? What wonders?

### **September 25, 1993**

Today was gap day. We gorged ourselves out. We went through the chasm and saw the other side. As usual we arose at 6:20 having for the third day in a row did not hear the alarm set for 5:45 and had a weet bix breakfast and headed out. This time we went out the Namatjira Highway east (slightly north also I think). There are many gorges, chasms, gaps that cut through the MacDonnell range. We learned that a very long time ago this area was a shallow sea. Many layers of silt deposited on top of one another until the bottom ones were compressed into rock. Then there was a huge uplifting of the land and there arose mountains here 10, 000 meters high, that is higher than present day Himalayas. Over time these eroded to the present height. The tallest are now only 1,500 meters. Apparently as the land lifted to form these mountains streams were running perpendicular to the uplifting ridge and eroded through the ridge cutting these chasms and gaps. First, we stopped at Simpson Gap, then Stanley Chasm, then we drove on out to Glen Helen, the end of our trek and about 135 kilometers from Alice.

At Glen Helen there is a huge gorge. With the recent rains all the pools at the base of these places were full. At Glen Helen Gorge the pool about 50 yards across and extended quite a way through the gorge. There were sand beaches and lots of cattails and other vegetation. On the way back we stopped at the Ocher pits which are rock formations of yellow and red formed in a wavy pattern and exposed by the erosion of a stream. This is one of the places where Aborigines



have collected ocher for thousands of years. Then we stopped at Ellery Creek Gorge. It too was very beautiful. We took pictures at all of these places and wonder now how we will remember which was which gorge. We have taken some notes and yet we also think it will probably be wise to get a notebook to keep a log of our photos since it will be months before we get them developed.

As we left Glen Helen, I felt some sense of disappointment. I suppose much of this had to do with the damn flies. At each of these gorges it would be great to sit a spell and contemplate the timelessness of this country, to just let one's bones absorb something of the spirit of the rocks. But the flies swarm around your head, land on your face several at a time and it doesn't take long to have enough of being outside. What a pity. We did learn that the flies are present year-round, but that some times of the year, like now, they are worse than others. Our trip back was pleasant, and we returned the car early. That was a relief to me since I was liable for the first \$1000 damage if I was in an accident involving another auto and the first \$4000 damage if I hit an animal or did other damage. Lots of people hit animals, mostly at night, I think. Lots of cars and trucks are equipped with huge guards on the front to protect against this kind of damage. Wonder if they really would work.

We had a couple more animal treats today. Just as we left Simpson Gap, early this morning a kangaroo bounced its way across the highway in front of us. It was medium sized and bounced very fast. Then as we were returning home, we saw a lizard on the road, likely a goanna, which was surely 2 feet in length. I swerved a bit and it finally got going and trotted off the road. Very interesting.

After returning to our room, we showered and went to the mall for a cappi and nice visit. We saw an Aboriginal woman with her husband, a white man, and their several children. This mixed marriage brought up all sorts of questions for us. When we returned to "the Lodge" Ann was working on the desk and we stopped to pay our bill. Then we began asking her questions about the Aboriginal situation here. She is a rehabilitation worker and has worked much with Aborigines. She feels that the situation is just a very difficult one, with two cultures so greatly different attempting to live together. She sees much violence and despair among Aboriginal peoples. This is nothing remarkable since it is obvious from just looking around. Alcoholism is the greatest cause of suffering and death. Much of the violence is domestic and some even self-inflicted. There is prejudice both ways. Some opportunities are extended only to Aborigines amounting to discrimination against white Australians. Many white Australians are openly prejudiced against Aborigines. Some Aborigines are offensive to whites and even use horrible methods to bait whites so as to rob and harm them. Thus, whites who even hit an Aborigine while driving a car will not stop for fear that this is a trap. We observe no communication between races except where there are whites who are expressly in the business of social welfare or something.

Ann says that no Aborigines work; they all live on social welfare. However, most Aborigines still speak their own languages as well as English. Most still go out country for ritual. Ritual is still widely practiced by most Aborigines even those who live here in the Alice fringes. The schools have both Aboriginal and white children, though some schools have only Aboriginal children. Ann didn't know much about whether the gap of prejudice is closing or not.

Last night, Emily and I read the little piece on Alice by Robyn Davidson in her book *Traveling Light*. It was fun to read this out loud experiencing the place she described. I enjoyed the piece very much and may use it in teaching. It includes an Aboriginal account of the Alcheringa [tjurunga] story of the Alice area. Still I have a little difficulty with Robyn D. She returns to Alice and criticizes how it has changed since she lived here over a decade ago. She sees it now as a tourist haven. Well, it is that, but I wonder how many have come here because of her book *Tracks*. This book was one of the main sources of information about the area that I had. She is criticizing something that she had a large part in creating.

Emily finished her first role of pictures on her new camera today. She got them developed this afternoon and they were beautiful. She is thrilled at having a nice camera and is doing a great job with it. She even got a picture of me in my Akubra hat that ain't too bad.

This evening we went Mexican again, the third time since we have been here. We love the food and decided to stock up before we arrive in Indonesia (which will be in just a bit over a week). We then went to Al Fresca's, the pasta place, for some yummy dessert. Then, as usual past the grocery store (Woolies, the Australian name for Woolworth's which here is a grocery store) for the usual supplies (it is closed tomorrow).

Tomorrow we'll hang out in Alice and read and rest up a bit. We pick up another car afternoon and then on Tuesday, we are off to Ayers Rock.

Not a bad day today, in fact a rather dandy one.

### **September 26, 1993**

A day of reading and reflection here in "the Alice." We slept in a bit this morning arising more like 8 and read through the morning. Last night I read a book about William Willshire. It was written by a guy defending Willshire against what he sees as false degradation of his character. Willshire is often described as an Aboriginal killer and in recent years this has been a bad thing. The book wasn't exactly scholarly, but it was interesting and offers me more info on this remarkable man. Interestingly this book attempts to look seriously at Willshire's novel, and to consider it as historical not fictional. Most interesting.

Then I read this morning W. E. H. Stanner's *After the Dreaming*. It is a series of 5 or so essays about the history of Australian Aboriginal policy and attitudes. Very interesting discussion of how Aborigines have been completely overlooked

throughout the history of Australia. The policy is more one of no policy than anything. It is insightful and important. Emily and I are reading aloud Robyn Davidson's *Traveling Light*. We are growing increasingly tired of her arrogance. She is above everybody and everything. Sad since her writing is rather interesting and her experiences are of value. I feel like writing her a letter.

The rest of today was leisure. We got our rental car about 1 p.m. then drove to the east side of the river to the casino and the posh hotels. We also saw a TV advertisement on Lasseter's (the casino) and it looked like Las Vegas with wealthy young people dancing in a fancy room with live band. What is ironic is that just across the street is the Todd River in whose sandy dry bottom live Aborigines. This city gets weirder every day. Another issue with which I have been struggling made itself known this afternoon. Emily and I were sitting on the grass near the Todd Mall reading Robyn D's book. Many Aboriginal people were around, some on the grass nearby and others, usually in groups, walking around the mall. I noticed quite a few men and women together where I didn't see this a few days ago. Some men were trying to get food from a vendor, and it seemed they were successful. At one point we looked up in response to a frail old man extending his dark black and rather greasy hand to us. I turned away, but he persisted. Finally, Emily shook his hand and I followed. He had a newspaper and was carrying a Sunday paper. He sat down on the grass next to us and began to visit. He asked us a favor, to give him \$1.30 for a cab so he could get home. I asked where he lived. He said a few miles (I'm sure he used the term "miles") out of town. I gave him the change in my pocket (perhaps \$.50) and he seemed disappointed, yet he pocketed the change. He asked us where we were from and when I told him the U. S. he said, "I thought you sounded like that, but that is a big country, where are you from in the U.S.?" We told him Colorado and he showed recognition. Then he asked us about our interest in football. I think the Grand Finals or something are being played this weekend, because TV sets are on wherever we go tuned to Aussie football. We told him we weren't much interested in football. He asked then about baseball. Then he left.

We felt rather strange after this meeting. This man, though dressed in rags and obviously living a traditional camp-based life, was educated and interested in engaging us in conversation more than to just get money from us. Still there are many Aborigines here who are openly offensive to others. It is a bit fearful to see them coming towards us. We want to be open and to get to know them, but there seems no arena for exchange. Then too it is impossible to tell from appearances which are approachable, and which are not. This is a sickening dilemma. One response functions from white guilt and fear. Another from curiosity. Another from genuine human interest and concern. When responding from white guilt, you feel a mixture of being manipulated by others who know they can play on your guilt or of manipulating yourself by feeling that while you

are trying to be open and benevolent you are also trying to say, “I’m not like all those other insensitive whites, yet doubtless we are.” This is very sad, and I don’t really know much what else to do. Just wish I had access to some people who are working with Aborigines so that I could go with them and be in more contact with actual humans.

Emily and I had a great conversation over a pasta dinner this evening. We talked about personal growth and I am seeing how much I am growing. On both of the last two days I have had moments of disappointment or of displacement from my agenda or possible misunderstandings with Emily. In every case I found myself being able to identify the issues to let myself have the feelings, to talk about them, and to then let them go. I think this is so important. I feel that I am able more all the time to relax, to be present, to see more fully what I am doing, and to avoid the difficulties that have led me in the past to behavior I’d rather not have practiced.

I am now in the middle of Janet T. Hospital’s *The Ivory Swing*. It is set in India and is a fine book. I am enjoying it.

One thing I have not experienced yet is the sky in the central desert. We must do that even if we have to risk taking the car out into the bush tomorrow night. I have heard so much about how the sky is out here. I must experience that.

There is a street on the very west edge of Alice named Tmara mara. I have seen it a couple of times and was interested in it because it is, I think, what the children in “Mad Max Beyond Thunder Dome” call the land they are to go to. I’ve thought that speech has been inspired by Aboriginal cultures. Today I found that Rex Batterbee, the white who taught Albert Narnitjira to paint named the street. That made sense since the street near Tmara mara is named Batterbee. It is the Arrernta word meaning “a good place to camp.” How nice. There is a street name Achilpa. In Arrernte this is Atyelpa (I have been writing it “tjilpa”). I am finding here that there are many preferred spellings for words I am using. I must try tomorrow to find someone who has done the language work and see if there is a current dictionary or something. Maybe the people at the Lutheran place. They are translating the bible into Arrernte and should know. Diane gave me the names of some of these guys.

I’ll call them and see if I can get an appointment tomorrow.

### **September 27, 1993**

Today was a casual day. I decided that I needed to know more about Arrernte language because I had seen even the name of the people spelled several different ways. Who better to talk with than the Lutheran people who have been translating scripture into Aboriginal languages for a century? I drove out to the Finke River Lutheran Mission headquarters on Gap Road here in Alice. Paul Albrecht is the main guy there and Gary Stoll served as a motor mechanic for years at Hermannsburg and is said to know more than anyone about Arrente

culture (maybe even the people themselves). These men were up north teaching a course on mission work, but Paul's wife Helen was in the office and I had a nice long chat with her, and I also purchased a basic grammar and some tapes from her. These will certainly be adequate to keep me accurate in the use of the language.

Then we drove out past Heavitree Gap south of Alice and found the old Police Station there. It was an unceremonious place with the grass grown up all around it. It looks like someone is living in the building. Clothes were on a line out back and a wreck of a car was parked in front. The building is very much on the order of those at the Telegraph Station. The first police station at Alice was at the Telegraph Station, but later (before the turn of the twentieth century) it was located in this building at Heavitree Gap. Willshire was the police officer in charge at both of these stations when they were established. It was good to see it and I took a couple pictures as well as one photo of an amazing red flower in the scrub near the house.

We then spent time reading and working. I'm trying to sort out the many texts for my book and figure how to compare them. This is tedious, but I made significant progress. I am also sorting down things I want to keep and preparing to ship a bunch of stuff back to Boulder on Friday morning before we leave Alice for Darwin.

A week from today and we are in Indonesia. Took our first Larium pill today.

Emily went for a walk this afternoon and found some used bookstores and an interesting coffee shop. She came back for me and we went out to look. Em found a new copy of Strehlow's *Journey to Horseshoe Bend* which I bought. I paid \$9.95 Australian for it. I saw the same book used at a collectors' store a few days ago for \$27.95 I believe. The coffee shop was a kick. It took about 13 seconds to see that it was a Lesbian hangout. That was fun. Those women looked very interesting and we found it curious to think about the history of gays in Alice. Emily found a local Lesbian newspaper which we took along to read. Seems they have a rather active community. We are enjoying just hanging around this little town. We are starting to feel that we are beginning to sense what is happening. Interestingly, last night I saw a stretch limousine (like a Mercedes) driving down the street. That seems a huge anomaly in Alice along with a zillion trucks that are equipped with animal bashing guards, high pipe air breathers, roll bars, short wave radios, racks for several spare tires, wenchers and huge jacks, and cans and cans hung all over for fuel and water.

This afternoon we also made our way into an industrial section of town to the old cemetery. It is not even on the map, but I read about it. There were probably 10 graves identified and several that weren't identified. It also seems likely that there were many graves all over the place that couldn't be identified. It looked to me that a flood or something had eroded much of the cemetery

away. The graves that remained were higher than the rest of the ground and some of the headstones clearly had been nearly buried at some past time. I recognized no names, but most (maybe all) were men. Most had died before age 35. The dates were mostly in the first decade of this century. A rough time for those guys.

We enjoyed Mexican food again this evening. We even ordered by saying “the usual please” and the lady (I think she owns the place) got it exactly right. We came home and worked through the sorting of our stuff in preparation for sending lots of stuff back to Boulder and for going to Ayers tomorrow and for going on to Darwin Friday. Seems we have been doing this kind of sorting with our stuff for months.

### **September 28, 1993**

The night chill has fallen over the desert at Yulara and a slight mist falls. We’ve had our dinner, vegetarian something or other, but with some good salads and bread. Thunder is powerful and the rain may soon be splashing over the desert. We had rain off and on as we drove here from Alice this morning. The desert was awesomely beautiful today. kilometer after kilometer of beauty. Flowers, trees, the great red earth. Four hundred forty kilometers and we saw but 3 or 4 gas stops. We stopped at one. There was one pump. There was an outbuilding that looked pretty bad that was for showers and toilets. They distinguished gender as “Sheela’s” and “Blokes”. An Aboriginal man standing nearby had about 1,000 flies on his back and, if I could have seen mine, I might have contested him. There was a lock on the gas pump. A boy, maybe about 10, came out with the key and in an Aussie accent so thick I could barely understand him, he asked if I wanted to fill the tank. There was no slab only a thick mire of dark red mud. What a huge country. Vastness and beauty. Incredible raw beauty.

The lightning is quite sharp, and I am feeling rather chilly. I may have to run for my Gore-Tex jacket. As we approached this afternoon (we ate peanut butter sandwiches in the car as we drove along), we stopped to take photos of the yellow carpet of flowers and the stunning green chandelier trees against the richly red earth. Then we saw it: Uluru or Ayers Rock. It was at a great distance. The sun shone upon it and the craggy character of its northeastern face shown, being cast in shadow. The Rock, as it is affectionately called by most here, could be seen through the trees in the distance. What a sight! We took many pictures here. It is now raining hard and I am freezing. Too late to go for my jacket without getting soaked. We’re sitting beside the pool at the Outback Pioneer Lodge where we have separate beds in dorms--all we could get. So surprising to experience so much rain and chill in the desert. We went straight to Uluru when we arrived here stopping along the road several times to look and to take pictures. We drove right up to the base and saw people climbing it. There is a chain to help pull yourself along. At least until you get up the steepest part. We chugged some water, ate some crackers (that is crispbreads), and headed out. Emily froze, of

fright, before we even got to the chain. After waiting a bit to see if she was going to overcome her fear, she decided to stay put and I went on. Once up the steep side it was a lovely walk a kilometer or so to the highest point on the rock. What fun. Exciting views and lots of people up there. I knew Emily would have to come sooner or later and I thought I might see her coming up as I was going down. Sure enough about 1/3 the way down the steep part she was coming along. There was fear in her eyes, but a strong sense of determination. I turned around and went back to the top with her. It was much more fun doing this together and by the time we got back down she was completely over her fear.

After we got down, we ate a banana and grabbed a bottle of water and started the 10 kilometer walk around the base of this rock. This is one huge single rock. The walk took us 2 1/2 or 3 hours, though we weren't keeping track of time. It was a great experience to me to circumambulate The Rock—we went clockwise—which seemed to me as much like a ritual honoring the rock and a humbling of myself as anything I have ever done. It was good to go sunwise for it took us first to the west of the rock and the afternoon light was marvelous. Many sights. We also saw 4 small (youngin's) frog-mouthed owls in a tree. Some of the area near the rock is protected for exclusive Aboriginal use. We did see some Aboriginal rock art paintings. They were the superimposition of many layers of designs. When we got back to the car, we noticed the moon rise slowing above The Rock as it was growing twilight. We started the 10 kilometers to Yulara (the resort village) to find our lodging. On the way we found dozens of cars in an area designated for watching the rock before and after sunset. We stopped and took in the sight. Uluru turns sort of bluish after sunset as twilight sets in. The moon now high in the sky accented this stone marvel. We saw every kind of person out there. Even one couple being served champagne from the hood of their white stretch limousine.

We found our digs and have been fed. The rain still comes, now lighter. I am still very chilly. Tomorrow we plan to be out there for sunrise (wonder if we'll go if it is cloudy?). Then we'll come back to fix ourselves breakfast, then go the 40 kilometers to The Olgas, which are supposed to be as spectacular as Uluru.

### **September 29, 1993**

Another magical day. What I am learning out here in this desert is that one must be attentive, patient, and appreciative. If one is, the desert yields its beauty, its power—just a wee little bit and, when it does, we gasp with the sheer presence of it, honored that it gave us a peep.

The day started almost before I went to bed last night. I found my bed, # 60, took a shower and spread my sheet and blanket. Many had retired already. It was quiet. That is, except for some guy whom I now refer to affectionately as Mr. Snore. This guy shook the walls. As I crawled into bed, I wondered whether I'd be able to sleep at all, but amazingly I fell right to sleep. But I awoke about 12:30

a.m. hoping it was almost time to get up. Mr. Snore was still at it. In my mind I could see his blankets and sheet rise with every roar, as in the cartoons. Once during the night, he got up, I suppose to pee. I was grateful hoping I could get to sleep before he returned and started snoring again. But no such luck. I had to deal with this horror all night.

We arose and met at the car at 5:45. Emily had had a much nicer night than I. We drove to Uluru for sunrise. Busloads of people, many Japanese, were out there lining the road. Many were being served breakfast from tables set out in front of these tour buses. Some were given little folding stools. Tough work watching the sun rise. It was rather cloudy, so we saw nothing special (except this gorgeous rock of course). We came back, had a peanut butter toast for breakfast and headed for the Olgas (Yara Tjuku). The sun shone beautifully on these rocks creating a spectacular sight. We stopped for pictures several times. Everything changes here with each succeeding moment and there is the feeling that each moment tops the last. We arrived at the Olgas about 9 a.m. and set out on the trail through the Valley of the Winds. This is a circuit walk that goes round one huge rock formation and in between two of them. Spectacular. We took about a couple hours on this great hike. After some lunch we went on another hike (there are only 2 at the Olgas). This one goes between the two tallest rocks to the point where they almost meet, Olga Gorge. The rock at the Olgas is composite made up of thousands, rather zillions, of round stones all glued together with other rock material. Ayers is one huge seamless rock. They are actually two totally different layers of stone. The difference is apparent. The Olgas are wonderful, but Uluru seems somehow more magical to me and especially after sunset, as I'll explain. We drove back to Yulara marveling at the flowers, trees, rocks, the red earth. Then, just ahead of us, trotted a dingo. This guy looked like a wreck, very unlike the beautiful creature we saw near Hermannsburg. This dog was mangy looking and scruffy. He crossed the road in front of us. We stopped and backed up. He turned back and crossed the road in front of us again, went to the roadside turned and just looked at us. We got his picture at this point. Wonderful experience.

When we got back to Yulara, we bought ice coffee in a container, our first, and found a sheltered place where we could see "the Rock" while we enjoyed reading our J. Hospital novels. This time was so restful and not only gave us time to read, but it gave me a deeper feel of the changing mood of the rock. Every moment it transforms.

Well before sunset we went out to see the sun set on the rock. It looked like it would be great, but a few clouds along the horizon blocked the sun. We watched a few minutes then started to leave. Just as we backed out, we saw a spectacular little rainbow color patch hanging in the sky to the north of the Rock. We leapt out of the car and photographed it. Another gift. We watched it until it



disappeared. In a state of awe, we started once again to leave. Just as we got past the area where you can best see the full rock (top to bottom) I noticed that the sun was peeking out from under the clouds on the horizon and I said, "Bet we messed up, we should have stayed." Emily said, "Let's go back. I Whipped the car about, and we raced the several kilometers back and flipped off the road at the first good place, jumped out of the car. The Rock was totally transformed; remarkably amazing. It had become a deep deep red in color. A remarkable sight. We took photos, but we were speechless. No words can describe this. No photos can capture it. But I'll always remember this as a precious gift and a magical moment. Once again, now almost reluctantly, we started back. Yet again, now the Olgas 40 kilometers to the west, were silhouetted by the setting sun. Huge boulders black against the setting sun. Too much for words.

We had a \$4 salad supper tonight—not great, but who cares. We got gas (petrol) in the car ready for its return midday tomorrow. We saw a dingo that came right into the lodge area snooping for food.

Emily read me her journal from last night. She was very upset with me then. It was because when we arrived here at this lodge, I got sort of quiet. She kept wanting to cheer me up. I kept saying I was fine. We dealt with this quickly before we went to bed, but it was very hard for her. She imagines I don't love her and much worse. As we talked about this a little today, I realized that I was quiet because I was savoring the experience and felt barraged by the people and the practical matters of eating and finding our place to stay. I wanted to journal write as a way of capturing my experience—or to provide myself with a trace of it so I wouldn't lose it completely [I'd like to write more about this notion of a trace related to journaling and photographing]. I didn't feel bad about what she had written in her journal even though some of it was very harsh, except for her statement that she thought I care only for my work. I suppose (well I know) this is a concern because I heard it for years from Judy. I think I am mostly over those problems yet here it is again. I feel we are able to work through these issues more completely and quickly each time.

Emily spoke, after our day, of the grandness of our experience making her feel melancholy with a sense of her own worthlessness. I have very deep feelings, but they are almost a lightening of my spirit—a kind of transcendence. It is just such a gift to be alive and to be a sentient being capable of reflection and self-awareness—to know that I know, to know that I feel. It helps me see that no matter how badly I screw up, how badly I fail, to Uluru it ain't shit. helps me lighten up when I think of how much I have to do, how little time I have. Really all the time I have is just now. Even Uluru and the Olgas change every moment. It makes me thrilled and remarkably thankful that in all the thousands of generations of human beings, it is only in my lifetime (and a bit longer) that anyone can visit so many diverse places all over the world. This means that I am

of a culture that is a completely new kind of being. As I sit here of writing, to my right are two young women speaking happily in Japanese and on my left are two young men, speaking earnestly in German. What a world this is, and I am not only part of it, I make my living appreciating its diversity of peoples.

It is also a gift to experience these things with Emily. She is so self-reflective, so appreciative, so eager to go for it, or to “give it a go” as the Aussie’s put it. Emily and I are presently sleeping apart but tonight is the last of that. She is so excited about photography. It is a joy to see her opening new ways of seeing, deeper and fuller. I see her growing so much every day. I feel very comfortable traveling with her and love her very much. She helps me to be me, to realize myself.

I have been thinking lots of family--this is where I tend to be melancholy--wishing they could share these experiences. My parents I think of often--wishing they had traveled more, had more confidence in themselves. Their lives could have been so much richer, but perhaps they were just being themselves; were living faithfully their storytrack. I think of Jenny and also of Judy, thinking they would both have enjoyed this country. Sometimes when I take photos of flowers, I think of how much Judy loves these things. These thoughts make me very sad. It is too bad we were not good for each other—it is too bad her life will be robbed of the opportunity for these experiences. But then I will remember that when we tried to have them together it mostly soured it for both of us. Quite sad. I feel this loss. Actually, quite deeply.

We learned today that the beautiful chandelier trees are desert oaks (not a true oak, but more of an evergreen). They have tiny thin needles and a very thick bark. Magical trees. I also learned that Mulga is the common desert shrub or small tree seen everywhere. The red flower I photographed at the Old police station at Heavitree Gap at Alice is called the desert pea.

There were ghost gums out among the Olgas. Made great photo opportunities. I also learned that their bark is a pink color or light purple. This cracks and peels away to reveal the stunning white layer beneath.

I am nearing the end of the J. Hospital novel, *The Ivory Swing*. Will finish it tomorrow, so we can mail it back.

Another spectacular and powerfully transcendent day. I am relaxing into travel. Just feel present. Happy to be here. Pretty much free of the past and of my Colorado life. All can do quite well without me. I am fine without it. I have some feelings about Indonesia. That may be a whole different level of travel experience. Coming very soon.

Oh--while we were reading at the Visitor’s Center a group of Aboriginals kept walking around the place. There were 4 men, one woman, one girl probably about 12 or 13, and a little girl maybe 3. They were trying to sell several craft items. It was clear they spoke little, if any, English. I’m impressed that they are

keeping their languages and that even the children seem not to have bought into European—Australian culture.

Perhaps soon to bed so we can try for another sunrise. We leave just after noon tomorrow. Learned today that Sydney will host the 2000 Olympics. Very nice.

Things I want to write about: auspicious; notion of lumping together sacred or special places (on order of collapsing all female figures together as Mother Earth); Rocks and their importance (as in Ayers Rock and Robertson Davies' novel); compare experience of Uluru with the reef; Yulara as a village (good and bad); wanting, but not being able to, see the stars while in the interior; photo taking as ritual; comparison of the experience of Uluru by Aborigines and by tourists (almost exactly opposites); the sense of capturing or taking the rock by climbing and photographing it; Japanese tourists (especially those that are guided through every moment); the difference between traveling on a tour and finding one's own way (especially the number of choices one must make).

### **September 30, 1993**

Sitting atop a wall at the Yulara visitor's center where I can see Uluru go through its changes of mood and character trying to ignore the flies. We went out again at sunrise. It was not as spectacular as the sunset last night, but it was beautiful. I could see Yara Tjuku in the distance just to the right of Uluru. The sky was nearly cloudless. There are many Japanese here on tour. Many in pairs, usually couples, sometimes two women. All are young; I'd say 18 to 25. Many of the couples dress alike: sweat suits or vests or sweaters—from head to toe. They take photos by the hundreds. The usual photo is a snap with a person or a couple in the foreground, but usually 20-30 feet from the camera and some tourist object in the background, The Rock. They exchange taking each other's pictures or even ask us to take their photos together. Most have just small automatic cameras, but lots also carry a tripod for these little things. Quite a few have mini camcorders. This morning and evening Rock ritual is very interesting. It seems to me it is a ritual well worth comparing with rituals of the Rock performed by the Aborigines. Almost every valence is reversed [more on this later I hope someday].

Emily and I had a serious conversation last night. She feels there is something not right about our relationship and she always wants to know if I love her and want to be with her. I told her I do have some reserve which is natural and necessary to my life situation—divorce, etc. She feels rebuffed by this despite the extent to which we are together and get along. I tried to be totally honest. Yet it is clear she needs more in this relationship than I can presently give. I love being with her, being her friend, but maybe there are things lacking from my point of view as well.

This morning, partly due to my finishing Janet T. Hospital's *The Ivory Swing*, I have been reassessing my act of leaving Judy. Juliet in the novel is married to an academic and he seems conservative and slow moving. They live in a small town. She feels stifled. They go to India. She feels more stifled yet chooses to try to work it out with him rather than leave--something of holding to tradition. Sticking with convention. Remaining within the law. What I have done is more like Yashota, the beautiful Indian woman. She defies convention for love and ends up broken and dead and disgraced. All suffer when one doesn't follow dharma. I have not followed dharma, though I did outwardly (only outwardly) for 28 years. Now I defy convention—I am a married man traveling with an unmarried woman 27 years my junior. For the most part I feel fulfilled, I feel myself. I feel alive. I am relieved of the pain and agony of dishonesty and of being divided and stifled. I am nagged by dharma--by memory--by the penetration in my thoughts of some of the nice things about Judy and about 28 years of marriage. While I contemplate starting a new relationship, even (almost unthinkably) a new family, I feel sadness at the loss of a life course I took and that somehow failed.

I also feel remorse at what I see sometimes as the most violent act in my life--which is leaving Judy--and doing it so suddenly and in flight. I can rationalize that my dishonesty with her, a dishonesty I couldn't even begin to understand until after I left her, was more hurtful than this effort at honesty, because we all suffered stifled, a heaviness, an awful unspoken agony. But does that mean I had to flee, I had to rob her of her future of her chance to see and do and experience the things I am now engaging? Perhaps, like last night's sunset, I left too early. I didn't have the patience to wait for the beautiful sunset.

I don't know. I am pretty much in agony at one of the most powerful places on earth. Perhaps this is fitting. Even now I pull away from Emily--needing space to think and feel outside of her demands on our relationship, on me.

She has many demands and is very good at expressing needs. She seems habitually restless, wanting always to pry, to get more.

I was angry with her this morning and told her I was. I told her she didn't give our relationship enough credit, or herself, or me for what is good. That maybe she is the one who is unhappy with this relationship and is reaching for me to provide her with rationalization. She denies this, but I don't know. I am not wanting to play games and I have felt very good about being with her, still I am frustrated with her constant need to have trauma and see failings.

Am I certain I am doing the right thing leaving Judy? When memory fails, no! Do I want long term relationship with Emily? Sometimes I imagine it. Sometimes I think I am kidding myself and her. Is it bad, as Emily thinks, that I am not certain, that I am not single minded? I don't think so. I've gone through so much. I've experienced so much personal change. All in such a brief time. It

is demanding way too much to expect clarity and single-mindedness and certainty. I need space and time to explore my feelings, to face my aloneness, to see my loss, to suffer my grief. Maybe I haven't given myself the chance to do these things yet. Though I want to be with Emily, my personal growth allows me to begin to feel the strength, and even the need, to be alone, to be myself, by myself.

Does this jeopardize this trip? I don't think so. It would only if I decided I'd made a mistake leaving Judy and I don't expect that. We were both dying and souring being together.

Does it require changes? I don't know. Things change rapidly. Maybe we can continue, but maybe we take the issues too lightly in doing so.

We'll have to talk. I'll have to demand myself brutal honesty. I am so bad at that. I am gutless. Why do I have so little faith in honesty and in myself? I must move past this.

## ***Darwin, September 30 – October 6***

**October 2, 1993**

Darwin, the top end. Finally, after a couple of days without being able to do journal we are now snug in a wonderful room in the Park Lodge, but this was only after suffering through a night in another pit. We left Alice Friday morning after packing and mailing two large boxes of stuff. Stripping down to the necessities before heading to Indonesia. The weight we sent back was about 14 kilos I think. That makes us much lighter. The flight up here was nice, and Emily got control of her anxiety better after having about lost it on the way from Ayers to Alice on Thursday.

We arrived here and immediately felt that Darwin is a rather raw place. We tried to get into the Park Lodge, but they didn't have an opening for Friday, but they did for Saturday and Sunday. So, we booked at backpackers' accommodations downtown. It was called the Transit Center. It literally was a bus station, but they also had rooms. Filthy and horrible. I won't write about that. We didn't know this yet when we went to get on queue for a taxi. While we were there a large group Aborigines were wanting a taxi. As each taxi arrived, they would attempt to get into the taxi and the driver would yell at them telling them it wasn't their turn. Most of these people had bandages somewhere on their bodies, head, face, somewhere. Everyone was pushing and shoving, and most were either totally withdrawn or rude.

As I have said the Transit Center was unspeakable and so we immediately called to get the Park Lodge for Saturday and Sunday nights. We then began to look at the booklets we always pick up in new places that tell where to go and what to do and provide helpful maps. We noticed that there were many advertisements for "pleasure places" sensual massages, 20, 000 XXX rated titles,

private video viewing rooms (couples welcome), etc. etc. There were several of these. After nervously stowing our stuff in our hole of a room, we took passports, money, air travel tickets, etc. and hit the street. Let's see Darwin. One of the first guys I saw wore a black tee shirt on which was the slogan, written large, "Nipple Nibbler." Great! We were accosted by Aborigines, growled at by a dog, spoken to curtly by several people and all this just got us to the American Express office to check on the mail we knew wouldn't be there.

Then we decided to walk around hoping to find a place to eat. That was a joke. We nearly lost it since neither of us had had too much to eat during the day. But we persevered and, remarkably, we discovered a nice little Italian place and got a vegetarian pizza, certainly one of the finest either of us has eaten in a long time. This is a good place to note that Aussies don't eat until late. We went to eat about 6 p.m. wanting to catch a movie to keep us from having to spend any time in our room. It started at 7:00 p.m. When we went into this restaurant, we were the only ones there. Just as we were about to leave, 10 before 7, two young women came in. We heard the hostess tell them they could eat if they were finished and away by 8 p.m. We then heard the waiter say to the hostess that there were no available tables after 8 p.m. We have noticed this elsewhere in Australia. We go eat about 6 or 7 and no one else is there yet. Our last night in Alice we returned for about the 5th time to Camel's Crossing the nice little Mexican place thinking we wouldn't have anything like that again until we are back to Boulder.

Last night we went to see Mel Gibson's directorial debut in "Man Without a Face." He also stars in it. It was a sweet movie that wasn't that bad at all. We saw the trailer for "Tina" that might not be bad. We were disappointed with the preview for "The Piano" in that it nearly tells the entire story and shows nearly every powerful image. We were totally happy that we didn't see it before we saw the movie.

This morning we had a leisurely breakfast of a banana muffin and coffee at a café called the Golden Oldies. It focuses on old American movie stars. I don't really get this either. It seems that Australians have this thing about America. They want to be like America. This is odd when there is such talent and such subject matter here. Even Mel Gibson's movie was set in New England, near Boston. Why? He is Australian. Why doesn't he do something Australian related. Jane Campion at least set "The Piano" in New Zealand.

During breakfast Emily and I had a long and important discussion about some of the things we are going through. While we had some difficulties just as we left Ayer's Rock, we have come out stronger. Through our discussion this morning I began to see that perhaps I am still working through my psychopathology. I find myself thinking of what pain I am causing Judy, what opportunities I have robbed her of, and I do this especially when I am having a

good time. I don't think that I wish she were with me or me with her, but I feel guilty. I forget that last summer I wanted to come to the Interior, and she did not. I forget all the difficulty and the dishonesty of that relationship. I feel guilty and regretful. This seems a part of my pathology in that I always feel responsible for others, I deny myself pleasure, I feel responsible for Judy's feelings and her life. I don't think I am. I have much to work through on this, yet, for the first time, I was able to tell Emily about this this morning and I think this will help lots. I feel better about it and that should help.

Yesterday in a book shop I discovered a whole bunch of dictionaries and language materials on Malay. I want to exert myself on this language in a major way while we are in Indonesia. I'll try to get some of these materials while we are there. Then I want to take whatever course at Naropa the people teaching I met from Indonesia that now living in Denver. Gamelan? Dance? [While at the time I wrote this I had no idea, I was referring to I Made Lasmawan, from Bali. He had a gamelan at CU that I played in for a couple years. I also went to Bali and stayed at his home village on two different times. He became a good friend.] I want to continue working with the language too. Beth Osnes knows the language and I can practice with her. This could be very exciting, and I feel it. [Beth knew a Malaysian language. What I think I was referring to was Bahasa Indonesia which is a very generalized language based in Malaysian languages that is used broadly as a lingua franca since there are hundreds of local languages in Indonesia. Then, rather true to my whole life, I had no faculty for learning language and didn't get far on that goal.]

Tomorrow, we plan to see the botanic gardens, hire bikes to ride up north for the sunset over the ocean and enjoy a leisure day. For the next day, we leave for Indonesia. A few days ago, I felt rather nervous. I still am, I guess, but now I feel very excited. We are trying to calculate our money so t we have only the \$40 exit tax when we arrive at the airport on Monday morning.

This afternoon we had a treat. Last night after the movie we walked farther away from the place we were staying. In about a block, we found a nice new performing arts center in a complex that had nice shops, restaurants, and a fancy hotel. At the performing arts center a group called "Circus Oz" was performing. They do sort of trapeze, clowning, theatre, dance, etc. It looked good and though we weren't wanting to go last night we thought we might try for today. They had tickets available and so we decided that we'd try to get back for the matinee today. We arrived about an hour before the 2 p.m. performance. We got tickets on the 4th row, though the place was nearly sold out. The show was terrific. Most of the audience were children, but that made it fun. It was full of good cornball Aussie humor and some sort of raw, goofy stuff. This is the sort of humor one associates with Barry Humphries and some of Jane Campion and is even in "Strictly Ballroom." The troupe had about 10 or 12 and most could do many

different kinds of physical things as well as play musical instruments. They reminded me of a very crude kind of “Air Jazz” [a popular group of buskers on the Boulder Mall]. It was very fun and is making our stay at Darwin already a time to fondly remember.

We didn’t schedule enough time for Kakadu to see crocs and all the other creepy crawly poisonous things here. I won’t miss them much, but Emily really wanted to see the crocs. They have a river boat cruise that features jumping crocodiles. They apparently toss out some meat and the crocs leap nearly out of the water to catch the meat. Nice. Wouldn’t want to eat a sandwich while rowing along in a boat. On the way to town, we got some food and ate in a park. Then we were approached by an Aboriginal man. We fended him off. He wanted bus money. He seemed a bit threatening and rude. But later at the bus stop he showed up again, apparently now with the money. He asked me if Emily was my daughter or my wife. I said she is my friend. He said, with a smile that he didn’t want to offend, but he was curious. He said some of us are old and ugly, that he was and didn’t even know where he was going. There was the friendly implication that I was old and ugly too. He said that others were young and attractive. That description fit only Emily. Anyway, we had a pleasant chat and he repeatedly apologized for any offense he might have caused. We felt terrible that the situation is so bad that one must fear and be closed to Aborigines. I don’t want to do that, but clearly there is a huge problem with alcohol and violence. One can’t discern from appearance who is friendly and who is a potential danger. This whole Australian Aboriginal situation is very sad.

We watched the local news this evening while we ate spaghetti we fixed for ourselves. We learned that the boat race run in the dry bed of Alice’s Todd River was cancelled for the first time today in its 37-year history because there was water in the riverbed. They just have bottomless boats that they stand in and run down the river. When we left yesterday there was water in the river, apparently from rains up stream. Guess they had more rain. We had regretted not being there for the race.

The Palm Lodge is about the nicest budget accommodation we have stayed in in Australia. Well, it clearly is. Our room is very nice and totally clean. We do have to walk down the hall to the bathroom, but it is as clean as our room. Many things are provided, and the kitchen is fully equipped. Towels and sheets are provided as well as coffee and tea. There is a pool and the proprietors, Grace and Gus, are friendly and completely helpful. Breakfast is also included. This is a great place at only \$38 per night. We paid \$30 for last night’s shit hole, and then we had to use our own towels and hire a sheet for \$2 and if they had included breakfast, I would have been afraid to eat it, but naturally they didn’t.

Our last day in Australia should be really special.



At some point I want to write about “Choices” and about men’s bathrooms in Australia. I’ll leave this note here hopefully to remind me when I have some time.

### **October 3, 1993**

Last night in Australia. We rented some bikes and road them up the coast several kilometers this evening for a very beautiful sunset. The bikes were rather clunky, and the derailleurs hardly worked, but they were a kick and an adventure to ride. At the eastern most point there is a Wallaby farm or something and lots of remains of a World War II military installment. Huge concrete long canon bunkers and heavy old concrete buildings. Darwin was attacked by Japan and heavily damaged and it seems they still feel nervous about all that even after 50 years. They have kept these ugly reminders of war and death. It gave me the creeps. We started our return and found a wonderful little place for some gelati. The flavor I chose was Baca, made of hazel nuts, delicious. We got, sort of by mistake into the edge of the botanic gardens on the way back, but we passed this by. Returning just at dark, we fixed spaghetti and had nice big bread rolls with it and now we are full and ready for our final evening.

Emily cut my hair this afternoon. She had never cut hair before and we both thought it might be a disaster before and during the operation. After an hour or so I still have a bit of hair left and it looks passable. It was really kind of funny, except for a few tense moments.

All morning I wrote letters and did some business to get the auto hire things worked out. In the midst of this Emily came to me for a discussion of trust. It was raised for her by the Mel Gibson film we saw. Gibson’s character was accused of child abuse. His new young friend demanded an answer of him, and Gibson told him that he would have to answer that himself based on what he knew of him. Earlier at a hearing Gibson had told officials that in teaching someone trust, you don’t check up on things on which you have placed your trust. She related this to our relationship and whether we can (she can) trust each other and ourselves. We had a great discussion. For her the issue arose when she realized that in fact Gibson could have been guilty of abuse at an earlier time. It is that possibility, and the certainty that no matter what one says or does, one can never know with absolute certainty about these kinds of things (and a whole lot more things in life), that makes trust even possible. We needn’t trust in things about which we are certain. In this respect trust shares something with gossip. The result of this was a wonderful discussion of the importance of trust and the processual nature of it in relationships. We discussed as part of this lots of films: “Trust,” “Proof,” “The Piano,” seems like there were others. We related this to psychotherapy, my play class, my Australia book, the role of trust in our relationship, etc. The discussion not only was, I think, very important to our continuing relationship, but it also had some importance to my own thinking,

personally and in terms of my research. Very nice. One thing I thought about that I need to think about. When I wrote about Ayer's Rock, I wrote in cursive because I couldn't get to my computer. There was a phrase at the end of one sentence that both when I read it out loud to Emily and when I transcribed it into the computer, it didn't make sense. It was something about sharing a "present" with the rock, that that is what I have in common with it. I think that I need to think through this more. I also want to think a lot about how the experience of Ayer's Rock and that area precipitated inspired or initiated. There is something really important in these things and want to try to come to terms with them.

Emily just pointed out to me how, in only 48 hours, this little city, that we first felt was sleazy and disgusting, has given us so many nice things: a great pizza dinner, a movie that has been important to us understanding each other and many other things and the discussion today that was motivated by the movie, a wonderful budget place to stay, a bike ride, a beautiful sunset, and several moments that we shared, and this doesn't even include the haircut.

Now that I have remembered some high points of Darwin, I want to remember some of the highlights of Australia.

Sydney: the opera house and the harbor bridge, Derek and Moni and the lunch with Moni's parents, The Phantom of the Opera, the concert at the Opera House.

The Blue Mountains: the three sisters, a walk through a rain forest, Australian King parrots, our first weird motel, the giant stairs.

Canberra: library and photocopies, The Piano, walking, the botanic garden, pasta, the old guys at the Macquarie, wide empty streets.

Cairns: our first backpacker's accommodation and a disgusting Chinese meal, leaving.

Mission Beach: The Great Barrier Reef, long beach walks, aerobics on the beach, a two—day long conflict that included Emily having a fit, passion fruit gelati, wonderful hours of work and writing on my Australia book.

Alice: Aboriginals, the Telegraph station, Hermannsburg, dingo, eagle, goanna, gaps, gaps, gaps, camels, four wheeling to Palm Valley and N'Dhala, ghost gum and the moon, the Anglican Lodge and Dave and Ann, Mexican food at Camel's Crossing and pasta at Al Fresca's, chocolate dessert, Akubra hats, weird Aboriginal art galleries, Emily with her new camera, and the camera store.

Ayers Rock; An experience of transcendence, The Rock, the red sunset after the rainbow sky, the climb, the circumambulation, the magic, the Olgas, the Valley of Winds hike, the ghost gums, the Dingoes, the relationship difficulties, the Japanese, the tour busses and sunrises, the Aboriginals the posh hotel.

Darwin: along with the things mentioned above: pleasure palaces, the worst and best lodging in Australia, injured offensive and misunderstood Aboriginals.

It has been quite a time. Favorite among my memories are Ayer's Rock and the response I have had to it. I think that experience will be telling me things for years, maybe the rest of my life. Second to this is the whole of the interior which had a similar kind of effect on me. Third was the Great Barrier Reef. Next has been the Sydney Opera House which stands as kind of a metaphor [perhaps I meant icon or symbol] for Sydney and also as a structure it soars and makes my spirit soar. Then the rest all comes as a rush. Ghost gum trees are very dear to me as are the desert oaks.

I think I have changed or at least I feel very different as a result of these five weeks experience. I feel present to every day and to every experience. I feel that I can tolerate and help to make positive things that are difficult and negative: like difficult moments in my relationship with Emily and like disgusting accommodations. I think I give up acting difficult more quickly. I know I withdraw less. I have little anxiety about travel and don't even look forward to going home, a feeling I have almost always felt all the time I have been away from home. I believe that I have deeply appreciated much of what I have experienced, and I believe that I have gone for all the experiences around. I think I have become more self-reflective and self-aware without becoming self-possessed or self-centered. I believe I have become more open to change, more accepting of difference and difficulty, less controlling, less need to be in control. I think I have gained more trust that Jenny, Corbin, Judy, my family, my students, can do very nicely without me. I think I am learning about love, true responsibility, self, and relationships. I believe that I learned lots that will be important in writing not only the Australia book, but in thinking through all the things in my life, both personal and professional. In fact, these things are more integrated than ever before. I am more myself and more integrated as a person than ever before. One of the most important ideas, and I think there have been many, that has come to me on this trip is that life has so many gifts to offer, and I think I am learning to accept these gifts with grace and gratitude. I am also learning the importance of journaling and photographing as ways of keeping traces (little threads that keep me connected) to profound experiences I have had. Experiences that are profound because I know that I will be able to draw upon them, be inspired and taught by them, for many years to come.

Emily just read her list of highlights to me and her personal reflections. This reminded me of things I want to include flies, kangaroos, rain on arriving at Alice, the flowering desert, Robyn Davidson as a disappointment, Janet Turner Hospital, the notion of "auspicious."

I also want to reflect a bit on Emily and her growth. She has become much more self-confident and independent, shown in her overcoming her fear of flying and her fear in climbing Ayers Rock. She is opening up to so many new thoughts, ways of thinking, ways of seeing. Her expansion of seeing is evident in things she

attends to such as birds, flowers, the landscape, people, issues. This is also evident in her new interest in photography. She asks important and difficult and often unanswerable questions of many things she sees; for example, related to Aborigines and their ways of life. She is constantly working on herself and forcing us to work on our relationship. She pushes and doesn't settle for easy answers. She is open to change and demands much of herself as friend, lover, companion. She is integrating all sorts of new experiences with her abiding interest in psychology. She has accepted the difficulties of travel and the things she has to compromise on or even give up on like working out and eating the most properly.

The things I miss most are: Jenny, Jenny, Jenny, Corbin, dance and working out, mountain bike rides, breakfast at The Walnut Cafe, time to read and write (but I've missed that for much longer than this trip), Boulder, fall weather, my house.

#### **October 4, 1993**

Still Darwin. Still Palm Lodge. We arose early this morning, said goodbye to toilet paper and drinkable tap water, called a cab and arrived at the airport only to learn that Garuda hadn't flown to Bali on Monday morning for months, as our ticket so prominently said. Though I had been attempting to reconfirm our flight since Friday, I couldn't get through to Garuda. I finally learned this morning that we were booked on their next flight, Wednesday. The main difference it made is the wasted cab fare to and from the airport, \$20, and the psychological processes of closing down our Australia sensibilities and engaging those for Indonesia.

Though I am disappointed, some interesting things came of this. When Emily learned there was no Bali flight, she came to me with a smile and said, "Guess what? We aren't going to Bali today." We had to do a bit of scrambling, but I didn't freak, nor did she. We fairly calmly assessed the situation and took the necessary action and reflected on what we did wrong and what the consequences were, and we reflected on how thankful we were that the consequences weren't worse, like the flight left yesterday or in a week.

We got back in the Palm Lodge and in a new room. We walked to town to get the last word on our new reservations and picked up some literature from Garuda Airlines on Indonesia. This was cause for concern and some depression. We saw adds for many luxury hotels in Ubud, the area we wanted to go to first. The prices were not horrible, but they were high. We don't want to go to a place loaded with tourists. It took us a while and a cup of cappuccino to settle ourselves that there remains much of Bali and certainly of Indonesia that will be more what we want.

Arriving back in our room I found myself thankful to have a couple of days to work, something I haven't had much of a chance to do for a while. Getting

out the materials for the conference Jack Neusner is hosting in February, think of what sort of piece I want to do on dance and religion. By late this afternoon I have a draft of 7 pages or so (perhaps a quarter or more) of the piece and plenty of good ideas on this.

Quite remarkably, as I am using Sandra Fraleigh's work on dance, Emily is reading Betty Cannon's work on psychotherapy. Both are based on Sartre's philosophy. Emily has his *Being and Nothingness* with her. I looked at it this evening and found that Fraleigh draws directly on his work. That is important to me in many respects. Anyway, I considered the screw up a misfortune, I 'd certainly prefer to be in Bali than here, but then I immediately saw it as a gift, a window of inactivity in which I can think seriously about the importance of dance in religion and culture which will be important not only in getting the article ready for Jack's conference, but for the way I want to see dance in Indonesia, Thailand, and Nepal.

There are also implications in the existential psychotherapy approach that Betty [Canon, Emily's teacher at Naropa and I'd done some therapy with her] describes in her book and my present psychological processes. Sartre described the self as agent, object and aim. Prereflective consciousness (Being In Itself) is the self as agent. The self as object (Being for Others?) is how we present ourselves to the world. The aim of consciousness is to create a self as value. The goal of psychotherapy is recognition of one's prereflective self as responsible freedom. . . . Betty writes, "The recognition that I was [in the events of my past] free leads to the understanding that I am free. . . . If I can really empathize with my past self at the choosing moment, then I can understand and appreciate my past self as a value-making process much better than if I take the more distant viewpoint of accessory reflection. . . . The fundamental direction of that change is movement toward the paradoxical realization that, though one must engage in the task of creating a self as value, one must never strive to be the self one has created--or to convince others to be the selves they have created or one would like them to create. Ultimately, the aim of psychotherapy is not building personality structure, but dissolving the illusion that consciousness or the psyche has structure and substance. The self as agent is free to create value." I don't really know why I have just copied these passages down here, but I want to begin to think of my present psychological processes more fully. In facing my past, I can see myself as a free agent in creating value. I chose to get married. I chose Judy. We chose to have children. I can see that I was free to make these choices and that in doing so I, as an agent, created value. But where does that help me in wrestling with my choice to leave Judy, to get a divorce? What relieves me of the feelings of guilt, the guilt associated with the very freedom I exercised, the guilt of forcing on Judy a life less rich than what she had married to me? This is the concern of freedom and responsibility. Was I being responsible in exercising this

freedom? In a way it is water under the bridge, for there is hardly any going back, nor really any real desire for that. Still, I am not a hard person (hey I am nothing but a process of exercising choices anyway) and I, in my present comprehension of myself, don't desire to hurt or harm. If by nature I can't be either good or bad, then I can make choices that are, from some perspective, more or less good. There is a kind of relativism here, which I can accept, but does this help me out much? From Judy's point of view what I did was bad, dishonest, and evil (I'm guessing). But the existential crisis has precipitated some self-actualization in her. Of course, I didn't do it for that reason, but one storytrack could run that way. I'd also guess she is not really open to this rationalization. From another point of view, I was seeking honesty. But what is honest in Sartre's perspective? Is this the key to "responsibility"? To be responsible is to be responsible to something or someone or some set of values (no matter how temporary). When I say I was trying to finally be true to myself, and if myself is but an agent, then I was trying perhaps only to be responsible. Clearly there are many things I don't understand and need to consider Betty's book more fully as well as Sartre. Usually, I can figure out this philosophical perspective more easily.

I think that I have been writing in this journal far too much from the perspective of "we," that is, Emily and me. It is fine to say that "we" went to the movie (for example), but it is not appropriate to say that "we" thought the movie was good. I should say that when we talked about the movie and we shared the opinion that it was good, or something like that. I think the thing that I am getting at is that I want to begin to be clearer, much clearer on my sense of myself, my feelings, my values, my doubts, my confusions. I want to begin to tell them like they are, to face them more as I become aware of them. For example, I have had some ambivalence today about my feelings toward Emily. I feel her to be intruding on some of my thinking and writing. She seems to need me physically and holds physical interaction more important than do I at the moment. I feel huge energy surrounding what I am thinking, what I am learning. This manifests in extensive energy around work: reading, writing, thinking, pondering. It is very difficult for me to have these processes interrupted by idle leisure or some other things. I, of course, realize that this may simply be old habit returning, an avoidance of commitments, a dodge for being honest to Emily about how I feel about her. So here I am. I am trying right now to be honest with myself and with Emily, brutally honest, yet I can't even get to the base of my feelings or to even sort out those values that seem more honest than some others. There are no final values, nothing from outside by which to measure them. But what is the basis for choice? Internal coherence at the moment? A feeling of honesty, knowing that feelings often deceive? I am kind of lost here. It seems that the Hindu approach is to base choice on tradition, dharma. To break dharma is to make all suffer as in Hospital's *The Ivory Swing*, but I am not Hindu. I don't have a

community that has defined these values for me. I live in a pluralistic world. I live with the belief that this life is the only one I have and that nothing is more sinful than the waste of life, the failure to seize the day. These value choices are fundamental to the process I am on in the comprehension of myself at this time. My choice to leave Judy is responsible in these terms. Still, what of the elimination of freedoms to her? Am I not responsible? Might I have stayed with her and chosen ways in which we might both have enjoyed greater freedom, though mine would have been significantly compromised? What of my loss of love for her? What of my dishonesty to the relationship? What of the dishonesty that this portrayed to Jenny and Corbin? What of the alteration, and stifling, of my relationship with Jenny? Did I make the decision for the greater good, for the good of the many at the expense of the one? I don't think so. I didn't knowingly sacrifice Judy for others. It is certainly wrong thinking to consider that I even have such power. I did it at the time for selfish reasons. I was divided in myself and suffering greatly under the stress of this division. I was dishonest to myself and to others (I allowed Judy and others to act as if I loved her and felt fulfilled in my marriage when I often did not feel this way). I left for myself. It was like the woman's choice for life in "The Piano"; like Mel Gibson's choice for life in "The Man Without a Face." It was a choice for life as opposed to a kind of living death. Interestingly here I am equating life, with the engagement of an open process, a process of struggle, a process of accepting difficult contingencies, a choice of not always knowing what is happening, a life with less expectation, less structure. I see death as determination, predictability, structure, dependability, being as presence, as suppression of self for the expectations and values of others. Perhaps I had the right to this choice on the grounds that everyone has the right and responsibility to choose life over death. But to be a hard ass for a moment, did I have that right when it meant such pain and unsettlement for Judy? I cannot say that her choice to remain in the marriage was one of choice for death as opposed to life. I cannot say that she was somehow wrong in her staying in it and wanting to stay in it.

Enough of that. I am disappointed at not going on to Bali, though at some level relieved. The respite from the fear of going to new places and facing new challenges. I'll enjoy tomorrow to write, read, think, and accomplish. Perhaps the mail from Colorado will catch up with me. I certainly feel vitalized, even as I feel that I am presently causing Emily some displeasure with me. That perhaps needs to be addressed. I should say rather I must address that with her. I am an agent of choice.

**October 5, 1993**

I 'm thinking now about creativity and exploration. I have had a couple of wonderful days writing and thinking. I believe that there is so much to be said about dance in the study of culture. I can hardly wait to get to Indonesia to

experience dance. I hope that I will be able to find some dance every day. Emily and I have continued to have some difficulties. She doesn't feel herself and I tend to feel annoyed. Anyway, we have had another talk and I feel okay for now.

Choices: how do we make choices. As we walk along a beach our eyes dart back and forth in front of us. Every shell fragment is caught by our eyes and in the mind some amazing drama must play itself out in nanoseconds. There must be grids, images, patterns by the millions that the retinal image is mapped against. Is it a shell, a whole shell, a shell of unusual shape or color or size? This goes on constantly, as we visit with a friend, scan the sea and the edge of the beach for other things of interest. Now and then a closer examination is demanded. Why? What is there that forces our bodies, involuntarily it would seem, to lean over and pick something up--a shell, a piece of coral, a stone? There is something in this mental, almost unconscious, process that sets off neurological responses that transcend the limits of this process. Our muscles respond and the image is drawn closer. The hand raises the object closer to the eye, turns it over, scans its full dimensionality. Again, the mental drama of choice continues. It is often protracted, lasting a second or more, centuries it would seem relative to the scale of the normal process. Sometimes the mere flip of the object terminates it. Opps! a hole. Toss it away. Yuck! the thing is still occupied by a slimy thing. But now and again an object passes tests failed by millions and millions of candidates and that object winds up in our pocket, quickly forgotten, as we begin the scanning all over again.

My question is why do we pocket some objects while we reject so many others? It might first seem as though we are looking for the unusual. That may be one criterion. Have never seen one like that before; better keep it. Have seen lots of blue ones, but never a green one; better keep it. But often what we select is that it is completely usual. If it is a cowrie shell, it is the quintessential cowrie shell. It is exactly what a cowrie shell should be. If it is broken or fragmented, we don't want it. It is only when it is whole that we do. But then these two criteria can be joined. If the beach full of whole cowrie shells, we'll not pick any up. Nothing unusual in that. We'll look for a cowrie of an unusual color, or better than that, we'll look for another kind of shell entirely. That must mean that our criteria adjust themselves based on the conditions. Still, isn't it fundamental that we want what is uncommon, difficult to find? If this is so, then perhaps the metacriteria is that our mind chooses the criteria that will keep this choice drama most active. If there are thousands of perfect cowrie shells, the mind can be idle. Anything can be selected. If every object is different, any object is unusual. Any object can be selected. The mind seems to choose the criteria that will force it to imagine what is possible but is highly marginal and set itself at the task of screening all candidates against these criteria.



Travel can be done in many ways. One way is to make a single choice, or several limited choices before traveling that will eliminate most other choices. This is to choose a tour and select the options of the tour. Once having made the basic choices all the rest is left to the package. You are picked up and taken to the airport, met at the plane, taken to the hotel, picked up for a bus trip to a sight, meet and told what you are seeing, etc. The only choices may be regarding food from the menu (though even this is often not possible) or what time to go to bed (though even this has little variable). Leisure times are often built into these tours, but suggestions are often made about where to go and what to buy.

I have been traveling without a tour. Though I have a schedule of air travel, everything else involves making choices. This requires procuring information on which to make choices. This information is almost always incomplete and often gained on the spur of the moment or from random sources. Not only food, but where to eat, how much to spend, what nutritional value and quality will be the food, etc. Simply finding nutrition for a single meal may require more choices than are made by someone during an entire tour selected ahead. The process can be, and often is, exhausting. Sometimes I also feel that I don't get to see as much as if I were on a planned tour. Tours have guides who have learned a spiel or who have studied something of the place or thing. But then when I know something of what I am seeing, I know that often tours concoct experiences for tourists so that they will think they have seen something authentic, while it is not. So, I must settle with the exhausting process of making thousands of choices on too little information engaging criteria that I can't articulate and then try to optimize whatever experiences I have. It is in light of the existential nature of these choices that I have come to appreciate what I have come to call "the gift". The gift is when one sees a dingo crossing the road, the sun casting light on Uluru in a spectacular way, an eagle spiraling in the air, the rain, the flowers brought to life by the rain. These are not events chosen to be seen. They are the gifts of the process of being out there. They leap out of that constant choice drama and demand not only physical response, but a spiritual one as well. Why spiritual? What am I meaning by this word I never use? I mean that these experiences are ones of me surpassing myself. They give me the opportunity to be surprised, to expand, to open myself, to gasp at the beauty or power of another thing, to be bemused, to contemplate my place in the scheme of things or the absence of a scheme. Of course, these things can come to one on a tour, but I suspect that those on tour become rather conditioned to see only what is pointed to, to hear only what the guide says, to look only in the recommended direction. And busses don't stop for dingoes.

## *Chapter Two*

### **Bali**

#### ***Ubud, October 6 – November 6***

**October 7, 1993**

Coconut palms sway in the breeze beyond the rich green rice paddies that border the little lawn of our bungalow. This morning we wandered the market and watched as women bargain with each other over fish, fowl, and vegetable. The smells were pungent and sometimes overpowering, rich in every respect, some inviting, others repulsive. The sounds are constant yet not loud, cocks crowing, the wind in the trees, an occasional moo from a cow, and an almost constant beep beep of auto or motorcycle horns.

Following Steve Sinclair's directions [Steve was a student of mine who had spent time in Bali and had given me his recommendations], we came to Ubud and looked for Londo's bungalows. The trip here was exciting and adventuresome. We paid 34,000 rupiah (less than \$17) for a cab from the airport. I know better prices can be found but it took about an hour and a half. What an introduction to Asia that ride was. Village after village was transited, all run together, of course, in one huge metropolitan mass. All streets are narrow barely enough room for two small cars, but these streets are negotiated by a tremendous volume of cars, trucks, bicycles, scooters, motorcycles, push carts, and pedestrians. The driving is on the left, but that seems to be a thing one pays attention to only occasionally. Lots of the motorcyclists and scooter riders wear helmets, but none of the bikers. Women often ride on the backs of motorbikes side saddle when they wear skirts. Though every driver is constantly beeping, it seems not to be a signal that causes offense. More like a friendly warning to keep

out of the way. Our cab driver suggested a stop as we went through Mas, a village specializing in wood carving. Seems each village along this route specializes one or another craft. Mas specializes in wood carving. The driver stopped at a place where wood is carved and we got out, received an introduction to woods and carving styles and were shown through the merchandise. Hundreds of beautifully carved pieces. We asked the price on some, but not yet ready to bargain and certainly not ready to add to our luggage, we simply moved on.

Though our driver seemed to take us all over the place and couldn't quite grasp where we wanted to go, we continued on. As we approached Ubud, we began to see that people along the road would sometimes see us in the car and call out to see if we weren't interested in something they had for sale. Rooms, crafts, whatever. Eventually I began to see that we were very close to where we should be according to Steve's map and fearing I would never get the driver to really leave us where we wanted to be, I said that he could let us out. As the cab disappeared and we began to collect ourselves, a woman was getting out of the car just to the side of the road. I asked her directions and it turned out that the stairs we were supposed to climb were just in front of her car. Up this huge set of stairs we trudged, and at the top saw a small little sign, almost faded beyond legibility pointing to "Londo's". The direction pointed was along a muddy path with a ditch on one side and a shrub on another. In a few meters we found some men and called out "Londo?" They pointed us on. We soon found a man in white shorts and shirt who was Londo and he began to help us think through accommodations. In less than 15 minutes we were snug in a bungalow. This one is nice; we will move to a nicer one in a couple of days. We are paying 20,000 rupiah (our budget was set at 16,000, but perhaps we can make this up later on, though we're talking here less than \$2). Londo introduced us to his niece, perhaps 18, who soon came with tea and bananas as a treat for us. Delicious. The bungalow has a large open room on the front that has a tile floor and no walls. This is sort of equivalent to a living room. It has bamboo furnishings, a divan, a chair, a table, and a chaise lounge. Very nice, very clean. It is a step up to this room and one takes one's shoes off before stepping up in it. Inside is immediately the bedroom equipped with two beds, at least one of which isn't very comfortable. The back room is the bath. There is a flush toilet, which is more than I expected, a square tub (about 3 feet square) for bathing, and a shower on the wall by the toilet. There is no shower enclosure. One just stands in the middle of the bathroom and showers away. Showering feels great, through the water is but one temperature, yet it isn't long before I feel hot and sticky again. Just the nature of the place, I think. The roof has bamboo supports and is thatched. This is the most common roof and looks beautiful and I am sure must be excellent. The craftsmanship on everything here is quite amazing. So many people seen working, but the work seems so small scale. Two men might be doing a little

concrete work on some tiles. They have only a basket, a trowel, etc. It seems that most things are done by hand with infinite patience, great skill, and taking however much time it takes. These roofs are evidence of that as are the walls and ceiling which are woven panels. Seems that everything can be made of local materials: banana leaves, bamboo, and whatever grasses or leaves are around.

Every morning, at all the homes, shops, everywhere, offerings are made and placed. These are usually little shallow boxes (*peti*) made of banana leaves. These trays are about 3- or 4-inches square and a half inch deep. In these are placed flowers, leaves, rice, etc. and placed on a post, in a doorway, on a shelf, anywhere—often with a stick of incense burning across the top. Other offerings are made of flowers perhaps three tied to a bamboo shoot and stuck upright into an offering basket. Lining the streets at about the interval of streetlights are huge bamboo poles that are decorated with woven leaves. These poles arch up over at the top and hanging from the tips by strings are whirling gizmos, all quite beautiful. Usually at the base of these poles is a little niche made of these same materials into which offerings are placed. All these offerings, to my present knowledge, are for the purpose of propitiating the bad or malevolent spiritual forces. This is taken very seriously by everyone because these offerings are done by everyone. Dogs roam the streets and help themselves to the edible portions of the offerings.

Temples are everywhere. One huge one is in Ubud and there are dances there rather often. We'll probably go to one this evening. Cost is 5,000 rp. The temples are Bali-Hindu. To go in them one must be properly dressed. We, of course, didn't come with proper dress, but we went this morning to rectify that. The shops were just opening. At one shop a woman rushed out to drag us in her shop. She was a powerful saleswoman. We left with two saris (both men and women wear them to the temples), a long-sleeved blouse for Emily (also required), and sashes for both of us. I learned how to tie my sari (I think) in the men's style. We also got a little experience bargaining. These things cost us 30,000 rp. Later Em bought a dress there for 25,000 rp. Perhaps we got ripped off, but we had fun bargaining and the lady was irresistible, and it seems that the prices are still very good (we still remember Bali Boutique in Boulder). Anyway, we are ready for entering temples.

When we got back to our bungalow around noon, a young man came with forms for us to fill out (registration I guess) and told us that we had missed breakfast. We had a horrible time finding something to eat in Ubud this morning, so we were pleasantly surprised. We had more or less given lunch up for a good dinner this evening, as we had last evening. This young man told us he would still fix us breakfast and he did. It was delicious fruit plate with an egg toasted inside of bread. Seemed like one of those electric sandwich makers like Jenny has. Anyway, it was delicious and provided us with a fine lunch.

Last night we began our first efforts at making sure our water is safe. We have an iodine treatment process we are using. The water this morning tastes a bit like iodine, but it isn't too bad, and it should keep us from getting sick. Last night we ate chicken satay. Good meal.

During our trip through Ubud this morning, I think I went into sensory overload so many people, things to see, choices to make, vehicles to dodge, I just felt overwhelmed. Finally, we stopped in a cafe and had some granola and yogurt and I got hold of myself a bit. This culture is remarkable, and I just can't quite make my senses and brain and feelings work fast enough to take it in. I told Emily that being from Kansas I have little experience in all this sensual richness and that all my training is to make a great deal of a few small things. This just blows my circuits..

One remarkable thing that I have forgotten to mention is that I have felt like speaking only in hushed tones since I have arrived here. Somehow, the place demands it. Emily has done the same yet neither of us has mentioned this to the other. It seems a place where one must be still and quiet in oneself.

Learned that Walter Spies lived in a house near the suspension bridge below our bungalow. It was Spies--along with Jane Belo, Margaret Mead, and Gregory Bateson--who set the world on end with their reports from Bali in the 1930s. I am sure they would die (of course, they are already dead) if they saw this area now, but still not all that many people come here and see these things.

Most here speak at least some English. Though I want to learn Malay, the people here speak enough English that my attempts to use a few words that I know are seen as humorous. Still, I'd like to continue with the language study and see what happens. It is sometimes difficult here to know what is fair and who are friendly. We heard many reports in Australia about people in Bali knowing how to rip people off. Perhaps we are paying too much for some things, but it is difficult to know what is fair. For example, we saw a woman this morning making quilts of batik. They were huge and clearly took a great many hours to make. She began her pricing at 50,000 rp. (\$25) saying that she needed the money badly and had to give us a great price. She came down to 45,000 and said that if we bought two, she'd come down more. They were beautiful, though we didn't know anything of the quality. Finally, we went away, though Emily wanted to buy one or two. At the store next to hers a woman came out and showed us her quilts. These were bigger (like for king bed) and she eagerly told us of the high quality of the batik and that her pieces were much lower (which they were) and when asked her price she started at 50,000 rp. It is so difficult to know, but maybe when one can buy a quilt the size of a king bed for \$20 it doesn't much matter. They were lovely. We are trying to be patient however (not altogether successfully), because we have 2 months in Indonesia and this is surely the most

expensive and tourist-oriented place in Indonesia (except for Kuta Beach, where the Indonesians must have a field day with the Aussies).

It is really quite warm here. It isn't unbearably hot, but the sun burns down, and the humidity is high. I feel sweaty and sticky most of the time. It did cool off at night, but my sleep was still a bit fitful, because of being uncomfortable. Think we'll rest for a while this afternoon then go back to Ubud, find a place to eat and arrange to see a dance this evening. Though I know these dances are for tourists and that the tourists take flash pictures and videotape them, I am prepared to see them even in this commercial form.

After figuring out the shower and bathing arrangements and resting a bit, we departed for Ubud.

### **October 8, 1993**

Auspicious day as it seems so many are, but I best go back to finish up yesterday.

In the evening we returned to the Ubud Palace, built by the King of Ubud in the 16th century, and the location for the dances. We ate dinner at Ibu Putu's. (means Mother Putu's) which is a little house at the top of the stairs down the way from us. I had Gado Gado, which was a vegetable and peanut sauce dish with what I have now learned includes crickets. Hmm. I liked those crunchy things, not knowing what they were. The food was delicious and cost us 4,000 rupiah (less than \$2). But the more interesting thing is that a young woman (probably in her 30s) was doing her daily round of offerings in the house compound next to the little porch nook that served as the restaurant. She began with a tray of dozens of little offerings. Each contained flowers, rice and leaves. She began by pouring a small jar of holy water from the large jar that rested beside the main family altar in the corner of the courtyard. Then she lighted a huge bundle of incense sticks. Prior to this I saw her go from altar to altars all around the house removing the previous offerings. So far as I know these are simply discarded for one sees them everywhere. She began with the main altar. It is the highest and located at the most kelod (mountainward) place on the property. It is also the highest altar on the property. She stepped up on something to reach it and placed several of the tray offerings on this altar and placed several sticks of incense sticking out from the edge. Then with some small green leaves held between the fingers of her first two fingers of her right hand she sprinkled holy water toward the altar shrine. She was composed in a respectful and devotional decorum, but she was not praying. She did this water sprinkling three times. Then she went to another shrine and made another offering. In the midst of this she did not fail to do other things like deliver our food to us and visit with her daughter and mother. At one point she went downstairs to the side of the courtyard and as in the courtyard carried the tray of offerings on her head (a most amazing thing in itself that seems to be the way Balinese women carry

everything). The whole offering process took half an hour or so and doubtless she had spent a very long time preparing the several dozen offerings.

After eating we walked to Ubud Palace and saw the Gabor dance. This was preceded by solo dances. I just cannot even begin to describe these dances. The costuming was gorgeous. The gamelan music was magical. The dances spectacular. These are dances done for tourists and are shortened in form, but they are very powerful and clearly done with great skill and talent. I like the women's dancing best because it seems to me to require more skill and has a great deal more movement. Much is done with body attitude and with arms, hands, and especially fingers. The head and eyes play large part as well. It is remarkable how widely they can open their eyes and seemingly never blink. The gamelan is certainly magical: about 20 men hammering away at 8 or 10 different instruments making the most remarkable sounding music. Nothing even close to it anywhere in the world that I know. Tonight, we returned, though we got a bit mixed up on time and were late. It was the Barong. Tomorrow night is the Legong (which I am especially looking forward to).

We had planned to hang out this morning and read some of the books we have bought on Bali and to walk to Penestanan a village close by and on to the river. We had a lovely breakfast of fresh fruit and a banana wrapped in thin sweet pancakes. Very yummy. We had hardly finished breakfast when we were visited by a young Balinese woman named Budi Komang who knows the man we are renting our house from. She does beadwork and silverwork. She wanted to show us. We accepted her offer and she laid her beadwork out and then the silver. Both were lovely and we visited and looked for a long time. Emily wound up buying a bracelet, two rings, and earrings (for \$45) and I bought 2 rings for Jenny (\$9 I think). They are very nice with silver and Balinese Gold. While she was showing us an older woman (I couldn't guess her age, but I'd imagine well in her sixties, maybe much older) showed up. She is a teacher of Legong. She didn't speak much English, but she wanted to teach Emily Legong. Being interested in dance I encouraged Emily to do this, and we arranged for her to return at noon. 10,000 ru.an hour lesson. Before she got back, we heard from Nyoman Santea, the cousin of Budi, and was a silversmith and rented cars etc. Emily almost bought from him too, the last minute resisted. This is very hard, because you want to help these people and you know that in the US these same items would be worth so much more. The dance lady, Sang Ayo (Sang Ayo Betut Moklen), returned and I took a few photos of her teaching Emily. I wished she spoke more English so that I could have asked her much more about Balinese Dance.

After all these people left, we collected ourselves and went back to Ibu Putu's for lunch (more crickets) and bought flip-flop sandals for \$1.25 and then took a walk over to Penestanan. This turns out to be a huge village that specializes in painting and in beadwork. The village is very attractive and in basket cages we

saw dozens of cocks (men's great passion is raising fighting cocks). They keep them in these bell jar shaped cages all the time. We got back and I began to read a bit and Emily, overcome by the heat and feeling a bit under the weather from lunch (she didn't have crickets) lay down for a nap. I had asked Nyoman about the location of Supiarta (Yuni's brother-in-law) and found that what I thought was his village was not where he lives, but it is a village high in the mountains. I couldn't figure that out and I got out Steve's note to me, because he had given me I Wayan Nama's address. Nama is the young man that Steve befriended a couple of years ago. I couldn't figure out that address either. I remembered a travel place on the road to Penestanan and I told Em that while she rested, I was going to walk over there and at least see if they could help me figure out the addresses. I was beginning to think that we need to get on to figure out more what we are doing here. I walked down the path to the road and on down that to this travel place. I walked in and asked them if they could help me. There were two guys there. They knew immediately of Mambal (Nama's village) and noticed the name at the top of the note. They asked me if I was looking for that man. I said yes. Then one of these guys seemed to look away. I couldn't figure out what he was up to. I tried showing the address to the man remaining who was paying attention. I noticed that the other one was asking another person to come in to help. I thought maybe it was someone who knew the area better or knows English better. When he came in, they said to me, "This is Nama." I said, "You are Nama?" He looked at me quizzically. "Are you the Nama that knows Steve Sinclair?" His face lighted up and said, "Oh yes. Steve is like a brother to me." I told him that we were here, and he immediately asked where we were staying and said he'd go back to my house with me, and we'd talk about what we wanted to do. He immediately said, "Now that you have me you have no worries. I'll take you anywhere you want to go and tell you about anything you are interested in." We talked for quite a while and even when I asked him what he would charge, he said it is up to us. Steve had told me that he refused to take anything from him. We'll benefit so much. We'll rent a car (\$15 a day) and he'll drive and take us anywhere. He is a very nice man and full of good will.

We went back to the travel place which is part of the Bali Restaurant for dinner this evening. Delicious food for just 6,500 rupiah. We ate today lunch and dinner for \$4.50 between us. Then had a dessert after the dance tonight for another \$1.50. We were worried yesterday that we couldn't keep in a food budget of \$10 per day.

We also saw Londo during lunch and he took Emily to show her the other house. We will move up there tomorrow. It has two levels and is huge. It overlooks rice patties and looks just great. Nama will also come tomorrow and take us for a walk around Ubud. Over to the river and whatever. I am certainly stunned by everything. So much. So ornate. So friendly. So rich. Everything and



everyone is beyond belief. There is much here to enrich one's life. I must be very attentive and be more than a looker or a seeker. I must honor and respect these cultures and these peoples, and I must allow myself to respond with heart, mind, and spirit. I'll be the better person for it.

I miss Jenny and Corbin. Wish they could be here to experience some of this. It would be just wonderful to send one or the other here and place them in Nama's hands for a couple of weeks. Well someday perhaps.

This is a far briefer description and comment on my day than I'd like, but it is getting late, and I need to get to bed. I'd really like to write some letters and post cards. Wonder when I'll get a chance to do that.

### **October 9, 1993**

Nama (I Wayan Nama) came to our bungalow at 9 this morning and helped us move to Londo's two story bungalow. It is huge with enough room for many people. On the first floor there is a wonderful bathroom and a room with a double bed. On the second floor are two beds a wardrobe and a double bed and a futon. This is a magical level with cross ventilation and views that are stunning. After we had tea with Nama and got signed in with Londo, we started out.

Nama arranged with his friend to rent his car tomorrow for 30,000 rupiah plus petrol and then took us to his friend's house in Sayan. This man I Wayan Kedewatan is a young man but is head of his village. He graciously accepted us into his house into a very lovely room. He spoke little English, but he was interested in talking with us. I had a million questions about Bali-Hindu. Shortly after we sat down, he asked us if we wanted coffee and we accepted. He got it and it had liquor in it (which Emily didn't realize until later, kind of funny). He also served biscuits (or crackers). Nama told us that Wayan was busy now preparing for a big family ceremonial that would take place early in November and we could attend if we wanted to. We talked for a long time about Bali-Hindu and Bali Aga (the old Bali). He asked if we wanted to see the preparations for the ceremony. We accepted and he took us to the back of his house compound (comprised of many buildings) and there were dozens of people doing all kinds of work. They were in groups in temporary enclosures all over the place. What I am learning is that Balinese spend tremendous amounts of time on ceremonial activities. Much of this is painstaking work. Intricate decorations that are placed in a temple and may never even be seen by anyone and either weather away or are taken down and thrown in the garbage heaps. Mats were being woven, food prepared, building was taking place, I don't know what all, but there were people everywhere. They all looked our way and smiled and greeted us. Wayan took us to his house compound temple and there explained each of the shrines. It seems that most of them represent a temple somewhere on the island and having this representation invites the god associated with that place to be present in the

family temple. But the gods are never seen so no one knows when they might be present.

There must have been a dozen or more of these temple shrines. Some were decorated with cloth in preparation for the upcoming family ceremony. I haven't learned yet what that ceremony is, but it seems like a marvelous opportunity for me to have access to this religious event. Before we left, we were asked again if we wanted coffee and we accepted again. This time the coffee was boiled coffee in a glass (covered) and a tray of goodies. One kind of goodie is a ball of rice wrapped in a kind of blade of grass round and round tied at the top in a wonderful shape. The rice has something sweet in it and also coconut and other things that I didn't know. This was delicious and very nice to look at. All the old men and women sat around and watched us eat to see what our reactions would be. They seemed most approving that we even accepted the food and especially happy that we liked it.

We left there and Nama took us on a wonderful walk across and along the Sayan River. The Dutch constructed the dam and canal system when they ruled Bali early this century. This was an amazing thing. Then, after walking along rice fields, we came to another part of the river. There were people bathing (washing themselves) in the river. Cows and chickens were in small fences. A woman was sitting in waist deep water with a huge basket on her head. She had a big bowl. She leaned in the water, scooped up a bowl of lava sand washed down from the mountain and placed it in the basket on her head. When she filled the basket (and it was huge) she stood up and carried the basket up on the bank and dumped out the sand. Over and over. We walked across a suspension bridge over the river that had a few wires to support the whole thing and it was just several bamboo pieces laid together. We could then see that other women were loading buckets full of sand and placing them on a pulley system that drew the bucket up to the top (maybe 40 meters higher). Once up there we could see the women turning the crank to hoist up the buckets. Once the bucket arrived a woman placed it on her head and carried it to a pile where it was dumped. Nama says that the women who do this work are the uneducated.

We walked along stopping frequently to sit and overlook the wonderful valley full of rice paddies (just an amazing picture book place) and to visit with the people. At one place we came upon a cock fight. Dozens of men were furiously gambling and making deals while some women ran food stalls on the street. Nama clearly doesn't like gambling and didn't spend much time there. Then more magnificent views. From here we saw women walking the path up this steep canyon with huge loads on their heads. One woman carried a bucket full of water. It must have been 3 gallons. Amazing.

When we got back to Wayan's Emily spotted a shop as part of his house and got his wife to come price things for her. Dresses were only 7,000 (\$3.50) and

pants were 7,500. Em bought two dresses and I bought Corbin and her a pair of slacks. The ones for Corbin are great. Hope they fit and that he'll like them.

We ate twice at the Bali Restaurant (which we found is owned by the same Wayan who we were guests of) and went to Ubud Palace for the Legong Dance. This was magnificent. I just can't believe this dance. I almost cried when the little girls danced Legong. How they do it is beyond me. Nama went with us and afterwards indicated that his brother an accomplished gamelan player and his sister teaches all kinds of dance. I must arrange to meet them both and learn about dance and music from them.

We came home and here I am. I felt that today was such a wonderful day. Maybe I can have mail sent to me at the Bali Restaurant. Perhaps we'll stay here until early November. We did learn that dance will be part of Wayan's ceremony as will Wayang Kulit (shadow puppet). Tomorrow morning we'll leave to go to try to meet Yuni's brother-in-law. Though I often ask Nama the Bahasa word for things, I remember few. Seems there must be a better way to learn this language. Perhaps Nama knows English too well and we can depend on him for everything. Anyway, I am very happy and delighted with all I am experiencing. I miss Jenny and Corbin and want to buy them lots of things. Think I'll buy Mom, Karen and Elaine beautiful sarongs. Now to bed so I'll be ready for another big day.

### **October 12, 1993**

Finally, a few minutes of peace to turn to this journaling. I have missed doing this and am learning that recording, rethinking, reflecting on, and comparing my experiences is an integral part of the process. We have raced over much of Bali with Nama during the last two days and while we have seen so much and experienced it, I need much time for reflection and digestion to know a little of what I have seen and to know a little of what I know. I have a long list of things on which to reflect and letters and post cards to write, but I want to get down some of what we have done.

Sunday the 10<sup>th</sup> Nama came for us early in the morning. We had arranged to move a bigger house of Londo's so we did that. This is a huge house and more than we want to pay, but it has a lovely view, and the upstairs is so pleasant and cool. First, we went to cash a traveler's cheque. Got 209,000 rupiah \$100 US. I hadn't taken my passport and they insisted on it, though driver's license had been enough most places. The young men who were clerks didn't know much about passports and seemed sufficiently confused that my driver's license number worked as my passport number and I got the cheque exchanged. They wouldn't let Emily do the same thing.

Off we went on the first of many terrifying drives along roads only wide enough for two or one and one-half small cars, but crammed with dozens of vehicles: motor bikes, bicycles, big trucks, people, cars, chickens, and dozens of

dogs who often nap in the middle of the road. All drive as fast as they can, pass every vehicle that they can out power and do so even if there is no possible way it can be accomplished. To make matters more terrifying (at least to me), there is usually not enough room alongside the road for construction materials (sand, rocks, poles whatever) so it is simply dumped in the road narrowing it by half a lane or less at these places. The practice is to constantly beep one's horn. I first thought this rude and aggressive. Now I still think that it is aggressive, but that no one takes offense. They just seem thankful to have a second to step from the road to avoid a hurtling vehicle. Nama seems a good driver, but at times I felt like hiding my eyes and praying that we would survive the next whirling maneuver. It seems amazing to me that there are any dogs, chickens, and children left in the country, but all seem to know how to stay out of traffic and all are constantly alongside the road unattended.

We had gone only a few kilometers before seeing the rice harvest. The rice is cut and carried to a single place in one paddy. Here it is stacked up evenly in a large pile like a cord of firewood. Next to this pile are several women positioned along a beveled winnowing board on the ground. This has ridges along it sort of like corrugations. It rests on a huge plastic tarpaulin. The women take from the pile bunches of rice and raising them above their head beat them down on the board several times. This beats the rice from the head. Then they throw the rice straw to the side. Here several old women sit taking up small bunches and with a small stick (a simple tool I am sure) stroke the heads of every stalk to get bit of rice from the head. The straw is then set aside. The rice is somewhat green at this point. If they wait until it is completely ripe, it falls from the head when cut and is lost. This means that the green rice must then be spread out on big plastic sheets to dry. I saw this too and a person has to walk along with a sort of solid rake and shift the rice so that all can be exposed to the sun. Very labor-intensive effort. Every grain seems precious. I also saw smaller operations where the beating of rice was done in a smaller contraption perched atop a rice bag.

We went on down the road and came to an ancient Royal Temple. I don't know much about this temple, but the Javanese entered the country in the 16th century fleeing Islam in Java. These royal families established themselves in Bali and introduced Hinduism (or it may have also introduced before directly from Indian and China). These royal families established temples. This is one of those. It was not much in use and has the shape of the high tower shrines so common to most Bali temples. The temple also had inner and outer temple areas; the most inner temples were closed as is also common. It was very large and the inner temple which could be easily seen over the stone wall surrounding it had many temple structure (I don't recall the name of them). There were two long rows of them, the largest to the upper side and descending as one moves toward the downside as is also common of all temples). We also climbed up in the bell tower,

a platform to the side of the grounds for a look around. This was a tourist stop and we again saw the Japanese couples that dress alike as we saw in Australia. But we haven't seen any of them in Ubud. Nama calls them ducks. He says they get off the bus, the guide tells them to see everything and return in 10 minutes. They walk around like ducks quacking.

Travelling onward we stopped alongside the road a couple of times for exotic fruit. The first was a stop for Jackfruit (nangka) which is a huge bumpy fruit. It is sort of the shape of a very fat kidney bean but about 12 to 15 inches long. This is cut in 1-inch slices and you normally buy a wedge of it. This has some sort of stiff membranes in it and some large seeds, but amongst these is bright orange meat. This can be taken out in small pieces about 2 inches long (the thickness of the inner meat of the whole fruit) and eaten. Like all the fruits we tasted, this has a powerful taste and on first tasting it seems the most delicious thing ever eaten. However, it soon is overpowering. I ate quite a bit of it, Emily could eat much less. Then it was just too much. Almost sickening. The other fruits we tasted at other roadside stops were selak urian. Selak is a small brown sort of pear-shaped fruit with a skin that reminded me of scales. It comes in bunches and grows on fairly large trees, maybe up to 30 feet tall. Inside the thin skin is a white dense meat (water chestnut like in texture) that divides into two or three irregular sections. Each has a brown seed inside it. This fruit is far less powerful in flavor, but it isn't a flavor that I much care for. Durian is about cantaloupe sized or maybe an oblong softball and yellow to green in color. It is bumpy all over the outside and each bump comes to a very sharp point. It is difficult to hold this fruit in the hand because of these prickles. This fruit cracks open a bit when ripe. When it is opened it divides into sections and each section has a sort of porous white material like the white stuff in oranges. In the midst of all this are large seeds (an inch or two long) several in a pouch and each surrounded by a slimy fibrous material. It is this slimy stuff that is eaten. It, like the jack fruit, is delicious, yet overpowering. Even the texture of it is almost too much to bear, though I wasn't at all hesitant to try it. What smells. What tastes. Amazing.

Up the mountains our destination was Pura Ulu Danau, a temple on Lake Bratan. We stopped first at a market near the lake and were hit hard by sellers. I yielded to some people selling orchid seeds and I have no idea whether these will do anything or not. We also found that jewelry there was quite cheap. I bought Jenny a silver ring with gold on it (like one Emily bought for 10,000) for 4,000 (less than \$2). The asking price was 8,000 I think.

The Pura Ulu Danau is an ancient temple on Lake Bratan, high in the mountains. The lake is surrounded by mountains. An idyllic setting. The temple is huge and multifaith. It is a temple for the goddess of the waters that she provides Bali with sufficient water. The main temple compound is Hindu. There is a Buddhist stupa outside this compound and up on the hill with a silver Arabic

looking dome is a Muslim temple. By this time, we began to see the pattern that has now become familiar in visiting temples. There is a charge for visiting one, usually 500 plus a surcharge of some sort. There is also a parking fee of 200 or 300. In some temples one must wear a sash (minimum) or sarong and if you don't have one these can be rented (more rupiah). All temples have long rows of shops selling everything imaginable at every price imaginable. Walking along one of these areas is an experience. Everyone is calling out to you to come look. Those selling cold drinks call out their prices. At the mother temple we visited yesterday the price for a can of coke ranged from 500 to 2,000 rupiah within a several hundred-yard area. Even as they call out their price to you, they change it without a moment's hesitation. "Cold drink madam? Cold drink sir? Very good. 800 rupiah. For you 500." The Ulu Danau Temple had a small temple on a tiny island just a few meters from the shore. There was evidence of recent offerings here and evidently there are times during the year when people come from all over the island for ceremonies to Dewi Danau, goddess of the waters. Many family temples have a shrine to this goddess, and I think this shrine is like a miniature replication of Pura Ulu Danau.

After we left this temple, we headed off to look for a man whose sister-in-law Yuni whom I had met in Boulder shortly before leaving had tipped me off to. This was in the village of Bangah. Nama didn't exactly know where this place was, but we drove all over the back hills. This drive in itself was a treat, seeing so many villages and beautiful areas. In one area there was obviously a huge temple festival going on. We began seeing truckloads of men dressed in white (shirts, trousers, and head scarfs) all going in the same direction. Then we saw women dressed in beautiful colorful blouses and sarongs with huge bowls of fruits perched atop their heads walking in the same direction. One place we stopped, and I photographed a long line of women beautifully dressed every one carrying something on her head. They were walking the zigzag path along the edges of rice paddies. As we traveled on down the road, we heard gongs and saw a troupe of men dressed in white led by men carrying tall banners. There were perhaps a couple hundred. Most were men and boys. They seemed, to walk in groups. Small boys led. Older boys carrying flags followed. Groups of men then followed. Each group seemed like the same general age. One group of musicians came along and then at the end were many sorts of stragglers. A barong costume was carried by two men. We stopped beside the road and watched the procession pass. It is apparently the appropriate gesture to do this. Down the road another kilometer or so and we came on another procession of the same kind heading for the same regional temple. Once we found the general area of Bangah, we went another direction to Jatuluh (pronounced ja to lew e). The word means, truly magnificent (or "really beautiful" as Nama rendered it) and that is an understatement. It is a huge valley filled with terraced rice paddies. Little shacks occasionally are perched

at the edge of a paddy, the home of a cow used for its labor in the rice. Since the cow lives most of its life in this little shack, people have to get feed for it. This is done by taking a sickle (a tool carried by many village men) finding a bit of uncut roadside grass and cutting it and bundling or bagging it. This bag is then carried to their cows on the head by women or on the back of a bicycle or scooter by boys and men. Sometimes a cow will be led on a leash to the roadside where its attendant will sit while the cow grazes. The secondary benefit of this practice is that the grass has a mowed appearance nearly everywhere. Everyone constantly looks for a bit of grass to cut for their cow. Jatuluhi is a little village at the rim of this valley and has, of course, its temple compound overlooking this beautiful valley.

Then on to Bangah where we finally found I Ketut Supiarta. As we were looking for this man, I began to realize that I had no idea why we were looking for him. His sister-in-law had given me his name and I was just following that. It turned out that he was a fairly well to do person in this village. None of his family spoke any English and yet they invited us in immediately making quite a fuss, to get us settled in their formal living room. Emily and I sat as Nama talked with them explaining who we were and why we were there. Realizing that we knew his brother, Supiarta wanted to know what we knew of his brother, did we have a photo of him, etc. Since we have never met him, we couldn't give many details. Nama and Supiarta talked and talked. Soon their conversation turned to the fact that Lasmawan (the brother in America) had sent them an application for their daughter to come to America to enter an English as a Second Language program. This daughter, Ni Nyoman Erawati, apparently wants to go to America. The father soon began to find ways that Nama and I could help. First, he thought the daughter could go with us back to America since she has never flown. Then he got Nama to tell him all about how to get a passport for her. Then he wanted her to come live with us in Ubud to teach me about dance (she knows a little something of Legong, but I doubt more than any schoolgirl [this turned out to be very wrong. Komong, as she was called, was a classically trained dancer]). Then they wanted us to be her American sponsor (a requirement of the Indonesian government perhaps). Emily and I were left out of most of this and clearly, we were seen primarily for what we could provide. They were very gracious and served us coffee, but we were beginning to feel used. We also began to see what power Nama manages by knowing English, Bahasa, and Balinese. I want to write extensively on this later. Anyway, after much conversation we left with a big bag of tomatoes and headed back to Ubud.

Nama seems not to need to eat, so all we had had all day was a bit of overpowering fruit. When we got back it was after 6 p.m. and I was bonking big time. I was so shaky when I got out of the car, I thought I might puke, and I had a terrible headache. But with hands washed (a feeling that is wonderful but all

too rare), a sugar soda, and some food, I revived remarkably well and rapidly. We then went to Ubud Palace and saw Mahabharata Epic: The Death of Kicaka. This kind of dance weaves the more dramatic forms of masked dance with some female group dances. It is entirely developed and choreographed for entertainment, but it contains the styles and forms of the more traditional dance. This dance had a wonderful comical element with three funny clowns. Though this dance is much more complicated and refined in some ways, it still reminds me a bit of some Hopi dancing. These clowns even looked a bit like Hopi clowns. I will write more about dance later.

When Emily and I got back to our house we were exhausted. We came up stairs and Emily just broke down. She said she was so confused, and she started to cry. She said that she didn't know what was going on and what we were getting into and what people meant or anything. I sat down with her and after a brief moment of panic that this would jeopardize our whole trip, I asked what the problem was. Soon I saw that Emily felt ways that I too felt and as soon as I shared this with her, we began to really enjoy talking about our feelings and all that was going on with us stimulated by this experience. This has drawn us much closer together and is making our trip more fun and interesting, even the difficult parts like getting attached (way too tightly) with Nama about which I'll have so much more to write. After a long talk, we fell into bed and I listened to the geckos that live on our ceiling tell us good night. We could hardly stop processing the day to go to sleep but forced ourselves to since we knew we had an even bigger day coming.

Monday morning we got started early and attempting to keep our commitment to Nama and the rental car down, we suggested we make a big circle up through the northeastern portion of Bali and return by the southeastern coast. The first stop was Goa Gajah the Elephant Cave Temple. Knowing that we would be going into temples Nama brought along scarves for us. These need just be wrapped around the waist and tied on the left (I don't know that this is customary). We walked downstairs that took us to the hand-hewn cave. This temple is very old. Outside are bathing pools (mostly empty now) that reminded me of places where Hindus bathe on the Ganges. But there were no bathers, just a couple of older European women sitting on the steps reading their guidebook about the temple. Surrounding the mouth of the cave is a demon's face carved in the stone. The cave opening is the mouth. To the sides of the face can be seen the ends of the fingers of the demon in what looks like him trying to pry something apart so he can stick his head out. Outside the cave were several of the shrines common to all Balinese temples. Some of these had fresh offerings on them and some men dressed in ceremonial sarong were sitting near one of these shrines. A pool had a shrine built in the middle of it. We went inside the cave. After a short passage the cave branched in both directions for a few meters.



There were a few offerings on altars in there and lots of incense burning. Quite the incensing just to go inside. In the outer temple area women were making rice balls and men were working on something that I suppose had to do with the festival or ritual. Apparently, this cave and the pools were only unearthed earlier this century and have been reactivated as a religious place.

Up the road near Tampaksiring is a fascinating temple called Gunung Kawi. We were accosted by many children before the car even stopped. They stuck their wares through the windows and pushed and pushed to get you to buy. They even know the technique of saying, "Here take, this is free." I think they know that few tourists will take anything offered from a child without compensation and that the compensation from a few hundred rupiah will far exceed the worth of their trinket.

Gunung Kawi is 10 memorials (candi) cut in the face of the rock alongside a beautiful stream surrounded by rice terraces. These monuments are huge and appear as if set in niches in rock face. Alongside some of these are monks' cells. I took off my shoes, as required, and walked around among them. These too are hewn from the rock. Outside of the monks' cells is a temple with the typical three divisions. I try to understand what all these shrines are for and I'm never very clear I know what is going on. Nama is eager to tell me about them, but I don't think he knows that much and on things like this I'm sure his knowledge outpaces his knowledge of English or mine of Balinese (which is none). Perhaps I'll need to read a lot more. I do recognize the principle that temples are microcosmic and that they also replicate the parts of the human body.

To get down into the canyon where these monuments are cut, Nama took us along a canal, passing a young woman standing in the canal bathing her children (or brothers and sisters), and along the edges of the rice terraces. This was fun and adventuresome. At the river we had to cross by leaping from stone to stone. This took us some time because Emily and I had cameras and we didn't want to get them wet, nor really did we want to be wet ourselves. We returned by the stairway. Gunung Kawi is one of Bali's oldest ancient monuments and is thought to have been built in the 10th and 11th centuries. I don't think much is known of it and I'd guess not much is known of ancient Balinese religion.

On to the great volcano, Gunung Batur, which can be seen from Penelokan. Here the vendors were totally obnoxious though Emily tells me she was offered a boxed chess set for \$2. And she turned it down? Amazing. Actually, I about lost it here. I know that these people are just trying to make a living, but when they crowd around you and touch you and jam their wares in your face and shout out their prices, when all I wanted to do was to see the volcano, was almost more than I could take. I noticed that many tourists were repelling them, but some were buying. The volcano was very lovely. The large crater spans many kilometers and has a huge deep lake along the east side. In the middle spiring up

like a craggy mountain is the central cone with a plateau on top. There were few clouds hanging near the top of the cone, but as they parted and shifted around the mountain lighted up beautifully. After we left this overlook, we drove eastward along the rim and stopped at another overlook that placed the lake and a village below us and between us and the cone. Very lovely.

Then on a few kilometers to Pura Besakih, the mother temple of Bali It is the temple that serves the whole of Bali and it is quite old and comprised of 30 temples. Its most ancient parts are over 1000 years old. Nama didn't care to go with us. We signed in and paid our fee. Then started the trek up incline after incline toward the main temple. It is indeed huge and yet very like all other temples we have seen. It has the three main parts (the main temple had 5) and inside each walled area were many of these shrines (I must figure out what they are called). The main temple was quite large and there were many others nestled around it. We stopped for a coke (the first one Emily and I have ever drunk together) and headed back. We stopped at a few of the little shops along the path downward and inquired of a few prices but showed no interest in buying. Though it was the mother temple, by this time it seemed to me like one more Balinese temple. It is remarkable how my expectations were so wrong on these. I expected temples to be something like Westminster or Chartres or something (well, I really didn't). They are all open air. All have the high pointed doorways (most of red and grey brick, but some of a black material). All incorporate these shrines. Driving along any road one sees literally one of these temple areas (perhaps 50 feet on a side) associated with every group of houses. Then there are larger temples for every village, every cemetery, and on and on. One gets templed to death in just no time. One special treat was to be charged 200 r. each to pee in a dirty hole that was called "Toilet - W.C." One makes one's living by having a hole. Interesting. Something for nothing. Thank you very much.

As we drove along the road I got a question answered. I had been curious about this bright red brick seen everywhere. We passed a place where it is made. It is simply the clay dug from the earth. Molded into a brick shape probably 3" x 12" allowed to dry, then fired in a kiln heated by burning rice straw. These bricks are very light weight, apparently strong, and can be sanded, shaved, chiseled, and carved. After these are laid in walls, they are clearly sanded to give the wall a smooth finished appearance.

Emily wasn't feeling too great in the afternoon, again not an adequate lunch, just a coke and some peanut butter cookies. We considered going straight back to Ubud at that point but continued on. One place offered a view of a beautiful valley of rice terraces. I must have dozens of pictures of these. Then we stopped at Sibetan where we had a light lunch at a cafe that overlooked the coast near Candidasa a few kilometers away. This was a lovely spot and the food and water helped revive Emily. Onward to Candidasa and the beach. We stopped there for

a brief view and a stroll along the wall above the beach. I had hoped to see some of the Balinese triangular sailing fishing boats. I saw some along the shore, but none in the water with sails up.

I had wanted to come this way to go to the Bali Aga (pre-Hindu Bali) village of Tenganan. They are famous for doing a double ikat weaving. In this weaving the thread, both warp and weft, are dyed in several colors before the weaving is done. When it is woven together it is done so in such a way as to make a pattern. I can't imagine how they do it, but I saw women doing it. This style is done with a belt loom in a sitting position. It looks like very hard work to me. These weavings were attractive, but not so much to my taste and they were mostly strips about 12" wide and 6 feet long. The least expensive were \$75. They also sold many other weavings from Indonesia. I bought a large tablecloth for \$25 that is single ikat, which means that the weft is dyed as thread and the warp is one color. It is very beautiful. It is made in Gianyar, which is known for its weavings. When I bought the material, I actually thought it was made in that village. I was a bit disappointed later when finding out, but I still like it and maybe I'll give it to someone. This village was very interesting and was built on terraces. It spread in one long stretch. At each terrace was an incline of cobblestones. There were huge gray horned bullocks in the village. The houses and shops lined both sides and there were common areas and temples in the center. Emily bought a nice vest. Nama sort of scolded us because he didn't approve of that village selling weavings from all over Indonesia. He thought they should sell only what they make. Hm!

On the way back we stopped briefly at Goa Lawah (Bat Cave) Temple. Again, fees and scarves. This temple was unlike the others in sitting against a cave full of bats. Some of the shrines were located inside the cave and were covered with bat shit. The bats were everywhere, a crawling squeaking mass. According to the story the bats are said to feed the giant snake Naga Basuki who lives in the cave. I can't quite figure why this would be a nice place for a temple. The bat shit and bat breath odor were noticeable as were the charming little girls that just wouldn't give up on selling their trinkets.

Nama wanted to stop at a Kacak dance on the way back, but Emily and I were pooped and hungry. We went to dinner at a restaurant built alongside the river at the main crossing in Ubud. This restaurant is built in a house that has many levels and offers nice views. This house is where Walter Spies, who first studied Balinese dance along with Jane Belo, lived in the 1930s. I felt honored to be in his house more so than at most of the temples where I am charged and hassled in so many ways. We had a nice dinner, perhaps the best in Indonesia so far, and visited with Nama.

We began early to see that we might have some trouble with Nama. When I found him, he immediately said he would just take us anywhere and do anything

for us. We talked of this and how we would compensate him. He told us not to worry, it was up to us. We didn't realize then how, after three days of being taken everywhere, how obligated we would feel to him. Further, we began to realize that he was setting our agenda and pace. Nama is, like everything and everyone in Bali, something of a contradiction. He says so many things yet also does and demands something different. He seems very nice, and he certainly is, but he latched on to us and we couldn't seem to shake him or free ourselves to have the sort of experience we want. This is very hard to describe, and Em and I have talked a long time about it. One minute we feel like we are jerks for even feeling the least weird about him. Then we begin to feel that he is a master manipulator and knows exactly what he is doing. The setting is terrible here to judge oneself, because no one here sees you as a person. They all say, "Where you from?" When they learn "America" they know how to set the price. Nama constantly told us he considered us true friends, that he hurt when Emily hurt, that he cared for us, that he would do anything for us, that he wanted nothing in return except what we had too much of (which for us reads, money). But he never has asked either one of us a single question about ourselves. He didn't ask a single question about America. He didn't ask any questions about the meanings of words in English, though clearly, he is just learning it. To us friends aren't friends unless you are interested in who the others are. So, friend to Nama means something else and we haven't been able to figure whether that is good or whether that adds up to obligation. We tried talking with him directly and that didn't seem too helpful. But today we refused to go with him and still are paying the 30,000 r. for the car. Emily isn't feeling well, a cold, and we finally just insisted that we needed rest and time to reflect on what we are experiencing.

When he stopped by late this morning ready to take us on another tour, we told him we just couldn't go. He seemed a bit sad but agreed that that was fine. He immediately began to plan for a couple days hence. We told him we would decide what to do in a day or two. He stood up, said he was tired, and went in the house and went to bed (there is a bed on the first floor we don't use). We sat there looking at each other in amazement. He said to wake him when we got ready to leave. Interesting. There are many things to reflect on here and I hope to do so in this journal soon, but at least Em and I learned much about our own interests, our own likenesses in not wanting to get obligated by others and not wanting to be manipulated by others, and about Bali.

I think everything in Bali is subtext (i.e., the unspoken) and variable. I have never been able to understand those descriptions of the world that are derived from Einstein's relativity before coming here. Nothing is dependable. There are no points of reference. Everything is negotiable and people say everything but what they mean. What would raise major ethical and moral issues for me regarding verity and honesty seem not to apply here. Beginning to experience

this throws into a mode of being highly suspect of everyone. Buying something for 25,000 r. one place, after bargaining for 10 minutes for it, only to find it offered by someone only a few feet away for 8,000 just blows one's mind. It makes me distrust and dislike and to be wary of the friendly and those who seem to be extending trust. This is a very friendly country. At first, and even now, this is something gratefully received. "Hallo" they all call. Even children in villages when you are flying through in a car will yell "Hallo" and wave to you. Everyone smiles. Yet, most seem to have in mind getting something from you as they smile. There are contradictions everywhere. The whole country seems to be living on the food that grows at hand. Everyone seems to be at work in the fields, with the cows, whatever. But everyone seems to be interested in money. Everyone in some sense has something to sell. Every village is lined with tiny little shops with curios, food, and junk. How they sell anything with hundreds of these shops in every one of the hundreds of villages is a complete mystery to me. I'd think their merchandise would get so old it would rot awaiting the first person to stop to buy. Yet they all sit there in their shops.

Sweeping is a favorite activity of people everywhere. They sweep the grass daily to pick up the flowers and leaves that fall. They sweep the dirt in front of their shops. They use two kinds of brooms: one is a bundle of stiff sharp sticks the other is a long handle with some soft black feather looking things on the end. But the toilets are horrible stink holes. .

There are interesting contrasts to the Australians, I think. Australians charge for everything: tomato sauce (catsup) and jelly, for example. Everything is . divided and everything has a price. Likely this is based on the cost and to make . a given profit everything must be sold for its fair price. In Bali, nothing has a price, everything changes if sold with something else, everything changes when sold to different people, or at different times, and on with variables that I doubt have limits. One wonders if there is such a thing as "cost" in Bali. Einstein must have been Balinese.

I am missing Jenny quite a bit. I got her photos out and looked at them last night and was hit with quite the . . .

### **October 13, 1993**

Interrupted yesterday by a procession that was going from Penestanan temple to the temple below the bridge near Ubud. We began to hear gamelan gong and cymbal music and went to see what was happening. It was a procession along the road like the ones we saw in the countryside a couple days ago. We followed the procession, though were far behind it. Stopped at the Bali Restaurant to find Nama to pay him for the car rental and clothes we bought. We went to the Walter Spies house restaurant--it is actually called Beggars Boost or something like that--for dinner. It overlooks this river so we could hear the gamelan and could see a

bit of what was going on far below. The procession formed again and headed back to Penestanan.

After eating we followed again, stopping at Campuhan (also spelled Champuhan and Tjampuhan) for chocolate cake and a brownie to go. We got to the temple at Penestanan and found everyone eating and since we didn't have sarongs and sashes, we just returned to Ubud to see the dancing. It was Ramayana Ballet and was very good. Quite theatrical. I am eager to see more things of the culture than things made for the consumption of tourists.

I am entering another mode of experiencing Bali culture that I think I am going to like more. We tried to go to the culture when we first got here. Ran , everywhere to see temples and to get in on things. But even when we did this the things we saw by accident: rice harvest and the temple processions were the most important to me. Now we are sitting in our house, on our porch (wonder if there is another word for this lovely outdoor living room), walking to find food and as we do so we see what is happening. Last night the procession. This morning another gift.

An old lady showed up in front of the house. She carried a silver tray and wore formal clothing including the wide sash that must be worn while doing offerings. Clearly this woman didn't speak any English. She was performing rituals that seemed to me to be to bless the houses. It seems that today is a transition time here all around. The woman nodded to us, communicating that she recognized our presence but had something she had to do. She came to the corner pillar of the house and removed a lovely decoration made probably of palm leaf. She took it to the edge of the yard and disposed of it. Then she approached the house and with green leaf between the first two fingers of her right hand dipped 3 times into her jar of holy water sprinkling it toward the house. Incense burned on her tray the smoke wafting toward us. She then paused for a few silently, but mouthed, words--prayer or incantation--then repeated the holy water sprinkling. Then too the tall, beautiful bamboo pole decorations are being removed this morning. These two things conjoined with the temple festival going on at Penestanan suggest to me that this is a transition time--end of one period and the beginning of another. Though I have read quite a bit on Bali, I don't recall anyone describing any of these festivals in much detail. I'll have to look. I also find that most people don't talk at all about what these things mean, just what things must be done.

We talked with Nama yesterday and settled with him a bit. Em and I feel much better about this and perhaps if we gain a measure of control over what we are doing and a bit of space we can attempt to develop a friendship with him. Once I began to see that something of a ceremonial nature was going on, I wondered why Nama had not told us about it. He should have known, and we had expressed our interest in seeing things of the culture. After the dance we

looked at the bulletin board at the tourist center downtown and even that lists these cultural events and indicates the level of participation acceptable for visitors. Londo even mentioned the temple ceremony yesterday morning and this morning we asked about it. He told us when and asked if we wanted to go. He said all we need is to wear sarong and sash.

Sitting and waiting for things to come, to happen, is a nice way and that is why it is so important that we have the time to do this. It is such an important lesson to learn about life and about travel.

As I reflect on my research and interests and my experience in Bali, I realize that I am seeing so many things of relevance. If one learns and bears one's culture in the body as much as in stories and articulated beliefs, then things like sweeping, walking, making offerings, dress, carrying heavy objects on the head, squatting to work are all important. I see a clear connection between the women doing drudge work--walking with heavy water buckets or baskets of sand on their heads--and the movement of the most formal Balinese dance. The foot is placed flat on the ground with each step, the toes often poised as though in reserve should extra balance or support be necessary. For a woman carrying water these toes may be the thing that keep her from losing the load and having to return to the river again. The body is relaxed and low. Very elastic which must be necessary to walk evenly keeping the head level and also to bear the weight of the load. The same posture is stylized in the body positions in dance. Surely this body posture must preserve the back. I don't see bent old people. Often the old women seem to have an even more erect posture. Surely their posture in carrying loads throughout their lives must be healthy. I don't see how, with Western posture, one could stand a single day of bearing such loads on the spine. These are the things I am interested in. Yesterday, a group of women that I recognized from passing them repeatedly on the road to Penestanan were carrying black sand along the path behind our house. Each carried a large basket full. At their destination they dumped it and returned for another load. One woman stopped on her return, hoisted her skirt up well above her knees and spread her legs to pee. Quick and easy, even with modesty. These women who do the drudge work are of interest to me. They have a grace and dignity, a style and even beauty, that is Balinese in character. This is something I am interested in.

During the night I awoke--I suppose it was around 5 a.m.--hearing gamelan music, or some percussion sounds I associate with it. I thought that it came from the Penestanan temple and I thought that surely we were missing something important. I wakened Emily and told her. After getting up to pee and returning I thought again I heard this music, only to realize it was a weird, yet strangely rhythmic, noise our toilet makes. Still, I imagined that I heard music and felt concern that we were missing something. This morning Emily thought that I was just imagining all this. I wonder.

Em and I spent quite a while visiting this morning over and after breakfast. We were accounting the changes we have and are both going through. We both see this time as one of enormous personal growth and that having the opportunity to travel this way as fortunate almost beyond belief. My growth is in terms of facing myself more openly and completely. Learning how to be honest with myself and with others. Accepting who I am, both my limitations as well as my strengths. Learning to accept personal pleasure more fully. And thus, to open myself to more experiences and to others. I think I am socially more comfortable and more naturally social. I feel I am much more myself. I rarely feel that weird sense of being beside myself and I never withdraw into myself.

I tried to call Jenny last night; it would have been Tuesday morning in Boulder. I had calculated the call to be 7 a.m. there, but it was 8 a.m. and she had already gone to work. Judy was then forced to talk with me. She said Jenny was okay "so far as she knew." Can I read the subtext? She said that Corbin was okay and that he was going to be in Boulder that evening to get something. He had gotten A's on everything in school so far. She said she was okay and talked about money mostly. Reflecting on talking briefly with Judy reminds me of changes. I rarely, almost never really, think about divorce, settlement, housing, all those problems. I am happy here. I am enjoying all that I am doing and experiencing without the anxieties of the problems I left behind. Perhaps I am resting and healing. Perhaps I am being renewed and reborn. Certainly, I look forward to returning to Boulder in January; so much to do and to enjoy. I look forward to getting a bit more settled in life. Still, that will come soon enough. I am thankful to be here.

Time to go to lunch. I still want to reflect on so many things. Hope I'll have time for that this afternoon.

Afternoon: It is raining hard now and experiencing this in this tropical house is a whole new kind of experience. The greens and reds and yellows in the nearby bushes are brilliant and the greens of the palms in the distance show subtly through the gray of the rain. The sound of the rain on the thick rice straw roof is subtle, surrounding, comforting. The cool breeze blows through the second floor surrounding me, bathing me, in comfort. I'm sitting on the futon on the floor (not at the table by the window) enjoying every moment, every fraction of a moment.

A few moments ago, we realized that our shoes are on the stoop likely getting wet. Though I was naked at the time I wrapped a towel around me and went to fetch them. I hesitated and slowed down because the outdoor living room is floored in big square tiles. I thought this might be slick, but even my cautious proceeding didn't save my feet from flying out from under me and my towel went skyward as my butt went down. Little difference it made since I had to pour the water from 6 shoes half filled. Think I'll write Jenny and Corbin a letter now.



**October 15, 1993, Ubud, Bali**

Attended a cremation ceremony yesterday and it was so powerful that I couldn't think about writing last night.

Night before last, after a day of endless hard rain, we began to realize that we were going to have to go out for dinner. There is a place several hundred meters north of here, but they were closed. We had seen a sign at the top of the big stairs "Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner" so decided to follow. We found it though we had to walk the small ledge along rice paddies as usual. The electricity was off, but the place looked nice, and the people were friendly. At one table were four Aussies with an open bottle of whiskey on the table and Cokes: one female and four young men. They were the type that travel the world endlessly and pretend to be Ernest Hemingway or somebody.

We ordered and while waiting for the food the electricity came back on, but along with the lights came thousands of flying termites. The owner of the place explained that the rain had caused them to come up from below and they were awful. We had him turn the lights back off and was pitch dark we ate by a single candlelight. Don't know how many termites I ate, but I, and especially Emily, just about freaked out with these horrible things crawling all over us. we had Gado Gado again for the thousandth time. This is one of the few vegetarian meals and after I tried chicken a time or two and didn't like what I couldn't identify, I went vegetarian. Gado Gado is a plate of steamed vegetables with tempeh covered with a peanut sauce and served with rice chips. It isn't bad, though some is certainly much better than others, but after eating only that for a few meals I feel Gado Gadoed out. Last night after returning from the cremation we ate at a wonderful restaurant and I even had a fettuccine dinner. Emily had a great Indian sampler meal that was served on a huge sectioned off tray. I had caramel, chocolate, peanut pie for dessert, yummy. We'll probably go back tonight. We waded back through the dark after the termite meal and our power was off. We showered by flashlight and crawled into bed and read each other journal entries by flashlight (or "torch" the Aussie word we both now tend to favor).

So, the cremation. I don't know how to begin to think about it. Perhaps first some feelings. I had no idea what we were going to see or do, though I had read a chapter in a Bali book about it. I didn't know whether the event would be an actual one or something for tourists. We were never told anything or given any instructions. For me the day was a curious process of trying to locate myself, to get in touch with my feelings, to constantly readjust my sense of propriety with being in the presence of a family cremation and in the presence of a number of other tourists who were trying to figure out what the hell was going on. The barriers between my culture and Balinese seemed little greater than that between me and my fellow tourists most of whom spoke little English and in fact spoke

little to each other throughout anyway. The performance elements--smells, sights, colors, textures, activities, tactile sensations--were so rich as at times to be nearly overwhelming. But, as I think on it, what is emerging in my mind and feelings this morning is how incredibly powerful is the ritual process. Clearly, I didn't know much more than the outline of what was going on. Maybe more than the average tourist, but perhaps not all that much more. But even the Balinese family constantly argued and yelled about procedure. Some things would start and have to be restarted as someone would shout out that something or another wasn't being done properly. I think that on nearly everything that was done there was discussion, even argument, much shouting and laughing before the action was finally completed. No directions were given tourists at all. No censure, no direction, only one occasion when a young man asked a few tourists to move away from a particular area where an action was about to take place. But as the process unfolded, the distance between tourists and Balinese, the distance between all was overcome so that in the procession carrying the body to the cemetery for cremation, we all walked along, seemingly swept by the mood, by the need to get everything from one place to another. This intermingling remained at the cremation site. Though there was little verbal communication, people looked at each other and messages of welcome and acceptance were passed this way.

Certainly, the event was the most ritually powerful experience I have ever had. I really did participate as at least two families cremated the bodies of at least three people in a huge and amazing festival only a very few hours of which I experienced.

The mood for a Balinese cremation is a festive one. There are no tears, no mourning, nothing somber. Black seems to be a common color of dress, but often a shirt or blouse worn with bright colored skirt or slacks. The event requires much planning and preparation and expense. The offerings alone would take weeks to make. The house compound is restructured in preparation for the event including making temporary structures in which to work, for offerings, for the priest to perform rituals, etc. All the workers who prepare offerings and build structures must be fed and given frequent snacks. It is a big and very expensive deal. The two most interesting preparations are the animal (a bull) that serve as the sarcophagus for the body at cremation and the high tower on which the body is transported to the cemetery. These are quite amazing. There is so much that goes on I can't begin to figure out or describe much of it, but I want to try to describe what I saw, even if just as a device to remember it and to later reflect on it.

We went to the tourist information center in Ubud where we had seen a sign indicating "cremation ceremony --14 Oct - 6, 000 r." We paid our money and returned at 10:20 to catch a Bemo (transportation van). Loaded in this, 15 or so

of us headed north and east of Ubud (I didn't get the name of the village and regret this deeply). When we arrived at the house compound 30 minutes later, we first saw a bunch of people there awaiting us to sell sarongs, sashes, and other things. I thought, "oh no, another tourist attraction, what have we gotten in to?" The Bemo driver told us that he would be at the cemetery after the cremation and to meet him there. As we turned around and fended off the sellers, assuring them we had sarongs and sashes, we saw the tower beside the road. It was maybe 8 meters high and sat on a large bamboo platform that extended quite a way out on each side. The tower was elaborately decorated and brightly colored. A gamelan instrument was attached to the platform on each side. In front of the tower was a large black bull perched on a temporary platform. We looked at these and photographed them. I began to realize that this was the real thing and that the vendors were just a part of it as were us tourists. Walking up a steep driveway we arrived in the family compound. A temporary large shed was the first structure, and it was for the gamelan, which was ready there, but without the players. A large structure was immediately on the right (I've seen these before). It is open on three sides and has sort of like a bed up on one corner. This place was just full of offerings and other things I can't even describe. I'd call this a pavilion.

Across from this pavilion was a building open on three sides that was prepared with food, which I learned later was to be served in a rather formal way to the male (and a couple of females) dignitaries. Two other houses were in the immediate compound. Both had open rooms on the front with closed rooms behind, the doors were red with extensive gold inlay. Perhaps the body of the deceased was in one of these and I heard someone say that one could go into the house and view the body laid out on a bed, but I didn't go. The male dignitaries gathered throughout the late morning at one of these houses. They were served coffee and treated with great dignity. It was interesting to see that some men approached this raised room and awaited to be invited into the room. There was much decorum here and the body language was most interesting. One young female was part of this group. I'd loved to have known her role. One man looked very (what is the word?) ... with sunglasses and long hair pulled back. He reminded me of some young Native American leaders. The young woman may have been with him. In the courtyard were other temporary structures. One was a platform built about 12 feet above the ground and roofed. There were what appeared to be food offerings there. Late in the morning a priest (I'd say) came and with the assistance of two men sat in this pavilion and did extensive and obviously esoteric rituals. Interestingly the priest clearly was not directing any of the general activities nor did anyone but his assistants pay the least attention to what he was doing. Lots of what he did was pray or recite something and he used incense, a lamp (maybe coconut or palm oil), and he often rang a bell to

accompany his inaudible words. I watched him to the extent I could see him, but no one else did.

Another temporary structure was a huge platform to hold offerings. These were often woven, folded, cut palm leaves (done in beautiful shapes and patterns), palm leaves covered with rice or satay, or raw meat, flowers, etc. Much incense was burned on this. Coconuts whole and parts were present also as were eggs, and anything one can imagine. The family temple was in the corner of the family compound. At least one shrine there was newly painted and seemed to be the focus of much activity in the temple. When we got there, it was raining lightly. About half a dozen women with plastic bags on their heads were squatting beneath a temporary platform attached to this shrine. Perhaps this shrine was designated as the residence for the ancestral soul released in the cremation. I don't know.

We wandered about as did so many tourists and watched what was going on. The gamelan played now and then. Women were constantly busy finishing the offerings and ritual materials. I loved watching them. They would laugh and discuss procedures and eventually agree and get the thing done. So much was going on that I hadn't a clue about during all this time. Finally, with the priest still finishing his thing, the women began to go around to all the offerings and sprinkle holy water repeatedly all over them and to recite something or other. One woman in particular seemed principal here. She carried a small silver bowl which she waved towards the offering as she silently recited.

Meanwhile, without my knowing it the bull was taken on to the cemetery about a kilometer down the road. The final preparations of the tower were made including attaching a long white cloth to the tower that stretches out in front of it to be held and pulled along by those who cannot actually get to carry the platform on which the tower is built. A yellow cloth was also attached.

One rite took place centering on objects that were in the pavilion. One looked to me like a spear about 6 ft long. It was carried out and, along with an intricate cone shaped object, was circumambulated about the offering table three times. This was a wild and furious event very like what would also take place with the tower on way to the cemetery. I read that if the body has been buried it is not actually transported to the cemetery on the tower. In this case a cone shaped object stands for the body. The wild circumambulation is done to confuse the soul that it does not return to the home (am I right on this? will need to look that up). I heard that there were two bodies: an old woman and a young girl. At the cemetery there was evidence of two bodies: one placed in the large black bull another a small package placed in a white one. Perhaps the girl had been buried and she was represented by this cone shaped object. Anyway, I now think that this procession was a mini procession done around these offerings and had the same intent as that of the tower procession. From my vantage I could easily see

that there was constant discussion, even argument, on how to do things. Clearly there was no single ritual leader. Often quite young people seemed to have a significant say in how things were done.

After this circumambulation (oh this circumambulation included the cone shaped object being pulled along by a whole crowd of people holding on to a white cord like that preceding the tower) the group stopped at a huge container of very fancy palm leaf objects. Here two very small children were important in the rite and at least one older girl. One of the acts involved taking a stick on which had been tied a kitchen knife and using this in a ritualized cutting motion to cut at many of these objects. Then all the young men and women (boys and girls most of them) gathered together, and a woman applied holy water to them amply. Lots appeared to try to get all they could on them. All wore white head band scarves.

The next part involved everyone kneeling or sitting on the ground and some people went up into the main open pavilion. Here everyone took flower petals held them between their fingertips in a praying hand gesture and spoke silently. Tiny children as well as people of all ages did this. During these rites several men sang a sort of chant from the open room of the house facing the pavilion.

There then seemed to be a pause. We tried to think where next to be. We saw a line of women, carrying huge baskets of offerings on their heads go down the driveway and we decided the procession was about to begin. We went down in the road in front of the tower. Hardly had we arrived when a group of shouting young men came barreling down the driveway carrying the coffin roughly. There was much shouting and laughter and rough actions. The cone shaped thing and the spear were also carried down accompanied by a black umbrella held high being attached to a long pole. The procession with the cone began the ladies with the offerings on their heads were a hundred yards down the road all looking back awaiting the procession. The people with the cone stopped and argued quite a while on whether to go on or not. The umbrella man also seemed to be late. Finally, they turned back as the coffin came down the driveway.

The coffin was hoisted up on the platform and finally placed onto a shelf beneath the roof at the tower's top. Several young men hung on the top to hold the coffin in place. On the platform beside the tower sat two men playing the xylophone instrument in the gamelan. With a terrific shout the whole thing arose as dozens of men lifted. Everything swayed but remained together. The whole contraption moved several feet to the road's center and the procession began. We were very excited by all this and we were virtually in the middle of it, no more than a few feet from everything. We took a few photos and headed on down the road to await the procession with the offering-bearing women. We had a good chance to photograph them, then as the tower approached, we ran on ahead.

About a kilometer down the road was the branch to the cemetery. As we approached it, we saw that another tower from another ceremony in a nearby village had just reached this branch in the road. There was a signpost in the middle of the road and the whole hoard with the platform went wheeling around this signpost. Next came the tower of the group we were with. They went round so fast that the tower swayed and bobbed. I could see women near me gasp and groan in fear that the whole thing would be lost. I don't know how the young men atop the tower even stayed up there much less managed to hold the coffin in place. But after 3 times around the procession headed on to the cemetery.

We all joined together through this procession. Balinese from both villages and likely visiting from all around and tourists. People looked at each other and shared the excitement. Near the cemetery two gamelan orchestras were playing (there might have been dances, but I didn't see them). High up on a ridge were three bull sarcophagi. One black one by itself and a black one and a smaller white one together. These were installed in temporary pavilions. The towers were set on the ground and moved off the platforms. The backs of the bulls were cut open and laid back. The coffin was taken from the shelf at the top of the tower and lowered to the ground where it was opened, and the body carried wrapped in a mat to the bull. Here the bodies were slid off the board that supported them and with quite a bit of effort placed in the carved-out container prepared for them and embedded in the back of the bull. The body for the white bull was just a small bundle and less attention seemed to be paid to it.

After the body was in place some ritual was performed on the body including pouring lots of holy water on it after which the containers (pottery it looked to me) were smashed on the side of the bull. Lots of cloth was laid on the body and even little objects set up on it. Finally, it was covered with a cloth. Green banana logs were put in place to each side of the bull to prevent the fire from spreading. Then to increase the temperature of the fire (I take it) a coil of a kerosene burner was placed between the bull's legs. Interestingly since the bull had huge gold testicles and penis these interfered with getting the burner in place. First a young man, showing what I thought was a little embarrassment attempted to hold them to the side to allow the coils to get into place. But there wasn't enough room. Finally, a man took his axe and reached under the bull and performed a quick castration (and whatever it is called when the penis is cut off: a penisectomy?). Now the coils could be put in place. The lighting of the fire seemed almost incidental. The cloth covering the bulls was merely lighted. The fire at first only played around on the bulls before beginning to grow. When it reached the torch, it took light and then the fire grew intense. The outer frame of the bull burned quickly as did the temporary pavilion. The sarcophagus inside the bull now could be clearly seen.

Many of the Balinese people began to leave as soon as the fires were lighted. We grew rather uncomfortable at this point as well and decided to move along to the awaiting Bemo. Much goes on after the cremation including a ritual repeat of it in a month's time, this time without the body. I'd like to know more.

After returning to Ubud, Emily and I enjoyed a good meal, but both of us were stunned by all we had seen and felt. Emily had one moment during all this when she felt very displaced and upset. Part of this had to do with us having little to eat all day. That combined with the powerful smells, sights, and sounds all around. She tried very hard to get me to understand what she had felt. I sort of understood, but she was frustrated and a little angry at not being able to communicate effectively. Then she realized that I had responded well to her at the time, helping her to gain some perspective by sharing my reactions and that all was well. She doesn't want me to compare her to my experiences with Judy and she doesn't want me to think her as weak or needy. I didn't think any of these things. There was really no trouble. We bought a deck of cards on the way home; had a cup of tea when we got home; took a shower (we both felt very dirty); went to bed and played kings in the corner and rummy. We fell asleep about 9:30 I think after a completely exhausting day and slept the night until 6:30 this morning.

Today has been fun reading, writing post cards, and refiguring our budget which we think is getting blown here.

After lunch we were both still hungry. We aren't getting enough to eat and need to rectify this soon if possible. It isn't a good feeling. This afternoon I also had a few moments of feeling that we still have a very long trip ahead of us and that I miss good food, hot showers, working out, and my kids. Of course, I miss all those things, but this is a wonderful experience, and I am growing and enjoying it so much. I spent quite a while this morning reading the guidebook on Yogyakarta and Solo. These both look like great cities to visit for a week or two each. Both centers for the arts and dance. We'll likely stay here a little more than a week and go on to Jogjakarta.

I have lots more writing to do and thinking to do about the cremation ceremony. Likely I'll have to do more of that as those feelings mature. For now, however, I am very impressed with what ritual does. It seems to the Balinese show great confidence in this. It is the ritual that has the power: there need be no leader; the tourists need not be instructed, warned, or even given a concern, and a certain amount of chaos and disorder is inevitable. But, in time, the ritual manifests and when it does all know what to do; all feel what is appropriate for them to feel. .

I think there is much here in light of my storytracks program to think about. The story tracks of the tourist crossing that of the Balinese, or, more specifically, my storytrack crossing theirs in this ritual. What the ritual does is much more the

concern of everyone Balinese than what it means. I am sure the meanings are not articulable. The priest's work remains esoteric. In religion we ask all the wrong questions; we report many of the wrong ways; what is going on in ritual. Perhaps I should amend this: the storytrack of the scholar has been so strong and needy (narrow) in some respects that it has not allowed for a full interaction with that of many of the subjects on which it has focused. This afternoon I grow impatient that I am not farther in producing the scholarship I have planned. Perhaps during the coming week, I'll have less processing to do regarding my Balinese experience and be able to turn to some of this work.

Writing post cards this afternoon was fun, but it made me miss Corbin and Jenny so much.

### **October 16, 1993**

Had kind of a rough day today. After writing a journal entry yesterday I realized that I was homesick. Emily was writing in her journal and I sat down beside her and said, "Em, you know what?" "What?" she said. "I'm homesick" I said. She was too but was trying not to tell me. We both had a nice cry and felt better because of it.

Today the feeling persists as we realize that we are not quite a third of the way into this trip, we are seriously over budget for this part of the trip (we were way ahead in Australia), and we don't know what to do. We talked off and on all day. We'd get ourselves settled on a plan (really a psychological plan more than a travel plan), only to shift our thoughts and feelings. I tried to work some and that failed. We both began to talk about all the things we miss. Working out was one of the major ones. We have done so little physically. I began, really for the first time, to strongly miss vigorous aerobic activity and I decided that I just had to do something this afternoon. I donned my swim trunks, Em joined me wearing her jog bra and short tights and we did more than 30 minutes of aerobics in our living room. We worked up a huge sweat and soaked the mats on the floor. We did some plyometrics that finally got my heart rate up where the aerobics only got it sort of going. We did push-ups and hundreds of sit-ups, took a great shower. All this changed my state of mind and I got immediately to work on the Balinese dance stuff for the "Dancing" dictionary. I am sure that if we do aerobic activity every day, we can we'll feel much better.

Part of our problem is to know what it will be like in Jogjakarta. We know it is a huge city and we are concerned about getting a good place to stay that will be in budget. It may be cheaper there than here, but we don't know. Furthermore, we don't know if we can get a place that will offer us a nice place to do our own things as well as to engage in cultural things. We must attempt to decide tomorrow when we will leave.

This evening we went out for dinner. We ate lunch here of bread and peanut butter that we bought yesterday. For dinner we ate at a little warung on Jalan



(street) Monkey Forest. We got vegetable soup to split which was good until we discovered a bee cooked in it and vegetarian tempeh curry with rice. It was cheap and good. Then we went to Casa Luna for dessert. When they asked if we wanted cream with our coffee, I forgot that they charge for it and said “yes.” It was actual thick cream, amazingly. And yes, it cost 1,000 rupiah.

On the way home Emily wanted to call her parents. We stopped at the hotel where we usually get to use the line for a credit card call and they wouldn’t let her use the phone. We had paid for the line before, but this time they simply refused. The clerk didn’t seem to understand what was going on. We went to another hotel (very fancy which it should be for the \$100 US per night it costs) and after much discussion got the use of their line. After Emily called, they wanted her to pay for the call. It was difficult to make them understand that it was a credit card call. We think they finally understood, but we’re not sure. They did charge 2,000 r. for the use of the line. Emily was made a bit more homesick from visiting with her parents, but she also feels better.

She seems to want to leave here and go on to Jogja. We’ll need to figure this out tomorrow, I guess. Think I’ll try to call Jenny tomorrow night. Will give her general post office address in Jogja, so I can hopefully get some mail.

The feelings I had today were quite a swing from where I was a couple days ago.

I was ready to pitch it in and go home. I know that as we travel on, we’ll probably suffer more the difficulties one must in Asian travel. I know that the situation will be particularly bad in Nepal. I also know that while it would not be so good for me to be home during the holidays, that these will be a little hard for me. I’ll miss being with Corbin and Jenny. I’ll not be able to call them even near Christmas. Still, we are going on and at least this evening, I am feeling much stronger and ready to brave the next phase of our travel. At least it is cool here and we are healthy and safe. There remain several things I’d like to accomplish seeing before going on: a dance in a temple setting, the kakak dance, maybe another dance in Ubud also.

Nama was sitting in the travel area of Bali Restaurant as we walked by this evening. We didn’t stop by to say “Hallo.” That remains weird. We still don’t know what to do about him.

**October 18, 1993** [entered in computer Nov 3, 1993]

The screen on my computer has failed me so I’m without it for the rest of the trip. I regret several things—journal writing will be more difficult, my work on Australia is now inaccessible as well as the work on the paper for Neusner that I did in Darwin. Then what I write by hand now will have to be transcribed (input) once I get home. Anyway, that is that and at least I haven’t permanently lost what I’ve written.

We have done our yoyo act lots lately. First, we feel bad and are ready to go home, go to Yogya or something, then we're ready to hang in here for a long time. Yesterday afternoon we discussed our situation doing an archaeology of our feelings. We began to get to the roots. Being in Bali has led to giving up a number of comforts and supports that we depend on good filling food, information from outside ourselves (entertainment, movies, fiction, friends) physical exercise, etc. Any two or three of these we can get along without for a while. We realized that we were giving up all of them. When we try to work, we can't. We have felt lethargic and confused. So, we decided we can put lots of these things back in our lives. After a couple more switches, we decided to stay here a couple more weeks. Nama has several house and family rites he will take us to: a wedding (high caste), a tooth filing (which is a major rite of passage), a house temple ritual (for the head of the village), etc. These are late October and early November. Then we have started doing aerobic exercise. We just do a half hour of low impact aerobics including plyometric quad work, pushups and sit-ups. We sweat lots and we found our legs and butts sore after doing this the first time. Then we decided to go see American movies. They have them at lots of the restaurants every evening for entertainment. They are free, but, of course, one is expected to buy something. Last night we saw "The Bodyguard"—totally cheesy, but information input—something to think and talk about. Tonight, we'll see River Phoenix in "Little Nikkita." Then we are eating peanut butter and bread and crackers for lunch and we've found a couple places where we can get a more filling dinner. Then Wednesday we're moving to a smaller, but nicer, house a couple hundred yards away for much cheaper price. We're paying 25,000 for this big house and 15,000 for the smaller one. Making the house arrangement was interesting. We stayed at Wayan's small house for 20,000 the first 3 nights in Bali. Then here. Now we know Wayan has no one in his houses. We offer 15,000 for his big house. First, he says "No" that he rents the small ones for 15,000, the big one for 20. We say we can't afford more than 15,000 and we want the big one, but we won't pay 15,000 for the small one. Wayan says, "Wait a minute." He talks with his sister in the kitchen and comes back and tells us he will rent the house to us for 15,000, but to tell Londo, his uncle from whom we are now renting, that we're paying 20,000. He said his uncle would be upset if he knew he was charging less and sometimes he got 30,000 for the house. No doubt. We're seeing plenty of hotels in the area with no better views but with hot water and phones for \$85 to \$100 a day US. That would be 170,000 to 200,000 rupiah per night. Anyway, starting Wednesday for 2 weeks and more we'll be in budget maybe at 25,000 to 35,000 r. per day for food and lodging. If we can do his well in Java, which is promising, we may get back in our original budget yet.

I worked much today on the Bali dance entries for the Dancing dictionary. Wrote 6 or so pages. Should be able to write another 6 or so then that will be all

I can do on that until I get to Java. Of course, I'll need to supplement these entries once I am back in Boulder.

Oh, we also bought ourselves novels to read to help keep us vital. Bookstores are just not here. We found a couple with used books for high prices and picked up a couple of mysteries—Tony Hillerman and John Updike and I found a Louise Erdrich and whatever her husband's name is, 1991 novel. Looks good. We bargained a bit for these books, and we can sell them back for half price. We visited with Nama this afternoon. He was encouraging us to stay and to change houses. We told him of our arrangements, and he is happy. We may be beginning to work out our personal relationships a little. Nama told us he was concerned about us because when we first came here, we were like babies. We need someone to take care of us until we grow up. Guess he thinks we're growing up a little. He asks us "What you do now?" He seems satisfied when we say, "Go home and read and write."

Talked with Jenny today. It was wonderful to hear her voice and to be assured she is okay. She said she is feeling peculiar trying to get ready to leave for Steamboat. She's still working and has lots to do to get ready but can't get it together. I know those feelings. Tiger is going up with her to look for a job for January when he finished high school. Seems they must be getting along well. Talking from here is frustrating. First, it is so hard to get someone to let you use the phone to dial AT&T direct. Then you have to pay 5,000 r. Then, since you know you are paying \$2 to \$3 a minute you can only say a few things and you can't describe much. Then after you hang up you remember all sorts of things you wanted to say and questions you meant to ask. I cried a little as we walked toward Ubud after talking to Jenny. Happy for having talked with her, sad from missing her and knowing it will be 3 months before I see her again. Judy answered the phone and I said "Hi! How are you?" She seemed a bit confused and then realized who it was. I asked immediately for Jenny. One nice thing about my divorce is that I can be open with myself and others about my feelings for Jenny.

So now we're all happy (except for my computer) and I'm again present to my experience. We look forward to moving to a smaller house. We look forward to getting lots of work done. We're happy to have novels to read and to have some Bali cultural things to do. Emily did lots of guidebook reading on Yogyakarta and Solo and those places look great •

Oh, when we got back this afternoon, we had a delicious pineapple for snack and Londo stopped by (to sweep our porch . . . sure!). After small chat he said his nephew told him we were considering moving. I said, "Yes, we have very little money." He said, "You decide yet?" I said, "Yes." He smiled and said "Okay." Clearly, we have been paying too much all along. We just didn't know how things work. Still at \$12.50 US a night we haven't been in serious trouble.

All this confirms my growing awareness of the complete relativity, the free play, of Balinese culture. There is no cost, no fixed base, no constant, no formulae, no rules of thumb. All is negotiation with infinite variables only a very few of which can ever be identified, even by the Balinese, though they certainly are in touch with many more than we are. In reading about Barong, I thought of play--neither Rangda, the witch, nor Barong, the monster wins in the end. They are in eternal play, though Eiselman [author of book on Bali religion] refers to it in the less than adequate terms of "balance." Then in reading about Gamelan, the instruments are purposely tuned not to be perfectly together. The disharmony when played produces a third tone or "beat" (like the "blue note" I'd guess) that is characteristic of the music. First, I need to be trained to identify this effect (perhaps the Balinese guy in America can help me with that) and then to think about this in terms of play. Maybe I'll write a chapter on Bali music and dance for my play book. Soon time for pizza and a movie.

**October 20, 1993**

Thanks, computer, for returning to life. I just want to write a short entry to note that I have some feelings related to the length of this trip and the effect it is having on me. I think it is also affecting Emily. Five months is a very long time to travel, and these many countries are a lot to cover. It makes one tired and it forces me to face lots of things about myself. Sometimes I long to be home, but as I think about it, I am completely settled in not only being here (i.e., today in Bali), but in continuing this trip to its conclusion. It is but three more months. That is still a long time, but there are many places to go and lots to see and do. Further, I am beginning to get some work done and that is satisfying, though this afternoon some of my stories (in Storytracks) began to run together and freaked me out until I could get back here and look at the book outline, I had written early in September.

We went to Ubud for dinner this evening at Cafe Luna. Very tasty dinner with delicious desserts and then we watched "When Harry Met Sally." There are quite a few non-Balinese that congregate at these restaurants to gee these American films. Perhaps 15 to 20 tonight. It is interesting to wonder who are these people and what do they do? Are they staying in Bali for a long time or just passing through? Do they miss home or just want to take a break from the Asian experience? It seems none of them ever want to talk with us. Try as hard as I do, I can't even make eye contact with any of them. It is likely that most want their private exotic Asian experience and other white folks ruins that for them. Well that it is interesting.

Just wanted to get a little of my thoughts down. I'd like to spend some time soon trying to get to the depth of my feelings about being away from home and what impact this long a trip has on me.

Tomorrow the tooth filing and the wedding.

**October 23, 1993**

No journaling for a few days, lost the rhythm of it and also after a day of Balinese ceremonies there is just too much to try the task. So much to catch up on.

Yesterday was Daddy's birthday, so I called him this morning (which was yesterday in Kansas) to wish him happy birthday. Mother answered the phone and seemed quite shocked to hear from me. They both sounded good, but then it is difficult to talk with anyone halfway round the world for 5 to 10 minutes because there is nothing that can be said in such a short time, so we mostly talked about weather, where I am, how they are, and so on. I asked them to call Corbin for me.

Emily and I have been having some difficulties the past few days. I don't really know what it is, but I do tire of the constant concerns she has about me, about our relationship, about so many things. I, of course, must be patient and doubtless I have a huge part in whatever difficulties there are, but I hope they smooth out before long.

So back to Wednesday. We were to meet Nama at the Bali Restaurant about 8:30 a.m. I showed up in shorts carrying my sarong and he helped me get it tied to approximate the proper male style. Then we sat on the stoop in front of the restaurant and watched the event unfold. The event was a tooth filing, which is a rite of passage, perhaps like bar mitzvah. It is a complicated affair lasting some days, with the main event taking place on this particular day. It was an auspicious day in the Bali calendar, and ceremonies seemed to be taking place all over. The house where the ceremony was taking place was directly behind Bali Restaurant. A shrine by the road marked the walkway to the house. I had never noticed it before. A number of young men sat on their sandals by the road near the shrine. A couple of them sat behind a table close to the walkway. Women wearing their traditional ceremonial dress approached the house, mostly from the direction of Penestanan (I think this house is near the outskirts of the town). Many of the women walked down the road carrying in their gifts (personal wrapped gifts for the initiates, food, and highly decorated palm leaf offerings) on trays on their heads. They were so bright and cheerful as they approached. Not all walked. Many were driven, mostly by young men on motor scooters or motor bikes; a few in cars. They sit side saddle on the back with their bundle on their laps. Arriving at the sidewalk they paused at the table where the young men wrote the name of the family presenting these gifts on slips of paper which were taped to the offerings and gifts. The tray full of offerings and gifts was then lifted to the head to be carried to the house.

After watching this for quite a while we went to the house to look at the offerings and the altar. Four or five apartments (houses with rooms open on one side facing a courtyard) were used as the setting for the ceremony. One of these

was installed with an altar and a bed on which the initiates would lie. In the corner of this room was a table filled with the usual ornate offerings made of folded and cut palm leaves. In the apartment were dozens of round trays that contained more of these offerings. A standard feature that I am beginning to recognize is an elevated temporary structure built on bamboo with a shelf about 10 feet high on which certain kinds of offerings are placed. In front of this hangs a kind of palm leaf scenic embroidery and many other things. Next to this was a sort of tapestry made, presumably of rice died different colors especially pink and yellow, that had human forms and some sorts of scenes depicted. I don't know much about any of these things and would like to know more.

I looked at all these things and noted that some priests (all dressed in white) and some of the elders were sitting around awaiting the beginning of the ceremony. There were temporary shelters for men and for other groups that were to gather. Behind this area in places I could not see were the kitchen and I think an area where everyone would eat and enjoy themselves later in the day. Staying only a few minutes to see the arrangement, I went back to the front to watch the gift bearers and to enjoy the sport of the men onlookers. Most of the women bringing gifts stayed only a few minutes and were then on their way. If escorted by a young man on a motor bike, as soon as these women would appear at roadside having left their gift, the young men would magically arrive to whisk them away. Nama said that every family in Penestanan was supposed to bring a gift of some sort on this occasion. It seems there is a major social thing going on here too. I suspect that the size and quality of the offerings and gifts is duly noted, though, to my untrained eye, the enormous detail and intricacy gets lost in the sheer volume.

I persist in seeing Bali as characterized by enigma or by eternal opposition. For example, a single offering may consist of a large number of elements. I am sure that the preparer of the offering gives extensive attention to make certain every detail is perfect. These offerings require much craft skill, patience, and time to prepare, and as single pieces each is lovely to look at. The way the leaf strips are folded and cut and stitched together with tiny pins of vegetable spine is a marvel. The women prepare these by the hundreds and surely spend countless hours in the task for something like a tooth filing. Then these offerings are brought and all placed together. Dozens of similar offerings crammed together fill the floor of a whole room. They constitute but a tiny part of many other, even larger and more elaborate, offerings to be found in every corner of the ceremonial place. The care and detail get lost to the observer due to the scale. From a theological and performance perspective, there is much profound and interesting here. From a theological point of view, these offerings are for the gods, not for humans, therefore no one need see these, they aren't made to be seen. From the performance perspective, it is in the preparation and proper

presentation of the offering that they are meaningful to the people. They clearly are not intended as works of art or objects to be kept and critiqued.

In time we were told that the tooth filing was beginning, and we went back into the house compound area. A few other non-Balinese were there and were armed with cameras; we, despite Nama's advice, choose to leave ours behind. In the little open room where the altar had been set up, was a bed on which two initiates, all dressed in fine gold sashes over white sarongs and shirts, lay for tooth filing. The teeth are "killed" by the priest who taps them with a rod struck by a mallet. Then the six upper front teeth are filed. These six include the four incisors and the two canines. The filing is done to remove some of the point on the canines. The Balinese represent the evil figures as animal-like with fangs.

The canines should not be fanglike as humans should not be animal like or evil. The other teeth are filed to even them and to beautify the mouth and smile. These six teeth also are associated with powers or forces (though I need to read more on this) of every person. The filing is apparently more or less painless. The initiates are given mouthwash to rinse their mouths and a mirror to examine the results. If they want more done, they can instruct the priest to file away. A priest and a woman chanted away across the courtyard, near where I was standing, using a small booklet to remind them of the words.

I didn't see much of the actual filing. Those with cameras were shoving their way right to bedside. I feel ashamed of these people so forceful and so eager to catch on film the most dramatic moments. They seem not the least embarrassed or shy at shoving their way past family to get their picture. While I am embarrassed for being one of these non-Balinese I detect not a bit of scorn or concern expressed by the Balinese. They seem to accept and permit this without any concern. Nama, when asked, confirms that no one really minds. Most Balinese seem little interested in these focal points of ceremonies. When a crucial moment (the actual filing) takes place they seem uninterested, attention directed elsewhere, or seemingly satisfied to sit at a distance. Most interesting. Also notable is that as soon as the filing was done, the non-Balinese soon packed their cameras and disappeared. I like to see the whole range of events, so I stayed.

Shortly after the filing was done for two sets of two young people (I'd say they were 16 to 20 years old) three male and one female, other rites were performed. The four initiates were brought back out altogether. They sat in a front corner of the room where their teeth were filed. The priest sat on the bed and began his prayers. I'd call this a prayer ceremony. During prayer everyone squats or sits down; apparently the proper posture for prayer because this is when the gods are present. I squatted down where I stood along with the others. Some prayer was conducted by the priest, others by the priest and initiates. At one point a small strip of palm leaf with a tiny object in the middle was tied around the forehead of each of the initiates. When the initiates prayed, they held

flower petals between their middle fingers and held their hands in praying position at or above their foreheads. For every prayer set they used new flower petals.

After squatting for quite some time during the prayer ceremony part, now the only non-Balinese present, we arose at the end and noticed that what I'd call a purification rite was about to begin. At this point a young woman approached us with a tray with two covered glasses of hot tea. These were offered to us and we were invited to sit down. I think this attention to us is significant. I would interpret this as a gesture of gratitude and hospitality in response to our showing some respect (wearing sarongs and sashes and lowering ourselves during prayer). We accepted the hospitality and sat down while the women began the purification rite (if that is what it is). This amounts to using a number of objects (a sort of wicker cone, a bunch of brown grass shredded at the end, stoppered coke bottles, dishes, etc.) to spread and shake holy water. A group of women, consulting each other constantly about using the right holy water (this is actually labeled on palm leaves floating in the custard dishes filled with holy water) and performing their rites correctly. While we drank tea, these women doused nearly everything with holy water making circuits around the courtyard focusing particularly on various offerings and altar places. Again, I found the energy and constancy of the discussion about ritual procedure among these women to be highly interesting. They are both getting it right and agreeing on how to improvise as they create the rites anew with each performance. They watchdog each other as well. If one fails in proper procedure or skips step, the others shout out to her demanding correction. This seems to be done brusquely, but in good humor. Again, the performance element is important here: these acts are not done to be watched by others, they are done because the effect they produce is desired and because the procedures are how one is Balinese in these times.

After the purification, clearly the initiates, beginning to fraternize with friends, seemed relieved and this shift in tension marked conclusion of the formal aspects of this ritual occasion. Time also for us to leave.

While Nama had taken us into the house for the tooth filing, he did not care to stay. He returned to his cronies at the Bali Restaurant where we found him.

Nama had told us of a Balinese high caste wedding that was taking place the same day and we had accepted his invitation to take us to it. It was quite a distance away and we needed "transport." He asked me to ask his friend who owns a car if we could rent it. I asked the guy knowing he didn't speak English. Nama interpreted. I asked the price. Was told 25,000 (which was way high for such little driving), but I didn't care much for the situation of Nama, being partially bilingual, controlling the situation, so I just agreed immediately to the price but noting I thought it was high.



It took about another hour before the car arrived and, in the meantime, we ate avocado soup at Bali Restaurant. It took about 20 minutes to drive to the place of the wedding: a huge and rather lavish family compound. There were two high pointed door gates and inside the compound were many house structures, most very nicely built and beautifully decorated. The eaves of most of the houses were draped with a decorative material for the wedding. Some had paper streamers, and everything was lovely. We were quite early and found the bride and groom dressed to the teeth in formal traditional wedding costumes with large gold headdresses sitting with a group of relatives at one house visiting and joking. We were escorted to another house where a few people were hanging out and after meeting the head of the household, a very friendly and generous man (the brother of the groom), we were offered tea and some little cookies prepared in the shape of a figure eight. Tasty. From our spot we could see the preparations taking place in the kitchen and elsewhere. We could see the movement around of the bride and groom. Emily and Nama ate a bite, food was available. I decided to wait.

In time the group formed, and a procession took place. Led by the bride and groom, the whole wedding party, us included, walked down the road to the house of the bride's family. Entering this compound was interesting. We knew that the groom was of a higher caste and clearly his family was much wealthier. The bride's family compound was not at all nice. Where there were goldfish ponds and lovely sculptures all over the compound in the groom's family, here was a bare yard full of scrawny chickens and unkempt houses. The bride and groom went onto a porch of one house and sat on a carpet. They looked utterly bored. The high standing men (I'm guessing) sat on the other end of the elevated porch. Other men sat on one side of the compound, the women on the other. Emily and I, the only non-Balinese, sat together on a stoop sort of at the end of the men's group. Many checked us out. Tea, coffee, and banana leaf wrapped rice goodies were served. In time the priest of the bride's family arrived and took the couple along with a few women away from the compound apparently for one ceremony. When they returned, the priest took the bride into an open fronted apartment facing the courtyard and there both sitting on kitchen chairs facing an altar on the wall (of some sort I didn't see it, but I'm betting it was one of those rice tapestry things) performed another ritual. Again no one paid any particular attention to any of this. Everyone visited and snacked.

Once this rite was finished the bride and groom got back together and led the procession back to the groom's house. The groom was equipped with a golden kris dagger which was carried for him by a young boy (perhaps 8) who seemed to stay by his side all the time. The bride's house was just a block away, making the procession easy. If the bride's house is very far away the wedding party is taken by truck and auto (sporting a special palm leaf emblem indicating

it as a wedding procession) to and from the bride's house. We saw many of these during our drive back and forth. The calendar said this was a most auspicious day for ceremonies and I guess especially weddings.

Back at the groom's house we took up our old perch and I noticed as it grew dusk (this had taken several hours by now) that in a pavilion across the compound a priest had begun a ceremony. We went over to see it. Again, no one much watched. The priest, a skinny old man wrapped from waist to chest in white sat on a bench before a table on which were placed his ritual equipment. To his left was a wooden box on which his bell rested, the box his "ritual box" (i.e., the box in which he carried around all his stuff). An elderly woman stood near the priest assisting him and she seemed to direct most of the actions of others that had somehow to correlate with the priestly ceremony. For much of the first part of this rite, a group of middle-aged men chanted. They sat on chairs in the grass below the pavilion. The bride and groom sat on chairs facing the pavilion. A group of women seemed to be assisting throughout running here and there placing incense, etc. Two gender gamelan instruments played from time to time in the same pavilion where the priest performed.

Near the pavilion was one of those temporary bamboo structures with the high shelf. These need crude ladders to reach what is on this shelf, an occasional need. The altar part of the pavilion seemed to be, made of those colored rice embroidery things. I noticed during the prayer ceremony of the tooth filing that while the praying was going on, several of the women who sat near this thing looked intently at it and seemed to be pointing out features of it to one another. Even some of the initiates got involved in this.

Another thing I notice as oppositions in Balinese ritual that some ritual objects and instrument are finely wrought and clearly of great material value: the priest's bell, the gamelan instruments, the use of fine cloth, etc. On the other hand, there are lots of very crude materials: animal flesh offerings, weird constructions of grass or bamboo used for something or other, coke bottles. There seems no embarrassment, no distinction. Very interesting.

The priestly ceremony went on for a very long time. It wasn't easy to see what the priest was doing, but for sure lots of praying or at least reciting something. Lots of bell ringing (which seems to accompany prayer). Lots of incense. Lots of sprinkling of holy water. On and on. The gamelan, the men chanting, the incense being carried here and there, the priest performing, the assistant directing everything. Quite a scene, though most who were not directly involved seemed uninterested. Again, the priest is esoteric and what he does, while essential, is for him. It need not be understood. There is nothing he does that need have meaning for anyone else. I'm sure the bride and groom, though present at this ceremony, understood nothing other than that it was getting them married.

At one point there seemed to be a shift in this ritual. The bride and groom got up and joined friends nearer the central compound. But later they returned and standing some distance from the pavilion were escorted into the pavilion. At first the bride sat on the floor (because of her lower caste?) and the groom sat on a chair. Later she was given a chair and allowed to sit at the same level with the groom. Apparently when there is mixed caste marriage the lower one must be elevated to the same caste (Nama's not all too reliable information). Also, if some of the rites of passage have not been performed by the time of the marriage on either bride or groom these can then be done. Some elect to have mini versions of all these rites done again at the time of a wedding, the last life cycle rite before cremation.

Sometime in the last portions of this rite attention was directed to the heads of the bride and groom. The priest had turned around on his bench by this time and was facing the bride and groom now. The woman assistant snipped some of the groom's hair (significance is beyond me) and rice was placed in the hair of both which I think was eaten by a duck (though it looked like a chicken to me) held by the assistant. Quite a bit more attention was given to head and hair. At one point the palm leaf head bands were tied to the heads of both bride and groom (as in the tooth filing). Nama said that that was for growth (more of his imagination?). At some point along this process, it was now good and dark, and the half-moon directly overhead shown through the trees overhead, the group of women did their rounds of sprinkling holy water (much as in the tooth filing, but they covered this large family compound). As the bride and groom descended from the pavilion the compound began to fill with older teen age youth, gender segregated as is everything. Nama told us it was now over, and the rest was socializing. He said that this was an occasion for the young friends to sort of say goodbye to the bride and groom, who were now among the married adults.

It was an exhausting day. I was very hungry, had a headache from lack of food water, and yet I was thrilled by all I had seen and experienced. It was an honor to attend so private an event and to be the only non-Balinese. For this I am grateful to Nama. I think the wedding was tiring for him and may have caused him some anguish. I don't know his caste, though I suspect it is the low caste he calls "peon," and yet he has friends who are of higher caste. He had to sponsor his own tooth filing and he knows he'll never have a wedding like this one. I suspect he has mixed feelings about all this. Interesting to me about Nama is that he is Balinese in bearing huge irreconciled incongruities. He seems to spout a kind of self-concocted New Agey perennial philosophy as Balinese wisdom. He constantly criticizes some Balinese for doing meaningless rites. He insists that knowing the meanings is what is important. Yet the meanings he attributes to these elaborate affairs is global trendy or common sense. He insists that the meaning of tooth filing is to mark the independence of the child from the

parents. He insists that is what it means to him. Yet, he clearly remains dependent on his parents. Girls have the tooth filing sometime after beginning menstruation and most then would obviously not be independent of parents after this time. So, this business of independence makes no sense while presenting a kind of common-sense explanation. Nama seems insistent on these positions and actually preaches about it. He is a contradiction in other ways such as his insistence that to be Balinese is to do as the Balinese (I'll buy that), but then he doesn't really participate in anything ritual that I can see. He doesn't work. He doesn't date. He doesn't support his family. He doesn't participate in any traditional Balinese art forms. The only girl he talks about, and he talks about her much is Lynn his California girl friend who wanted to marry him. But the other day we got out of him that it has been four years since he last was in contact with her and that he no longer knows her address. He is a mystery.

Back from the wedding we ate a tuna steak at the Bali Restaurant and visited and called it a day. A very busy and tiring one. We wound up paying 20,000 for the car (less than \$10) that's okay. The last two days have been reading and some important research for me on the Australia book. Lots of text comparison. Tedious, but significant. I'm about to wrap up the first chapter, I think. I still have a couple entries to do for the Dancing dictionary, and to input them, now that the computer is working again.

The last two nights we have eaten dinner and watched an American movie at a restaurant. Nice diversion. The days have been very hot, and it is difficult, as now, to work in the afternoon dripping with sweat. Mother and Daddy said it had been a beautiful fall day in Kansas. I really miss the fall, my favorite season, but I have gotten over the homesick feelings. I'm present again here and looking forward to the rest of the trip. After another week and a half or two weeks then Yogyakarta, which I think will be wonderful for dance and art. Then Solo, maybe even better. Want to buy gifts there. I also want to walk to Mas (a village a few kilometers away) that is known for mask carving. I think I want to buy Corbin a mask here (maybe one for me too). Think I'll buy batiks for my family for Christmas presents in Java (I think their batiks will be more beautiful).

Should have some comments here on my personal growth. I think something is happening to me. I think I am beginning to know more about myself and beginning to face some of my strengths and weaknesses. I feel that I am separating a little from Emily. That is likely good. I need to be strong and independent. I need to grow on my own. I don't want either of us to think much about the future of our relationship until near the end of our trip. It won't be appropriate until then. Guess I'll take a shower to cool off and do some more work on my Australia book.

I'm reading a novel by Louise Erdrich and her husband, Michael Dorris, *The Columbus Crown*. The characters are academics, and this causes me some self-

reflection. The novel presents the academic scene in some of the romantic terms I lost years ago (coffee at the faculty club) and academic politics, etc. Not a bad novel at all.

**October 24, 1993**

Last night at Casa Luna while watching the film “Julia and Julia” I began to feel, really more than think, that something quite extraordinary is beginning to happen to me. It was a quiet feeling, but strong, nonetheless. I associate it with that feeling of a marvelous new insight, yet with a prescient sense about it. My Life is about to begin anew. I am beginning to see myself, to find a calmness, a truth, an honesty within myself. I feel it in terms of inspiration for my work, in terms of how I will manage my personal life, in terms of just being here, being here today I feel confident about my work and ready to move lots of it toward some conclusion. I feel it in terms of my relationship with Emily. I feel it in terms of being here, traveling, writing these words, reading the novel I am enjoying.

In terms of my personal life, I have begun to feel differently toward Emily and towards myself in relationship with females. These are but feelings, barely articulated, but perhaps this writing about them will make them more so. I am beginning to see that while Emily is friend and lover, neither of us is likely to be long satisfied with this relationship. I enjoy being with her and I have grown tremendously in my relationship with her, but I am beginning to sense that once this trip is over and some semblance of normal life returns that we will begin to see that there are other needs, other desires. I am beginning to feel that I’d like and enjoy some time being alone. To think, to read, to reflect, to work, to enjoy and explore a whole range of activities with myself. To explore new relationships, to spend much more time with my children, with my parents, with my sisters. To return to myself, to my roots, to my offspring and explore most fully and completely life and my brief holding of it.

I admit that some of these feelings may be because I am repelled a little by Emily’s recent roller coaster of emotions. She is strong and happy and present to traveling one moment and a few moments later she is in crisis, she is questioning herself and our relationship. This is now a daily swing and I find myself tiring of it. This morning she broke down completely and cried and cried. I find myself helping or encouraging. I feel strong in myself in terms of the way I respond. I do not overreact. I do not criticize. I feel fairly selfless in holding, being patient, trying to ask simple questions or say small things that might help without doing harm. I encourage her to accept her feelings to give herself to whatever kinds of things she needs to go through. Actually, this emotional breakdown is in some ways more a breakthrough than her daily announcement that she has now seen and understands the nature of her issues and is beyond them. These intellectual gains are valuable, but they don’t seat themselves in a changed mode of being. One must feel trust to trust, feel love to love, etc.

This makes me wonder if I love Emily. I certainly enjoy her and am fond of her and know her very well, perhaps better than anyone I have ever known. I like what has happened to me being with her. I like the way I am when around her. I don't know that I love her in the way one ought to live a long time with someone. I don't know that I know what love is unless I think about Jenny. Jenny, I love as life itself. She calls from me everything and my feelings swell with the thought of her visage, the sound of her name in my mind, the glowing letters that dance on this screen. If that be my measure of love than I love only Jenny, but also Corbin, and also my parents and also my sisters, and also . teaching, and writing, ad thinking and so many things: life, living, even the feelings of loneliness and lostness that are so much a part of this trip, the feelings called from me by Sydney Opera House, Ayers Rock, the moon behind a ghost gum tree high on a ridge.

I am feeling a calmness within myself, an acceptance, a kind of inarticulate knowing. Yet I also feel a quickening, an excitement, a grounding, an inspiration, a strength of will. From whence these things come I don't know. How I will be different as a result, I do not know. That there will be any difference, certainly one perceivable by my closest friends (actually I'm not at all sure I have many real friends), I do not know.

I also am beginning to realize that I feel more, am open to more feelings and to others more completely. Yet this is not the kind of feeling that produces greater displays of emotion. It is merely a fuller acceptance of what is present; what is life.

As I am writing the image of my house comes to mind. I see myself after I return in my house, finishing it, fixing it, building a darkroom, repairing and cleaning and revitalizing it. I see myself by myself, but with friends and my children there from time to time to enjoy it. I see myself settling into deep satisfaction in doing and feeling so many things yet knowing that some of these will be hard and perhaps uncomfortable. I see myself trying to meet new friends, trying out new relationships. I don't want to rush any new love relationships, any long commitments.

I must allow myself to think on these things through the balance of this trip, to attempt in the privacy of this writing to reflect as deeply and as honestly and as openly as I possibly can. I want to face myself; to know myself completely; to find that place of calmness within myself from which I can constantly in every moment, no matter what the action or environment, be most fully alive, knowing and embracing that I am nothing, truly nothing, other than this minded body conscious and acting in this very present moment. It is that moment that must be filled, that must be entered, that must be also yielded and lost, for that is life.

**October 26, 1993**

Had a very full day today, another cremation ceremony that came up unexpectedly. Will have to write about that tomorrow, but first I want to remember yesterday which was also a very special day. We walked to Mas, a nearby village that specializes in mask making and wood carving. Since the main reason I went was to buy a gift for Corbin, I think I want to write to him as a way of describing the day and later, when I have a chance to give him the mask I bought, I will give him the letter.

Dear Corbin:

Yesterday I went to a village named Mas to buy you this mask. I had seen a couple of masks of this type in a shop in the main village where I shop. This village is called Ubud. Most of the villages around Ubud are known for a single craft. It seems everyone in these villages specializes in the same craft. If you are interested in silver, you go to the village where they make silver, and go on with baskets, weaving, woodcarving and masks. I knew that Mas was the village that specializes in making masks. I knew that I liked one particular kind of mask, the kind I got you, because it is the Balinese version of the comedy\tragedy masks that are emblematic of western theatre. I thought you might like one of these.

Emily and I left early in the morning deciding to walk to Mas, a few kilometers away, rather than hiring "transport." We walked through the open market in Ubud which is always a terrifying, yet interesting, experience. There are dozens of people selling their wares, mostly vegetables, meat, eggs, and edible (at least to the Balinese) things, but also cloth, sunglasses, watches, anything you can think of. The sounds and sights are amazing, the smells are overpowering. Some smells are so strong and, to my nose, offensive as to make me nearly ill. It is an experience and finding myself not overwhelmed by it helped me see that I am becoming familiar with Asia.

Trudging on along the road, temples on every corner, dodging trucks and motorcycles constantly, we made our way in the direction of Mas. We had looked at a guidebook map but stopped for a soda and directions at a warung, a place where the Balinese eat. No one spoke English, but when we said "Mas," they pointed on down the road where we were headed. Okay, so far. Not too far from there we began finding many shops selling wood carvings and masks. One of the first ones we saw had masks like this one and I was stunned to find that the price they asked (and they would take much less than this) was only one third what the starting price was in Ubud (just a few kilometers away).

Now a seasoned shopper and bargainer, I did not even think of bargaining at any of the first places, because if you name a price and they meet it, you have to buy. I wanted to see a great many masks and to compare. I wanted to become a little knowledgeable about masks before I thought of buying. I find that it is difficult to know quality when you are unfamiliar with things. Some things, after

you buy them, turn out to seem a bit like junk. I didn't want this to happen. So, we turned down every alley way and hunted every shop. We saw lots of masks being carved--every shape, size and character. We priced many. "How much?" We went where tour buses always stop and there found the prices in US dollars rather than in Indonesian rupiah and the prices were at least 10 times what the same objects cost 50 meters down the road, i.e., at the places without western flush toilets.

Finally, we went off the street to a sign "mask maker" and talked with I. B. Anom. He had just a few masks in his shop in contrast to most shops where there are so many masks you cannot really see any of them. He had two of the "happy-sad" masks and immediately popped one on his face, the one I eventually bought you, and performed for us, first as sad and then as happy. He was a fine character actor and we talked with him. He is also a masked dancer and, later we read a magazine article about him. He told us that he was the designer of this mask style. When I asked him why they appear elsewhere, he said that others copied him. I believe him, though one is never sure. I examined his masks very carefully and began to discern what distinguished them in quality and what might justify his prices, which were very high compared with most other shops. With his masks in my mind, we went to a dozen more shops and looked at them to compare. I could begin to see why his are so wonderful.

Now you have not seen any of these masks, so let me at least tell you some of the things that make this mask so special, to me anyway. The most important thing is how the carver has worked with the natural colors in the grain of the wood. He has used the color to emphasize the eyes and mouth. When the sad face is showing the colors look like tear stains. Other areas of the wood color highlight the expression. No other masks like this showed so much understanding of the wood; no others began to be so fully expressive. Other things important about this mask were the added small details in the carving that make this mask more expressive. The way it is carved. Then the proportions are so that the mask actually fits the face. Many of the lesser quality ones didn't even fit the face (they were sculptures that looked like masks).

After all this comparative shopping I went back and bought this mask for you. No need to bargain, though I tried, I paid the asking price.

Stopping at a warung for a snack in the blazing heat, we saw a collection of young (and a couple older) men who each carried their pet rooster (fighting cock) to an area under a huge (really huge) banyan tree. As we sat there, we watched how much these men love these birds. We joked, the possibilities are endless when you know that these birds are "cocks," about how these men loved to stroke their cocks. Occasionally a couple would go to an open area and engage the birds in mock (because they were not equipped with the deadly spurs) battle. Quite a sight. Very fun to watch.



Then the long walk back to where we are living. The shopping trip took all day and was exhausting. When we got back, I was starving, yet completely satisfied with this wonderful purchase. I do wish that you could have met Anom and seen him act the mask. Hope you enjoy it.

I think there is another reason I chose this mask for you. First, I thought of getting you one of the painted masks that represent one of the many figures in Balinese dance drama. I've seen many of these and the masks look very Balinese. But I thought that since you haven't seen these dramas or know the stories, the figure might not be that significant to you. At first, I thought this double mask didn't seem very connected with Bali. Then I realized that it is quintessential Bali in that everything here is a combination of opposites. Nothing is only what it first appears to be. So many things appear simple, like buying a cheap sarong, but turn out to be infinitely complicated, like actually bargaining for the thing and figuring out whether you got good deal or were scammed. This seems impossible for it seems nothing anywhere has a fixed cost, a fixed value. All sales are complicated interactions with dozens of unspoken and even unknown variables. Many people here seem to work all the time. Everything is done by hand in the hardest most labor-intensive way. Yet, it seems like everyone here has plenty of time, especially for ceremony and dance. The women carry the heavy loads. The young men sit around admiring their cocks and showing them off to their friends. Life is very slow here, but don't step in the road without looking for everyone drives fast and dangerously. The malevolent and benevolent spirits are always feared and held off by constant offerings, yet they do make themselves present on many occasions and do battle, but neither side wins. Everything has two faces and so this mask is wonderfully Balinese, as I am experiencing it.

Love,

Dad

I'll have to catch up on other things tomorrow.

**October 27, 1993**

Having a rather lazy day today. The morning went by with little to show for it. Visited some with Emily. Checked out a number of things in the Thailand guidebook and began to think through some of what we'll do on the balance of the trip. The Thailand thoughts were stimulated by having met a couple, Don and Ann, yesterday at the cremation ceremony who are Utah Mormons who are in Thailand on a 3-month exchange program from Northwestern University near Chicago. They are in Bali this week as their mid-term break. They invited us to look them up when we get to Bangkok and they gave us some information about Thailand that will likely be helpful when we are there. Then I thought quite a bit about the trek in Nepal and realized how much I am looking forward to cooler weather and to the mountains. What a wonderful climax that will be to the trip.

Emily and I have been trying to figure out a little how we should think about our relationship in terms of our return to Boulder. The other day we established that it will be best to at least consider living alone. I am pleased that this has become an option and yet it will be fine if we just postpone this decision until much later. We still have far too much to get through and to think about on this trip to make any sort of decision. One thing I am thinking is that I really want to live in the dome. I want to redo much of it and to finish it up. There is the outside that needs lots of work. The basement needs to be finished: trim, heaters, the shop, the darkroom. Glass needs to be replaced and the greenhouse needs its heat connected. I want to do the darkroom and to repaint and decorate the dome all over. Perhaps when I refinance (which I can do at the credit union) I can get enough cash to get money for finishing the house as well as some of the things Judy will take when she leaves. Much here to think about and to look forward to. I want to have a great place for Corbin and Jenny to be when they come home.

Last evening, I talked with Emily about an issue that is raised for me by meeting new people. The immediate case was the young couple from Utah. While I engaged Don on many things and asked him all sorts of questions, while I talked with Ann and while we were friendly and played with their 2-year-old daughter Brook, they did not ask us anything about ourselves. Nama, too, has asked me nothing about who I am, what I do, etc. I tend to feel that I should not indicate who I am, what I have done, what I am about, what I know, I nonetheless feel that perhaps someone might be interested, that others might see me as one who might be potentially interesting enough to inquire a little about. When they do not ask, then I feel disappointed in them and also in me. I think they are insensitive and uncaring, and I think that perhaps I am a bore and haven't done anything, or know anything, worth sharing with anyone else anyway. This, I recall, was one of the big issues I uncovered when working with Betty [a therapist]. In fact, it may have been the issue she described as the most important one in my life. That is sort of interesting and I certainly need to give it much more thought. I tend to think that if I say I am a professor, I'll seem arrogant or that others will be distanced from me. Yet, certainly I harbor the view that how I would state who I am and what I am about is sufficiently offensive to people as to distance them from me. Emily helped me see that these were my images of these descriptive categories and not perhaps what others think and also that I needn't act out of my views of how others see these labels. Anyway, I think this is an area I need to consider and to be attentive to.

Monday evening after returning from Mas, we rested then went to dinner at this little Domino Pizza place and tried to watch "Howard's End." The problem is that we were the only movie-watching customers, and the Balinese people were completely uninterested in this quiet drama about a house, and it lasted for about

3 hours. They finally made sufficient hints that we left before the movie was over and I felt a bit irritated both during the end of the film and at the people in the place. Well, no big deal. I'd seen the movie before.

Yesterday in the morning, I was just beginning to start a journal entry when Nama showed up and asked if we wanted to go to a cremation ceremony. Emily waffled, but I was ready to go. After a little consideration Em decided to go. We had some time to do some laundry then went to the Bali Restaurant, which also runs a travel agency, to depart. The man, Wayan, whose car we have rented several times drove and one of the guys, Nyoman, who works at Bali Restaurant, went with us. One of the people being honored in this ceremony was his grandmother's mother (I think) who had died over a year ago. Before we left, Nama helped me put on my sarong and he loaned me a black and white checked short sort of wrap around to go over the sarong and he tied a black scarf on my head, a gesture of respect for the dead. Em took a picture of me; hope I didn't look a fool. But I think that Nama did this as a gesture of respect for my interest in learning about Bali culture. He said that since I am getting to know lots about Bali, I should dress more like the Balinese. I allowed myself to feel a little honored, though I knew that all the young men who were helping me get dressed were finding it pretty fun too.

The ceremony was not far and when we got to the village, we visited Nyoman's house. It was a very poor family, but he spread a thin worn carpet out on one of the open rooms in the family compound and we all sat on it. One couple was from Germany and spoke little English. There were six of us tourists. Nyoman soon brought tea and cookies for us, the typical Balinese gesture of hospitality. Brook played about and we chatted for half hour or so. Then sometime after noon, we were invited to go to the ceremony. We walked down the road and as we got to an intersection, we could see one group with a cremation tower in one direction and another straight down the road. Nyoman said that the one to the right was his family, but that since the other involved an actual body and was higher caste we'd begin with it. We soon arrived there, the tower was much smaller than the one we saw the week before, and there were more tourists. We did not go into the family compound as we had at the other house but waited in the road. Because of the former experience I knew what would happen. The young men would rush out into the road bearing the coffin and load it aboard the tower and the whole procession would begin. Sure enough, that is the way it happened. One difference was that the bull simply preceded the tower rather having been taken some time ahead. It was quite a procession with so many Balinese and also quite a few tourists. The tower was so tall that at each place where utility lines crossed the road it had to pause, the bearers would lower it a little and tip it and others equipped with bamboo poles with a tee shaped cross near the top would lift the wires so the tower could pass beneath. At the

intersection the whole procession turned in the direction we had seen the other tower and once at that location we all paused while that group finished its preparations. Then with two bulls, two towers, two marching gamelans, we continued down the road. After the first tower passed an intersection, we saw coming from that direction another bull and tower. The final group awaited and let this group go on ahead. Now three towers, three bulls, and lots and lots of people. Several hundred more yards, we reached the cemetery. On the way the group paused several times and people along the road doused the tower with water (holy water?). Once at the cemetery we saw that numerous other bulls and smaller towers were present. Also, along one side of the road across from the cemetery was a temporary enclosure, sort of a walled coral, in which much preparation had taken place for the 20 or so people who had died and been buried, but who were being honored in this ceremony.

A word about these people. When people are poor and are of low caste, they cannot afford to have a cremation ceremony. The body is buried. I don't know what sort of ceremony there is associated with burial. However, these people still must be symbolically cremated, if, in fact, their bodies are not actually cremated. I have read that the bodies are dug up and the remains are cremated, but that wasn't the case here. As clearly as I understand it, some 30 or so days before the ceremony, the families of people who have died and been buried come to the coral enclosure near the cemetery. Here they make preparations of offerings, they make personal symbols for people who are to be honored. They sleep there. We saw this place and every person who was being symbolically cremated had a place along the walls of this area. Here a symbol of them (it looked roughly like an effigy, but not a realistic one) was made and hung up in the sheds that surrounded the area. Other symbols of them were made: one to be burned and one to go home with the family. I supposed that these people simply await a death of one of substance and caste to occur in the area. When this takes place all these other people share in the honor of an actual cremation ceremony. All twenty or so of these people have their personal symbols which are actually collected on a small body tray (just like the one used for an actual body) and wrapped in cloth. These, like the coffin of a dead person to be cremated, are all loaded on a single tower where they all ride together to the cemetery escorted by a single bull in which all of these symbols will be placed for a common cremation.

At the cemetery, the bulls go on into the cemetery and are readied to receive bodies and the towers are placed at rest at the edge. If a coffin is present it is unloaded and taken to the bull in which the body will be burned. It is the tower with the symbols of all those symbolically cremated, these bundles are unloaded from the tower one by one. As the bundle is picked up the name of the person is called out. His or her family comes to pick up this bundle and goes to the area

where it will be placed into the bull for cremation. With 20 or so being honored together this was quite a procession just from the tower.

There were small towers and many bulls all over the cemetery. It was quite a sight. The backs of the bulls were hacked open, and the bodies loaded into the sarcophagi, then the women who carried the offerings on their heads in the procession to the cemetery came to the sarcophagi and these offerings were placed in with the body. I noticed that a symbol representing the deceased, even when a body is present, is carried in the procession and I was pleased to identify that included the man's kris dagger.

This time we remained in the cemetery long after the fires were ignited. Bulls were burning all around. The Balinese use kerosene torches to assist in the burning. On the bull nearest me they used two torches, trained carefully on the sarcophagus. As the wood of this enclosure burned away, the body dropped down into the wire that had been wrapped around the bamboo to make the body of the bull. It hung there, rather unrecognizable as a body for some time. Finally, the wires burned through and the lower part of the body fell down to earth pulling the less than completely burned skull out of the partially burned sarcophagus. There was little interest shown in this, though at this point it hit me emotionally rather directly that I was witnessing a real event and that this was a human body being burned. The men attending the cremation simply used a metal pole to shove the body on down between green banana logs used to contain the fire, covered the body with a sheet of corrugated iron and pumped up the torches after redirecting them.

After the body is burned as well as it can be, bone fragments are retrieved and taken to the home where they are placed on what is described as a "bed." Here the fragments are arranged in a human shape and dressed (I don't know how this works) in clothes of the deceased. Then at some point (maybe another 30 days) the ash fragments are taken to the sea and placed in the ocean. I think one of the personal symbols winds up in the ancestral shrine in the family temple, the place of residence for the spirit of the deceased. The whole thing finally concluded.

The experience of this cremation was quite a bit lighter and more fun than the first one. I think part of that is that in the first one we were in the family -- compound, spatially confined, and we didn't know what the heck was going on. We identified as tourists, but there was no camaraderie because I felt alienated for taking the same photos I was taking. All very weird and tiring. Here not only did I know what was going on, we didn't go into the family compound, also we were with people we knew a little and we had been given a nice transition by Nyoman by being offered tea. Then we were less physically confined at this cemetery. Incidentally, though not really incidentally at all, the cemetery was in a very beautiful area. It was filled with very tall and quite beautiful palms. Looking

through the cemetery which sloped downward to a valley in the back I could see on the opposite slope beautiful, terraced rice fields. It was cool and pleasant in the shade in the cemetery, the gamelans played in the background and the fascinating and beautiful Balinese people sat around everywhere watching as others were busy with the work of cremation.

As usual, hawkers were on hand to sell sarongs, drinks (for which we got royally ripped off for water), and snacks. These people are very persistent, getting right in your face and refusing to go away, but I am feeling far more tolerant of them now than before. In fact, I have grown much more used to many of the things originally so shocking to me.

Still in the restaurant where we ate last night, during the dessert course of black rice raisin, rum ice cream, I nearly lost my appetite being unable to direct my attention away from the several rats running the rafters in the ceiling. We also had mice (I hope that is all) in our ceiling and walls last night during the night, which along with the heat and mosquitoes made it very difficult to get good sleep. I haven't slept well for several nights now. The mosquitoes are microscopic in size but pack a powerful wallop raising a welt that itches for days.

Nama caught me at my computer yesterday and became very interested in it. The other thing he has become interested in is the Bali calendar. I began seeing them in stores and everywhere this week and asked him about it. Interestingly he had never really looked at it before and since I had read about it, began to ask him all sorts of questions and point out things to him that shocked and surprised him. He has now taken to reading the calendar in amazement at all it tells. It actually incorporates about six or seven different calendars into one and to begin to see them all there is fun. The combination of seeing my computer (which just caught him open mouthed) and me telling him about the calendar has amounted to something of a change in his attitude. I have actually enjoyed his company quite a bit the last few days. I have begun to see him for himself and to accept him for that. What more can or should I do. It is nice.

The rice paddies in front of our house are now getting grain in their heads. This makes them prey to the birds. Tiny little birds some black with white breasts and others that look to me like wrens, love the rice. The Balinese put contraptions all over their rice fields time to serve as scarecrows. Mostly these scarecrows are bamboo poles to the top of which is attached by a string a piece of plastic garbage: a bag, a sheet, a wrapper. Other things are old shirts, rags, tin cans with pebbles in them. There are hundreds of these in the rice fields and to cast one's eye across a huge area these is quite a sight, beautiful really even when, perhaps especially when, realize that this is waste plastic. Guards are assigned to the field as well. In the one near our bungalow, the guard has built himself a little platform with a thatch roof over it where he sits to watch for birds. He has connected a great many of these plastic bearing poles by strings that all come

together at his shack. From dawn until dusk, he can be heard shouting at the birds and rattling the cans and shaking the poles by pulling his strings. Adds quite a bit of local flavor to an already delicious dish.

We did laundry in our mandi the last two days. Quite a process, but at least it is better than wearing smelly clothing for weeks on end and they do get rather smelly. Just some of the chores required of this sort of travel. Em and I talked today about how we are changing and how it will be to get back. We can certainly identify some changes now, but I think it will take being back for a while before we'll begin to realize the fullness of these personal changes. To this point at least I think I am liking the kinds of changes I feel are taking place in me. One thing I know is that I am going to invest a great deal of myself in my children and my family when I get back. I want to see Corbin and Jenny much more often; just hang out, visit, begin to build relationships. Write and call my parents and sisters more frequently, go see them more frequently.

We'll be in Bali another week and a half then on to Java. I'm enjoying this more than ever now. In this next week and a half, I'd at least like to draft most of the paper for Neusner's conference. Think I'll use the Barong as a key example. Tomorrow is a day of preparation for the big ceremony we are to attend on November 2. Don't know if I'll be involved in that or not. It would be fine with me to simply hang here and try to get some writing done.

### **October 29, 1993**

Two months ago today we left Boulder. Then the destination was Australia with some distant sense of Indonesia. Now here in Indonesia, the destination toward which all this travel is heading is Boulder by way of Java, Thailand, and Nepal.

The last three days have been early to rise, then the day filled with reading, thinking, talking and a bit of writing. Sartre has been my project for the last couple of days and today I had significant breakthrough in linking Sartre's notion of play with a way to develop his system in a positive direction. I really need to write about that tomorrow. I also see that moving into conjunction of my study of dance with that of play, perhaps for the Neusner conference paper. I'm very excited and eager to see how this all develops. Interestingly Hazel Barnes ends her introduction to Sartre's *Being and Nothingness* with the statement that negativity of Sartre's project is overwhelming and that the only way to see his project positively is suggested in someone who wrote that Sartre wrote about how the world is, not how it ought to be. She entirely overlooks the importance of his presenting play as the alternative to the spirit of seriousness, a link he explicitly makes, though in his conclusion to *B & N* he says that the aim of existential psychoanalysis is to dismiss the spirit of seriousness.

Emily and I have been having quite a bit of fun the last several days. Last night in the middle of the night we found ourselves both awake and feeling

unable to sleep, which is difficult given how hot it has been and mosquito infested is our room and began making all sorts of jokes. I can't even remember what all we joked about, but we carried on in a very silly way for quite a while. We have also been having excellent conversations about Sartre and we have been using Betty Cannon's book as a way to get into Sartre. All this is in good fun and I am feeling very close and excited about our present relationship. Hope we are able to keep it free and vital through the balance of the trip, but we have shown that we can rise to this rather well.

Thought some today about the notion of being a tourist and the elements of choice that one has to engage. This is a controlled process of experiencing the kind of freedom that Sartre talks about. In traveling the way we are, one is forced repeatedly to make choices not knowing or often even guessing what the results may ultimately be. There is no alternative but to choose, where to go, what to do, what to eat, when, etc. Hundreds of choices every week. Most of these are made simply on the faith that they will take one in an interesting and growing direction. To be in a situation where choice is necessary is an exercise of freedom. To experience this freedom, even under the circumstances that the period is known to be limited (i.e., the trip will one day be over), nonetheless gives one the experience of choice. If I can choose and thereby exercise my freedom as a tourist, and survive and find it meaningful, then I can choose and make choices and exercise my freedom related to the balance of my life after I return home. Thus travel, if conducted in a way that demands choices, ought to have a high potential for personal growth in the sense of catharsis, the dismissal of the substantive self, the overcoming the spirit of seriousness, etc.

Had a nice little lunch down the road and went on down to Tjampuan to a shop and bought a Batik card for Em's birthday, coming on Sunday, and several post cards. I wrote cards to Corbin, Jenny, and my folks today. Fun to write them, but a bit overwhelming to think about how to communicate what is going on.

It is really rather interesting to think about how the trip has settled into a pattern here in Bali. We experience the culture, go to all sorts of cultural events, see people we know and that recognize us, feel the ebb and flow of life around here while reading Sartre, studying Bali dance, reading some fiction, thinking about writing a variety of things. I feel this is a remarkably creative time for me. I can't remember a time when I have had such freedom from schedule and commitment to spend long hours reflecting, reading, and imagining. I only wish that the whole day was more conducive to work (it gets so hot in the afternoon and evening) and that our bungalow had better light and a place to work at night. Still making the most of this and knowing that I will be energized for a very long time because of these several weeks.



We learned last night from a woman who is from Java that it is much cheaper to be in Yogyakarta than here. We hope to find a nice place to be and do and work and enjoy, until time to go on to Thailand. Then the Nepal experience and we are back home. Doesn't seem like all that long to go, yet we are not half through the trip yet.

Nyoman at Bali Restaurant invited us to go to a temple festival in his village on Sunday. That should be enjoyable. I read about temple festivals today and look forward to going. Seems there should be much more to write but guess not. Had fettuccini with tomato sauce this evening. Good.

### **November 1, 1993**

There is a sense in which we are beginning to psychologically close ourselves to our Bali experience. We are beginning more and more to look beyond, to Java, to Thailand, to Nepal. We are beginning to assess what we have seen and done, and we are beginning to feel satisfied in our Bali experience.

Yesterday was Emily's birthday and it turned out to be a very fine. We began the day as usual by arising early and awaiting our breakfast which with each day seems less fulfilling, less filling, less satisfying. We had arranged to go to a nearby village with Nyoman for a temple ceremony and we had a number of errands to do in the morning. As we left, we walked up near our old house at Londo's and just beyond there we could see the mountains. This was definitely auspicious since having been here nearly a month, this was the first unobstructed view of the mountains. Quite a sight. Down the big stairs to Tjampuan Hotel where Emily called her parents. While she was doing that, I snooped around a bit and found the house that was Walter Spies' as well as a plaque on a wall commemorating his residence there. The house was a lively native shelter that now serves as one of the rooms in the hotel. I also took a picture from that location, a lovely view of rice paddies across the valley. Emily then cashed a traveler's check and we braved Ubud market to buy me a white shirt of the sort that is worn to temple ceremonies. I found one in the market and I'm sure I'll never wear it again, but it is rather neat. It is long, extending below the waist and has pockets in the lower part and a breast pocket on the left. It buttons down the front and is of heavy cotton. It has a short standup collar and looks rather like a dentist's jacket. Anyway, these are worn by all men over sarongs and short sarongs (forget the name of these) that are gold in color worn on top of the main sarong. They also have a head scarf that looks rather snappy. I settled for the shirt and wore the sarong I already had rather than go for the whole thing. I probably looked rather stupid, and Emily tended to identify me with her father (which I didn't like all that much), but at least I was sort of properly dressed for the *odalan* (temple ceremony). I took, Emily out to eat for her birthday (I also gave her a Java batik card). We experienced once again, perhaps for the last time, the market. This time I was even less grossed out which must mean something

about the way I am changing. We mailed post cards and bought a few necessities. We enjoyed a leisurely early afternoon including a chat about being homesick, motivated by Emily who is certainly feeling lots of homesickness. Then we went to the Temple Ceremony late in the afternoon. We got a snack before we left, and they had "Halloween pumpkin pie" there (the Javanese woman who runs the restaurant is married to an American from Ohio and lived a year in Ohio). We enjoyed a piece and got to see the little girl of the woman who runs the place dressed as a bunny. Our only evidence of Halloween. My thoughts have been very much on Corbin recently. I have wondered how his Halloween plans developed and whether his group made the front page of the Camera as usual. I'm eager to hear all this from him.

Nyoman is such a nice young man, 25 or so. He had arranged transport through a friend, another Wayan. We went to Nyoman's house as we did for the cremation ceremony and he served us tea and we relaxed. Emily loves the Balinese children and enjoys trying to get them to come to her and for the babies to let her hold them. She is very cute in these effusions of warmth and friendship. Around 6 p.m. we went to the temple. Throughout the afternoon women had been coming to the temple with huge offerings on trays on their heads. They were still streaming into the temple well after dark. The gamelan players showed up and began playing music. Around 8 a loose procession formed and tramped about 2 kilometers to another temple. Here the gamelan of the other temple was playing. The members of "our" gamelan set on the ground in the outer temple grounds and waited. The others played several songs. We were awaiting some ceremonies to be complete in the inner temple. Then the image (or symbol) of the god, in a box, is finally carried out and the procession begins to take it back to the first temple. This was very fun, and the procession involved a whole gang from one temple joining us and heading down the road in the dark with two gamelans playing as we went. Women carried "things" (what they were I don't know) on their heads in both directions. The god symbol was comprised (I think) of a big box carried on the head, and a sort of throne carried on poles between two young men. I don't know how the women carried the things on their heads. I could hardly walk (and I even wore my sneakers) on the uneven road. Oh, while in Nyoman's family compound, one of his female relatives was doing her daily round of offerings. As she walked across the courtyard with the offering tray on her head, she lost it. It crashed to the ground. This is the only time I have ever even seen a woman have to catch or steady a tray thinking it about to fall. I am relieved to know that this is not some completely mysterious thing that all Bali women can do innately.

When the procession arrived back at the first temple, the gamelan set up and began to play and many others went into the middle temple area (within the walls). They all sat down. Prayers were offered here and then they all went into

the inner temple with the symbol of the god to pray. In the middle and inner temple, the offerings brought there throughout the afternoon were stacked everywhere. Hundreds and hundreds of these huge, stacked trays of offerings. Quite a sight. Nyoman took us into the middle temple, though I sensed he was a bit uncomfortable in doing so. Then when the group entered the inner temple, he escorted us to the outer temple grounds to await them coming out. He and Wayan wanted to go eat and so Emily and I remained at the temple.

The gamelan was playing in its pavilion. Many people were selling nuts and snacks on the outer temple grounds. Groups of men and groups of women sat and chatted and enjoyed themselves seemingly everyone eating snacks. The gender segregation here is quite remarkable. Rarely do you see a man and woman talking. Yet the counterpart of this is interesting too. The contact among individuals in both genders is very close, very friendly, and very physically affectionate. It is common to see men, especially unmarried young men, walking along holding hands, hugging one another, arm in arm or even for one man to stand behind another with his arms around another. Women are equally affectionate with one another. Both genders love the children. They play with them, hug them, hold and kiss them constantly. This is a very affectionate culture with the exception of between genders. We asked Nyoman about how males and females get together and what they do. It is very limited. He is 25 and says he isn't even thinking of girls and won't until after 27 when he can get a good job. It seems that if a male and female catch each other's eyes, they can rarely even talk with each other. On Mondays the boy can go visit the girl in her home, I suppose if admitted and always under supervision. If they see each other on the road, they might chat a bit if the girl's family is not in sight. Other than this there is little contact until the boy tells his father he wants to marry a girl. The father (I suppose he must agree) then talks with the girl's family and then they must agree. Much care is taken that marriage doesn't involve a match that is within the descendants of the first four generations of a common ancestor. The fourth is marginally acceptable, but the fifth is finally okay.

While Nyoman and Wayan were gone to eat, Emily and I noticed how much attention we got from the Balinese. First of all, of the hundreds of Balinese there we were the only non-Balinese present. Secondly, we were together--a man with a woman. Thirdly, I know the Balinese are totally curious about our age difference. We could see groups looking in our direction and chatting among themselves. We have grown quite accustomed to being looked at and talked about and we tend to respond by smiling at them to let them know that we know what they are about. The Balinese have wonderful senses of humor and are constantly joking and enjoying each other. They love it when they can include you in their joking and when you respond with a smile and good humor. For example, we have been debating about Balinese physical characteristics. I argue

that there is a Balinese walk. Emily now sees this and thinks it is a very sexy way for the young men to walk. They walk very smoothly with relaxed bodies with the pelvis slightly forward. Very comfortably in contact with the ground, with a relaxed confident unhurried gait. She commented on how sexy this walk was as we walked down the road with Nyoman and Wayan. I decided to try to walk this way. Without telling them, I tried, in earnest, to walk this way. They immediately knew exactly what I was trying to do. They thought this to be very funny. They even began to talk about how to walk. For example, to walk like a king requires that the little “tail” that hangs down in the front of the sarong should be carried over the left arm. Nyoman did this and everyone around, seeing him, laughed and thought it a grand joke.

When Nyoman and Wayan returned from eating we went to the area near where the gamelan was playing and listened to that a while. Then in the back of that pavilion the dancers were getting prepared in their costumes. We went in this little room and watched them for a while. Then we took a place on the lawn near a sort of temporary bamboo pavilion with an enclosure at one end with curtains constructed that would act as the stage for the dancing. The gamelan players moved their instruments to this open pavilion and set up to accompany the upcoming dances.

The music began. The first dance was solo Baris. The young man with the triangular military hat and the distinctive wide eyes raised shoulders and Baris step. Interesting dance. It seemed more comical to me than I had expected. Seemed the caricature of a warrior rather than anything very realistic. It was fine and I am impressed that even in such a small community (there are literally hundreds of these all over Bali) that such fine gamelan playing and dancing could exist.

The next two dances were done by young women. One was solo and was a version of Legong (though done as a solo and shortened). The second was done by two dancers and was a “new” dance, the one we had seen at Ubud Palace involving the dancers using the edges of a kind of drape behind them to form yellow wings that they raised and lowered at times. This seemed to me to be a kind of courting dance and might represent two butterflies (though Nyoman indicated he thought they were birds). It turned out that Wayan, who was with us, is a fine dancer (having danced Barong, Baris, and others), and that one of these female performers was his dance teacher. Wayan is 18 and a remarkably handsome young man. After this female dance was Topeng, the masked dance. This is a drama more than a dance. The maskers use postures and walks related to Baris, but they speak their roles. This was quite a long drama involving something of the story of the founding of Klungkung or something on those lines. It involved one character at first (the classic Topeng) then he changes to “the old man” (much joking about who will look like this old man and how

soon). Then several characters who simply stand and speak their parts dramatically while the gamelan at this point takes up a kind of pace keeping refrain awaiting the signal that the characters have spoken their parts. Finally, a huge fat guy (one of the few I have seen, and it turns out he lives in Nyoman's family compound, his cousin or something) comes out in a female mask and plays a comic role. The audience became more attentive. The drama finally wound down with a final character with a very small white mask and that ended the dancing for the evening.

Everyone watched the dancing. They watched it with rapt attention. There were many young boys who sat right to the side of the curtain and seemed completely fascinated by every moment of the performance though by this time it was nearing midnight. Other children seemed fascinated by the gamelan and sat as close to a gamelan player as they could. Some gamelan players actually played with a child sitting on their laps. Other than during Topeng, everyone was remarkably attentive. Still there was little visible audience reaction. No applause after dances. When the butterfly dancers wiggled their hips at one moment in a move seemingly designed to attract the other, there was some laughter and response. Also, quite a few people began to mill around a bit during Topeng. It seemed that only a few were following the words during Topeng. Many stood, some sat on the ground, but everyone was attentive throughout most of the 2-hour dance performance. The dances are sort of entertainment, sort of offerings to the gods who are present. The continuity between the entertainment and the offering quality of a dance is measured by where the dance is done. In the inner temple it is an offering mostly, though lovely to watch. If in the outer temple, it is more entertaining, though still an offering. I think that individual variation and that dancers showing a mild amount of individuality are tolerated only in the outer temple. Knowing that all dance, like all offerings, is for the gods, it need not be seen to be an offering (interesting point in my discussion of dance theory) though it must be very beautiful, the dancer is a medium as much as anything, hence the fixed (masklike) facial expression (this is interesting to my theory as well) and rigidity of dance forms.

After the dance was over, everyone started filing into the middle temple. Prayers were then to be offered. We elected at that time to head home. Wayan brought us; Nyoman stayed since it was his temple to, in his words, "enjoy the festival of his temple." I was profoundly impressed with the whole affair and delighted to finally see temple dancing. Emily felt that she had had quite a remarkable birthday and enjoyed everything as well.

Being with Nyoman, rather than Nama, was quite an experience. Nyoman is less confident in his English than Nama, but he clearly is much more interested in us and in telling us facts about his culture than is Nama. It was wonderful to be with him, to hang out and to see him interact with his friends. He was so

gracious, generous, and caring. He was courteous and modest. Just a very fine person who is nice to know and fun to be with. This cast Nama in a slightly more critical light. He seems less in touch with his culture, though he constantly covers this with a kind of New Agism aimed at non-Balinese. He simply doesn't know his culture like most who really participate do. Nyoman touched me deeply when he said that he had spent a couple months studying hotel management by traveling around south Bali interviewing hotel managers. He said that he was very sad at this time and at other times when he had to be away from his family. Clearly his life has its meaning because of his relationship with his family. Nama seems to cover himself. He was even openly to us critical of Nyoman who he said was young and didn't know the meaning of things. Yet we learned more concrete things about Bali religion and culture from Nyoman in one evening than we have in nearly a month from Nama. Interesting things to reflect on.

The day before, i.e., Oct 30, Emily came down with a bladder infection. It was of sudden onset. Just suddenly she felt terrible and had trouble peeing. We made a quick diagnosis and looked up in the Nepal book the drugs to get to treat the condition. The Indonesia book said you could get any prescription drugs without prescription at an Apotek, none of which we had seen. I made a list of the drugs and noted that Emily is allergic to sulfa and went to Bali Restaurant to ask where I could find an Apotek.

Only Nyoman was there and when I asked, he, knowing that Emily was sick, simply handed me a helmet and we got on his scooter and headed to the other side of Ubud to the Apotek. There struggling to make sure I was getting something legitimate I finally paid 79,000 rupiah for 5 days medication and was back at the bungalow within an hour. Emily recovered quickly, thanks to fast action. Add one more to our Indonesian experience.

Nama brought me mail this morning. I learned that a package sent me in Darwin didn't make it. Don't know what to do about that. Two letters from mother were nice to get. A bit of department junk, little of interest. Good to get mail if for no other reason than to feel that we can now leave here without missing mail in route.

It was much cooler last night, and I slept through the night (first time in a while) and feel refreshed this morning and ready to go forward. We'll need to make some decisions about leaving in the next couple days.

### **November 2, 1993**

Got mail from CU yesterday and as a result decided not to go to Neusner's conference in Florida—too soon after I get back is the main reason, but then it forces me to spend too much time thinking about and working on that paper. Also .decided I must finish the play book ASAP. Dennis Pakula is using my play stuff for his thesis. I find myself in a mode of generating all kinds of new thoughts and projects now and I must find a way to allow that creative process

to go forward while returning to projects in process and make choices, that I stick to, on priorities. I'm going to work on evaluating priorities and try to do some planning.

*To Risk Meaning Nothing*--must finish this spring. Need to rethink the organization and structure. Write chapters on Turner and Sartre.

*Storytracking*--want to get at least the first chapter completed and the work organized and carefully outlined by mid--summer with all the basic text comparison complete and know what I have to do. Then finish it fall '94 while teaching Australian Religions.

*Dancing*--winter & spring write entries for dictionary on Indonesia, Thailand, and Nepal and native North America. Outline some work on dance theory. Working from Fraleigh and Sartre and do bib work for body theory. Teach "Dance and Religion" 2nd term summer.

Ritual Studies Anthology. A week's work spread over February and March.

Long term--dancing, body, etc. Perhaps if the Amsterdam program comes off, do a presentation on the face of Balinese dance as mask from a Sartrian perspective. Need to make notes on that anyway

### **November 3, 1993**

Yesterday was a major ceremonial day for me here in Bali. Nama came by early in the morning with a Fed Ex envelop for me. Jake Smith wanting recommendations for grad schools. Nama told us that his friend Wayan was having the "top day" of his family temple ceremony that day and we could go. We agreed and I quickly dressed in my ceremonial garb and Nama took me over on the motor bike while Emily dressed. He returned for her.

Soon after arriving a marching gamelan had formed in the road and many young women came from Wayan's houses into the road carrying large offerings, largely ones made of bamboo and other grasses formed into beautiful designs, on their heads. With those long flags and umbrellas we processed to a nearby village temple where everyone except the hired gamelan players went into the inner temple to pray. The women filed up one by one and placed their offering on a large concrete table that was in a pavilion before a covered shrine that looked like a chair or throne, perhaps the seat of the god? With the offerings in place everyone knelt on the ground and while the priest in a pavilion on the side prayed with the typical accompaniment of his bell, all the people prayed. After the prayers they took the offerings up again and returned to the street forming a procession. Again, back down the road we went, this time passing Wayan's house and going one or two kilometers down the road to another temple. This temple happened to be alongside a grade school and the gamelan players set up in the school yard to perform. I sat with Emily in the school yard and watched the gamelan players. It was interesting for me on this whole deal to be near the gamelan players so that I could try to figure out this kind of music.

I found that much of it is constructed on a basic eight or sixteen count. Each instrument has a fairly rigid combination to beat out within this base count. For example, one large gong might strike on beats one and seven, while the other large gong strikes on beats six and eight. The small gongs have similar patterns, though some of them do more than simply strike the beat, they have a double strike or a special striking technique. The ceng (or cymbals) have whole sections signaled by the drummer who is the leader. I could anticipate their playing patterns fairly well after just a few repetitions. It is quite amazing and fascinating the results of all these instruments each doing its own thing, once they all fit together. Still, I don't know how they know one song from another, though clearly there are dozens of them. Somehow the drummer signals the song in his introductory phrase and they all know what to do. While I thought that I might like to play gamelan in the Naropa group in Boulder, I have decided that perhaps this isn't so appealing. [I did end up playing in the CU gamelan for several years.] I like listening to the effect of the whole piece better than I think I would like to simply count an eight-count making sure I hit a gong on beats two and seven. [Interestingly, eventually I preferred the challenge of playing to listening to the music I was helping to make.] I don't know, perhaps there are other attractions. Perhaps there is a kind of meditation that one falls into while keeping one's part going in the pattern. It was interesting that once in a while the music got screwed up. If one person gets off, there is certainly a notable change in the music and the other players tend to get on the one who gets off. That part was fun to see as well, since these were just local people who happen to enjoy playing gamelan.

After that procession we returned to Wayan's house. The offerings were taken into the temple area and the rest of us went into the house compound. I could hear singing and praying in the temple. The gamelan players were given coffee and offered lunch, for it was noon by this time, given a gift of goods in plastic bags and they left. We hung around wondering where Wayan Nama had gone. He deserted us soon after we arrived leaving us, the only non-Balinese, to our own devices. By this time, we were beginning to wonder if the family even knew we had been invited. A couple people made an effort to visit with us: a young college student and an elderly quite stately gentleman. Though both were nice, after an hour or so of waiting, Nama had not shown up, and I felt much like an intruder. Though I had met Wayan, the host, and his wife and had greeted both of them earlier, I didn't feel that anyone else knew we were anything but tourist gatecrashers and so I choose to leave and walk back. It was only a couple kilometers or three and the walk back was nice.

The afternoon was directed to work on setting my academic priorities and to beginning serious thinking on the play book, which turned out to emerge as highest priority and with Sartre and the notes I wrote a year ago, I am ready to



proceed. Also spent a bit of time reading a Tony Hillerman novel. Not much good, but it does remind me some of my Navajo-Hopi connections.

The evening was for the Temple ceremony in Payungah, Nyoman's village. This was to be the last night of the main ceremony. We got a ride with young Wayan shortly after 8 p.m. and again spent some time in Nyoman's family's house. I met his brother who was working on his computer in his apartment. He is working on a master's degree through a university in Yogya. He is interested in teacher education. He is a very nice man, and it is nice to see a Balinese home with books, a computer, and a resident student. Clearly the family was very proud of him and his accomplishments. His apartment was set up very nicely for him to work.

Then we went to the temple. This required some waiting at the warung across the road where Emily sparred with the locals. She gets into their joking and has lots of fun with them. Finally, we crossed to the temple and after all the people prayed in the inner temple (which we watched from the middle temple) everyone gathered around the outdoor pavilion where the dancing was to take place. While watching the people praying in the inner temple, I noticed the dancers, mostly men of middle age, preparing their makeup and costumes in a shed along the side of the inner temple. Clearly their role is religiously important.

The dance pavilion was equipped with microphones and lights, some of which were designed to have dramatic effect. The performance that was to unfold, interrupted one time only by a brief shower, lasted more than three hours and had many parts and characters. A great deal of it was clearly humorous, though I got only the physical humor of the clowns who performed near the end (the last hour I suppose), but everyone was riveted to the dialog and there were many laughs. The gamelan sat to one side rather than around the dance area as before. The gamelan clearly had some music to accompany the performance, but it became very clear that they, through the drummer leader, were taking cues from the performers.

I don't know how to begin to describe this performance. It involved many scenes and many characters that seemed in the last hour to build very dramatically, though interestingly with clowns mediating everything, to quite a finale: the entrance, stabbing, and speaking dance of Rangda, the last part of which she was accompanied by her two sons. Also, it turns out that when Rangda entered, she did so by coming down a ramp that went to the top of the temple wall: she literally descended from the temple amidst fire and smoke. When her presence was felt, the audience all knelt as she was the "symbolic god" I was told. Now let me return to the beginning and attempt to recall some of the scenes.

An early part of the dance involved a single masked figure, like Topeng, perhaps Jaok. Then the figure changed to "the grandfather" and danced. This was interesting in that the old man engaged some of the children who sit

attentively near the stage entrance. I also noticed that one little girl showed great fear of the old man. When he turned in her direction, she fled which required nearly climbing over half a dozen people.

Another scene involved two figures, seems like they were the same as performers on Sunday evening. One was the straight man and the other was a comic. They bantered back and forth many times and this was a delight to the audience. Some of the humor is physical, but most was verbal. Even the small children seemed to stay with this, though clearly some “got” more of the humor than others. People near me would laugh heartily and then repeat quietly to themselves the funny lines and laugh again.

Then the drama went into a mid-section that involved two figures (neither masked) and a young woman. She perhaps was a consort of Rangda, I don't know. They were joined eventually by another woman. These women danced some but had long speaking parts and one of these dancers in particular gave a very long monologue received with shouts and hoots.

This troupe was eventually joined by what appeared an old lady, but it might just as well have been an old man, and there was dialog among all of them. None were masked but were clearly playing familiar characters. The audience seemed a bit less attentive though perhaps this was due to the hour that this group performed.

Next, if memory serves me at all, a group of four women did a very pretty woman's dance and before they finished the performance was briefly interrupted by a shower. We all ran to the gamelan pavilion and I was surprised that even before it stopped raining, everyone hurried back to the performance pavilion to get a better place to see. I was amazed that while by this time it was well past midnight and I had been standing on my toes all evening trying to see a little, all the Balinese were hanging in there.

Once everyone was in place again, the drama started with the entrance of a skinny old man clown. This guy was a marvel of comedy. He had a huge wooden meat cleaver in the back of his sash. He wore a black sarong, a sort of rag covering tightly his hair. His upper body was naked, but painted with a few simple white lines, a couple over and under his breasts, and perhaps a vertical line down the center of his chest. He soon did a caricature of women's style dancing that was most artful. He had all the moves and seemed to imitate them perfectly until he would give comic exaggeration to a hip move, like doing a hunching move along with a side-to-side hip movement. Everyone loved this and crowded forward like canned sardines to catch every move. Soon another clown entered. This one a slightly plump man with his face painted with red and white in a manner that made him look rather monkey-like to me. He too was bare chested and wore a sarong. An early joke was a physical one. Apparently, he made some reference to his penis and threatened to expose it. He pulled back

his sarong, only to reveal another sarong, everyone laughed. Then he pulled this back, yet another sarong, everyone laughed. Some also gasped at what they expected, but then the men pulled back, in a flurry, several more sarongs, never getting to his bare self (perhaps a physical demonstration of Sartre's insubstantial self--my own joke). At times these two clowns caricatured women's dance together in a most hilarious way. The second clown would caricature the first clown's caricature to great effect, especially since he would do it behind the first clown so he couldn't see him. One great joke was a play on the Balinese fingers curving backward. The first clown could do it. The second clown used one finger to try to hold his fingers into a backward curving position. Everyone loved all this. Much of their humor was grossly physical: lots of belching, farting, and sexual interplay. The second clown carried a black portable microphone in his sash. This technological innovation became also a comic innovation. First it looked like a large black penis. They played on this resemblance for quite some time. Further, with the mike close to the mouth the clown could make funny farting and belching sounds accompanied, of course, by the appropriate physical actions.

A masked monkey figure joined these two for quite a time. They teased and threatened the monkey (man or woman? I rather think woman). They chased her, the first clown chased her with his cleaver (after of course going through the motions of sharpening it on his thigh and threatening his own genitals). At one point the two clowns lay down on mats to sleep. The monkey woman joined them after they went to sleep. The second clown got up but the first one got hold of the monkey woman and began fondling and caressing her as a man might his wife in sleep, or in the dark in bed. Everyone nearly lost it at this point. When the clown awoke to see what he was "loving" he went on and climbed on top of her and imitated in a highly exaggerated way, sexual intercourse. This nearly did in the monkey and the first clown invited the second one to follow him, an invitation accepted. Hump. Hump. Hump. The monkey figure finally left.

The sequence may be wrong here, but either at this point or during the discourse between these clowns and a male figure dressed in what I'd call royal garb, there was a furious mock funeral. This was conducted completely by young people. They sprinted into the pavilion with a bed made of bamboo that they erected on bamboo stilts near chest high. They carried a body of a young man wrapped in a mat. They erected the bed. Roughly and furiously, they placed, the mat bound body on the bed, unwrapped it, washed it by dumping a bucket of water over it, covered it with a sheet, added a few offerings, and rewrapped it in the mat. They secured the mat to the bed. Then they spun round and round, reminding me of the spinning during the funeral procession, and flew out of the pavilion into the road in front temple. With torches they ran in one direction, returning in a few minutes they ran to the other direction. A few minutes later

they could be heard to the side or behind the temple perhaps a block or so away. I would love to know what this was about and how it fit into the pattern of the drama.

Then entered a sort of royal looking male figure. This figure talked with the clowns extensively. Attention turned to a secondary curtained platform up a ramp to the top of the temple wall. It seemed to me that they were arguing who should go up to that area and get whoever was behind the curtain. Clearly it was a frightening thought, as with attention directed toward the platform, a fire emitted billowing smoke around the platform and flames shot in great blasts from behind the wall here and there (incidentally effected by a man blowing a flammable liquid into the path of a torch). At this time, everyone knelt or sat on the ground, the Balinese gesture of respect when “the god is present.” I noticed some in the audience were very serious, some even appeared frightened or awed. A preliminary to this scene was the entrance of umbrella bearers who stationed themselves with red umbrellas atop tall poles at either side of the base of the ramp. These umbrellas also apparently signal the presence of the god. As this happened, the young 16-year-old Wayan said to me, “The coming of the symbolic god.” The royal figure brandished his kris dagger and threatened the clowns. They would make feints at going up the ramp, but they never had the courage. Finally, the royal figure began his slow ascent. At the top he went behind the platform and dragged the costumed witch Rangda down the ramp. At the base of the ramp, he took his kris and stabbed in highly dramatic effect Rangda time and again. Rangda did not appear to suffer. Rather she entered the dance pavilion and did her speech (and dance?). Soon other umbrellas (yellow ones) appeared signaling other deities and from the center door of the temple wall and the side door came two other Rangda figures. These were sons of Rangda. They joined her in the pavilion (the clowns and the Royal dude were still there), danced and the whole group exited in a rushing procession up and down the road and back into the pavilion. A brief dance seemed to follow and the three Rangda figures exited by going into the middle temple through the central door. That ended a 3-to-4-hour performance. Everyone was going back into the temple to pray and we exited for home with Wayan. The time was after 1:30 a.m.

On the way home, I was totally confused by all this. From my reading Rangda is an evil witch. How could she be “the symbolic god”? Wayan said that in his village there is also a Barong. The Barong and Rangda fight with one another and Barong wins making the world right (a noted difference from Eiselman’s description that neither wins in the village he lives in) Wayan first suggested that since Nyoman’s village has no Barong, that Rangda must represent good, but then he said that he couldn’t understand it himself. My reading this morning suggests to me that the box that contains the symbol of god contains the masks that represent god. So, on Sunday night when we went to the other temple what

we brought back in the box were the masks of Rangda and her sons. On the third day of the temple ceremony, these masks are taken out of their boxes and activated for the evening performance. Eiselman describes these being returned to their boxes at the very end of the festival and returned to their safe place to be kept until the next appearance of god.

There are lots of things I don't get. Why the mock funeral? Why the stabbing of Rangda? Is Rangda a witch? How can Rangda be the "symbol of god"? What do the Balinese mean by "the symbolic god"? What is effect by this dance-drama? Why are the clowns so intimately connected with the entrance of the "symbolic god"? I'll try to ask Nyoman about these things today.

Interestingly Emily spent lots of her time during the dance-drama jousting with the young Balinese men. They teased her in Balinese taught her words for things; laughed and bantered with her. She returned this in kind, teasing them and relishing the attention. For the most part I didn't mind this at all, but I did realize that she was really having "fun" as she calls it. She paid little attention to me and "hung out" with these guys. I'd call what they were doing as "hitting on her," though she didn't see it as that, but since they didn't pay me much attention, I have to think that her age and gender had a great deal to do with it. You could also see it in their eyes. On returning home we spoke little, though Em asked me several times if I had "fun" and repeated the question several times this morning. She repeatedly told me that she had lots of "fun" and this was the first time that we had hung out socially with anyone since we left. She later told me that during the evening she had "Noticed my age." All this is interesting and bears some thinking about. Certainly, I recall that seeing her flirting with these guys didn't make me jealous, but it did make me sad and perhaps a bit ashamed about who I am, the old guy who isn't fun. We talked a little about this this morning and I'm sure it will have its impact. Em just got up from a long nap and seems in a bit of a bad mood. Doubtless some trouble brews for today.

It is rather hot this morning, but a breeze just stirred. We are trying to decide when to leave for Yogya. It may be Friday, but Nama has mentioned a shadow puppet and tooth filing as Wayan D's house on Friday. Will we ever get free of Nama? We also don't know how to pay or give gifts to these guys we have been with here. Notably we haven't spent any time with women here at all.

I must cash travelers checks today and I'll try to call Jenny. I'm eager to learn from her what she found out in Steamboat. Hope she got a job and a place to live. I'm missing her quite a bit now.

#### **November 4, 1993**

We're in the process of trying to determine when to leave. We had definitely decided on Friday, tomorrow, but then I had second thoughts. We had stayed for the temple ceremony we went to yesterday and we were planning on going to the tooth filing tomorrow. Then there is shadow puppet theatre which would

be nice to see at Wayan's house. We hesitated, and we will see today what happens. Likely we will leave Saturday. I also want desperately to talk with Nyoman about the dance drama we saw in his village. He is supposed to be at a reception at Wayan's house today. I mainly wanted to leave because I felt manipulated by Nama and because I feel uncomfortable in Wayan's house. But I'll just have to be patient and see if I can do the best thing. I don't want to commit a Bob Lester and cut off my penis to deprive my mate of sex.

Called Jenny yesterday around noon. It was wonderful to talk with her and to learn that she has a good chance to get a lift op job at Steamboat and a good chance for housing. She got there early and seemed to have prepared properly. She'll call today (tomorrow for her) to find out. She had gotten new tires but didn't think they were snow tires. This has been much on my mind since I know she will need snow tires living in Steamboat. Anyway, it was great to talk with her. She also told me that Corbin's Halloween group had made the TV news and the front page of the newspaper. Bet they were great to see. She said that he had had a party at the dome on Halloween. That is rather unbelievable. Nice that he did it. Guess it was okay with Judy in Steamboat with Jenny.

Yesterday afternoon Emily had a major low with homesickness. I sat with her and she cried. I cried a bit thinking of Jenny and wanting to be with her--to be there to help her and to guide her. But then we both got hold of ourselves and we are much better. We also talked about the issue raised the night before. . While we are both aware of our age difference, we both want to be with the other at least for now and I believe that we are both being open and honest without manipulative or hidden agenda. I wrote to Lynn about the department's mission statement and told her a bit of what I have been doing. Also wrote a letter of rec for Jacob Smith, a sympathy note to Roxie, whose mother died, and got the whole thing mailed last evening.

Went to Kacak last night. This is a for tourist dance, so it isn't done other than for tourists. We paid 5,000 r. for the Bimo ride and the admission. Not many attended. The area was the outer temple of a village temple compound, but it looked like an abandoned temple. Chairs were placed around the grounds and a blue plastic tarp covered the ground. In the middle was a makeshift metal affair that served as the principal light.

The men entered, more like 30 than the 100 indicated on the program, sat in a circle and did their cak (chak) cak thing. I thought they were pretty shabby. Their sarongs (the black checkered ones whose name I forget) looked like they had never been washed. They were bare chested and of many sizes, shapes, and ages. Some old guys who were in the back seemed only to fill places, never cak-caking, just holding up their hands when it was time. This annoyed me as well as the constant flashes of the cameras by the tourists.

This dance includes a little of everything. Legong style women's dance, the deer dance female, several masked figures including the ever-popular monkey god, the works. It didn't make a whole lot of sense, as any of these ever do all that much. The tourist next to me from Australia literally spent half her time trying to figure why her camera wouldn't work, and most of the rest of the time looking at the meaningless program trying to figure out what was going on. Hope she got a picture so when she gets home, she will have an icon of a nonexperience. But I must get over this being offended by others. They do their thing, I do mine. We do what we do. So that's that. The Balinese seem to let this be. I should also. Damn it. I will. Sartre says I have free choice.

The evening also included trance dance. This was the best part for me. Two men carried a young, perhaps 8 years old, girl each into the dance area. These girls had their eyes closed and expressionless faces. They stood them on the blue tarp. A group of women singers sat on one side in the background and the kacak men sat on the other side in even rows. These became the singers who accompanied the "trance" dances of the little girls legong. The dances were lovely, especially as performed by such young girls. At the end of the dance, the girls would collapse on their sides on the ground. Two women then came from the chorus and lifted them to their feet and placed them again in the center in readiness for the next dance. One of the dancers had a bit of her headdress come loose. She danced on, eyes closed all the time, and a woman came from the chorus and fixed this without interrupting the dancer. Again, they fall to the ground. After the third dance, I believe, the girls were tended by the two women. The women held them lying stretched out on their backs with their heads on the women's laps. Their headdresses were removed, and hair undone. The priest came out sprinkled holy water on them. Then the women holding them from behind, the girls still in the position of reclining on their backs and shock them from side to side several times. Their hair flew free, and they awoke. The priest gave them holy water to drink, and they exited fully awake.

The next dance was supposed to be a fire dance, another trance dance. For this the blue tarp was removed. A rice bag full of coconut husks was dumped in the center of the dance area. A flammable liquid was poured on the husks and lighted. A man with a wooden rake stirred the fire until it was burning well. Then an old man riding a weird sort of stick horse affair entered. He went straight for the burning pile and kicked it, exploding it all over the dance area. He turned and kicked it again. Round and round he road kicking the fire. He used a sort of shuffle step I take it to keep from stepping directly on burning embers. As he kicked the mess around, the rake man raked it back together in the center so the old guy would continue to have something to kick. This went on until everything had pretty much burned up and only embers were left here and there over the area. Then the rake man chased down the horseman and forced him to sit on the

bottom step to the temple door. The stick horse was removed, and the priest came out to sprinkle the man and give him holy water to drink. Again, he was supposed to exit from trance. A man announced this was the end. The cast of players had been larger than the audience, and I felt quite disappointed as we crawled into the bimo for the return trip.

Regarding the trance. Likely this was but theatrical, but to me it doesn't matter much whether trance is technically an altered state or not. Simply to appear to be entranced could have a significant affect if done in some contexts. This was tourist context, however, and had no meaning other than entertainment. I have loved the video tapes I have seen of kakak. This, seen in Bali, experience was less than what I had hoped for.

On the way to this village for the dance, we encountered many large temple gatherings. The roads were full of white and gold dressed men and the colorfully dressed women carrying offerings. I wished I could go to one of these, perhaps one where Barong performed. Lots of sleepy Balinese this morning no doubt. On the way to the kakak, we drove past the monkey forest. There had been a small accident there. A woman riding on the back of a motor scooter carrying a temple offering had dropped it in the road. These offerings are food, of course. The monkeys from the forest, likely 20 of them, had seen opportunity at once and had rushed out to help themselves to the offering. The woman and the scooter driver stood at roadside, disappointed looks on their faces, waiting for the monkeys to finish their temple treats, so they could retrieve the basket that had covered the top of the offering. I wonder about the consequences of losing a temple offering. It must be a great disappointment. I wonder if it portends the inauspicious or is merely looked on as an accident. Would be a good question for someone.

It seems very hot this morning, though I feel content. Breakfast was light and the coffee, of which I drink but a little, tends to wire me. Trying to write the letter to Lynn yesterday late morning was almost impossible because the coffee makes my hands shake. I'll stop that shortly. I drank no caffeine before leaving home. I need to return to that.

Slept rather well last night despite the heat and the sheet that always gets wrinkled beneath me and the occasional cries of the small child belonging to a German couple in the adjoining bungalow. I am certainly ready to head for Yogya. Will call Corbin soon after we get there to talk about his Halloween and to see how he is. Look forward to that. Am nearing the end of the Hillerman novel. Would like to sell it back before we leave. Couple thousand rupiah back, wow! Did laundry this morning hoping to get everything clean and dry before our next travels. Think I'll work some on the play material this morning.



**November 5, 1993**

Last evening in Bali. Have about half an hour before time to go eat. The last sunset. Just a few minutes ago the clouds parted enough to see the full red orb of the sun, and we haven't seen really any hugely beautiful sunsets while we have been here.

Could go to a shadow puppet performance this evening but nixed it. We have sort of shut the door on our Bali experience and just can't get into doing the traditional dress one more time.

Washed a few clothes this morning so everything but what is on my body is clean, or at least as clean as possible given conditions here. Have paid Wayan for our housing; have gotten together the notes and money for Nyoman and Nama. Have our bus tickets and have arranged for taxi to the Denpasar bus station. Have only to finish packing in the morning. The little pizza place where we often eat and watch a movie is run by a woman from Yogyakarta. Last night I asked her for a suggestion on places to stay in Yogya. She has a friend there who has a homestay. It is new and has showers and fans and in an excellent location. She said he charges 10,000 r. That should be good for us. She also suggested not to stay in Solo. A day trip there would be better. So, we feel ready to move on to Yogya. We also have places to stay in mind in both Kathmandu and Bangkok, so that only leaves us a few nights here and there having to hunt: the nights in northern Thailand, the night in Denpasar before leaving for Thailand; and, of course, every night on the trek.

We have gone to a neighboring group of bungalows to swim in their pool the last two afternoons. Did sit ups and squats as well. This bit of exercise certainly helps. Both times we have been at the pool, I, for some reason, began to think about how I would change the dome if I am able to get it. I think I'll open a new file in this journal to keep track of some of those thoughts. Most interesting to me is how much of myself is identified with building and imagining plans and building and changes, etc. I really love this, and it really gets the juices flowing.

Nama didn't get in touch with us yesterday for the house ceremonies and didn't show up today. Nyoman was perhaps to come by as well. Nama showed up at Melati's pool--he does some landscaping for them--and said that he had a bit of influenza and was under the weather. He offered to go to the shadow puppet theatre with us, but we declined. I still want very much to talk extensively with Nyoman in the morning. Have my questions ready. Hope that works out.

The other thing I have been very involved with in the last couple days is a reorganization of my play book. I've spent many hours rethinking this and I'm pleased (though I have been before) with a whole new organization that turns out to be not all that different in some respects (it mainly involves completely redoing one chapter into five), but the results will be much more my book and much more manageable, I think. Anyway, I'm working away on it and I think

that I will be able to even begin serious writing on this right away. At least very detailed outlining. I'm excited and am committed to getting this actually finished. I guess I have had to wait five years to get this all straight in my head. Perhaps reading a bit of Sartre and Dennis Pakula's thesis proposal was what it finally took. Now I just have to deliver.

Though the trip is just reaching its halfway point, I feel like the second half will go very quickly. I did feel some homesickness, rather mild but a bit more than usual, today. Just a longing for Jenny and Corbin and for the home I don't have.

Would like to make a few summary comments on Bali, but those may be more profound with more perspective. Still, it has been a fabulous experience. Though Ubud is not such a great place, I think that to be in one place for a full month has been very important to our experience. If we had not stayed these last two weeks, we would not have developed the friendships with Nyoman and with 18-year-old Wayan. We would not have had so many ups and downs with Wayan Nama. We would have been far less involved with Bali culture. The full experience has been delightful. The things that have been hard have been mostly creature comforts--no hot water, plenty of hot sticky air, no light at night, few people to talk to, little entertainment, no chance to exercise much and the fact that this is a really long trip and throughout this month at times there has seemed like maybe too much more to go through. Not only has the Bali experience been great for me. I have written much of the Dancing entries on Bali; I have worked extensively with dancing theory and developed ideas about development of dance theory; I have in mind some writing on Balinese dance (planned for the paper for Jack, but will now become the paper for Amsterdam and Jack can use it if he wants), extensive development on theories and applications of masking (especially via Sartre, but I have in the past worked with this in ways that I'll need to recover), now I am fully back into my play book; and I worked quite a bit on the Australia book (lots of text comparison and some writing). It has been very productive.

I will remember the Balinese as warm, friendly, humorous, enigmatic and the living symbol of relativity. I find their way of life, family and friend centered; strongly revolving around home, village, and temple. It is through and through a religious way of life in the most formal ways. Nothing is excluded from religion and no one escapes extensive involvement in formal religious practice. Few places could you find it common for almost all young men and women to pray at temple regularly, to do religious dance, to play religious music, to dress in the traditional religious costumes. They do this openly and without resentment or second thoughts. They openly admit and proclaim their religious practice to one and all. People of all ages are involved seemingly equally, though the women certainly seem to do most. We have found no one to be rude, or crude, or

uncaring, though certainly there is a sense in which many Balinese seem to be angling for something from you wherever you go. I can't tell if this is real or imagined, but other non-Balinese we have visited with feel the same. The Balinese seem on the one hand completely leisurely—always time to sit, to visit, to watch the road, to smoke, to show off your cock. But, on the other hand, the Balinese are always working and often working very hard. Again, today I encountered the sand ladies with huge baskets of sand on their heads. Well, I'm sure I'll have Lots more reflections as time goes on. I am certainly ready to leave Bali, but I have enjoyed it here and do not regret any of this experience.

## *Chapter Three*

### **Java**

#### ***Yogyakarta, November 6 - 11***

**November 8, 1993**

Monday 5:30 a.m. Awakened from a 10-hour sleep, brushed my teeth for the first time in a while, moved my bowels for the first time in a couple days, so I feel somewhat better. Now in Yogyakarta, a city I expected to enjoy. Yesterday, after our arrival we began to find it very hot and oppressive in many respects and faced a sort of recurring travel crisis. But that for later. Historian that I am in this journaling, I need to go back and get the story together.

Friday, we wondered if we would see any of our Bali friends again. Nama was to take us to a tooth filing and shadow puppet at this friend's house. That was why we stayed the extra two weeks in Bali. But he didn't show 'til late afternoon saying he had felt sick on Thursday and didn't even go the reception that was before the tooth filing. I certainly didn't feel very comfortable at Wayan's family temple ceremony, so I didn't mind missing the reception. Though we could have gone to shadow puppet, we decided not to go. We ate at Domino Pizza and told our friend there goodbye. We then saw Nyoman and Wayan and Hans (from Germany) and visited with them. We went to the home behind Bali Restaurant. This is the home where we had gone to the first tooth filing. A young woman and her husband were both there and we recognized them as two of the ones who had their teeth filed. They recognized us as having come. Had a very nice visit and exchanged addresses around. This young woman had an 18-month-old child that Emily enjoyed playing with. They had some honey rice cakes drying

and offered us one to taste. These were being made for offerings. They were very good.

I started to talk with Nyoman about the dance at his temple ceremony, but there wasn't time, nor did it seem the right occasion, so he agreed to come visit me at Gerebig's Saturday morning. We said goodbye to our friends and felt we were doing a proper job of closing our Bali experience.

Saturday morning Nama came by. We visited and gave him our address and the envelop with the note and 50,000 rupiah in it for him. Nyoman came over and we talked a couple hours about the dance. That was important to me and I learned much about it. We went to lunch with Nyoman.

During lunch Nyoman got very shy and embarrassed acting then told us that he had a girl friend from Germany he wanted to tell us about. Seems she came and they went together to various places around the island. Nyoman acting as guide. Then the girl went to Kuta for a few days. She returned and told Nyoman she had sweet feelings for him. He told her he liked her too. She is 28, he is 24. She wondered if her being older would bother him. He said it did not. She returned for a month the following year and occasionally calls him on the phone. Then he said he also has a girl friend from New Zealand. Similar situation even down to him guiding her many of the same places. He was so cute telling us about these girls. A 24-year-old man who was as shy as a 10-year-old telling us personal details of his love life. He said that even another foreign girl had approached him, but he told her that he already had two girlfriends. I teased him about what he would do if they both came to visit at the same time.

He said he didn't have much luck with Balinese girls. They seem to want someone with money or stature. He also talked about marriage and men and women being together in Bali. He said that if the woman gets upset with her husband she can go to her mother's house, but she must leave her children. This is because women go to their husband's family house to live upon marriage (patrilocal). Her children belong to her husband's family. Nyoman said that usually when a woman goes home to her mother she doesn't stay long because she misses her children too much.

He then talked quite a while about his mother (whom we had met). He told us about one time when she went to her mother's and all the pressure put on her to return to her husband's family. He also talked about times as a schoolboy that he played tricks on his mother and how angry she got. He even said he took money from her to buy his school friends things. He said she never learned who did it. Nyoman seemed very confessional during lunch. Maybe it is easy to talk of these things to strangers. He also thanked us several times for the money we had given him the night before (30,000 rupiah). He said that he had had a broken part on his motor scooter that he hadn't had the money to fix. Apparently, he had paid for it to be fixed that morning and was very happy to have the money.

We had arranged a taxi (35,000 rupiah) to Ubund Bus Station at 2 p.m. and said goodbye to Gerebigs and went to the road to wait. As predicted, it didn't show. A phone call at 2:10 assured us the taxi was on its way. At 2:20 we went to Bali Restaurant and asked 18-year-old Wayan to drive us. Nyoman wanted to go, so we had more visit with them. We made it to the bus station in a flurry at 3 p.m. exactly when we were supposed to arrive. Nyoman took our tickets, we unloaded the bags. The bus station was a mad house. Buses everywhere and no one seemed to speak a word of English. Nyoman finally found where we were to go but learned that the bus was late. Don't know why this surprised me. He and Wayan stayed with us for the hour or more we waited for that bus. They were friendly and Nyoman repeatedly thanked us and said it was he who should thank us for being his friend. It was a sad departure, but Em and I were ready to go on.

The bus was comfortable and upon sitting down we were given bottled water and a bun. We settled in for the overnight journey. Sometime after dark we came to the west end of Bali. We stopped to await the ferry. Food sellers came on the bus to sell food. We didn't buy. Then the bus drove on the ferry and we got off the bus and went to the upper deck for the 30-minute ride to Java. it was hot and very dark. The ferry was very dirty. We were the only non-Indonesians on the ferry. Em was approached by a boy who wanted to shine her shoes. She had on her Dr. Martens. She paid the 500 r and let him shine them. He did a fine job and everyone on the ferry seemed to watch intently the whole process. In fact, many simply stared at us through the whole time we waited to leave and while we crossed. A Javanese man visited with Emily. He was a university student studying Russian, if you can believe it. I can't figure how an Indonesian would know much about that.

After the ferry ride, we settled in for the long night's ride. Very bumpy and was a severely rough ride all night long. We stopped around 10 p.m. where we were given an Indonesian buffet meal. Not bad. Throughout the night, whenever I awoke and looked out, there were people on bicycles, people in the road, people everywhere. All night long. At 4 a.m. people were on bikes loaded with goods heading for markets or some place. I wonder if these people ever sleep. Seems they were on the road throughout the night.

As the sun arose, we were approaching Solo. Then an hour more to Yogya. We had been told that the bus would go very near our intended destination, but at the bus station we couldn't get much info from anyone and decided we must get off. We were then hit, as usual, by so many trying to carry our bags, to take us somewhere. We finally arranged for 10,000 r for a cab (the guy started at 20,000 r) and we finally arrived in the main part of Yogya. It was very early morning. We found Sari Homestay which had been recommended to us by the Domino Pizza lady in Penestanan. The room seemed very basic but had a shower

and toilet, so we decided to take it for one night anyway. We showered and rested. We had planned to sleep but couldn't. Then we remembered that there was classical dancing in the Sultan's Palace a few blocks away and decided to go.

Along Malioboro the merchants were unpacking their goods for the day. Everything imaginable and yet everything looked rather cheap. The guys with the bicycle transport (becak) were after us every step of the way, but we wanted to walk to see the sights and to get a feel for the place.

At the Sultan's Palace we found another market and after a few wrong turns found the palace. The current sultan (a symbolic figure only) lives in the palace. The 1,500 rp. fee gave us entry and a personally guided tour through the palace compound. I wasn't all that excited about the sultan, but it was interesting and beautiful. We finished the tour around 9:40 and had time to rest and drink some water before the dance began at 10:30. The gamelan was a huge orchestra that also included a men's and a women's chorus (perhaps 8 men and 8 women). The Javanese gamelan uses the same instruments as the Balinese, though larger instruments (I think) which would mean a deeper tone. They didn't seem to use the ceng-ceng or the long instrument played by 4 or more people (don't remember the name just now). The music is much slower than Bali gamelan kebyar. The singing I don't much care for. It is a kind of melody-less whining or something. To my ear it distracts from the gamelan.

The dance pavilion is huge, and I recognized it as the same as in the PBS "Dancing" film where I saw the Javanese Sea Nymph dance (bedoyo). The dancing began shortly after 10:30 and was lovely. The first was a single female. The second involved 2 women who enacted something of a dagger fight near the end. Two young men danced next--again enacting a fight with one killed at the end. The last dance was done by a young man wearing a bright red close-fitting mask. He seemed to be imitating a shadow puppet character. His face and arm and leg movements were very controlled and precise but presented that sort of jerky stiffness of the shadow puppets. He was wonderful. There may have been another dance in the middle there somewhere.

We walked back from the palace and by this time the market all along Malioboro was a mob. Em was major offended by it. We got back and tried to eat. My food, the dependable Gado Gado, was made mostly with uncooked vegetables so I didn't want to risk eating it. We got back to our bare bones room very hot, hungry, exhausted, and disenchanted with Yogya. Emily was in crisis; I wasn't far behind. Weird how quickly the oppression of heat and foreign places can rub your nerves raw.

We struggled for an hour with what to do and we knew that if we could rest and get some food, we'd feel better, but we couldn't sleep—too disappointed, too confused.

Deciding we should find a better, more comfortable, place to stay, we headed out to look. Following the guidebook, we found several places that were 2 or 3 times what we are paying here. They were no bigger and had nothing extra other than perhaps a fan. Some had no bathroom. One for 30,000 rp. had hot water but was very sterile. We decided our place was at least secure and clean and has a bath with a shower. We booked a morning tour to Borobudur for Tuesday and finally found a little place with good and very cheap food. Emotionally we were alternatively up and down all evening. We have decided to see what there is in the area without wasting any time, then to head on to cooler places. Perhaps Mt. Bromo and back to the north beaches of Bali. Today we'll go shopping, try to find dance and shadow puppet and whatever. Tomorrow a temple tour on AC bus, with maybe more dance and theatre then out of here Wednesday or Thursday. It is not yet 7 a.m. and it is already very hot. The roosters have been crowing for hours and the muezzin (Muslim person who calls people to prayer) called everyone to prayer (via loudspeaker) hours ago.

Don't know what to think of this trip now. It is barely half over, and Em and I are pretty travel weary. New places and moving around are hard. So much to carry. So much to look after and no one to talk to or ask about anything. Travel in Asia is very hard. Still, we must get our act together here and make the most of it. As hot as I feel this morning, perhaps I know why people in Indonesia stay up all night. I fell asleep at 7:30-8:00 last night, so I at least feel somewhat rested.

Would love to be in better contact with Corbin and Jenny. Want to get a card of to my mother for her birthday today. Would like to reflect more on this travel stuff but will perhaps do that later. Need to go out to eat, etc. before it gets too hot.

7:45 a.m. Emily awoke and I was hit by sadness and lots of emotion. I feel that lots of this traveling is hard, that we are doing this in the hardest way, and that I really really miss Corbin and Jenny and want to talk with them for hours and to hold them and hug them. I cried some and Em was so understanding and supportive. I feel much better just being able to say that some of this travel sucks and that I wish I were home.

We then talked about what we can do for the next 3 weeks before going to Thailand. Decided maybe to try to get nicer accommodations in the Lovina area of North Bali and hold there and swim and read, etc. for 2 1/2 to 3 weeks. Decided it will be better to pay more and have more comforts so we can be productive and happier until time to go to Thailand.

Today we'll shop, visit dance schools, see shadow puppet or *wayan golek* (solid puppets). I feel better now and am so pleased that Emily is with me and so understanding. She a jewel.



**November 9, 1993**

Yesterday was a very fun day with its own ups and downs. We left our room early in the morning, had a decent breakfast. Emily had “oath porridge” and I had an omelet--then out into the city. Emily wanted to call her parents and after some distress--the usual phone problems--we found a telecommunications place that charged 5,000 rupiah per minute for an American call, and you could charge it on Mastercard. Emily called her mother and I called Jenny. It was wonderful to talk with Jenny. She didn't get the Steamboat job, but she had interviews, today it would be, at Winter Park. I am hoping she'll get a job there. It would be so much closer to Boulder. She was also getting her snow tires exchanged which relieved me.

We went on for a walk to shop. Had lots of places mapped out. Found a shop selling leather goods—a disappointment and took advantage of a becak and driver to get around. He took us to a workshop where they made shadow puppets. It was fun to look, and we made large purchases. Later we figured we likely paid high tourist prices, and this made us momentarily sick, but that's not so bad. We like what we got and will enjoy them for years. I'll enjoy giving Corbin and Jenny each a set of puppets. Our becak driver brought us back to our room. We ate lunch then went to the Water Palace—an ancient place, partly restored, where the sultan used to play. Swimming pool, gardens (no longer there) and the works. I read that when the gardens were complete the sultan had the architect killed so he wouldn't reveal the secret rooms, etc. he had designed for the sultan's pleasure. The place hadn't been much restored, but it was interesting. The guide claimed to have earned college degree in anthropology, but he said he had been a tour guide at this place for 20 years. Part of his tour included stopping at a batik shop. Sales pitch, all lies, and high-pressure sale. I wound up buying 2 small batiks. I don't know, they sort of spoke to me, but I paid but \$5 each for them. Maybe they should be trashed—I'll see when I get back. Em and I also bought small batik cloth paintings of Ramayana shadow puppet. Kind of neat. I got black, she got red. 5,500 each. Cute ladies sold them. Fun to buy from them.

We attended a shadow puppet rehearsal in the afternoon. Very interesting. The gamelan players were very informal and chatted throughout. I imagine they do the same in actual performances. An old woman played the lead gender (is it?) and another woman sang. The dalang, puppet master, was excellent. A beautiful singing voice. He also spoke. While speaking he would tap a rhythm with a block or stone on a box in which he kept lots of his puppets. He held a ceng-ceng between his toes and played them by striking it to another on the box. This allowed him to set the pace and rhythm. It was especially effective during the many fight scenes. The woman who sang used a book. The rehearsal included numerous pieces, maybe five. The last one was high comedy. In anticipation of

this, four young Javanese boys came by and sat near the dalang. They got a great kick out of the performances.

The theatre allowed for viewing on both sides of the screen. That was nice since Javanese shadow puppets are decoratively painted. Neat.

Paid 2,000 rupiah to a skinny little guy to bring us back in his becak. A long uphill ride. He was pooped when we got here. A 30-minute ride for less than a buck!

Even with a great day we feel very oppressed here in Yogya. Too hot, polluted, crowded, to seemingly dangerous. We decided to go back to Bali, to Lovina on the north coast and rest and prepare ourselves for Thailand and Nepal.

Called Corbin last night. Went to the Telecom office at 8:45 p.m. braving a wild and crazy city. It was really fun talking to Corbin. He sounded great.

Had tests and papers and projects all due that day, but he seemed prepared and excited. Wonderful. I'm learning on this trip how much I love my kids and how much I miss them. I want to see them as soon as I get back and to see them regularly and frequently from then on.

Today was another excellent though tiring day. Arose at 4:30 a.m. and we were picked up at 5 for a trip to Borobudur and Prambanan temples. Arrived at Borobudur before it opened at 6 a.m. and we were among the first to approach the temple. This is a huge and amazing place. Covers the whole top of a hill and contains thousands of stupas base relief sculptures Buddha statues. It took 75 years to build in the 9th century, doubtless employing thousands of stone carvers and laborers throughout this time. It was abandoned shortly after it was finished, got buried in volcanic ash and fell apart until it was discovered by the Dutch in the early 19th century. It has been restored twice, the second time involving taking the whole thing apart stone by stone, numbering the stones, and keeping all the stones recorded in a computer. There are hundreds of thousands of stones. The temple is a wonder. While there, one of the Buddha statues in the midst of these bell-shaped stupas is said to grant wishes to those who can reach through the holes in the stupa and touch, for men, the ring finger of the Buddha, for women his head. I climbed to the reaching place, was successful despite my short arms reaching his ring finger and wished that we would have a safe journey and that all our relatives would be healthy and happy while we are away. A wish worth a very long stretch for any day.

The drive back to Yogya after Borobudur was hot and very polluted. Then also back in another direction to the Hindu temple complex, Prambanan. This temple (temples rather) is very tall and as amazing in its own way as Borobudur. It still has Hindu sculptures--all of the gods in the interiors of the temples. This place also was built very early and fell into ruin. Also restored. Same principle I'm sure. Then back here by 1 p.m. or so.

After a decent spaghetti lunch at N. N. across the gangway, I cashed a traveler's check, and we arranged the bus to Lovina in north Bali. We found a good used bookstore and bought five novels for reading in Bali. We've decided to splurge a little on where we stay and get some place where we are cool (need a fan), have light to read at night, a pool so we can work out, and we'll have a great three weeks resting, reading, and preparing for Thailand and Nepal.

Nights here in Yogya are hard. Without a fan it is very hot in our room. then it seems no one here ever sleeps. You can hear people talking, music playing, people walking all through the night. Then the Muslim call to prayer is at 4 a.m. someone near here has a weird clock that plays a different little ditty--twinkle twinkle little star, pop eye the sailor man, etc.--every hour. Such a struggle to get any rest. Last night when I went out to call Corbin the streets were full. Everyone was out and around. Then this morning at 5 a.m. as we drove through the streets and along the roads there were people sweeping, going places with their bikes loaded down, full buses going somewhere. Same weirdness as in Bali. The guy that runs this homestay does absolutely nothing. He is a young man, maybe 30. He sits by the door, sits outside, sits on the floor and reads the paper. He is always here, and I hear him walking around during the night. Seems he lives with his mother. Sometimes she too sits by the door. All these becak guys sit daily in their bike cabs for hours. I think many of them must actually live in their cabs. There are thousands of these guys. They mostly don't work, but when they do it is hot and hard. Seems to me most people here have a hot hard life. I couldn't take it that's for sure. Think of the hundreds of lifetimes of human labor it took to build, restore, and restore again the temples. Along the roads, road crews digging ditches, building walls, repairing the working with the simplest tools, never do I see power tools. Amazing what they do accomplish in this way. All it takes is a huge nearly free labor force and no deadlines. It took 75 years to build Borobudur. Everyone here seems stuck for life.

But there is an upper class here. There are many fine hotels, with a doorman and a piano bar (even at 8:30 a.m. when we went looking for a phone). The people who own these hotels, doubtless Indonesians, must be fabulously wealthy. I don't understand who stays in these hotels. Can't imagine a person who would want to stay in that kind of hotel would last more than five minutes on the street.

Should have access to my computer again when I next write [this entry was input in Bali on 14 Nov].

So, the Yogyakarta experience. We did lots in a very short three days, but we are both ready, more than ready, to leave. We worry about being travel wimps, but we are doing the whole trip on a shoestring budget and this is a very long trip. The pollution is perhaps hardest for us to take. Then the crowds of people

always in your face wanting something, seeing you only as a business opportunity. Very hard.

We have met a few nice people here: the guy we stay with, the people who run the restaurant where we have been eating, etc. Still, I ain't a city kind of guy. I need my mountains, my quiet, my clean air, my privacy, and good clean food and water.

Em and I are getting along great. We really celebrated when we got our Bai bus booked and had the great fiction find. I started Marion Bradley's "The Mists of Avalon" this afternoon.

Don't look forward to the overnight bus ride, but that will be another experience. Leave tomorrow at 2 p.m.

Later: So now we are going to list the high points of our trip so far. [Emily and I did this together as a little thing to have fun. Independently we made lists then compared them.]

Best Cultural Experiences:

Meeting Nyoman and Wayan

Temple Ceremony with Nyoman

Cremation ceremonies

Moni's parents in Sydney

Alice Aboriginals

Later after hearing Em's list I added the Javanese dance and the Balinese wedding.

Best Place:

Ayers/Olgas area Sydney

Alice area

Rice paddies especially Jatuluwi (truly magnificent) Mission Beach

Best Site:

Ayers at sunset

Sydney Opera House

Great Barrier Reef Jatuluwi in Bali

Three Sisters in Blue Mountains

Later I added: Temples near Yogya, ghost gums in Australia and the

Australian King parrots in the Blue Mountains

Worst places:

Yogya

Cairns

Darwin Transit Center

Bali-Java ferry

Ubud (some areas)

Worst Experience:

Nama mess

Later added:

pollution in Yogya

Best Experience:

Nyoman and Wayan friendship

Later added Ayers Rock

Later after we talked, I added a whole list of memorables not on the above

list:

“The Piano” (a movie)

Phantom of the Opera

Concert at Sydney Opera House

Sayan River Walk

Seeing wild camels in the Australian interior

Circus Oz in Darwin

Shadow Puppet Theatre in Yogya

## *Chapter Four*

### **Bali**

#### ***Lovina Beach, November 12 - 18***

**November 12, 1993**

Lovina Beach in a little village of Kalibukbuk in the larger area of Singaraja on the north coast of Bali, staying at the Rini Hotel reached by a little one lane road winding from the main road which ain't much itself to the beach. The hotel is actually 50 meters from the beach which is fine with me. The beach is black volcanic sand. The local attractions are the dolphins which are seen early in the morning from pontoon dugout boats stabilized with outriggers made of a length of bamboo (another remarkably appropriate use for this amazing plant). Snorkeling can be done as well, a kilometer or so off the beach. Perhaps I'll try both while I am here.

Before we left Yogya, we had to check out of our room at noon and didn't have to board the bus until 2. We ate at N. N. and left our bags by the window where we could watch them. While I ate lunch, I began to think how much I disliked the crappy batiks I had bought at the Water Palace. I decided to try to trade one of them for another one of the shadow puppet batiks like we had bought from the little ladies near us. I timidly took one of these batiks to them and said "swap swap" hoping at minimum for an even trade. They said okay but you pay 3,000 more. Remembering that I had paid only 5,500 for the other one I bought I began to realize how the good deal I thought I had gotten wasn't all that good, in fact quite the opposite. I finally talked them down to 2,500 and was glad to be shuck of the crappy thing. I later had Em go back to try to trade the

other one, but the ladies were gone. I think I'll give the batik to Corbin--it ain't all that bad, with the story. He might enjoy it.

The trip from Yogya was the expected nightmare. Boarded the bus at 2 p.m. Wednesday and spent at least an hour and a half driving about Yogya picking people up. By the time we departed the city every square inch of the bus was full, crammed. Seemed that it soon grew dark. I occupied myself by reading "Mists of Avalon." Sometime after dark, it began to lightning and rain. The rain grew to fierce proportions and many vehicles had abandoned the road to await better weather. Not so the bus. Though it slowed, it kept plowing through the rain. Leaning out in the isle I could scarcely see the road and decided to try not to look. Stopped somewhere for a buffet dinner in the early evening and headed on down the road. Two more horrible movies, which I tried not to watch, and the lights went out so we could try to sleep. I'm sure I slept some, but it was a restless sleep, and I was thankful when I noticed that it was growing light, that the rain had stopped, and we had arrived at the ferry crossing. Since I had gotten a bit weirded out by the last crossing, I had resolved to stay on the bus. We waited for about 2 hours for our turn to cross. I stayed on the bus, though it had grown quite light. Emily left and went up on deck. She returned to tell me that the sky was clear (something very unusual for all the time we have been in Indonesia) and that a volcano could be seen looking back towards Java. I went up on deck to check it out and it was quite beautiful. Steep sided volcano, just like kids make and draw. No smoke coming from the top, however. Perhaps just as well.

On the Bali side we were met by a Bali bemo and we transferred our luggage, which is now rather formidable, to the bemo. The drive began as a lovely drive through the most isolated part of Bali I had seen. Groves of coconut palms planted at equal distances, so they made rows. The ground beneath these palms had been or was being (with men managing a single share behind an oxen) plowed. Don't know why. As we began to arrive in more populated areas, we started picking folks up along the road. Bemos are Balinese public transportation. The fuller the bemo got the faster the driver drove. He was a maniac. At times he passed when I knew we would never make it. Other times he tailgated the vehicle in front of him at speeds up to 50 mph. It was terrifying. I was surprised to see a significant Muslin Balinese community in this northwestern coastal area. I didn't know that there were hardly any Muslims here. I suppose they are among the most recent Javanese to come to Bali, though I don't know that. I also saw the simplest family temples I've seen in Bali. They were just little boxes with roofs, atop four legged platforms perched in the corner of the lawn. And of course, the directional orientation of the temples is reversed here, for the shrine representing the mother temple (if this is correct) is on the southeast to be oriented toward the mountain, the abode of the gods. I don't think Bali Hinduism is nearly as strong here as in the Ubud area. I see few panjars (the

bamboo pole decorations) and few offerings. Did see one offering remains on the beach.

Finally, after a two-hour ride and now 20 plus hours since leaving Yogya, we reached the place we had hoped to stay. The hotel was quite upscale, and the rates were higher than we had been told. No possibility of staying there. Emily came unglued about that time. She had just about had it. We ate a little and very expensive breakfast. I found a nice man—Nyoman, wasn't that expected—who agreed to haul us around to look for a suitable place to stay. He had several suggestions. We looked at quite a few and finally found the Rimi Hotel and put in there for 25,000 r. per night. It is certainly the nicest place we have stayed since arriving in Indonesia: spacious, ceiling fan, very clean, vaulted ceilings, no creatures that I've seen, shady and for Indonesia a bit cool.

Emily and I had to go through our usual freaking out being in a new place. I don't think we yet feel quite right with each other. I dreamed of Judy last night and had some feelings of guilt. I suppose those are expected and related. This morning I am resolved to work hard here and accomplish much, though I also want to attempt to do some deep reflective thinking. But first the rest of this brief tale.

After resting a while, we went to the beach. This is very low season. The beach is nice, though a bit cluttered. It runs miles, it looks like, in both directions. There are little stores on the beach and though the beach was more or less vacant these stores were open and there were plenty of people trying to sell their wares on the beach. These Balinese use a different tactic: they ask where you are from, they ask your name, they chat and may even joke about how tourists are confronted by people trying to sell them things, they repeat your name, then they tell you they have little business and if you want to buy, they will sell to you very cheap, they say they don't really expect to make any money, they just want to sell something for good luck. When told that you are not ready to buy, they attempt to extract a promise—"you promise"—that you will return to their shop and buy only from them. Quite sophisticated, particularly coming from Yogya. One young man showed us a variety of very beautiful shells including large, chambered nautilus shells. When asked the price he said that he usually got 20,000 rp. for them, but that it was off season and he'd make a deal. I priced some of the same shells in a restaurant this morning and they wanted 8,000 for them. There are many beautiful shells here however and I'd love to have a nautilus shell. I think they might make good gifts, but I don't know how I'd get them home. But some of the smaller ones are also lovely and less breakable.

As we walked about, we learned that the evening attraction to get tourists into restaurants is to host an all-you-can-eat buffet and offer Balinese dancing. We went to one of these just 20 meters from our hotel last night. The cost was a mere 5,000 per person plus drinks. Likely they make their money on selling



beer. Most tourists endlessly drink beer and smoke. We split a large aqua, as usual. The food was delicious and included many different things. It was a good filling meal. The dances included two by a single female; the first a version of the opening offering dance pendet and the second one I don't know but the girl wore trousers and a sort of military head dress, perhaps playing the warrior. The male dances were the white faced Rangda, the witch which was done in a humorous fashion including some sexual gestures, like scratching her crotch and smelling her hand and like offering her black and white striped pendulous breast to tourists to suckle. The second male dance was Topeng, the old man or the grandfather. I've seen this dance now half dozen times it seems, and I think I could do a fair job with it. It almost always includes in the later portion the wiping of the sweat from the face and the picking of lice from the hair which are examined and squashed by the old man. He usually also interacts with the audience and he did so again last night. A group of older German people had quite a time with Topeng and got their pictures taken by each other as the old man shook hands with them. The dances weren't bad at all for just the relatives of the restaurant man, which I'd guess they are. From the intro to this area, it seems restaurants do this kind of thing several nights a week and by going from one to another one can not only keep well fed cheaply, but also see some dance.

The evening drew to a close after that since we had not slept much for a very long time.

This morning we had a very modest breakfast at our hotel, included with the room. Then I spoke with the manage-owner (a German or Dutch guy) about weekly rates. He offered the only break being to not charge the 5% tax. That's okay with me, better than nothing. So, we may be here for a while.

Want to try to do some deeper reflection. Don't know why I feel called to do this. Perhaps it is motivated little by the struggle Em and I had yesterday. Nothing like a significant disagreement and we talked honestly about it right away. Perhaps it is because our trip is now in its second half and one ought to reflect a little now and then. But I am hesitating . . .

The trip is very long and some parts of me long desperately to be home, in Boulder, to be in a place I know and doing things familiar to me. But I planned this trip and wanted to go. I'm not sure what I had in mind. Something about isolation, something about testing myself, something about making up for lost life and time, something about trying out those things for which I had dreamed and had never experienced. I know that I had a very romanticized view of what all this traveling would be like, but I don't think it has been disappointing or hugely different than I had thought. In fact, I thought that physically--comfort and convenience--the trip might be much harder than it has been. I feel that I am gaining enormous experience and have quieted significantly in myself, sort of come to focus, to the present. While I long to be home, I don't feel terribly

homesick. Well, of course, there are occasional moments when I do and I'm thankful for them. I feel here, though I clearly see that here is in some senses nowhere, not in my former world (the world of marriage, profession, living in the dome) and my future world (a world yet to be invented). I don't think that in coming on this trip I was trying to escape. All the problems and issues I left will be there when I get back. But perhaps I did want to give them and myself time to mature, to ripen, to sort themselves out. I have, for the most part, left all that behind and have not thought much about any of it. For me the major thoughts of home are Jenny and Corbin, the mountains and cool fall weather. Other than those things, I'm pretty much fine to be here rather than there. This next three weeks should be restful and peaceful. Hopefully I'll gain readiness to face Thailand and then Nepal. I very much look forward to Nepal and a mere month from now we'll be there.

About my relationship with Emily, I feel pretty good. Yesterday I felt that she was not as strong as me in holding at bay the feelings of the horrors and hardships of a nightmare bus and bemo trip, but that isn't so bad. She loves me and cares for me. I am not yet sure that I love her enough to live with her the rest of our lives, but I do enjoy her, and I'd be very uncomfortable without her on this trip. I wonder if I could make this trip on my own. I wonder how different it would have been had I been alone. Perhaps in some respects I am facing my aloneness in this. Though I am with Emily, being without the children and being so I cannot contact them is in some ways facing my aloneness. Am I being at core honest? With Emily: I think so. With Judy: I want to be, and I am certainly not hiding anything from her. With Jenny and Corbin: completely. With myself: now that is the difficult one. How is one to know? Am I hiding feelings? Do I secretly feel horrible and want to abandon this trip? I don't think so. Do I secretly miss Judy and want to go back to her? I have very sad feelings about that. I like Judy and would love to be friends with her, but I truly do not believe that we are good life partners. We'll both live fuller lives apart. I want to continue to try to befriend her, knowing that I have deeply hurt her. I awoke this morning and thought about how she must feel with Jenny leaving home any day now. I thought about how she must feel when she thinks of me traveling the world with a 24-year-old woman. I know I would seethe with anger and I'm certain I can be nothing to her now but an object of hatred. Perhaps that is deserved, but this is another of those situations when the past cannot be recalled, nor in many ways would I want it to be, but that is because of what happened in the past, the course of the future is laid. It would sacrifice both our lives and perhaps even the children for us to remain in that marriage. I truly do not think of returning to it at all. I think that now I could live a life alone and enjoy it and find it full. That would be preferable to what I had lived for some time.

I must also face the sacrifice of the dome. Much of my heart is in it, but by selling it next spring, I'm sure that both Judy and I will be better off financially. I'll need to look at the options either before or after I return and see what would be good. It might be fun to buy a small house in the mountains or to even build myself another (design it and contract the work on it). Interest rates are at an all-time low now and I could buy Judy a place outright from the proceeds of the dome and pay off all debts, then finance my own place. I don't know. That will unfold in time.

Am I a different person now than when I left two and a half months ago? Most certainly, but I have a hard time articulating it. I feel clearer, I feel much more honest, I feel a truer and more genuine connection with Corbin and Jenny (they have never been far from my mind), I feel that I know much more about human relationships (thanks mostly to Emily), I feel much more tolerant of myself and of others, I think that I have my life and work in clearer perspective in the scheme of things (more must be said on this), and I feel much more present on everything.

In the last couple of days, I have thought of this trip as a form of meditation. It requires isolation from the conveniences; it requires a focus on the present; it challenges by constantly juxtaposing the present here with the imagined present if I were home; being isolated from friends and family and in cultures where people don't even speak English it forces one to oneself, to think and to reflect and to be with oneself. I think that this is a good thing. It hurts and is uncomfortable, but it strengthens and builds character, honesty, and presence. In Sartrean terms, travel that requires constant decisions, that presents constant choices, allows one to see that one can choose, that one has an impact on the world or at least on one's presence in the world. Perhaps Balinese do this as part of their way of life: in sweeping the lawn, in sitting doing nothing, in going to temple, in preparing and making offerings. Of course, I am not Balinese, but I can be fully present to everything I do. I can be openly thankful and grateful for every choice, for in every choice presented to me I am being offered freedom, play, life. I can be thankful for my ability to be self-reflective, to think about who I am and to consider what everything means. I can choose to be present in that way and to live my every breath being thankful for that very breath; to be thankful for every moment of experience; to cherish all the simple things that surround me. I want to pursue self-mastery in everything that I do so that I may daily transcend myself. Life is at no other place and time than this very second and I want to open myself to every present, drink in every moment, and face every present with humility, grace, dignity, and a quiet delight. These feelings are among the most religious I think I have felt in years. The world is full of richness. One doesn't need to travel to find it, but travel offers remarkable opportunities. One doesn't have to buy anything or find anything or await anything; it is all here

for the choosing. Though I can imagine being home and the happiness I will feel there; I must cherish and be present to the image of that happiness rather than to fall into despair that that future is not now present. The thought of it is and that thought may be a happy one. Nor is sadness odious. It is a present, too. It the coming together in oneself, of distances that cannot be otherwise overcome death, miles, time. In sadness these unbridgeable distances are bridged in their own peculiar way and thus there is play even in sadness.

Well, it seems that I am getting carried away a little here, though I feel strong in it. I vow now to attempt to live every moment as fully in the present as I possibly can, to be mindful of the process, and to not let a future which not yet to empty the present which is.

### **November 14, 1993**

Though I had come to terms with being present here at Lovina for several weeks, something deeper in me wasn't convinced. In time this unsettledness emerged and entwined with a similar process going on in Emily. After a brief discussion yesterday morning, we found that we have pretty much had it for Indonesia and were feeling anxieties that once in Thailand, the seven days would be sufficiently short that by the time we made any sort of arrangements to go anywhere, like Chiang Mai in the north, we wouldn't have time to go. So, we decided to call Garuda and see if we could arrange an earlier flight to Bangkok. Eleven thousand rupiah later (2,000 r. per minute at this hotel to call Denpasar) we had a flight booked for November 18, this coming Thursday. Immediately we began to feel elation and realized that we are excited about travel once again. We have learned that we can store luggage at the Bangkok airport for a small fee (less than \$1 per day) and we'll be able to travel about with only our frame packs to burden us, nothing compared to what we have been dragging about. So, we are very excited and ready for a fine exploring journey through Thailand.

The scene here at Lovina is rather weird in many respects. One is constantly approached by young men (most 18 to 25 I'd guess) asking if we want to see the dolphins or snorkel. When we tell them we aren't yet ready, they often say "you said that yesterday!" or something to show their increasing irritation with us. Some have asked us if Emily is my daughter and when told not, they quickly talk among themselves and laugh. Walking down the beach night before last one young man called out "I like your daughter." This is sexual harassment and short of that simply rude. Further, as we brave a short walk on the beach to see the sunset, there are groups of Balinese huddled around every pair of tourists. Some are engaged in conversation, no doubt telling the tourists of their many relationships with foreigners and how often their hearts have been broken. One young man gave us such a story. His American girl friend overthrew him, and he said he had been sick with sadness for her for over a month. I'm sure. He, like Nama, told us of black and white magic, and its powers and properties. All new

age tripe so far as I am concerned. Other Balinese offer hair braiding, those tiny little braids that cover a woman's head. Others offer massage. And, of course, the many who sell things from sarongs to food. What a trip. There seem to be few tourists that aren't in tow of a whole entourage of Balinese in service to them. One form of service seems particularly irksome to me: the young Balinese man who strikes a romance with a tourist woman. This is very common here. Couples are frequently seen. We knew this was common in the Ubud area, for Nama and Nyoman both told us of their tourist girlfriends. Here however it seems but a twisted branch of the tourist service tree. The young man seems to offer himself as personal guide, companion, confidant, and finally friend, though my guess is that at the slightest initiation by either, he also becomes lover. Doubtless the pattern begins with the girl accepting help and feeling elated at a friendship contact with a Balinese person. If she happens to think of compensating the young man, he, I'm imagining this on the pattern of Nama and my other experience, will say "It's up to you." She relaxes feeling that certainly she can afford this and off it goes. There comes eventually the time to leave and how then to compensate. We know from Nama and Nyoman that this relationship produces a bond not easily ignored by the tourist. Doubtless money is given before departure and gifts continue to flow through the mail as well as phone calls, etc. This may be a fine practice, but I wonder a number of things: what of birth control and sexual disease control? What do the Balinese women think of this? While some Balinese man certainly initiate it (particularly here in Lovina), what of the unwary naive Balinese boy like Nyoman who is latched on to by foreign women, women whose worlds are beyond the Balinese imagination?

This brings up the larger question of the impact of tourism on cultures. There are some indications that tourism wreaks havoc on cultures. Here at Lovina, little remains that is not directed toward tourism, I suppose that in the villages a kilometer or so away, things are not so tourist oriented, but most of the Balinese who work here are from these villages. What impact does their relative wealth have on the village? Can they go home without feeling out of place? What of the ideas these Balinese pick up from their constant stream of tourist "friends"? Can they ever practice a more traditional Balinese life? I think Nyoman is the exception among this group. in his being so firmly engaged in his own religious tradition and the temple and household practices. Nama has clearly made some separation and I think that many of the youth here have as well. Once that separation has been made by a significant portion of the youth, is it not but a matter of time until the dolphins and the monuments are all that remain of the culture?

Emily has begun to feel that tourism has primarily negative effects. I see these as I have just outlined them, but then the question arises: what is to be or can be

done? Regulation? Who will do the regulation? What will the regulations be? Do not all peoples deserve to interact with one another? Is it not a colonialist attitude to keep the natives, the third world, isolated so that they may be exotic objects fascinating to but the few? Certainly, one of the biggest surprises I have had in this Asian experience is that tourists are almost completely invisible to one another. I have often made the effort to make eye contact, to advance a greeting, to other tourists. After all I thought it would be a natural camaraderie. Rarely is eye contact ever made and almost never a greeting exchanged. Doubtless this is the bearing of a colonialist and elitist attitude. The sense is perhaps to feel that you are the only outsider who has the privilege to experience these very foreign people. I have often bragged in letters that I or we were the only non-Balinese at some or another affair. We want these people to be our people. We want to be discoverers. We want to be first. We want to feel exclusive. And we want to take something away; at the least a photo, but more likely clothing, something made by their hand, something distinctive to them, something that cannot be bought at home. How odd it is that even with our best intentions we find ourselves in the same rapacious acts as those we look on with scorn.

I know not at all what is right here, other than perhaps that there can be no completely right. To visit another, to get to know another, most certainly changes them whether they are your closest neighbor or on a most distant and exotic land. It seems that given this, the approach ought to be to present yourself as honestly and openly as possible while being as open and understanding of the other as possible. I remain hopeful of this approach while realizing that the very history of contact among cultures leaves patterns and expectations that are, in any reasonably short term, impossible to overcome. So, when the Balinese, in friendly interested voices, ask "Where you from?" and seem terribly delighted when you respond "America," they are accomplishing two things: they are opening a relationship with you and they are assessing where in their bargaining system they need set the initial price and the pattern by which they bargain with you. Initially I was flattered that they wanted to know something of me. How nice of them to be interested in my homeland as I am interested in theirs. But once this naivete is exposed, I begin to feel differently when they ask me this friendly opening question. I begin to feel but an object. They are merely classifying me among the objects of their labor to better determine how to take advantage of me, how to manipulate me most efficiently to purchase, to present my wealth to them. When I feel objectified, I feel offended and irritated by them. My reaction is to withdraw, to distance myself, to steel myself against their inquiries. If they see me as but a mere object, I can respond by not playing their silly game at all. I don't need their services or their wares. By withholding my money, I can get them back for their objectifying me. But this response simply further taints the situation. I then fail to appreciate their culture at all. I eliminate

my chances to get to know anything and I suffer the punishment I levy on them. Further when momentarily taking this defensive tack occasionally a Balinese person will engage me in a way that I feel may (one however never really knows, for there are many levels of sophistication in this business) be completely genuine. Certainly, Nyoman and Wayan, our Ubud friends, were genuine beyond any reasonable doubt in my view.

So, I suppose this means that one must tread lightly and be careful. One must not be overly impressed with friendships extended, for there are often attachments that may be deep. But one must not close oneself even at the risk of getting occasionally “ripped off” because how else is one to learn? I think that being in Indonesia for 6 weeks has begun to reveal something of the fine line one must walk, but I think that it is extremely difficult to simply walk it evenly. I find myself swinging to both sides all the time.

Well, Emily and I are enjoying a few days’ rest. We are doing a brief physical workout—squats, sit ups, and pushups—every afternoon. We want to regain a bit of strength and muscle tone in anticipation of Nepal and the glorious Himalayas, not to mention simply feeling and looking better.

A week from today we will surely be in northern Thailand enjoying much cooler temperatures. We have decided to spend some of these last several days reflecting on Indonesia and our experience here. Did we do what we wanted? How would we do it differently? What did we learn? Of cultures, religions, people? Of ourselves? It seems to me an enormously important 6 weeks of my life, but I need time to reflect and think on this and these last few days will be good for that.

Am reading *Mists of Avalon*. It is fun and a read, though the story well known. Emily read with much enjoyment John Hassler’s *The Love Hunter*. Think I’ll type up some of my handwritten journal entries now before doing anything else.

### **November 15, 1993**

Dolphins. Yes, we saw the dolphins and that was a delight. Leaving our hotel before 6 this morning the young man that had arranged the trip for us awaited us in the road and took us the few meters to the beach where his father had the boat launched and his motor running awaiting us. Wading out to the boat we climbed aboard. These boats are something. They are hollowed log canoes about 15 feet long equipped with bamboo (that ever amazing material) outriggers 10 feet out on each side. The pilot sits in the back where he can work a crude rudder device simply tied onto the side of the boat. The boat is powered either by a sail (I’d love to see these, but there is no wind this time of the year) or an outboard motor. The motor is 5 horse and attaches to the side of the boat near the back and has a very long (I’d say 10 feet) propeller shaft. So, the motor sits at a radical angle, so the propeller extends back and downward into the water. The boat being 1 to 2 inches thick wood really doesn’t displace much water, so you ride

sort of high. These boats are used as night fishing boats and at night the lights (Coleman lanterns) on the boats make quite a sight from the beach after dark.

We headed toward the open sea at a snail's pace. Once we were several thousand yards from the beach the boats (there were perhaps a couple dozen) began to choose which way they would go. We went west along the coast. All these boats putted along at a leisurely pace seemingly going nowhere in particular. Then we began to see the boats in front of us (a thousand yards or so) all turn toward the beach. As we approached the area, we could begin to see the water surface disturbed by schools of dolphin. They would mainly just pass through an area with their backs only—their back fins making them easy to see—breaking the water surface. They would come in waves with their bodies arching as their noses came out of the water readying them to return gracefully into the water. In and out, in and out, wave after wave. A few seconds passed and then they would disappear. Once spotted the boats chased them and circled the area awaiting them to resurface again. Sometimes they did, often they did not.

Our pilot, a skinny, sharp-eyed man of mature years (I started to call him a little old man until I realized that he probably was my junior (god I hate being this age)), seemed to know the game well and, unlike most other pilots, didn't stay with the bulk of crafts. He found his own waters, often accompanied by no more than one or two other boats. We saw many appearances of the dolphins, sometimes just a few—maybe 15 or so—that would surface only a few times before disappearing. Sometimes a great congregation—maybe 50 or more—that would occupy a large area with lots of groups above the surface at the same time. Quite the sight. Only a couple times did I see dolphins actually leap free of the water. One time there were several who together made the beautiful graceful parabolic glide through air before returning to the sea. Another time seemed more like the frolic of a kid when a dolphin leaped above the surface and turned sideways splashing, undolphinlike I'd say, on his or her side on the water's surface. The dolphins seemed smaller than I had expected, conditioned as I am by dolphins in Sea World and on TV. These seemed perhaps five or six feet long, though it was difficult really to judge their size. At one point seeing a large group of them move along the sea I was really quite overcome with the emotion of seeing such a sight. I'd love to touch one of these animals. They were beautiful to see.

We circled for perhaps an hour seeing dolphins fairly frequently during this time. Then the sea became glassy still, it had been only mildly choppy before, and headed back to shore. A wonderful experience, despite the difficulty in trying to please the dozens of young men who are constantly trying to get you to go with them to “see the dolphins.”

These dolphins have something of the mystery of so many things I have experienced on this trip. Seeing them reminds me a bit of the Ayers Rock



experience. There tourists lined the lookouts at sunrise and sunset in the hopes of catching that wonderful moment of the sun on the rock. We were fortunate enough to see it. Here too the tourists are driven by crude craft out on the sea early every morning to see the dolphins. It can't be known—for only god, if any, controls these events whether or not dolphins will be seen and, if seen, what they will do. Seeing them, then, is a gift, a fortuity for which one must be grateful.

Returning to our digs, I showered, then we went to breakfast. I had a jaffle (actually I learned that those little breakfast things we have been eating for weeks made in an electric device are called “jaffles”) filled with cheese and tomatoes, not bad. Then we read a few minutes before falling asleep for a while.

The heat here is wearing on both of us. We are tending to hide out in our fiction. We are reading the Thailand guidebook and realizing that leaving here early may be completely renewing to us as travelers. The Chiang Mai area, a northern province, seems to have many attractions and it is cool and quiet there. We now plan to stow lots of our goods in the Bangkok airport for the duration of our stay in the country and then be prepared to get about lightweight while in Thailand. We'll arrange a train to Chiang Mai as early as possible upon arriving in Bangkok then play it by ear once we are in that area. Perhaps we'll spend the whole three weeks there or come back and go to the Kwai River for a couple days or whatever we like. Looking forward to that experience.

Yesterday I bought a few shells: a nautilus shell for my dad and a couple beautiful cowrie shells with dark blue areas on them for Corbin and Jenny. I love these shells so much. I bought Em a chambered nautilus and a cowrie shell for her birthday (late since couldn't find anything in Ubud I liked). I think my dad will really like the huge nautilus shell though it will be difficult to get packed and home safely.

Last night we went to the movie place here and saw “Hero” the Dustin Hoffman, Geena Davis movie. I'd seen it. Em hadn't. It was fun. We're both tiring of Indonesian food: not filling and not very tasty, though we keep trying to eat it at least one meal or more a day. It isn't fun feeling hungry so much of the time. This afternoon we went for a snack and split a plate of French fries: what I'll stoop to here to try to feel filled and satisfied for a few minutes. Also, we are excited about the food possibilities in Thailand. We both love Thai food, and it seems inexpensive and abundant in Thailand. Was that an informative sentence or what? After seeing the movie last night, we started home walking the few meters along the main road before turning into the little side road leading to our hotel. Just before we got to our side road, we saw a motorcycle hit a dog and crash, one of those sparks flying glides, as a result. The dog, doubtless horribly injured, dragged itself yelping off the road and the motor cyclist slowly rose to his feet. Many local youth ran to the scene. We didn't really want to see more than we did; that was unnerving enough. I couldn't help thinking of Jenny's

motorcycle crash and about my being out of touch so much of the time. I'll never be this out of touch again if I can help it. I also couldn't help thinking about how horrible it would be to need medical assistance here for anything very serious. Probably best not to think much about these things until I have safely returned home.

Two more days of Indonesia. Neither of us will be sad at all to leave. It has been a wonderful place to visit. I know that more summing up ought to be done, but perhaps that will come more once we have gained some distance and cooled off.

I know that I changed several things since arriving here. I gave up learning Indonesian as I saw that I didn't want to return here for an extensive field study period. That seems very healthy to me now since I really need to get myself much more focused and complete things I have in progress. I learned a great deal about Bali Hinduism and about Balinese people and dance. I made wonderful progress on several intellectual projects: Australia and Play. So, I think I have cleaned up my act a bit, stripped down my expectations, and established better priorities both personal and professional. Emily and I have worked out a wonderfully workable and exciting relationship facing the hard times and the good times with courage and good humor. Many gifts. Now we look to two more countries and two other very exciting experiences.

Some other things I came to know. I like cool weather, mountains, fall, and vigorous physical activities. I don't do well for long periods in the opposite as characterizes the tropics. I'm sure many find the tropics paradise, but I'm not one of them.

Though we promised that we'd find a new place to eat tonight, I have a hankering to see another movie and eat something like an expensive, \$3.50, pizza.

"Unforgiven" is playing at the local disco (the only disco in Bali I think) that specializes in Reggae.

#### **November 16, 1993**

Another bright hot day and Emily and I have made a trip down the beach in search of a place to make an international phone call. Em wanted to tell her parents that we have decided to go on to Thailand and I wanted to tell Jenny the same and to see if she got the Winter Park job. We finally got to Aditia's, the upscale resort that is the only place in Lovina that has an international connection. They wanted 25,000 rupiah for three minutes and would accept only cash. We bagged it deciding to call when we get to the airport or when we get to Bangkok Thursday evening. That sort of set me in a negative mood. I hate being out of touch. Not that I want to imagine anything bad happening or that I could do anything if it did, or that I am needed by anyone all that much, but I just would like to know that I can be reached, if necessary, just the peace of mind.

Em and I had begun to like and appreciate the Ikat cloth that is made in Bali. It is woven with pre-dyed thread and is quite lovely. It is made into sarong size cloth. We stopped at quite a number of places and asked, and few could come up with any. Most of the pieces we found were ugly, dirty, or full of holes. Lots of this weave has stripes along the sides and it may be made in Java rather than Bali, not that that is all that significant. Finally, we found a woman who had a couple of very nice pieces--one a pink sarong and the other a green heavy weave with yellow in it. Both very nice. She wanted 60,000 for the green and 40,000 for the sarong. Clearly everyone knows that these are much nicer quality than the batik, though one woman wanted to pass off to us a batik print that imitated ikat (the threads don't match which is what makes them distinct) and I kept pointing out to her that this was only batik. Anyway, we told this woman that we couldn't begin to meet her prices. She asked us to name what we could. I told her that my price would insult her. I also asked her if she would swap in part for the temple shirt I had bought (for which I paid 15,000 rupiah). For the pink sarong I told her I could only pay 8,000. She seemed disappointed. I told her I was sorry and walked out to the road. She latched on to Emily at that point and began to bargain with her. Em said her price was 10,000 and after a few minutes they agreed on a compromise of 12,000 (a very good price). Then she turned to me and told me she'd take the shirt and 30,000 difference for the beautiful green material. I said that was nice, but 20,000 was what I'd pay. She said 28,000 and I said that 25,000 was my final price. She said that since she wanted to give the temple shirt (unwashed after all) to someone for a birthday present, she'd agree to 25,000. We think that we are beginning to know how to bargain and to know value. Takes a long time and still I'm not at all sure. But I am sure that this lovely piece of cloth is worth \$12 to me and that I was going to dump the temple shirt anyway. We arranged transport to the airport on Thursday. We are both eager to be on our way to Thailand.

Yesterday I found myself figuring financial matters related to divorce etc. I had done some planning about the dome a couple weeks ago, then I did some planning for building a new house. Yesterday the hard economic reality dawned on me and I guess my subconscious worked on this through the night. This morning I had come to realize that I will have to give up the dome. It will be just way too great an economic burden to keep it. That makes me sad in the sense of giving it up, and it initiates a whole process of thinking about what I will be doing from this point on, but then too it is exciting. Nice, I think, to come to this now, so that by the time I get back to Boulder I'll have had a couple months to think over all the consequences and be prepared to face the decisions I'll have to make. Funny how these things are now entering my mind after I have not thought of them since I left in August. Perhaps I'll write more later.

**November 17, 1993**

And on the morrow the Indonesia experience, the Bali experience, will draw to a close. I sit here mid-day nursing, with Emily's kind help, a case of diarrhea. Thought I might avoid this fowl contamination. Hopefully it won't be severe and will be mostly pass by tomorrow's 3-hour trip to the airport.

After breakfast this morning we went to sit on the beach and contemplate our experience. Ketut, the brother of Michael and son of the man we went with to see the dolphins, came by. He is a very cute lad and seemed genuinely friendly. He sells shells on the beach. He cornered an Aussie (I think) woman who had come to sunbathe. At one point he called us over to give testimony to her of our satisfaction in buying shells from him. As we commented on them, knowing a bit more about what is done to them than this woman, he motioned us to be quiet and came round to whisper to me that we shouldn't talk of price since he was selling them higher than the price we got. We are tough customers I think, but maybe just a little more price conscious than the average tourist.

I woke up this morning reflecting on having had, I think during the night, thoughts about how I might have proceeded on this trip. Call Koesnoe in Surabaya; made contact with officials, academics, etc. in Bali and Java; made a more official effort to get more to the heart of these cultures than the touristed fringes. While I knew that I did what I wanted to do; while I knew that the experience, I had was pursued in the way I wanted to pursue this experience; I nonetheless had some self-doubt. Fred Denny always is my foil in this kind of thinking, here anyway. I could imagine how Fred would go about this. He'd be giving lectures all over Indonesia and be addressed as "pak" and be escorted as some sort of official to all kinds of cultural events. Certainly, that is not my way. I much prefer to stumble along among the folk, even those who serve tourists and are most affected by them, to see what I will see. I worry about whether I am doing what I ought.

I mentioned this to Emily and she responded immediately that this was surely a core issue for me and that I really must deal with it before long. She has insight I'm certain. I think this is the very issue that Betty indicated in one of her most bold statements to me that this was the very core issue I had to deal with. But I'm not yet certain that I really know the character and outline of this issue. Emily and I talked about it for a while on the beach this morning. Perhaps it has to do with honesty, honesty in myself and acceptance by other. Perhaps if I return to rethink that pathology that I worked on with Betty, I can find roots of it there. If I conducted most relationships on the basis of acting how others wanted me to act so that I be deserving of their love for me, perhaps I do that even in these professional ways. By this reasoning, I'd need to think of how others would expect me to act as scholar, mentor, teacher, field researcher and perform in those ways. But whose opinion would really matter to me? Certainly not Fred

Denny's. My students will be sufficiently impressed that I have even been here. There are no others that really matter. I do know that it is difficult for me to speak my mind on even simple things such as what I like, what I want, what I prefer without fear of alienating or of being selfish or thoughtless. Likely this works in reverse. If I did speak my mind with sensitivity and gentleness, perhaps I'd be showing my faith that others need not agree or that they might stand up for their own views, moving more toward an honest relationship rather than disguised manipulation. All this may be, but I'm not sure.

Certainly, professionally I have come to some clear views about where my strengths and interests are. I am not a field worker though I enjoy field experience and I believe that I can make much of little things I see, observe, overhear, etc. I am much more interested in theoretical issues and that all of the concrete cultural concerns I have should be bent toward theoretical concerns. I believe that I am now seeing where my strengths lie and where I should devote my energies. The play book, the Australia book, the dancing area and to edit and further support the reference book series. These areas are where my heart is and I have enough to do in pursuing this academic course to keep me working for many years. I need not apologize nor feel ashamed nor even question my strengths and my task. I know them to be good and sound and to pursue them with energy, enthusiasm, diligence, and integrity is all I really need worry about.

Em just got back from lunch. She brought me more water and a package of cookies. I am feeling some better and hope that my illness is on the wane. This morning she went out to get me Sprite and water and she brought me a lovely shell as a get well present. She is very sweet and loves me truly and tenderly. I'm often surprised that at her age she has the insight and strengths she has.

Guess I'll just run on a bit here. On several occasions here the obvious difference of our ages has made itself felt. One Balinese lad commented that he liked my daughter; a couple of children asked if Emily was my daughter and when Em told them friend, they said "you are so young, he is so old." Many of course tend to pay no mind and I don't flatter myself by thinking that I should be long in the consciousness of anyone, here or at home. Still, despite how remarkable I think Em's and my relationship to be, sometimes I wonder if in years to come it can possibly remain so with me growing older. I've talked with Emily about this issue and she seems very clear. I will be settled for now, but Em deserves to be a mother and to have her own life with her own family and in the time that is right for her. She just asked me if I had heard a baby cry this morning and told me how it wrenches at her to hear babies cry so. I'm rather certain that Em's father would think it the most honorable thing for me to set her free, an act of love, to have her own life. But this isn't giving her any role in the decision and I frankly think that she must play the main role in this consideration. I don't mind being my age and believe that I am as gracefully aging as any I know, but I do

think of these things when reminded of the age difference as I am from time to time.

I want also to write a bit about language. I'm no good at learning languages and fear that I am rather arrogant in not making much attempt to do so. There are few, almost no, tourists here whose native language is English. Still English is the lingua franca. They all know enough English to order from menus, to ask for directions, etc. The Balinese do not know French or German or Japanese. All intercultural communication is done in English. This brings up some interesting things for me. First it caters to my laziness and arrogance regarding language. I've gotten along all this time without knowing other languages, I don't feel now like it is much worth it. This plays into some of my self-doubts in the scholarship line.

But perhaps a more interesting point is that almost all communication between cultures here is done in a language that is not native to either speaker and for which neither is capable of speech beyond very simple levels. Tourist English must amount to a few hundred words and is largely stripped of even the first level of complexities: articles are omitted, verbs are all present tense, etc. It would surely be interesting to know if anything really is communicated, other than basic physical necessities, between cultures. This is an opening for the importance of body language accompanying speech. As I watched Ketut sell shells to the Aussie lady this morning, I noticed the extent of his gestures and the use of his facial expression. His English is very good, and he moves beyond the most basics, but I think that much also must hinge on people reading each other's body language. Of course, I think some body language is culturally based, so that is a factor, but perhaps some of it is not.

Another thing that I have found interesting to think about is my drive for authenticity. Em points this out to me. I want it in scholarship, indeed, there I have made a career of it--and also in nearly every walk of life. So, for example when I began to see that the shells I bought had been altered, buffed and sanded to show different colors, it raised for me an issue. When a woman tried to tell me that a batik print was really ikat, I was incensed. When Michael makes an agreement to go see the dolphins, then it turns out that it is his father with whom we are to go, I feel misled, etc. I don't know what this is all about. I want things to be what they are presented to be; but certainly, this is a naive notion. Nothing really is simply in and of itself what it is. The very thought would drive me crazy from a philosophical perspective. Perhaps all my academic work is to attempt somehow to figure at least how one bases issues of value. If there is no base, then how do you choose, what way do you go? Sartre's and the existentialist's arguments for choice are very persuasive. I must believe that we have choices and that our lives are, to some degree, as we choose them to be. Still, if nothing is substantive, if nothing is what it appears to be, then how do we choose, what

is the basis for decision, for value? I think both my work on play and on Storytracks is an attempt to deal with this issue. Rather fascinating.

The heat of the afternoon has set in. There remains a dull achiness in my stomach, but I have made no emergency runs to the bathroom in some time and I've eaten nearly the whole package of cookies Em brought me. I'm enjoying reading the *Mists of Avalon*. Actually, lots better than I had anticipated. I've always loved the Arthurian stories.

Spent some time with the Thai guidebook this morning and feel that the Chiang Mai area is rich and will be a wonderful place to spend 2 plus weeks. How exciting to think of that and that a month from now we'll be trekking in the Himalayas. I expect Bangkok to be a huge pain, but once in northern Thailand, we should find it cool and exciting. Em has had strong conviction about the importance of the trip, even with respect to its length. I certainly appreciate her strength and courage.

## *Chapter Five*

### **Thailand**

#### ***Bangkok, November 18 - 21***

**November 22, 1993**

Now in Chiang Mai and haven't gotten the chance to do any journal entries for days. So much has happened. So much changed.

Departing Bali was a tedious process as was everything in the whole Bali experience, the whole Indonesia experience now seems. We arose early on the 18th. Emily wanted to do a bit of shopping for ikat blankets before we left. I had bought some on the beach the night before. We had gone to the beach for a last sunset and to parry with the Bali beach folks one more time. This woman Lou who had asked us frequently to buy something from her approached us again. I asked if she had sold anything that day and she said, "No just one short." Meaning one pair of shorts. She asked if we didn't want to buy anything, and I said no. She didn't press, but later came by and held out a lovely single bed ikat blanket and said that she'd sell for a very good price, 10,000 rp. (i.e., \$5). I said, thanks, but no. She stayed there a while and I looked at the blanket. It was very nice, and I felt sorry for her. I thought that \$5 couldn't be all that bad an investment. I bought one. She was grateful yet still wanted to sell a couple more. I refused them.

She went on to sell and I began to think that these were very nice and would make nice gifts, so I went after her and bought a large one and another small one for 23,000 r. Emily wanted some to by then, but didn't like any that Lou had, so she decided to look at some in the shops before we left. She found two lovely ones and paid a great price for them.



The shuttle bus came for us at 10 a.m. and off we went on a harrowing 3 hour ride up the mountain across Bali to the airport. The ride was terrifying as usual and all I could think of was how glad I'd be to be away from this kind of driving whenever that might happen. Really it is a wonder that anyone grows to adulthood on that island. We went through Kuta Beach on the way. We had avoided this area and it was horrible. The most touristy area I've seen, and it went on for miles.

Arriving at the airport at 1 p.m. we knew that our flight wasn't to leave until 6:45 p.m., but we wanted to be cool and have some quiet. We went on in and checked in, checked our bags, paid our departure tax, and cleared security. Officially out of Bali we now had a few hours to kill. I still was sick, fighting off a tendency to diarrhea. The food was terrible and very expensive. We looked at some of the shops in the airport. It was interesting. It was like another world. Ikat blankets for \$200. We waited and waited. Finally, the call came to enter the departure area and we did so along with about 500 obnoxious French people all of whom it seems had been vacationing in Kuta. The flight to Bangkok was headed on to Paris. Soon after we got in the departure area, they announced that the flight was delayed "because of technical reasons" and would depart at 9 p.m. They gave us a coupon entitling us to a horrible little snack and we waited. Finally, about 9:20 we boarded the 747 and departed for the 3 hour and 50-minute flight to Bangkok.

In Bangkok, we immediately felt that we'd like Thailand lots. Everyone was friendly and helpful. We cleared customs. We exchanged money and we repacked everything so we would be stripped down to only our large frame packs. We stored everything else in one very tightly stuffed duffel and checked it in "Left Luggage" for the duration of our stay in Thailand. We knew where to get a cab and did that. Fixed rate. We got into the cab, number 219. Our driver got in and turned around and asked us, at least that is what we figured, where we were to go. We told him. He began to speak enthusiastically in Thai. We got out a map and pointed to the place. He spoke now more loudly and showed some exasperation. We pointed to maps, talked slowly, etc. Finally, he inquired of another driver and started out. After driving into the city, we got to the area of the Sheridan. We knew that our intended destination was close to that. The driver looked to us for directions. We couldn't give them. It was now between 2 and 3 a.m. and this was a rather frightening looking area of Bangkok. At one point we said for him to let us out at the Sheridan, and we'd walk. He understood "walk" and let us know that he would never allow that. He stopped at one point and called the place, the River View Guest House. Then on we drove, seemingly in circles with his frustration growing and our fear rising. At one point he stopped and inquired of two young men. Finally, one of them got into the car and we began to weave down a crowded little alley way. Emily was freaking out and I

was just trying to remain calm enough to keep from doing so myself. Finally, they pointed up to a sign with arrow attached to "River View Guest House." The car stopped, we got our packs from the trunk and the four of us started a walk through an ever-narrowing passageway. It was dark, crowded, industrial, and frightening. After 75 yards or so we turned to follow another sign along another narrow passage and arrived at the door of the guesthouse. We checked in and tried to find the way to the second floor where our room was supposed to be. Once in the room, we collapsed. it was a fitful night spent as much wondering where we were and how we'd survive as in sleep.

But morning brought a surprise. The room in daylight looked rather nice. It was clean and even had a live plant in it. Emily had seen that the hotel had a restaurant, and we went to the top floor to find it. Opening the door to the restaurant we entered a lovely wood paneled room with windows on the opposite side overlooking the river and the city. It was a view dimmed by the pollution, but it was a breathtaking sight, and the restaurant was wonderful. We had a delicious breakfast, and our nerves began to come back together. The waiters were very pleasant, and we began to perk up. This was going to be good after all.

We had given the address of the American Express office in Bangkok to several people, and we decided to go see if any mail had arrived and to get train tickets to Chiang Mai. We located the building on the map where the Am Ex office was and, thinking it wasn't so far decided to begin walking. First, we had to inquire at the front desk how to get away from the guesthouse area. We left. Sure enough, this guest house, as are so many very nice places in Bangkok, was built in the midst of a small shop highly industrial area. There is no access at all except to walk and to walk down a labyrinth of alleyways filled with these little greasy shops. Lots of people live in this area as well in tenement and slum conditions. After several blocks of this we came to a street. and began our trek. After quite a few blocks, as we walked along a nice-looking Thai man who spoke excellent English, asked us if he could help. We were studying a map. We told him where we were going. He said that the Am Ex office wouldn't open until after noon and that we might want to go to a place called Peter Lang's to shop. We said no, but he said he'd just help us get there by arranging transport. It was in the direction we were going, so we agreed to the ride in a *tuc tuc*, the motorcycle carts common as transport here. We arrived at Peter Lang's and were escorted in, shown to a private room and there a man began a hard sell of custom-made Thai silk, or whatever fabric we wanted, clothing. We were polite for a while, then left. We recognized that this friendly man on the street had been a tout and we had seen through the snare. Leaving there we were soon approached by another. We didn't even let him talk. We walked on and finally found the building where the Am Ex office was. It was just noon and the office was closed between 12 and 1 p.m. so we decided to get our train tickets. This led

us to the Siam Center, a huge indoor shopping complex. We began to look around and were blown away by how classy this place was. There were many Thai people shopping and it was expensive, and all these shoppers looked very fine. We just couldn't believe what we saw, having just left Indonesia. Amazing. Such style, such class, such expense. Lots of people in Thailand must have gobs of money. So many of the young women looked stunning in their costumes, for costumes is what their attire seemed to be. I saw an advertisement for a shop called Nambe and realized this was drawn from the American southwest. Just had to go there. Sure enough. It had a Santa Fe feel and lots of ecologically tasteful American Southwestern items from kitchen things to jewelry. I bet no one in that shop had even ever heard of the southwestern pueblos much less had ever visited the almost nonexistent village of Nambe. I visited it many years ago and there isn't much left but a couple houses and a kiva.

Silk and Thai hill crafts are everywhere as well as very fine jewelry. This shopping complex was huge and filled with this fine kind of expensive merchandise and the most beautiful people I've ever seen shopping and selling there.

Out in the street we looked for the travel agent across a very busy street who sells train tickets. Women with nursing babies were sitting on the pedestrian crossover bridge begging. A glimpse down alley ways that were at the back sides of attractive buildings on the street side revealed 4 to 6 story slum residences in which clearly hundreds and hundreds of people were crammed to live a very impoverished life with the only bit of sunlight that made its way down into this chasm of poverty. Sad and heart wrenching. Smelly and offensive. Still, one must be quick and observant to take that peek down the alley way to even notice that this part of the city exists.

We bought train tickets at 335 bhat for a day trip to Chiang Mai and visited a bookstore. This was a delight. There were hundreds of books and lots of Thai people browsing. Indonesians seemed not to read or have anything to read. But Thai people not only enjoy reading, but have a huge selection to read in Thai. The book shop was small but had a nice English section and we each bought a couple of cheap books on Thailand to begin our fast education on this place. I bought a book of essays on Northern Thailand. Very fun.

At the Am Ex office Em got a letter from her mother. Enclosed was a copy of my review of Steltenkamp's Black Elk book. Nice of her to see it and to send it.

We had a lunch in this shopping area. It was a simple little food shop, but it was delicious, and we got our first chance to eat Thai food in Thailand. It was more than we had expected. Just wonderful. We just began to celebrate being in Thailand with that meal and began to feel our enthusiasm return after 6 hard weeks in Indonesia. Since then, we have had to refrain from being harsh on

Indonesia. It was increasingly clear that we suffered much while in Indonesia. It was hot, impossible to get around, irritating to have people in your face all the time, etc. Here, though we had been hit up by a tout and had breathed in tons of polluted air, we found ourselves renewed in our travel and ready to experience all we could. After shopping, rather window shopping, for a while longer and treating ourselves to a Swenson's ice cream cone, we headed back. A taxi driver refused us upon learning where we were going, so we walked the whole way. A long walk but it gave us some sense of the city. We arrived before dark and after showering and resting a while we went to the guest house restaurant for dinner. It was a wonderful Thai meal in a most relaxing atmosphere overlooking Bangkok at night. There were even fireworks over the city throughout the evening.

After a night's rest and another fine breakfast, we started out on my mother's birthday to see Bangkok. We expected a difficult time to get to the city but learned that all we had to do was to go up to the Sheridan and there catch an express ferry to the city. It would leave us at the Grand Palace and wat Phrae Koe where we wanted to visit. This was a very fun ride down a polluted and busy river filled with barges, long tailed (actually nosed) boats, and crafts of every kind and description. The fee for the ferry was 6 baht or 25 cents.

The grounds of the grand palace were but across the street. We had worn long pants anticipating a dress code at the palace and we barely passed, I think. We are beginning to feel that we look pretty ratty after living in the same pair of shorts and several tee shirts for months. We bought a ticket 125 baht (\$5 bucks) and began our tour. This is an amazing area. The temples are simply beyond description. They are so elaborate and complex as to make one simply stand mute and marvel. Honestly, I can't begin to think of any way to even describe these places, much less to do them justice. Every inch of several of these temple buildings is covered inside and out with small tiles, many of them reflective or mirrored. The colors are rich, and the effect is stunning. The buildings are large and impressive. Elegance and richness are words I'd use.

### ***Chiang Mai, November 21 – December 10***

#### **November 23, 1993 Chiang Mai**

Computer failing me again, so I'll have to write. The last entry was entered with a dark screen, so I hope it got saved somewhere. Don't even know what I was writing about when I quit, but I know I wasn't finished describing the day in Bangkok.

The Teak Mansion was a lovely old residence open and airy built in an "L" shape three stories high. Some of the rooms were octagonal, some semicircular, some circular. The rooms were huge, and we saw something like 30 of the 70 rooms in the house. The grounds were extensive and nicely kept. In a small

portico area next to the mansion, we saw classical Thai dance. Five women danced. The first dance had something to do with 5 jewels, all different, each dancer was beautifully dressed to represent her jewel. The dance is slow and involves subtle but precise movements. The bare feet are mostly on the floor, but I noticed that in several of the dances one step involved lifting one foot, heel flexed, high to the back without repositioning the upper leg. Sometimes with the leg in this position the dancer would slowly rotate her body on the one leg with the foot providing the movement around. In the 5-jewel dance the dancer in white was in the center of a semicircle formed by the other four. At different sections of the dance each of the four would come forward for a bit of a solo dance before the standard dance maintained by the others. The head and arms were very like Hindu and Bali dance. Fingers often in mudra positions and the fingers often arching back. The dancers made quick, very small movements (almost imperceptible) of the head or upper body. Very nice.

There was another dance group with male and female dancers. They each carried some percussion instrument. All were dressed in loose pants and shirts all green except for two of the drummers who wore different and brighter colors. This dance involved quite a bit of play and improvisation. I certainly wouldn't call it classical dance. More like informal village dancing. I think they said this dance was preparation for hunt or something.

We hailed a taxi back to the Grand Palace, or a huge park near there and after a couple photos of the Grand Palace temples from a different perspective we made our way to the river for a cram-packed ferry ride back to near our guest house. We ate a very late lunch in the huge and very fancy River City Shopping Center. Another interesting experience. This center had four floors at least and the majority of stores were either silk or fine jewelry. There must have been a dozen of each. Amazing.

That evening we stayed in and enjoyed a wonderful meal in the restaurant overlooking the city. I had a chicken peanut dish that was one of the best meals I've had anywhere. Delicious.

Next morning, we ate a quick breakfast and started our walk through the labyrinth and to the train station not so far away. The train ride was interesting. Leaving Bangkok, we saw lots of slums and very poor housing areas, but these were, as I'm finding, typical of Asia, mixed with fine homes, large hotels, and lovely wats (temples). Found out that the train goes to the airport solving our problem with the morning we leave for Kathmandu.

Once out of Bangkok heading north, I was surprised at how completely flat so much of the country is. Rice fields, houses but sparse, and the frequent wat or even a huge golden statue of a sitting Buddha. Beautiful country. About 250-300 miles from Bangkok the terrain suddenly changed, and we began the long

slow climb through densely forested hilly country. I suppose you'd call this jungle.

We arrived in Chiang Mai just before 7 and walked through the station ignoring the touts for all the guest houses and found a *tuc-tuc* to take us to the Guest House we'd gotten the recommendation for at River View Guest House in Bangkok. They were full up, so the driver suggested another place, the *Lai-Thai* Guest House. It turned out to be wonderful. A lovely room with hot water (ah!) a ceiling fan (ah!), and plenty of light (amazing). After spending months with the smallest watt bulb (like about 10) to see at night. This light is the greatest luxury. The place has a wonderful pool, a great restaurant, free drinking water, FAX and phone service international, and even stamps. All for about \$12 a night (300 baht). We settled in and will enjoy 2 weeks here.

Yesterday we took 3 great walks. The first took us along a street with lots of neat shops and a good bookstore. I bought a book on Thai Buddhism and a recommended Thai cookbook. It turns out that the Thai cookbook sucks, but such is life. The second walk took us to a wonderful vegetarian Thai restaurant. It was in a quiet lawn filled with trees and orchids everywhere. We ate on a porch overlooking a large fishpond. A young man was in a tree picking some sort of weird looking pinkish white fruits. Later he brought us some Thai apples he called them. They were tasty and had a very slight resemblance to apples.

We looked in other shops and found another great bookstore. Here I bought 2 neat cards with small needle work/weavings on them. I wanted them for Karen and Elaine's birthday cards. I wrote and mailed one to Karen today.

After some rest we went out to a restaurant specializing in Northern Thai food. Had some very hot spicy chicken soup and what was called chili which I ate over rice. Good but not my favorite. Then we went to the night market (or bizarre). For blocks and blocks there was anything and everything you could imagine in street side stalls. Silk blouses, hill tribe clothing, wood carvings, elephant hide shoes, leather bags, toys, jewelry of every kind. Amazing batch of stuff and huge crowds making the way from booth to booth. We had pledged not to buy anything for at least 4 days. This was really important for there is much temptation to buy. We learned much of variety, value, and quality which we will extend much over the next several days. We are beginning to get in mind things we may want to buy. The market was fun, and we spent 4 hours there without coming even close to seeing everything. We'll probably go back after we get more orientation.

Today was intended for leisure and reading. I wrote Karen a letter and fixed her birthday card. I sat out by the pool. It was very pleasant and so fun to sit out there. I can't ever remember a time when I just sat by a pool and enjoyed leisure. I'm trying to finish the *Mists of Avalon*. Have about 20 pages left. It has been a good read and helped take my mind off airport waits and long train trips. This

afternoon we entered the old city, i.e., the inner part, inside the moat area. This part of the city is older but quieter. Lots of wats and we found some great shops with hand woven silk and lots of clothing. We also found a huge food market. Such a contrast to Indonesia. Everything beautiful clean and attractive. Very nice. We had ice cream treat both last night and this afternoon. What fun.

As we settle more in northern Thailand, we reflect more and more on how hard it was in Indonesia. Everything is different. The night market was really fun here while in Yogya we couldn't stand it. People here are eager to bargain, but they leave you alone if you don't want to buy. It is just great here, and we'll enjoy it fully, I think. Now that I'm caught up, sort of, on journal writing perhaps I'll be able to be a bit more reflective later on. Consider where I am now to 1 year ago Thanksgiving.

### **November 24, 1993**

Left our guest house this morning immediately after breakfast for a walking journey through Chiang Mai to the northwest side of town. We wanted to see the Thai Tribal Craft Center. We saw a craft center, but it was the Northern Tribal Craft Center. Since we didn't know at that time there were two of them, we missed the second one. We are beginning to learn a bit more about these hill tribes and their distinctive crafts. I read a collection of essays on Northern Thailand and it helped a little. Emily has a book of interviews with some of the people. Of course, a trek would be the way to see the villages and see them in their setting. We are hesitant to do this for several reasons: not prepared here to trek, don't want to disturb the tribal peoples, don't have time to figure out the trekking situation, and since we'll trek for a month in Nepal, we aren't much in the mood. Still, I find these people fascinating and we'll go to the Northern Tribal Research Institute tomorrow to learn more. All this is a huge trip bonus for me.

We both have suffered constipation lately, something new to us. Mine is pretty much gone--regularity has returned. Emily still suffers. This has been a base for endless jokes and humorous asides.

I'm beginning to see the things here I'd like to buy: beautiful woven silk with embroidered stripes and a lovely Akha tribal embroidered wall hanging. We'll see, pretty exciting.

Ate at the Whole Earth Restaurant again today. It is a beautiful peaceful quiet setting for lunch. We had Indian food today, yummy. Will likely try the night market again this evening for a little select shopping but not buying.

Learned that Chiang Mai is about to celebrate Loi Krathon--one of its largest festivals, and we'll be here for it. It is a festival of lights in which people release offerings on lotus shaped banana leaves on water ways with candles lighted on them. They also launch hot air paper balloons. I've read about this and it will take place on November 27-28. Should be great to be here for it.

**November 25, 1993, 9:30 p.m. Thanksgiving**

Much to be thankful for but turkey, dressing, mashed potatoes and gravy, cranberry salad, and pumpkin pie are not among them. Nor is spending the day with Corbin and Jenny. I plan to call in an hour or so--14 hours behind us, see if I can get a hold of Jenny.

Today we started with breakfast of oatmeal and toast at JJ's Restaurant where we returned this evening for dinner. This is a very nice and very clean eating place. Some Thai people can be found there as well as many farangs (i.e., foreigners). Thai's eat Western food there. I ate Thai food.

We walked through the center of the Old City, i.e., the part inside the moat to the east part of town. We were looking for a Hill Tribal Craft place which we found, but it wasn't that hot. We also went to Chiang Mai University looking for the Hill Tribe Research Center. It was hard to find but we finally did. They had a nice little museum there, but not much else. I'd have looked briefly at the library collection, but the library was closed until 1 p.m. for lunch and it was barely past noon. Then we headed for an area that was lots of the finest quality crafts. Before trying out these stores we had a good pizza. These stores were a bit disappointing--seemed like tourist traps--the giveaway was that the prices were in US dollars.

We took a tuc tuc back to the hotel and still wound up walking a good many miles.

Perhaps the most fun part of the day was seeing the fringes of a food market. Very clean and neat market. We saw tubs of slimy eels (yuck!) and bags of frogs, and other livestock. Nice market and made me know that the Ubud market was as filthy and awful as I first thought it to be the first morning we were there.

After some rest we went to the shop where we had looked at hill tribe crafts. The lady there is very nice. Em bought a lovely necklace made by the Karen tribe and I bought 3 very neat bracelets for Jenny. They are hollow and have pieces of silver inside them which makes a sound. I bought 3 of them (matching) all to be worn at once. Very attractive. I know Jenny will love them.

Been thinking lots about what to buy for whom. So much here that is great that it is difficult to make selections. I love a whole lot of the Hill tribe crafts and lots of the Thai weavings. Much more looking to do before buying much more. We are also beginning to plan our day trips for next week. Probably a 1-day tour booked through the lady from whom we bought the silver to see elephants, orchids, butterflies, and waterfalls. Then another day on our own to Doi Suthep, a wat and monastery on a hilltop overlooking Chiang Mai. Tomorrow we'll go to visit the weaving village and see what is good there.

I'll try to call Jenny a bit later.



**November 26, 1993**

Called Boulder last night, Thanksgiving morning there. Judy was the only one home. That's the first thing she said to me, "I'm the only one here." The weather was very cold and icy. Jenny was staying in Granby, Corbin in Greeley, and Joyce, Boyd, and Leif were coming to Boulder to be with Judy. We visited a bit, learned that Jenny works 15 hours a week, early mornings 8 to 10:30 I think. She lives with another girl in a tiny motel room in Granby which I think must be 20 or so miles north of Winter Park. She has no phone, so I didn't get a chance to call her. It sounds like she is having fun and not minding where she is living. I wrote her a post card this morning as did Emily.

Today we went to Bor Sang and San kampaeng. These are the villages that specialize in umbrellas and cloth and clothing. We went by Song teaw (meaning "4 wheels") which is a pickup truck with a top over the back and bench seats along each side. We paid 100 baht to go to Sankampaeng. The driver wanted to escort us on a factory shopping trip, but we didn't want to do that. As it turns out these big touristy show rooms are about all there was out there. They have fine silk clothing alright, but it is the style for the more mature (to try to put it nicely) kind of person. So, we jumped on a local bus and rode back the 14 km. for 5 baht each.

We walked to the Thai Tribal Craft Shop that we had missed before. I bought a great vest and a jewelry case for Jenny. Then we went back to the Northern Tribal Craft Shop and I bought two lovely wall hangings. Great buys for which I'm proud. Came back to our room for some rest and lunch then late this afternoon we walked to the main silver craft area. Dozens of shops. Some nice things but no purchases. I'm sort of stuck on what to get Corbin. Maybe a nice silver bracelet.

Ate 2 meals at JJ's today. Em's stomach is still a bit raw so we're being careful with spicy food, well she is anyway. Tonight, I had a banana split.

Tomorrow begins 3 days of Loi Krathon. Fireworks are already being set off and lanterns are everywhere. Many of the main events will take place at Thapae gate very near our guest house and on the moat just across the street.

Walking through the old city this evening going from the silver area to the restaurant we came on one of the many Thai markets. This was inside a dark warehouse kind of building and wasn't as clean and nice as others. We saw a rat near some nice shops yesterday and this was apparently on Emily's mind while we walked through this greasy dirty market. When she told me she thought there must be many rats in there I was certain of it and it nearly made me sick.

After dinner we went to a silk shop we had been to before and Em bought a great jacket.

Oh, also on the walk through the old city we came on a takraw game. It was a school competition and there was quite a rooting section for one team. The

others, with no supporters, were clearly the visiting team. I'd read about this game before but hadn't seen it. It is an amazing combination of soccer, badminton, volleyball, and gymnastics. Three players on each team. Fast moving and quite artful. We watched with enjoyment for quite a while.

I'm reading Anthony Burgess's *The Pianoplayer*. Fun reading. Think I'll read more now.

### **November 28, 1993**

The last day of the third month of the trip. Our attention is beginning to turn in the direction of Nepal. Bought the *Lonely Planet Guide to Trekking in Nepal* this morning and have spent quite a bit of time today reading it and contemplating our time there.

Yesterday was an amazing day. We started out at JJ's for breakfast, then without plan for the day, we decided to revisit "The Loom" and another silk shop not far from us in the edge of the Old City. "The Loom" didn't open until 10 a.m. so we had 20 minutes to kill, it being 9:40. We went to one shop where we'd been before, affectionately called "The Dirty Shop" by us because everything in it is covered with dust or worse. Still, they have some interesting things.

"The Loom" opened and we went, what a feast of weavings and fabrics. The store is in an old house with 2 rooms given over to the shop. The owners apparently live in the rest of the house. A young man, quite knowledgeable of weavings and with enough English to communicate well his knowledge, tended shop. Emily bought me a gorgeous cotton weaving made in Nan Province in Northern Thailand (not so far from Chiang Mai). I bought my folks a wonderful silk weaving from Uttaradit Province (a copy of an ancient design) of very fine silk. I bought Elaine and Karen lovely pieces of silk made in Surin Province in Eastern Thailand. All spectacular pieces at excellent prices. I also bought Emily a pair of earrings designed after an old style. Very nice. Later Em bought Jenny a pair just like them. I also bought a lovely blue cotton weaving with end section in an off white. It spoke to me. "Buy me! Buy me!" Wonder what I'll do with it. Em bought a piece of silk for her parents similar to the ones I bought Elaine and Karen.

We were high from making such great purchases. Good prices and priced didn't even matter because the silks and weavings are so beautiful. Em decided to look more seriously at some jackets she'd seen, black cotton with silk front panels, and wound up making a great bargain on one.

I was in the buying mood and bought rice straw on Thai silk cards that I'll use as Xmas cards. Bought 10 of them. Will spend some time next week writing them so they will arrive by Xmas. The cards are just beautiful and what I'd call "suitable for framing."

Yesterday was the first day of the 3-day celebration of Loi Krathon. It involves lots of candlelight on waterways and I got it in my mind a tripod was necessary for my camera. After comparative shopping I bought a rather flimsy one for \$38. In the afternoon, crashing psychologically from the adrenalin high of the morning I had serious buyer's remorse, both for spending the \$ and for accumulating so much stuff to haul. Anyway, I took the tripod when we went out with my camera screwed on. After shooting a few photos I tried to remove my camera from the tripod and it wouldn't unscrew. What a mess. Worried about this before bedtime, woke up in the night to worry about it, then went to the shop where I bought it twice before settling the matter. It wound up that I ripped the thing apart with pliers to get it off and the people gave me my money back. Whew! What a way to get out of that. I thought the gods must be looking out for me.

Loi Krathon is a lovely festival. People make small floats of banana leaves decorated so beautifully. These have candles and incense sticks on them, and they are set afloat on the river, on moats, and on any bit of water. Offerings to the goddess of the waters, though there are Buddhist connections as well. The people decorate their gates and house fronts mainly with green banana trees, animal figures woven of palm leaves, hanging lanterns, and lots of lights. It has a bit of a Christmas decoration feel to it.

Last night we watched a parade down a main street of the Old City and out Thae Pae gate. Dozens of groups—many children, but sometimes groups of teens, young adults, old women—paraded by carrying lanterns, candles, etc. Many groups were accompanied by a musical group—either percussion, drums and cymbals, or strings (little 1 or 2 stringed bowed instruments). One group featured 2 middle aged men playing very odd instruments that looked a bit like large clarinets with metal bells that were attached at a slight downward angle to the rest of the instrument. All the groups were preceded by banners identifying them and last in the line for each group was a krathon float—a lantern like affair often carried on a truck, but sometimes by several older boys or men. These were lighted inside with candles usually, but some had generator powered electric lights.

The reconstruction of the old wall at the gate made a lovely setting for the parade where we watched it. The wall as well as the moat was covered with lanterns.

We ate at JJ's protecting Em's upset stomach, then went out through the gate to the large area where entertainment was going on. We saw what must have been a contest. Groups of about 16 identically dressed women, though some groups were clearly young girls, rushed successively onto the stage and each did a dance (sort of a simple hip hop style) to a song played by an orchestra and sung by the singer for each group. The music never stopped simply going from one

song through a musical interlude into the next song. The music wasn't much appealing to my ear, sort of 50s style sounds I thought. The group costumes were elaborate and widely differing in design and color.

Throughout the evening from locations throughout the city people launched hot air balloons. These were launched with fireworks attached that as the balloons ascend, they are like a comet with a fireworks tail. Each carried aloft a tray of burning embers which serves both to keep the balloon aloft and also casts a red glow as the balloons reach altitude and stabilize. The full moon sky was full of new bright red stars.

Today big rounded cornered cube-shaped balloons have been launched from all corners of the city. They are made of what looks to me like kite nylon cloth, though I think they used to be made of paper. The sky is full of these colorful balloons today.

We may go to the river this evening to see the krathons set afloat there. I've decided to get a UV filter and a polarizing filter for my camera before going to Nepal. Essential, I think. Have more things to buy here for Corb and Jenny before leaving. Oh. I also bought Corbin a silver bracelet yesterday, as well as a beautiful necklace for Emily. Have a few more things in mind to buy though the goods are accumulating.

### **November 30, 1993**

The last day of November and I'm sitting this morning poolside watching a few tourists swim a few laps, getting the exercise I sorely need, but I am too lazy and not fond enough of swimming to do. I have a peculiar set of emotions this morning: 1) feel pretty much relaxed and present here in Chiang Mai though I'll be happy enough to go on to Nepal, 2) I'm very excited about trekking in Nepal though I know it will be physically difficult and hygienically uncomfortable, 3) I feel less confident about long term relationship with Emily for reasons not altogether clear, 4) I'm aware that my own pathologies are the source of both my strengths and weaknesses, 5) I don't feel that we're having as much fun as we might. Emily seems withdrawn and less willing to "go for it" ("give it a go") than before. Certainly, the length of our travels may well have much to do with this--we see no one but each other and talk to no others really, so we're bound to have reached saturation with each other long ago. I'm even beginning to feel some concern that I am doing enough to justify myself academically on this part of the trip.

Anyway, just a bit of a week left in Chiang Mai that will be occupied with day trips, shopping, writing letters, reading and relaxing. Then a day in Bangkok, a day flying to Kathmandu, several days preparing to trek and then the trek. I figure to try the Annapurna Circuit which, by leaving around the 14-16 of December will put us near the pass on Christmas. So, we may be spending Christmas above 14,000 feet.

Now to catch up a bit on the last couple days. It is Loi Krathon here in Chiang Mai and to be here at this time is quite auspicious since we hadn't originally planned to leave Indonesia until December 2. The Thai really get into this festival, the most lively surely of their annual calendar. Throughout the last three days and even still this morning the sky is dotted with the squarish hot air balloons. Just a few minutes ago one of these arose from not far away and on reaching altitude, several hundred feet, a string of firecrackers went off followed by the uncoiling of a nice tail which hung 20 to 30 feet below the balloon. Then it floated gently along on the breeze. These colorful day time balloons are replaced at night by cylindrical shaped balloons with a tray of hot coals attached to the balloon. These are launched with fireworks attached that made quite a display until the balloon has arisen well into the sky. Then the embers make the balloon glow like a red star for a very long time. For the last three nights the sky has been filled in every direction with these red glowing stars. Quite a sight. Another even larger balloon of many colors is overhead just now with its tail unfurling. Lovely sight.

Every evening for the last three has been a raucous celebration of parade, dance, launching of krathons on every body of water and endless fireworks. The last two nights the parades have been comprised of elaborate floats brightly lighted on which are placed for show several lovely Thai women. Last night a parade lasted for hours and I watched from just inside the Thai Pae Gate. The parade is highly fascinating in a weird sort of way. Each of the many groups is preceded by a banner carried by several people announcing, I take it, the name of the group sponsoring the float. I think many of the groups are schools and others are wats (temples). Since schools are often attached to temples likely many are both. I also saw in a temple compound a float being decorated which adds to this evidence as well as the fact that many of the floats depict wats, stupas, dragon staircases, etc.

Following the banner are a large group of walkers usually in common dress. These may be lovely sarongs and traditional Thai costume--even the sarong style stereotypical of Thailand (Siam) with the tail drawn up between the legs to form pantaloons. But often the dress is jeans and work shirts. These work shirts are neat, and I may buy Jenny one. They are dark blue denim with round neck, no collar, they have long tail even all the way round that hangs well below the waist and has pockets low in the shirt front. They are neat shirts though while watching the parade last night it struck me that these have a kind of Communist worker flavor to them when worn by everyone. The people in this group often carry candle lighted lanterns (Loi Krathon is a festival of lights) or long streaming banners hanging from tall bamboo poles.

This group is usually followed by the float. some of these were a marvel to behold and were the product of countless hours of labor. Many shimmer and

sparkle in the lights cast upon them. Many are covered with strands of colored blinking lights. To provide light for these floats power is necessary, and this is provided by gas powered portable generators carried on trucks that precede or follow the float. So as beautiful and breath taking are so many of these floats is matched by the ugliness and pollution of these power trucks. The engines chug away noisily (often half a dozen or more on a truck bed) and belch clouds of smoke and fumes into the air.

Another weirdness is that many of these groups include a sound truck, again generator powered, with dozens of speakers all turned to the max in an ear-piercing blast producing a mix of speech (obviously meaningless to me) and really bad (to me) music.

The pollution produced by this festival is impossible to overstate. The long wall near Thai Pae Gate was adorned by hundreds of oil lanterns which were lovely to look at, but each wafted streams of black smoke. The balloons are filled with an ugly black smoke. The fireworks exploding everywhere produce clouds of smoke. Endless lines of traffic produce visible smoke from every exhaust pipe. Street hawkers each have a portable brazier attached to their carts on which they cook their foods. These too produce smoke. In and along the moat surrounding the Old City torches are set up in lines, each producing smoke. The result is pollution almost impossible to long endure. If I didn't know that my stay here is short and that I'll have a chance to really clear my lungs in the Himalayas, I'd be seriously concerned. My mouth and throat seem constantly irritated and filled with dirt. I've taken to frequent spitting even along the sidewalks. Emily is even less tolerant than I am and refused to endure the pollution last night and went home early without seeing all the parade.

Night before last we went across town to the Ping River. On the way we stopped at Mr. Chang and Miss Pauline's for a surprisingly delicious pizza. On the way to the river, we had frequently to dodge fireworks and one large firecracker exploded far too close to Emily. It freaked her out and she was very jumpy through the balance of the evening. I became as fearful as she, realizing the wantonness with which these fireworks were being set off.

In any case we did make it to the river to observe the thousands of krathons set afloat on the river. Just below the bridge a platform had been built extending out over the river a few feet. A ramp had been constructed so people could easily walk down to the platform. Each person carried a krathon—and leaning over the river to set it afloat. Each one has incense sticks and a lighted candle. A dozen or so boys were in the water, yucky polluted water, to help shove the krathons out into the wide river. Each krathon was soon caught in the river current and started its way out into the river of lights. These launch platforms were at intervals on both sides of the river. The effect was quite moving to me—these kinds of things seem often to be—the observation of hundreds of people setting

forth an exquisite work of art onto a huge river the accumulative affect being a river of candle lights.

The river was filled with lights. The sky was filled with lights and the area in between was filled with exploding fireworks on every side. Beautiful, moving, dangerous and polluting. Asia!

Yesterday we confirmed our flight to Kathmandu on the 10th. I found that while I thought “reconfirmation” meant for the passenger to confirm the time etc. of the flight, that here it means to reassure the airlines that you indeed intend to use the ticket you have bought and paid for. Without reconfirmation by 3 days prior to flight the airlines might simply sell your seat again to someone else. Nice thing to know. We also got our train ticket on a night train back to Bangkok on the 8th. We paid for our accommodations here through the 7th, and we arranged to rent a car tomorrow to go see elephants, orchids, and butterflies. Should be a fun day.

I don't really know what my personal problem is here this morning. I feel a bit bored with Emily. I'm wondering what our future will be. I am thinking any commitment for the long run is a commitment for my life (or for the useful portion of it anyway). I don't know. I'm also missing Jenny--since I can't call her, I miss her even more. I must call Corbin in a few days. I'm really quite eager to get on to Nepal and begin the Himalayan trek. I'm also looking forward to being back in Boulder, but I think being there without a home or place to go will be very weird. At age 51 I can't go home for I haven't one. Oh well, I must see this as a time of regeneration, of forging a completely new life, of engaging in newly creative adventures, of gaining the life and character forming experiences I should have had when I was in my 20s. What is it I want to do with the rest of my life? What is it I want to be? So many of these questions must remain unanswered for now, but one thing is certain—I want to foster and build close relationships with my kids, my parents, and my sisters. Also, I want all of my relationships to be honest (completely so) and founded on integrity. I want to live every day fully, mindfully, and to be present in all that I do—the small and mundane things as well as the large ones. I want to be a teacher and mentor to a few. I want to write and read and think, hopefully creatively yet without the anxiety that what I write and think need be anything for anyone. I want to be very physically active: dance, ride bikes, hike, lift, cross train like I never have before. These are a few things. Oh. I want a neat place to live that I can build, design, create and make my own. I want it to be in the mountains, in clean air, in the quiet. I want new friends with whom to share many of my values and interests.

### **December 2, 1993**

At pool side again after an enjoyable couple of hours getting my visa extended. After breakfast and cashing a traveler's check we hired a nice lady tuc

tuc driver to take us to the immigration office near the airport. When we got there, they told us, rather showed us, that we needed 2 passport photos and 2 copies of pages in our passports. We had the tuc tuc driver take us to a place that took photos and made copies and used this as an opportunity to get extra passport photos in anticipation of the need in Nepal. Then back to Immigration, filled out a form, paid 500 baht and in a few minutes a gentleman in uniform handed us our passports and smiling shook our hands. I sort of felt like I'd just become a citizen of Thailand and I was a bit embarrassed that I didn't even know the King's name.

Yesterday we rented a car and drove north of Chiang Mai into the countryside. Our first destination was 25 to 30 kilometers north to an elephant work camp. Actually, it is a tourist attraction at which they have perhaps 25 elephants and they give rides and have a show. There were about 6 or 8 big loads of tourists there, all French. As before my experience of French tourists is not a positive one. They seem so brusque and rather obnoxious. I'm surprised at how few English-speaking people I encountered anywhere in Thailand--mostly French and German (a few Japanese).

We walked around the elephant camp for a while before the show started, photographing these beautiful elephants and watching the French tourists feed them bananas and sugar cane. At the entrance to the area a group of very small hill tribe children obviously placed and dressed to attract attention. Their scam was to demand money from tourists who took their photos or stopped to admire the parrot they had. They were dressed in shabby hill tribe clothing and a couple very small children about 4 years old had tiny infants tied on their backs. They were probably from the nearby Miao village. A pathetic sight and a situation to contemplate. Very sad.

The elephant show was focused on elephants at work, and they did do a routine in which they stacked about 8 huge teak logs. Their strength and agility are impressive. Much of the rest of the show was more like what you'd see in a circus--walking planks, standing on back legs, playing harmonica, teasing tourists, etc. The French tourists, mostly of the blue hair set, seemed to love it, clapping wildly with every trick. It was a fun time, and we took lots of photos.

Then we went on to the Orchid and Butterfly farm. There are 4 or 5 of these near the elephant place. It cost 10 baht to get in and they gave you a nice orchid bloom as you entered. The orchids were beautiful--so many colors and shapes. I'd love to figure out how to grow some and to make the seeds I bought in Bali grow. A Thai man, speaking French, was explaining how to grow orchids from seeds, I think, but my French isn't good enough to catch much of it. I must try to learn how to do orchids. The butterflies were also fun to see. They had boxes where caterpillars were spinning cocoons and they had racks of hanging cocoons awaiting the magical transformation. And the beautiful results fluttered about



throughout the enclosed gardens. It was great fun to try to photograph both the orchids and the butterflies. The micro phase of my telephoto lens works great for these kinds of pictures.

We also stopped to see a series of waterfalls—the Mae Sa falls. This was pleasant to walk along with little pollution in the air. But it made one concerned about how tight my lungs felt with just a bit of exercise. Can't wait until the Himalayas to clean out the lungs and get the muscles back in shape. My left knee has been bothering me a bit. Hope it doesn't in Nepal.

After the orchids and butterflies, we headed north toward Fang. We wanted to see a mountainous area (the guidebook calls it "little Switzerland"). I wanted to visit the Hill tribe villages on the slopes. The trip turned out to be longer than we thought and Emily sort of freaked out after about 50 kilometers. She doesn't handle the Asian traffic situation very well. Not that I do. The car was a 4x4 jeep type but the play in the steering wheel was rather large and, though Thais are much safer drivers than the Balinese, it isn't a happy situation. There are, of course, no seat belts in cars here.

Em felt better as we got back towards Chiang Mai so we drove the Mae Sa Rim drive that begins north of the city and goes in a huge semicircle to the west of the city ending south of Chiang Mai. This was a beautiful mountainous drive with expansive views for many kilometers, as far as you could see of range after range of hills or low mountains. In some areas farming was being done on very steep hill sides. There were no terraces, the fields just ran up and down the hill. I don't see how anyone could stand up to work these fields much less how the hills would have any soil or retain any soil when cultivated. Still very interesting to see.

We got back to Chiang Mai before 6 p.m. and returned the car. A pleasant day out of the business of the city and traffic for a day though the cost was to the nerves in driving in Asian traffic. Anyway, I'm thankful that my last Asian driving experience concluded without incident.

Finished Upfield's *Cake in the Hat Box*. Fun to read a mystery novel set in Western Australia. Kind of took me back to my Australian experience. Last night we went to the Night market. Em had seen a lovely antique hill tribe bracelet she wanted. She bargained successfully for it. Then I bought Jenny a hooded shirt jacket and Em bought herself one too. I hope to find one for Corbin and perhaps myself before I leave. Might get Corbin some matching pants.

Might start Doris Lessing's *The Four Gated City* as a book for the trek. See if it is engaging.

### **December 5, 1993**

The king of Thailand celebrates his birthday today and all Thailand celebrates with him. As soon as the rubble of Loi Krathon was cleared away, flags, banners, huge pictures of the king and affairs that look like altars to me began to appear

all over the city. Doubtless Bangkok is more the center for celebration, but it is taking place here in Chiang Mai as well. After breakfast this morning we saw several hot air balloons (the small individual squarish variety) in the sky with firecrackers pop, pop, popping now and then from them. The king is highly respected, and criticism is strictly forbidden. That is interesting.

Yesterday we explored Doi Suthep, i.e., Suthep Mountain, which is just to the northwest of the city. From the city you can see (if pollution permits) Wat Phra That Doi Suthep. We took a tuc tuc to Chang Phuak Gate north of the old city where we caught a songthaew, a pickup with two rows of seats in the back. These trucks, mostly red, are everywhere and serve as taxis along with tuc tucs and bicycle 3-wheel affairs. The songthaew was full including an English-speaking tourist, a German woman, a couple Thai people, and 2 hill tribe women with 3 kids between them. We also stopped at an ice factory and loaded a bunch of ice on the back step. The journey up the mountain was a twisting winding steep road with the truck belching black smoke all the way. The hill tribe women sat across from us and chatted with one another. They ate small turnip looking food. One had a plastic bag of ice water. One, the older one who looked 40 but was probably 20 something, had 2 children, one sitting on a stool the other, without pants, on her lap occasionally breast feeding. The other woman was maybe 18 though she looked older. She was quite beautiful despite her obvious poverty. Her son, perhaps 3, sat on the floor picking up and eating any incidentals he found there. Very interesting to see and listen to these women. When we were leaving the wat, we saw them again on the stairway, their children in their laps, begging. How sad.

The wat is atop a hill and a long stairway, edged by the bodies of undulating dragons, leads up to the temple compound. We hiked the stairs taking note of how well we did physically, one part of our minds on the Himalaya. Not so bad I thought. Going up the stairs seeing no one dressed in shorts, as we were, I realized that “polite” or “respectful” dress to the Thais means long pants. I figured we wouldn’t be able to enter the wat. After circumambulating the compound, we found a basket full of sarongs and big baggy blue denim pants. Em donned a sarong and I pulled on a pair of baggy pants. Off with our shoes and into the wat. It was beautiful. The center object was a huge golden stupa with a five-tiered umbrella affair at the top. Golden umbrellas were at each corner and the whole area was surrounded by a square that had Buddha images all along the wall and several chapels filled with Buddha images and worshippers. At two locations worshippers lighted candles and incense, left flower offerings, and many made offerings of gold leaf. They buy these outside—a piece of gold leaf folded in a piece of paper. In the wat the worshipper selects where to place the gold leaf—on a Buddha image or other places, unwraps the gold leaf, and presses it on the chosen place. Many people prayed. Some were led in a vocal prayer by

a monk. Some shook a canister of sticks, like the I Ching, and read the message on the stick that first fell out. The area was active and very beautiful. Tourists, both Thai and non-Thai, intermingled with worshippers easily. Em and I drew a few looks and comments for our weird dress, but all in good humor, at least, I think.

All of these places are overwhelmed by hawkers selling junk. Beneath the temple is a huge area loaded with stalls every one filled to the rafters with junk to sell. I don't know how any of them make a living.

We caught another songthaew that took us up the mountain to a Hmong (Miao in Thai) village. The guidebook describes the village as heavily impacted by tourism, but it understates the situation. Just one huge glob of shops. We paid 5 baht to get into a formal terraced garden area in which is a nice waterfall. This area, fortunately free of shops, was the setting for a group of hill tribe children dressed in traditional clothing offering photo opportunities for a fee, "Hello. One baht." I took a few photos with telephoto. Em took one of a little girl and gave her one baht. The little girl, maybe 2, had not asked for money but had clearly posed for the picture. When Em gave her the coin, her eyes lighted up and she immediately clapped her hands together for a formal bow. Amazing and sad.

The gardens were lively. Huge poinsettia plants all over along with lovely large bougainvillea of many colors and other flowers whose names I don't know.

While we were in the gardens 2 Thai young women approached me. They wanted something and I thought they wanted me to take their picture together. A common request. I reached for their camera and they pulled back. One kept saying "together." I thought they wanted a different background. After a brief comedy of confusion, I realized that one of them wanted the other one to take her photo with me. I was honored, but haven't a clue why she wanted to be with me in the picture. They were very nice friendly throughout this process. Em thought this pretty funny and got a picture of us too. A photo with a story whose punch line will never be known.

After an hour in this sad village, we loaded in the awaiting songthaew and went back down the mountain to Phra Tamnak Phu Phing, a winter palace for the royal family. Again, at the gate we were informed that polite dress was required. We asked the guard and he waved us in. We did receive some glaring looks from Thais along the walk. The palace wasn't all that unusual and the gardens, which were supposed to be the big attraction, seemed insignificant for a royal garden. We made a quick circuit avoiding eye contact and exited.

On back down the mountain with a late lunch and an afternoon nap. Finished writing letters to go in Xmas greeting cards last night and mailed them this morning. Hope they arrive by Xmas.

I decided to get a role of slides developed to see if my camera is still working properly. Quite excited about seeing them and maybe getting more developed. Just 120 baht developed and mounted. We'll see the quality. Just 3 nights left in Chiang Mai. Am very excited about the trek.

Couple days ago, we went to the night market and bargained for a funky pair of pants for Corbin and some silk shirts for Em and me. Got the silk shirts for 250 baht each, i.e., \$10. Also bought film and filters (UV and polarizing) for the Himalaya. Though we've had a great 3 weeks here I'm ready to leave. The pollution is tiring as is even trying to get across the street. Ready for clean air and vigorous exercise.

We are experiencing a serious food dilemma. Even though we like spicy Thai food, and it is abundant here, we are tired of eating out every meal and having to eat the same things all the time. Makes mealtime a downer. Where to eat? What to eat? Yuck. In this respect I can't wait to get home. A nice salad, a plate of spaghetti at home, cooked on my own stove without having to look at a menu and have others determine portions, etc. I can understand better Corbin's attitude toward food.

Have decided the dome must be sold, but that I want to buy a house in the mountains and redo it. I could really get into that and should have the money to do it. We'll see. I'm going to have to begin thinking about all that stuff before long. Yuck. But the Himalaya first.

### **December 8, 1993**

The last three days have been so busy that haven't had time to write anything. Now on the train ready to leave Chiang Mai. It is after 7:30 p.m. now. The train we had originally scheduled left at 3:30 this afternoon. We came, boarded, and found it a dirty weird energy train so we exchanged for a later air-conditioned train. This one is nice like the one we came up here on. It arrives only 1/2 hour later in the morning than the one leaving over 4 hours earlier. In our 4 hours free time we went back to our old haunts, had a nice vegetarian meal and a last sundae at JJ's.

Saturday night we went to the Night Market again. Wanted to buy silk shirts. Looked at them then went to Mr. Chans and Miss Pauline's for spaghetti. Then back. Em bought 2 and I bought one. I was going to buy Jenny and Corbin one but decided I couldn't judge the size or color well enough, so I didn't get them one. I did buy Corb a neat pair of pants. Ended a great day.

Sunday I don't remember too well. Must have just hung out. That night we went to a Kantoke dinner at the Chiang Mai cultural center. Kantoke means round table. We went in a huge room that was sort of divided by a raised stage area. Many Thai people were seated on the floor in long rows facing each other with kantoques (round tables) brought to each pair on which was an assortment of foods. We sat next to the wall on a slightly raised platform. We were first

brought soup, then plain and sticky rice. The kantoke had pork curry, fried port skins, fried chicken, a vegetable dish, a dip for the pork rinds and vegetables, some sort of sweet fried noodles. Maybe another dish. The food was good, though it seemed toned down for the occasion. It was fun to eat sitting on the floor with the little table full of food. A British couple, probably in their 50s, sat next to us only a few farang (foreigners) and seemed neither to enjoy each other nor sitting on the floor to eat. One of the few things the woman said to me was "I'm not used to having my feet in the food. "Made me think about traveling once your children are away from home. Perhaps couples do so to finally try to enjoy one another and their money, but by then they don't really even know one another or care to try to know each other. Their communications patterns are probably so strongly established they couldn't begin to know how to renew themselves or their relationship. Given my marriage I feel I was in that same situation. Travel together but feel alone. Seems sad to me and of course it has everything to do with me and probably nothing to do with the British couple. They may have been as happy as larks. Ha!

After the meal musicians began to play Thai music and there was a performance of seven classical dances. Very beautiful. After the dancing we went to a nearby pavilion for some hill tribe dances. Here the audience sat on bleacher seats surrounding a concrete dance floor area. Several of the tribes performed. The program proclaimed the dancers to be authentic members of the respective tribes. They looked authentic to me, but during their dances, certainly more primitive but no less interesting than the Classical Thai dancing, the Thai people in the audience seemed often to laugh. The laughter was obvious and seemed to me derisive, but I didn't know what motivated it. It seemed disrespectful but later when we asked Thai people we met why--they suspected the dance wasn't authentic and the people knew it. I somehow doubt this, but I'll probably never know. It was a very fun evening.

Monday morning, we went to find the Chiang Mai Dramatic Arts College and National Theatre. It was simply marked on the map and I knew nothing about it. We first couldn't find it. It didn't seem to be on the street where it was marked on the map. We almost gave up and went on to something else, but I decided we should try another street. As we walked down the street, we began to hear music and peering over a wall saw young people dancing and playing music. We asked the guard at the gate if visitors could visit. He took us to the administration office. They cheerfully got a sense of what we wanted and called for someone. A man soon appeared, greeted us in English, and began to take us on a tour. His name is Boonrok and he teaches English at the school.

There are 8 years of arts and general ed at this college. The youngest students are 12. The first level is 3 years, the second level is 3 years, and the third, 2 years. You must be examined at the end of each level to move to the next level. Most

students are girls and most study classical Thai dancing with some studying Thai music including singing and a variety of Thai musical instruments. A few boys study dance, but this is a form of masked dance that seems very like martial arts.

As we walked along room after room was filled with groups dancing. We paused at several to watch and take photos. The students noticed us but were not nervous or affected by our presence. The dances were beautiful and performed very nicely by the whole class in unison. The teacher mostly counted the rhythms, did a little leading and sometimes would go to an individual student to physically correct her position.

We went into one class and learned that it was divided into two groups, two teachers in one room. All were female, but the girls had been divided into female dancers and male dancers. The division was made primarily on the shape of the face. The female parts go to girls with round faces--ones with a smaller forehead and a broader face. The male parts to girls with tall foreheads and narrow faces. Once we were told this you could clearly see the two types.

After they danced for a few minutes one teacher stopped the classes and had the dancers sit down. She asked one female part dancer and one male part dancer to come before us. They demonstrated standing, sitting, and various body positions to show gender differences. The male stands more open-legged, more side to side and more elongated than the female. The teacher corrected and adjusted her students to the perfect form. Very meaningful to me to see this.

I asked Boonrok if he had the time to spend with us as we went to watch the boys train. He said, "Oh yes." He seemed to be learning too. About this time, we met a young American, Bruce Collett, from Wisconsin who is there for the fall term teaching English and studying Thai music. He is learning a 2 stringed bowed instrument--a classical Thai instrument. We chatted a bit then watched the boys train. They were dancing a very vigorous "monkey" role. The teacher sat on a bench in front of the 4 boys and hammered the count out by hitting a stick on the bench. Wrong moves by these 12-year-old boys drew a sharp whack on the hand, head, or thigh with the rhythm stick. Ouch. Then we visited music classes--some held in the hallways, others in rooms. Students willingly demonstrated for us. Teachers gladly interrupted their classes to answer questions and to demonstrate for us.

About this time Boonrok suggested that we stay for lunch then visit his afternoon class. He said he wanted his students to hear English spoken by Americans. We accepted the invitation glad to repay the favor of Boonrok's hospitality. We had a nice, but very small, 7 bhat lunch. Visited more with Bruce and entertained a cluster of students who were very curious about us.

In the class we introduced ourselves and told a little about what we did. Bruce visited the class to observe. The kids were very excited and completely relaxed. They bow to their elders, but they are boisterous and move freely about the

classroom. They asked us dozens of questions. How tall we are, our ages, our marital status. When Em told them she is single, they made a huge howl and wanted to set her up with Bruce. They especially wanted to know how we like Thai food, Thai people, Chiang Mai, etc. They loved it when we told them how much we liked Thai food, culture, and them. They cheered and clapped. We asked if they wanted to come to America and almost all said they wanted to visit. They like Michael Jackson and Madonna. They then wanted us to sing for them. They wanted to sing for us. We asked Bruce to join us and learning that they knew the chorus to Jingle Bells, we sang the first verse, the "Dashing through the snow" part and invited them to join us on the chorus. They loved that. Then they sang us songs in Thai and in English, putting us to shame.

The class ended with as much energy and enthusiasm as it had begun. During the class students asked if we'd come back and we agreed to return the next day.

Then Boonrok asked if we'd like to meet another class of his that afternoon. We agreed. This one met outside and was a repeat of the first.

Em loved this experience and I suspect she would be a gifted and highly successful teacher should she choose that profession. I imagine she'll investigate a little.

We then found a group of young men jamming mostly on classical Thai instruments, but a Thai style amplified guitar was added. Very fine music. Reminded me so much of Jenny's Sept School band. We asked if that kind of music was available on tape and Boonrok arranged to get a tape copied for us.

We left the school around 4 p.m. excited and looking forward to returning. We were told that on Tuesday there would be major rehearsals for an upcoming performance.

Monday night we returned to Mr. Chan's for pizza and then to the night market. After wearing my silk shirt on Sunday night, I decided I just had to have more, for \$10 each. I also bought a Hill tribe musical instrument for 85 baht. It is a gourd, bamboo flute. We'd seen this instrument played and I thought it very fascinating. Em bought a rotary style bamboo flute. Then she bought one more silk shirt and I bought two.

Tuesday, we returned to Chiang Mai Dramatic Arts College. Oh, on Monday I had an hour to look at some books on Thai dancing in the school library. They were dated I suspect, but still relevant so I wanted to copy some from these books.

We watched a dance rehearsal when we arrived at 9 a.m. Then went to copy the pages. We had lunch with a large group of students who were very eager to talk to us, show off for us, teach us Thai language, and tell us Thai customs. Very fun and we began to identify that a few students were especially interested in us and we were also in them.

After lunch we went to the English department and met a Thai Muslim woman Umpan (Oom—pun [short u]) who is chair of the English Department. She is a wonderful and beautiful woman. She told us much about herself; asked us much about ourselves, and soon invited us to her house for lunch on Wednesday. We accepted.

We visited Boonrok's class (a third group of first year students) and all was fun again. They even wanted us to sing Jingle Bells having heard we had sung it the day before. By this time, we began to realize that Thai people think Americans are attractive. They constantly told Emily in English, "You are very beautiful." They told me I was handsome. They told me I looked smart. Very interesting since we think we are pale and ordinary compared to them. They all look so beautiful to us.

After class we went to a rehearsal of advanced students preparing a complex Thai dance drama. This is a complete merging of dance and theatre. They dance extensively and have long speaking parts. This drama was an old Thai folk story about a giant (or someone) who lost his eyes. The part we saw had to do with a hero trying to recover the eyes. He (played by a girl) courted a woman who knew where the eyes were. He got her drunk and got the information (secrets) from her. Very interesting story, the whole performance takes 2 hours. This rehearsal reminded me so much of Corbin's theatre experience and parts of it I have seen.

We left the school again elated and with the promise to return Wednesday (for lunch). Bruce asked us to meet him for dinner and named a very cheap vegetarian place near J J's. We rested a bit, went to the photo shop, bought padlocks for Nepal and went to meet Bruce. We had an enjoyable dinner. Bruce came to Thailand in September. Went on a meditation retreat for 10 days then came to Chiang Mai and got a job teaching English at the college and found a teacher to teach him music. He has been alone for all this time and plans to go to India in January to stay until June. Quite an experience. Bruce is interested in Naropa and CU and was interested in our travel experience.

We parted at 8 p.m. As we left the restaurant, I said that I'd enjoyed talking to Bruce and asked Emily if she did. She said, "I guess, but you talked all the time." That statement burned like fire and I closed down emotionally so fast I couldn't stop it. She knew it instantly, but I was a goner. It was a fairly unpleasant evening and night, but this morning I was able to describe the process and what happened, and this seemed to get me out of it and us back together. Really interesting how that worked. By describing what happened, an ethnography of a psychic shift, I could see myself clearly enough to break the spell and move out of the veil. What happens is that when something occurs to hurt me or threaten me seriously, I have a coping mechanism. It is like a veil falls between me and my own thoughts and feelings. Em constantly said "Talk to me! Tell me what you're thinking, what you are feeling." All I could do was to say I was okay. I



couldn't identify either thoughts or feelings. I couldn't really think what I could do to make the situation better. I was cut off from myself and unable to act. Thought my defaulted actions were clearly hurtful to Emily, and I could see this. The old pattern—how many times I've done this in my life only to have to take days to wear it out. Amazing. I was surprised when it happened last night and seemingly, I was unable to prevent it as I now almost always can.

So, this morning I could describe rather objectively what happened. After that I felt much more in touch with myself, my emotions, then I could begin to see why Em's statement was so hurtful. Many reasons. 1) Judy told me the same thing countless times telling me I am self-centered, that I must be the center of attention, that I care nothing for others, etc. I always hated that and felt it unfair. 2) I do not want to have a relationship in which I must hold myself back because the other is too weak or shy to engage in conversation as strongly as I do, 3) I feel that I have changed so much socially, feeling much more comfortable with so many people now. I didn't want to think that I'd somehow become socially dominating when I had been too shy socially. 4) I thought Emily had exaggerated in her statement of the degree of my dominance. She agrees that she did.

So, all is okay.

This morning I went to Sirowang Book Center to get some bibliography for works on Hill tribes of Northern Thailand in hopes of learning about their dances. I had planned to go back to the Hill Tribe research center at Chiang Mai University, but the opportunity at Chiang Mai Dramatic Arts college preempted that. Human contact is always preferred to library research. At 11:30 we went to the college. We met Bruce but Boonrok and Umpun were not there. The office soon filled with students. The same girls we had been having lunch with. One, a very sweet girl that likes English and especially touched both Em and me, asked me to read English passages with her from her textbook. We did that and she was very good at reading. Em had some photos and all the kids loved looking at them. These girls were sad to learn that we weren't eating lunch there and lined up, to bow to us and tell us goodbye as we left. Em and I were both moved to tears in our sadness at leaving these new friends.

We went with Bruce and Boonrok to Umpun's house. A very lovely Thai home, quite formal near a mosque on the north side of the old city just outside the moat. She had prepared a huge meal for some disabled people. We ate about 1:15 or so. She had invited two women teachers from the college who were interested in meeting us and especially to talk with Emily. We had a delicious meal beautifully served with engaging conversation. Umpun is very Muslim and has strong Islamic views. She rejects every other religion particularly any that suggests superstition or magic.

I asked about an offering I had seen alongside a street. Em had taken a picture of it and the picture was there. They explained this was placed at the location of

a traffic accident where someone had been killed. It was an offering for the spirit of the dead person. I also asked about scarves I'd seen wrapped around some trees. I was told that a yellow scarf designated that the tree was like a monk and should never be cut. A red one indicates that a spirit of some sort resides in the tree. I'd seen rice and a cup in a niche of a tree with a scarf. An offering to the spirit in the tree. We asked how the spirit houses fit with Thai Buddhism. Boonrok said most Thais are a little bit Hindu. He sees the spirit houses as stemming from Hinduism. And of course, most of the classical dramas come from Ramakien, the Thai version of Ramayana. Ramakien should be an entry in both the Dancing and Acting dictionary projects.

The two women teachers at the lunch were very interesting. Toy and Chim (their nicknames). One taught non-Thai music at the college. The other taught guidance (or psychology). They were very nice and practiced their English with us. When it was time to go Umpun told us she felt we would return. In fact, everyone constantly asked us when we'd come back and encouraged us to do so soon. Again, they all lined up on the porch and wished us well, encouraged us to return, and to say goodbye. What a wonderful experience this was. Chiang Mai is a lovely city (not to forget the pollution) with lovely friendly, gifted, and talented people.

Umpun had done the Hajj last year and has traveled often and extensively. She plans to come to America next Summer. Her husband, a banker, is, in her words, "a China man." We met him briefly. She asked Em to be her daughter and said I might be her brother. She has a daughter studying to be a nurse. She told us she had a son who died five years ago. He would have been 17 now. Very sad. She is a lovely person and I hope I do meet her again.

While we awaited this later train, we went back to Tapae Gate area and while having a last sundae at JJ'S we saw Bruce again. He joined us for a bit more conversation and we had a second goodbye with him

We leave Chiang Mai with such fond feelings. I'd love to return some day and I want to keep in contact with these new friends.

They have turned most of the lights out on this train. Most people are sleeping. Em seems to be sleeping soundly. I don't feel at all sleepy, but I don't have a book to read or anything to do. I may try to sleep. The earlier train was supposed to be a sleeper, but I doubt I would have slept on it. Too weird. This one we have to sit in seats to sleep. Hope I'm not exhausted when we arrive in Bangkok at 6 a.m.

Our loads are very heavy now. My backpack is almost heavier than I can carry and both of us bought small bags for the things we bought in Chiang Mai. We still have a huge duffel full of stuff in the Bangkok Airport. Friday morning early, we'll have to re-sort everything. Ugg, but fun to have the stuff.

**December 9, 1993**

The night train ride went by with some sleep despite much discomfort. Mostly my butt hurts on long rides. Likely because my butt is skin covered bones. This reminds me of something I forgot to write about at Umpun's house. I found a scale and climbed on to see how much I weigh. It was, with jeans and shirt on, 145 pounds. That would be net weight somewhere around 143 and this mid-day just after lunch. Before we left Boulder, I think I weighed around 152-155 after a workout. This means I've Lost 10-14 pounds on this trip. Em suggested that I have worms. I feel too good for that, though I don't know if you feel bad if you have worms. I just think it is loss of muscle weight and that I haven't been able to get enough to eat. I often feel hollow, empty, yet I no longer feel much hunger and the thought of food is not very exciting. Likely a product of eating out every meal for months. Yuck! I told Umpun how much I appreciated the opportunity to eat in someone's home.

The last few days in Chiang Mai we had numerous encounters with a couple of cute young men in a photo store across the street from JJ's. Both Em and I did some photo business there. When their boss was not there these two guys were complete jokesters. They teased us and we them though it is clear we know almost nothing of each other's languages. The last time we were in the shop we asked their names. The younger, 15, was named what sounded like One or Juan. The other, 17, had a name that sounded like the English word "egg." One, we were told by the woman who runs the shop, means "fat." We teased him a little. Wish we would have gotten their photos because they are totally cute. Jenny would have really had fun with them.

We arrived at the River View Guest House about 7 a.m. Got a room, took a shower and caught some z's before breakfast. Had a delicious muesli breakfast and inquired how best to get to Siam Center. We took bus #36 and did fine knowing where to get off. The bus cost 7 baht for the two of us. At the American Express Office, I got a package from CU that was totally without significance except for letters from Karen and Mother. It was great to read these letters. I had to have Emily read Mom's letter I was choking up and had too many tears in my eyes. I particularly miss communicating with everyone, not hearing from anyone, and not being able to talk to Corbin and Jenny. Boo hoo.

Emily got a great newsy letter from her friend Sally. When we learned that she and her husband will be gone for a week just a couple days after we return in January, Em wrote her a post card inquiring if we could house sit for her that week. It would save us a bundle. Bought some post cards of fingernail dance and of Chiang Mai. I bought a card to send to Steve Sinclair. We got back on bus #36, arranged for a taxi to the airport early in the morning, and figured our money. We are about \$25 ahead of budget for Thailand. We made budget almost exactly for both Indonesia and Thailand. We've increased the budget some for

Nepal. Of course, this doesn't account for all the things we have bought gobs. All my Christmas shopping and more. Still good purchases. I'm very pleased and should still get home with maybe \$600, enough for most of that road bike I want to buy in the spring. Of course, we were way ahead of budget for Australia.

So, we are closing our Thailand experience. We're sitting in the restaurant atop River View Guest House enjoying, yes, the river view. We are both very excited about Nepal and trekking. By this time tomorrow we'll have had our first views of the Himalaya. Thailand has been a total gift. We didn't plan to come here at all then when we had to change planes in Bangkok, we added a week for Thailand. That grew to three weeks when we wore out on Indonesia. We have had a wonderful time here and have new friends. I knew almost nothing of Thailand before coming here and now I know a little something at least. Know some about Thai dancing and music, some about hill tribes, some about crafts and silks, some about the geography, history, climate, and religions of Thailand. Thai people are so friendly and gracious. So helpful and thoughtful. Emily is really enjoying it here. She is very interested in Thai language and she is excellent at identifying hill tribes by their costumes and appearances. It is really fun to see her so into this experience.

We have both really settled into the travel experience. Though we feel homesick and miss people and things, we are good at putting these feelings in the perspective of our whole trip. We also think that our relationship is pretty amazing for us to get along so very well.

In Karen's letter she mentioned that reading about my experience put her problems and concerns in different perspective. She seems to be appreciating the size and diversity of the world through my letters. That is interesting to me. I've had some of the same feelings. For example, in Bali with cremation ceremonies going on all over the place all the time and experiencing death as a joyful experience certainly puts life and death in a different light. Death, the dead, are much more common and perhaps therefore more acceptable. That may just help one to live more in the present, more in the moment. We may be experiencing something of this living in the present through travel.

As the sun sinks near the horizon and glows huge and red through the polluted air, I listen to popular Thai music and look with happy/sad feelings over the watt spotted skyline of Bangkok. Farewell Thailand. I may be back.

On to the Nepali Himalaya.



## *Chapter Six*

### **Nepal**

#### ***Kathmandu, December 10 - 17***

##### **December 11, 1993**

Some final notes in this Thailand journal. The King's birthday was Dec 5. The country celebrated for days. Don't remember whether I recorded this or not, but it needs to be remembered. Fireworks, more balloons (both night and day), and huge pictures of the king everywhere.

We were taken to the airport on Friday morning by a young man who drove a pickup with a second jump seat where Emily sat. It was sprinkling lightly, and we were glad we didn't try to go to the airport by train. It took over an hour with heavy traffic and road construction.

In the airport I went to get our "left luggage." They looked, then invited me to look. I began to get nervous thinking perhaps they had lost it. Finally, we went downstairs and into a large warehouse type of room and there I found our huge heavy duffels. Back upstairs I found Emily and we went to a corner with some space and repacked everything. Pretty funny and yet it worked.

There were some Buddhist monks in the airport near our repacking place. They must have been of high status. Dozens of people were on their knees before them. Some few approached, without shoes, low to the floor. Interesting, but who knows what that was about. Then through the ticket counter, through passport check, then a quick snack and a two hour wait for the flight to leave. All went smoothly and we departed Thailand.

Seems I've forgotten some things in Thailand. As I remember them perhaps I'll add further.

### **December 11, 1993, Kathmandu Nepal**

As we approached Kathmandu on our Thai Airlines flight from Bangkok, Emily and I went to the back of the plane to pee. She said on the way that she had seen some really big mountains, but I looked out and didn't see them. As I sat back in my seat after peeing, I looked out the window and there they were, the Himalaya. I just started crying and I haven't really gotten control of my emotions since. When Em came back, she saw me crying and said she had felt like crying too. Mt. Everest was in the second group we saw. These huge completely snow-covered mountains are way beyond description. As I looked across the land they seemed to loom as high as the plane flew and I suppose they did. Everest has a dark face to the side we saw it from, I suppose from being so sheer the snow falls off or it is cast in shadow.

I did finally get hold of myself enough to get my telephoto lens on my camera and a nice young gentleman offered me his window seat so I could take a picture. I'm crying again now as I think of this moment. The first sight of the Himalaya is surely one of the peak moments of my life and to think that I'll get to spend more than a month with them.

Everyone, well most everyone, on the plane seemed excited. Clearly many on the plane had planned and dreamed for years of coming to trek in these mountains.

Once on the ground we exchanged some traveler's cheques and applied for a Nepali visa, paid our \$40 in US cash, as required, as our fee. We retrieved our rapidly growing mound of luggage and had little problem clearing customs. This was unlike an oriental man who went through just before us. That man was only a small carryon bag. The customs agent opened it, removed everything dumping it all over the counter, opened everything inside and peered in everything. Then he left the man standing there while he took care of us. Seeing that happen I thought with our huge load of baggage if it all got dumped, we'd be hours repacking.

Once outside the customs area we got hit by several touts regarding housing. Since we didn't have reservations or any recommendations, we choose one who showed us a photo of a half decent looking place and promised a good price plus free transportation. Then we were assisted, like it or not, by a herd of teen age boys who wanted to carry our luggage. They ran around chattering, encouraging us to watch, to count the bags, to be sure they did everything right. Em went to pay them in Nepali rupee, but they saw she had Thai baht and preferred that. They seemed willing to take anything and assured her they would share whatever she gave them. I think she gave them 30 baht (about \$1.20).

Next our ride to the guest house. This took us through winding narrow streets bustling with hundreds of people, rickshaws, bicycles, a few motor scooters and an occasional car, and, of course, a few strolling cows. These cows are a kick. they aren't fenced or tied and simply wander around the streets eating this and that. I think people feed them scraps etc.

The drive from the airport took about 30 minutes during which we told the man we wanted to pay no more than \$15 per night for a room. He assured us we'd get a very fine room for that. He also found that we are friends not father and daughter, so he knew the sort of room we wanted. He had told us we were under no obligation, so on arrival at the Snow Lion Guest House, I asked to see the room before deciding. We went through a very nice lobby and a restaurant and up four flights of stairs. We emerged on an open walkway and he pointed out Mt. Ganesh (which one I don't know yet) to us. Mt. Ganesh is a huge mountain far to the south, snow covered and massive. We looked at the room, which is large and very nice with a bath including hot water, tub and shower. Very nice. The man told us his name was Siddhartha ("like the Buddha" he added) and took us up one more light to the roof. Here mountains can be seen all around and across Kathmandu valley is the monkey temple, famed for its bearing the image of eyes, easily seen from our room. Siddhartha instructed his helpers below to bring up our bags and thus we were settled.

A quick moment to refresh ourselves and we headed for the American Express Office to see if anyone had sent us mail. Nothing for either of us. But while out we wandered the streets, observed the people, smelled the smells, heard the sounds. Yes, we are certainly in Asia. We both immediately loved the feel and were so glad that we'd had the preparation of being in Indonesia and Thailand before here. Nothing at all to freak us out and both of us were prepared for much worse conditions than we found. Few people begged. Few people hawked goods to us. Lots of people were interested and pleasant. And we quickly learned that prices on items we want to buy are much cheaper than we expected. Also, the exchange rate is half again better than we thought, rather than 32 rupee per US dollar we are getting 48 rupees. Yea! Plus, the sweaters, jackets, and jewelry here are very beautiful.

Interestingly we were approached by three different people (young quiet speaking guys) and asked if we were interested in drugs, marijuana and hashish. Interesting. Said that didn't I?

We also found the trek outfitting shops though Sidhartha has told us that a friend of his can outfit us. I want to buy some equipment since I can get excellent brand equipment here for 20-30% of what I'd have to pay in the US.

It got very chilly as soon as the sun slipped down, and we came back to Snow Leopard, oops, Snow Lion for jackets and a little rest. Then we went to dinner at Narayan's Restaurant. Excellent piping hot food, very inexpensive. Very tired



we came straight back and relaxed a while before turning in for the night. It got quite cold at night. Fortunately, we had a heavy blanket and a very nice comforter. We snuggled before going to sleep and talked over our trip and how truly wonderful it is turning out and how much we love and care and like each other. A very special time for us.

This morning we had a delicious breakfast of toast, oatmeal and pan cakes, and a big pot of tea for a whole \$1 each. Then we went up on the roof to have a look around. I'd wanted to get up for sunrise and did, but the whole valley was fogged in. After breakfast the sun was beginning to burn away the fog and we watched things emerge slowly out of the mist. The surrounding houses with people hanging laundry, reading, playing with puppies, dancing, drumming on tin cans, drawing, knitting, pounding herbs (I suppose), or just relaxing. Our roof is a couple stories higher than most so we can see many roofs. This seems to be a place where many people go to enjoy themselves work or whatever. It is very fun to look over this area of the city and see all these people.

We could see people stretching laundry on the ground and fences to dry. Cows wandered along. Children played. A few houses have small vegetable gardens.

Finally, the Monkey Temple began to emerge from the mists and that made a couple of nice photo moments. Then we could begin to see the white mountains to the south a little. Prayer flags flutter from every roof. A few satellite TV dishes can also be seen.

Music can be heard and there is a constant din of human voices arising from the street below. There is a little traffic noise, but very little especially compared with Thailand and Bali. The air here is polluted, but it seems nothing compared with everywhere else in Asia we've been.

Oh, our room has a phone from which you can direct dial international credit card calls.

We spend a couple hours this morning unpacking and repacking everything preparing for our trek. We have loads of stuff, but I think most of it we'll leave here while we trek. This guest house is very secure, and we saw their storage room and system for storing things for trekkers.

Now it is nearing noon. We are back on the roof warming ourselves in the sun and catching up on our journals. The fog has pretty much lifted, and the sun is warm. We are wearing our hooded long sleeved Thai shirts. They are just right for the climate here. Guess I'll go get my camera for a photo or two then go eat lunch.

Later. Forgot to mention that on our first walk into Kathmandu we became involved in a wedding procession. The street was seriously narrow, and we caught up with a major jamb. Then we saw there was a highly decorated car in the middle of the mob and on the other side a group of men in red jackets and

all wearing some sort of hat (can't remember). They were a brass band playing music. How fun.

We had lunch today at a fine restaurant. I tried a Tibetan dish called fried dumplings, wonton skins filled with vegetables, with a great sauce to dip them in.

We looked around a bit then came back to the Snow Lion so we could consult with the guy about trekking equipment. We got a ride to his office but all he had to offer were expensive guides and porters. He seemed to discourage us from going alone, but of course, he is in the business of providing guides. He wanted \$700 each for one package and \$380 for both for just a guide. Not for us. We then found a shop that has good equipment and rents bags and jackets at good prices. I was thinking of just buying a bag, but we'll need 20-degree F. bags, and that kind of bag would be useless to me in Colorado and a down parka wouldn't be worth much either. Then we checked on people who will get a permit for you. The guy wanted \$90 each to get the permits. The cost is only \$13 or so. We'll wait in line and get our own, thank you.

Still, everyone here is very friendly and helpful. It is a joy to be around everyone. There is some serious poverty here. We see a few beggars. One little girl approached us today. She looked desperate and followed us along pleading for money. This kind of thing is heart wrenching, but even government publications discourage giving to beggars.

This evening we had seriously delicious food at yet another excellent restaurant. Everything in every restaurant is served scalding hot. I had vegetarian lasagna, yummy. This little cafe was jumping with activity. Lots of people were eating steak. Weird to think of a restaurant here serving steak when cows are not supposed to be killed. Even weirder to think of the mindlessness of those who order steak.

So tomorrow we're going to apply for our trekking permits and try to get outfitted. Everything is so cheap here you can get a load of equipment for almost nothing.

We looked at some beautiful, highly refined, jewelry in a very upscale jewelry store tonight and the more expensive bracelets and necklaces were 1,000 to 1,500 rupees, that's \$20 to \$30. We also, this afternoon, saw neat cashmere neck scarves and shawls. Wool gloves and hats cost \$1.25. Great long wool sox cost less than \$3. Amazing.

Late this afternoon we again went to the roof top. Everest was pretty visible to the northeast, Ganesh to the northwest, and several other huge peaks to the north. Breathtaking really. We need a longer time here, I think.

We'll try to get everything together on Sunday and Monday for a 7 a.m. departure on Tuesday. We are both very excited.

**December 12, 1993**

Quite a day. My emotions have been all over the map. The morning began with the electricity being off, as is very common everywhere in Kathmandu, so we had our breakfast porridge by candlelight. I had major weirdness, the old withdrawal syndrome, this morning which later, with Emily's help I figured was due to denying my feelings of sadness and loss in not being in contact with Corbin and Jenny. I had planned to call Corbin this morning but put it off and found myself dodging it. I know I wanted to talk with him but couldn't bring myself to call him. When pushed to do so, by myself and Emily, I tended to withdraw. My belief now is that by calling Corbin I'd have to feel the pain of my missing him. Jenny is another story; I can't even get hold of her at all. So, with that in the air we headed for Immigration to deal with trekking permits and visa extension. Much queuing and returning, and much more money than we thought necessary, but we did get them.

Then we tried to settle down enough to get equipment. We were pretty successful with that, though lots of loose ends, odd items we need. Then we got a bus ticket to Dumre on Tuesday a.m. Pretty exhausted we came back to Snow Lion to regroup. At this point Em began to worry about medications we might need and about whether or not we should hire a guide. With so much affecting me at the point I felt very impatient. But we made a list of medications for every known human ailment and went to dinner.

Dinner, by candlelight for the power was off in that neighborhood ("the Bluebell" same as last night), offered us a chance to relax, reflect, and converse about our roller coastering emotions and where we stand. We agreed that we are really doing very well and cheered up considerably. I particularly feel hopeful and grateful because I moved a long way in the direction of understanding more fully my withdrawal weirdness. It is a severing of myself from feeling emotions, potentially painful ones. I drop a curtain between myself and my emotions and in that space I'm unable to feel much of anything. It is sort of an emotional Novocain. I know the pain is there, but I can feel nothing but general pressure. But I also can't feel what I'm doing, I can't feel anything good or bad. When others push me, try to anger me or humor me, or love and support me, the very feeling heightening character of those efforts only deepens my withdrawal. What helped me today was when Em told me she thought I was cutting myself off from my feelings about Corbin and Jenny. This purely rational explanation helped me build a bridge toward my feelings even though there wasn't time nor place to truly feel these emotions.

After dinner we went to tackle the drug/medication issue. I anticipated much confusion and difficulty communicating. We had a dozen or more drugs that in the US would not only need a prescription but wouldn't even be available. We walked into a tiny little pharmacy. We told the man we were preparing for a trek

and needed medicines. He smiled. As we started down the list, he had every drug and most cost but one or two rupees a pill. After half an hour we walked out with a big bag of stuff, antibiotics, bandages, eye, ear, throat, skin, anti-diarrhea, constipation, and anti-nausea, etc., etc. All for 613 rupee or about \$12. We did not fail to get a single thing we requested including 3 exotic high altitude sickness medications. It was actually fun.

Earlier I had opted to try a layering approach. Instead of a huge down parka I decided to get a heavy wool shirt, a double-knit wool sweater, and my Gore-Tex along with polypro underwear. So, with spirits raised from the successful pharmacy experience I bought a sweater, hat, and muffler. All very nice and lovely and totaling 700 rupees or \$14. I bargained a bit, successfully. These sweaters are great.

Now with teeth brushed, a hot shower, a warm comforter over me, and a shrinking list of things to do and buy tomorrow I feel pretty okay. We loaded our packs with the items we have, and they don't seem heavy at all. So, hope we'll soon be ready. I'm eager to begin our trek. It should be an amazing experience.

#### **December 14**

We should now be on a bus to Dumre but Emily awoke in the night sick. We can't yet figure it out. No diarrhea or vomiting but stomach pain and aches. Hope we can go tomorrow.

Yesterday was very hectic trying to get ready to go. Lots of things to buy arrangements to make. We finally decided to hire a porter/guide. At the trekking shop where we rented equipment, they introduced us to this young man Parang Lama. He had done the Annapurna Circuit 25 times. He knows the way and can help us negotiate for places to stay. He speaks a little English. He is 22 and very nice looking. He was to meet us at 6 a.m. this morning. He was there ready to go. I told him Emily was sick. He understood and said he'd be back at 10 am to go change our bug tickets. He was here (it is now 11:30 a.m.) but we weren't ready yet to decide if Em will be ready to go by tomorrow. I told him I'd come to the trekking shop at noon.

Yesterday I called Judy to find out about Jenny. Seems Jenny is okay and enjoying Winter Park. She'd been home a couple times. It was certainly more fun to talk with Corbin the day before. He was so up and enthusiastic. He'd received my Christmas card but hadn't yet read my letter.

Judy told me that she has found a place to live and will be moving out of the dome in January before I return. That will be fine, I guess. Will worry about it when I get back.

Had a horrible time yesterday getting an Am Ex packet. Went to one Am Ex office and they sent me to another many blocks away and in a rather offensive

part of town (more like urban Bangkok). It was very polluted and nasty. Not quaint like this Thamel area of Kathmandu.

Our list of things to do and buy shrank over the day. Last night we negotiated some incredibly narrow and completely filled streets to go to a place called the Super Market, a collection of stores. It is about 1 km from here, I think. It was like an indoor shopping mall. All the stores used gas powered generators for their lights, so out in the mall area dozens of generators roared away, a nasty sound and smell. We needed sunglasses. Though it took a long time we finally found some. Quite an adventure for a simple item.

Yesterday we changed our 1,000-rupee notes for smaller money, 20s, 100s, etc. We walked away from the bank with 1-inch-high stacks of money wondering how we were going to manage it. We bought money belts, but with all this money in them they are rather obvious.

So, we're here on hold for a while. The Himalaya beckons, but we're not yet there. Rest day or limbo. Perhaps the next several hours will tell us something.

As part of my trek gear, I bought some neat wool sweaters and some wool mittens and gloves. Also bought Gore-tex mittens for \$14 (\$70 value according to Emily who has some).

It is past 11:30 so I need to contemplate and discuss with Em our next move.

1:45 p.m. Got bus tickets again for tomorrow. Em seems on the mend. She went out with me. We met Parang and he seems so nice, so responsible. He asked Emily, as so many have, if I am her father. She told him we are friends. He seemed embarrassed but smiled. We had a nice bland, but delicious, lunch. Shared minestrone soup. I had baked eggplant with melted cheese, Em had baked potato with butter and cheese, and a pot of mint tea.

Now we are roof top of the Snow Lion Guest House. It is hazy this afternoon so fewer of the huge peaks are visible. I'm so eager to be trekking. Hopefully tomorrow.

Walking back here from lunch impresses upon me the conditions of a third world country. The street is dirt but with some rock and stone on it. There are many potholes and even deep excavations (open for days) for who knows what. Buildings crowd the narrow street on both sides except for a couple areas where there are open spaces. No matter what time of day or night the streets are full of people. Most walk but a few travel by rickshaw, some on motor scooters and an occasional auto.

A few people beg. A little girl, a total urchin dressed in rags, runs along beside us with hands out. She doesn't give up easily, perhaps because there are almost no Europeans in the street. Perhaps we are her only hope. There are stationary beggar usually old men, who sit or stand. They call out to you "Namaste" and bow and give you a big haggled toothed grin with a wild weird look in their eyes.

But beggars are not so many as I had expected. Actually, lots of people in the streets are what I'd call dressed up and well groomed. Some men wear tailored western style business suits, others in jeans or slacks and attractive shirts. Many of the women wear skirts and blouses, often of beautiful and colorful cloth, sometimes with pants beneath the skirt in the same cloth. Most women wear the tika or dot or decoration on their forehead. Sometimes it is a red line that goes up into the part of their hair. Many have attractive long black hair. Many of the women--dark skinned, eyed and haired--are very beautiful, the men handsome. Some children wear school clothes of a western style. There seems to be a youth center near here.

As in other Asian countries I've visited there is here much physical expression of affection within gender. Men, youth, and young boys walk hand in hand or with arms around each other's shoulders or waists. Women show the same affection to one another.

Babies generally go without diaper. You often see them, bare bottomed, crawling about the stoop or the house next to the busy street. Not infrequently the mother takes them into the street and helps them to squat, early toilet training.

There are many vendors. Many houses, as in Indonesia, are fronted by a tiny store that sell everything. We stopped at one last night for supplies. The man had everything we wanted and much more. All good prices and he was very friendly. Others vend from stands on the street, particularly oranges (a greenish orange small fruit, mandarin I think), bananas, and peanuts particularly. There is one very remarkable woman, very dark and completely dirty and disheveled, who sits near the busy intersection of about 5 streets near here selling peanuts. She has a large wicker tray with a mound of peanuts and sells them by the cup full. Cups used to measure peanuts are slightly cone shaped with the small circle at the top. I wonder why.

Fruit seems to be sold by the weight rather than the piece. The street vendors are equipped with a crude balance scale. They hold it with one hand and with the other place weights on one tray and fruit on the other.

Then, of course, there are many shops selling crafts, carvings, sweaters, woolen jackets, cashmere, jewelry, carpets, Indian clothing and tapestries, trekking equipment, medicines, and books.

There are roving street vendors selling a single piece, a carved elephant or a little gadget of some sort, or a peacock feather fan, or something.

Regularly you pass near someone who whispers to you "You want to change money? Very good rates." This is the black-market currency exchange. You may also hear whispered, "You want to smoke something? Hashish? Cocaine?" They always ask me regarding changing money. They always ask Emily regarding illegal drugs.

It is a great joke and a kick to see the cows wandering the streets. They plod along, stopping at garbage piles to nose about for food. Sometimes they are huge horned black bulls. One was lying down on the sidewalk just outside a busy bank where we went to change money yesterday. Often, they lie in heaps of garbage. No one seems to pay them any attention. There are quite a few of them also.

Yesterday some drew the attention of a few in the street as the bull proceeded to mate with a heifer. Dogs do it in the street as well. There are many street dogs who live on garbage, and often fight with one another. But the Nepali also like dogs for pets. These dogs live on rooftops rather than the street and get only the exercise of running about their small patio. Of the dog pet variety there are many. A German shepherd lives on a nearby roof and on another live about six of those funny little mop-like dogs that look like bedroom slippers.

Nearly every night I've been awakened by dogs barking. They seem to yap endlessly at one another from their rooftop locations, seemingly hundreds of them. This may make sleep impossible for an hour or so.

Nepali sweep much like other Asians. Women with short-handled brooms, and often pathetic brooms at that, walk along slightly bent over sweeping away. The hallways and stairs are swept daily here at this guest house. The homes sweep stoop, street, courtyard, whatever, every day though these surfaces are themselves often nothing but dirt.

As I look over the city from here many pieces of cloth flutter in the slight breeze. Many are simply laundry. A huge field near here is almost always filled with laundry hanging from lines and lying flat on the ground. I noticed an interesting substitute for clothes pins. They take two pieces of rope and twist them together. The laundry is held to the line by the corners being inserted between the two ropes. This works very well, and I think it quite clever.

Other fluttering cloths are prayer flags. There are some on every roof. Usually this is a piece of cloth attached the length of a 15 foot or so pole, like a very short but very wide flag. Some have prayers written on them; some are colorful. Most look like gray rags. Perhaps they all begin as colorful flags with inscription and time renders them all the same.

Flags attached to stupas usually are attached to lines or ropes that go from the ground to the peak of the stupa. These are small 10" by 10" rectangles, often presented in many colors.

Though garbage is everywhere and there seem to be places along the street that accumulate huge piles of garbage there are trucks that seem to rove around occasionally picking up this garbage. I have also seen a few garbage pickers--people who sort through this mess looking for something of value to them. I can't imagine what it could be.

Several boys, I'd guess 12 or so, just came up here to the roof top. All wore nice pants and shirts and had stylish haircuts.

Nearly everyone here is friendly and pleasant. All call out “Namaste” or “Hello.” Most smile and a few bow. So nice.

We have hired our porter and guide for \$8 a day if we want him for 12 days only and for \$6 a day if we keep him the whole circuit. That will be about \$100 to \$150 depending on what we decide. We will each be spending more than this on food and lodging for the circuit and he’ll eat the same food and stay in the same places. Don’t know how he’ll make much money. He seems a fine young man, eager to work. I’m pleased we decided to hire him.

Perhaps this will have to do for Kathmandu at least until after the trek. It is simply impossible to capture in words or pictures the feeling, the situation here. It is at once so poor and sad and so beautiful and alive. I am completely grateful for this experience.

I hope I can get a haircut this afternoon. Perhaps I’ll go try to get Em to do a little trim for me.

#### **December 15**

Em’s sick so we’ll be here in Kathmandu for at least a couple more days. We were ready to walk out the door before 6 a.m. this morning when Emily decided she was too sick to go. I was disappointed and as a result I didn’t support her well enough, but it is a good thing because she is now feeling worse. She had an interesting experience going to see an Indian doctor. Very primitive but he prescribed antibiotics, vitamins, throat medicine, etc. The whole thing cost about \$10 and her return checkup on Friday will be without charge.

Some weird little vehicle with a blaring loudspeaker just went down the street. Have no idea what it was saying. Reminds me of the many trucks in Chiang Mai that blasted music and advertisement.

Kathmandu is a sprawling active city with much going on. Temples everywhere and processions, music, etc. part of the course of the day, just like power outages. I feel rather restless. I’d like to be learning about this culture, seeing dance, talking with people, especially since I’m not trekking, but I don’t quite know how to do that.

First thing this morning after catching a bit of extra sleep after deciding not to go, I heard a bell ringing nearby. It sounded like a small hand bell. They have such lovely sounding ones here. Though hearing bells in the early morning is not uncommon I got up to investigate. On the roof top just across from my window a monk was doing a ritual for the erection of a new prayer flag. He stood beside a red flag across from the newly erected flag and prayed, rang the bell, and dipped and flipped water toward the new flag which is white with white, red, green, yellow and blue fringe pieces and inscribed with a prayer (I suppose). I slipped out on the balcony and got a couple of photos of this. Very lovely mystical image through the morning fog.



It is not a very clear day today. I cannot see any of the high mountains from here. I'm writing while sitting on the roof top this Wednesday afternoon.

Want to write a little about games. I've seen in just a few days the Nepali playing all sorts of games.

Cards are popular on one roof top just below me. Two little girls are playing with an old woman. A man is looking on. I haven't a guess what game it is. The other day a group of men and women were playing cards on the same roof.

At midday these same two little girls, I'd say they are 8 years old, were playing a sort of jump rope game. They had an elastic rope about 10 feet long. They tied one end to a pipe or pole. One girl held the other end. The other girl began astraddle the rope and began a skipping kind of step in which she bounced one foot on one side of the rope several times then began a rhythmic pattern of steps across the rope catching it with her foot behind her, etc. I couldn't really figure out the pattern. I went outside to see if they were reciting words, but they seemed not to be. One girl seemed more advanced than the other and for her the rope was held about crotch high while for the other it was between ankle and knee high. While I watched a young woman, 18-20 come on the roof. She wore jeans and dressed rather western in style. She took her turn at the rope and added some turns the little girls apparently hadn't yet mastered. This game seems to me aerobically active and it actually reminded me a little of aerobic dance.

I've seen several boys rolling hoops along with sticks. I've read about this game for years, but this is the first time I've ever seen it done. One I saw was a hoop about 2 feet in diameter. The boy ran along beside with a stick pushing the hoop along. He went right past a group of cows laying in a heap of garbage. Another boy is often seen rolling a small hoop no more than 10-12 inches in diameter in a little garden yard below me. He has a long pole with a bend in the end. He runs behind the hoop with his pole in the middle of the hoop.

Men are sometimes seen street side squatting in a group. In the midst of them is some sort of board formed by scratching it crudely on the street. The game pieces look like bits of rubbish. Clearly this is a gambling game for it draws much observer interest as well as player interest. Wonder what this game is.

Then a while ago I saw a man playing a game resembling marbles with a small child. Again, the balls were small round stones. The man would hold the "marble" between thumb and forefinger of one hand and flip it with the other forefinger. Again, I don't know the object of the game, but clearly man and child were enjoying the game.

When Em went to the doctor this morning she got the recommendation from the people here at the guest house. When we found the place there was just a small sign above a little tiny pharmacy (and I mean a single counter 4 feet long with a couple of shelves behind half filled with boxes randomly arranged). Two young men stood behind the counter. A man sat on a stool out front. Em asked

about the doctor and the man stood up, escorted us through a curtain into a tiny, not at all private office, behind the pharmacy. Here he took a careful history, did his examination, and upon making a diagnosis wrote out the prescription and carefully explained it to Emily. Three of the 4 prescribed items were available and they sent someone to run down the street to get the 4th item. Amazing. But more amazing is this. The streets here are full of sick people. I can't begin to contemplate the kinds of sickness and sufferings going on here. Yet this doctor sat awaiting a patient and the pharmacy is supplied with many modern western drugs at one to 10 rupee per pill, ten anti-biotic tablets cost about \$2. I suppose that it is simply that few people here can afford even these small prices. Perhaps few have any conception of this kind of medicine. I did pass one stall this morning where a man was making some sort of preparation of powders, some bright colors, on a piece of banana leaf.

As I sit here writing about so much, I'm seeing and so little I'm understanding I fathom my unpreparedness for Nepali culture. It is a wonderful experience, yet I feel ignorant and naive. Doubtless I should have prepared more, as I should have for Australia, Indonesia, and Thailand, but then it would have been years before I'd have travelled. So, things are as they are. I'll practice my skills at observation and, following Janette Turner Hospital's (whose wonderful book I read, it seems, so long ago) method of later coming to know what I already know. I hope these journals to be like photographs containing things that I'll later understand when I find them again.

One important social interaction here is picking head lice. Many times, every day I see one person carefully going over the scalp of another picking and squashing the lice. I asked Em what happens if lice are not removed. She suggested hair loss and recalled hill tribe women in Thailand who had obvious hair loss as a possible case. Perhaps so.

I've begun Doris Lessing's *The Four Gated City* for the second time. Think I want to take it on the trek. Lessing sets a wonderful model for careful and detailed description. I marvel at them. So rich.

I'm sad not to be able to see the mountains and am concerned that there is bad weather and heavy snow in them which will make our trek more difficult. But then like everything else today, I don't know.

It is getting rather chilly. Think I'll go down, though the room isn't heated so to stay warm requires sitting in bed, the only place to sit, with the comforter pulled up. I could wear one of the warm wool sweaters I've bought.

Oh. One more thing I don't understand. As we walked down the street to go for lunch, there was a group of people off to the side. A white haired, white bearded man seemed to be holding forth, telling the group something. One youth, a boy perhaps 14 was absolutely livid with anger and was yelling and shouting at someone, but not the old man I don't think. He had to be restrained

by others. He seemed to be arguing with a woman, perhaps an older sister. Finally, an older and stronger youth hauled this angry one across the street and restrained him from throwing a stone he picked up. After a bit of struggle, he managed to get the angry boy inside a house. The group continued to hang around as the older man returned to his speech. A guess might be that the older man, an elder or judge, was called to settle a family dispute and his judgment was against this boy. But who knows?

As the sun begins to sink ending another day in Kathmandu, I feel I am experiencing so much and understanding and knowing so little. Humbling. Certainly, the religious cultures of Nepal, a tiny little country, could occupy a lifetime of study. One thing for sure is that none of it is simple and none of the religion and culture practiced here is remotely resembling the classic descriptions of Hinduism and Buddhism. Both these traditions inform the religion and culture here, but it is mixed and crossbred and developed in remarkably complex ways which for any individual, group or family here amounts to what they do. Acts performed or have performed on their behalf. Walking the streets today I saw at several places a stone. One was a sort of slab about 3 feet long set upright. Another was no larger than a brick enclosed in a fence that was of obvious religious significance for they were marked with red ocher and yellow flower petals were present. The small one was literally in the gutter of the street. What's that all about?

Temples are everywhere, but they are dark and drab for the most part. Peering into them reveals hints of images and a few candles can be seen burning, but they are dark and uninviting. But then there are magnificent white stupas here with the famous eyes of the Buddha painted on the four sides, eyes through which the Buddha overlooks Kathmandu. These are bright beautiful religious structures. Perhaps the little dark temples are Hindu and come to think of it, I did recognize Ganesha, the elephant god, as a figure in one of these temples I saw this morning.

### **December 16**

Rooftop again and a little after noon. Now I'm sick and have begun antibiotic treatment. Got up this morning feeling fine which I pretty much still do. When to breakfast after a normal bowel movement then had to leave breakfast with diarrhea. Yuck! Took rehydration fluid and decided to try Cipro antibiotics so it won't delay our already delayed trek. Em is feeling some better but has many allergy symptoms which may well be from just breathing the dusty air here. The white spots on her tonsils are lessening and she seems to be feeling better. I got some soggy crackers and a jar of orange jelly to eat late in the morning. Unappealing to Em but gave me something in my stomach and we both ate some muesli from a package we bought a couple days ago. Hopefully the antibiotics will end my diarrhea and Em will be stronger by tomorrow. I'm beginning to go

stir crazy and may go nuts if we can't get on our trek soon. The haze and clouds persist again today, and I can't see the mountains. Makes me sad. I love to see them.

Our trekking permits are good through January 11 so we still will have 25 days to trek if we want to take it. Another day to recover health and surely, we will be ready.

Haven't been able to get into Doris Lessing's *Four Gated City* though I've tried all morning. I may look in the bookstore this afternoon for another book for the trek.

Awoke this morning to the Nepali band that is composed of drums and long keyless clarinet looking thing that sounds a bit like an oboe. They played for an hour or so near here. I can hear drums from a distant part of the city now. I've also been reading about all the temples--Hindu and Buddhist--in the city and surrounding area. It seems it could take days to see a few of these. We'll likely spend five to eight days here just before we go home visiting temples, etc. and having a final shopping fest.

It has been perhaps an hour since I ate a snack. I wanted to wait a while before going out to see if my digestion problem returns. perhaps it is okay. Hope so.

### **December 17**

The Eve of the Trek. Em went to the doctor and got the okay to trek. My stomach is improved, we have our bus tickets (for the third time), Parang has been contacted and will be here at 6 a.m., our bags are stored. We're ready to trek finally. Yea. Today was a time to rest and make final arrangements. It has also been a time for Emily and me to reflect on our trip and on our relationship, and on how much we love each other. There has been a shift in our relationship yet again and again we have grown closer, more in love, yet more complete and confident as individuals. This travel has been amazing in the way it has transformed us, or helped us transform, given us the opportunity to transform, again and again. It has been long and often hard, but what a growth experience.

I have some mixed emotions tonight as I think about the trek. I feel sadness and regret at being out of touch with Jenny and for such a long time. I feel very excited about the trek, the fulfillment of a dream, yet I haven't a clue what it will be like. Nothing I've experienced on the trip has been quite as hard as the images I had of it. Wonder if this will hold true for the trek? I feel eager to be home in Boulder to begin so many things I'm ready to begin. I'm sad not to be with Corbin and Jenny for Christmas. I'm sorry and sad Judy, according to Mom, is still so bitter and angry, yet I can understand. I'm so happy and in love with Emily and thrilled with the closeness and trust of our relationship. At this point whenever any problem or issue arises, we are able to deal with it promptly, effectively, and amicably. We trust each other enough to take well placed butt-

kickings, and we care enough about each other and our relationship to give them out gently when needed. I sort of feel our relationship is one that ought to be written about. I think it is that rare.

I decided to call Mother and Daddy this evening to wish them Merry Christmas and let them know we leave tomorrow on the trek. They were surprised and thrilled to hear from me. They said that Karen and Elaine had been in touch with Judy to get Jenny's address and that she was very bitter and still blames me for everything. I asked Mom to write to Jenny to tell her how much I miss her and how badly I feel being cut off from her.

We went to American Express for mail today and, of course, had none. We ate at an Indian Vegetarian Restaurant. We had no idea how to order and once we ordered we had no idea what we were eating. Still, it was good. Expensive 320 rupees or \$6.50 for the two of us. We also reconfirmed our Thai Airlines flights to Bangkok and to LA in January and were assured we needn't go through customs in Bangkok. That we could check our bags through and stay in the pre-customs zone. There is actually a hotel there but it's about \$100 per night. We'll sit up in the waiting area and talk. I'm certain we wouldn't be able to sleep in any case.

Am letting my beard grow for the trek. I'm certain not to like the results though Emily is jovial and accepting of it. "Rugged mountain man" she calls me.

### ***Annapurna Trek, December 17, 1993 – January 4, 1994***

#### **December 19, 1993**

Sitting outside the Himalaya Lodge in Ngadi at the end of the second day of trekking. Fabulous day beginning shortly after sunrise. I went downstairs at the s'Annapurna lodge and Em said, "shut your eyes and come here." I followed her instructions making sure to miss the goat, chicken, and children. When I opened my eyes, the horizon was dominated by Lamjung Himal (6986m/22,920ft). Wow! The morning sun lighted it brilliantly. Awesome. I had been so concerned yesterday, which was hazy and cloudy that we'd see the mountains at all. But today was beautifully clear all day.

Back to yesterday. Last night I had so many things I wanted to write, but there was no light, and it was late.

Left our guest house in Kathmandu at 6 a.m. Parang was waiting. Went to where the bus was to leave. Parang helped us find our bus and our seats which were the worst on the bus. They were the last two in the small bus and the seats in front of us were so close that you couldn't sit straight because there wasn't the knee room. This would have been enough, but the windows on both sides of the back were missing. The cold wind blew in. We had to wrap our heads in scarves and put on the hoods to our Gore-Tex jackets. It was still cold.

Somehow, I'd Imagined the bus ride from Kathmandu to Dumre as relatively level. Don't know where I got the idea, but it was wrong. The bus drove around Kathmandu, crested a hill where it paused briefly, then we entered a huge, terraced valley that ran for many kilometers. Every square inch of this valley from top to bottom the full length was terraced. Remarkable how people who live in a country with almost no level land make it level, but in little plots. The road went winding precariously down, down, and still down. It seemed, and was, very dangerous. I saw quite a few remains of accidents. One was a bus that had crashed into a truck. It had been abandoned in the middle of the road. There were hundreds of big trucks on the road. Often one would be broken down occupying a lane. This would cause a tie up for a while. Once, after a couple hours, we had a rest stop. The men all headed for the roadside to pee. Em enjoyed the experience of peeing in the weeds. Plenty of evidence of people shitting roadside. Then on down the valley. Another stop in a horrible roadside town and the second stop at Dumre. Here we happily exited the bus and Parang negotiated a ride on an open truck to Besi Sahar. We had no idea the nature of this ride. Thankfully, otherwise I'd have found it even more difficult. Parang got us a seat on the bench behind the driver in the cab. He stayed in the back with our bags along with a dozen or so more people. The cab eventually had 8 or 9 people in it. This seemed crowded, but we saw a bus that was crammed so full I couldn't believe it. Some people even sat on top of the pile of luggage on top, about 5 hung on the outside at the door.

Finally, we got on the way. Through stream beds, over huge rocks, up and down a road that had never been graded. Two times they stopped and told us to have our trekking permits checked at police check points. Hour after hour we ground on. Several times late afternoon the truck broke down and we waited for them to fix it. Finally, around 5 p.m. they parked the truck and we had to walk the rest of the way to Besi Sahar, about 90-minute walk, the last 45 minutes in the dark.

Parang led us to s'Annapurna Lodge and Em and I got a room together. How nice. Then we went down to dinner and had our first experience at Dal Bhat. Not too bad, but rather basic. Rice with some thin soupy stuff and a bit of lentils and potatoes. They gave us all we could eat. Had a good pot of warming tea as well.

So much I saw that I wanted to write about. The trucks that all look like circus trucks. The Indian people on the bus (2 men and 2 women), the men wanted their photo taken with Emily. the suffering and poverty of Nepali people, the sad sad children, the food, the terraces, innocence, so much, but the sun already threatens to extinguish my light.

Left Besi Sahar this morning around 8:30 and couldn't get enough photos, everything was beautiful and interesting—the village, Lamjung Hi-mal, the

terraces and the Marsyandi Kohla (River). This is a wide river rushing with water melting from those huge peaks. There is rafting on some of the rivers but with winter approaching the water volume is less than usual. The water of this river is teal blue, absolutely remarkable. We walked through Besi Sahar, which is quite sizeable and the last village to be accessed by road, then entered the trail “to Manang.” Actually, the road narrows and becomes but a path. Across a stream, up a very steep bank and we were on our way. Lamjung dominated our view much of the morning with Marsyandi River running along beside us. We crossed several side streams, one of which cause a guy we’re hiking with (Gene from Santa Clara or Santa Cruz who has been traveling for 20 months) a bit of a dunking. But no danger. Around 11:30 we crossed the river on our first suspension bridge. It looked precarious but wasn’t bad at all. Then we had dal bhat at a grimy little place. Yuck. Em nor I could finish it. Too weird. Too dirty. Flies everywhere. You just can’t think about this much if you don’t want to starve. Glad I’m still on antibiotics. On our way again and shortly after leaving the village we turned a corner and came into full view of Himalchuli (7893/25,896) which we’d gotten a glimpse of at the bridge crossing and, shortly after that, of Ngadi Chuli (7514/24,652) and, somewhat in the clouds of the afternoon, Manaslu (8162/26,778). Ngadi Chuli is also called Monaslu II. This is one gigantic chunk of mountain. Here at Ngadi we are at about 880 meters/2,890 feet. So, from here to the top of Monaslu is over 7000 meters, over 22,000 feet. The experience of this is just far more than can ever be described.

So many things to write about. The young boys who thought that with my stubble beard and white hair I am very old. They asked me my age. The waterfall that was so beautiful and the goat herd we saw with all the newborn kids at the base of the waterfall. The many people walking this trail (almost all local people, very few trekkers). The villages, with water buffalo, the thrashing of rice with cows, the winnowing of rice with big round fans, the terraces which are everywhere, the storage of rice straw on the tops of sheds in round shapes, cone-shaped at the top. So many things.

Ngadi (named for the kohla we’ll cross early tomorrow and the river that forms the valley up which we have looked all afternoon) is a very pleasant village. We got here between 1 and 2 p.m. We enjoyed cleaning up (I shaved), washing things out, and having some tea this afternoon. Restful. I’m a little sore in the back, mostly shoulders, but otherwise okay. Em’s feet are sore, and she hurts a little here and there. Pretty good start for not doing much for so many months.

#### **December 20**

Sitting on the back porch of a lodge in Syange overlooking a suspension bridge over the Marsyandi River that rushes past below us. Behind the lodge is a sheer rock face that rises perhaps a thousand feet. This little village is nestled

between river and rock and just a hundred feet down river the waterfall cascades in several phases. Beautiful.

We left Ngadi around 8:30 this morning and had a lovely walk over here. Some climbs and drops, don't think we actually gained much elevation at all. We crossed the Marsyandi soon after we left Ngadi and saw countless terraced rice fields. Often these were being worked by families. Many things to do to prepare for new planting. Oxen, cattle, or water buffalo pull a single share plow guided by a man, often with difficulty it seems. I've seen women and children in plowed fields breaking clods. Animal dung is hauled, trump line on the head bearing huge baskets on their backs. Some fields have big piles of dung dumped on them. I saw one woman spreading shit over a field with her hands. Many activities done by many people. I'm amazed at how completely covered so many of these hills are with terraces. Top to bottom, hundreds and hundreds, of little terraces. There are many villages perched hundreds of feet up on the hillsides. I'd think the people would have to be born there. I can't imagine how one would get to the village. I think so often of Daddy while walking along seeing these things. I know he'd be most interested in all this.

The path we are walking on is frequented by lots of the village people. Seems groups are often going one way or the other. So many of the women are colorfully dressed. Many are attractive. Yet there are also many people who look utterly poor. Especially the children and old people often look so pitiful. Have seen dozens of little children who look like they have never had a bath and have on clothing that has never been washed. Their hair is matted, and their bodies caked with dirt and dust. They are often bare bottomed and footed. The girls have nose and ears pierced. I wonder if it is done with ritual or casually. The old people often look rugged but haggard. Old women often carry huge loads. Their work is never done. I marvel that anyone ever gets old here. I'd think they'd die before very advanced age.

But this bleak picture needs to be countered by the observation that most people seem happy and are cheerful. Most greet us with a smile and "Namaste." Children play. Old men I've noticed, enjoy playing with the children. At lunch stop today an older man was pulling along a group of 3 or 4 children holding onto a rope. All, including the grandpa, were giggling away. We've also seen some fine healthy, well fed dogs up here.

The path is frequented by pony or donkey trains (seems usually small shaggy ponies). These animals walk along in a line, perhaps 5 or 10. Their human guide actually follows. The path pretty much just is one lane without many turn offs so the animals need know only to walk the path. They often wear bells so you can hear them come and go. A group crossed the bridge near here and I snapped their picture from our room.



Stopped at a place called Eagle's Nest for lunch. They fixed us the usual Dal Bhat, this time made from scratch as we waited and served to us piping hot. I felt hungry and enjoyed lunch. Last night I had gobs of painful gas and had to get up and go out to the toilet 5 times after everyone else was in bed. Rats. I was worried his morning that I was getting sick again, but I feel much better now. Think the lunch and positive thinking worked.

Though the trail was beautiful, and we saw mountains that would rival Long's Peak, we did not see any of the high Himalaya today. They will begin to show again soon I suspect.

We had a fun time after dinner last night. Parang ate with us, politely using a spoon in our presence (he usually eats with his hands). After dinner we had a fun visit with him and Gene, the guy that has attached to us. Parang was teaching us Nepali. We were trying to use the Nepali language guide we brought along to see if he'd understand what we said. Sometimes we were successful, but often he couldn't begin to figure what we were saying. Makes one wonder the usefulness of such a booklet. Without Parang, I doubt we'd have any success communicating with the people beyond "Namaste."

I certainly intended at the beginning of this entry to remark that today is Elaine's birthday though doubtless she has perhaps as I write this yet to awaken. I thought of her all day sending my fondest wishes to her around the world. Hope they get there in time.

I also thought some of Jenny and Corbin today. I don't like being so cut off from them, but I'll trust in their strength and self-sufficiency and seek to be much with them when I return. We leave to head home a month from tomorrow.

Later. Waiting inside the lodge for another meal of Dal Bhat. Em just asked me if I was able to describe our day. I said that I'd tried, and she confessed she felt it difficult. She did remind me of the many poinsettia plants we saw along the way. They are huge, 15 feet high or so, and beautiful. I tried to get photos of some and to get them to frame photos of terraces, etc. Hope the photos work out.

After we arrived at this lodge, we set out to do some laundry, a daily concern, though I'm guessing we'll do less laundry in the coming days as we gain altitude, and it gets colder. Personal washing is difficult. There are only public, like middle of the village, places to wash. At Besi Sahar we saw a girl wrapped in a sarong at the waterspout attempting to bathe through the sarong. How sad! Em and I decided to use wet handkerchiefs to do a little private bathing in our room. It worked, sort of. Anyway, we both feel better. We get a kick out of all these improvisations and peculiarities. It is great to not only have Em as a traveling companion, but that traveling together we share so much life experience. It is dark and chilly here. But it will be darker and much colder as we ascend. The

Coleman lantern, Nepali electricity as one young man described it last night, lights our dining space.

I am feeling a little fear as I think of our next week and a half. The altitude, the cold and the lateness of the season. But we'll move on in the morning.

[Emily entered the following] I feel so much right now. So glad you shared this with me, your fears and that you too like sharing all the daily life shit and passion as well. I love you so much. Wish I could kiss and touch you. On we go.

### **December 21.**

Tal, Nepal, Manaslu Guest House. Sitting outside, but it is cold. Inside it too dark. Besides the views out here are magnificent. To my left is a wonderful cascading waterfall that begins as one large fall then breaks again and again then converges near the bottom into two large broad falls. Just magnificent. Em just pointed out several other ribbon falls I'd overlooked. This little town sits on a plateau that is still surrounded by towering cliffs on both sides. When I say towering, I mean it; they must rise several thousand feet. Clouds are playing among the top of these mountains. Where the valley makes a "V," a huge snowcapped peak makes the surrounding walls look like bumps. As we came into Tal the clouds parted a bit and I got some great photos (I hope) of this mountain. I think it must be Pisang (it turned out to be Kang Guru), but I'll have to ask Parang. It is dramatically pointed at the top.

We didn't get these high mountain views today, but I appreciated the Marsyandi River even more. It is a powerful rushing river that makes a roaring sound when anywhere near it. It is teal blue green. Amazing color. Also, the vegetation we walked through today is remarkable. We still saw some poinsettias. But we also saw tropical plants like ferns and palm trees. We stopped at a village called Chyamje for lunch and high atop the ridge opposite us was a line of palm trees. I couldn't believe it at first, but Gene had binoculars which helped us confirm. And later, we saw them very close. Actually, there are palms up on the walls of the mountain just across from me here.

The other major views today were waterfalls. There must have been a dozen. Each one seemed more spectacular than the last. Tried photographing some of them, though it is very difficult.

The proprietor of this guest house, a Tibetan woman named Selu, just visited with us for a while. She speaks excellent English. She has several children. The baby, a boy, very dark skinned and quite smiley. Em loved him and held him, resulting in her getting peed all over. The children wear no pants here.

Had a rest at a little village of Jagat this morning where a group of children had the cutest little puppy. It looked like a fur ball. One little boy carried it around by the fur on its back, sort of like a lunch box. We took photog of these children. They seemed to love it and lined up every time we got out the camera. The

children are so sad here. Dirty, snotty-nosed, ragged, yet often they smile and seem happy. I can't see how they survive. I don't see how any survive.

Then there are the heavy porters. They carry huge loads, often heavy reinforcing steel, or sheet metal or whatever. They wear shorts, flip flops, and a stick which they use both for balance and to prop their loads up with then they rest. Gene says they sometimes carry up to double their body weight and receive just a few rupees per kilo for hauling material over a distance requiring seven days travel. I can't see how they do it. I notice they don't have much life in their eyes.

Tal is a nice village lying on a valley floor where the Marsyandi has leveled off, one of the few level places I've seen since we started. The river actually meanders here where it is hell bent for the bottom everywhere else. There are hotels and guest houses on both sides of the street, but few people are here.

One couple from Germany or somewhere seem to be everywhere we are. I call the guy Screwy Louie because he walks along with a hard ball of some sort about two inches in diameter and screws away at it with some sort of tool. He does this no matter where he is or what he does. His female companion has sore feet and carries nothing, leaving her load to their porter. The guy has a huge square tattoo in the middle of his forehead, and I think this couple look and act screwy.

My thoughts are often on Jenny and Corbin and my family. Hope they are having a great holiday time and that they are all safe and happy.

Emily has been in good spirits today--though we had a long hard climb just before reaching Tal during which we both grunted and groaned. We're both homesick and this is heightened because of the holidays and by us being so completely out of touch. Very hard, but we have each other. As we came across the plain before Tal, we felt special joy and closeness. While I wouldn't want to fight the crowds trekking during high season, there is a sort of loneliness in being here now. Glad I have Em and that we are so close. Glad we hired Parang and we're both pleased that Gene is traveling with us. He is a very nice young man.

Though I am chilly and the light wanes early leaving me little to do but eat and go to bed I still feel uplifted by the very grandeur of this earth. Though the Himalaya make one feel small and insignificant, a mere fleck of dust, I don't feel diminished but inspired and somehow transcendent by the great privilege of experiencing all this.

#### **December 22**

The mountains seen north of Tal are Kang Guru (6701/21,985) with Kuchubhro (5910/19,390) in front of it. Near Dharapani we got a peek of to the northeast of [didn't get this recorded]. Then as we rounded the bend below Bagarchhap we saw Annapurna II (7937/26,040) and in the village itself we could

see another very pointy mountain. I took a photo of it with red and white prayer flags attached to a pine tree in the foreground.

Sitting in the sun on the porch of the Thakuri Guest House awaiting the eternal preparation of Dal Bhat, yummy. Very hungry today. The place we stayed in Tal was pretty miserable, the food awful. Our oat porridge and corn bread and jam lasted about 30 minutes. The lady, a Tibetan, was very dirty and her place looked like her. Her baby was sick, and I don't know how the whole bunch survive. We left around 8:30 this morning and everyone seemed a bit tense and ill-spirited. Em quickly informed me she was irritable and less than happy. We assured each other that we had reason and continued to support each other. Finally, with a bit of humor about how terrible the corn bread was we all began to relax.

Lovely mountain and valley views this morning. With some sustenance perhaps we'll feel much better this afternoon. We hope to make Chame tonight, though this will be a very long day walking.

### **December 23**

Chame, high in the Himalaya (well only 2630 meters/8628 feet). The sun is warm as we wait for our dal bhat. Our room is by the river. There is a hot spring and the views ain't bad. Lamjung (6986/22,920) towering to the south of us and Annapurna II (7937/26,040) to the west. If we were just a few meters from here we could see back down the canyon the top of Manaslu (8156/26,759). Tomorrow the views may even top today. We left Bagarchhap about 8:15 this morning spinning all the Buddhist prayer wheels as we went out of the village. Annapurna II was huge and brilliantly lighted in the morning sun. We soon lost view of it as we started into the Marsyandi valley and walked through pines and other huge trees. The forest was chilly, and we had to repeatedly remove and restore our jackets. It was a beautiful walk though there was quite a bit of climbing. Both Emily and I alternately felt good and tired. Still, we made it here shortly after noon and we've washed, a little anyway. We went down to the hot springs which are right beside the river amongst the boulders. All sorts of people were bathing and doing laundry. The water looked pretty dirty, so we elected (with Em pushing hard) to go up to the "Bath house" where there was an actual shower. The only problem was that the water was ice cold, so cold in fact that where it dripped on the floor was an ice stalagmite. Still, we washed a bit and now feel all better. I may shave, but I don't want to use up any of this glorious sunlight. The problem with these villages is that deep in this valley they lose sunlight about 3 p.m. and it instantly gets very cold

Our guest house last night provided a bit of a cultural experience. We went in the lodge while our food was being cooked. The woman who runs the place invited us to sit by the fire. By this time, it was pitch dark and the only light in the kitchen was from the 2-burner cook stove. Actually, the stove is a metal "U"

shaped piece the top of which is flat and holes for burners. Beneath is a tunnel in which a fire is built and can be fed from one end. A chimney on the other end focuses the smoke and creates the draw. Around the stove an area is built up on three sides by a couple inches making a foot wide shelf or table on which food is prepared or dishes set by those eating. Mats are placed around this so people can sit and enjoy the warmth, much appreciated as the only heat in the house. I don't see how the food is prepared because the room is so dim. Still for us it was nice because we've found you enjoy your food so much more if you don't see it prepared. My pancake, for example, this morning missed the plate when served from the pan and landed on the floor. The cook smiled, picked up the pancake, and handed it to me. Nice. I ate it.

It was most enjoyable to see the family in their home. Em coveted a Tibetan necklace worn by our hostess. Those necklaces are commonly worn by ladies here. They have two coral colored round stones, one on either side of a large turquoise chunk. I think the cord is a black shoelace. They sell them in Kathmandu, but they are likely not really Tibetan. The lady (actually she said she is 25) asked if Em wanted to buy it and offered for 8,000 rupees (\$160 US). Sure, it is worth it.

Chame is unusual for a village in this location. They have a bank and a telecommunications center. You can actually place international calls which beats Bali. They also have electricity; don't know how they generate it. Quite a nice place.

Gene, the guy that has been trekking with us, decided not to stay at this lodge. Had to quit on that, no matter.

**December 24, 1993.**

Pisang (pronounced Pee-song) at Chalung Gurung Hotel. Christmas Eve, but as write these words I almost cry. In fact, I awoke early this morning and felt a great stab of sadness. I thought about trying to deny these feelings and rise to the need to be here and be present, but then I have tended to deny my feelings, to separate myself from them. And, in fact, I miss my kids, I miss Christmas, I miss being warm and comfortable. I miss good food. Most of all I miss Corbin and Jenny. I'm very happy to be here, and to be having this experience, but it is sad. I awoke Emily and told her how I was feeling and we both cried. Last night was a hard night and neither of us got much sleep. We ate potatoes and vegetables for dinner. The vegetable was cabbage, and it gave me so much gas that I had to get up 4 times. Then when I finally got to sleep, it must have been long after midnight, I heard something in the room. I said, "Emily are you up?" She replied, "No." I got up to realize that some animal was after our chocolate. I put it in our duffel and closed it and went back to bed. Later I heard something scratching inside the duffel and realized the damn thing had gotten in and

couldn't get out. I took it to the door opened the bag and let it out, a rat no doubt. Em was pretty upset. So was I since neither of us got much sleep.

Still today began with a spectacular view of Lamjung in the early morning light. Then the hike was through lovely, wooded areas--huge pines and frequent views of Annapurna II and the ridge that runs along from it. Spectacular. Still climbing up the Marsyandi River Valley. Then we came into the presence of Paungda Danda--an enormous rock bowl that lies just below Pisang. Along this area Em began to suffer from knee pains. Hopefully this is nothing debilitating, but she did have to take it quite slowly. After lightening her pack (Parang and I carried more) and taking some Ibuprofen she did some better. Hope after some rest she'll be ready by tomorrow.

As we entered Pisang we could see Chulu to the North and the top of Pisang to the east, Annapurna II to the south and also the huge Paungda Danda rock bowl.

#### **December 26.**

Manang. The day after Christmas and a rest and acclimatization day. Christmas Eve was spent in Pisang. We met a German couple my age and joined them in a very cold very smokey dining room for Christmas Eve feast. We ordered apple pie with custard for dessert and the Germans, Helmut and Ann (who is native French), brought a red candle. The pie got served first, all this food except dal bhat is alien to the Nepali, so we went ahead and ate it. It was sort of a calzone affair with some kind of weird pudding dribbled over it. Still there were apples inside and they tasted good. When my dinner came, I was greatly saddened. I'd ordered vegetables and rice. But the vegetable was cabbage which had given me such an upset stomach before. So, I had a small plate of rice with about half dozen marble sized potatoes for my Xmas eve feast. I was pretty down at this point.

Christmas Day, we decided to take the long route from Pisang to Manang. It crosses the Marsyandi River which is now a narrow stream. The trail climbs high on the north side of the river and passes through two Tibetan villages--Ghyaru and Nhawal--then descends gradually into Manang. The reason for going this way rather than right along the river is that it offers spectacular mountain views to the south and west. We started early so we could get the morning light on the mountains. We passed by a lovely glassy emerald colored pond then began our ascent--a long steep switch back trail up to Ghyaru.

From Ghyaru the views were indeed amazing. Annapurna IV (7525/24,688) loomed just across the valley from us lighted brilliantly in the morning sun. Annapurna III (7565/24,820) arose just down the ridge from A IV. Though not in very good sunlight, Annapurna II stood hulking huge a bit to the south of IV. On two occasions we saw avalanches on it. This mountain in hulkingly massive.

Ghyaru is a Tibetan-populated village as they all are in this region. These remind me of pueblo villages in the American Southwest. They have flat roofs because at this altitude it is so arid that not much snow falls. The houses are built of stone and have a sharp angular look. The first or ground floor is for the animals and the living floor is reached by a ladder made of a log leaned in a corner into which steps have been hewn. The houses are close spaced with narrow passageways forming a maze within the village.

There are many Buddhist monuments all over the region. Prayer flags on every roof top, chortons which are square based rounded topped monuments, and places where mani stones (prayer stones) are placed, gompas or monasteries, prayer flags at many spots on mountain sides, people praying rosary beads, people praying by spinning prayer wheels, and long series of prayer wheels that you walk along and spin at the entrance to many villages. All this makes me wish I knew more about Buddhism, particularly Tibetan Buddhism. Perhaps I should take a course from Reggie Ray.

Leaving Ghyaru after taking about a roll of film we headed on passing so many Buddhist monuments. Rounding every ridge was an amazing widening of an already astonishing view. Soon we could see farther to the north, seeing Annapurna III and Gangapurna. Pisang Peak the top of which could be seen from Pisang and Ghyaru became more and more visible. We could even begin to look back down the Marsyandi Valley through which we have trekked seeing Pisang below with the emerald lake nearby, the huge Pauangda Danda stone bowl and far far away at the end of the valley stood the massive Manaslu. Quite the Christmas gift to see such spectacular views.

We stopped at Ngawala for lunch. Emily was immediately befriended by a cute Tibetan boy who took us to his house for lunch. His father prepared us noodle soup and Tibetan bread while his grandmother, all the while praying with rosary beads, showed off her twin grandchildren. The grandmother was quite a character. She kept talking to us--we could understand nothing of course--and smiling her two-toothed grin. A lovely woman so fitting to the place.

The afternoon views were great, shifting to the north and finally the east where we could see Chulu and Pisang and a huge snow bowl to the left of the peak of Annapurna IV. The snow blew off the top of A. IV all afternoon and I couldn't resist taking lots of photos.

But as the sun began to go behind the mountains and the wind blew its height altitude freezing chill on us the day's walk began to get long. We arrived in Manang shortly after the German couple did (they'd left 45 minutes before us and had not stopped for lunch) and we finally settled in the Tilicho Lodge for two nights.

The food last night was good and eaten in a more comfortable, yet still quite chilly room. We eat with sweaters, coats, long underwear, down booties, and

jackets on. Em and I had fried macaroni and tuna, tomato soup, and a big pot of hot lemon. We topped all this off with two fried eggs each. Good meal for a change, though by local standards only. I couldn't think much of Christmas food back home.

Parang came in our room just as we were ready to retire, about 7:30, concerned that we'd run out of days on our permit before we finished the trek especially if we go the Annapurna Sanctuary. I think we'd still have plenty of time, but trekking is hard, and we may now try to arrive in Pokhara on January 4 or 5 so we can clean up and celebrate my birthday there. Then we'll have a few days there and more time to sight see in Kathmandu before going home.

I've had an upset stomach for days. I can't seem to get past it. I seem to be okay for a while then I get more diarrhea. So yesterday I went back on antibiotic, Cipro, to see if I can get better. It is much harder when your stomach hurts so much of the time and when you know you're losing weight. Wonder if I weigh even 140 pounds now.

We bought a small jar of peanut butter this morning and had a chocolate-peanut butter snack this morning as we sat on the rock near Manang. Yummy.

Now sitting in the kitchen watching our lunch being prepared. I really need much more time to reflect on all this experience. I find myself a bit irritable because of several things: too cold (I get chilled to the bone every afternoon); too dirty (everything here is so dirty); not well; not enough time to write, read and reflect; and then the whole duration of the travel is wearing, I think. I want to write more on this later, time for lunch now.

Later. The sun has dropped behind the mountains and the mercury has dropped in the thermometer. I don't know why the chill goes completely to my bones, but it does and this time of day, the time I had thought would be my favorite, has come to be the most dreaded. After lunch we walked to the main part of Manang. It is an interesting village almost wholly deserted now. There are interesting carved and painted windows. Photographed a couple. A couple little kids begged in the most obnoxious way. Then we made our way to the top of the village. This gave a vantage of a beautiful green lake with a little ice on it at the foot of a huge glacier extending thousands of feet down between two mountains. Such a mass of ice. Then we thought we'd make our way up to a monastery perched about 1000 feet up the side of the mountain across from our hotel. Em began to get a headache as we started and decided not to go. I went on and, though the way was hard (steep and very loose), the farther I went the more I felt like going on. I thought it would be neat to see the monastery--there were supposed to be 3 Lamas (females) there--and to get some more altitude. I made it. It was very crude with several cells carved in the rock. I found no one there. Rested a while. Took a few photos and started down. Part way down I suddenly realized I had the key to the room and Em would not be able to get in.



I hurried along and when I arrived back, she was waiting. She'd gone through lots of moods but had come to think that the trip may be harder for me than for her and had decided to be more supportive and helpful to me. She's such a sweetie. We talked some about what is bothering me while we shared a wash pan of hot water. We share so much here we stood in this bleak dirty dark cold room stripping down area by area to wash. My hair is filthy and disgusting and I haven't shaved in days. Neither of these conditions was improved by our spot bath, but I feel much better having washed here and there. My jeans are completely filled with dust and dirt, but I'm saving my others for evenings. I also have a pair of cleaner socks and sock liners I use in the evenings.

So, the thing that seems to be causing me most dampening of spirits is being cut off from Corbin and Jenny. It is especially hard not having even talked with Jenny since early November. I don't know if she was home for Xmas. I don't know anything. This might not be so overwhelming if I was warm, comfortable, not sick, could sleep, etc. So, the whole combination just dampens my spirits some and Emily senses it instantly. I'll be okay, however, and I feel that I'm pretty well present to the experience here. Having a chance to write today and reflect a little and to talk some with Emily has been most helpful and my stomach feels better this afternoon.

Tomorrow we head on. We'll head for Thorong Phedi, (4450/14,600) but if anyone feels any signs of altitude, we'll stay a night at Letdar. Letdar and Phedi are supposed to be expensive and very bleak, but one must be sensible at altitude. I'm pleased that so far I feel fine. Then over the pass and we might spend an extra day in Muktinath since it is one of 7 major pilgrimage centers in this whole Buddhist area. Then on down the Jomson side which should be fun and easy getting us to Pokhara before my birthday. Hurray. Likely I'll not be able to write much again until Muktinath. Hope the next days go well.

**December 29, 1993.**

Muktinath. We made it! But it wasn't easy or completely free of risk. Today has been a rest day and one muchly needed. But I must catch up a bit. The trek from Manang to Thorong Phedi was a long and fairly hard day. It involved a climb of nearly 900 meters or around 2,800 feet. We left Manang fairly early and were delayed some by a big goat herd but continued our way. Our climb would take us to 4920 meters, 16,141 feet. We had to be concerned about the effect of altitude on us. Several times Em got head aches and we stopped and rested until she felt better. Behind us down the valley loomed the huge Gangapurna (7454/24,455) and Annapurna III to its left at 7565/24,820. The trip was long and passed through alpine territory with hues of the vegetation the most varying, yet subtle, shades of pink and brown. The Marsyandi River now approaching its source had dwindled to a much smaller meandering stream. The last rise into the

single compound that is Thorong Phedi was very steep and difficult. The digs there were very basic, grim you might say.

We went to the dining room and found there a group of people huddled round a tin can with a small smoky fire. We joined the group and met a couple—the girl (Amy) an American from NY living in Japan, the guy (Vic) an experimental musician from Boston. They had joined with a girl from Holland. A German guy was there with his two porters. They had passed us earlier. Kurt, the know-it-all American, we'd met in Manang came steaming in shortly after we did, bragging of his speed. An hour later Gene (who Parang calls “Chinese People”) came in sweating like a pig, obviously left in the dust by Kurt. And Helmut and Ann whom we'd traveled with that day were there. Good conversation and horrible (really horrible) dal bhat all around. Early to bed, as usual, but this time in anticipation of a 4:15 a.m. rise for a predawn start over the pass.

We didn't get quite as early a start as we anticipated, but it was still in the dark with Parang leading the way. Everyone was up preparing to go, but the others choose to start later, though I didn't understand why. Our ascent at first was gruelingly steep. It began to spit a light thin sleet and we didn't know how far we'd get but kept the pace. The guidebook says it should take from 4 to 6 hours to the pass. It was a hard steep climb. The weather was deteriorating, but we felt we should keep going. At one point (several actually) I felt considerable panic because I couldn't seem to get enough air, claustrophobic. Helmut and Ann were behind some but kept coming. Em passed me with a burst of energy, and I felt temporarily pissed that she was so strong. As we got within an hour of the pass, it got very cold. It was snowing little pellets and the wind was blowing. Em made me stop and put on a sweater and more gloves. She made me eat some chocolate. That brief moment was a huge change for the worse for me though it was absolutely necessary. My hands lost all feeling. I got very cold all over. And I sort of lost my bearings. My hands wouldn't work enough to get my pack fastened again right away and I got a bit scared. Parang at this moment got very cold and realized he had to move on. He did so and simply left us behind. Once I got moving, I began to feel better and the adrenalin from the fear not only warmed me, but it also gave me such energy I could scarcely feel the thinness of the air above 17,000 feet. Em felt miserable at this point and Ann helped her along. Full of adrenalin I was dancing on the trail above her waving encouragement. Parang had disappeared.

On we trudged arriving at the pass at 9 a.m. a mere 3 hours after beginning. Though we'd seen many beautiful mountains, often through mist and cloud, we did not stop for a single photo, way too cold and too frightening to delay our crossing by even minutes. The descent was rapid and painful to the knees. Some distance down Helmut began to fall behind and we realized he was suffering

altitude sickness. He felt terrible and could hardly go on, but somehow managed to do so. They had no altitude sickness medicine nor painkiller and we finally convinced them it would be a good thing to take. He did and within minutes began to feel better.

We arrived in Muktinath around 2 p.m. exhausted but elated that we had crossed the pass safely. Later we began to realize the enormous risk we had taken and how closely we had skirted disaster. Many things could have gone wrong, but they didn't, and we were pleased. Helmut and Ann went immediately to bed. Em and I had soup and fried potatoes. Then we began to feel headachy and went to bed. We wondered about the others we'd met in Thorong Phedi. I also had stomach problems.

We rested, began to feel better and joined Helmut and Ann for dinner in the dim dining room. We saw some other people there we'd felt we'd seen before. It turned out they were on our flight from Bangkok and Kathmandu. Even weirder it turned out they are from Boulder and the woman, Barbara Carter, is a psychologist and teaches at Naropa. She had led a holotropic breath workshop at a gestalt retreat Em had gone to last Spring. Amazing. Her husband, John, is a free-lance photographer and carries tons of photo equipment. We had a nice chat. Helmut, Ann, Em, and I all shared stories and thoughts about our crossing over dinner. Much fun.

When we went to bed, I began to have serious stomach problems again and realized I need to do something about it. This morning I reread the Nepali Medical guide and it is clear I must have mild amoebic dysentery. I took medication for that this morning and already feel better. It will be great to begin to feel well, and shit properly, again. I'm confident this medication will fix me up.

We learned more about the group we met in Thorong Phedi from Kurt who crossed the pass shortly after we did. Apparently, they were having a huge argument and things kept delaying their departure. He stopped waiting and went on my himself. We know they started late in ill spirits, but that's all. It snowed here 3 or 4 inches overnight and surely several times that up the mountain. They didn't come over, so we assume they went back. Certainly, hope so.

It was cloudy this morning, but some patches of blue sky were present. These have grown throughout the day so as the sun goes down it is now pretty much clear. This clearing has allowed us to see the magnificence of the setting we are in. Just remarkably beautiful on every side. We've taken some great photos today. Visited a Buddhist-Hindu temple area and monastery. Had a nice lasagna (that had no noodles in it) lunch. Seeing local crafts, I bought a couple of yak wool neck scarves (gave Em one of them). The scarf is very colorful and nice. I bargained and got them for 200 rupees (\$4).

Tomorrow we go a short distance but down greatly in altitude to Kogbeni, which is supposed to be a very interesting town and the next day on down to Marpha for New Year's Eve. Morpha is supposed to be a luxury town (by Nepali trekking standards) and a great place to end 1993.

So, we've crossed Thorong La Pass (5,416 m/17,769 ft). Even at the pass, which is higher than all but 5 mountains in North America, we could still look up in every direction around us and see huge mountains. An experience I'll never forget. We're at once proud, humbled, thankful, and tired. I got the tips of my fingers frost nipped. Hope the numbness won't last long.

The trek from here on is all downhill except for one day. We plan to be in Pokara on January 5 so we can celebrate my birthday with showers and a comfortable bed and some great food. Psychologically we're excited and renewed. The rest of our trip should be fun, easy, and beautiful. The views from here are fabulous. I'd not take anything for the experience of simply the magnificence and beauty of this place. On to Kogbeni.

### **December 30, 1993**

Kogbeni. Sitting in a solarium awaiting lunch enjoying a cup of jasmine tea. After lunch the solar heater should have generated enough hot water for us to have a shower, the first in many days and much needed. Hope also for a shave, since I haven't shaved in days.

The walk from Muktinath was just 2 1/2 hours and so many wonderful mountain and tundra views. The mountains are so high and powerful. The tundra distinguished by the subtle colors of the soil--red, green, brown, yellow--and the sparse vegetation--pink, heather, brown. Add all these together and contrasting with one another and the results are amazing.

We arrived in Kogbeni before Helmut and Ann, who are linking strongly with Kurt. We chose Parang's recommendation, The New Annapurna, over Kurt's recommendation, The Red House, which is just next door. We sort of want to be alone for a while. For several days now, the mealtime has been a time for Emily and me to sit quietly and listen to Kurt and Helmut show off their knowledge to each other, mostly about places they have traveled (they have both traveled extensively) and about Germany and Germans and German influence, etc. They both seem to know everything about everything, yet they are wholly uninterested in Emily and me. They never ask either of us a single question. When either of us make any comment, it is completely ignored.

Emily and I have had some kicks analyzing Kurt. He seems a classic overt narcissist to us. We have reflected on the response he gets from others--most immediately love him--and why we see him as a superficial hoax, i.e., what that reflects in us. Anyway, we are tired of spending those precious hours of mealtimes being ignored. I think it interesting that, even knowing that I'm a

university professor and that I teach Native American things, my views are never sought even when the American University and Native Americans are the topic.

Emily thinks that I should enter the conversation more and that I have an obligation to say what I know. Perhaps I doubt my own knowledge, but I think rather that what I know and how I think are miles away from the fact slinging, anecdote telling, and I must say rather pointless talk that I have sat and observed. When I reflect on my teaching and on the interactions with others I treasure, all require lots of time, all are subtle, no conversation or point is definitive, what is not known is so much more interesting than what is known, there is a high degree of mutual exploration and trust. Yes, these things are essential to important relationships I want. To enter into these fact—slinging ones where numbers, statistics, and points are enumerated would be to abandon what is essential to me. Also, I'm no good at it. I get too emotional. I don't have a volley style repartee. So, I sit and listen and reflect. I haven't felt necessarily left out or offended, though there is cause to feel this way. Emily feels this more than I. Still to have to be in this situation day after day, in this place of all places, simply due to the accident of who one happens to be walking with, need not be long tolerated. So, we're seeking a bit of our own space and enjoying it.

We have just been discussing how smelly and dirty we are and that we have never before been this bad.

As I reflect our accomplishing crossing the pass, its achievement seems all the greater. To do it in good weather would be enough in which to take pride. The elevation gain from Besi Sahar to the pass is over 5,000 meters (16,400 feet), a gain that can occur on very few if any other hikes in the world. The pass approaches 18,000 feet, which is amazing. But to do it in the winter, in a snowstorm, with bone-chilling cold wind, now that is all the more remarkable. It was hard, very hard, yet we did it. Likely we were among the last few over the pass this winter.

We are so pleased to be here in the winter. All but the day we crossed the pass, it has been crystal clear. The views are fabulous, and we don't have to contend with the hoard of trekkers that are here during high season racing from village to village competing for places to stay and waiting hours for food. We are the only guests at this lodge so far today and that has often been the case. You can have much more of a cultural experience and enjoy things in greater leisure. I'm sure the vegetation would be lovely during high season, but the starkness and high contrasts and the crystal-clear air that we are experiencing makes this time of year surely as beautiful, perhaps even more breath taking than during the fall.

We've enjoyed a nice lunch—tomato soup and French fries (“chips”)—with the sun on my back. The mountains are beautifully lighted. We'll get cleaned up, explore this village and perhaps have a chance to read later on.

Later. Just in from a walk around Kogbeni. The village stands at the gateway of the Mustang region. It is expensive to get permits to enter the region and there is a police checkpoint on that side of the village to control those who enter the area. I think this is the area Peter Mathieson was in as the setting for *Snow Leopard*.

The village is filled with old stone houses connected together in hap hazard ways. A labyrinth of walkways, alleys and even tunnels must be traversed to get around. Even then there are parts of the village we can see but can't seem to get to. The children seem cleaner here and the people have more character, more colorful, than on the Manang side. Many wear Tibetan shoes—sort of leather soles that wrap up around the foot and crocheted together over the top. Many of the women wear huge strands of mountain coral and turquoise necklaces. But the women seem not too friendly. I was trying to take a photo of a colorful rooster when an old woman saw me and thought I was going to take her photo. She freaked out and yelled at me and waived her arms. I did take a few photos of children. One little girl with a child tied on her back showed us a tiny puppy she was carrying. Emily asked her if she could take her picture. The little girl consented willingly and posed. Other children saw this taking place, and all rushed to get in the picture. After the picture they all crowded around demanding “one rupee.” We gave the first little girl the one rupee, feeling sad to enter this kind of corruption. Yet it may not really be corruption but adaptation and change. What do these children have of worth to those with money save their own appearance. Lots of children beg when you see them. They demand “pen.” We just respond, “no pen.” I can't imagine what they would do if you gave them a pen. There is nothing for them to write on and I can't imagine they would be able to sell a pen for much of anything.

Some say these Tibetan Nepali villages look like pueblos. I am certainly reminded of them, but I think it a rather surface resemblance. At breakfast this morning an old guy (I suppose in his late 60s, so perhaps not so old) and his younger female companion commented on this resemblance as well as resemblances in dress. They seemed like New Age seekers to me, so I wasn't very interested in conversation. I did ask when the man was drawing these parallels: “So what do you make of these parallels?” He advanced a theory of unity at a time before continental shift. Pretty funny that people can hold these views. The separation and shift of continents was eons upon eons ago. But some need the world to make sense, for everything finally to be one, for no difference to survive. Yet at the same time these types romanticize the hell out of these Nepali people (and, of course “Indians” as well). the woman kept going on about how totally wonderful these people are. I just don't see how you can make such grand generalizations when you can barely communicate with any of them and those encounters range all over the map in terms of my sense of how wonderful they

are. Some seem cruel, some seem unhappy, many seem lifeless, while others seem happy, kind, and full of life.

Another thing that bothers me is that bashing of the west done by so many travelers. Kurt calls himself an “expat” (i.e., expatriate) and says he is looking for another country to take residence in. How can one grow up in the USA, travel to Asia, and not get a sense of renewed appreciation for our freedom, our sense of humanity, our sensitivity, our intellectual development, and this is not even to mention the physical and social comforts of life?

Now a comment on long term travelers. We’ve met a few. Those types who seem either to travel regularly for extended periods and those who are perpetual travelers. These travelers seem to me to be just the flip side of those who can never leave home. While those who fear leaving home fear everything in the world outside of the area, they can highly control, perpetual travelers must fear any sense of regularity, any sense of order, anything of depth. This is like J. Z. Smith’s locative and utopian models. Either pole is impossible. These are like Schiller’s notions of the “formal” and the “sensuous.” Neither is really possible, and neither is really desirable. To strive for either is, in Sartrean terms, to live in “bad faith.” In my terms, both are seeking to take the play out of life. One seeks place, the other (the traveler) finds being in place odious. Yet the irony for the traveler is that her or his conversation is restricted exclusively to recollections of places one is not now in. Psychologically, though I am fully ignorant here, it seems that the locative stay-at-home correlates with the borderline personality (do I know what this is?) while the traveler correlates with the narcissist. All this is very interesting.

To live (in Sartre’s terms) in the “spirit of play,” is to travel to appreciate home and to stay home to appreciate travel, to be open to the surprises (Pierce) of both home and away through the oscillation between them, yet finding neither undesirable nor despicable. I really think that Em and I are living in “good faith” in the “spirit of play.” We love travelling and are able, I think, most of the time, to live here in this trek in this travel, in the present without (overly anyway) wanting to be at home. Yet we don’t find going home frightening or disappointing. We look forward to structures, to regularities, to habits. We look forward to comforts, to pleasures, to making place. Yet in traveling we learn the potential for growth, for stimulation, for renewal, for surprise, for amazement that is not so easily found “at home,” “in place.” Both are necessary.

Traveling and being at home would make a wonderful metaphor to illustrate my theory of play. I think it might be interesting to add a section on stay-at-homes and travelers for my play course. Perhaps one could find some fiction for the stay-at-home (some recluse like Emily Dickinson) and there is huge potential for travel literature for travelers.

**December 31, 1993 - New Year's Eve**

Got up before sunrise this morning to take photos of Nilgiri North (7061/23,166) and perhaps Tilcho (7132/23,399) which would be just to the left of Nilgiri. Nilgiri loomed large as we walked along the Kali Gandaki River, sometimes in the riverbed. As we got a few kilometers out of Kogbeni we got a look back through a crevice to the pass. From that angle the pass crossing between Thorong Peaks looked most dramatic and it looked so high and impossible to cross, which at this time it surely is.

As we went on towards Jomson, which we knew we were approaching because of an airplane that had obviously taken off not long before, we began to see Dhaulagiri (8167/26,795) and to its left Tukucho Peak (6920/22,703). Dhaulagiri is a magnificent peak rising like a pyramid to a sharp point. I just couldn't stop taking photos.

We arrived in Jomson shortly after 11 a.m. First, we went to the police check point. The policeman asked us if we'd come over Thorung La. When we said "yes," he smiled very broadly, reached over and patted us on the cheeks and said we were very lucky. And, indeed, we were. Kurt talked extensively of this last night. He felt that to cross the pass, near 18,000 ft., in a snowstorm was a challenge quite great. Doubtless we were rather foolish to try, and we courted disaster far more closely than we imagined. Still, it is wonderful to be on this side and going downhill.

Dinner last evening was weird yet sometimes fun. We had a fettuccini dish, soup, and apple pie. Not bad. The village of Kogbeni is wired for electricity which I heard is supposed to be supplied by wind generators. The problem is that the windmills all blew over. So, no power. The dining table with the heated coals beneath it was first lighted by a Coleman lantern. This didn't last long so they brought candles. Before Helmut and Ann finished their meal, someone came in, fiddled with the lantern, and sprayed kerosene over their food. Pretty upsetting to them and to others.

I engaged Kurt a little on being a perpetual traveler. I looked on it as field research. When pushed (gently) a bit, he is much less brusque and self-assured. Kind of interesting, yet in the middle of our conversation Helmut arrived and immediately began his endless spiel of travel anecdotes. I'm convinced that, while Kurt has the capacity and perhaps even the interest in self-reflection, Helmut is a surface kind of guy. Well so much for a little field research into the "perpetual traveler."

Last night Em and I shoved our beds together but neither of us slept much. Helmut in the next room, roared away much of the night snoring. Then my legs hurt. At one time I got a cramp. Anyway, by morning neither of us was in such a great mood. We snapped a bit at each other, and we've spent the day feeling sad and shy and regretful about that.



We ate lunch at quite an exclusive place in Jomson. The rooms cost \$20 USA. They have satellite TV and a western style toilet and hot water. We saw a few of the guests looking like they belong more in Aspen. Apparently, lots of people fly into Jomson, hike around a few days, and fly out. Quite the easy way to trek. On this side of the pass everything is so much easier and there are so many more trekkers. This morning I saw my first company trek. About 4 to 6 white senior citizens walked along without packs escorted by a couple of guides. Strung out behind them for kilometers were porters carrying chairs, tables, pots and pans, sleeping mats and pads, tents, the whole works. Helmut's brother took one of these for the whole circuit a couple months ago and I think he said it cost around \$3,000 US though that included airfare from Germany. That would mean the three-week trek would cost around \$2,500. Em and I are spending together between \$10 and \$12 a day, or perhaps \$125 each plus porter that we share for about \$120. We're spending maybe \$200 each on the entire trek, perhaps 10% the company price, and we could have done this without Parang.

So here we are in the Paradise Guest House on New Year's Eve. We have had a pot of tea and our first apple crunch. Helmut and Ann arrived and have gone out to explore this village. I think I'll forgo that experience preferring to write and do more reading. Em has gone to the room for a nap. Four Brits, 3 young women and a young man, are having a snack and others seem to be arriving. I think quite a few are enjoying Winter Holiday treks.

So, what has this year been for me? Probably the year of greatest change in my entire life. Shortly after the first of the year I turned 50 in London. In March I left Judy and began to rebuild a new life. I won a faculty fellowship and the University of Colorado Research and Creative Works Award. Em and I started a relationship and worked very hard on it. I began new relationships with Corbin and Jenny and with my parents and sisters. Jenny and I traveled to Texas in the summer as part of this renewal. Late in the summer Em and I left for the travels we are still on. We've been in Australia, Indonesia, Thailand, and now Nepal. I taught a Religion and Dance course and began research in that area. I conceived and have begun research and writing on the book *Storytracking*. I've got a renewed plan for *To Risk Meaning Nothing*. I've done most of my share of the editing for the *Ritual Studies Anthology* with Ron. I've begun editing the "Arts of Living Series" of dictionaries for ABC-CLIO. Really quite a year. I am thrilled that I have begun new relationships, that I have worked hard on my problems and grown quite a bit personally. I'm pleased that I've had the courage to travel. I'm excited about my relationship with Emily and am beginning to think, from that relationship I am learning not only what a relationship is, but what love is. The only things I regret from this year are the inevitable hurt I've caused Judy, leaving the dome which I built and put so much of my heart into, the hurt I've done Corbin and Jenny because of the divorce.

It has been a year of enormous growth and accomplishment. A renewal, rebirth, reunification of myself. A new beginning.

Next year begins tomorrow. I know many things will occur, but I really don't want to make predictions, promises, or resolutions. I plan to continue to renew my relationship with Corbin and Jenny and, of course, my parents and sisters. Relationships then are first. Emily, my kids, my family, friends. I want to make new friends and to renew old friendships and accomplish much there. I want to conclude my divorce as quickly as possible and to begin to rebuild house and home. I'll do all I can to be true to myself and to others, to be a genuine parent, friend, child, sibling, partner. 1994 must be as wonderful a year as 1993 has been.

### **January 1, 1994 Happy New Year**

New Year's Eve wasn't so spectacular from a social point of view anyway. We were at a very nice lodge in Marpha called "Paradise." In the evening we went down to the dining room to order dinner and read. A couple from England were there. Helmut and Ann showed up. A Belgium woman traveling with a Canadian couple (from Vancouver) came. Later the Canadian couple. I thought Kurt was not going to make it, but he made a grand entrance telling one and all of the glorious side trip he'd made, and his wet pants evidenced his fording a stream. Immediately he fell into a high-tech computer buzz word conversation with the British couple who turned out to be computer nerds. Helmut did his shtick on the many countries to which he has traveled. Round after round of trivia one-up-on-another games. It should have been a game of Jeopardy!

Em and I sat silently, eating, trying to read, occasionally (very occasionally) trying to enter the conversation. We were usually simply ignored. We had lasagna which I think had chapatti bread for the lasagna noodles. Not bad. We had our second apple crumble of the day for a New Year's Eve treat and ordered Parang one as well which he seemed to enjoy. He, like us, was completely ignored, though this is so ironic, since everyone seems to constantly talk about the wonderful Nepalese. They don't seem to notice that they completely ignore the Nepali people who are in their midst. In fact, when the Canadian couple came, they virtually displaced Parang from his spot at the warm table. He got up to head for the kitchen until Helmut, Ann, Em and I insisted he return, and that room be made for him.

About 8 p.m. with the Jeopardy! game in high gear and beer and local wine flowing, Emily and I excused ourselves to return to our room. Once there Em broke into tears because of being ignored by the group and further because she felt she knows nothing about the many topics so rapidly bantered about the group. I assured her I knew nothing either and that a quick review of my vitae would suggest that such a lack doesn't make me dysfunctional nor a blundering idiot. We talked extensively about what qualities we think constitute relationships and what constitutes interesting and important knowledge. She became assured,

or reassured, that what was going on there was nothing to feel threatened by and that she need not spend 20 hours a day trying to know a little something, a few facts, about everything.

It is amazing how much Kurt pretends to know all there is to know about most any and everything. Let me think of just a few things I recall: the oriental influence on the economy of British Columbia, the maple syrup industry worldwide, the microbrewery industry, super computers, the best places to eat in virtually any city in the world (often including the name of the restaurant and the street address), worldwide economy, population figures, birth and death rates for Nepal, how to avoid attacks by brown bears in Alaska, shark attacks in the Great Barrier Reef, and on and on. Every time I hear someone mention a book, he claims to have read it and his usual response is to pan the content with a quick statement. Still, when we know a bit about that of which he talks, it is clear most of what he says is either wholly made up or utterly superficial. What a bore, but certainly he is loved. Everyone, save us, seems immediately to love and admire him and look to him for the final word on everything. Well enough on Kurt.

We enjoyed a warm night and I slept more than usual. The Paradise was a fine place, by far the finest we've experienced since we have been on the trek.

This morning we arose shortly after 7 a.m. It was a bit cloudy. We had a hardy Tibetan breakfast (2 eggs, 2 pieces of Tibetan bread, French fries, and coffee or tea) and we added muesli to this. The walk out of Marpha was fairly undistinguished with the clouds mostly covering Nilgiri. After several kilometers we began to see the lower areas of Dhaulagiri with clouds completely obscuring the tops. Looking back, we could also see Nilgiri, it too in the clouds. We stopped in Tukohe for a nice glass of warm apple juice. On the trail another hour or two and we stopped at Lanjung for a quick bowl of soup (not great, but warm). Dhaulagiri loomed above the village, again not much visible due to the clouds. Still, I made some interesting, I hope, pictures of the beautiful, muted colors in the lower elevations with the white capped peaks above. We arrived in Kalopani (2560/8,694) around 2 p.m. having descended only one hundred meters lower than Marpha. We are at a clean guest house, but the food is horrible so we'll go up the road for dinner. Helmut and Ann arrived about an hour after we did and joined us. We've enjoyed a nice chat though it is very cold in this dining room.

Ann and Em have gone up the road to check the menu. Em is in a mood of homesickness and wants the trek to be over. Though I'm encouraging her to be present, to "buck up" as it were, I am not far behind her in mood. We contemplated yesterday spending another day on the trek to go into an interesting area north of the main route, but I think now we will let that go and take a half day trip out of Pokhara for a view of the Himalaya that Helmut promises is magnificent.

So, it is New Year's Day here and my thoughts today have been almost constantly with Corbin and Jenny, wondering what they are doing on New Year's Eve, hoping they are having a great time, even more hoping they act sanely and are safe from the many dangers of the holiday. I can't wait to get back to Boulder to see them and find out what they have been doing. Think we'll spend a number of days, split between Pokhara and Kathmandu, simply reading, writing, and reflecting. I think this is necessary prior to our return to Boulder to help us rest, reflect, relax, and prepare ourselves for the major changes of returning home. Perhaps I'll finish *Frankenstein* before the end of the trek, but if not, I can finish it and either buy a new book, work on *To Risk*, or read one of Emily's books. How wonderful that time shall be, how important to successfully concluding this fabulous trip.

Helmut and Ann are out for a walk and it seems to be clearing here this evening. I have high hopes that it will be crystal clear in the morning because there are major mountains in every direction. Annapurna South is just now making an appearance with the sun lighting its top. I must go take a photo.

The sun is just setting, and I went out to get some photos of Nilgiri and Annapurna South (7273/23,862) as the sun made its brief appearance before disappearing for the day. Now in semidarkness, despite the electric lights, and in semi-chilliness, despite the coals under the table, we await our dinner, bean and cheese burrito. Then some conversation with Helmut and Ann and early to bed. Hopefully the early morning views of Dhaulagiri will be wonderful.

### **January 2**

The 16th day of our trek. It was a very hard day despite descending nearly 1400 meters/4600feet. My lower back hurt much of the day making every step a painful moment and the occasional body jerk to recover from a slipping or rolling rock underfoot was a wrenching pain.

It was lightly cloudy most of the day with the sun breaking through a few brief times. Dhaulagiri stood massive as a huge bowl to our backs as we left Kalopani.

Em and I had to process a bit more of our weirdness of last night but decided that we are both body and travel weary and want most of all to get on through the trek and enjoy the mountain views from Pokhara.

Today was mostly a pushing drudge through the day.

We stopped in Ghara for lunch. An interesting valley as we descended. The vegetation changes along the way through the lower sides of the high peaks are mostly brown. By the time we got to Tatopani we saw citrus, banana, ferns and bamboo.

The trail was loaded with caravans, groups of pack animals (donkeys, horses, and the cow-yak mix with big horns). Frequently we had to wait for them to clear

the trail. Interesting and colorful, plus their neck bells are lovely to hear, but they kick up lots of dust and grind the trail into 4-inch-deep dust nearly everywhere.

We're staying in the Kumala Lodge. As we arrived, we hardly noticed Nilgiri South (6839/22,438) at the end of the valley through which we had traveled. We were too hungry. First, we ordered tea—we were seriously dehydrated—and tomato soup. Then we ordered French fries which we gobbled. Then we saw them carrying two freshly baked cakes from the kitchen to the bakery. Can you believe it! We ordered a piece of coconut cake to round out our snack.

When we started for the room, I suddenly felt chilled to the bone. When I started up the stairs to the room, I realized how serious is my back pain. In the room I couldn't bend over enough to untie my shoes. I just started to cry, and Em helped me off with my shoes and other sweaty clothing and snuggled me warm under the sleeping bags. Later she rubbed me down with Tiger Balm and I began to feel better. Spirits have returned, but my back is still very sore. The trip tomorrow is a 7- 8-hour steep climb up to Ghoropani. I really want to go so we can be in Pokhara for my birthday, but I don't know whether I'll be able to go. Perhaps I'll wait until morning to determine that.

When we came down for dinner, garlic cheese lasagna (sort of), two pots of mint tea (more rehydration), and two more pieces of coconut cake, Emily spotted Helmut and Ann in the inn across the street. Amazing that they made it here today. We're both seriously tired and sore. They have been trekking several days longer than we have.

So here we hang. Tomorrow will bring what it will. Em and I are close and loving again and that is excellent. When we had still an hour to go Em responded with great concern. I thought she was going to cry. But she rallied her strength and on we came. We talked about that and it is helpful, I think, to us both.

Wish I knew what was best for my back. Today there were times when I felt somewhat pain free, other times it was excruciating. I may load Parang's pack with a bit of my stuff to try to lighten my load.

### **January 3, 1994**

We shot up the mountain from Tatopani climbing 1600 meters (5250 feet) in a total of 7 hours including lunch (about 1 hour). The main reason for the speed is that just above Sikha where we had lunch a group of young men suddenly appeared and casually surrounded us. They talked with a Nepali woman who happened to be near the trail. Em had left her backpack on a stoop. one of them started to pick up her pack. I protested. Parang, who had stayed behind to finish his dal bhat, showed up around this time. The young men soon went on up the road. Parang seemed to think they were innocent though I'm not sure he understood our concern. Em was freaked out and so was I. Her adrenaline rush shot her up the hill. I couldn't go so fast partly because of my back. Em patiently waited now and then. It was a surprise when we got here. Actually, here turns

out to be Dearali, not Ghoropani as I had thought. Dearali is where Pun Hill is and if one hikes up there one can see the whole top of the world from Lamjung Himal to Dhaulagiri. Doubtless we'll head up there in the morning and hopefully see the mountains. We can see Dhaulagiri from here as we could our lunch stop, and it is a seriously huge, tall mountain (26,777 feet).

This hotel is very basic like so many we've stayed in. We thought these hotels on the Jomson side would be much better, but they aren't so great. Last night we had delicious food, but the hotel was very basic. This morning we had a delicious Tibetan breakfast for 50 rupees each, with fried eggs, Tibetan bread, fried potatoes and milk tea. We also drank a pot of mint tea to help us stay hydrated.

Both of us are weary of trekking. Actually, the walking is fun, the villages are often interesting, the people are often friendly. But it is hard to deal with such crummy dark dingy cold places to stay. We had high expectations on the Jomson side and since that hasn't worked out very well, we're sort of disappointed. This village doesn't even have electricity or a heated dining table. And it is cold here.

Parang gave us a long speech last night about his knowing which places are best to stay and that his choices should be followed. We've been shopping around, but when we arrived here, I was happy to take whatever, I was so tired. Em thinks there are much better places. Since tomorrow will be an easier day, we'll make our own choice for our last night which will be in Birethanti. Then on January 5 we walk 10 minutes and catch some sort of vehicle to Pokhara the haven of hot showers, comfortable beds, no walking and hopefully an international telephone connection.

We've been drinking some mint tea awaiting a snack of potato soup and some Tibetan bread (mine with peanut butter). This is our way of testing places for their food. If the soup is good and the bread not too greasy, it seems to be okay to eat a meal there.

This morning as we prepared to leave, Helmut and Ann appeared to give us a great send off. They had decided to stay in Tatopani to recover a bit and knowing how hard the climb to Ghoropani is, they thought they'd take two days for it. Helmut complimented Emily by saying she did so much for an American girl. A compliment to her and an insult to American females. Still, they were warm and genuinely gracious, and we were very pleased to have such a warm conclusion to our week and more travel with them.

The country through which we traveled today was quite beautiful. Many terraces, lots of green fields, poinsettias a plenty, bamboo, high snow peaks. We went in and out of mystical forests. Just below Ghoropani we went through a forest of huge trees, though not too tall, with their roots sticking up. Seemed like a fairy forest but given our little episode with the "gang" of guys, we both felt a bit creepy. We were treated to seeing a couple of monkeys in the forest. They

were quite large and had big white hairy fringes around their faces. Though I saw them only in a flash, I think their faces were black.

It is sunset and I just went upstairs to a balcony to take some photos. Nilgiri South stood, all pointy by itself bathed in warm evening light. What a great object to photograph. It was completely cloud free though Dhaulagiri further to the west was totally obscured by heavy cloud. Annapurna I (7,647/25,088) or Fang (7647/25,088) and Annapurna South (7273/23,862) were bathed in clouds, themselves taking on lovely sunset colors. From time-to-time holes in the clouds would match the location of the mountains giving me a peek at the peaks. Fun to have this experience and to, hopefully, get some breathtaking photos.

The dining room has its Coleman lantern burning and a central stove, made of half a 55-gallon drum adding a bit of warmth. The food we had for a snack was delicious, so we told them to keep it coming. Pizza, which should be interesting, more Tibetan bread, and milk tea. We'll go to bed early and be prepared for a pre-sunrise rise. One day all downhill to Birethanti and we'll conclude the trek. I've given up even a concern about my odor, which is beyond bad (new abbreviation: H.O. = Horrible Odor), or my appearance which is beyond scruffy. When we arrive in Pokhara it will be the time to return to these social concerns, besides Em smells as bad though she still looks great. Hm, wonder what her secret is? So, I'm psyched for the food that's coming and for tomorrow's sunrise, tomorrow's hike, tomorrow night's lodging and food as a fitting climax to the trek.

I asked Em what the high points for her trek were. She said the Xmas day hike from Pisang to Manang, the pass crossing, and the hike from Muktinath to Kagbeni. I'd pretty much agree with that.

Though my back remains stiff, and my hips still want to displace to the right, I don't think it is nearly as bad as last night, at least I haven't had to cry. Yea.

Perhaps I'll read a bit of *Frankenstein* while I await our food.

Didn't get but a couple paragraphs read before our food came. The pizza was a round piece of bread covering the bottom of a round pan covered with tomato, onion, and cheese. Rather tasty by trekking standards.

During the meal the Nepali family has congregated around the fire: the man and woman who own this place, a teen aged daughter (I think) and a young man and woman, perhaps a daughter or son and spouse. Another younger girl, perhaps 12, was here for a while. Parang has disappeared. I think it is fairly clear that Em and I, the only guests, are a principal topic of conversation. The woman asked earlier, "Father and daughter?" She giggled when Emily told her, "No, friends." Perhaps our relationship is giving their imaginations an object for reflection and their senses of humor may be engaged as well. Em said to me that she is tired of being the object of such private conversations, I agree. It is only

6:40 pm, but it is chilly and there's not much to do, so we may go to bed soon. Slept so well last night, hope I can repeat that tonight.

#### **January 4, 1994**

Birethanti. The last inn and tea house of our trek. We arose this morning before sunrise and climbed our way up Pun Hill above Ghoropani for sunrise. From Pun Hill mountains can be seen all over the place. The huge Dhaulagiri on the far left. Then going to the right or east a distant snow-covered range, Nilgiri South (which was mostly a black face, but the snow on its other side caught the light), Annapurna I. Annapurna South, and Machhapuchhare (the famous fish tail mountain). There were doubtless more, but those were the most spectacular ones. Snapped quite a few pictures and ate some granola.

We went back to our hotel, ordered our breakfast and packed while it was being prepared. We got started about 9 a.m. Down down down we came. At Banthanti we got a spectacular mountain framed view of Machhapuchhare and farther on down at Ulleri, where we had a very delicious lunch at a beautiful spot, Annapurna South dominated the end of the valley above us. Parang had thought we'd make it only as far as Hille, two hours short of Birethanti, but when we arrived there it was only 2 p.m. and we felt good, so we pushed on. Some people leaving Ghoropani this morning were aiming for Pokhara tonight. We wanted to spend one last night at an inn before Pokhara. We also want to arrive in Pokhara in time to shop for a few necessities.

This town, or at least this lodge, has no electricity, so we'll be in the dark before long. We did treat ourselves each to a bucket of hot water ("shower"). We still smell and our clothes reek, but it certainly feels wonderful to get the first layers of scum off. I didn't shave, just too inconvenient, and Em didn't wash her hair, same reason.

Birethanti is a neat town with lots of inns and shops. As usual our room is quite basic. But we did descend 1700 meters today, so it is much warmer here.

At our lunch stop we met lots of people we'd seen in Ghoropani. A couple of them were suffering serious knee pain and we dispensed a bunch of ibuprophen. Em had a bit of knee pain. My pain remained in my back which is getting better and my ankle where the tongue of my boot which tends to slip around has made a nasty bruise. But I felt good most of the day.

The trail was like one huge stairway. Thousands and thousands of steps down. We began in a forest and came out of dense trees after a while. Then the trail opened out on hill sides, many of which were terraced, and wound its way down through a variety of villages. I particularly liked Ulleri which was built on the steep descent. There were many tea houses along the path with lovely bright table clothes on tables. Some had tubs of soda and trays of candy bars laid out, trekkers' delights. Everyone was friendly. It was a fine place to stop for lunch.



One major experience on the trail is meeting caravans of mules and donkeys, up high they were horned yak-cows. Typically, these caravans have 10 or 12 mules. The first several usually have a triangular decorated carpet piece, made specifically for the purpose I'm certain. The first ones may also have neat plumes that stick up above their necks. Many of the animals have huge bells around their necks that can be heard for quite some distance. The problem occurs when you meet one or more caravans in a narrow spot on the trail. The mules have their loads hanging on their sides and they often take up much of the trail.

Sometimes we try to travel along the edge of the trail, sometimes we have to wait. The mules typically go a few steps then stop awaiting a shout, a whistle, a thrown rock, or a whack with a stick to get them to go on. Sometimes 4 or more caravans are strung together. Mules also have the habit of pissing in the same place. These frequent piss places are a quagmire of mud and stink of ammonia urine. Yuck. This morning as I finished checking in at the Police Check Point in Ghororpani, a caravan was coming up the street/path. A water place had run all night as common and had frozen in a sheet of ice half filling the street at just a place where the mules had to make a large step up. Mule after mule hit the ice, went down on its knees, and struggled to get back up to its feet and slide past the ice. Finally, the drover caught on and whacked the remaining ones, so they'd skirt the ice. Very sad, these animals. Their back bones are worn hairless as also anywhere straps scrape. I don't see why they do what they do, but most everything that is used and sold in every village that is not produced locally must be hauled by these animals or by the many porters who also carry huge loads. I've been noticing porter's feet. They are spread out like duck feet, even wider than mine. Their toes hang over the flip flops they wear and look as gnarly as one can imagine. They often carry huge loads strapped to their backs and supported by their head bearing strap. I saw one today carrying probably 10 sheets of corrugated steel. Even the encumbrance of 2' or 3' x 8' sheets seems more than one could endure, but these loads are also terribly heavy.

We're out of the views of the snow peaks--i.e., the Himalaya--now. They should appear again tomorrow, but more at a distance from Pokhara. In the morning we walk about 30 minutes, then catch a bus to Pokhara. Likely we'll spend a few minutes looking around this town before heading out. We've enjoyed potato soups, mint tea, and French fries. Now we've ordered tomato, onion, pizza (same as last night, but a recommended specialty here).

The inns on this side--the Jomson side--have certainly not met my expectations, built on so many reports. Certainly, more things are available on this side, but it is still a far cry from what I'd expected. This town, perhaps the largest and the most highly praised, doesn't have electricity. So now I'm writing illuminated by a single lantern provided for the outdoor dining room. As the sun has set, I'm a bit chilly. So as usual for winter trekking, a long, big meal and off

to bed. Not so bad, but I find it impossible to sleep around the clock. Night before last in Tatopani, I slept most of the night through, but last night, despite being pooped from the long hard climb, I slept very little. The dog that barked ceaselessly most of the night didn't help. I think I was also anticipating a pre-sunrise awakening.

So now we've come to the end of a 200-kilometer trek. When I look at the map and see where all we've been and think about days walking and places for the night's lodging (most of them bedrooms that were like large packing crates) I am amazed at what we have done. It has been a very long walk with many physically very difficult days. We rested really only 2 days—Manang and Muktinath—and on one of those I took a long hike. If one added all the meters ascent and descent it would be many thousands. The peak experiences for me have been many: to cross a pass, in winter of all times, that approached 18,000 feet and for me to feel great enough to dance at that altitude. But even more the peak experience has been to see and try to grasp the enormity, the grandeur, the power, the unfathomability of the snow peaks. They stand silent but moody. They appear eternally frigid, but they thaw the spirit and inspire the imagination. They are there, just there. They don't give a damn who looks on them or attempts to climb them. The very idea of "conquering" these mountains, as is the term often used for those who ascend to their peaks, is ludicrous. Nothing, save time itself, can conquer these mountains. The very thought of human conquerors is the height of silliness. We stand before them humbled as few other natural experiences can be so certain to do. Yet in our infinite smallness, our sense of the infinitesimal time the courses of our lives occupy, we nonetheless go away happier, more human, more accepting of our condition, more inspired to give our best to the tiny bit we've been given in the scheme of things. Then too, realizing that as the Himalaya grows and is worn away, as the great flat deserts of central Australia were once the location of its own Himalaya, we realize not to take ourselves too seriously, not to overly worry about things we make, about the little efforts we make to try to achieve a tiny measure of immortality. For me this has shifted my personal priorities to building and maintaining close personal relationships. Feelings, good relationships, love, friendship, these things are all for the moment, for the present. Nothing about them must endure. Thus, we needn't much worry about durability, about immortality. We have, as the Himalaya, only the present. Seems I had something of the same response to Ayers Rock. It is interesting to compare these experiences. We walked around Ayers Rock, 9 kilometers, and it took 3 hours. We walked around part of the Himalaya; it took 19 days. We climbed Ayers Rock to the top. We did so with hundreds of other people. It took perhaps an hour. We crossed a high pass--Thorung La in the Himalaya, but from the pass we looked up thousands of feet

at mountains all around. Only the very few of all those who visit here even do this pass crossing.

So, the Himalaya are much grander, much more inaccessible than Ayers Rock. Still, perhaps for this reason, Ayers Rock is even more important as a natural object to inspire. Our emotions, our imaginations, our fullest human capabilities are thrown into such an overload by the Himalaya that we can't even just sit in wonder, we're overwhelmed. Yet I remember so well the better part of a day with my eyes and heart trained on the Rock? It attracted as it inspired wonder. This doesn't mean I like Ayers Rock more than the Himalaya. To me they are finally incomparable experiences. I'd never give up either.

### ***Pokhara, January 5 - 9***

**January 5, 1994**

Pokhara. Treks over. We arose this morning, had a nice breakfast and walked briefly around Birethanti before heading out. Even as we walked the half hour to Lumle where we wanted to catch a ride to Pokhara the activity began to increase, and we met many more people. We came to the road and saw the horror of trucks and buses crammed to overcapacity, people and luggage hanging everywhere, and we realized what a culture shock we were in for.

As we awaited transport, I noticed a small child, maybe two years old, bare bottomed and footed walk across this busy road, squat and shit diarrhea on the roadside. I turned away, but this image is burnt into my mind. This is Nepal. One of the poorest countries in the world. A country with a high infant and child mortality rate, but also a major overpopulation problem. I was first shocked that no one would tend this little child on such a busy road, then I realized that its chances with trucks and buses were perhaps better than its chances with disease. As we waited, I thought about all the Nepali children I've seen. Most of them had so much dirt on them that they'd be unrecognizable if clean. Most, almost all, had snot running down their faces, often past their lips. All wore rags, many layers of rags. Some played, but the games were all inventions using found and junk objects. I saw not a single manufactured toy. As we drove along to Pokhara--fortunately we were able to get a taxi, though it cost 500 rupees--I saw many children doing hard physical labor on road crews, boys of 12 to 15, even some girls of this age. A very few children I have seen seem happy. Last night the principal busser and wait person was a little girl, perhaps eight. She worked hard and the man who ran the inn was cross and sharp with her, but she smiled broadly, though she was so shy, and there was life in her eyes.

For so many Nepali children life is pain, disease, death, diarrhea, work, dirt, cold, and neglect. Very harsh it seems to me.

Reflecting on the image of the child squatting shitting in the road I remembered taking a photo in London just a year ago tomorrow, my birthday,

of a woman turned patiently to the side as her leashed groomed dog squatted in the gutter of a clean street to shit. London pets are healthier and more well cared for than Nepali children.

Of course, the harshness is there, but perhaps in the shock of it I have overstated the situation or neglected the positive side. I've seen many parents show care and affection for children. Parang often talks to and has fun with children in the homes where we have stayed. There is another side, but still, it seems the negative side is overwhelming to me. I haven't even mentioned the begging so commonly practiced by children in most of the villages we passed through. Well, enough of that. I think the huge romanticization of the Nepali people and know that for many travelers the children are cute and endearing.

So, we've finished the trek. Arriving in Pokhara before noon, Parang hauled us down a side street to the place he always stays, the Iceland Guest House. With a string of disappointing places on the Jomson side of the trek I expected a horrible place, but it isn't so bad. We decided to stay, a double room with attached bath for 300 rupee (\$6) per night and if it is clear in the morning I think we'll have a spectacular Himalayan view (for which we're paying an extra 50 rupees per day)—the room with the view.

We landed and promptly left to shop for necessities—laundry soap, razor blades, toothbrushes, etc.—before we could start the long process of cleaning up. Parang was heading out for lunch and we walked along with him. We invited him to lunch and wound up in a lovely garden restaurant on the lake eating Mussaka salad (though I shouldn't have), and chocolate cake. Parang, unable to read the menu as we quickly realized, yielded to my suggestion that we choose something new for him to eat. It was fun. He did know that he wanted a beer to drink. We ended with a huge slab of chocolate cake and as I think on this lake side garden setting juxtaposed with the baby shitting in the road that I'd seen but a couple hours before, I realize that I've seen something of Asia, something of life.

### January 6

My 51st birthday. Awoke early this morning trying to recall the names of my Beta pledge class. Don't know why. Mike Bloodhart, Mike Stucky, Tracey Burton, Larry Seigel, Spider (Bill) Gross, Rex Molder, etc. Actually, some of them were just friends. I can't really recall which were in my pledge class. Thirty years ago. The images of their faces were immediately available, but their names came rather slowly. Funny, now I'd recognize their names if spoken, but if I saw them I might not, likely not, connect their present appearances with them at all. Since Mike Bloodhart lives in Aurora, I might try to see him when I get back. I have yet to recall the name of the girl, woman, he married. Don't remember liking her all that well.

So, after it started to get light, I looked out our window and there was the promised beautiful mountain view. Macchapuchare was center stage aglow in the early morning sunlight. Annapurna South appeared a big snow-covered mound to the west and behind the trees to the east were Annapurna IV and Annapurna II. I took a couple photos of Macchapuchare—such a beautiful pyramidal shaped mountain. I'm so pleased I photographed it from the Jomson trail because only at that angle is the fish tail appearance visible for which it is named. The appearance of these snow peaks changed throughout the morning. We enjoyed this view from the garden of the Boomerang Restaurant by the lake where we ate a delicious breakfast. But before even our breakfast was complete the clouds had formed and began to obscure the peaks. By noon they had disappeared altogether.

After breakfast we strolled about the shopping area near us. I looked at cotton flannel shirts and this afternoon I drove a seriously good bargain and bought a heavy one for 350 rupees (\$7). We saw Kurt who told us he had word on the people we spent the night with in Thorong Phedi. He said he'd heard they made it over the pass perhaps 3 days after we did. Good to know. Perhaps they will show up in Pokhara in a day or two.

We had cinnamon rolls and milk tea at one restaurant, minestrone soup and herbal tea at another. Both Em and I have had a stomachache today from overeating last night, particularly garlic. We went to very lovely restaurant and ate spaghetti Napolitana and garlic bread with coke. We finished the meal with a chocolate role cake with rum sauce. It included two huge slices of roll cake. We had coffee and tea with our desserts. Most enjoyable the restaurant provided an hour and a half of folk music and dance which we experienced while we ate. Terrific evening even if my stomach paid the price.

As I sit here on the second-floor balcony looking towards the snow peaks I cannot see, it strikes me again how amazing it is to sit in the sub-tropics amidst banana trees, poinsettia trees, huge bamboo clumps, papaya trees, etc. and be able to look at the Himalaya without intervening mountain ranges.

At present we don't know how long we'll stay in Pokhara. We bought a used copy of the *Lone Planet Guidebook to Nepal* and are beginning to realize how much there is to see and do and buy in Kathmandu. As idyllic as is Pokhara, we may head back to Kathmandu in a couple or three days.

Em called her parents last night. I'll call mine tonight, so it will be early morning there—give them a chance to wish me Happy Birthday. May not try to call Corbin or to see if I can learn anything about Jenny through Judy. Perhaps I'll call Corbin when I get to Kathmandu, but it costs so much I may not. Am sure my parents will be thrilled.

So how do I feel on my 51st birthday? Like I've grown lots since I walked in Hyde Park in London a year ago today. I feel healthier physically, mentally, and

spiritually, as well as stronger and more integrated as a person. It has been quite a year, but I summarized all that on New Year's Eve. I'm happy and enthusiastic. I feel rested and full of energy. I find this trip has been, is being, a powerful and moving experience, demanding and providing opportunity for so much growth and experience. I'm truly happy to be alive and look forward to all things in my future. .

Emily and I had a brief, but harsh, interchange last night. A few moments regression for me into old withdrawal patterns. We're both in transition from trekking and we are both eager to head home. No wonder there were a few moments of weirdness. We got it resolved before dinner and enjoyed our evening together very much. She gave me a lovely pressed floral card (that she bought in Thailand) on handsome sa (mulberry) paper. She wrote a very sweet message on the card and I've enjoyed being with her so much today. She looks so cute with her hair washed and nice clothes on. I'm experiencing an amazing, transformed feeling now that I've shaved and cleaned up a bit.

A note now about human rock crushers. I've intended to write about them before and haven't done it.

In many places throughout Nepal, we've seen groups of people working as human rock crushers. They sit in riverbeds with hammers. They take a large rock and whack it until it breaks. They take the pieces and whack them until all are crushed into walnut or smaller sized stones. It seems that a good many people make their living in just this way. I noticed one person who had devised a sort of rubber ring into which the larger stone was placed. Likely this person had poor aim and had fingers at risk. Most however just hold the stone by one hand and pound with the other. I haven't seen any gold bricking (laziness) among these rock crushers. They all seem to work rapidly. What does this say about the value of life? the quality of life? Reminds me of the Balinese females and haulers. Some of these Nepali rock crushers are women and children. Hm! Gives pause for reflection.

We'll go out to eat this evening, how surprising! Perhaps I'll read *Frankenstein* now or about Kathmandu.

### January 7

My birthday ended mixed. Called my parents in the evening and it was great to be in contact with them again and to know they and everyone else are okay. Also learned that Jenny now has a phone, but when I tried to call her, she had already gone to work—6:20 a.m. her time. It was snowing in Winter Park according to her roommate. Then when I called her this morning (evening there) her roommate told me she'd gone to Boulder for the evening. Rats.

All the phoning was fine, but expensive. What was not good was a bout of food poisoning I picked up. Think it was from a piece of apple pie that had an odd taste. I ate several bites before deciding it was no good, and the bites were

apparently enough to cause my severe nighttime illness. Emily suffered the sounds of endless farting and when it came to puking, she thought I was dying and cried for me. How sweet. Puking helped and a quart of rehydration solution helped me get back in the pink. I've eaten normally today and feel okay go far.

The mountain vista was spectacular again this morning. Such a gift. Makes me eager to arise and begin my day. Over breakfast, while enjoying the mountain and lake views, I went through the Kathmandu section of the Nepal guidebook and listed 8 days or part day activities that I thought we should do. We counted back and decided we need to leave here the 10th to have 10 days in Kathmandu to give us plenty of time to shop as well as see everything. Neither of us looks forward to a 7-hour bus ride, but at least this time we know what to expect.

The rest of the morning was spent walking towards the dam site of Pokhara. Don't know if we ever really got there, but we found that Pokhara spreads out quite a way. Saw a great wool jacket that Em may buy for me for a birthday present. We're learning what constitutes value in these jackets. Interesting.

Since my bout of food poisoning our attitude towards food has changed. Where yesterday we found lots of food great, and wanted to eat and eat, today things taste not so great, and our appetites are curbed somewhat. Food is certainly hard in Nepal.

Two more days to rest and relax in Pokhara then 10 days in Kathmandu seeing the city, temples, other cities, and shopping and then we're off to the US.

### January 8

Pokhara. Awoke this morning teeming with energy thinking of my research projects. I have somehow placed these projects in the back of my mind, let them be dormant since before we left Bali. Suddenly this morning at 6 a.m. there they were again in my mind and my energies welling toward them. I think this a wonderful natural effect of my travelling. I'll begin today to review my notes on *To Risk* restarting my engines.

Last night I finished *Frankenstein*. Excellent book. Now I need to read Prometheus since it is described as a "modern Prometheus tale" and I think I'll write a note to Corbin describing my reflections on the book as well as the physical history of the book and give it to him when I get home.

Started Hesse's short novel *Knulp* last night and read some on it this morning early. A lovely simple little work. Em is enjoying Tom Robbins' *Jitterbug Perfume* which I think I want to reread.

After breakfast this morning, I called and finally got hold of Jenny. It was so wonderful to talk with her. She sounded happy and excited about her work, her snowboarding, and very happy to be talking to me. She may try to meet us at the airport on the 21<sup>st</sup>. That would be great. She had received and enjoyed the cards and letters we've sent her. She wanted us to come visit her as soon as we get

back. Only talked 5 minutes (\$22) but it was wonderful, and I didn't even feel sad afterwards since it will only be 2 weeks until we are back. Yea!

Shopped for woven cotton bags this morning. Found some neat ones that we may buy later. Might get one for Corbin—sort of a many compartment book bag.

We saw Amy and Victor, the couple we met at Thorong Phedi before our assault on Thorong La Pass. They had not started the morning until after day light. They hiked for 3 1/2 hours and not knowing how near the pass they were and with the weather deteriorating they turned back. Gene, who had shoe problems, had a cold foot and must have turned back even earlier. They regrouped at Letdar, hired a porter, and tried again successfully in 2 days. Victor was very altitude sick as was the porter they hired who had lived for months at Phedi. He'd consumed alcohol and goat meat the night before they left. They made it over and though they had to go through snow they said the views were beautiful. It was funny that when we saw them the first thing she said to us was "You missed some great views!" Which, of course, we did. But then later she said that with half their group zonked out from altitude sickness she didn't really have time to look much at the scenery. I really do wish we had seen the mountains in clear light, but my memory of the crossing will always retain the mystery and majesty of the scenery almost seen. Amy and Victor seemed in high spirits and were in the midst of an animated story telling of their crossing to another couple with whom they were enjoying breakfast. Gene apparently made it over with them and decided to go to Annapurna Sanctuary. He may not be here in Pokhara before we leave, but perhaps we'll see him in Kathmandu.

It is a beautiful day, and the mountains remain visible as it approaches midday, though the air seems more hazy than usual. I'll need to take in these mountains as fully as I can today and tomorrow, for the next day we'll be off to Kathmandu.

Late afternoon. Just finished Hesse's *Knulp*. Knulp is an eternal wanderer, constantly on the move. As a young man he was seen as a dandy and everyone enjoyed having him around however briefly. As an older man he was seen as a bum, a vagrant, and scoffed at. For a time, I thought *Knulp* might be a novel for the play course for the perpetual traveler versus the stay-at-home theme I recently came up with. But in the end of the novel, having found no way to go home, Knulp wanders about talking to God. God assures Knulp that he is who he is and in living his life true to himself he has been part of God. Knulp dies in the end satisfied that he has been true to himself, his God, and his fellow man. This is oversimplified I think for it eliminates the play. People are divided into wonderers and those who stick with home and "make something of themselves." Hesse seems to opt for substantive self (Sartre), knowing self, and living true to it. My feeling is that in Hesse's later work he didn't resolve the issues so easily if



even at all and in those later works introduces the idea of play, which of course would also threaten the belief in a substantive self. Remember Joseph Knecht and Harry Haller.

*Knulp* was published in 1915, *Demian* in 1919, *Steppenwolf* in '22, *Narcissus and Goldman* in '30, *Magister Ludi* after that (was it '42?).

A note: Many Nepali women are very beautiful and in their everyday dress enhance their beauty in colorful costume, tika and make up. Many are slender and have penetratingly dark eyes and angular facial features. Some Nepali women wear what looks to me like Western style cotton flannel long night gowns as dresses or as overdresses to other clothing. These garments are often pastel pink or blue and often dirty. They look out of place and I certainly don't find them attractive. Weird.

Another note. There is a little twelve-year-old boy, Ram (a shortened version of his Nepali name), who may be the son of the owners. He works very hard all day long, cleaning, sweeping, doing laundry, washing dishes, cleaning rooms, so many things for a 12-year-old. He stopped and introduced himself to me and now calls me by name. He is bright, intelligent, and congenially humored. Today I asked him if he goes to school. It seemed to me a cloud passed before his eyes as he told me that he did not. I can't help but believe that he not only would like to go to school but also that he'd be an excellent scholar. What will his life be? What will he do? Can he retain his brightness and good humor as he continues his life? Will he always be happy to work hard all the time? Is it that by never knowing anything else he'll be happy? My heart goes out to him. Though he may continue to be happy, what of his potential? Is potential only in terms of dharma-living well accepting the limits one is given? Am I being foolishly ethnocentric? Many issues here.

Pokhara is pretty much a resort type town. It is spread out all along a lake side and apparently beneath the dam. It is loaded with shops and restaurants all, it seems, aimed at tourists. The streets are wider than in Kathmandu though only one lane is paved. It is sort of a weird city and seems to have far less of interest, save the fabulous mountain views, than Kathmandu. After window shopping for a couple days, we've decided they have better stuff better selection in Kathmandu than here. The lives of the hawkers are remarkably familiar, however. These guys see you, approach you obliquely, walk along with you a few steps and in an audible but hushed voice they inquire; "Want to take a boat ride [i.e., on the lake]?" and if you say "no," they go on to their other services, "Have anything to sell? Change money? Hashish?" Very funny.

Em is a bit under the weather this afternoon and this presents problems as we look toward eating. No place really reliable; no food dependably safe. What a drag. This evening I may try to buy a book to read through the balance of our Nepali stay.

**January 9**

Pokhara. Filled with energy again to go and especially to do research, write, think, etc. but feel like I'm on hold here in Pokhara. Further my back persists in its pain as well as the bruise on the side of my ankle. While I'm enjoying the mountain views, the leisure, the sun's warmth, I'm ready to move on, to begin new things, to end this travel, to return home.

Bought a used copy of John Irving's *The Cider House Rules* last night and have enjoyed reading the first section. As far as I know it is the only John Irving novel I haven't read. It should last me much of the time we have left in Nepal.

Em is still sick today and her illness finally became diarrhea. She's letting it run its course and is drinking rehydration solution. Hope it gets better today so we can take the long bus trip to Kathmandu tomorrow.

We had a bit of a tiff this morning over the purchase of a couple woven cotton bags. I saw two I liked and decided to purchase them. She wanted one but wouldn't say. Anyway, we both acted out and in bad faith and after some discussion moved past it. These problems are more persistent now than ever before (actually there weren't many before), but I think they are in large measure due to the issues of long travel and sickness and unsatisfactory food, etc. Not to worry now.

Afternoon. I'm growing increasingly irritable with Emily. I know that she doesn't feel well and that she is tired of travel, but she increasingly (it seems to me) plunges into self-pity, into indulging negative feelings, into the borderlands of depression. She says everything she sees, the Nepali, etc. seems so horrible to her, that she is helpless, that she understands nothing, that she is lonely, that she hasn't done enough with her life, and on and on. These negativities exasperate me. I try to respond with understanding and encouragement. I try to express some criticism. Nothing seems to help. She then just goes to sleep. She accuses me of being insensitive and not nice to her, but later she says it is her fault and apologizes. Sometimes I tell her she goes up and down unpredictably, yoyoing, she rejects this. She says she doesn't know how to be happy here. I'm increasingly concerned. I must try to talk with her about this later.

***Kathmandu, January 10 - 20*****January 10**

Thanks to the powers, the gods, we survived the bus trip from Pokhara to Kathmandu. As directed by our bus ticket we were at the appointed spot for pick up by 6:30 a.m., having paid for our room last night and said our goodbyes to Ram and the nice folks at the Ice Land Guest House. The bus finally arrived at 7:30 a.m. It was a much more comfortable bus than the one we took from Kathmandu to Dumre several weeks ago. We'd prepared ourselves with a few things to eat so we'd not be dependent on roadside stops.

The road from Pokhara to Kathmandu is in fact indescribable, the trip even more so. It is less than 200 kilometers (120 miles) and takes 7 to 8 hours. In no place, at no time, would I want it to have been shorter, since I felt seriously at risk most of the time. Perhaps half the route has a single lane paved. But the pavement is full of holes and the shoulders are very rough. Vehicles, almost all huge trucks and buses, drive on the pavement dodging potholes and as they approach wait until the last second to veer onto the shoulder to pass, blaring horns and flashing lights all the while. Many parts of the road wind along the mountains where the road cut has often completely washed out or been covered over by a landslide. These areas are one lane, bumpy and terrifying. Quite a few kilometers are under formal repair. This is sort of a joke to me. Dozens of workers, all using no tool more sophisticated than a shovel, are digging, breaking rock, building retaining walls, etc. Mile after mile. These crews camp in weird little tent and leaf shelters and I notice the camps are equipped with women cooks who doubtless prepare huge messes of dal baht a couple times a day. Many young and teen aged boys are on these crews. The bridges are long narrow affairs with a sign, almost weathered away, that says "One Vehicle at a Time." What confidence!

The practice of these buses is to drive along for a couple hours, or shorter if someone requests, then just stop on the road, perhaps slightly on the shoulder. Everyone piles out and rushes to the ditch or farther (particularly the ladies) to pee or whatever. Dumre and Munpang are dirty little towns that serve as refreshment stops. Here there are wide areas where buses can pull in to stop. Everyone piles out and goes in for food and drink. Long before the bus gets stopped it is surrounded by hawkers and beggars. Some sell bananas, oranges, and coconut. Others have little violins, or trinkets. The beggars are pathetic: a frail child walking along with desperation in his eyes pointing to his mouth, another who scarcely has a mouth, etc. Today Em and I got quickly back on the bus to have crackers and peanut butter. A child, perhaps in his teens, stood outside our window looking at us. He was thin as a skeleton, his face looked as though it had suffered severe burns, one hand was horribly deformed, and he had no other hand. Heart wrenching.

The last hour or so of the trip ascends a very steep narrow busy road through an amazingly terraced valley. This is the part I'd dreaded most. When we finally reached the top I breathed and thanked, with true sincerity, the powers that guided us and oversaw our safety.

Once in Kathmandu the bus pulled over and stopped, apparently quite some distance from Thamel. Several Westerners on the bus rudely demanded to be taken on and refused to get off. The bus driver spoke little if any English, but, through a Nepali passenger, conveyed the message that due to traffic the police would allow buses to go no farther at that time of day. The passengers got ruder,

and Em and I just got off, got our bags, and easily got a taxi, for 75 rupees, to our hotel.

Once at the hotel we asked for a cheaper room, they came down some in price, but we'd set 300 rupees per night as our max. So, we agreed to stay the night, since we have so much luggage, and went out to find other digs. This was easily done. We'll move to the Excelsior Annex tomorrow and pay 250 rupees a night for a room much like the one we have at the Snow Lion.

We ate at KC, lasagna that wasn't that great, and came back to the Snow Lion, retrieved our stored luggage and now we're enjoying the evening in planning our day tomorrow and reading.

We'll sell back some of our trekking equipment that will about pay for the equipment rental. Nice. We also had a bit of a chance to shop a little. There are great buys here. We'll enjoy lots of shopping.

The man at the trekking shop is so nice. He assured us that Parang is happy with what we paid him.

Oh, when we left Pokhara this morning we got a full sweep view of the Annapurnas. Wow! What an amazing range of mountains. They loom over Pokhara with stunning beauty and magnificence. They too are just beyond description. Though I've seen photos of the scene I saw this morning they don't even begin to present the size, the power, the magnificence of these mountains.

My back is still bothering me. All day long every bounce of the bus was felt by my back. When I stand in front of a mirror, I can see that my hips rotate displacing my upper body far to the right. Standing with my right foot in my shoe and my left bare foot on the floor evens me up. I hope this straightens out soon. I think a couple hours of aerobic dance would do the trick.

### **January 11**

Such a fun day. Ate a solid breakfast at Snow Lion then reorganized our growingly huge amount of luggage. Strapped on our backpacks and headed for Excelsior Annex. Checked in got two "boys" to go with us back to get the rest of our luggage, pay our bill, and say goodbye. Soon we were set up in a new room for \$5 per night. Very nice room as well.

Em cashed a traveler's cheque at a carpet selling place. "Go to the back." All hush, hush. But quick and a good exchange rate, 50 rupees per \$1 (banks give 48).

Then we went to begin a couple of 4 walking tours of Kathmandu. In the middle of the first tour, Tour #2 in the guidebook, we went to the American Express Office to check the mail. I got nothing; Em got a Christmas card from her friend Sally. How wonderful to get a bit of mail, even if it was for Emily.

The walking tours (part of #2 and part of #1) were fascinating and helped us understand lots more about the shrines and unusual buildings we see all over. There are hundreds of them on every street. We ended up in Durbar Square

which is a quick overload of temples. We simply found a lunch place, enjoyed lunch and decided we'd return tomorrow to finish both the walking tours and learn more of Durbar Square.

We did some shopping. Em bought me a completely awesome wool jacket, maroon with black trim and a wool black, grey and red trim that is made in Bhutan. She bought herself a short wool black tuxedo jacket (waist length) with maroon lapels. Both great jackets. I have been interested in Nepali drums and looked at one and the guy priced it at 1050 rupees and showed me a cheaper one for 600 and a more expensive one for 1300. I told him I'd come back. He said name a price. I said (for the 1050 one) "600 rupees." He scoffed and said that was ridiculous, but he said "850." He said, "name your last price." I said "600." He asked me this several times and I kept trying to give him back the drum to leave. Finally, he said "Okay." Several Nepali had gathered at the front to watch this. It seems I made a good deal, but one never knows. I priced other drums later for 950 and 600 that I couldn't really see were much different. Anyway, it was fun, and I'll buy a couple more of these for Corbin and Jenny.

We did more window shopping, had a nice pot of spicy Nepali tea, chai, and returned to rest and reflect.

After a respectable dinner we went to a bookstore where I found about a dozen great books on Asian dance. I'm going to the library tomorrow to do some research. If I find some good sources there I'll try to photocopy them. If not, I may have to purchase several books. Just what we need--to add weight to our luggage.

We went to the trekking shop this morning to settle up with the nice man there. After the return of my rain pants and down booties my rental for the sleeping bag was only 60 rupees. Parang was there. It was fun to see him and tell him goodbye. He is off to his village tomorrow. Will be there a month. Seems they are having a festival. The man at the shop wouldn't take back the woollies I bought so I gave them to Parang. Also, I didn't want the knock off camera case I bought so I traded it for a good-sized lock. All fine with me. The shop man is interested in our Nalgene bottles, he can't get them, and will pay 200 rupee (\$4) each for them. I think they cost \$3 or so at EMS so I'll sell him my three and Em will sell him two of hers.

Today was a great day as I expect tomorrow to be. We have just a few days left. I decided tonight to try to buy Corbin a ring here and Jenny a pendant necklace. They have wonderful things here. Am enjoying J. Irving's *The Cider House Rules*. Guess I'll read some in that.

### January 12

A dreary day weather wise and I felt a bit dreary myself. Think it was also due to the sensory overload I experience here. Temples everywhere, shops everywhere, people everywhere, someone in your face every minute, horns

honking, etc. etc. My being can only absorb go much sensation before it needs time for reflection and assimilation. I've been thinking lately that there is a difference between sensation, simple sensory experience, and experience, i.e., the more traditional notion of something memorable, something meaningful. Think for me I have sensations and while I am having them, I can construct only limited experience. I need times of low sensory input in order to begin to construct experience. I need to read Proudfoot and others who have written on experience to enrich my understanding.

I'm also constantly upset, physically and psychologically, by the food. Every day we try new restaurants and nearly every time I'm disappointed. I'm learning how important food is to a sense of well-being and when I then reflect on how many people go hungry or eat the same basic food every day (most of the world really), I wonder if anyone experiences happiness and well-being in that sense.

So today was the day to visit the Nepali Library to study dance. We went at 9 a.m. and learned it didn't open until 10 a.m. Cashed a traveler's cheque through a Turkish-looking carpet dealer and returned. An armed guard checked our belongings at the door and as we entered this old palace (really very beautiful) we were greeted by a huge stuffed snarling tiger. The first room was newspapers and journals, maybe 6 or 9 copies of various Asian journals and 10 or so copies, in complete disarray, of Nepali and Asian newspapers. The second room had some glass covered lawyer-style bookcases with hard bound copies of English language books, fiction and other miscellaneous. At the end of this room were stairs which we ascended, went through a more or less vacant room into a long widish hallway lined with metal cabinets with their doors closed. On top of the cabinets, in Nepali and English, was a general category indicating the contents of the cabinet. We looked in a few. Didn't seem that they'd acquired any books in 25 years. At the end of the hall was a small reading room and a doorway closed by chicken wire over a frame with a sign warning "No Entrance." That was the library. No card catalog, no computer access; not even a librarian that I could find and no patrons. Given the fantastic resources in the local book shops the library is quite a contrast. So, no luck on studying dance there, I'll have to purchase the books. Got our stuff. "Namaste," to the armed guard and we were out of there.

Did lots of window, or shop front, shopping and made a few purchases: great wool pullover jacket for Jenny, wonderful antique hill people bracelets for Emily and Jenny. Em bought Jenny a hooded flannel. Very nice. We looked at drums, etc. Sold our Nalgene bottles to the trekking shop man. Slept a bit in the afternoon.

I'm trying to keep focused and not burnt out. We have just over a week left and much to see and do and things we want to buy. Actually, slept very well last

night. This hotel is much nicer and at night much quieter. Think my back may be finally improving as is my ankle bruise. Em is a sweetie and a great companion.

### January 13

Woke up this morning with an Asian belly ache. Had curd and a cinnamon role for breakfast. Thought we had the intention of heading for Durbar Square and to finish the two walking tours, I didn't feel so hot. Returned to the hotel and sat and read for a couple of hours. I am totally into *The Cider House Rules*. It is so much about abortion and orphans, but I think I like it so much because it is about love and how, sometimes and for some people, love is so rarely experienced and how hard it is to express one's love for another. Look forward to reading more tonight.

After a couple hours I felt better so we headed out. Did sites on the walking tour more selectively. It is so hard to take in everything. Things just seem to blend into one another. Reached Durbar Square in good shape. We planned, once there, to climb up Maja Deval (a Shiva temple), sit a spell, read the guidebook and watch the scenery. Well, that's a crock of human shit and I mean that literally. Trying to go up the temple stairs was impossible due to the stench of the very obvious piles of human shit. Then too we were hounded by hordes of touts, beggars, Saddhus, and hawkers. It was horrible. We'd stop to read a description of something and be surrounded. At one point a little girl led her blind grandfather to us to beg, a young man looked over my shoulder to see what I was reading offering his services as a guide. Several others were trying to sell I cheap junk, and the kids were begging.

We escaped for a while by paying 10 rupees each to go into Hanuman (the monkey god) Square which is part of the old palace. The beggars, touts, etc, couldn't afford the 10 rupees nor, I suppose, would they be allowed due to their nuisance. In this old palace area, we went through a rickety museum that reminded me of the library, old, dirty, unorganized, and uninteresting. There are hundreds of wooden carvings on these buildings. They are very elaborate and hundreds of years old, but all are falling apart and in poor condition. Such enormous amounts of work that went into these centuries ago and now are thresholds to decrepit buildings used for nearly anything. There are hundreds of bahals (monasteries) all over Kathmandu. The entry way is marked by lion sculptures, now almost always headless or worn away slick and featureless. The wood on these buildings was once beautifully carved. All have an inner courtyard that is accessible. We saw one today and walked through the tunnel into the courtyard. Shrines were there. Women were washing clothes on them. The whole back side of the square had fallen into a pile of rubble and some of those beautifully carved window frames were just hanging in midair, left hanging when the rest of the building fell.

At Durbar Square we went to the residence of the living goddess, the Kumari Devi. This too is an old bahal. Kumari is a living girl who is the goddess until she reaches sexual maturity, and another little girl takes her place. Kumari lives in this old bahal all the time she is goddess. On a couple occasions a year she is taken in procession about the city. From the inner courtyard Karnari's linen was hanging to dry, the goddess does soil her linens, and one could hear voices in the rooms, perhaps the goddess, but a faded sign warned that taking photos of the goddess is strictly forbidden.

We shopped a little, Em bought me a great vest and herself one. We had a passable lunch. We did more shopping and returned to our hotel, climbed to the roof top when we realized how clear it was to photograph Ganesh in the distance, then returned to shop more. I bought a black onyx pendant, and a cool lapis ring for Corbin. Em bought a pendant, a garnet ring, and star of India earrings. Good buys.

Oh, on the way to Durbar Square this morning we stopped at Katesimbhu Stupa—a miniature of Swayambhunath (the big monkey temple). Very interesting. Took a few photos especially the more colorful pagoda to Harti, the goddess of smallpox.

Don't know the state of my health. I'm certain it isn't good, but at least I'm mobile. Tomorrow we plan to catch a taxi to Pashupatinath and Bodhinath, both important temples northeast of Kathmandu. Just a week before we head to Boulder and my kids. Yea. Em has been in a good mood today--keeps me lighter when I withdraw a bit from sensory overload and shopping fatigue.

#### **January 14**

An amazingly incredible day. It began with a so-so breakfast at la Bistro. Cashed a traveler's cheque in a carpet shop, somewhat scary. Then caught a taxi to Nepal's most important Hindu temple, Pashupatinath, which is just a few kilometers west of Kathmandu. It was a honking swerving ride like all rides through narrow crowded streets. The taxi finally stopped, and I couldn't really see any temple. I asked the driver and he pointed across the road and indicted we go up a passageway to the temple, he pointed on down the street and said "death." We crossed the road, entered the passageway not having a clue what we were getting ourselves into. The passageway was up hill, and it was lined both sides with beggars with every imaginable sadness. They were not just totally impoverished; they were also unspeakably deformed. Many could obviously not walk or scarcely move, yet they all had a tin bowl which they extended, often touching, even pushing us. They called or cried out for us to give them something. A few people, I suppose Hindus, doing a religious act of charity, walked among them sprinkling rice or a bit of food in their bowls.

I found myself feeling like I was running an emotional gauntlet. My eyes focused straight ahead; my pace quickened. Emily fell in behind me, grabbed the



back of my coat and we went up the hill. When we reached the top there were crowds of Hindus heading for the temple. Em said quickly to me "I can take only about an hour of this." I wasn't sure I could take near that much. As we went toward the temple, many people were selling flowers (yellow), offerings, red ocher, and other ritual materials. Near the temple entrance some communists (I think) were delivering an angry speech over a loudspeaker. At the temple entrance a sign informed us that only Hindus could enter. We turned around sought and found a way back to the road that avoided all the beggars. We crossed the bridge at the end of the road in which the taxi driver pointed when he said "death." We knew that cremations are performed on cremation ghats by the Bagmati River. I think it is a tributary to the Ganges River and it is a holy thing to be cremated by one and have one's ashes dumped in the river.

As we crossed the bridge, we looked toward the cremation ghats. One was being prepared with a body already in place. Another had the logs laid and they were just carrying the body to the bier. The body was wrapped in bright yellow. It was placed on the stacked timbers with the head to the north. Some offerings were made so far as I could tell, and attendants began to prepare for the cremation. There was scarcely any ritual and though some members of the families may have been present I saw no noticeable mourning. The body was eventually covered with dry grass or straw. Some straw was stuffed among the logs below the body, and fire was ignited. We watched from a wall across the river. There were several westerners, the few we saw in total at the temple, who were watching from this point relatively free from the hassle of beggars and hawkers.

As we stood here and watched there were many things to see. Below us by the river a mother held a baby whose face was horribly deformed, a huge bulbous protrusion where its nose should have been. Some people--a man or two and a group of 3 or 4 girls, maybe 10 years old--waded up the river collecting bits of cloth and other remains. I suppose some from cremations and offerings made upriver below the temple. Down river perhaps 50 meters one woman was doing her laundry and a few meters farther another was washing dishes. All this in the same water. Remains of earlier cremations were still visible in the river below the ghats.

Behind the ghats and across the river I could see the tops of a couple other Hindu temples: Rajrajeshwari, immediately behind the ghats, and Bachhareshwari, farther down the river. These temples formed background for some of the photos I took.

Photos. I certainly took some of this remarkable scene, though I felt self-conscious about doing so. I was happy I had a telephoto and that I had a woven bag to keep my camera in when not in use. But there was a group of about 6 Chinese who had huge, long telephoto lenses, but they weren't satisfied standing

across the river. Once they ignited the bier these people, men and women, ran (literally) across the river and got within a few feet of the bier and shot hundreds of photos. They circled the bier I suppose looking for a bit of exposed flesh. They crawled walls, they squatted in stairways, with their shutters snapping. I found it horribly offensive and completely insensitive, though I suppose I was doing the same thing but to a slightly lesser degree. After an hour or so we realized the whole cremation would take hours and the smell of burning flesh began to drift our way so we went north a few yards to a series of 11 chiatyas, small stupas with short linga in them, which lined the river bank directly opposite the big temple. From here we could see hundreds of Hindus come down the steps to the river. Most simply dipped their hands in the water (a token bathing), others washed their feet. A priest, I think, offered blessings to worshippers by marking in ocher their foreheads. Yellow flowers were again offered for sale, offerings. Monkeys chattered and bathed in the river as well, but also performed their antics on the walls and roofs of temple compound.

The temple itself, what I could see of it, was not at all impressive.

North of the temple across the river were cave-like places housing saddhus. I photographed some of them.

Quite a scene to look down the river and imagine all that was going on in such a short distance.

With nerves jangled, emotions spinning, we headed up the walk in the direction of other temples--Gorakhnath (where I took a photo of a shikhara style (corn shaped) temple with long trident, and Guhyesshwari. Just beyond Guhyeshwari we came to the Bagmati River again still farther upstream from Pashupatinath, along which we walked for some distance. One place had been designated for bathers. A wall with little niches had been built where people hung their clothing while they entered the river to bath. Quite a few people were there bathing.

We came to a bridge, crossed the river, and entered a path leading us to the Tibetan Buddhist temple, Bodhnath. This is the largest stupa in Nepal and one of the largest in the world. It is a beautiful white domed structure topped by a golden square tower above which is a tall spire. The familiar (at least in Nepal) eyes of the Buddha look down from the four sides of the tower. The stupa is enclosed in a walled compound along which are many shops. All along the base are prayer wheels. Many gompas (monasteries) house the hundreds of lamas (monks) associated with this temple.

We entered this compound--no beggars, just a few stalls where Buddhist stuff was sold and began our circumambulations, clockwise as is customary. As we walked, we realized that the temple was being prepared for something special, don't yet know what. Someone had climbed to the top of the tower and was attaching streamers of colorful prayer flags to the tower and throwing these

down to others who attached the ends to the perimeter of the mandala shaped base of the stupa. Another crew was forming interesting scallop designs on the white stupa by taking a bucket full of yellow liquid and flinging it in arc shapes out over the white dome. Rather nifty scallop results. After circumambulating one time we began again, and part way around entered the inner stupa where we could walk on the mandala and higher sections of the stupa. Great photo opportunities all around including pictures of the very beautifully decorated small stupa behind Bodhnath to Ajima, the goddess of smallpox.

After this circumambulation we had lunch on the terrace (3rd floor) of the Stupa View Restaurant. Then we headed into the village and braved labyrinthine roads and alleyways to see a couple gompas. From one of them poured a large group of monks (lamas) of all ages. Some of the young boys grabbed at us and demanded donations.

When we returned to the stupa, we decided we were ready to return to Kathmandu and had no problem getting a taxi.

The contrast between these two very important Hindu and Buddhist temples could hardly be greater. The Hindu temple was dark and crowded, filled with the poor, the deformed, the dead, and worshippers who seemed to be performing rote ritual arts. My feeling is that so many here bore in their eyes a look of desperation or at best resignation. The temple was walled, inaccessible, dark colored and seemed contained, earth borne. The Buddhist temple was entirely different. Lamas and many colorfully dressed, even jovial, worshippers walked along spinning prayer wheels, or chanting. The eyes were directed up to the stupa, not down to the river. The temple is white, gaily clad with bright colored prayer flags, gold-topped and even the tower is clad in bright colored cloth (can't remember the name for these drapings). The Tibetans, mostly refugees from when China took over Tibet, are happy prosperous looking people wearing traditional Tibetan costume (women with the woven aprons, men with hats). The monks in burgundy and saffron robes carrying yellow bags, walked often hand in hand, arm in arm, and in groups. Bodhnath had the air of festival and celebration; Pashupatinath, the air of death, desperation, and darkness.

I didn't suppose that these two temples, or at least my reflections on the sensations I received from brief visits to them, accurately reflect Hinduism and Buddhism, but if they do, I'm quite sure I'd rather be Buddhist.

Wow! What an experience. I'm certain I'll not ever come fully to terms with what I experienced (still more raw sensations than full experiences) to try to follow the distinction I've been thinking about.

We rested a while and talked a bit to help begin to digest and respond to what we'd seen and felt. Em remembered how freaked out she had been in Bali at her first cremation and how, in comparison, she was so calm and collected today. She feels that leaving AA is perhaps the beginning of a path of growth that is

also marked, at much further stage, by her now being more able to witness the horrible confounding and now absolutely have to have answers by which to resolve the issues raised. Very interesting.

Oh, we also had a cup of coffee and a piece of rich chocolate cake while we recovered from our morning. The irony of eating cake to recover from running a gauntlet of pitiful beggars was not unnoticed.

Adding to the irony we did our part to improve the Nepali economy by shopping more this afternoon. Emily bought a beautiful, hooded flannel. We shopped for jewelry. I bought a lapis and a red onyx pendant and Em bought earrings for her mom and a ring for herself. We both bought wool jackets. Em for her brother and me for Corbin (or me). And Em bought a vest for her father giving me the idea that I might do the same for my dad. At another store I ordered a long black coat for Corbin and Em bought herself two black wool coats. We ate pizza at Helemas and couldn't resist another piece of chocolate cake.

Quite the day. We'll likely relax more tomorrow. Read, write. I'll go dance book shopping and order a second coat like the one I ordered for Corbin. I don't think it will be hard for me to finish my shopping now. Looking forward to reading more of my novel. Oh, my digestion has improved and, though not 100%, my back is finally showing improvement.

### **January 15**

A dark dreary rainy day. So nice we had planned to hang in, read, write and enjoy ourselves. Began a light rain this morning and has kept it up. The rain coupled with Saturday being the weekly holiday when lots of stores remained closed makes this area seem much more laid back and quiet than its usually bustling pace.

After a good brecky at Helena's we went to the Pioneer Book Shop where they have a fine collection of books on Asian dance. I looked them all over carefully, with the Dancing dictionary especially in mind, and purchased several. Most are published in India and I doubt they would be easy to find in the U.S. So, I at least have a start on some of the entries for India and Asia.

Then I ordered another jacket like the one I ordered for Corbin. I'm in a quandary about what will fit and what Corbin and Jenny will like. I've pared down my "to buy" list and may overbuy on jackets so if one or another doesn't work out for one or the other, I'll have alternatives. So cheap, why not?

Bought Mom a beautiful black wool shawl.

We saw that a cafe was going to show the film "Damaged" with Jeremy Irons this afternoon. Em had seen it but I haven't. We went there to see it and found that they had changed the film to something else. The cafe was a dark dirty hole in the wall, so I doubt we'd have had the patience to see any movie there. Still

the day engenders a desire for a little entertainment. My entertainment today has been reading *The Cider House Rules*. Excellent.

Enjoyed a lunch at Alice's Restaurant, tomato soup and French fries. Over lunch I was saying that in a week we'd be about ready to leave Kathmandu. Em informed me that I was a day off. That a week from today we'd be on our way from Bangkok to the U.S. Wow! Our trip is almost over. The interesting thing to me about this revelation is that I am not much counting days until we return. I rarely know what day of the week or the month it is. This indicates to me that I have settled into the present pretty thoroughly and am not experiencing anxiety (i.e., desiring to be in a time that I ain't in).

As the trip draws to a close, I want to reflect on some aspects of it. Create or transform sensation or remembered sensations into deeper experience. Em has suggested we do some joint writing exercises for this purpose. I'll have to give some thought on how to best do this. We talked some about return culture shock. I think we'll be shocked by the width of streets and roads and their smoothness, by cars and vehicles being in fair repair and moving more or less without honking and swerving. When we got back from the trek and received American money that we'd left as deposit we were both puzzled by its shape, the bills seemed so long and skinny. I think we'll be suspicious, and this may be well founded, of the purity of drinking water. We'll be shocked and perhaps offended by the "to do" around sports and the Super Bowl, which I think will be the day after we return, but then I've always thought that horrible. After thinking a bit about return culture shock, I decided it would be more interesting to not try to anticipate much of it. To let it happen as it does and yet to be a careful observer of my own surprises. Perhaps I'll learn more about myself, my travels, and my own culture as a result.

Evening. Had some fun writing lists (see end of Thailand journal) of all sorts of things I want to do when I get home. Doing this arose out of my expression of fear that once home the complexity and confusion would obscure things, I want to do to the point they get lost. So, I wrote, or began to write lists. Some fun ideas came out of this exercise which makes me all the more excited to get home.

Late this afternoon Em and I had a long conversation reviewing a number of things; what personal issues we see we want to work on; how we each have grown over the period of the trip; what we see and want in our relationship; what are our fears about returning home; etc. Some interesting things came out of this. Perhaps I'll write about them tomorrow. Want to read some *Cider House* now.

### **January 16**

A rainy cold morning. We're hanging in our room today, or at least until it clears. We got out all the pictures we have had developed and looked at them.

We've done this many times, but it is always fun and surprising to be reminded of some of the many places we've been and the things we've done.

Had so much fun with lists last night that I want to reorganize and repeat a couple of them here. These are lists of things to do upon returning to Boulder.

#### Trip Related

Photos: get slides developed

identify slides and cross-reference to journals and guidebooks

organize slides into various presentations

make scrap book of prints chosen from my slides, Em's prints. Use also post cards enlarge and frame some for house décor

#### Journals:

transcribe handwritten journals

edit (simple) for completeness and accuracy and spelling edit some select portions and develop for possible distribution to family, etc.

cross reference journals and slides

#### Social:

Thanksgiving, Christmas & New Year's celebration maybe Feb 4-6. Have Jenny & Corbin there

Invite others for part of it.

Have tons of food--turkey, potatoes, dressing, pies, etc. cookies

Show slides and photos and give gifts wrap some gifts for C & J to give at that time e.g. shadow puppets, a Nepali jacket each, C's mask, etc.

Social occasions to show slides:

Kari, Ron & Susan, Mimi & Brad, Gestalt class & Betty violin teacher (Jeanne), Jacque, others?

Souvenir items

frame cards Em gave me

prepare and hang textiles and fabrics and wall hangings prepare stands for shadow puppets

#### Family Relationships:

see if Karen could bring folks to visit in Spring if not go to C'vale either part of Spring Break or in May after Winter Park has closed (in April) and after Em is out of school promote family gathering in Texas in Summer, maybe Corb, Jenny, Em & I could drive call C & J every couple days; try to see one or the other about every week figure how to get C. a computer.

#### Academics:

finish Ritual Studies Anthology (4-5 days) entries for Austr, Asia, North America for Dancing. Shred over Spring.

#### To Risk

Storytracks

edit Dictionary entries

acquisition of more volumes  
 start student bi-weekly or weekly forum  
 figure out what it means to be “trained” in dance  
 Amsterdam in Summer?

Physical:

appointment with trainer--begin weight training 3x/week objective upper  
 body size and strength aerobic dance 3x/week preferably funk  
 flexibility, yoga class

X training

mountain biking Moab on Spring break road biking

I find it pretty fun making these lists. I know that this spring will be very busy, and I want to accomplish as much and enjoy as much as possible. Hope making these lists will help.

Later after dinner. Hung out most of the morning waiting for the weather to clear which it finally did. We went out for a walk and it turned out to be a wonderful shopping journey. At a jewelry store Em bought a lapis pendant and I bought her lapis earrings. I also bought a beautiful red onyx (think we usually call it carnelian) pendant. We bought black and white woven cotton bags as gifts. I'll give the two I bought to Corbin and Jenny. Then we went by a jacket store where I always see a red and blue pull over wool jacket with elastic at wrists and waist. It has Nepali cotton trim and I'm always attracted to it. I tried it on and bought it for Corbin. Think he'll love it. Then we saw some silk woven purses and pouches in a store. Stopped to admire them and noticed they also had a couple wool jackets. Em asked about one with Kari in mind and it turned out the woman had many. She kept them turned wrong side out and folded up. Em bought a great black jacket with a hood for Kari and I'm going to buy one just like it for Jenny. The lady will bring it tomorrow. Think I'll also buy Jenny one of the silk purses and maybe one for Mimi also.

Had a nice dinner this evening with yummy chocolate cake for dessert. If the weather is good, we'll likely go to Swyambhunath tomorrow.

### January 18

Yesterday was a rainy chilly day and Em was pretty sick, the Nepali crud, so we mostly stayed in. We tried going out a little, but Em felt pretty bad. We were out long enough for me to buy a great hooded black wool jacket for Jenny and a couple neat small silk purses. I'll give one to Jenny and one to Mimi. I also picked up the two black wool jackets I had made for Corbin and me.

How neat.

I also finished *The Cider House Rules*, a lovely book. I appreciate how a subject like abortion can be dealt with effectively through fiction, more so I think than a polemical factual argument. I found Dr. Larch and his staff of old lady nurses and helpers so endearing, and Homer Wells (alias Fuzzy Stone) was a fine

character. I think the book is maybe more about love and truth telling, the stuff, as Melony knows, of heroism. If you tell the truth, no matter what the rules, you act heroically. I think there is something in this for me, since it is knowing and telling the truth that I've been trying to learn how to do. The theme of love is important. Love is a difficult thing to have work out. It gets complicated; it encourages departures from the truth, it is often unclear, but it also inspires heroism. We live our lives to find or to keep love, yet we're often hurt, damaged or threatened in the process.

The novel is also about time. Time does take care of things. Larch, Melony, even Homer Stone (sort of) die, as do many others. For other characters they age, they mellow, they change.

I loved the novel and have purchased to read Dickens' *Great Expectations* and *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte, the books that were read to the orphans at bedtime and which John Fowles so artfully worked into his novel. Hope I find them enjoyable.

Em feels much better today, and it has been a fun whiz-bang day. It was very foggy this morning, so after breakfast we shopped for a while to await the air to clear. Given it would be a clear day we wanted to walk to Swayambhunath, the monkey temple. I bought Daddy a great vest and got the string put into the bottom of Jenny's pullover wool jacket. The Tibetan man who runs that corner shop is so nice. Then I bought Ron a great book bag and I liked it so much and the price was so great (130 rupees or \$2.60 US) that I bought Corbin one also. Em bought yet another wool jacket. This one a flannel lined pullover. Between us we've bought 12 or 13 now. Wow! We came back to the hotel with our stuff and got our cameras. I went to the roof to take a photo of Swayambhunath emerging from the mist. We bought a cinnamon roll and headed for the temple.

We wound our way through residential streets and alleyways and arrived at the Vishnumati River. Quite a scene there. In deltas along the river huge patches of white raw wool were drying. I suppose it had been washed. Women were washing, other people bathing. We went past unused cremation ghats and the Indriani Temple to a bridge crossing the river. To one side of the river, actually upstream from all the bathing and washing, was a huge stinky garbage dump. The river was lined with the worst garbage. Several sows were lying in piles of garbage nursing their piglets. Some people were picking through the garbage. This reminds me of a scene I saw last night. A big garbage pile is at the end of the street near here. I went out in the evening to get water and crackers. In the garbage a cow scavenged on one end, on the other end was a little boy. He'd built himself a small fire to keep warm. My heart ripped on seeing this.

We crossed the bridge and headed up a long stairway to take a quick peek at the Bijeshwari Temple. As we came out of the temple, we heard a drum and cymbal playing coming down the very street we had come down to the river on



the opposite side. At the front of a procession pall bearers carried a body clad in bright orange. They didn't go to the bridge but made their way across the river right at the end of the street heading for the cremation ghats near the Shobabaghwati Temple. The drummer and cymbal player stayed across the river, sat on the steps, and continued to play. We walked down to the cremation ghat and watched the funeral rites.

The body was placed on the stack of wood and his face was uncovered. Each of the mourners, all men by the way (don't know if women are excluded), came forward and the man who seemed to be directing the funeral poured water in a mourner's hands. This was let go on the ground, I suppose to clean the hands. Then three times water was poured into the mourner's hands, each time the mourner let it run on the exposed face of the deceased. The mourners used a gesture with a pointed index finger to direct the water on the face. At least one mourner also placed coins on the chest of the deceased. There were about 20-30 men including several small boys who performed this rite. The director stood near the head on the right side of the body for this rite. After the water sprinkling the mourners each circumambulated the body in the customary sunwise direction. A few mourners were visibly mourning, wiping tears, all were somber.

After this an older man whom we'd seen walking up the riverbed in only his underwear appeared. He had what looked to me like handfuls of river sand. He was led, while making mournful sounds, around the body and he knelt at the foot of the body. There he placed the sand. He was led another circumambulation and squatted again smoothing out this sand on which he placed what looked like a bed of rice and I couldn't see what else. He was led around again, this time pausing to do the water sprinkling rite and at the feet of the body, he sort of broke down. He took hold of the feet--oh, I remember others who, when passing the feet during their circumambulation, would touch a foot and then their head--put his head between them and wept. He then knelt or really squatted again at that location. The golden cloth was removed and put aside. Others sprinkled red ochre and I don't know what over the cotton matted covering on the body. This was finally folded back and removed and even the cotton gauze wrap the body was in was untied to expose the bare chest of the body. The feet were clearly visible through the gauze.

Now the man in the undershorts was given a firebrand and again moaning he circumambulated the body and set fire to the grass beneath the wood.

As the flames began to rise in the wood around the body, Emily and I decided to move on. We've seen bodies burn before and didn't care to see or smell this one.

I took a few photos with my telephoto lens of the procession as it crossed the river, but none of the rites. It wouldn't have been proper.

We walked up the hill and headed toward Swayambhunath. Several good opportunities to photograph and see it perched up on the hill above us. We approached from the east, the preferred approach. This takes one up a very long very steep set of stairs to the temple. Along the stairs craft persons carved and gold little mani stones with om or om mani padme hum carved in Nepali script on one side and the famous eyes of the Buddha on the other. There were, of course, quite a few women with all sorts of children, begging along the stair way. Very sad.

The stupa at Swayambhunath is very small compared with the stupa at Bodhnath and seems older and in less fine condition, but the compound is interesting. There are two shikara style (corn-shaped) temples on each side of the stupa at the top of the stairway. There is a gompa (or monastery) in the compound, maybe more. I took photos of little boys in monk's (lama's) garb--are they monks? In front of the room of worship where there is a large sitting Buddha figure. There is a Hindu style tiered pagoda style temple to Harti or Ajima, the smallpox goddess, who is also goddess of fertility. I didn't see in the sizeable temple, but it was very active with worshippers going in, circumambulating the figure, praying, etc. I did catch a monkey on the roof of the temple and took its photo.

We looked around the compound for quite a while, visited with a few others, and went down, returning to Thamel. Interesting cultural and architectural experience.

Em seems to have had a bit of a relapse. Hope she gets better very soon. This Nepali stomach problem can certainly dampen one's spirits.

### January 19

More thoughts on *The Cider House Rules*. Been thinking about this book more and find that I think a major perhaps, given the title, the major theme of the book, is the nature of honesty and its relationship to rules and following the rules. Dr. Larch performed abortions despite its illegality, i.e., the rules say it can't be done. The apple pickers ignored the cider house rules—and interestingly it is finally revealed that they didn't even know the sheet of rules tacked up by the light switch presented rules—but they had rules of their own, rules set up by Mr. Rose, rules of blacks, etc. Some were followed, some were not. The consequences of not following some were severe, Mr. Rose's knife, Rose Rose's knife, etc. Further Larch had rules about the use of condoms. The results of breaking them could be severe, pregnancy, but even the value of the consequences isn't clear. Angel Wells was one result, as were likely most of the abortions and the orphans. Homer finally had to face breaking various sets of rules. The law by performing abortions, the rules that say one should protect the feelings of old friends (Wally), taking an alias, etc. But he is portrayed by Irving

as becoming heroic in breaking the rules. He acts with honesty and for what he has learned is good for other people.

Em and I talked a long while at lunch about the possible issues arising from her living with me. Should she identify herself when answering the phone? Will she be a hidden person in my life, i.e., hidden to some select group of my acquaintances, etc.? We both don't want anything hidden. No lies, etc. I began to see that the issue is the issue addressed by Irving. The societal rules are clear that I should be divorced, and time should pass before I have a new relationship. They also say I should have a relationship with someone my own age. So, to keep the rules we shouldn't have been together at all up to now nor ever really. Our choice is to have the relationship and hide it from some or to have the relationship openly. The first choice is no choice, though I have found myself hiding Emily to Lynn and to Judy. I hate the way I feel when I do that and Em dislikes me when I do it. So, the only choice is to be open and to accept whatever social consequences arise. I've worried some about Del and Nancy, Irene, Beth Osnes, Lynn and other faculty. But if I hide Emily from them, they will know anyway and dislike my dishonesty. This is the sort of duplicity of Candy and Homer entered with Wally. I have to believe that those people care enough about me, are true enough friends, are strong enough people to try to understand and accept what I do. If they aren't, I'm not losing much of a friend.

Today was a fun day though low key. Em is beginning to return to health at last. We went to the American Express office this morning to check on mail, nothing. Then we wandered the streets of Thamel taking street scene and people pictures. I took photos of a few of the shops where we have bought things, the wool jacket shops, the drug store, etc. Nice light. Hope I got good images.

This afternoon we decided to start packing to see what that situation would create. It is amazing how much stuff we have bought. The big duffle we took trekking would not hold all our wool jackets; the drum is in there too. We'll have to purchase another medium-sized bag to check through. Several bags are fairly heavy. Still, we got great stuff and look forward to giving it away and enjoying it ourselves. I bought Jenny another pair of earrings today--these dangly with black star of Nepal in them. Also got her a chain for her pendants. Got myself another wool jacket. Can't seem to stop. I think I'd like to get Corbin one more thing and some incense and then I'm done. Don't have any money left anyway.

Ate today as last night at a nice restaurant. It has an open fireplace that you can sit around. Cozy and the food is good. Nice atmosphere and music and good prices.

Have begun Dickens' *Great Expectations* taking up from Irving's frequent reference to it and bought *Jane Eyre* for the same reason. I think I'll enjoy both and they will provide a way to continue to think about *The Cider House Rules*.

Plan to go tomorrow to Patan, a city just across the river from Kathmandu. We'll walk over and perhaps take a taxi back.

I have become very excited about returning to research and writing. Got some of my Australia research out this morning and looking it over got me very charged up. Packing today got both of us completely excited about the reality of our going home. Recently lots of our conversations have turned to what we'll do when we get back. We have also begun to be a little more reflective and valiative about our trip experience and about our experience in each country. We both realize that our views are rapidly changing on so many things we have seen and done and experienced. The hard parts soon fade, though they were once so dominant, and we are beginning to appreciate even more the richness of most everything we have done. Em is beginning to see that she has learned so much more traveling than she ever would have had she stayed in school. Interestingly she is beginning to think that psychotherapy may not be for her. She sees it as elitist and a luxury for rich people in a rich country. She plans to investigate teaching (kids) possibilities. I think she'd be a wonderful and gifted teacher.

So, we're close to being packed--we have one day left and we'll be heading for home. What a trip!

### **January 20**

Laid back, closing down, finishing up, fun sort of day. We left our hotel this morning with plans to go to Patan, the city just across the river from Kathmandu. First, Em wanted to go to a clinic for a stool test to make sure she didn't have some sort of exotic weirdness. She has bacterial diarrhea and is again on Cipro, but no parasites or giardia cysts. That took a while and we headed then for Thai Airways both to confirm the departure time tomorrow and to see if the LA earthquake would cause us any problems going through there on Saturday. As we walked along, we decided we'd rather hang out in Thamel and take a few photos taking walks than go to Patan.

We did that as well as purchased the last couple items, another bag to check, a vest for Corbin, and some incense for Em to give him.

We walked all over Thamel taking some hopefully great candid photos in the streets. Hope some of these photos will capture a little of the character of Nepal and this city. Took a few from our hotel roof. It was a clear day with mountains visible in several directions. We each took a self-timer photo of both of us with Mt. Ganesh in the background. At lunch we found a garden cafe on a roof overlooking the street near our hotel. From there we took photos with my telephoto of various people in the street: rickshaws, Tibetan ladies, colorful Nepali ladies (often with a child), etc. Fun. Took nearly a roll of film; just hope many of the photogs are good.

Ate pizza for the third night in a row at the restaurant with the open fire. Very nice. Have figured our money and will need to change about \$60 tomorrow morning to finish up here. Trying to figure it as close to the rupee as possible.

So, we leave for home tomorrow. Em and I are both very excited. We're ready and talk much of what we'll do, and how things will be, when we get home. The journey will be long with a 12-hour stint of hanging out in Bangkok tomorrow night, but neither of us think it will be at all bad. We're going home!

We watched a tiny bit of BBC news. Rather weird experience to connect again with the world. They had a bit on the LA quake. Awful. Actually, all the news seemed awful. But it is part of the world we'll be reentering.

Writing journal through this whole trip has been an amazing experience. I have enjoyed it so much. It has helped me record, and therefore save, the details of what I have done. Often, I've seen the journal as a complement to photos. In the journal I've been able to describe the things photos can't capture moods, smells, sounds, motion, size, etc. Following Janet Hospital's novel, *The Last Magician* which deals with photos capturing things and people studying old photos carefully to come to know what they already know, I see journals as holding the same possibilities. I'm eager to transcribe them onto disk and to read them and have them available to read again and again as the years go by.

I'm also hoping that the journals will give me, as time goes by, insight into my personal growth. That should be interesting to consider.

Finished gift buying and am very pleased at all the gifts I've gotten everybody, particularly Corbin and Jenny. It will be so fun to give gifts to everyone. Hope they will enjoy and like everything. Hope Corbin and Jenny aren't overwhelmed or disappointed. Can't figure which they might be, but most likely they will be pretty happy about everything. Couple days from now I'll begin to find out.

Perhaps I'll try to write further reflections on the way home, and I want to do more journal writing once I'm home to record thoughts, feelings, reactions, etc. about the trip as I reenter life in Boulder. Actually, I could see doing fairly regular journal writing from now on. Wouldn't that be a kick. I can see this especially with my laptop.

Been thinking lots about getting Corbin a new computer. As soon as I can assess the financial situation, I'll try to make plans for that.

Now I want to get further into Dickens' *Great Expectations* getting some momentum going for the many hours I'll be reading it on the way home.

Em and I have talked lots lately about our relationship. It has to be remarkable that we've spent nearly every minute for five months together. There have been only a few times when we were apart more than an hour or two and actually only a few times when we've been apart more than the time it takes to go to the bathroom. Our being together has involved not being simply in the same house, but in the same very small room. We've not eaten a meal apart in 5

months. Still, we find we thoroughly enjoy each other's company. We aren't getting on each other's nerves. We still have lively conversations and great times. Any relationship that can stand up to five months of constant togetherness is remarkable, but even more so one that has thrived on it as ours has. We have both grown so much and our relationship has been instrumental to lots of this growth. While upon returning home, we may experience a bit of separation anxiety, we both are looking forward to the stimulus (both personal and to our relationship) of having our separate lives as well as our relationship.

### ***Bangkok Airport***

**January 21**

Bangkok Airport Purgatory. We thought we'd have an opportunity to eat at a great restaurant, but we're stuck in a small transit area with nothing but a snack bar with not so good expensive food. Guess we'll make the best of it. Had a tuna sandwich and a banana split and still feel unsatisfied. I probably will not feel satisfied until I've been home a while.

At the moment Em and I are having sort of a major issue. Maybe I'll have to write later.

Winging over Japan and the Pacific towards home. Yea! This will be a double day. Left Bangkok this morning at 9 a.m. and arrived in Seoul, South Korea around 4 p. m. Departed an hour or so ago as it was getting dark. But ten or so hours from now as we arrive in Los Angeles it will only be 11:30 this morning. Who says one can't time travel? Guess the limitation is that you can't go back more than most of a day. I wish I could read a coherent description of time and travel. I can never really figure it out. Dinner coming.

Just as dinner arrived the captain announced that we were passing over Japan. So now I've seen Seoul from the airport and the lights of a Japanese city from the air.

Yesterday morning on our last trip to the carpet shop money changer we saw our trekking friend Gene. We'd been looking for him hoping we'd see him to get his story of his Thorung la Pass crossing. We got his story alright, and it scarcely resembled either of the other stories we'd heard from Kurt and from Amy and Victor. Gene said he wanted to leave Thorung Phedi with us, but Kurt didn't want to leave until it was light. Then he said Kurt went off and left him. He didn't confirm the huge fight Kurt described between and the woman from Holland, but he said he thought they were disagreeing as they started out that morning based on the gestures, he could see them engaging in. The sad part of his account was that his boots were no good and he couldn't keep his feet warm. He said the snow was knee deep for his crossing and, trying to stay with Amy and Victor, he was going as slow as he could. Finally, fearing for his feet, he went on. Once over the pass, with warmer feet, he waited for the others. It turned out that Victor

had such altitude sickness that he was completely incoherent (we'd heard this from Amy and Victor). Victor had hired a porter to carry all his stuff except a small day pack and even this Victor had simply abandoned. The porter himself got such altitude sickness that he lay in the snow and refused to go on. The Dutch woman was the slowest and complained bitterly of having to carry anything. I was so happy that we hadn't tried to stick together as a large group during our crossing. It was risky enough with Helmut. I'm surprised that the other group didn't experience a major disaster.

Having heard three accounts, all quite different, all sincerely given, I am reminded of my storytracks principle. It was at work here.

Last night about 1 a.m. we decided to put in for a sleeping room at the airport and paid our \$25 for 6 hours use of a room with 2 beds. I'm sure we feel much better as a result. I slept pretty well, awakening a half hour or less before time for us to arise. I had a soapless and shampooless shower, refreshing anyway. Without access to deodorant, I can now whiff the results, but I feel okay. On this leg of the flight, we have a whole four seat middle row, so we'll be able to stretch out some to sleep. Hopefully we'll not feel too badly when we arrive in Boulder.

Last night raised issues and disagreements between me and Emily. I continue to feel some distance. Wonder what that means. It arose when Em called her mother. Her mother told her she was coming to Boulder to visit February 4 and 5. Em told her this was great because we have plans with my kids and she could join us. I heard this and felt immediately upset. I felt her mom was presumptuous and that I'd been stripped of any choice. I know we could never have one large gathering. Too weird. Expecting way too much of everyone. When I voiced my concerns, I'm sure I bore the emotions of years of being told what I'd do on holidays and with home. I reacted very strongly--hurt and pissed, feeling I was selfish and insensitive to her and her mother. It spiraled down from there. After quite some time we finally communicated a little more clearly about the issues and achieved some resolution. As often happens the question of whether or not we should live together came up. Perhaps my emotions were a bit more to the surface and affecting me, but I wondered about this and maybe in some ways still do. Wonder if there is any substance to my concerns. As we return home, there seems some sort of shift. In Seoul Em said she was beginning to like me again. I received this a little coldly. I have also found myself feeling a little hurt or jabbed at a few times by things she has said. Who knows, perhaps all this is just a by-product of long travel and long flights.

Certainly, hope Jenny is able to meet us in Denver this evening. It would be such fun. But I think I'm sort of thinking she won't be there. A preparation against disappointment?

Been reading Dickens' *Great Expectations*. Wonderful book, fun reading, inspiring use of language, remarkably imaginative.

These Thai Airways flights serve free alcoholic beverages with meals which I always decline, but I've been accepting the cognac after dinner drink. Weird and tastes pretty awful. Why have I done this?

On these flights I've enjoyed listening to music, some popular and some classical. Not done that much before. "Man Without a Face" is a movie later. May watch part of it though I think it wasn't much of a movie. Oh! Just remember I have it confused with a Chris Christopherson film that was horrible. I'm a bit more enthused. Still Dickens and some sleep might be more fulfilling.

Should have trip reflections to record as the reality and nearness of home increases, but nothing much comes to mind. Actually, I feel sort of sad right at the moment and a large part of me does not, in this moment anyway, want to go back and deal with the issues of divorce, finance, department politics, and all the nitty-gritty. But I am very excited to see and spend lots of time with Corbin and Jenny and to get on with my research and writing.





## *Chapter Seven*

### **USA**

#### ***Boulder***

**January 26** (I think).

Sitting in the car in the Naropa parking lot too weirded out by trying to do some shopping to go anywhere else to wait for Emily.

Got into Denver 6:00 p.m. Saturday evening and was totally thrilled to find Jenny and her friend Tiger awaiting us. She looked happy to see me and I certainly was to see her. We packed our 9 bags and 4 of us into Jenny's car and headed for Boulder. We were all hungry, so we decided to stop at d'Napolis to eat spaghetti, a long dreamed of treat. There was an hour wait which we decided to endure.

Seeing all the stylish, image conscious, self-absorbed, people there was but a hint at the weirdness I'm experiencing trying to return to my culture. All these people seemed shallow, so wrapped up in the purchased, painted-on image they bore, so filled with self and image. I just stared and found myself offended.

Kari stopped into say Hi to Em. We ate and even that seemed a disappointment. So much food and not as yummy as I had remembered it. Anyway, we had a wonderful visit and when we got home, we gave Jenny some of the gifts we had gotten for her. She was very pleased. Em gave her all the things she had bought her. I gave her the Bali rings, the two wool Nepal jackets, and later (next day I think) the Bali blanket. We had been up for 40 hours or so and when we went to bed, we slept for a few hours, but woke up way early.

I felt sick Sunday with diarrhea, and we went out to eat at Walnut Café. Good pancakes. Grocery shopped and hung out in the afternoon until time to go to a movie. We saw Robin Williams in “Mrs. Doubtfire”--clever but not memorable. I felt even worse by this time, but Corbin was coming from Greeley and we hurried home to have burritos. Nice to see Corbin, but I felt so bad I couldn't give him proper attention. Gave him his Bali blanket and two Nepal wool jackets. He seemed pleased.

I have a hard time with Corbin. He talks lots about himself and what he is doing. I enjoy all this and ask him lots about his things. He never seems to know or care what I'm doing or have done. Never a question. I explained that we wanted to have a party weekend to make up for the holidays we missed. I asked if he could come the 11th through the 13th. Jenny seemed excited about the prospect. When Corbin called, he said that he was having a Valentine's party on the 11th. I said, “Well could you be here the 12th and 13th?” His response was that he was uncertain. He didn't want to spend the night. He had other things to do. I told him I'd been gone five months and expected him to be there. He said he'd see. I'm concerned about how I'm going to break through with him. I don't feel we have established enough of a relationship base on which to openly share our lives and feelings. I think I'll go see him soon and just talk straight to this concern. Don't know what else to do.

Monday morning Em and I woke up at 3:30 a.m., talked until 6:30. We got up, ate breakfast and started to work on decorating the house. We hung her Thai Akha tribe hanging in the triangle between the two big windows. Brought up the black futon couch and placed the Akha pillow cover pillows on it. Very nice. We put my Akha hanging on the high wall above the stairs and my cotton weaving on the big wall above the stove. Very nice. We're eager to make some changes, to make the house ours.

Being in the house has renewed my love for it. I think I want to do whatever necessary to keep the house. Perhaps that will mean giving up lots of my retirement account. I'm eager to get everything settled.

Judy had taken lots of things out of the house. That is okay, but she left it filthy and cluttered with packing materials and her personal rejected junk. She had told Jenny she could clean the house if she wanted to, and Jenny had cleaned some. It is sad how she treats Jenny. I think her actions and attitude are self-defeating. Oh well. I wrote her lawyer to try to get financial records and an inventory of what she took.

Em started classes yesterday. Big shock for her. We are closer now than ever. She has grown and matured so much. This has given her quite a different perspective on Naropa, Boulder, her former friends, etc. She is thrilled, but a bit anxious. She was emotional this morning about what her new life will be like. All very exciting to me.

**January 28, 1994**

Picked up 31 rolls of slides last night and bought a slide projector. After dinner we started looking at them. Amazing images from throughout our trip though we haven't looked at even half of them. We'll have many days enjoying these and it will even be fun identifying, sorting, and editing all these for slide presentations, enlargements, and prints for a personal trip album. Yesterday a package arrived from my parents and Karen for me for Christmas and birthday. Em's home: will continue later.

**March 9, 1994**

Haven't done any journal writing much since I've gotten home. Should really do some because I'm having lots of feelings that need to be expressed. Just don't have much time.

Since getting back I've felt at once very happy and satisfied and also frustrated and annoyed. There are so many things to do and on so many fronts. I'm constantly distracted from my most important things by the less important ones. There seem so many administrative things to take care of that I nearly go mad. I think I need to make more hard choices and cut out many more things.

This morning as I was working on entering changes to the first chapter of my Australia book, I suddenly found myself feeling like I'd like to travel. I'd love to leave tomorrow and be gone another 5 months. I reflected a bit on this wondering if my interest in travel isn't a desire to escape from the structures and annoyances of home. I thought of Kurt and Gene. Yes, they probably were traveling to avoid something, and I think I may have the same issue. Travel is hard, but it is so much easier than home in some ways. Everything is cash. All schedules are one's own making (or nearly so). While there are so many decisions to be made, they aren't so difficult. It seems that one can live without being hurt by others or without hurting others, though this, of course, is false. Who knows who and how many are hurt by the traveler? So weird.

I love Emily more than ever. We have deepening feelings for each other. We make as good of house mates as we did travel mates. The chores of homemaking are a breeze to us. We enjoy doing them and doing things we know the other will find enjoyable. So, this part of my life couldn't be better.

Called Judy's lawyer this morning. He promised a draft agreement by the end of the week. Why does this make me nervous? I suppose I fear that, after all my work to initiate a settlement and draft all of it, that what I'll get will not resemble it in any way. I just want all this to be done.

Jenny is working on cleaning her room now. First time in 10 years. She is enthusiastic and seems to be enjoying it. Hope that when she gets it done, she'll be able to participate more in the homemaking, including cooking and dish washing. She has to have surgery on her foot next week. That won't be fun for any of us, but it is good for her to get it over with.

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Talked with Corbin last night. He had wrecked his car for the second time in a very short while. He seems to be magnetized to poles. This sounded bad, but, as he said, "What can you do?" He doesn't think this can be fixed by him anyway. He'll need turn signal lights. Otherwise, he seemed fine. I need to call him more regularly and to go see him more often. I want to get a Frisbee so I can go over and play Frisbee golf with him.

Need to get to reading some Australian stuff. Just wanted to get the journal writing habit started again.

*Chapter Eight***Ghana West Africa*****Accra, July 10 - 14*****July 10, 1997 (Thursday)**

Soaring over the Atlantic leaving JFK two and a half hours late we are on our way to Africa, finally. One stop for technical reasons whatever that means in Dakar and then on to Accra. It is 5:30 Eastern time US and is supposed to take about 7 hours to Accra. Can't yet figure what time we'll arrive but probably 7 to 10 a.m. on Friday. Jen and I are already pooped needing both sleep and decent food.

Yesterday was final preparation day which included going to Greeley to have lunch with Corbin and Claudia. Saw Claudia's apartment—very interesting—and enjoyed calzones with them. Just yesterday but now seems a world away.

Finished up things at the house and went over to Mary's about 8 p.m. She served wine and we had a pleasant visit including a bit on her dating some of the 46 men who responded to her personal ad. Then we picked Jenny up from Judy's about 10 and headed to the airport.

Got to Newark about 6:15 this morning with at most two hours fitful sleep. We caught a van to JFK and found a place to catch another fitful and uncomfortable hour or so of sleep. No wonder we feel like zombies. Spent the day wandering the international terminal at JFK. Interesting culture study. Dozens of Hasidic Jews with forelocks, long black coats, and black brimmed

hats on top of their yarmulkas on top of nearly shaved heads. Beards and moustaches. Many were decked out and carried hat boxes doubtless for an alternative black chapeau. I was really surprised to see several with women, doubtless spouses, and to see that the women were very stylin' with neat hairdos and fancy clothes. At one point about 10 or so of these guys gathered, all looking serious. Many constantly tease facial hair. An elder sat down and the rest stood around him showing differential treatment. Once in a while another would show up and all would shift a bit. One guy—the only one dressed differently with no ear locks and wearing a brown sport coat—was constantly talking on a cell phone and walking around. Some pairs huddled for a talk. Finally, the old guy stood up, they all clumped around this smiling guy, and walked on down the corridor.

Had a hero sandwich near Japanese Airline (JAL) and observed the dozens of Japanese. Shoes and dress style are key with them. With shoes many tall platform shoes, 4" or so. Very cool and cool looking people and very aware of themselves. Jenny noted that Japanese women used to wear platform shoes, but with bound feet.

Then we got a coffee (Jen got Frappuccino)—it was Starbucks, of course, and headed to Ghana Airlines We went in on one floor down some stairs and entered a huge room that immediately felt third world—like a marketplace. People everywhere with little order, lots of shouting and stuff, mostly huge bags and boxes piled everywhere. There was a huge line out the door and down the block and I thought we surely needed hours to get through it.

A woman told us we needed a boarding pass. We asked where? She pointed vaguely to one side of the room. We started to get into a line and I asked if the people there had boarding passes. They told us they were available at a table and I thought the line out the door was it. Asked a guy in the line and he just told us to step right up to the table. Immediately got boarding passes and went immediately to check in. That took only a couple minutes. The guy checking us in—I think he might have been Pakistani—looked at our passports. He said to Jenny, "This certainly looks like Jennifer." Big smile. May have been because her passport photo looks rather like a grumpy person. As we finished checking in a guy asked Jen, "Are you going on this flight?" And beamed, like he was sure we were a little freaked.

Boarding took 2 hours. Amazing. No one seemed upset. Just patient. Most of the packed flight are Ghanaians or Americans with Ghanaian connections. Cool experience to be in the minority.

Oh. On the way to check in we saw a large (10 or so) group of women and children following a man down the hallway. They were dressed in plain

print dresses with stockings and a black or white scarf tied on the back of their heads. Maybe Amish or Mennonite—though a bit modernized (especially if Amish). The man led. He started off toward the “Men’s” room just as we passed and had to tell the women more than once even, “Don’t follow me here!” Like sheep they seemed to follow anyway. Then they (or a similar group) turned up on our flight. Missionaries to Africa no doubt. If they are Amish, they are breaking the no-motorized-vehicle rule.

So that’s it for now. Really enjoying Jen. She’ll be a great travelling companion. It is fun and easy to be with her. She has no fears and is ready for anything. Such a fine woman. Mary was much impressed with her. And Jen likes Mary. This mutual admiration is a positive element for my relationship with Mary.

**July 13, 1997**

9:50 a.m. Accra time

We’re in Africa and Jen got quite the initiation. We are in a daze from both the day and the change in food, time, etc. not to mention the fact that the last time we slept in a bed was Tuesday night. We sat up 2 nights. Jen’s pooped out so I’ll write all this in the morning.

5. p.m.

Just returned from a walk about Accra. Will describe that but first yesterday.

We arrived in Accra. Cleared customs and went to pick up our bags. The baggage claim was chaos. Filled with people. There was one automated baggage carousel and hundreds of people around it. Jen looked there for our bags to pass as I surveyed elsewhere. Found the bags all sitting in a huge pile in one congested area. Made my way there and was able to hook them. Got Jen, had our bags checked, changed money (and got clearly ripped off) and headed out the door.

What happened next didn’t surprise me, but it did Jen. The hawkers for cabs. Wow! Intense. Dozens pushing and shoving to get our business. Some trying to grab our bags, and on and on. We finally went with private enterprise not the official cheats and paid 10,000 cedis which many say is a good fare. One German guy we met said he paid \$20 or 40,000 cedis. We heard of a Japanese guy who paid 100,000 or \$50.

Jen just stood there in the midst of this with a surprised look on her face. We finally got to Hotel de California. Seems a standard Lonely Planet type Euro-Am tourist style place. Seedy atmosphere with the appeal to a certain type of tourist. The type I am and yet am not. Wanting a non-tourist



experience but knowing that I'm just being sold another kind of tourist experience.

Thus enter Harry or Niibo (his African name). We walked to the center of Accra then back. Had rested a while then ran into Niibo. Handsome young man who says he is going to auto mechanics school but is clearly a tourist pimp. He's all smiles and very friendly. Ready to show you anything and go with you anywhere. Give you free advice on what to buy, where to go, etc.

He immediately showed Jen a little musical instrument—two small gourds (calibash) with sand rattles and connected by a string. Kooshka. They clack together and also rattle. He could play it well. Jen enjoyed it. He offered to get her one for 5,000 and she got two for that price.

Last evening, we sat on the porch and got travel stories from Brits and a German and a Ghanaian who teaches part of the year in Liverpool. His name is Enoch.

We also got good rice and beans from a street vendor yesterday. Had a hot soup sauce on it. Very good.

The food here is weird. Restaurants are lots more expensive than street food and I doubt that it's much better. And most restaurants are Chinese rather than African. I don't know why.

Ate at a Chinese place last night for \$7 and on the street for 50 cents (those prices are for the two of us). May eat on the street again tonight. Ate at a museum place today. Fried rice and veggies, and cokes for \$6.

Today we slept until 11 or so. Both slept well. Our room seems cool at night. Then went to National Museum. Disappointment. A shabby old museum. \$1 each entry fee. Oh, just as we started Niibo caught up with us and, of course, took over as guide for the day. Neither of us like this, but we have little choice, at least without being rude, and then he is some help.

After the Museum we went to the Craft Center, a huge barn full of vendors. Lots of cool stuff. Prices seemed fine to me. Saw this fancy embroidered men's dress costume pants, shirt and overshirt (very heavy and fancy) for 160,000/\$80 (and everyone told us that if we wanted to buy there would be a discount). Lot of Kenta cloth, prices seemed 35,000 (\$17) to maybe 100,000. Seemed okay. Don't know yet about quality and machine made versus stamped. Quite a bit of batik. Big batik African scenes. 60,000 cedis (\$30).

Went to a drum making place. Just a bit of an arbor with craftsmen carving and making drums. Seemed good drums at a price of 50,000 (\$25).

Djimbe and kpanlogo (pegged) style drums. Full sized and smaller. Smaller were 35,000.

Then we went to an area above the beach on the Gulf of Guinea. Dark sand beach with lots of garbage. We could see the fishing boats out at sea. Long thin canoe-shaped boats. We'll see more of these as we head west along the Gold Coast.

Walked back through town center and markets. Lots play lotto here. Seems a huge business. Saw some well-dressed guys in a Mercedes who seemed in some sort of supervisory capacity. Likely a few getting very rich off a lot of very poor people.

People impressions. Cheerful soft people, patient, unhurried. Women often wear colorful African clothing, sometimes dressy western style clothing. Men often dress up in western style clothing, sometimes African. Mothers carry their babies on their lower backs tied on with a cloth. Most babies seem to sleep in this position. They are sort of smashed against their moms. Men and women are together here. Have seen couples holding hands, etc. But have also seen same gender touching also. Boys with boys. Yesterday was Friday and experienced considerable Muslim presence. Also, there is Christian stuff going on broadly both yesterday and today.

Jen seems to be having a good time. She's an easy traveler. Adjusts easily and is consistently cheerful. She did get two sets of kooshka for 5,000 from Niiboye.

Think we'll go eat on the street and then come back and drink beer. May head down coast tomorrow.

10:10 p.m. Ate rice with a hot spicy gravy on it for dinner. Delicious. Should have gotten two bowls because I'm hungry now. Then went down the street to the little club where we had a beer yesterday and shared another beer. Two actually. Niiboye was with us, of course. Jen seems to like him. They talk music quite a bit. He seems very nice, but I just don't like him being stuck to us like glue. Jen seemed to be wanting me to come up here to the room so she could hang with him. So I did.

Also visited with a young woman from England, near Birmingham, who has taught English at Cape Coast for 6 months. She likes it here and has just a week left. She will be coming to Kokrobite Monday. We're heading there tomorrow. Seems like a place to experience some African music and dancing though the man there who is Ghanaian is married to a German woman. The place to stay, according to the British woman, is Wendy's run by a British woman.

There seems to be little African music and dancing here. Everyone is interested in reggae and rap and they do hip-hop style dancing. MTV, Bobby Brown, Michael Jackson, and MC Hammer. All the dancing and drumming is done at hotels and culture centers and the university. Maybe before long Africans will have to come to America to learn African dancing.

Oh, the British woman suggested also to go to Ada on the way back from Togo. It has a lake on one side and beach on the other. Says it's a nice place.

Jen seems to be settling in nicely to the situation. She seems relaxed and comfortable. That's so cool.

Been having second thoughts about the Dancing Cultures project. I enjoy this traveling, but a month will be enough for me, I think. Lots of hanging out letting things happen. I'm not the greatest at that sort of patience. Should do me good. Just relax and enjoy. Strange territory, new things, etc.

Guess Mary has crossed my mind some. Think of her thinking of us and am pleased to think of her doing so. Wish I knew more of what to think of her and me. It is important to me that Jen likes her, but there are many things I find I'd like that aren't there: biker (but she's trying), fit (but she's trying), intellectual (but she's not stupid). Who knows? She certainly likes me, I think. Though she will be dating some of the 46 men who called her while I'm gone. Would I have that chance? And what would she think? Would she be jealous? I'm not really, though I wonder what she's getting from doing it. Well, I'll see what happens to my feelings while I'm gone and what the situation is when I get back.

Today is my parent's 61<sup>st</sup> anniversary. Hope they had a wonderful day,

Tomorrow along the Gold Coast. Maybe take a couple walks along there. Few day trips around, then up to Komasi.

### ***Kokrobite, July 14 - 15***

**July 14, Monday** [I think]

Kokrobite, West Africa. 6 p.m. A coastal village not far from Accra.

Got up late this a.m. had biscuits (cookies) and orange soda for breakfast on the street. Met up with Andy, the guy who wanted to write us letters to guest houses and he did so. I had a long chat with him last night while I was waiting for Jen to come back from going out with Niibo. Andy is intelligent and informed and talked on and on about Ghanaian politics and how corrupt it is. He believes American politics is way cool and I didn't have the heart to tell him he wasn't entirely correct. He wouldn't have believed me anyway. I told him African life is much higher quality than in Indonesia and he rejected it forcefully and told me that Malaysia had bought up the Ghanaian divested companies. He

was a very interesting guy. Wants to become a lawyer. I don't see how he'll ever manage it, but he is trying.

When he told me that he'd write me letters he told me I'd need to support him a little so he could copy some law books. I asked him how much it costs, and he said "15,000, but you don't need to give me that much." This morning I have him 7,000 (\$3.50) and he beamed and thanked me.

While we were sitting on the street having breakfast, Andy came by. We do the letter thing. Then Enoch was going to Kokrobite today and we were going with him. But his friend wanted to go to the soccer game. The Pakistani friend had a car. They told us to get our bags. We got in the car with all of them. The Pakistani driver, Enoch, and Andy and several other guys from California Hotel carried our bags out and they took us to catch a tro-tro bush taxi.

This would be an experience, especially for Jen. We piled in with about 20-25 others in a 4-seater van and off we went. 500 cedis (25 cents) to Kokrobite about a 45-minute drive. Drove about 60-70 mph with everything rattling and swaying. Stopped at a police/military check point. The driver paid high deference and smiled. The army guy (big gun) let us pass. A little scary. At one point we came to a hill and the tro-tro wouldn't go. We all piled out and walked up the hill, got back in and headed down the miserably bumpy road. Came to villages and people began to get out and others got in. Always full. Finally, we got to a place where they told us to get out. They wanted more money, but I couldn't figure out what for, I decided it was a hit up for a tip and gave the guy 20 c. He couldn't believe the small size and laughed as they drove away. We got into the back of a pickup and headed on down the road. A dancer at the hotel that sponsors drumming and dancing on Sunday afternoon was along. They were going to take us to that hotel, and I kept insisting "Wendy's." The guy said, "Why you not want to go to [and named the other hotel]?" Finally, I said that we were meeting friends at Wendy's. That seemed to satisfy him, and the dancer got a little boy to lead us off down the road to Wendy's.

This place is a palm grove by the beach with several rental huts. Apparently, a British woman owns it. She's not here now. The place is run by a Ghanaian woman named April. Very nice woman in her thirties I'd guess. We showered (bucket shower) and changed and headed west along the beach to the hotel that had dancing. Turned out to be quite a distance with numerous detours around rocky areas. Now and then we could hear the drumming and that drew us along. We finally arrived. The hotel is large with a dining area seaside outdoors. There were lots of chairs there. Then across a little performance plaza is a pavilion for the drummers and singers.

There were six (three men and three women) and lots of drummers. They played like crazy. The dancers were singers part of the time but danced more as the program progressed. Their dances were programmed, theatrical, and

intended for tourists obviously, but I enjoyed them. Lots of humor on the theme of social relations, particularly male female. The dance movements certainly had the get-down quality to them. Bent at waist, lots of movement of hands on the shoulder axis. Lots of hip movement. This group performed about 1 to 1½ hours. Then a group of three acrobat clowns performed. Excellent acrobatic movement with slapstick comedy. At one point they got a guy and Jen out there to assist in one of their little sight gags. Again, much humor based on farting, peeing, and monkey faces. Jen thought they reminded her of Peking Opera. All the humor and acrobatics combined.

When they finished, a drum group came from the side of the hotel. They had percussion instruments (double-bell, talking drum, etc.), but once they got in the plaza huge kpanlogo drums had been set up for them. Four mid-sized (about 3 feet tall and 2 feet in diameter), 2 huge (about 5 feet tall) and one tall skinny one (4' x 1'). These drums were amazing. When they played the big drums, it shook your chest. Wow! They were excellent as were the others.

We stayed until 20 before 6 and left to go to dinner. We'd had nothing but pop, orange juice, and cookies for the day.

Dinner turned out to be around 6:40 and it was pasta with a delicious sauce and fish (don't know the kind, but light and delicious) and garlic bread. We ate with a couple just finishing their Peace Corps duty and a couple on holiday during their Vista duty. Bob and Sarah are from the states and were going back in August. They had traveled much of Africa and were going next to Mali, I think. Joe and S??? are Brits and are in Nigeria. S is through with her 2+ years duty and is going home soon, I think. Joe seems to be a career volunteer. Two years in Thailand and many years in various places in Africa. He'd had malaria 11 times. They talked shop a lot. Much insider stuff on volunteer stuff and Africa. But they also shared much with us about their Ghana travel experience. Enjoyable evening.

Jen and I went back to our cottage and sat outside in the cool evening for a couple hours. Jen practiced Kooshka and we visited. Enjoyable, but the night wasn't. I didn't sleep at all until after light. Was chewed on by mosquitoes all night and kept thinking that I'd surely get malaria from them.

We had a tasty breakfast—tea, some sort of potato pancakes with delicious sauce, and eggs and toast. Then we went to the beach to see some of the fishing boats return from sea. They go way out to sea in these little canoe boats made of heavy boards and don't seem too seaworthy to me. They leave around 1 a.m. and they are returning through the morning, 8 to 10 a.m. They have square crude sails that they drop several hundred yards before the beach and paddle like crazy to get to shore. They ride in on the surf and beach the boats. They seem to be of many sizes. One had about a dozen men in it, another only three. Can't tell much about their catch. Haven't been that close yet.

We'll hang out here today. Maybe see about the drumming/dancing institute that's supposed to be here. Read and enjoy the ocean breeze.

Women carry everything on their heads here, men too. Very interesting.

**July 14, 1997** (evening)

Took a nice walk down the beach this afternoon. A few photos, though we've been warned it is dangerous to show cameras. Sort of upsets me. I'm using the mini camera because I can stick it in my pocket. Had nice chat with Jen, the great traveler.

We spent midday reading the guidebook and discussing what we'd like to do and a very general rough schedule for our month. We have four weeks.

Ate lunch at a little stand on the beach. The guy served fried eggs and veggies. He called it an omelet and local bread, it is white, medium weight, and sweet. Jen noticed it has sort of a nutmeg flavor of some kind. Total bill including two cokes was 3,500 c. (\$1.75). Nice guy too.

Walked through the village behind us. Shanties. Not a blade of grass. People huddled beside their houses cooking or preparing food. Kids everywhere scarcely clad. Dogs about. Lots of people sleeping just on the dirt or a little rag beside the house. Smell strong of many things. Smell so similar to smells I associate with Asia. Wonder what all goes into that smell—smoke, cooking, urine, body odor, kids' poop—who knows, but it sure is distinctive. Most people scarcely looked at us. One boy, 6 or so I suppose nicely dressed in white shirt and white pants, asked us where we were going. We did want to know where the tro-tro station is for tomorrow, so he took us there.

April came back after 3 and said they wouldn't be serving dinner, but the other guests arrived and now they are boiling yams. We'll see. Then two women we met at the Hotel de California that said they were coming arrived late this afternoon

Some low clouds are floating in as they did last night. Think it rained in the night, was very damp this morning.

Think we'll go through the hassle of heading for Cape Coast tomorrow. Have to take a tro-tro back to Accra, then get a bus.

Decided we may try to make it to a game park up north. Should have plenty of time. In fact, we'll need to travel leisurely not to end the trip two weeks early. Jen's voting for a week in Accra at the end. There are several things we could do there. Jen wants to buy drums etc.

Should think about gift list.

***Cape Coast, July 15 - 19***

**July 15, 1997**

Jen is having some issues around Niiboye. He showed up at Kokrobite just as we were leaving. He road back to Accra with us and then had private

words with Jen extracting her promise that she'd come back. Got her to give him the ring I bought her from Bali. She really didn't want to, but she can't seem to see straight when he turns on his line. She so much wants to trust everyone. Now she feels manipulated and angry. I don't blame her. I do too. I'd noticed that she sort of loses herself around him. I was worried. I confronted her and she got angry with me, but later admitted that it was because I saw what she didn't want to admit to herself. She feels bad and I don't blame her, but at least we've broken with Niiboye until we return to Accra and the cost was I think small. Doubt she'll ever see her Bali ring again. He told her she'd give it back when she returns. I've got to be gentle and easy with her about this.

Enjoyed a morning at Wendy's. Hung out and ate our second raw coconut around noon. Right after breakfast we went through the village to a drum teacher's house. He gave Jen an hour-long lesson (5,000 c) and I taped part of it so she'll know the rhythms when she gets home. The teacher was a good teacher as well as a good drummer. His name is Abass. He wanted to make a drum for her. Watching I got sort of excited about the possibility of doing some drumming myself. Would be challenging and could be fun. Last night we visited with a couple of young women who were in the Peace Corps in Cote d'Ivoire. Sanitation consultants. One from Michigan, Nicole, and one from Florida, Naomi. They were very nice, and we enjoyed a visit with them.

Feel sort of scattered about all this. Took tro-tro (horrible) to Accra. Taxi to STC Bus Station (State Transit Corp) and paid 3,500 c's each for ticket to Cape Coast. It was a three-hour ride. The bus is big and fairly nice. Some have Air-Con. The road was narrow and filled with cars and trucks. Not many walking and not hardly any bikes. Asia contrast. Some long waits where the road was washed out. One place there had been a bad accident just minutes before. A tro-tro ran into the back of a truck. Two African women appeared to be trapped in the front of the tro-tro against the back of the truck. One was bleeding that I could see and the other was more fully trapped and I couldn't tell her condition. Our bus pulled over and several men went to the wreck. We went on after 15 minutes or so. No report on the condition of the women. Was scary especially since we've ridden the tro-tros.

The country between Cape Coast and Accra is rolling green and lush with an occasional huge, majestic tree. On the coastal side there were palms in the distance. There were numerous villages. Some had those huge chaotic markets. I never understand how anyone can sell anything there. So many people. So much stuff. But lots of the country was just land.

Got a taxi to bring us to Summo's Guest House (Andy and Enoch's suggestion) and got the next to the last room for 16,000 c. Had rice and vegetables. Not bad but 10,000. Then Jen and I had a long talk while we ate. I feel so much for her.

Been thinking about Mary some. Think about telling her things. Think about what she'd think of all this. She might be a trooper about it. I think probably so.

Had a dream that had Emily in it last night. Don't remember much but know that my encounter with her wasn't happy or positive. Wish that would come to an end. Still, I haven't been thinking of her here. Indeed! Feel something of having turned the corner finally, though much of this trip is like Asia, it doesn't remind me of her, and I like that. It is my experience with Jenny, and we will enjoy it.

We just did a bit of laundry for Jen. Her bathing suit smelled horrible, and she was low on clothing. There is running water here and a sink in the hallway. We used shampoo for detergent. May take two days for her stuff to dry.

I had a moment today when I felt like I have begun to give myself to this trip experience. That sort of feeling is like, "okay, I'm here, I'm hanging, I'm seeing Ghana, I'm looking forward to seeing and doing and being here." I have had a sort of hidden feeling anxiety, "This is hard, this is dangerous, this is such a long time—why did I get us into this? What the hell are we doing? Etc." But I think I've let lots (most) of that go. It is just sort of a big challenge for me since this kind of experience is so very different from my daily experience.

Had one interesting thing happen today. A little Ghanaian boy pointed at me and said to him mom, "Hey, there's a white man." Funny I caught it since most all the people here speak the local language rather than English.

Another funny experience, Jen's drum teacher told her I looked "big"—meaning strong and muscular. I mentioned that when NiiBoye was around, and he said that's what he thought too when he first saw me. "Muscles popping out!" He said he thought I must be an engineer, whatever he must think that is. Funny.

We both got viciously bit by misquotes while we were doing Jen's laundry. Ouch. Jen says she's sure she has malaria now since she's been bitten so many times. Hopefully the Larium will keep us healthy. Everyone (other than travelers) asks about it.



Jen is sort of concerned that we aren't meeting enough Ghanaians and talking with them enough. Actually, I don't think we're doing badly on that score.

Interesting that except for these lodges we're the only whites in sight. Interesting experience because it is not like being in LA in a black neighborhood. Clearly you feel distinctive, different, but not really threatened or oppressed. Ghanaians seem to like Americans lots. One man asked me today where I am from and when I said America he said, "President Clinton" whatever that means.

Talked with a German guy last night who had been up to Molé National Park, a game preserve. He said the hotel is built on the water hole. That the animals come right up to the hotel. You can bush walk or drive among the animals. Can hike into the forest and stay at a ranger station. Elephants, etc. Think we need to do that. Come to Africa and not see the animals when you have a chance? No way. The north is supposed to be very different. We have plenty of time to go. Less time in Accra at the end. Which given the Niiboeye situation is good, I think. Jen has decided to write to Will. Think that is very healthy for her to do. Give her some perspective.

I must send postcards tomorrow. Corb, Mary, folks. Plan to hang tomorrow—reorient. Castle and rainforest walk next two days. Then we'll see. This hotel is nice with running cold water and flush toilets and electricity. We're on the third floor and they have a rooftop bar. We're not going out tonight so we can relax and write some.

I'm hungry pretty much all the time. Could eat a huge plate of pasta right now. Rice just doesn't cut it for me.

**July 16, 1997**

Jen crashed emotionally a little this morning. Part of it was the realization that Niiboeye conned her out of her Bali ring. Part that she can't trust people. Part that we haven't been here yet a week, yet it seems like a month. We slept in, though a rooster crowed for hours waking us up. Had a leisurely breakfast and talked about relationships and cultural differences, etc.

Hired some laundry done and went out to walk around Cape Coast. Pleasant place, way less intense than Accra. Jen found a cloth place with some cloth she liked. She priced it. We walked around lots more. Looked at some other cloth places. She returned and bought two pieces. Beautiful. One she'll use as a skirt. She already put it on. The other which is three yards is more a wall hanging or a big tablecloth Very pretty. She also saw a street vendor that had tons of little things. She bought a couple neat necklaces, cowry shell, leather, brass (I think). Kind of a primitive look to me.

We bought towels to ease our lives. Jen doesn't want to bargain, but she tried a little. It was fun to see her try.

We came upon a women's center. We'd passed it last night when we arrived by cab. We talked with several women—one from Australia, one from Germany, one from USA—and met Ghanaian women. We saw their batik cloth dying place and they told us about the method. They sell cloth there and Jen bought another piece. It is mostly about 4-6,000c per yard. She got a one-yard piece for Colleen, her Durango friend. It has fish on it and Colleen loves fish.

The women's center is very interesting. They have a credit union. Apparently, the women have a traditional system for saving money called susu (sue-sue). Every day they give their extra money to a man to keep for them. He collects it from them and charges them one day savings for each month. With the credit union, the women can deposit their savings, pay no man, earn interest, and after they have saved for six months, they can borrow money in proportion to the amount they have saved. They have a batik school and sell the batik in the shop. The earnings pay many (2 or 3) women who do the work for the credit union and the library. They have a good café and community meeting rooms. Neat enterprise. We may try to help them out in some way for a day to two. One can even learn to do batik there.

We met a Danish (Jen says German) man here this evening. He came here two years ago and traveled around Ghana but liked Cape Coast. He has come back now to stay a couple of months. Most of his time is here. He has many friends and enjoys the community. He told us what I already know that you must stay a while in one place to get to know the people, etc. Also Mr. Yankson, who owns this place, suggested we visit his school. Maybe he is a teacher. We're planning on doing that.

Then Tom (Mr. Tom), the Dane, introduced us to Jerry (missed his African name) the 13-year-old son of the proprietor (Mr. Yankson). Told us the lad knows everything. He came to us and said "Mr. Tom wants me to help open your eyes." We asked if he wanted to show us around. He said no, but he'd direct us. His English was excellent, and he was smart and amazing. Gave us his whole daily schedule. School from 6 a.m. to 3 p.m. Study, bathing. 1 hour 4 to 5 to play and 8 to 9:30 to play or watch TV. His favorite TV? "I like foreign television. CNN is my favorite." He said he is very lucky because the President, Jerry Rawlings, provides free education. He was so excited to learn. He said that without a certificate one cannot even get a job picking up garbage. Everything in Ghana is going "up and up" meaning, I think, progress in technology, economics, and education. I asked him what

he wants to be when he grows up. He said, “The president ... pause ... or a pilot or an engineer.” He said that since his name is the same as the president’s then surely, he’ll be president, but then he reasoned that since Rawlings had been a pilot, then he might be that too. He said he could fix things well and his mother really liked that, thus he might be an engineer. I’m betting on him being president.

So today has been a great day from Jen’s low this morning, she’s back up and enthusiastic. Now it seems like with the traveling we want to do that time won’t be so long. We can stay here a few more days to get a bit more depth.

We had a descent dinner here, but overpriced, and then sat on the rooftop for a while and shared a Gulder brand beer. Smooth, brewed and bottled in Kumasi.

Wrote to Mary today and now think I’ll jot a line to Corbin and perhaps read a while. Africa.

### **July 17, 1997**

Slow day. Slept in quite a bit. Went to Women’s Center for brunch. Very good and filling. Had to make two trips to the bank because I forgot my passport. But exchanged \$200 for cedis. Learned that “cidi” is derived from Akan term “sedee” which means cowrie shell which was used for exchange. After the bank we went to Cape Coast Castle. Really should be called a fort. Its history begins in mid-15<sup>th</sup> century with Portuguese. They had gold trade from the area to Europe. It changed hands many times and was expanded often. Finally, the British used it as one of their bases for slave trading. We were taken into the dark underground holes that were built as storerooms that were used to house slaves. Almost no light, a dirt floor, and only a little ditch to evacuate the human waste. The guide said it filled to 1 or 2 feet deep in the lower end of the one chamber. Many died in these “apartments.” Men were kept in one area of four apartments, women in another. Women got somewhat better treatment because they were scarce and therefore worth more. When a ship came in the slaves would be driven through a long tunnel that finally turned into a funnel that would admit but one person at a time. Going through that place was the point of no return—off to another country never to return. We also saw a punishment cell that was actually used to kill those who misbehaved. It was an airtight cell that held up to 50 men. They were shut in the cell and allowed to suffocate. On the ship the slaves were stacked one on top of another for the months long voyage. Those who died were dumped overboard. Though 15 million slaves were shipped to the US, many more went to the Caribbean and Brazil.

They had a very good museum there and then a guided tour. A young man named Eric took us. He was very articulate and knowledgeable, also very tall. He was rather matter of fact about the horrible history of the place. In

the museum display they sort of soft pedaled the slave trading saying that while the horror of it was beyond description, it none the less led to many Africans making a good life in America and the colonists, including missionaries, brought schools and Christianity to them. Interesting perspective.

A number of people are buried in the courtyard. A few have been identified but many not. There are a number of cannons pointing out to sea. If the castle was approached lookouts at the forts on the hill above the town would see the intruders and between canon fire from the forts and the castles, they'd try to fend off the enemy. Can't imagine the old guns would be able to hit a ship at sea. They said the 16-pound cannon balls would go from 1 to 2 kilometers.

After the castle we stopped for a coke where we went yesterday. The lady smiled and was friendly. We also saw the street vendor from whom Jen bought necklaces yesterday. He was so smiley and happy to see us. He told us that if we knew anyone who wanted anything to send them to him.

Then to the Women's Center where I bought 4 yards of cloth (very cool dark blue with orange in it), a 1-yard piece (even cooler) and some wild pants for Corbin. Jen bought a batik picture of a fishing scene, women buying a fish. And she bought Will a t-shirt with a mask print on it. The woman there is named Vaida and is wonderfully nice. We met her little daughter yesterday who is named Christine for the American Peace Corp worker who helped start the Women's Center. It is so nice to buy from them because it supports their operation.

Jen has felt a little sick today. A bit nauseous this morning. Sore throat started last night and is continuing today. Her stomach seems to have settled. Now we'll see what we can do for the rest of her problems.

Andy, the guy from California Guest House in Accra turned up here today, I heard he was here yesterday. We had a chat this morning and he wanted us to go with him. He is guiding 2 groups of 4 from Finland around Ghana, but for a short period, I think. He was going to prepare the way at Busua and Kumasi for us and we'll see him again when we return to Accra. Shook hands with both of us about 20 times and kept saying that he'd tell everyone that "daddy and sister" were coming. Very funny.

Mailed our letters today. Nice to have them off. Supposed to reach the US in 4 days. May mean delivery in a week, maybe less.

Our expenses including everything, but purchases are averaging \$25 per day. That will mean that per diem for the trip will be about \$700 and I surely won't spend more than \$300 on stuff.

Later. Just finished dinner, had a cold shower, and Jen is digesting and will get a shower soon. Then we may go up on the rooftop for a while to enjoy the evening.

We went out around 4:30 to go to the beach. We walked to the west and headed back east with the castle as our destination. We'd barely started when we ran into Jerry, the 13-year-old we talked with last night. We said "hello" and visited and headed on. Soon he caught up with us but walked a way behind. We stopped and asked him where he was going, and he said he wanted to walk with us. Soon another lad, Michael, joined us and they talked a blue streak. Told us about everything under the sun. We wanted to find a restaurant that Tom, the Danish guy, recommended called London Bridge. The boys took us through the market area and finally we came to a drainage ditch and sure enough the bridge crossing it was named London Bridge. They seemed confused that this didn't satisfy us.

We saw where the recent king's funeral had centered. A cloth covering a replication of a crab stands as a reminder of the king. Then on up the hill. Michael suggested we go visit the fort, the one I had photographed from the guest house. Jerry admitted he'd never visited it and asked Michael if there was a guide there to explain things. He said he hoped so because he would put information "into his mind" so he could use it later. He told me he keeps a diary and would write this experience in his diary. Quite a lad.

He wants to go to the rainforest with us. Says he's never been. He said his family went once but they were in a hurry and left him behind. He said, "I stayed home and cried."

The fort was interesting. Sits on a hill and about 30 feet up is one level with cannons all around. Then on up another 30 feet is a walkway around for use as a lookout. Seems it may also have been used as a lighthouse. A family was living in this small central area. Sort of a crude penthouse to Cape Coast.

We also saw a group of young people who appeared to be rehearsing African dancing. Drum, double-bells, and dancers.

On the way back we saw kids playing a game. Michael was trying to explain it to Jen, and it wasn't working much. A young woman was walking along and took up the explanation. Guess it is like rock, paper, scissors but it is a game you play with your feet. It is used to settle disputes. The woman's name is Claire, and she is a seamstress. Very nice. I liked the life in her eyes. She laughed and was very open to Jenny.

Then they took us past their schools. They'd like us to visit them. We may, I don't know. Jen isn't feeling great. Hope she's not getting sick. Know she thinks time is creeping. She was just counting the remaining days, twenty

something. Know this experience is wonderful experience for her, as it is for me, but I share at least some of her impatience. I keep thinking of Mary and wanting to be with her in a comfortable setting and enjoy the ease of our life. Interesting.

Today reminds me of the principle I learned in Asia. If you work hard to seek experience it eludes you. If you take it easy it will come to you as did Jerry and Michael and the late afternoon experience.

**July 18, 1997** (3 p.m.)

Lazy indecisive morning. Jen is experiencing cultural overload and is not feeling entirely well. A little sore throat and general malaise. I have a bit of a stomachache too, but it may be from the cabbage vegetable stew I had last night.

We hung for a while then went to the Women's Center for breakfast. French toast, eggs, orange juice, good. Then after quite a bit of hesitancy, Jen just can't figure out her thing today, we went out and caught a taxi to Elima. Deposited directly at the castle, St. George's Castle. It was begun by the Portuguese in 1482 and Columbus actually came here before he took his voyages to America. The castle was heavily involved in the slave trade during the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the slave dungeons were clearly present. The chapel, in which there is not a museum, was the first Christian church in the tropics and is the oldest building, I think, in the castle compound. For 200 years the chapel served as the room where people came to buy and trade, from goods to slaves.

We did a self-guided tour which was good for us. We wandered around and took lots of neat pictures (I hope). Across from the castle is the market where the women come to buy their fish when the canoes come in. It was a huge area totally packed with boats and people. One or two boats came in while we were up there. A big canoe came in and the women waded out to the boat to make their fish purchases. We took photos. Jen's batik of women buying fish from a canoe depicts this same scene.

The castle is huge, and they are restoring it. It is one of something like 340 world landmarks, the same status as the pyramids. I put in some B&W film and enjoyed taking photos of palms and the B&W pictures of the castle, etc. Though I'm sort of messed for tomorrow because we're going to Kakun Rainforest.

On the way to Elima, we arranged with the cab driver to pick us up in the morning and take us to Kakun. He'll charge 8K per hour, but that seems well worth it to not have to worry about getting there and back, His name is James Ogly (or something like that). The relationship between drivers and the military (or police?) is interesting. After our driver dropped some people, a

policeman came over to the car, said a few words, and the cab driver shook hands with him during which 500 cedis was passed. Drivers seem to always smile and wave at these police dudes. It seems that maybe they have to humor them to keep from being hassled. And maybe they are occasionally hassled anyway.

When we got out of the cab at Elima Castle we were surrounded by kids. A couple gave Jenny scraps of paper with their addresses written on them with a little message. They want you to write to them. They ask for pens for school, but I don't think these are the type of kids that go to school. One boy introduced himself to me. Isaac, age 13 in 7<sup>th</sup> grade (though I don't think they number them that way here). When we came out of the castle the same group of kids was there and Isaac remembered my name, "Mr. Sam." He gave me his address and wouldn't let any of the other kids do so, "One is enough!" he said to them. We had given away our pen, so I gave a couple of them 200 cedi coins. Isaac's note says, "Isaac Tachie, c/o Mr. Patrick Sam, Post Office Box 118, Elima-Central Region, Ghana, West Africa. May the almighty God richly bless you to live in long life and your occupation will be grow and be develop. So don't forget to write me a letter from your hometown. May God bless you and your families. Safe journey." Cute bright persistent kids.

We walked through the town. Jen had about all this experience she can handle for a while. Got a cab and returned here.

We've been sleeping well. It is cool here, especially at night, and the fan helps. It is fairly quiet at night but by 5 a.m. the street is becoming active, and the noise begins. There are chickens and roosters right outside that seem to wake everyone up and keep them up. They crow and go on from early. Kid noise begins soon for many children go to school about 6 a.m.

Goats, of which there are many, do this little thing that Jenny is getting good at imitating. Then this morning early there was a car with huge speakers blaring some sort of message, who knows what? Very obnoxious. Still, we sleep in until 8 or 8:30. We've arranged for a cab driver to pick us up at 8 in the morning to go to Kakun. Should be fun and a wonderful morning. Then on to Takoradi on Sunday, I guess.

Bought a little brass fertility figurine at the castle today. May give it to Mary with wishes for fertility in her life. It is cool. There will be plenty of these in Komasi, I'm sure.

5:30 p.m. Balcony outside our room. Evening light is lovely. Took couple photos of bread ovens, old colonial houses, women carrying stuff on their heads.

8:30 p.m. Got sidetracked taking photos and Jen and I went up on the roof to take some photos and had a nice chat about the trip and stuff.

Want to remember some of the names of shops: Darling Jesus Coca-Cola, ... darn, I can't remember more. Many have religious basis. One tro-tro had the epigram (or whatever it is called) across the top "Only God Knows the Future." How true so far as tro-tros go. Will try to remember other shop names and add later.

Everyone carries everything on their heads here. I was wondering about the person who is a klutz and can't balance things on their heads. But we are also noticing how wonderful is most everyone's posture. Erect, heads held high. Healthy. In the village at Kokrobite I noticed a woman placing a flat rock on her crawling child's head. He was just sitting there, and she held the rock on his head, and it would fall off. Training from the earliest days it seems.

Took some diarrhea meds this afternoon. Hope it helps. I didn't feel so bad, just upset stomach.

### ***Kakun National Park***

**July 19, 1997**

Medaasi, "thank you," in Fanti.

Sitting on rooftop talking with young man named Benjamin. I think he's trying to scam us but I'm not sure. Seems these young people—Niiboye included—are excellent at the scam. We just walked around Cape Coast and we were soon joined by a group of young boys who wanted to exchange addresses. They use this as a way to talk to you and while they are friendly and not pushy, they eventually ask you to send them something, computer game, books, pens, or give them something to remember you by.

We went to Kakun Park this morning. We arranged yesterday for a cab to pick us up at 8 a.m. He arrived at 7:30 and we were ready by 7:45. It was about 45-minute drive. Then we paid 30,000 c to go on the canopy walk. A guide walked us down the road and into the rain forest. There were enormous trees of many kinds. The guide, named Isaak, talked about many of the plants and trees then we climbed up a ridge and at the top was a little hut that began the canopy walk, 300 or so meters long. The first bridge to the first big tree was only 10 meters above the ground, but from there the forest floor dropped away and we were soon 40 or more meters above the ground. Some of the walkway was a suspension affair with ropes and cables supporting the bridge. The walk itself were boards screwed to the equivalent of a narrow aluminum ladder. A net went up both sides so you couldn't really fall. Still the bridges were wobbly and swayed both up and down and side to side. Reminded me of the bridges in the Himalaya in Nepal. Each bridge ended with a platform



attached very high up in one of these enormous trees. Then another bridge goes to another tree.

On the walk back we learned about other trees one of which, the choking fig or something like that, has a very deadly poison. Also learned about worms you can get in fresh water the thickness of a thread that can get in your body and cause lots of problems. They can exist through your skin, maybe on your leg. Sounded horrible.

After the walk we had nice lemon pancakes, really crepes, for lunch before returning to CC. Several European women caught a ride back with us. Our cab driver didn't quite understand time and money but finally settled with us. We rested then went out again for a last walk around Cape Coast. The walk with the boys.

As we came back from the park today, I kept thinking about why the tropics are the countries for most third world people. So much is available all year round, coconut, papaya, bamboo, and so on. Building materials, food, whatever can easily be found. A little work with it and you have a shelter, a utensil, or something to eat. It would be so much harder in northern latitudes. Even in Nepal the mountains are closest to the tropics so these things are always available. But there they must be carried.

So tomorrow on toward Tokoradi. First, to Busua Beach until Wednesday when we'll go to Tokoradi to be ready to catch the train on Thursday, Jen's birthday. Benjamin is still with us here as we write. He's reading Kinky Friedman's *Armadillos and Old Lace*, the book Jen gave me for Father's Day. I started reading it last night and am halfway through already, rather a kick to read.

Laid back afternoon, now clouded over a bit and getting cool. We plan to try a different place for dinner this evening. Hope it will be good.

Jen felt quite sick at the beginning of the walk today but rallied and seems to now be feeling better than she has for several days. My stomach isn't 100% but I'm getting there. Jen even suggested that we go out and walk this afternoon. She enjoys the kids. They were teaching her how to say things in Fanti, the local language, and were enjoying teaching her. Enjoying traveling with her. Last night she told me how much she misses Will and wants to be with him, but I know she'll remain present to this experience anyway. I suggested to her that she start a letter to him and add to it each day so she could feel that he is present in a sense. Think she started that last night.

I had a very hard night. Some mosquito got after me. It would buzz in my ear. I'd swat it but it still bit me many times once on the eyelid. When I woke up this morning my right eyelid was swollen, and I couldn't open it but halfway. It has gone down some now. Guess we'll rest a bit before we go out

to dinner. Yes, Benjamin's presence was a scam. He gave us this long story about being caned from school because he didn't have a dictionary. I ignored it but later offered him 2,000 c. He said the dictionary costs 4,000 and asked me to try as hard as I could to help him. He was so persistent. He even took me off away from Jen to beg. Then when I wouldn't give him more, he asked Jen for some, she now sees the pattern from the kids in the street to this 19-year-old Benjamin to Niiboye. All are scammers. None telling the truth. She'll likely give Niiboye a piece of her mind if she ever sees him again and she might. Though I'm sure she'll never see her ring again.

Evening. Went to Solace Spot for dinner. Had spaghetti with vegetable sauce, very hot. Too hot for Jen, but she survived though I ate the bulk of her sauce. Got a few cookies on the way back and the man at the stand taught us "welcome" and the response to "thank you," medaasi.

### ***Busua, July 20 - 23***

**July 20, 1997** (late afternoon at Auntie Elizabeth's)

We had a fine conversation this afternoon while sitting on the beach at Jen's instigation. She noted that we seem to be having a frustrating time here. I agreed. We had a nice visit about it. Everywhere we ask about dancing and music we are told to go to the cultural center or the arts center. Seems Ghanaians still have dancing and drumming but it is done mostly during festivals of which there are now none that we can find. But we did talk to some people who had been to the king's funeral last weekend and they didn't get close enough to see the dancing. We're realizing that this is a transitional culture rapidly leaving behind what we would think of as their traditions. What is replacing them is not much that we can see other than Christianity. The only singing we've heard from the culture has come from Christian churches and we've heard plenty of that.

We saw a little drumming on the street in Cape Coast yesterday related to mourning the king we think. A few people dressed in red and black which we understand as mourning colors were sitting solemnly nearby. But no one, save a guy who could well have been drunk, dancing. Everyone else walked by not even collecting the beat. Weird.

This morning we left Cape Coast. Mr. Yankston, the proprietor of Sammo's Guest House, told us goodbye. He was so sweet. It was moving. He told Jenny that her father loves her very much and seemed to be expressing his high approval that we are travelling together. He asked Jen what level school she is in and seemed surprised that she is as old as she is. She told him that Thursday is her birthday, and she will be 22. He just beamed and told her that he would buy a mineral water and drink it in her honor. So

sweet. And one reason to stay a few days in one place. We didn't get to tell the young man goodbye. I'm sorry about that.

Then we caught a tro-tro to Takoradi Not too horrible. Then, rather than getting a cab to Busua, we took a tro-tro. Horrible. Twenty-five people packed into a van built to hold twelve. Took about an hour including a breakdown of fifteen minutes. Then we paid a cab driver 5,000 c. to bring us the last seven miles. My door kept flying open as we drove along.

When we got to Auntie Elizabeth's she was just finishing her church service. She's the priest of a little church that adjoins the courtyard of her house compound. She was all dressed up in a fancy white dress, almost a robe. Sorry we missed the service. Seems the most traditional thing that goes on in Ghana except for fishing.

Andy (from Accra) and his European group showed up and we shared some lunch conversation then walked down the beach. Of course, we were hit up immediately by two people that knew who we were and, of course, wanted something. The kid did the usual litany, "Hello, what's your name? Where are you from? Where in America? What is your occupation?" Then the scam. This one was for papers he wanted you to sign to indicate how much you'd give him. We just told him we'd been asked too many times and ignored him. He got the message. The other guy, Paul, wanted to sell us juice. Andy had recommended it but said that the guy would ask 5,000 and the price is really 3,000. We told this to the guy and he quickly agreed with 3,000.

Then Jen and I had a great talk. Decided to take a bit more charge and try to make the best of this. We'll go to Bix Cove in the morning and then leave here mid-day. Go to Takoradi, get money changed, stay in a mid-range hotel and take the train the next day to Kumasi. We talked with Auntie Elizabeth and she seemed a bit encouraging about the culture there. But again, it is the cultural center that seems to offer the best possibility.

The people here at Auntie Elizabeth's are very nice and I think very beautiful. We're staying in a room above the courtyard, and they are installing a door on the room as I write. We may have mosquito problems even at that because the door doesn't fit at the top and bottom.

Oh, on the beach at Busua Resort we saw numerous couples where the man is a disgusting looking white man and the woman is a dolled up high fashion Ghanaian. I said to Jen that I thought the men looked like Aussies and she said, "they are, I heard them talk." We couldn't figure it out. Every couple was of this variety. Then Auntie Elizabeth told us that they are Australian gold miners who work a mine some 50 miles from here. She says

they come here every weekend. Weird. These women are total fashion. Very expensive coifs and clothing. Hmmm.

Auntie E is checking out the new door and bringing in a furniture change.

Glad I'm with Jen. She said she was majorly freaked on the tro-tro but she really has great powers of recovery and a solid positive outlook. I thought about the grand proposal for a year of traveling when I was on the tro-tro and I thought that perhaps this will be my last trip of this sort, i.e., extended and hanging out in cultures to try to experience them. I'm no ethnographer. I sort of want to talk to Mary about this. Interesting ain't it? I feel that I'd like to get busy on my house. Enjoy that rather than a year in foo-foo land. What a revelation. Would still be great to land a year off with a grant. Maybe I could travel to India for a month and use past experiences and research for all but the India chapter. I've paid for all this. Very interesting.

Justina, a girl here, just walked through here wearing a CU jersey, a sleeveless tee shirt. I told her that I teach at that school and she just smiled. Amazing. She is very pretty and has a pretty smile.

#### **July 21, 1997**

Walked long way down the beach to the east this morning. My stomach ain't good. Took more meds this a.m., but its cramping on me. Makes me bummed because it is sucking my energy and I have to fight not to be a bit grumpy. Talked with some French folks this morning who have been around some of West Africa. They were really high on Ghana; honest and friendly people, beautiful, inexpensive, etc. and that was good to hear. They have seen no traditional drumming and dancing, not even in the much more traditional cultures. That was not good news, but at least it confirms that we aren't just missing everything. I also think that the north or central area will be awesome and offer us much to enjoy, see, and do.

Talked with Elizabeth this morning. Such a lovely woman. She is the Auntie to all these people here, seems they are here brother's kids and her brothers have died. She has a house in Takoradi and said she'd let us stay there since we are leaving the next morning by train. So nice of her. Had pancakes and coffee this morning with bananas. Wish my stomach would ease up.

No mosquito protection last night and it was a very unpleasant night. We bought a mosquito coil for tonight. Hope that helps.

They are working on this house, expanding and improving it for tourist business, thanks to *Lonely Planet* and Andy it is becoming popular. They make most everything as they build and it is all rather crude. But interesting and it works. When they use a handsaw, they hold it vertical and saw by pushing down

and up with both hands, saw towards themselves. They also make their own concrete blocks by pouring concrete in a square form. Interesting.

Jen is awesome. Great attitude and going for it.

Also heard from the French people that Molé, the game park, is awesome. I also think there may be something to do of cultural interest in the Tamale area.

And my back ain't great either.

I bought a shirt and shorts made of Takoradi Ghana flour sacks. I at first thought it was weird, but Jen liked it and the man selling it. The tailor's name is Francis. He was so proud of his idea to make clothing from flour sacks. I told him my grandparents and parents did that years ago. He was excited to hear about that and turned it into an extension of his sales pitch. We went to his house—a ratty little house in the middle of the village. Jen is cool with the people. Open and friendly and genuine. They are attracted to her. They call her sister. Many people also talk about the two of us. Most think we look much alike. One guy this morning told me I look very young, then he added until one considers the color of my hair. He said that seeing that one could say "He's been around the world for a long long time." Is that a compliment or what?

Jen is considering buying a drum here. The guy has offered to go to Takoradi with us tomorrow and help us ship it back. The drums seem cool and are of a different style. I'm going to leave it to Jen to check it out, but I think that he only wants 45,000 for the drum (\$23) and I doubt shipping would cost much more than \$20-\$25. We'll see.

Just saw a woman taking down her laundry. She'd take it down. Fold it and put it on a stack of folded clothing on her head. What a concept, ready-made laundry basket and your hands are free.

Jen just tried on her flour sack shorts. They are cute. Sewn a bit weird, but that just gives them character. When Francis was trying to sell her on the shorts, he kept telling her what a good price he was giving her and at the same time telling her all the things she could do if she had both pieces. Wear the shirt and shorts as an outfit, wear the shirt with a skirt or other things, wear the shorts with other tops, give your brother or friend the shorts or the shirt if they want them. He kept going on and on. Jen thought that he was so cute.

Last evening, we had a very long visit with Ishmael, a 15-year-old nephew of Elizabeth's, I think. He was so very nice. An awesome young man. He and Jen just chatted away.

## ***Takoradi, July 22 - 23***

**July 22, 1997**

Another very hard night for both of us. Jen has about a thousand mosquito bites and my stomach ain't good. I started cipro this morning to try to beat it. Don't know where I got what I have. We're leaving at 10:00 a.m. by taxi and will stay in Takoradi tonight. Must change money and get train tickets for tomorrow. Thought we'd be resting here but mainly this was a place to experience family and village life. That's good.

Bunch of older men in fancy dress just went up and down the road. Don't know their business, but they look fancy. We're due some engaging and enjoyable events. Hope the train trip tomorrow will accomplish that and then Jen's Birthday in Kumasi on Thursday. If Jen recovers from her mosquito bites and my stomach returns to normal things will be better for sure.

Takoradi. Noon or so. Beachway Hotel. We left Busua about 10 a.m. and came here by taxi. Frank, Elizabeth's son came with us. He lives here and goes to school I think, but I'd think he is in his mid-twenties. He took us to Harbor Hotel which was expensive and creepy. Then to this place we'd selected from Lonely Planet. It is low or mid-level I think, but kinda rundown. Hell, what ain't? Then they took us to the bank to change money, then to the train station to find out about the train tomorrow. It leaves at 6 a.m. so we'll leave here at 5:15. We arranged for a guy here to take us. Then Frank took us to a chemist (pharmacy) to try to get something for Jen's bites. They suggested some sort of cream, but they were out. I asked if they have Benadryl and they looked at me like I was from Mars. We decided we have probably better than this cream.

Our room has a fan, two beds with actual bottom sheets rather than some rag and screens on the windows and doors. Should let us rest up today. The Cipro seems to be working for me too. I'm feeling lots better. Jen didn't itch so badly after her bucket shower here. We've both cleaned up and had a few cookies. Probably read and write here and nap, then go out later for some food. Takoradi doesn't seem like such a bad place. We're close to the beach and there is a golf course nearby though I didn't see anyone playing.

We're 1/3 into the trip and likely it will pick up speed from this point on.

Some thoughts on Dancing Cultures. Write the proposal to take advantage of my travels to Bali, Java, Thailand, and Ghana at my own expense so the basis for doing a number of chapters—focus on issues for each of those—and apply for a faculty fellowship to go to India for one month to study with Shamala and the balance of the year to write the book. Also do ethnography of Boulder dances.

Then begin now to make concrete plans about working on the dome house to start next spring or fall. Sort of speed that whole thing up by a year.

Music. Take up Africana drumming. Check into taking a course from John Gham (?) and take lessons from Judy Henderson. Buy one or two drums here. And take some African dancing classes at Dance West or somewhere. Could start drumming immediately and the course from John Gham as more support for my Faculty Fellowship proposal. If things worked out with Mary [my God what am I saying?] then we could ... share a house .... [do I dare contemplate this?]

I'm thinking of Mary, but is it of her or just the woman I left behind? She is sweet and fun and game. She's working out, but we've never done anything physical together. She's intelligent but not well read, etc. She's mature but still open and adventurous. She may soon have some financial means. I don't know.

Had a moment of seeing Emily in my mind, seeing her more plainly, just the physical person. She ain't that attractive—narrow face, beady eyes, bad posture. She wasn't that bright—far less ambitious than Mary. Far less independent. I'm so pleased that I'm never thinking of her on this trip. I'm often reminded of Asia, but not of her. When I am reminded of her it is of her freaking out. I was really patient. She was amazingly fortunate to have had that experience with me. Now is the time to put all that in perspective and build my life the way I wanted.

Yes, maybe studying drumming would be an awesome thing to do. And dance lots more with Mary. Get her involved with hip hop. Or the two of us with ballroom or something else. Take swing or country with her that would be fun.

Later. Had dinner at Shalimar Restaurant. Had samosas and fried rice. Pretty good. Then we bought a supply of snack crackers for the train for tomorrow. Wrote a few letters, confirmed our ride in the morning. Listening to some music and hanging. Seems fine. Jen's still suffering the itch but remains cheerful about it.

Last night Jen and I were talking, and I was thinking that Kokrobite was expecting electricity in six months. I told her that we were surely among the last to visit villages like that one and Busua before they get electricity. Indeed, this morning I asked Frank and he said it was scheduled to arrive in Busua in August, that is, next month. With that comes the world via TV. CNN Baywatch Arnold Schwarzenegger. Ishmael, who at 15 had never been anywhere beyond Busua (well maybe here to Takoradi) and who talks with travelers with a keen interest to learn enough about them to imagine their country, their culture, will suddenly have it—the world—accessible. Jerry at Cape Coast, talked all about world politics etc. While Ishmael didn't have that experience. Jerry hadn't traveled either—not even to Kakun Park—but he was worldly wise due to electricity and CNN. We maybe got a little taste of something that will soon cease to exist for almost all the world. Even quite a few of those villages in the Himalaya have electricity and phone via satellite. Then when phones depend on satellite only there will be cell phones in every village. An advertisement indicated that many Ghanaians have cell phones.

When we departed from Frank today, he expressed such fondness for us, and I was again moved by the generosity and softness of many Ghanaians.

### ***Kumasi, July 23 - 29***

**July 23, 1997**

We like this city. I sort of knew before we even got here that it would be great. Even as we got off the train it was a good sign that no one jumped to get our bags. Few took notice and we even had to go to the street to get a taxi. There are cars everywhere. The traffic is awful. There are people selling things everywhere. But there is a friendly upbeat kind of feeling everywhere.

We went to the National Cultural Center right away to find Mary on Andy's tip. On the way we went by the market. Amazing. Huge and just packed. Supposed to be 10,000 stalls there said to be the largest market in West Africa. Hard to believe and I've seen it.

When we got to NCC we went to Kentish Kitchen. The waiters ran out grabbed our bags knowing that we were to see Mary. We followed. She is a large beautiful powerful friendly woman. She manages the restaurant, and it seems she does so with an iron hand. We had lunch, not bad, then visited the museum and craft center. Mary said we would wait until she came home. She said she had a room that would be good for us. At the craft center we enjoyed seeing carvings, talking drums (\$4 to \$6) and all sorts of stuff. Jen really liked three entwined figures carved from a single piece of wood that opens out to hold a calabash or gourd. One version was a carving of harder wood of three figures (abstract) with joined hands holding up the world. The clerk told us it shows that we need each other, that one person can't hold up the world alone. Jen really liked this one too, so I bought it for her as an early birthday gift. We also bought a game called Oware. Has 12 dishes with 4 peas in each dish. We went to the restaurant, had another soda and learned how to play the game. It is fun. Jen had read that if you want to meet people just play the game in public. Sure enough. Two guys came by and asked us if they could play. They sat down and showed us. Very friendly.

Then Mary told us she'd called a taxi for us and we were all loaded up and it brought us here to her place. She has a large, lovely home in a suburb (it really is) and behind her house is a little row of rooms, one of which she rents out. It will serve us fine. There is even a lounge with TV next to it, though I'm not interested in TV.

We've showered and relaxed and now are enjoying a pleasant evening. Mary is home and giving us the word on everything. Such a lovely woman.

We got up at 4:45 a.m. and the taxi came for us at 5 or shortly after. The train left at 6 a.m. sharp, surprisingly. Most of the area was rain forest. Lots of corn patches here and there cut into the forest. Very dense growth. Bamboo and plenty of huge trees.



A few kilometers before we arrived at Kumasi, the landscape turned to what I think is border savannah.

Later. Sat outside and visited with Mary for a long time. She's quite a woman. Kentish Kitchen is her business. She's lived and studied in Europe and London. She wants to start a new restaurant at the airport which will soon become an International Airport. And so on. Told us about the accidental death of her brother. He fell out of a five-story window. She even showed us a photo of him in his casket. Her daughter Manuela played and acted like a three-year-old. Then we went out to an elegant Chinese restaurant, me in tee shirt and dirty jeans shorts, and had a very nice meal. So happy I'm feeling better. It is fairly cool here. Have a fan that does a little. And we're protected from mosquitoes. Jen and I played several games of Oware. It is really fun. A counting strategy game.

Jen wants to go round Kumasi tomorrow for her birthday. We may take one of the girls here with us to help us find cloth places and get good prices.

Mary has two girls working for her. One is 16 and has a baby girl, Ya, born in February. Mary feeds and clothes the both of them I think as the return for what the girl does for her. They look after her daughter and keep up the place. Mary is also refurbishing her house, so she'll have a couple more rooms to rent.

Well, we're full and we're happy. Ready soon for bed. With my health back and with some rest, I'm happy. Hope Jen's itching stops soon.

Had dreams last night I wanted to sketch. The most enigmatic one was rather long and dealt with me falling in love with a very attractive and rather young woman. I could see her clearly in my dream and sort of remember her appearance—no one I know now, darn it. I was much in love with her and so pleased to have her as a partner. In one scene I was driving a car that seemed smallish. She was a passenger. Seemed we were in a parking structure of some sort, under construction. I stopped and she said that something was in the way and she jumped out and moved it. Seems like it was something like a screw jack.

Well, that one is interesting. Am I supposed to fall in love with a beautiful young woman who looks like the one in my dream? Or am I supposed to fall in love with a woman who will remove the obstacles that are in my path?

The next dream sort of seemed connected to the former one. Jen was in it and seemed to be talking to me and this partner of mine. She said she got the kitties in, but she couldn't get Khumbu in. I heard a bark and said, "oh there he is." He was with another dog and didn't want to come. I seemed angry with him and he seemed to want to bite me.

Well, I have that one to take care of when I get home. Maybe dog training for the two of us.

In the third dream I was in my house. I knew it was my house, but it wasn't the dome. Seemed to have lots of rooms and many wings. I was going through the house observing that there were groups of people living in every room, even

every corner of every room. I couldn't seem to find my stuff. Finally, at one end of a room that was divided by a curtain with one group living in the other end, sat on the floor the components of my computer. Nothing was hooked up.

Maybe this dream suggests I presently find my house crowded by others living in it. My work (computer) is disconnected and difficult to find because of it.

**July 24, 1997** (Jen's birthday)

Started out in a funk. Jen was sad about not being with her friends for her birthday and had general sadness. I can appreciate that. Plus, Mary has turned out to be rather dominating and overpowering. More on that later perhaps. We waited round here quite a while then got a ride, with several detour stops, when she went to Kentish Kitchen. We had a breakfast there then headed for Kumasi. We were looking for native cloth and it took us some time to find any at all. We stopped at the P.O. and mailed our letters, bought some African batik cards that we found (have seen them everywhere). Tried some awful bottled beverage we couldn't drink. Bought some ice cream before we thought we shouldn't eat it. Had taken a few bites but it didn't taste all that great. Then Jen's funk caught up with me and we both gave in to it for a while. Part of the process really, I know that. I felt I'd dragged Jen into this terrible experience and it will be too long and hard and the most it will do for her is to teach her school lessons about geography, race, ethnicity, economy, etc. But we moved through it and found neat cloth. Jen bought some flip flop sandals (goat skin) from a kid at a stall. Neat. And we went back to the cultural center to chill. Then we found lots of craft places there. Bought a few things. Found great drums. Cool paintings. I bought Jen one for her birthday and she bought a couple. I bought some cloth (batik). Then we went to the pavilion by the cultural center and some Swiss kids (16-18 years old, maybe some were more like 12-14) were doing a performance for the Africans. They wore leos and did modern style dancing and gymnastics and folk dancing. Seemed so weird to experience more European cultural performances than African. But between times the Africans played drums and a man and woman danced. That was cool.

Had dinner at the Chinese place. Not bad as a birthday dinner. Jen wore her new shoes, but they killed her feet. She walked home barefoot. Had a great chat over dinner about me and Mary. Jen was interested in what I have been thinking about her. She is very encouraging as far as Mary is concerned. She thinks she's cool. She doesn't understand why I'm so reluctant about her and the relationship. Valuable for me to hear. Time for a little Oware.

Several games later—the game is getting to be very fun. It is shifting quite a lot as we learn the various strategies. Cool.

Well, things seem to be okay now. We're okay and having some fun. Lots to reflect on. The cab driver this morning said he wanted her to stay in Ghana and

marry him. He said he wanted a white wife. Seems like he said he wanted to order one. The women in the African art store said that they thought Jen was very beautiful. Many men and girls look at her. I think they think she is beautiful. And of course, she is, but what are cultural ideas of beauty? Why would a Ghanaian man even think of having a white wife much less talk about it?

Well, my parents are surely at Elaine's tonight. Hope all is well with them.

Maybe I'll veg on a little Clive Barker before sleepy time.

**July 25, 1997** (Craft Day—way cool)

We got a driver to take us to craft villages today. We started shortly after 9 a.m. We had him take us to Windmill Café and Bakery for a fast breakfast and then to change money. Then we went to the village area where they make and sell Kenta, the traditional Ashanti woven cloth. The village is Bonurire (BONE-wee-ray). At the heart of town is a row of shops all selling Kenta. We went from shop to shop looking and pricing. A couple of guys finally told us about the cloth. Some of it has names. Some is double weave, some single, and some silk, some rayon, some cotton. Some is old, some is new. We began to learn and understand and get a sense of price. Then we bargained. Guys were following Jenny giving her their addresses, trying to get her to send them her shoes (the major Adidas tennis shoes she has) or just chatting with her. She really enjoyed herself. I bought one double length 4" wide strip, 16' long. Jen bought two strips. I bought a cool double weave whose center is green, 4 strips wide. Jen bought some plastic beads for 1000 cedis (kind of a joke, they asked her 9,000 for them and admitted they are plastic). One guy gave Jen a little Kenta scrap. We got in the car and one guy had tried hard to sell me an old silk piece. I got in the car. The driver went to buy some food. I thought I might get a good price. I went to the shop. I'd looked at an old piece, beautiful. He said 50,000. I said, 40,000. He said, "45,000. It is my final price." I said, "okay?" and turned to go to the car. He called out, "okay, you can have it for 40,000." Amazing. A huge piece of silk cloth hand woven and antique for \$20 US. Just as we were pulling away one guy runs out and hands Jen a long strip of the black and white cotton weave. He said, "I just want to give it to you." So nice.

Then we drove along seeing Kenta cloth being made along the way. We stopped at one place where they were making Adinkra cloth. It is stamped with designs. Lots was black and for funeral dress. They brought out one piece of red that is 3 wide strips of red stamped cloth joined together with a Kenta stripe about 2" wide. The whole piece is 4' x 5' or so. I thought Jen would be interested. They explained all the stamps to her and what they mean. She bargained from 20,000 to 15,000 (\$7.50 US). She took photos of the young people weaving the black and white cloth. When we got back to the car, two 8" strips were hanging out the window. One guy had gone with us. He said, "I sell you one for just 4,000." What the hell. A great deal.

Next was the wood carving village. It was fun too, more active. Bought more Oware games. Jen and I both also bought male/female painted figures. Nice.

We came back to Kentish Kitchen for a midafternoon lunch. It was very pleasant and restful there and everyone is so friendly. Mary fixed me some fried plantains. I guess I know they were a type of banana, but I'd forgotten. With them were beans and a fish (head, eyes, and all). It was good but I didn't eat much of the fish, though it wasn't bad. Stephen, a waiter, stopped and taught us some Twi words, and of course he gave us his address. It rained and we enjoyed some rest there for a while. We came home and will stay in this evening. Maybe getting a little snack nearby.

Notice I'm now using some Ghanaian English phrases like "small small" to mean little.

Oh, while we were at Kentish Kitchen the very stylin' lady who runs Black Africa Arts stopped by to visit us. She was wearing a studding dress of royal blue with some parts made of Kenta cloth. She is gorgeous. Her name is Maggie (Margaret). We told her we might be still interested in the drums at her shop. She caught the plural and asked if we were interested in both. We said, yes. She said if so, she'd reduce the price by maybe 10,000. The big one is 80,000, the small one 60,000 (I think). She said she was glad we were still interested because she said a man came by and asked the price. She said she told him 100,000. The boy in her shop asked her why she named that price and she said it was because she thought Jen might come back and buy it. Of course, that cinched the deal with us. We'll go tomorrow and put down some money and she'll hold them until we come back here. She said her mother also makes cloth, the combo of tie-dye and wax batik. I love those so we'll look at them. Such a nice lady. She should also get some paintings for us too, by the next time we come back.

We've now looked at all our stuff and are resting. I may go get a shower while I'm still warm. Then I'll read and maybe write another letter to Mary. I think she may be staying at my house this weekend. I don't know.

Jen seems happier, though this morning she was kind of still in a funk. I think the balance of the trip will be enjoyable and will move along faster. She'll enjoy it.

### **July 26, 1997**

Weird dream this morning. Race. Bike or barefoot carrying a big backpack. One part thought the scene was beautiful and I stopped to admire it, but it transformed into an industrial scene with factories, etc. I thought the place was supposed to be Aspen. Then I thought maybe I was going the wrong direction. Confused I turned around to go the other way. Mary, the woman in my hip-hop class was with me and then we were running. I was barefoot and carrying a large backpack. Not so heavy, but bulky. She told me she was going to get a divorce. At one point she told me her objective was to try to keep up with me. She said

she didn't know why. We went into a garage that was an elevator and then another one. We started along the trail. Suddenly, I knew I couldn't go on and I had three reasons for not going. The first was that Khumbu was running loose and I needed to find him. I sort of forgot the other two reasons at that point. There was a big animal sort of like a bear running with us. There were various light golden retrievers nearby, but none were Khumbu. I went back down the trail and my car was there. One bike was loaded in the back and I was thinking about Khumbu as I loaded another bike. I was sort of angry about him being loose. I had the passing thought that I wonder if Em would be concerned or know if something happened to Khumbu. There was also a bike wheel near the car that had the tire and tube mostly off. I chucked the whole thing on the top of the bikes. Seems that was the end. I was headed off to try to find Khumbu.

Don't know why Khumbu is now in my dreams. He's always running loose. I'm always needing to get him and control him. He seems not to want that. In the dream I acted on responsibility. I was a little angry at Khumbu for being loose.

Mid-afternoon. Went out this morning for African adventures. Jen is much more present, and I'm pleased. Makes me much happier. The same taxi driver took us in the morning. Stopped at Kentish Kitchen to leave off stuff. Then he said, "if you want to go to Windmill, I'll take you." We had planned to go there but didn't say anything to him. Don't know how he knew. This sort of thing has happened often. Had a leisurely breakfast. Three groups of Europeans were nearby (actually, the only other people there) and among them they had four copies of Lonely Planet guide to West Africa. We didn't have ours with us today.

Visited long there. I may try to get Jen a better car before she goes to Washington, a 4x4. I'll have to figure. We talked about cultural experiences, etc. After breakfast we got our tickets to Tamale for Monday morning. 6:30 a.m., leave at 7:30. We'll try to leave a bunch of stuff here at Mary's, since we'll be back here later in the week.

Bought some food for the bus trip at the Supermarket, then headed for the market. There are some 10,000 vendors there and we just crossed a corner of it. Narrow little walkways just wide enough for two people to pass and the little buildings gorged with cheap junk spilling their wares into the space. All the things of one kind—soap, kids' clothes, belts, whatever—are all in the same place. Every shop has the same stuff. Amazing.

We found some beads. Asked the price which took two or three people talking together to work out. Once they thought I'd agreed to buy, but I was just verifying the price. They asked 9,000 cedis for four small strands of unpolished African glass beads. I offered 5,000. The old woman shook her head in disgust, took the beads from me, and tossed them back in the pile. Another woman came up. I offered her 5,000 and she yelled that it was not enough. I'd been observing

the locals bargaining with each other and knew there was lots of yelling involved. She finally said, 8,000. I said 5,000. She yelled again. This time I tossed them down and started to walk away. She called out, “okay, 5,000.” She had a huge smile on her face. She wanted to know if Jen is my wife or daughter. Suddenly she was best friends.

It took us about half an hour to just get out of the market. Then we wound up in a tro-tro park and that was more frightening than the market, so we dove back in, walked along a railroad track where they sell used clothing. Huge piles of clothes. The sellers would dig through the clothes, pull out one, and stand there shouting 1,000 cedis, over and over. At one place two guys were standing together. One would say 5,000 over and over and the other was sort of rapping the words and numbers in a rhythmic fashion.

The worst part of the market for me was the section that had piles of something that looked like fried intestines.

When we finally got free, we went to Kentish Kitchen for water and later lunch. Jen bought more beads, and we went to see Maggie at African Art to put down money on the drums. Jen bought more beads there. We also learned that next Saturday from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. or so at the Cultural Center there will be African dancing and drumming. We’ll try to get back for that.

Then we came home to rest before we go out to Oldtimers Club at a downtown hotel where there is supposed to be African dancing and stuff. We’ll hope.

### **July 27, 1997**

Woke up early this morning teeming with energy, both for here and for later. Want to make lists of things to do when I get back home. Wanted to go to the library at the culture center today, but that didn’t work out because it was closed. Jen and I had a great conversation today. During it I began to think that there is continuity in movement vocabulary between traditional dancing and modern night club dancing to Highlife music. We saw some traditional dancing at the culture center and it involved an opening phase where especially the man worked on arranging his traditional outfit, a huge piece of cloth. The same seemed to take place last night at the Old-timer’s Club. Both dances were done pretty much without much footwork, very subtle, with the torso swaying and undulating to the feeling generated by the music. The woman in both cases wear the traditional print dress, puffy sleeves, head scarf, and the mid-body wrap. This wrap is used in dancing by some women. They hold the ends of it. One let hers fall to the floor for a time while she was dancing, and she didn’t pick it up. In the traditional dancing the men and women seemed to dance separately, with little attention to one another, for a while. Then, at other times, they did moves that were the same and done together, though more side by side than face to face. In the club the couples—male female, both men, and both women—were more attentive to one

another. It is clearly a couples dance though not to do the same things ever. Most of the time the couples were face to face, just like our club dancing, but some danced briefly front to back.

The hypothesis is that the movement vocabulary is relatively standard even as the culture moves to club dancing. The music is very different. Traditional dancing is done to powerful polyrhythmic drumming while there is a soft non-compulsive simple rhythm in Highlife with fuller orchestration and invariably singing. Clearly the words, likely in Twi, are important because I could see that the women were singing the lyrics along with the recording.

Jen danced a couple of times with African men who invited her, but she wouldn't dance with me. I thought she might have felt slightly embarrassed being with me, though when I suggested it, she nearly threw a fit, which may mean it was close to home.

We got home around 10. Jen seemed to be eager to get home, more so than me and she fell immediately to sleep. We each had a large Star Beer, and some guy bought her one that we shared. The beer, too little food, and a busy day was enough to cash us both in.

Today the place was shut down pretty much especially through the morning. Church meetings everywhere. I heard chanting to the accompaniment of the double bell before 6 a.m. Then Christian hymns pouring out of everywhere. We went to Windmill Bakery for a late breakfast. No one much there but one young Ghanaian man was nearby. At one point he asked us our names. Then he said that no one had ever given him \$100 or 100 pounds and would we do so. It was such a ludicrous statement I asked him to repeat it and when I'd confirmed it, I found it so insulting as to deserve no answer. So I didn't. Then in a few minutes he said, "I am waiting." Jen told him she didn't have \$100. He kept insisting. Then he asked where we are from. Jen told him the US. He said, "are you sure? Are you sure you aren't from Great Britain?" Too weird.

We walked on to the culture center to see if the library was open. Then hung out near where a church meeting was going on. No singing. Maybe 20 to 30 people all dressed up attending. The leader sat behind a table in front. I noticed women would go up front one at a time and at some point, leave money. Occasionally a man in the congregation would stand up and talk. I don't know. Nobody is studying native forms of Christianity. Surely this is Christian only in dressing. In belief and conception, it is surely something very different. That meeting was in a pavilion on the culture center grounds. There were meetings in every little shelter area (many of them) and even in little groups crowded up on benches under big trees. One featured the men all sitting in front with the women (far fewer) sitting behind and separate. The women wore head coverings more in the style of nuns or Muslim women. The depth of mystery regarding all this is

significant. Surely most of the world now practices an indigenous form of Christianity and we don't know anything about it.

Later we saw Maggie. Chatted a bit. She said there was some sort of festival going on at the palace. That meant we had to walk round one end of the market. Jen was for it, but by the time we got to the palace we were both worn out and while we could still hear drumming, they turned us away saying that the festival was over. Rats. I really want some dance/music experience, something that can be the basis for teaching and writing about African dancing.

We got a taxi back, picked up some bread, showered, ate, packed and we've been writing though I think Jen is now sleeping.

Ya, the 16-year-old house girl just took the clothes off the line. She did as I've seen others. With her baby, Ya, tied on her back, she takes a piece off the line, folds it, and places it on her head. Then the next and next and so on with the stack of clean folded clothes growing on her head. All very handy, or perhaps I should say "heady." We leave for Tamale and Molé very early in the morning. We're both ready for a few days with animals and nature and get some rest from dense cultural experiences. Funny how an hour or two can satiate you for a whole day.

Think we've decided to stay downtown in Kumasi when we return next Saturday. More convenient and we want a place with a fan. Mary has one but it now does not work. We can't stay in the room because it is too hot. Don't know what we'll do for dinner this evening. Such a pain and I'm always hungry.

Leave tomorrow very early and we're both ready to be on our way. Want to see big animals and just be with nature away from so much culture for a few days. We're both counting the days. I don't actually have anxiety and Jen seems fairly satisfied, but home is calling.

What am I thinking about Mary? I'd love to have that work out, though I remember thinking the same of my marriage. I think the two of us could be happy and enjoy life together. We could build a home together (as in make and redo), we could travel, we would be pretty compatible and grow together. Clearly at this point I'm not wild about her, don't feel powerful love for her. I miss her. I'm fond of her. I'd prefer she was a biker and highly fit, though she keeps telling me to give her some time. Would prefer her to be slimmer. Would prefer her to be more broadly educated, though clearly, she ain't stupid. But there is much. She is caring, sweet, generous, pretty, etc. Wonder how I can move to decide what to do?

Really want to write more internet pieces this fall. Want a better computer and some fancy graphics software.

Really want to start my own house projects no later than Spring. Maybe start with two additions and then main floor and save the upper floor and basement for another time. Seems there should be a way to support the dome from the



outside so that I can cut through the 4-foot riser and the dome triangle to put in the door I need in the corner of the room. Save that. Create an entry hall where the west deck is now.

Really want to do some drumming. Take lessons from John Gahm. That could beef up my engagement with African stuff. Could do some African dance, but not sure.

Will need to go to Lubbock at some point, but don't know when exactly. Mom and Dad should now be in their new home. Hope they are okay and everything went smoothly. [Jen was still at Fort Lewis at this point].

Would like to go to Durango in the fall to visit Jen, maybe with Mary, maybe Thanksgiving. Want to think about different cars for Jen now and Corbin later. [then I wrote in list form these possibilities and plans].

### ***Tamale, July 29 - 30***

**July 29, 1997**

The heart of Ghana or of our African experience. A dusty hot dirt street town in Northern Ghana [it is more like mid-Ghana] surrounded by hundreds of villages with round houses and conical thatch roofs. Looks like Africa and feels like it too. A bustling city with a little of any and everything.

We stayed in our first air-con hotel here and I'm glad of that despite the 53,000 cedis (\$27) we're paying. Actually, things seem higher priced up here.

We thought we'd make it to Molé yesterday, but the bus from Kumasi left late and took forever. Didn't get here until 4 or so yesterday and the bus to Molé leaves around 2 p.m. since we're not that thrilled with Tamale, we plan to go on back to Kumasi on Friday and won't get in there until late and will have to find a hotel. Still, we want to go to the dance thing at the cultural center on Saturday.

Had another experience here this morning. Small boy 14 who took us around then hit us up for money. We took him to lunch. That should have been enough.

We bought a couple pieces of gonja cloth here. It is woven in strips about 4 inches wide then sewn together. We each got a blue plaid design (same one) and it cost \$12.50 for a 2-yard piece that is at least a yard wide.

I'm really looking forward to Molé though it is a major effort to get up here and go there. But I want to see animals and have less cultural intensity.

Here in Tamale, many ride big coaster bikes. Lots of them look new. Quite a few motor bikes too. Women and friends side saddle on the back. The goats are much larger up here. The people wear more clothing, especially the women. Lots of women wear head coverings. It is much hotter up here too.

I went out at 6 a.m. this morning for bus tickets and yet I think we could have gotten them at any time.

We ate last night at a place called Sparkles and today at a place called Souingers (?). The waitress was pretty, but she seemed to have a bit of an attitude.

We posted letters to Will and to Mary this morning. Jen wants Will to come to Boulder to be with her until she leaves to go back to Durango. And we requested pizza and other stuff from Mary. We hope we can get on an earlier Western Pacific flight from Newark to DIA. We'll try anyway.

In a few hours we'll hopefully be at the game reserve and enjoy that place for a couple of days. Can read and write some letters and hike and watch animals.

Tamale is not too much of a happening place, but I'm glad we came up here. Another image of Africa.

Apparently, they had a festival here last week. I asked about it. The various chiefs of the villages and districts came. Sure they came with their stool and their entourage with an umbrella and to drum accompaniment. Then there is singing, dancing, and drumming. Think it is too bad that I haven't gotten a chance to see one of these festivals, could do much better with it no doubt. Probably should have worked harder at preparing this trip, but then we do what we do and must make the best of what we do.

We're enjoying an hour of air con before we head for the bus and the long four-hour ride to Molé. Should be fun once we get there.

Almost 6 p.m. Sitting on the road (literally) only about an hour outside of Tamale. The bus overheated and we're stuck here until someone can go back and bring another bus. All the ladies and their kids quickly made themselves at home on the roadside. The men seem mostly to have disappeared, have no clue where. Funny that our desire to go to the game park and to have a nature rather than culture experience has led to intense cultural experience. And the effort to go somewhere to rest for a couple of days has been our hardest travel.

Even leaving the hotel was trying because it came up a downpour and the taxi was 20 minutes late.

We'll get there I'm sure, but it may be very late tonight. This time in two weeks will put us well on our way home. I'm eager. It is quite beautiful here, dark lush green vegetation and village shacks, some in ruin. We're near the Volta River system at the farthest reaches of Volta Lake.

Wanting rest relaxation, reading, and writing and a chance to see some animals. Elephants and cool ones. Jen is just great at this. So patient and cheerful. How awesome.

When our bus replacement comes there will be mayhem, I'm sure. Getting the bus loaded the first time was incredible. Jen and I were talking about how much humor one needs to endure this. Little did we know.

### ***Molé National Park, July 30 – August 1***

**July 30, 1997**

Well, we made it and that, in itself, is amazing. We left Tamale at 3 p.m. and got here about 10 p.m. There were 65 kilometers or more of washboard heavily

ruted dirt road. The last 5 kilometers were almost impassible, but the bus lumbered over it all. As we drove along through the night a bit of lantern light would indicate the occasional village and often, we'd stop to let someone off. It was really cool to be riding along with people mostly women and many had kids, who were from these villages. While the villages look so primitive the people seem awesome. Most are very beautiful. Jen is sort of blown away by how attractive the women look in their outfits of a half dozen, I think, print cloths in bold colors and their head ties, etc. By the time we got to the park and the hotel Jen and I and two white European women were the only ones on the bus. The bus parks here and departs at 6 a.m. for Tamale. We'll be on it Friday morning, betting back to Tamale hopefully by noon, then a bus leaves for Kumasi either at 4 or 6 p.m., that will be a 6-hour ride.

A little while ago Jen and I were here on our veranda overlooking the savannah [it was really a dense jungle] and writing when a group of girls walked by each carrying water on her head. They were probably six to ten years old. They all had on school uniforms. We spoke to them and they put down their water and asked for pens. Jen gave them hers. They were all excited and I took their photo with Jen. Then I gave them a pen and they all lined up to have Jen take our photos. Then some, the older ones, requested special pictures with either Jen or me, or wearing Jen's sunglasses. They wanted our address and then I asked for their addresses. One wrote her address, then each one wrote her name. Some struggled a little with that and finally an older one helped each write her name. As they left each one came to us, shook our hands, and curtsied to us. So sweet. They are also so beautiful.

Jen did a little aerobic exercise this morning. Then a few sit-ups and lunges. She said it made her feel much better. I did about 10 lunges and let that be that. Too humid. And somehow out of place.

When we went over to register this morning, they told us there was an elephant out at one of the water holes and took us to a place where we could see it. He was probably half mile out, but you could certainly see it well enough. We'll go on a guided hike this afternoon at 3:30 if it doesn't rain. Then we'll go on a walk tomorrow morning and afternoon. Hope we see many animals and more up close.

I finished my black and white role this morning and am putting in high speed color slide film for the animals.

Seems a bit hot and sticky here though it is cloudy and occasionally there is a good breeze. It rained heavily through the night and it rained yesterday. That is not good for viewing animals because they don't need to come to the water hole below the hotel to drink and bathe. But we'll go out there to see them. This is very restful here. A nice transition and breath-catching time before we get

involved in our last rounds of travel and activity. We have pretty much every day from this point on planned. The time should pass quickly enough.

5 p.m. Just got back from a bush walk guided by Dadzie. It was wonderful. Just the two of us and the rifle carrying guide. We hadn't been out 30 minutes when we saw an elephant. Then we saw cad, a kind of antelope, bush backs, a kind of deer, wart hogs, and then we came onto a herd of elephants, maybe 15 of all sizes. We were at a location where they couldn't catch our scent and they just walked right towards us. I snapped off lots of photos. They were way cool. We watched them quite a long time and then moved on. Dadzie explained to us the eco-balance of all the animals. He was defending the elephants pushing over some of the trees. Kind of naïve ecology, but he was very excited about how everything depends on everything else and talked about it as though he'd discovered it on his own. Maybe he had. He was thrilled to show us so much and we signed him up to take us again in the morning, 6:30 a.m. for a longer walk.

6:40 p.m. We just ate spaghetti with mystery meat and mushroom sauce. Weird, but hell why are we eating spaghetti in Africa anyway?

There have been monkeys in the tree outside our room all afternoon. And we observed and photographed elephants bathing this afternoon. Should be some amazing pictures since the green savannah [forest] background was magnificent. We've seen so much today, wonderful, and we hadn't expected to see the big African animals.

This place has a beauty unlike any I've experienced before. It is spectacular only in its extent. From this ridge you can see endless savannah [forest]. But in the long view it is all much the same, the subtlety of variety on closer view is how it is remarkably beautiful. The distinctive trees, the subtle changing in color, the constant presence of animals. It is really something to experience. So glad I'm having this opportunity.

Had a bucket shower this afternoon. Nothing so amazing about that, but their water system is not working here so they bring you water in a big bucket that they dip from a dead swimming pool. It has a little green water in it as well as a nice population of frogs. So I'm showered in diluted frog piss this afternoon and it was quite refreshing actually.

A few schoolboys stopped by this afternoon. They left a whole list of things they wanted me to send them from Accra. Been through this routine many times now. Of course, they worked us all to be photographed together. The boys aren't as fun as the girls. They are more forward and seem ready to ask for anything.

### **July 31, 1997**

We met Dadzie at 6:30 a.m. and headed out on our walk. We walked to a place maybe one kilometer from here where we saw a whole bunch of baboons and a red monkey. We saw cab and waterbuck a plenty also. Then we walked down into the area below the hotel to the far water hole looking for crocodile.

When we got there, we might have seen one with its eyes above water for a minute, but no others.

We started back and saw the same group of elephants we saw yesterday. One elephant has a broken tusk, but they were sort of spread out and Dadzie thought it was a bit dangerous to approach them.

As we were about back, we learned that a dozen elephants were bathing in the close by water hole. We went to the water's edge and watched them for half an hour. Got many good pictures, I hope. Then we came on up to the hotel. Three-and-a-half-hour walk. Felt great. The elephants stayed in the water a long time. Then they went to the meadow and their black bodies (all wet) looked so shiny against the bright green background. I couldn't resist taking a bunch more photos. There are still a couple out there now at noon,

Dadzie was a great guide and wanted us to write him and send him photos that we took of him. He kept saying to try not to forget.

Jen and I sat at the overlook to the water hole for an hour and chatted. Discussed cleaning out her room and me renting it out this fall. Would be a way to help pay for a car for her. Might be good to do for 9 months. Would be \$3600 toward a car. And it would put me in a situation better to start remodeling in the spring. Might also shift the balance with Brad a bit.

Had a dream about Emily last night. Weird. Can't recall much detail, but I woke up with that feeling I've often had regarding dreams of her. Guess it means that, though it has been about a year since we broke up, I still have lots of feelings around her. When I think of her looks now and even how she travelled, I don't have so many illusions, but I still have the feelings. I just wish I knew how to let these feelings go and how to allow myself to feel that way about someone else, like Mary. I need to work on that for sure.

The green monkeys in the tree outside our room woke us up at dawn. They were chattering away and flying through the tree. They are in the tree now. Seems there is something there they like to eat.

Like to hear the elephants, their deep breath, the sounds of clacking ivories when they play rough with each other, and their trumpeting.

Whole herd of baboons just outside our house when we came back from enjoying a cup of Nescafe instant coffee at \$1 each. Funny the costs of things here. The baby baboons were riding on their mommies' backs. Maybe the African women learned this way of carrying their babies from the baboons.

## ***Tamale, August 1***

**August 1, 1997**

The bus left Molé a few minutes before 6 a.m. and we were on it. We made two long stops before we'd gone 20 kilometers. Still, we made it to Tamale in only 5 hours. Got our tickets to Kumasi and stored our bags with a man at the

STC station. We changed \$200 in travelers' cheques at a cool air con bank. Had lunch at Sparkles. Shopped for some crafts and beads. Jen bought sandals and I bought some beads. Bought Jen a couple goat skin small purses. She bought me a cowrie shell bracelet. Now we're back at Sparkles drinking water and awaiting the time to go to the bus. It is hot and raining lightly. Tamale is much hotter, dustier, more humid and less comfortable than anywhere else we have been.

Last night we had gone to bed to read a while. We had our mosquito coil, the brand is Savior, burning. Suddenly the lights and fan went off. It was pitch dark and we lay there wondering if the power would come back on. After a bit, Jen said, "We have only the light of our Savior." I really cracked up. But she was right. We only had the glow from the coil.

We mailed our last letters today and we may beat them back. This is Friday and we nearly stumbled into the middle of Muslim worship a while ago.

The endless string of young kids, and not so young kids, asking the standard series of questions is wearing. We're getting better at just telling kids that we're going and telling them goodbye.

We won't arrive in Kumasi until perhaps midnight. Hope we won't have problems finding a room. We'll get a taxi.

Walked through the Tamale market a while ago. Bought a string of old glass beads from an old guy. Second such string today. Paid 5000 cedis (\$2.50 US).

## ***Kumasi, August 2 - 6***

**August 3, 1997** (Muron Hotel Annex II)

Recovering from return trip from Tamale and Molé. Left Molé at 6 a.m. got in Kumasi at 12:30 a.m. next morning. Got a taxi easy enough, but no rooms at two inns and the driver didn't know where anything is. Finally, found a creepy room and the driver wanted 15,000. I gave him 10,000 and told him to consider himself lucky getting that much.

Raining the next morning, yesterday, I woke up with a splitting headache and it didn't let up until about 10 p.m. last night. Still have residual headache. It was really intense.

Went to the cultural doings at the Culture Center. Our reason for coming all this way back in one day. It wasn't that much. Highlife, church group type singing, sort of comedy group, a poet, etc. One group of women singers was sort of traditional. That was nice. Still the event gave us a filling out of our experience.

We got moved to this hotel mid-morning yesterday and the bathroom is clean and that pleases Jen.

We saw Mary yesterday and she wanted to know if we'd been to her house. Seemed she was disappointed to learn we wouldn't be staying with her. Still, it is cleaner, cheaper, and much more convenient here.

Jen is sort of bummed today. Kind of a down day. I'm trying to chill so I can keep my headache from returning. I think it is congestion and I've snorted tiger balm to try to help it. Last night it was so bad that Jen consulted the Himalayan medical book to see what she could do. Sweet of her. She is getting very eager to be home, to talk with Will and to be more active. We're both feeling like blobs and like the trip is wearing. Guess I better get my butt in gear and get us out there to enjoy the day.

Early evening. Very laidback day. This afternoon we went out looking for cloth and found that Sunday everything except the market is closed. A couple of kids hit us up for our addresses right away and I felt sort of pissed. Guess because about half a dozen hit us up in a five-minute period. So we ripped on stuff for a while and walked up to the Culture Center. We went to one craft place and each bought a necklace. I bought a blue one I think Mary would like. We scored zero on other stuff.

Hung at Kentish Kitchen mostly because Stephen was working there. He kept coming to our table to teach us Ashanti words.

I asked him about the cheek scars. He said it was done at birth, apparently without ceremony, at least he didn't seem to be aware of it or misunderstood me. I think there has to be one though. The markings tell the culture group—Ashanti, Fante, Ga, etc. He said that the government was discouraging it now because it makes discrimination easier. If no one had the scars, no one could immediately tell which group a person is from. Though I think some language distinction would be obvious. There are many languages in Ghana, but I think many must be dialectically related because it seems a Ghanaian can go anywhere and still be understood in a native language.

I think it is very interesting that English is the official language of the country, but it is clearly no one's mother tongue. Everyone learns English in school, not at home. That's why all the kids have the litany "Hi. How are you? I am fine, thank you." Thus, in conversing in English with a Ghanaian, they clearly don't know the fine, or medium, points of English and doubtless always think in their native language (obviously). So, you get very strange constructions. The national symbol means "accept God," but it is often spelled "except God" which would be the antithesis of what they would intend, I think. You also get some funny things like "Coles Law" an item on a menu, coleslaw. Probably it doesn't make any difference which it is—it still tastes the same—but it is funny. Official announcements are not only highly formal, but overly polite and even saccharine. At the bus station, the bus was late. They made an announcement. "This is an announcement for our passengers to Tamale. Our dear bus is experiencing some mechanical problems and our engineers estimate that it will take two hours to make the repairs, etc. etc." It is a very amazing understanding of the word "dear" to use it in any serious way to describe the bus. Clearly the announcement had

been written out for it was repeated verbatim. Probably took 30 minutes to construct the message.

So, it seems highly interesting that the official language for everyone and a language many don't know at all and is a second language. Most who use it have a very elementary sense of it. Then too it must be British-based English, but who knows what shifts in British English have occurred in its transformation into Ghanaian schoolbooks.

Also thinking today that there is very little white presence here. I've seen not a single white proprietor nor government official or anything here. Ghana is so black that many people say "white man" or "obroni" (white person) when we pass them on the street. We rarely see white people actually even though by staying in inns and eating in restaurants are the places where foreigners tend to congregate. I don't think the prejudicial issues are at all racial. They are cultural and doubtless socio-economic.

Likely lots of official corruption here too. I asked Stephen about the police checkpoints on the highways and what they are for. He said, "For police to get money." I said, "They charge a fee or a bribe." He immediately said it was a bribe. He said the police will hassle people, like cab drivers, unless you pay them off. He said that recently drivers and police fought in the street over the bribes. We saw it in Cape Coast. Had I noticed that the drivers always smile at the police. Am sure they are swearing under their breath.

Stephen says, "This is a free country." And seems proud of that.

Stephen asked us to go to a night club with him this evening. We chose not to go. It is just uncomfortable being the "obroni" on display. He has also invited us to his house tomorrow. Jen wants to go. Maybe we will. Tomorrow and Tuesday should be active. Then Accra. Those days should be active also. Then home. Jen is eager to the max and so am I.

My feelings are shifting regarding Emily. Some images, slightly more objective it seems are beginning to replace the blind romantic ones I have had. Now I wonder why I was so attracted to her. Don't think she is that cute and it is interesting she has bad posture. She wasn't so great in many ways that I accepted. She got my life moving again and got me out of my marriage for that I'm grateful and I feel that my attachment was because of the new life I was experiencing rather than her entirely. Still, I feel profoundly sad that the relationship ended as it did and came to a non-relationship. I think that was her choice, not mine, but perhaps I forced that as her only choice. I wonder if I will ever have any contact with her again. Sort of doesn't matter, but it still seems sad.

Jen seems totally excited about getting my Legacy. I'll need to evaluate the situation, financial as well as what 2 or 3-year-old Outbacks are selling for. I should be pretty well off financially. Wouldn't even mind teaching Australian



Religions next summer either. Then I'd need to think about what would make parity for Corbin though I've spent huge amounts on him. Could say a part of Jen's car is her college graduation present given early.

Every place to eat is closed on Sunday evening. Seems that everyone stays home after church and rests and prepares food at home. Seems that they may not prepare food at home much except Sunday. Maybe they just make a huge quantity, and it lasts the week.

My physical ailment continues to bother me some even at the end of the second day. Yesterday it was intense head pain, a kind I've not really had before. Seems like changes in position affect it lots. If I stay sitting or walking for a while it isn't so bad. But if I'm sitting and stand up my head rips and rips badly. I still think it is congestion, but since I had a bit of a fever last night (99.6), and since sometimes I can feel the pain even in my chest, I wonder if I don't have a bit of flu of some sort. A mild infection with headache.

#### **August 4, 1997**

Had a fun day. Started with a not-so-great breakfast at Windmill. Seems whatever you order you get the same thing. That was funny at least. While eating breakfast we decided we'd just carry a drum Jen bought rather than shipping it. We just have the one bus ride to Accra tomorrow and an extra bag will cost only 50 cents and then a taxi to the hotel and a taxi to the airport. We bought a fine bag for \$2.50, and it's all worked out. We're repacked this evening and put some of the wooden things inside the drum. We have a plan for packing the djembes if we buy them.

Then we bought some batik cloth we each got three 2-yard pieces, two of them the same. Decided we needed to change more money so did that. Then went to Kentish Kitchen to arrange a taxi, our old driver. Then we went to the Adinkra cloth village and the wood carving village. I bought an enormous, very beautiful piece. It was so fun. The old man who made it came out and the young man tried it on as a formal men's costume after I bought it so I could take his picture. Paid only \$30 for this piece. Then I bought a small strip from a kid for \$1. He begged me for another 10 cents, amazing. Jen bought a neat piece with Kenta stripes and Adinkra. Then I bought another piece for \$20, maybe too similar to the first one, but I liked it.

At the wood carving village, we wanted elephants since we'd seen so many at Molé. I found one about 6" tall and Jen bought a set of 4 of different sizes. So cute. Jen bought a couple necklaces that feature a big seed at the bottom. She'd seen them when we were there before. Later we picked up the drum from Maggie. Maggie had made Jen a necklace and she put it on her and said, "I want to dash you with this necklace." "Dash" means the same as "tip" or "give." We also bought post card sized paintings. I wanted larger ones but will make do with

the smaller ones. We'll give them as gifts to Angela, Karen, Elaine. Will mat and frame them in some neat way.

Ate at Baboo's Restaurant. Samosas and rice with vegetable curry. It was actually delicious and inexpensive. We'd tried to eat there several times and thought it was closed. But I'm sure we were confused and didn't recognize the opening to the place. We'll eat breakfast there in the a.m. and go pick up some cloth a woman is making for us and pick out a shirt for Corbin. We are to report for the bus to Accra at 12:30 p.m. A four-hour trip.

Jen said at one point she was eager to be home, but she got into the day and enjoyed herself. We have just one week to go. We should have a dozen simple necklaces from the beads I've bought for Angela, Mary, Karen, Elaine, and who knows? Have a lot of beads.

Took a photo of Jen with a batch of little boys at the Culture Center today. Very cute and lots of fun.

## ***Accra, August 6 - 10***

**August 6, 1997**

Day 27 or so. We're in Beverly Hills after a night in Asylum. Well Asylum Down Hotel wasn't what the guidebook called it. We took their double however after a long bus ride from Kumasi. Handling the bags is such a mess. Just makes us filthy.

Last night we ate at Bus Stop, a place that attracts young Accra people. Kind of a Ghanaian version of a sports bar and restaurant. Had several TVs tuned to a sports station. We even ate veggie pizza and French fries. Weird.

Jen had a headache and crashed early. I quickly followed not wanting to deal with the light flickering because they install the fan below the light.

This morning we headed out kind of grumpy. The Lemon Lodge wasn't bad, but it was full. The moderate priced lodge next to it had available expensive rooms, but I didn't really like them. We couldn't find a place for breakfast. Ghanaians don't seem to eat breakfast. We had another hotel to check out near Center and headed that way, still a bit grumpy. At one corner we saw a sign for a restaurant and lodging and went in the gate to find food as much as anything. The proprietor was a very nice man and showed us two rooms, 40k and 50k each. We had a nice breakfast and went on to Accra to check out the other hotel. We found it and while Jen didn't see much difference between that and Beverly Hills, I thought these were very dingy and depressing while I liked the clean carpeted rooms and quiet of Beverly Hills. We went back and negotiated the bigger room for 5 nights at 45K per night. I'm fine with that. A way to make the end of our trip as comfortable as possible.

So now we're a bit settled, and Jen is recording Highlife music off the radio. Something she's been keen on doing. Fortunately, the room has a radio with a tape recorder built in. She has many tapes so she can record plenty.

Yesterday was departure day from Kumasi. We left the hotel early and went to Baboos for breakfast. We got hit up by a group of boys hawking stuff particularly djimbe drums. They were particularly aggressive, and I was direct in indicating my lack of interest. Still, we hung out and Jen began talking to a young man named George. He said he was very interested in coming to America. He asked specific questions and knew something of what it takes to get there. He asked if he wrote us, we'd help him. I gave him our address. I was impressed with how sincere he was. Gave me an idea that helping people like him might be an alternative to adopting a child. It was also a chance to see that much is gained if you continue talking to boys who seem eager to sell you and bother you as much as possible. When we left George wanted to accompany us and we just told him we'd go on alone. He accepted that and wasn't offended.

Then we went to the Culture Center to pick up the batik we had them make. The woman there was so nice. She visited with us. Wanted to know our names. We bought a shirt for Corbin. We took Jen's photo with the lady. Her name is Ellen and is one of those great Ghanaian women we've met. So strong. Very beautiful in her way too.

Then we made one last stop at Black African Art Gallery to get another couple small paintings. I want to give them as Christmas gifts and other gifts framed and matted. Maggie wasn't there but the young man that we've often seen there was. We picked out several and when we went to pay, he said he wanted to make us a gift of another one and invited us to pick it up. How sweet of him.

Then to Kentish Kitchen to say goodbye to Stephen and Mary. Stephen smiled hugely when we arrived and gave me the special Ghanaian handshake. We sat down to drink some water and visit with Stephen. Mary soon came and gave us business cards to pass out to anyone we met who might be going to Kumasi. She started bossing all her staff around and sat down to visit. She gave us a long-impassioned discourse on the Ashanti and on Kumasi. Impressive and nice to hear. Also heard about her business plans. She was very pleasant to us. Her presence sort of cut Stephen out and clearly he was wanting to visit with us. He had told us he had a gift for us he wanted to give before we left. We took pictures of Jen and Mary and then Jen, Mary, and Stephen.

Mary went on to do her business and Stephen immediately came over to visit. He was so sweet. Shy and cute. He is 20 and will be 21 in a couple weeks, the 18<sup>th</sup> I think. He gave Jen a little plastic sack and told her to open it later. We finally said our goodbyes and Jen, Stephen, and I were all sort of choked up at the departure. It was such a great feeling to have sadness at departing. A feeling of having made friends, of enjoying knowing some people of a very different

culture. We opened Stephen's gift when we got to the bus station. He gave me a brass image of Prenpeh I and Jen a brass napkin holder with a crocodile on it, very cute. He also wrote us these sweet letters. Jen's might be considered a love letter. He was very taken with her. His letter was a little difficult both to read and to fully understand. Jen will write him, I'm sure, and send him a tape. It was a powerful experience and one we'll both treasure.

I'm also very pleased that we hung in with Mary. She was a bit overpowering at first, but I think we got to know and appreciate her. She certainly enriched our experience. She's a big beautiful powerful woman.

So now Jen is facing having to deal with Niiboeye. Know she is very nervous. She wants to be polite and treat him nice, but she wants to let him know a bit about how she feels, and she doesn't want to be manipulated by him. Hope she'll be able to handle him. I feel he is very manipulative and has much power over her. When I say much of anything she gets really touchy.

#### **August 7, 1997**

Last evening, we went over to Hotel de California to find Andy and Niiboeye. Didn't take so long actually. Jen's contact with Niiboeye seemed okay. She thought she was more in control and more used to what was going on. He still has her ring which surprised me. She's made him a necklace and will give that to him and ask for the ring back. We'll see how that goes.

Andy took charge of us immediately. "Sit." Do this and that and insisted we should not buy drums at the Cultural Center. He has a connection he says will provide the best drums. He agreed to take us there this morning. He'd never been there and when we got there it was a Rasta place and the guy wasn't there. We'd seen him the night before and he'd said he'd be there but he wasn't. So now we don't know what to do. We'll give him the chance to show up tonight or we'll go to the Culture Center tomorrow. We think the drums there are good. We went to the University of Ghana at Legon. It is a pretty campus spread out. Almost all one-story white buildings with red tile roofs. We bought a number of books on Ghana, some fiction, some sociology and religion, one on female circumcision or rather clitorrectomy which Jen is interested in (and me too), and one on Highlife music its history. We walked through the library. I couldn't bring myself to even think of looking for stuff. We were escorted to the African Studies Department, music, theater, and dance. Again, I couldn't bring myself to even introduce myself and make any inquiries. I really need to think about why I couldn't. Jen was shocked at my reluctance and reminded her of the advice I always give her to introduce herself and ask questions. Should think about this and write about it later.

We're back here after a meeting with Andy. The drum guy suggested the village where many drums are made as the way to get a drum. It is where the botanic garden is, so guess we'll go there in the morning. Be back around 2 p.m.

I hope. We'll see if this works. If not, we'll go to the Culture Center market and try to find what we want in the afternoon. Andy hauled us off to some political lecture. I finally decided it is what he wanted us to do not what I wanted to do, and I knew Jen didn't either, so I bucked up and told him we were leaving. He protested and protested, but I prevailed. Whew! Still, we'll be going with him tomorrow. And we'll be going on low quality busses ... argh! But we'll see the gardens and have a chance to shops for drums, I hope. It is only 20 miles away, I think. We'll also see something related to cocoa and I have been interested in that. If we wind up with great drums I'll be surprised, but we'll give it our best.

#### **August 8, 1997**

Today started early with us meeting Andy at his hotel at 8:30. He took us immediately into the hotel courtyard and said that Niiboye had located some drums yesterday and brought them back. They were sitting there in their bags. Cool carrying bags. We unpacked them and indeed they seem to be fine drums. 80k each including the bags. What a deal.

Niiboye was there and we discussed that one of the drums wasn't properly strung and needed some work. Tightening and some correction. Then Andy hurried us along because we'd agreed to go with him today.

Long story that I didn't want to tell, but he controlled the day as he tends to do, and we were on tro-tros all day which he assured us we wouldn't be and spent way more than he said we would. Anyway, we went to the cocoa research center and learned about that which was actually quite interesting and then to a botanical garden at Buras (?). We had a good meal there. Andy had twice what we had and, of course, we were paying. The gardens were no big whoop, but the village is a place for wood carving, and we snagged a small djimbe for \$14. Amazing. The village there was on a hilltop and, if you can believe Andy and I'm not sure you can, it is very old. He said 500 years. It reminded me of Nepali towns for some reason, maybe the way the buildings were arranged so closely and that it was on a hill. Odd that an African village would seem so similar to Nepali towns, but then I remember thinking some of those Tibetan villages near Pesang were much like the pueblos in the American Southwest.

We got back at 7 p.m. and stopped to get the drums. Niiboye had been waiting since 2 p.m. and had already redone the drum. We couldn't help being late. We arranged to have him come later and we went together to Novotel to see drumming and dancing. Bought 2 beers for 5,400 each, most expensive beers in Ghana, but then that hotel is for the wealthy. Rooms run \$150 a night. I'd only taken 12k and was worried I wouldn't be able to pay the bill. The drumming and dancing were awesome, but then it was for rich hotel patrons. A few whites there, some with a few rich blacks. Would be interested to know a little about who they were.

Realized today that I'm getting remarkably tired of dealing with cash. Every time you go somewhere by car, every meal, every night, everything is a cash transaction, and every cash transaction is done with small money, equivalent of one dollar. I get tired of big rolls of bills and the constant need to count it out by the dozens. At home most of my life is without purchases and most of my purchases are done by credit card, so I don't deal with that much cash.

Jen and Niiboeye are visiting now. Hopefully still just outside the room, though I'm expecting him to put the pressure on her. It wouldn't surprise me if he persuaded her to go elsewhere. Hope she won't. I told her I'd prefer her not to do so. He has power over her though. Maybe it is all very innocent, but it isn't worth taking any chances.

So anyway, we have great drums for ridiculously low price. And, despite Andy's lying and controlling our day, we did okay. I'm fairly cool about things and we have just 3 days left in Ghana.

Oddly I don't and haven't been thinking at all about Mary, just occasionally. I haven't missed her and that isn't such a great state of things to establish a lasting relationship. I don't miss her, I don't think about her, I don't think much of her in my life when I get home. I need to make progress with figuring my relationship with her. Sometimes I think of myself as old and unattractive and that I ought to settle with her as my best bet, better to be with someone that likes you than to be alone. But then sometimes I think that would be selling myself short and is a perfect formula for disaster.

Guess I'll go to bed though Jen is not yet in. It will piss me off if she has gone somewhere with Niiboeye.

#### **August 9, 1997**

Beginning to wind down this trip. Enjoyed today quite a lot. Jen came in last night saying Niiboeye had tried to hit on her and she was pissed, especially after she had talked with him about his intentions. She didn't think she'd see him again, but when we got back to our hotel a while ago he was here. I think he's kind of a creep and I don't think Jen will get her ring back though he's still wearing it. Maybe I'll just have to intervene. I left them out there talking so who knows what sort of crap is going on. Just wish she'd stand up for herself. She just wants so desperately to bridge the barriers and to be his friend.

We had a leisurely breakfast here at the hotel, then went out. Tried to get information on weight limitations on bags and Ghana Airways was closed, but we did find a travel agent open and it seems it must be 60 kilos per person and we'll make that very easily. Oh, we found the travel agent in an indoor shopping mall, a bit ugly and weird but a shopping mall with electronics stores, clothing stores, and what have you. Weirder us out. We then headed for the Culture Center to buy another small drum. Hung out. Chatted with lots of people. We

seem to be getting where we can just hang with people like in shops even if we don't buy their stuff. More relaxing and fun.

We visited with one young man who said he was a dancer. He took us to his house nearby to show us photos of him dancing. He told us that his group would be dancing this afternoon as part of a funeral celebration. There was a large group of people dressed in black and red, funeral colors, all sitting in rows under two covered pavilions. They were listening to an enormous sound system turned mega ear-splitting high volume. A man was announcing who knows what constantly over recorded music. Most of the people seemed to be just sitting there.

Sure enough, later in the afternoon they began drumming and a group of young men and women entered the dirt area in front of the drums and did a dance. It seems that there are a number of set dances in Ghana and everyone knows them all. The group did several dances of this order. As the audience, now much more enlivened, appreciated the dancers, individuals would come and paste some money on the body of the dancer. They were also collecting money in a broken drum throughout the dancing. At least one of the dances featured solos by each dancer. Many were highly energetic, lots of contractions of the lower back, the arms, shoulders. Highly energetic. The women who had fairly loose tops on, danced so energetically it seemed their breasts would fly out. Lots of hip swivels, both front to back and side to side. Lots of audience participation and very high energy. Sure enough the young man who had befriended us was an outstanding dancer. Much of the time he wore a kind of grass skirt, red head band and bare chested. He was very athletic and did lots of athletic moves. After perhaps an hour of dancing the dancing company exited and the drummers stopped playing. They turned the amp system back on and played African music and everyone danced. It was great to see this event was done for the Africans, a memorial service for someone who had died. There were a few non-Ghanaians there, but hardly noticeable. Quite the contrast to the Novotel dancing last night. It is this kind of cultural activity that I have been waiting to see and experience. It was awesome. And what a way to honor the dead.

We went to the Arts Center and looked at a few things. Jen is getting into bargaining. She looked at a necklace. The guy asked 10,000. She offered 2,000 and when he wouldn't take it she walked away. Found another very similar one. Again, the woman asked 10,000 and Jen offered 3,000. That woman accepted it. She got a brass bracelet the same way for 4,000 when 10,000 was asked. Then we looked at drums. Only one was really decent. The asking price was 50,000. Since we'd bought one yesterday at a carving village for 28,000, we knew that was a possible low price. We started at 30,000 as a counter and together we agreed that 35,000 was the max we'd go. We got it for that. We were pleased.

Jen has things settled with NiiBoye. She asked for her ring. Told him she didn't trust him and told him she didn't want to go out with him. She came in and told me that he wanted to see me. I went out. He said he apologized for trying to hit on Jen. I told him I appreciated that and wished him well. He said he was going to sit there, and I told him he couldn't do that, that he had to go on. Who knows, he may still be sitting there, but I'll not tolerate that. I'll ask the people here to send him away. He'll not stalk us. Jen is proud of herself and I'm very proud of her.

The proprietor of this hotel is reciting the history of Christianity, mostly in English, to his guests. Amazing. We were/are so interested in his Ghanaian English that we decided to try recording it. So we laid the tape recorder on the window and we'll see what we get. The man is so animated and speaking so loudly and energetically. He's gone through John Knox, Martin Luther, etc. His guests are participating very little and when they try the man just increases the volume and the energy of his dissertation. Saturday evening warmup.

Plan to eat here tonight. Hang out. Maybe find a different place to eat breakfast tomorrow.

Jen is cute about our drums. She says she thinks of goats when she looks at them. Of course, both of her drums have little tails. Funny. She imitates goats and cocks quite well.

I have a list of things I want to write about and will try that tonight or sometime before we leave.

Later. Jen seems very high on the trip at the moment. She just went on and on during dinner about how awesome she thinks it is and has been. She sees the NiiBoye episode as sort of emblematic of the trip. A test for her and one she has passed. She thinks she's been challenged by many things and has gone through it learning about herself and others. It is the social aspect of the trip most appealing to her at the moment. She sees herself changing the way she will relate to people in the future. Much more open and more curious and engaging. That is wonderful. She feels that we've fully immersed ourselves in everything we've done and benefitted greatly from doing so. I'm just so pleased that she's appreciating the experience. It has been wonderful to share with her. She's helped me lots and I've enjoyed her every day. We've not had a single personal incident and seem to be tolerating one another's company very easily. It is awesome for a father and daughter to share this kind of experience. Seems like the longer we're together the easier it is for us to just sit around and chat. I like that. I'll be very sad when it is time for her to return to school.

#### **August 10, 1997**

Awoke with a dream of Angela, another of Emily. Then, thinking of how much I'm learning about dancing and that I still have opportunity to learn more. Need to set down what I know and maybe what I don't know. The dreams, or



dream fragments. The first was seemingly Angela returning from her travels to Brazil. When I saw her, I hugged her and gave her a passionate kiss on the lips, seems I kissed her several times. But the cool part was that she held me close and put her lips close to mine like just almost touching and sort of breathed in my breath, her seemingly savoring the possible (likely?) touch of our lips. I awoke feeling passion and attraction for her. I lay and reflected that I don't have those feelings for Mary.

When I went back to sleep, I immediately had a dream fragment about Emily. I was sitting in a chair in a lawn sort of at the edge of a group of chairs. Seems others were in the chairs. Emily walked along the side of the lawn and past me sitting in the chair. Can't recall if we made eye contact (likely), but we didn't speak. I think I turned to look at her as she went on past. Then we were talking. She said her mother (?) had heard (from?) that I'd said I felt like (seems some sort of play on words regarding fruit). I said I'd never said such a thing. Can't recall the rest of the exchange. I do remember studying the detail of her face. Woke up rather pissed that I'd dreamed of her. Would rather dream of Angela.

Then I thought about Angela and how much she's learning about samba. Then I got to thinking about whether I'm taking full advantage of the situation here. Maybe I'll talk to the young dancer this afternoon, if I can find him. But then I began to realize that I do know quite a lot about dancing and decided to get up and write about it (see below). In the midst of that there was a knock at the door and the lady here said there was a man named Andy to see me. Well, I went out and he gave me some sort of story about problems he needed to attend to in his village near Cape Coast. He finally made his intention clear. He wanted 10,000 cides. My guess is that he'd heard from NiiBoye that we'd given him 20,000 and wanted his fair share. He quickly disappeared after I gave him the money.

The lady here knocked again and asked if we wanted breakfast. She wanted to fix it so she could go to church. Saw her a bit ago all dressed up and the proprietor here, Frank I think, had his traditional draped costume on as well. Everyone goes to church.

We've gotten into Ghanaian food—haven't tried fufu yet—especially Red Red which is fried plantains and beans. The plantains are fried with salt somehow and served beside a delicious gravy sauce of small beans. We may ask this woman how to make it later this afternoon. Jen and I both love this dish. Yum. We also tried yams and palava sauce. The palava sauce is spinach and some other yummy stuff, but the yams aren't as tasty as the fried plantains.

One of the men who works here saw the sack of dirty clothes of mine in the corner. He asked if I wanted them washed. I told him I was going to throw them out. He immediately asked if he could have them and smiled from ear to ear, I told him I'd give them to him Monday, but yesterday when we got back, he

rushed for our key and opened the room, ran through to the bathroom and adjusted the curtains. Then he asked if he could then have the clothes. I told him sure, go ahead and take them. He was delighted. But they were a dirty smelly lot. Yuck. We'll give him our towels and whatever else we don't want to haul home.

We're through (I hope) with Niiboye and Andy. We've fairly compensated them. We've retained our autonomy and dignity. Feel they both have helped us out and taught us much. But it is kind of nice to have closed those relationships. So glad that Jen feels good about her personal growth related to the Niiboye incident. She still feels very sad about Niiboye's life and, of course, he and Andy both are kind of stuck in a closed loop that is entered occasionally by tourists from places N & A will never visit and on those occasions they spin their stories, sometimes straight fabrications, try to make a few cides, and then remain trapped in their loop as the visitors travel on. Both these guys get by with this approach, at least for a while. It is a constant struggle to keep them from encroaching too far. Plus, they don't mind asking you for anything, where you are staying, how much are you paying, etc. And, of course, all the info they get provides clues to other things, I think. Still, it works out to everyone's benefit, I think. We got good cheap drums and tips on places to stay, and they get some food, some money, and something to do for a while.

Went down to the beach this morning, had a soda, and sat in the shade area overlooking the sea, the Gulf of Guinea actually. There were fishing boats off the shore from James Town and the light house. The other way there were many people on the beach and playing in the water. We hung for an hour or so getting sticky from the sea breeze.

Church is going on in every possible location. Amazing. Lots of them are totally filled and rocking. We contemplated for about 5 seconds going to church this morning. I think lots of them go on for hours. We saw one that said it was 8 a.m. to noon, but they were still going on at 1 p.m. In the church yards vendors gather to sell snacks, water, etc. to the church goers.

Then we walked down the cliff area above the beach to the Culture Center and did a bit more shopping. Jen bought a couple bracelets, one brass and one made of wire with a cowry shell. Bargained well. We saw the dance guy and visited. Then bought some street snacks on the way home.

Niiboye has now shown up and wants to take Jenny down to the Djembe House so we can get some bags for the small drums. He's going to record "Pan-Africa" for her as well. Hope that works out. He has given her his address as well.

There are numerous things I've been wanting to write about. Will do one or two now.

The weather has been a complete surprise to me. Though it is hot today and often gets hot in the sun, there is usually a breeze and, in the shade, being inactive

you usually feel cool enough. It has rained very little, but it has been cloudy a lot. Ghana has been about 20 degrees cooler than I'd expected. So that has been a very nice bonus.

Kids: The kids here seem awesome. Happy, smiley, friendly, enthusiastic, and sweet. That surely comes from the strong nurturance they get as infants, always on their mom's backs, and the peer support they get as kids. It is rare to hear a child cry even on a packed tro-tro and they almost always greet you in a friendly enthusiastic way.

Later. Well, of course, we hadn't seen the last of NiiBoye. He called on us, wanted to make Jen a tape of PanAfrica, a music group and to take us to ger carrying bags for our small drums. Jen didn't trust him and so I went back to the Arts Center with them. We ordered the bags (22k for both). The bags should be nice, and it will make carrying them back much easier.

I also talked to the woman who is the cook and everything else here. She starts work at 6 a.m. and she works until late at night. She cooks everything for this restaurant. I asked her if she could tell us how to make Red-Red. She agreed and said we could buy beans in the market to take home with us. I'll try to see her before noon so we can get the beans tomorrow. I'd love to do that. We'll change money after noon and then buy tapes and beans.

Back to the things I've been wanting to write about.

The Whistle Man. In front of the Culture Center yesterday the traffic was very busy. A young man was in the middle of the street. He had a red flag on a pole about 3 feet long. He had a whistle in his mouth and was blowing it constantly using it and his flag to direct traffic. His whistling was so constant, and he was making a little song or music with it and sort of doing an elaborate dance to direct traffic. He was cute and funny. After we crossed the street, a car apparently didn't heed his direction and he ran after it yelling and swearing at them.

Signs. I've written about this some, but the signs here are interesting. There are huge billboards with public service advertisements: AIDS awareness, crash helmet encouragements, and opposition to overcrowding tro-tros. The radio includes discussions of birth control, encouraging women to use oral contraceptives. The radio had a program on the internal combustion engine aimed at educating drivers of cars on how to repair and prevent problems with their cars. There was an advertisement for the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God who had sites to cure effects of witchcraft. Incidentally today in the market area, a man was making long (12" diameter) drawings on the ground. Circular, one had recognizable images of snakes and a person carrying something. NiiBoye said it was voodoo. And there is a fetish market here in Accra as well. Then the buildings and vehicles all have names many of which crack me up. I've made a small collection of a few outstanding ones:

God Is In Beauty Salon  
 God Is First Hair Salon  
 Little Drop of Water Electrical  
 Except the Lord  
 The Blood of Jesus Ent. (Enterprise, I presume)  
 The Son of Man (on a bus)  
 Only Prayer Ent.  
 Living Faith Prep School  
 God Only Knows (on a truck)  
 Patience Move Mountain (on a truck)  
 Diving [divine I imagine?] Peach Chop Bar  
 Coles Law (menu item)  
 Keep Smiling [smiling?]  
 Everything By God (truck)  
 Small Action (abandoned wrecked van)  
 Highly Inflammable (fuel truck)  
 Follow Jesus Fashion (wonder if they sell sandals?)  
 Loving God Chemicals  
 Barbing Center (barber)  
 Fresh Prince (barber)  
 Maternity Center of Complex Hospital  
 Perserverance (tro-tro)  
 Festus Garment and Hotel  
 Best Brain Computer Center/Secretarial Services  
 Black and Lovely Hair Relaxer (billboard)  
 Avoid Overspeeding (sign)  
 Amen Amen Junction (intersection)  
 Practical Jesus Int. Ministry  
 Believe in God Music Center (a cassette tape store)  
 Top Secret Coffin and Casket  
 The Latest Shoe and Bag Company  
 More Hope Chop Bar

Just wish I'd been able to take photos of many of these. Could make a neat book, just pictures of these places with the signs.

Sound at traffic accident. While we were here, we were near witness to two traffic accidents. One had just happened, and the people were bleeding. The other, which I don't think I even wrote about occurred when we were coming back to Accra from Kumasi. The tro-tro in front of us suddenly swerved off the road into the ditch and up the other bank. It was probably going 45 to 50 mph. I thought it would surely roll over, but the bus stopped, and many ran back, and it seems it didn't roll and everyone was okay. But in both cases the sounds of the

people when they saw the accident has stuck in my mind. It seemed somehow distinctive. Sort of a common extended “Ohhhhhhh.” The second one I heard several people say, “Jesus.”

On traffic accidents they commonly just strip the vehicle that is totaled and everything that anyone finds of value and leave the remains lay in the ditch to rust away. On the train from Takoradi to Kumasi there had been, likely years ago, a significant train wreck. All the cars were left where they’d landed. Seemed like wrecked train cars were seen over the expanse of a mile or more. Suppose they just don’t have the equipment to do anything other than this.

There are many BMW and Mercedes cars in Ghana. Have seen a few Subarus here in Accra.

Pissing Men. I am very tired of seeing men piss everywhere. It is unbelievable. Everywhere you go there is some guy with his weenie out pissing. Men stop on the sidewalk and piss. They piss at roadsides, in the drainage ditches, beside cars. Everywhere with everyone around. No pretense at seeking privacy. This really disgusts me for some reason. I have only ever seen one woman piss. She was walking along the road. She was probably 50 yards away. Pulled up her skirt and pissed standing up. She didn’t remove the load on her head. I saw this in Bali once. That woman had a load of sand on her head.

Men hold hands with men, boys with boys, girls with girls, and male and female. Nice.

Ghana is pretty flat. There is a bit of a ridge 30 km or so north of Accra that some refer to as mountains, but they laugh when they say that. Up at the botanic gardens at Aburi, there is a ridge, part of this ridge, and it is a nice feature. Much of the landscape in the south half of the county is rain forest. The distinctive feature is the huge hardwood trees.

Malta and Maltina seem to be a big drink here We tried it and thought it was gross. Haven’t tried fufu and that may be a bad thing.

I was trying to learn to drum this morning and Jen was making a face and derisive comments and it hurt my feelings. I think we need to try again.

The trip is just about over. This time tomorrow evening we’ll be about ready to round up and go to the airport. Hope checking in goes smoothly and that the flight back is on time and enjoyable. Will be a very long trip back spanning twenty hours or so.

## ***Boulder***

**August 12, 1997**

In flight south of Chicago. Will be home in two hours. Jen is suffering major emotions upon being back in the USA. Think the trip was a very powerful experience for her. She feels she experienced some very genuine people, and she fears she can’t have that in her life. She seems kind of overwhelmed by all of this.

I'm not feeling such emotion as she is, but clearly all this new experience establishes the priorities of life and places the values on human relationships. Jen worries that Zannah is into superficial stuff and will be disappointing. She may feel sad that Will likely won't be here to meet us. She maybe worries how much of what she has experienced he will understand. I know all this is really important and wonderful for her, but I feel sad that it has to be a painful side of it.

Monday had promised to be a boring day, but it turned out great. We had a leisurely breakfast at Beverly Hills. I talked to the woman there about making Red-Red. She said she'd go to the supermarket to get some beans and some Magi cubes for us [this turned out to be MSG]. She was so sweet. I gave her more than enough money and she was so grateful. She shook my hand and said, "Thank you so much." She got us several bags of beans and a few Magi cubes. Then she kept telling me how to make the dish.

After breakfast we packed and freaked out briefly because the bags seemed so heavy. We stored them and went to change \$20 and then went to Ghana Airways to assure ourselves they'd be no weight problem. There wasn't. Then we went to pick up our small drum bags. We tried a different route hopping to miss the madness of the market, but sort of got into it more than ever. We were trying to make it to the beach to walk along there a while. When we finally got there, we were so hot and tired we had to sit in the shade and drink a soda. Then on to the Arts Center. The guys didn't have the drum bags finished so we went back to the hotel to meet NiiBoye. We had French fries (potato chips) and water and Jen and NiiBoye did koshka for a while and visited. Then we went out later in the afternoon to buy snacks for the plane trip and to get audio tapes. The tape buying session was fun. The guy played all the tapes a bit for us and Jen chose 8 tapes a total of 30K or \$15. Got a mixture of Highlife and traditional music. Wish I recalled music like she does. We got our snacks and had just enough money for dinner and the airport.

NiiBoye said he'd take us to the airport, and I told him I'd give him whatever money I had left over. He also said he'd go on his bike to pick up the drum bags. That saved us another walk through the market. Andy was waiting for us when we got back from music and snack shopping. He already wanted to take us to the airport to get our remaining money. I felt strongly that I didn't want to spend my last hours in Ghana with him. I told him thanks for coming to say goodbye and that NiiBoye was going to take us to the airport. To make sure he got the message I stood up and extended my hand. He then asked if I could send him some "boots" like mine and he pointed to my horribly worn-out sneakers and assured me that used would be fine. Weird. Then he excused himself. Whew!

We had a nice dinner and got the bags to the parking lot. NiiBoye came by with the cab at 7:45 and we loaded up and headed out. His friend went with us. After we got checked in, we all went to a nearby bar, and they bought us a beer

with the remaining money I'd given NiiBoye. He didn't profit much. At 10:30 we went back to the terminal and said our sad goodbyes. Entered the terminal and no man's land between countries to wait the hours to leave. Visited with a nice guy from Arizona, Don, who had spent three weeks in Ghana and was pretty worn out. We loaded up and started rolling maybe at 1:30 a.m. but went back because of some mechanical problem. Finally took off three hours later at 4 a.m.

Got a van from JFK to Newark and got on standby to this flight which left at 2:50. We were scheduled for 7:10 flight. So now we'll get home at 5 p.m. rather than 11 and I'm very happy about that. We're in the very last row on this flight and I've spent much of it chatting with six-year-old Shani from Jamaica. Cute. And chatty. She's not gone to sleep.

Amazing to think that we started the day in Ghana and now we're almost home. Such a shock. Such a transition.

Called Mary from Newark to tell her we would likely make it on the earlier flight. She wanted to chat. She's been calling my folks a couple times a week and talking for 45 minutes to an hour each time. She's very thrilled that I'm back.

My tummy hurts some. Don't know what's got me. Maybe just travel.

Weird being almost home. Sort of feeling with Jen that I don't want to be getting home, don't want to lose the specialness of travel. Don't want the disappointments of trying to relate to people here when I know it can't be done.

Will need to write more later, reflections. Anyway, we're back in the USA. I'm also feeling really sad that this experience with Jen is about over. It has been such a wonderful experience with her. Maybe the closest we'll ever be in our lives.

### ***African Dancing (notes written August 10)***

Saw dance rehearsal in Tamale, performances for audience in Kokrobite and Accra, and a cultural event funeral memorial service in Accra.

In Ghana there are a number of set dances which everybody knows. They are performed to specific rhythms played by drum and percussion groups. The rhythm is basic 8-count with the base maintained by the double-bell or one of the drums. Polyrhythm is accomplished by many drums playing together. There appears to be a lead drummer who seems to control the performance. Drums are mostly the pegged kpanlogo type in many shapes and sizes. The larger ones, size and diameter of head, are played with sticks that are bent at the end and the smaller diameter head drums are played with straight short sticks. Some of these drums can be quite tall, 4' to 6'. When straight sticks are used, they can beat both the head and the wooden side of the drum.

The set dances are performed principally by youth. I'd say unmarried and in gender mixed of specific parts. That is, there are an equal number of males and females, though I've observed females dancing the male part. The basic group

seems a minimum of three couples, but more are possible. Three was basic to tourist performance and 4 to 6 for other settings. The dancers are arranged in a circle for the basic formation, male female alternating. The basic movement is circular in a counterclockwise direction. Thus, movement to the drum rhythm is a step slide close, step slide close, movement with the feet. Torso bent slightly or markedly forward. The upper body movement as the feet is choreographed for the piece. Sometimes it is a side-to-side torso rotation or a hip rotation. Sometimes the hands are raised level with the face with arms extended to the sides and sometimes they are moved up and down in this position in a kind of flapping motion. The side-to-side rotation may be a rotation where on a step the movement to one side is more greatly extended, followed by a rocking motion from side to side, to extend the other side more greatly with the next step. Thus, the group moves in a circle stepping with the drumming.

Then a change in drum pattern signals a change in the dance. Often this involves the male-female pair turning to one another for a dance sequence facing or front to back of each other. The movement may be the same, mirrored, or opposite. It may involve turns and movements that accomplish a change in partners rotating around the circle.

The dancing is generally to a rapid rhythm. The footwork active but well-grounded. The body down, torso usually forward. The torso often reflects a “popping” movement emphasizing the rhythm.

Some dances are accompanied by singing and everyone seems to know the songs and some in the audience might sing along. It is also common to see a member of the audience pick up and perform a few steps distinctive to the particular dance. I saw one girl with a tray of snacks on her head do so. Torso well forward hips moving extensively side to side, but the tray stayed stable and level.

There are also dance pieces, both in the more staged settings and in the basic cultural setting that emphasize individual performances and improvisations. One by one the dancers enter the ground, stage, and perform a sequence of movements. It looks to me that each may have her or his favorite movement, those done best, and these get done extensively on these occasions. Many of these movements seem to be done to specific drumbeats (sequences) and there appears to be interplay between dancer and drum ensemble to coordinate the rhythm and movement. The women seem to do complex hip and torso rotations and polyrhythmic movements. Feet well-grounded and the body staying more or less in one location and the hips and torso performing complicated movements. Male improvisations are more athletic, and the movement is around the dance area. Jumps coinciding with specific drumbeats (effects), turns, highly active foot work, like up-rocking in hip hop, also very complicated are performed.



In the funeral setting dancers were recognized individually by audience members coming out and either fanning them off with a handkerchief, “you’re hot” is the message this conveys to me, and by placing money on their bodies. This is done with some dramatic movements like slapping a cide note on the sweating dancer’s forehead or shoulder. When the money falls off someone retrieves it as the dancer continues. I can’t tell how the rotation works among the dancers for improvisation. Also, at the funeral not only the dancers in the group took their turn at improvisation, but others may do so as well. One woman dressed in a dress with a fancy scarf head covering, wearing shoes, and her dress indicated she is married, but she looked late 20s to me, did an improv solo. Her dance was more upright, but clearly all of the energetic movement of youth had transformed into subtlety. She had it all, but it was so contained, refined, extremely subtle.

There seems to be a general correspondence between the size and raw energy of dance movement. The older contain this in smaller more subtle but still highly sophisticated and complicated movement. Here the movement easily goes to a style suitable for dancing as couples in Highlife and I’d guess the young can adopt the same movement to hip hop performed to rap or a kind of swing performed to reggae.

In traditional dancing the males are usually bare chested, the women wear shorts or kind of grass skirts with shorts beneath. The women wear skirts or shorts and wrap around tops so their shoulders and arms are completely exposed. Seems the women often have a bit of a time keeping these tops on and often have to re-tuck them as they dance.

A kind of chicken wing movement is relatively common. Arms held to side elbow at 90-degree angle with hands up and a flapping up and down. A variation is a flapping back to front accomplished by contraction of the shoulder blades. These movements are done while also rhythmically contracting the lower torso and walking forward as well. Highly polymovement. This movement is also accompanied by a huge full toothed smile, head well raised, and eyes cast extremely upward. The effect, since Ghanaians are very black skinned, is white eyes and teeth standing boldly out against dark black skin. Has the suggestion of entrancement to me.

Oh, Jen said she noticed that when dancers who dance an improv solo finish, they go to the drummers and touch the ground before them. Suppose it is honor and recognition of the drummers. The drums themselves are usually painted and often not in the best shape. Many are painted black or blue. None, or few, seem carved or fancy.

Teaching. The teacher stood in the center of the circle of dancers. She had a stick. She directed the dancers verbally and sometimes made physical corrections. One of the male dancers also seemed to be instructing. I saw him physically

correct the body position of a female dancer. Lots of children were around for the dance rehearsal class. They were playing but also participating at various levels. Don't know the function of the teacher's stick. Seems she just used it to direct the activities. She was older, I'd say late 30s. She and the male dancer who taught did some of the dance as a pair in a rather informal way before the group began. Kind of a review or enjoyment of the movement. That group performed rather complex figures moving in lines and turning out, males one way, females the other, making multiple circles and lines. Couple interaction was complex as well.

After the set dances were performed, everyone danced to recorded music. The continuity between set dancing and other dancing seems seamless. Easy transition of movement vocabulary.

Later. Went back down to the Culture Center and looked up the young man, Nii Naku, who was a dancer. He answered a number of questions from which I learned more about dancing. The occasion was the funeral celebration of a man who recently died. Then on dancing.

There are a number of set dances and they do have names and distinctive rhythms. Rhythm patterns correspond with vocalized syllables sequences, as in India and elsewhere, and these correspond with dance steps. The lead drummer signals changes in rhythm pattern with a drum beat sequence so both dancers and drummers know to change. There is also a lead dancer. This man is the lead for his group and the lead dancer signals the lead drummer regarding changes. I saw him make eye contact with the drummer and he also used hand signals. The lead drummer usually sits in the middle, and he maintains the basic rhythm pattern. Dancers listen to the lead drum to do the dance. The improvisation solos involve an interplay between dancer and drummer. Specific movements are accompanied by specific drum effects so either drummer or dancer can initiate the pattern that is then repeated.

While the dances are set, different groups may perform the same dance using a different style and varying the choreography. New dances are still being choreographed. Any age person can dance any dance, but this guy smiled when he said that older people can't dance the way he and his young group dance.

Oh, and during the time that the solo performances are done, the lead dancer dances the last solo as he had done yesterday.

I think studying dance here would be very easy. Just come and join one of these dance groups. Take lessons. Learn all the terms and observe dancing groups during the festivals, etc. I'll have to see the literature on Ghanaian dancing, but I don't think there is much.





