

# WORDS GROWN IN INTERNATIONAL SOIL: A POETRY ANTHOLOGY

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SJSU INTERNATIONAL HOUSE  
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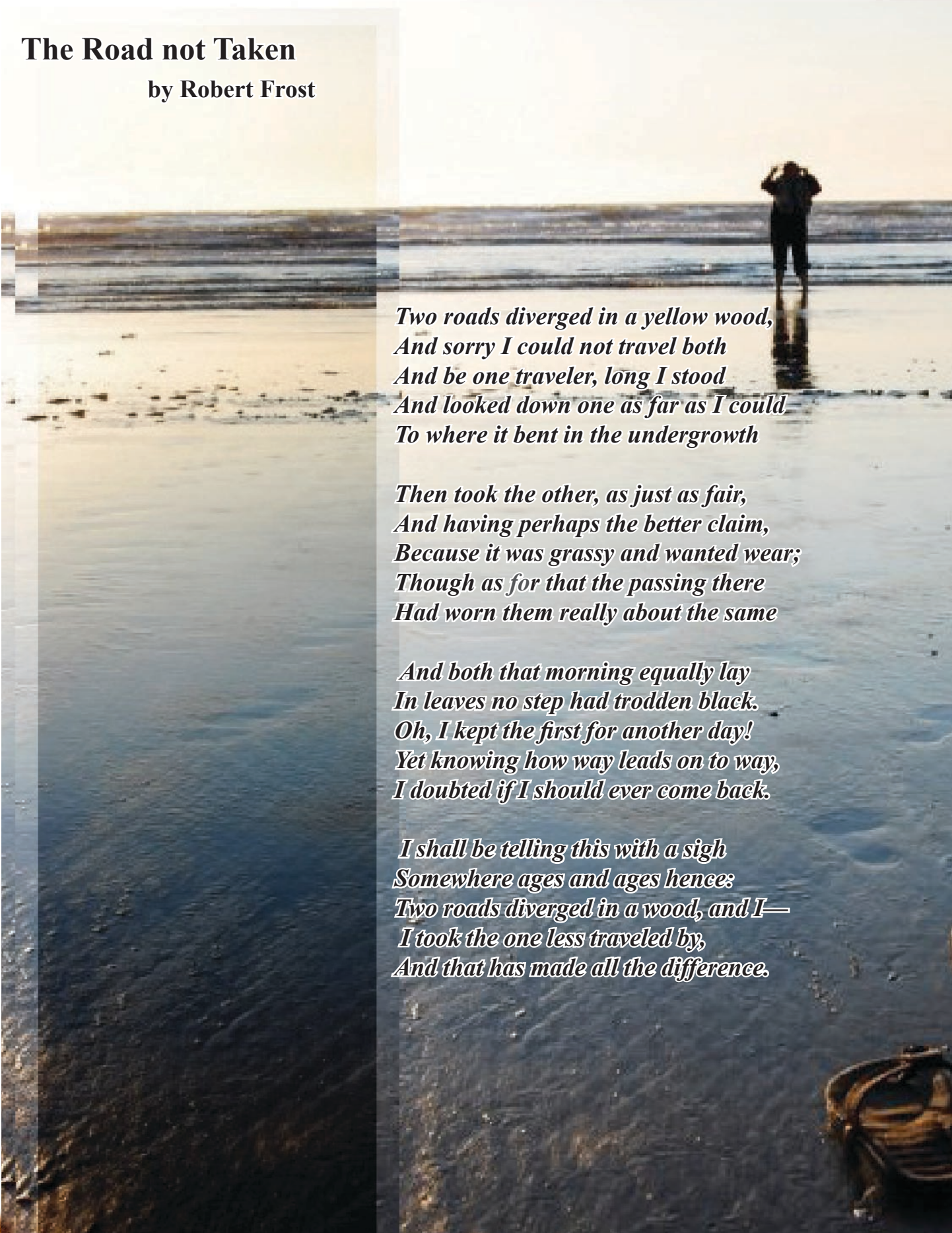


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# The Road not Taken

by Robert Frost

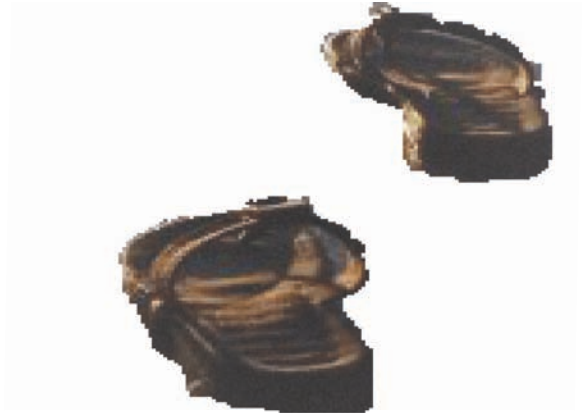
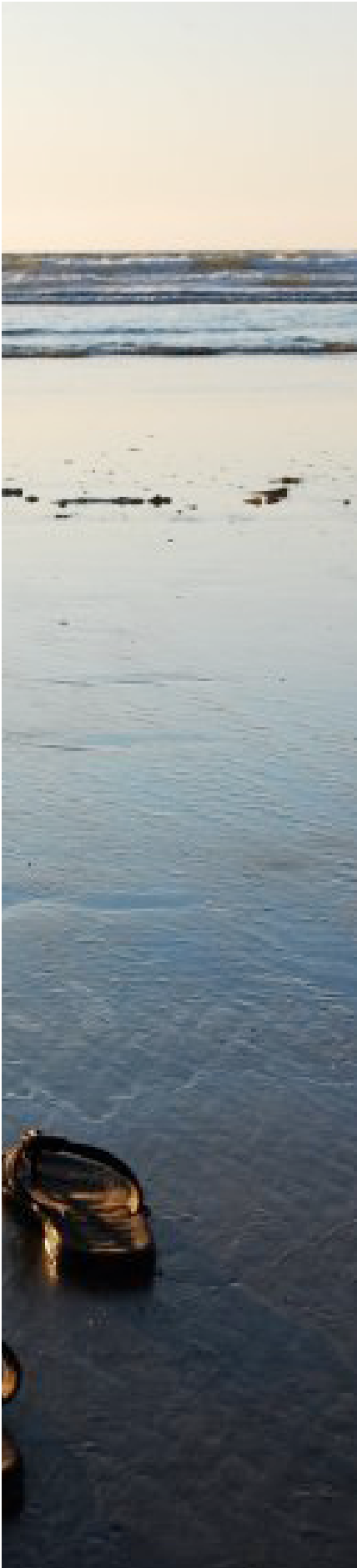
A person stands on a beach at sunset, looking out at the ocean. The person is silhouetted against the bright sky and their reflection is visible in the wet sand. The ocean waves are visible in the distance.

*Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,  
And sorry I could not travel both  
And be one traveler, long I stood  
And looked down one as far as I could  
To where it bent in the undergrowth*

*Then took the other, as just as fair,  
And having perhaps the better claim,  
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;  
Though as for that the passing there  
Had worn them really about the same*

*And both that morning equally lay  
In leaves no step had trodden black.  
Oh, I kept the first for another day!  
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,  
I doubted if I should ever come back.*

*I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence:  
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—  
I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference.*



Several times in the past year, I have shared this poem, *The Road Less Travelled*, with I-House residents. Throughout our lives we make choices, knowing that either choice we make, either road we choose, the other will be left unexplored.

We make choices based on what we know, what we hope, and what we believe. Either way that we choose, we face unknowns, obstacles, and opportunities. Fortunately, I-House residents, alumni, and staff all made a choice to follow the road that led them to the International House. That, in turn, has given each of us further choices, additional forks in the road of life that have brought us together around the world.

-Leann Cherkasky Makhni, Director

This is probably one of my favorite poems of all time. It was also something that came to mind when I was at a crossroads, trying to think of where to go for graduate school. The image of having two paths in front of you is a vivid illustration and representation of the choices that we each face in our lives. Some of these choices are simple, or at least seem like it, while others are much more complex. How this poem can be related to I-House is that each individual resident is given choices and opportunities, such as how much he or she wants to interact with others or what kind of events to participate in and attend. The choices that each person makes create the experiences, and thus the memories, that he or she will have during time spent in this special environment.

-Sarah Kyo





# FOG CARL SANDBURG

THE FOG COMES  
ON LITTLE CAT FEET.  
IT SITS LOOKING  
OVER HARBOR AND CITY  
ON SILENT HAUNCHES  
AND THEN MOVES ON.

"Sunny California"

Sometimes I feel that I am held personally responsible for the weather in California. As I write, it is a perfect California fall day with clear, crisp blue skies and a few red, orange and golden leaves blowing across the front steps. Of course, it is not on days like today that I am held responsible...

I remember the first big rain of Fall semester 2009. It was a "doozy!" Multiple failures of gutters, pumps, and covers combined to create the "perfect storm" and flood the I-House basement. When Don and Ebony mentioned that it was flooding, I thought they were being overly dramatic (as I often am). By the time I went down to check, the party room was a mess with water filling the window wells like fish tanks and gushing down the walls. Fortunately enough residents pitched in, literally rolled up their trousers, and bailed, siphoned, mopped and carried water out of the basement. They saved the day!

On the first big rain each semester, several residents come into the office with hurt expressions. "I thought it never rained in California," they say mournfully. "I didn't bring any rain jacket or umbrella with me."

Other days we awake to a damp gray foggy morning and residents come downstairs to ask me if the weather is going to stay this way for the rest of the season. "No," I can say, "the sun will be back by noon."

My favorite poem from childhood describes that wonderful spooky fog. While you are in California I hope you have a chance to see it oozing over the Western hills or hovering above the Bay.

The author, Carl Sandburg, was born in Illinois to Swedish immigrant parents. My father's grandmother immigrated to the U.S. from Sweden, and my mother is from Illinois, so I feel a certain kinship.

-Kristen Pendleton



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# I Carry Your Heart With Me

E.E. Cummings

I carry your heart with me (I carry it in  
my heart) I am never without it (anywhere  
I go you go, my dear; and whatever is done  
by only me is your doing, my darling)

## I f e a r

no fate (for you are my fate, my sweet) I want  
no world (for beautiful you are my world, my true)  
and it's you are whatever a moon has always meant  
and whatever a sun will always sing is you

here is the deepest secret nobody knows  
(here is the root of the root and the bud of the bud  
and the sky of the sky of a tree called life; which grows  
higher than the soul can hope or mind can hide)  
and this is the wonder that's keeping the stars apart

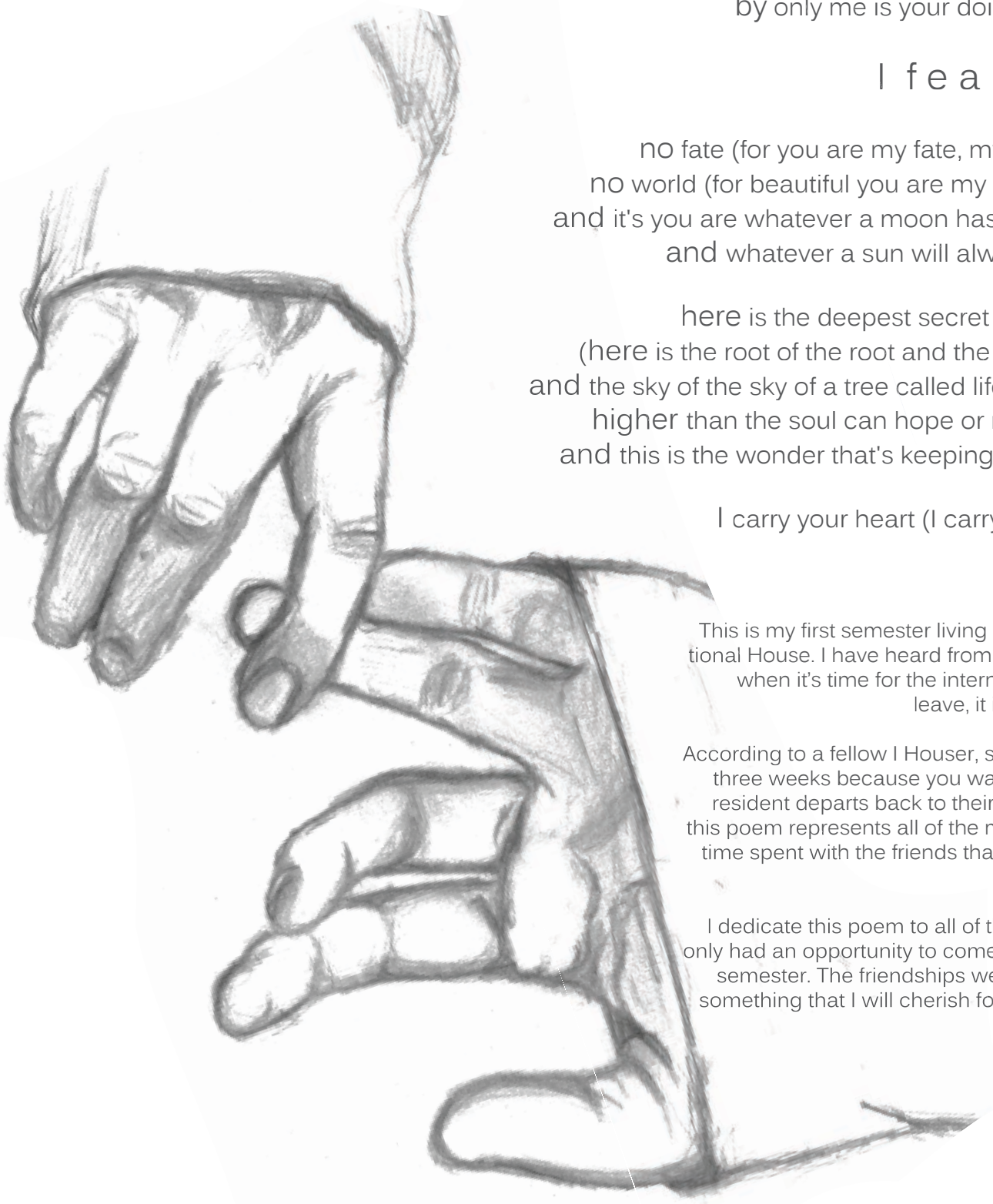
I carry your heart (I carry it in my heart)

This is my first semester living here in the International House. I have heard from past residents that when it's time for the international students to leave, it is heart wrenching.

According to a fellow I Houser, she cried for almost three weeks because you watch as every single resident departs back to their home country. So, this poem represents all of the memories, love and time spent with the friends that I made here that I carry in my heart.

I dedicate this poem to all of those students who only had an opportunity to come to the U.S. for one semester. The friendships we developed will be something that I will cherish for the rest of my life.

Natasha Bradley





## わたしと小鳥と鈴と

わたしが両手を広げても  
お空はちっとも飛べないが  
飛べる小鳥はわたしのよう  
地べたを早くは走れない  
わたしが体をゆすっても  
きれいな音は出ないけれど  
あの鳴る鈴はわたしのよう  
たくさんな歌は知らないよ  
鈴と小鳥と それからわたし  
みんな違って みんないい

### *Me, the Little Bird and the Bell*

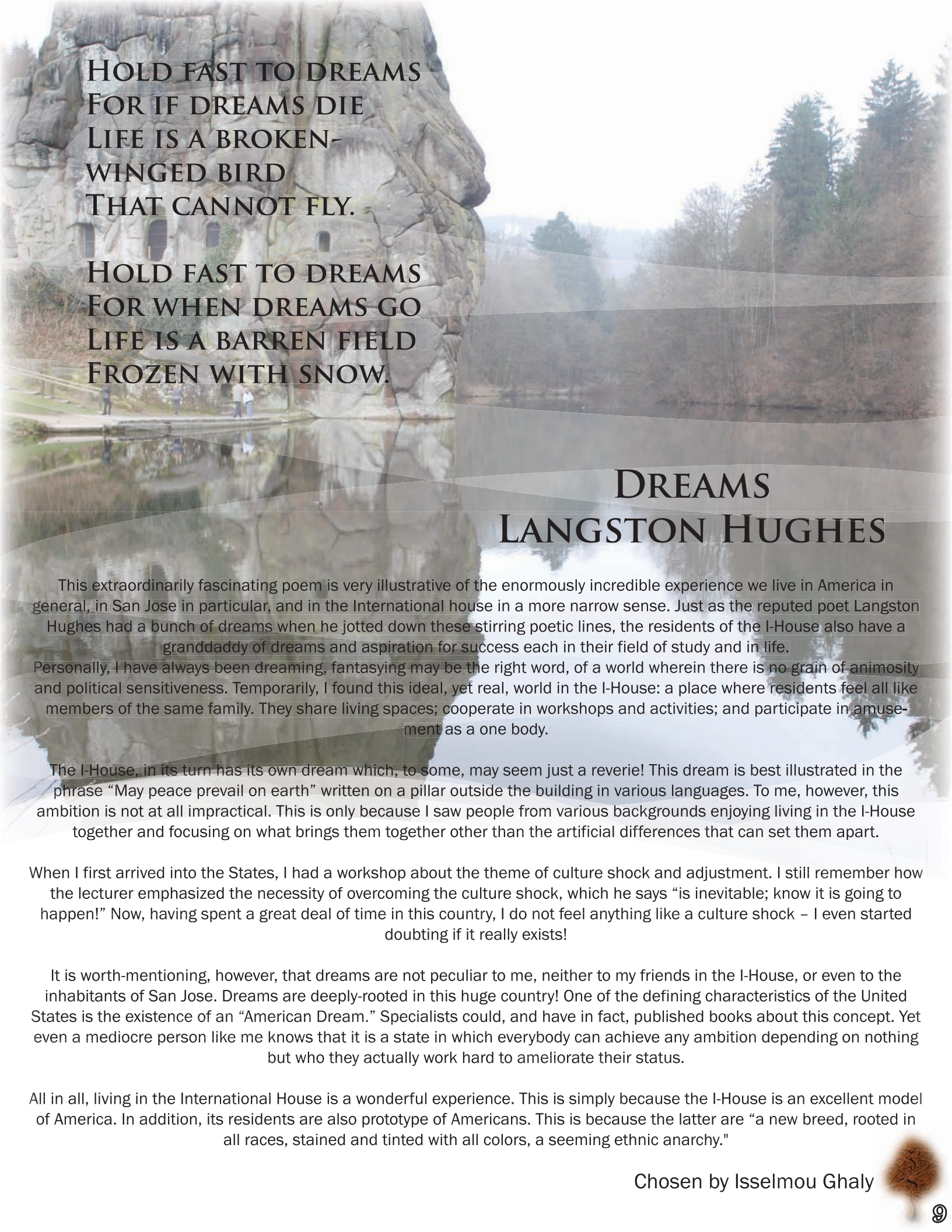
Even if I spread my arms,  
I can never fly in the sky,  
a little bird flying the air  
cannot run fast like me  
Even if I shake my body  
I cannot make pretty sounds,  
the bell ringing beautiful  
doesn't know as many songs as I know.  
The bell, the little bird, and me  
Everyone is different so everyone is great.

*Fujimoto*  
This poem talks about a bird, a bell and a human being. Each of them has a different background; however, this difference makes them irreplaceable and valuable.

This also applies to my life in I-House. There are different nationalities from different backgrounds. My life with such people and in such an environment is as valuable and irreplaceable as those above in the poem.

- Hitomi Fujimoto and Mariko Nitta





HOLD FAST TO DREAMS  
FOR IF DREAMS DIE  
LIFE IS A BROKEN-  
WINGED BIRD  
THAT CANNOT FLY.

HOLD FAST TO DREAMS  
FOR WHEN DREAMS GO  
LIFE IS A BARREN FIELD  
FROZEN WITH SNOW.

## DREAMS LANGSTON HUGHES

This extraordinarily fascinating poem is very illustrative of the enormously incredible experience we live in America in general, in San Jose in particular, and in the International house in a more narrow sense. Just as the reputed poet Langston Hughes had a bunch of dreams when he jotted down these stirring poetic lines, the residents of the I-House also have a granddaddy of dreams and aspiration for success each in their field of study and in life.

Personally, I have always been dreaming, fantasizing may be the right word, of a world wherein there is no grain of animosity and political sensitiveness. Temporarily, I found this ideal, yet real, world in the I-House: a place where residents feel all like members of the same family. They share living spaces; cooperate in workshops and activities; and participate in amusement as a one body.

The I-House, in its turn has its own dream which, to some, may seem just a reverie! This dream is best illustrated in the phrase "May peace prevail on earth" written on a pillar outside the building in various languages. To me, however, this ambition is not at all impractical. This is only because I saw people from various backgrounds enjoying living in the I-House together and focusing on what brings them together other than the artificial differences that can set them apart.

When I first arrived into the States, I had a workshop about the theme of culture shock and adjustment. I still remember how the lecturer emphasized the necessity of overcoming the culture shock, which he says "is inevitable; know it is going to happen!" Now, having spent a great deal of time in this country, I do not feel anything like a culture shock – I even started doubting if it really exists!

It is worth-mentioning, however, that dreams are not peculiar to me, neither to my friends in the I-House, or even to the inhabitants of San Jose. Dreams are deeply-rooted in this huge country! One of the defining characteristics of the United States is the existence of an "American Dream." Specialists could, and have in fact, published books about this concept. Yet even a mediocre person like me knows that it is a state in which everybody can achieve any ambition depending on nothing but who they actually work hard to ameliorate their status.

All in all, living in the International House is a wonderful experience. This is simply because the I-House is an excellent model of America. In addition, its residents are also prototype of Americans. This is because the latter are "a new breed, rooted in all races, stained and tinted with all colors, a seeming ethnic anarchy."



دن رگی دکی یاضعاً مدأ ینب  
دن رهوگ کی زشنی رفا رد هک  
راگزور دروا درد هب یوضع وچ  
رارق دن امن ار اه وضع رگد  
یم غیب نارگی دتن حم زک وت  
ی مدأ دن هن تمان هک دی اشن

*By Saadi*

*The Children of Adam are limbs of each other,  
having been created of one essence.*

*When the calamity of time afflicts one limb,  
the other limbs cannot remain at rest.*

*If thou hast no sympathy for the troubles of others,  
thou art unworthy to be called by the name of a man.*

Living in the United States and at the International House has given me much more than I can put in words. New horizons and worlds of opportunity have opened up to me since I arrived in this Land of Opportunity. I have often compared the amount of things I have learned during the past three years with all I had learned before. But not everything I have learned comes out of classrooms. Indeed the greatest lessons are those I learned through living side by side with people of all origins, cultures, backgrounds, races, ethnicities, colors, religions, beliefs, thoughts, and habits.

The one great lesson I have taken into my heart and soul is that, no matter where from, we the humans are simply all the same and should care for each other to remain humans. Many of my accomplishments, including my very coming to the United States, would have never come about if it was not for the help and support I received from many people.

I am admittedly unable to thank all people who have gracefully helped me push through my ambitions, let alone returning their favors. But one thing I have learned is that I must as well care for all people and lend a helping hand wherever one is sought. That will not make a good human out of me; that will only let me remain a human. This is the religion, the ideology, and the philosophy I try to live by; one that the great Persian poet Saadi has artistically articulated some 800 years ago.

Arash Motamedi

I'll Be Your Mirror  
The Velvet Underground

I'll be your mirror  
Reflect what you are, in case you don't know  
I'll be the wind, the rain and the sunset  
The light on your door to show that you're home  
When you think the night has seen your mind  
That inside you're twisted and unkind  
Let me stand to show that you are blind  
Please put down your hands  
'Cause I see you  
I find it hard to believe you don't know  
The beauty that you are  
But if you don't let me be your eyes  
A hand in your darkness, so you won't be afraid  
When you think the night has seen your mind  
That inside you're twisted and unkind  
Let me stand to show that you are blind  
Please put down your hands  
'Cause I see you  
I'll be your mirror

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But if you don't let me be your eyes  
A hand in your darkness, so you won't be afraid  
When you think the night has seen your mind  
That inside you're twisted and unkind  
Let me stand to show that you are blind  
Please put down your hands  
'Cause I see you  
I'll be your mirror

*"I'll Be Your Mirror" is a song by Lou Reed's band The Velvet Underground, released in 1966. Although my previous impression of the song would never have made me think of the International House, a second interpretation can always be drawn of all things. The International House is home to people from all over the world, each person bringing their own experiences, attributes, and flaws, as well as their own thoughts, beliefs and inner aspirations. Coming to live in the International House is a huge transition and can mean leaving your comfort zone or going to explore something entirely new.*

*The I-House and the people that inhabit it all serve as a sort of mirror to each resident. Being in such a close and diverse environment forces each resident to see oneself through another's eyes, "Please put down your hands, 'cause I see you". It forces each person to truly self evaluate and learn more about who they are as a person on an abstract and personal level as well as a social and communal level. More than that, the I-House and its residents serve as a home away from home and a kind of support system for each other, "I'll be the wind, the rain and the sunset, the light on your door to show that you're home". In a world that is maybe new and unknown, the I-House is a place where one can feel safe and comforted. When things don't go as planned, or misfortune brings us down, the I-House is a place where we can be rejuvenated, "But if you don't let me be your eyes, a hand in your darkness, so you won't be afraid. When you think the night has seen your mind, that inside you're twisted and unkind, let me stand to show that you are blind. Please put down your hands, 'cause I see you".*

*The International House brings together a diverse group of people that likely would have otherwise never met. Living here is an incomparable experience and each one of us should strive to cherish each moment, to learn, explore, and connect. We are each other's mirrors.*

*Chosen By Maddie Marusarz*

Sing-Song (excerpt)  
Christina Rossetti, 1893

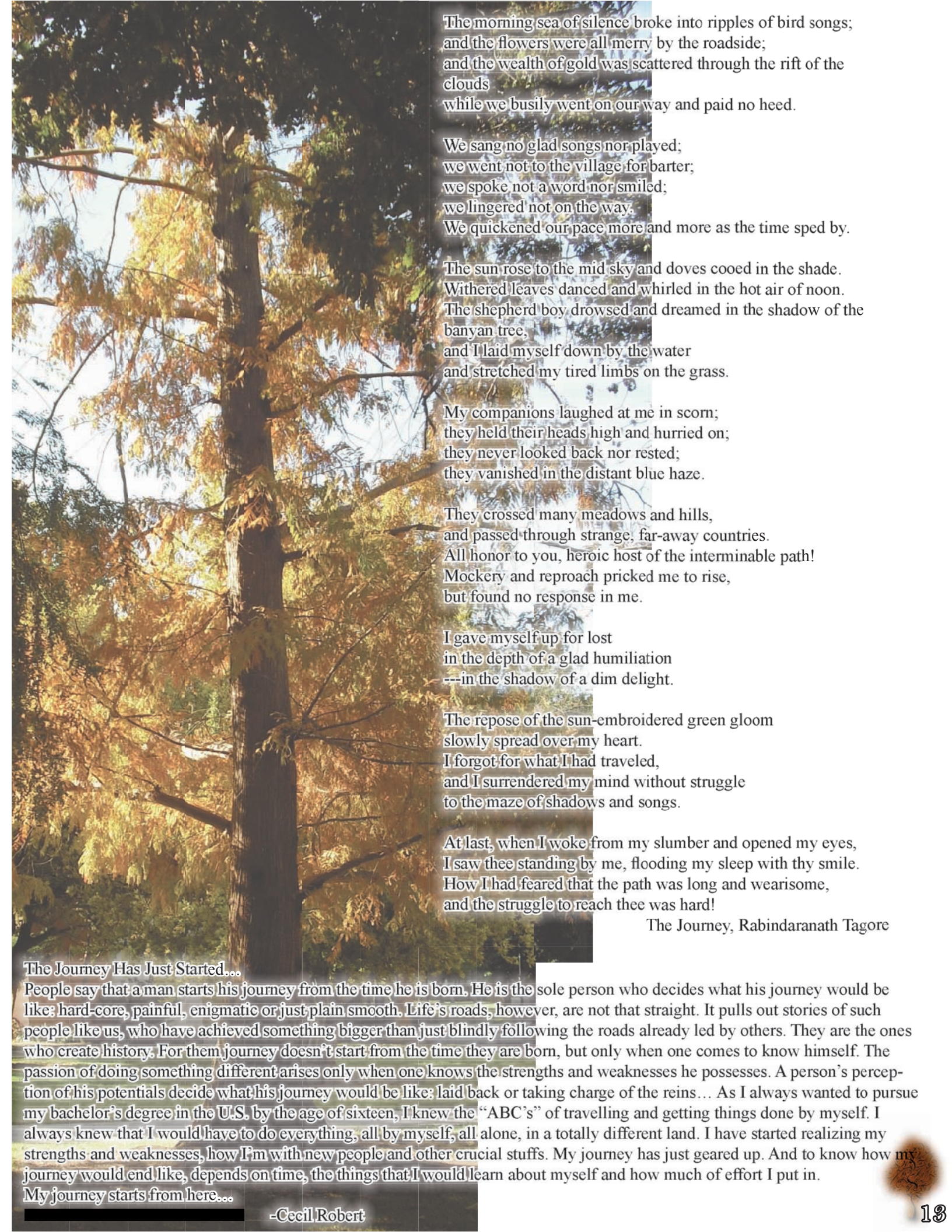
Is the moon tired?  
she looks so pale  
Within her misty veil:  
She scales the sky from east to west,  
And takes no rest.  
Before the coming of the night  
The moon shows papery white;  
Before the dawning of the day  
She fades away.

This poetic piece made me think of home. One night, when standing in the back garden of the International House and feeling slightly homesick, I realized that the closest I come to my family, friends and life back home is when the moon is out at night. With an 8 hour difference between San Jose and Scotland, the moon that I am seeing now at 11 o'clock at night, my parents have seen only half a day earlier. Such an event is calming and comforting when occasionally feeling down about being away from home.

The quiet surroundings, late at night, and the beauty of the moon, nature, the stars – the overall sense of being and life – leaves me feeling safe, content and happy, knowing that I will return at some point, and can fully use the opportunities given to me here in this wonderful place.

Jonny Mowlem





The morning sea of silence broke into ripples of bird songs;  
and the flowers were all merry by the roadside;  
and the wealth of gold was scattered through the rift of the  
clouds  
while we busily went on our way and paid no heed.

We sang no glad songs nor played;  
we went not to the village for barter;  
we spoke not a word nor smiled;  
we lingered not on the way.  
We quickened our pace more and more as the time sped by.

The sun rose to the mid sky and doves cooed in the shade.  
Withered leaves danced and whirled in the hot air of noon.  
The shepherd boy drowsed and dreamed in the shadow of the  
banyan tree,  
and I laid myself down by the water  
and stretched my tired limbs on the grass.

My companions laughed at me in scorn;  
they held their heads high and hurried on;  
they never looked back nor rested;  
they vanished in the distant blue haze.

They crossed many meadows and hills,  
and passed through strange, far-away countries.  
All honor to you, heroic host of the interminable path!  
Mockery and reproach pricked me to rise,  
but found no response in me.

I gave myself up for lost  
in the depth of a glad humiliation  
---in the shadow of a dim delight.

The repose of the sun-embroidered green gloom  
slowly spread over my heart.  
I forgot for what I had traveled,  
and I surrendered my mind without struggle  
to the maze of shadows and songs.

At last, when I woke from my slumber and opened my eyes,  
I saw thee standing by me, flooding my sleep with thy smile.  
How I had feared that the path was long and wearisome,  
and the struggle to reach thee was hard!

The Journey, Rabindaranath Tagore

### The Journey Has Just Started...

People say that a man starts his journey from the time he is born. He is the sole person who decides what his journey would be like: hard-core, painful, enigmatic or just plain smooth. Life's roads, however, are not that straight. It pulls out stories of such people like us, who have achieved something bigger than just blindly following the roads already led by others. They are the ones who create history. For them journey doesn't start from the time they are born, but only when one comes to know himself. The passion of doing something different arises only when one knows the strengths and weaknesses he possesses. A person's perception of his potentials decide what his journey would be like: laid back or taking charge of the reins... As I always wanted to pursue my bachelor's degree in the U.S. by the age of sixteen, I knew the "ABC's" of travelling and getting things done by myself. I always knew that I would have to do everything, all by myself, all alone, in a totally different land. I have started realizing my strengths and weaknesses, how I'm with new people and other crucial stuffs. My journey has just geared up. And to know how my journey would end like, depends on time, the things that I would learn about myself and how much of effort I put in.

My journey starts from here...

-Cecil Robert

## Ιθάκη

Κωνσταντίνος Π. Καβάφης, 1911

Σα βγεις στον πηγαϊμό για την Ιθάκη,  
να εύχεσαι νάναι μακρύς ο δρόμος,  
γεμάτος περιπέτειες, γεμάτος γνώσεις.  
Τους Λαιστρυγόνες και τους Κύκλωπας,  
τον θυμωμένο Ποσειδώνα μη φοβάσαι,  
τέτοια στον δρόμο σου ποτέ σου δεν θα βρεις,  
αν μεν' η σκέψις σου υψηλή, αν εκλεκτή  
συγκίνησις το πνεύμα και το σώμα σου αγγίζει.  
Τους Λαιστρυγόνες και τους Κύκλωπας,  
τον άγριο Ποσειδώνα δεν θα συναντήσεις,  
αν δεν τους κουβανείς μες στην ψυχή σου,  
αν η ψυχή σου δεν τους στήνει εμπρός σου.

Να εύχεσαι νάναι μακρύς ο δρόμος.  
Πολλά τα καλοκαιρινά πρωιά να είναι  
που με τι ευχαρίστησι, με τι χαρά  
θα μπαίνεις σε λιμένας πρωτοειδωμένους,  
να σταματήσεις σ' εμπορεία Φοινικικά,  
και τες καλές πραγμάτειες ν' αποκτήσεις,  
σεντέφια και κοράλλια, κεχρμπάρια κ' έβενους,  
και ηδονικά μυρωδικά κάθε λογής,  
όσο μπορείς πιο άφθονα ηδονικά μυρωδικά,  
σε πόλεις Αιγυπτιακές πολλές να πας,  
να μάθεις και να μάθεις απ' τους σπουδασμένους.

Πάντα στον νου σου νάχεις την Ιθάκη.  
Το φθάσιμον εκεί εν' ο προορισμός σου.  
Αλλά μη βιάζεις το ταξίδι διόλου.  
Καλλίτερα χρόνια πολλά να διαρκέσει  
και γέρος πια ν' αράξεις στο νησί,  
πλούσιος με όσα κέρδισες στο δρόμο,  
μη προσδοκόντας πλούτη να σε δώσει η Ιθάκη.

Η Ιθάκη σ'έδωσε τ' ωραίο ταξίδι.  
Χωρίς αυτήν δεν θάβγαινες στον δρόμο.  
Άλλα δεν έχει να σε δώσει πια.  
Κι αν πτωχική την βρεις, η Ιθάκη δε σε γέλασε.  
Έτσι σοφός που έγινες, με τόση πείρα,  
ήδη θα το κατάλαβες οι Ιθάκες τι σημαίνουν.

## Ithaka

Constantine P. Cavafy, 1911

When you set out for Ithaka  
ask that your way be long,  
full of adventure, full of instruction,  
The Laistrygonians and the Cyclops,  
angry Poseidon - do not fear them;  
such as these you will never find  
as long as your thought is lofty, as long as a rare  
emotion touches your spirit and your body.  
The Laistrygonians and the Cyclops,  
angry Poseidon - you will not meet them  
unless you carry them in your soul,  
unless your soul raise them up before you.

Ask that your way be long.  
At many a summer dawn to enter  
-with what gratitude, what joy-  
ports seen for the first time;  
to stop at Phoenician trading centers  
and to buy good merchandise,  
mother of pearl and coral, amber and ebony,  
and sensuous perfumes of every kind,  
sensuous perfumes as lavishly as you can;  
to visit many Egyptian cities,  
to gather stores of knowledge from the learned.

Have Ithaka always in your mind,  
your arrival there is what you are destined for,  
but do not in the least hurry the journey.  
Better that it last for years,  
so that when you reach the island you are old,  
rich with all you have gained on the way,  
not expecting Ithaka to give you wealth.

Ithaka gave you the splendid journey.  
Without her you would not have set out.  
She hasn't anything else to give you.  
And if you find her poor, Ithaka has not deceived you.  
So wise have you become, of such experience  
that already, you will have understood  
what these Ithakas mean.

This poem, on bended knee, begs the reader to delight in the journey of experience. The International House is many things, but it is without question – an experience. People from many nations populate this house every semester, captaining their own eccentric voyage. Once down this rabbit hole each resident discovers their own curious journey to treasure throughout their life. The I House is a gathering place for those ingredients of life that cannot be found while alone in nature, but among those friends and rivals that make up the most unlikely of families. We are the family you never even knew you had – the Ithakas for you to come to understand. Make of us what you will, but those who come with any kind of care in their heart never leave exactly as they came.

# Remember (excerpt)

By Douglass Pagel

Remember that a little love goes a long way.

Remember that a lot... goes forever.

Remember that friendship is a wise investment.

Life's treasures are people... together.

Realize that it's never too late.

Do ordinary things in an extraordinary way.

Have health and hope and happiness.

Take the time to wish upon a star.

And don't ever forget... for even a day...

How very special you are.



**I came here less than a year ago, not knowing any one on this side of the Atlantic Ocean. Once a stranger to this nation, I now refer to the I House as “home.” For the people that I share my life with here, are the people I consider family in this nation. Whenever I hear “I House” I will be reminded of that what makes us unique is what brings us together, not apart. I believe that we as the community of the I House make the world a better place as we increase our understanding for different people. I hope that the friendship tied here in this nation where we knew no one at first, but now see as our home will last forever, as I know that love always will.**

**-Matias Sjöblom**

# HOME



The Croatian hills are shaped just like the ones at Home,  
Silhouetted against the moon they could be mistaken for each other,  
But their surfaces here are coarse and uneven,  
Covered mostly in short harsh shrubbery that pricks and scraps,  
and always visible is the dry grey soil that sweeps and stings.

The Polish scenery was something I'd never encountered.  
It was probably the most like Home,  
With green hills that were wide and short,  
But I could feel the difference in my skin,  
There was an inland feel to it,  
No salt on my cheek.

The Slovenian Alps were so picturesque you'd swear you'd seen them before,  
On a bottle of water or in the Lord of the Rings.  
The mountains there tower over the tallest hills of Home,  
Soaring into sheer rock and snow that climb so high into the clouds they could disappear,  
And float in space.  
Unlike Home they are fearful and catch your breath in a glance.

I miss the green lushness of Home,  
I don't think I realised how green it was until I came away.  
Hills carpeted in soft greens spotted with white and black grazers,  
Separated like jigsaws by clumsy handmade stone walls.  
I miss the familiarity of it,  
The knowledge that, even if it wasn't raining, you could lie down in that grass and get up soaking.  
The familiar comforting green.

Roisin O'Reilly

I wrote this poem last summer when I was traveling through Europe. On my travels I saw some magnificent scenery, and though I thought it was beautiful, I couldn't help but miss the beauty of Ireland. Traveling across California I have seen some spectacular landscapes; Big Sur; Yosemite National Park; Highway 1; Pismo Beach. Although I found these sights breathtaking, the scenery of Ireland, of my home, will always be the most beautiful to me. Others might think it doesn't compare to these places but it is a landscape that has been etched in my heart. I have really grown to love California and find myself really comfortable living here but no matter where I go or what I do in life, for me, Ireland will always be Home.



# A House to Remember

By Nancy Seyam (Princess of Egypt)

A new semester is starting  
And everything seems too exciting  
Amazing cultures are meeting  
Getting to know each other they are competing  
Day by day the love is glowing  
And passionate bonds between us are growing  
We not only learn the meaning of caring  
But in DC, coffee nights, trips, and parties we are sharing  
Yet comes the day of crying  
When we realize that our days are flying  
The semester is almost ending  
And so the lovely days we are spending  
Yes from the house we will be leaving  
Yet our hearts will always be remembering  
That huge family we once had  
And the amazing experience that left us ever so glad

Ojalá que las hojas no te toquen el cuerpo cuando caigan  
para que no las puedas convertir en cristal.

Ojalá que la lluvia deje de ser milagro que baja por tu cuerpo.

Ojalá que la luna pueda salir sin ti.

Ojalá que la tierra no te bese los pasos.

Ojalá se te acabe la mirada constante,  
la palabra precisa, la sonrisa perfecta.

Ojalá pase algo que te borre de pronto:  
una luz cegadora, un disparo de nieve.

Ojalá por lo menos que me lleve la muerte,  
para no verte tanto, para no verte siempre  
en todos los segundos, en todas las visiones:  
ojalá que no pueda tocarte ni en canciones

Ojalá que la aurora no de gritos que caigan en mi espalda.

Ojalá que tu nombre se le olvide a esa voz.

Ojalá las paredes no retengan tu ruido de camino cansado.

Ojalá que el deseo se vaya tras de ti,  
a tu viejo gobierno de difuntos y flores.

Ojalá se te acabe la mirada constante,  
la palabra precisa, la sonrisa perfecta.

Ojalá pase algo que te borre de pronto:  
una luz cegadora, un disparo de nieve.

Ojalá por lo menos que me lleve la muerte,  
para no verte tanto, para no verte siempre  
en todos los segundos, en todas las visiones:  
ojalá que no pueda tocarte ni en canciones

Ojalá pase algo que te borre de pronto:  
una luz cegadora, un disparo de nieve.

Ojalá por lo menos que me lleve la muerte,  
para no verte tanto, para no verte siempre  
en todos los segundos, en todas las visiones:  
ojalá que no pueda tocarte ni en canciones

Let's hope that leaves do not touch your body when they fall  
So that they don't become as crystal.

Let's hope that the rain allows this miracle that graces your body

Let's hope that the moon can rise without your presence.

Let's hope that the ground does not kiss your steps.

Let's hope it is finished with the constant gaze,  
The precise word and the perfect smile.

Let's hope something happens that erases you forever:  
A brilliant light, a blast of snow.

I hope at the very least, it takes me to the grave  
in order to not see you so, nor to see you always  
in every second and every vision.  
I hope that you are not even mentioned in song.

I hope that the aurora does not call down on my back,

I hope that your name is forgotten by this voice.

I hope that the walls don't retain the sound of your sad passage.

I hope that the desire leaves after you  
To your old government of the deceased and of flowers.

Let's hope it is finished with the constant gaze,  
The precise word and the perfect smile.

Let's hope something happens that erases you forever:  
A brilliant light, a blast of snow.

I hope at the very least, it takes me to the grave  
in order to not see you so, nor to see you always  
in every second and every vision.  
I hope that you are not even mentioned in song.

Let's hope something happens that erases you forever:  
A brilliant light, a blast of snow.

I hope at the very least, it takes me to the grave  
in order to not see you so, nor to see you always  
in every second and every vision.  
I hope that you are not even mentioned in song.

### Ojalá by Silvio Rodriguez

This song, written by Silvio Rodriguez, a Cuban musician known for his symbolic lyrics, is a descriptive representation of my view of the International House. As the lyrics reflect, this song speaks of a lost love which the singer looks back on with sadness and which he wishes to forget. However, he is unable to let the memories of that love leave him so he is caught in a battle to keep what he thinks of fondly and to leave behind that which hurt him so. This idea of a longed for lost love describes the emotions that residents feel upon leaving the place they have called home for at least a short while. The first stanza, which describes the beauty of love, shows the greatness of where we live; how even though we all come from differing cultures and backgrounds, we find connections which make the experience of living here not only bearable, but preferable to what we had before. Then the chorus shows the sadness that many feel upon leaving as well as the desire to forget the fond memories that signal the return of that sadness. The lyrics of the third stanza reveal how each person who leaves from the International House retains memories which cannot be relived therefore, for some, are forgotten so that the sadness that shadows those memories can't take hold once again. Having lived in this house for many semesters, I have been there to see many people come and go. Each time this happens, I gain new memories of the good times here. Though I will cherish these memories, I dread the time when I leave this place to face the real world, knowing that the next time I come to visit this wonderful place that holds such good times, it will be as a visitor, getting peeks at what I once had. However, I am prepared for this and know that it is still in the future. And no matter how quickly that future is becoming present, I will enjoy these special times and cherish them forever. For anyone who comes to live at the I-House walks away with memories that will haunt and grace them for a lifetime.

-Dave Thomson

# Beyond A Home

## Ebony Flett

**Diversity**

**International, camaraderie**

**Sharing, learning, ascertaining**

**Relinquish, cultivate, together, friendship**

**Affecting, renouncing, spellbinding,**

**Adventure, power**

**Unification**



### **Editor's Note**

***A diamond poem, or diamante, is a style of poetry that is made up of seven lines usually usually forming the shape of a diamond. The form was developed by Iris Tiedt in A New Poetry Form: The Diamante (1969). The first and last lines each consist of a one-word noun. The second and sixth lines are each made up of two adjectives and the third and fifth lines are made up of three gerund form words. The fourth and middle line consists of four nouns. Conceptually, the poem is divided into two halves, with all the words in each half being related to the single noun at the beginning or end. The division point between these halves occurs between the second and third nouns in the middle line. The entire poem is centrally justified, with the inner lines physically longer than the outer lines.***

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Editor's Note:

To everyone who contributed to this semester's newsletter – you have my profuse and profound thanks. Collecting your thoughts and feelings together in such expressive forms has been a truly rewarding experience. Those feelings have travelled from all over the world to concentrate here in the I House. Thank you for the journey.

~Ace Antazo