Accents

Personal Stories

Various native speakers from different parts of the vast English-speaking world give a short account of their lives. Their stories represent a range of regional and local accents, cultures, backgrounds and attitudes.

By reading or listening to their stories you will feel as if you belong to their world, for they speak a language common both to you and millions of others around the world.

A set of 2 cassettes is available.
**Forword**

This book includes personal stories narrated by seventeen people from different parts of the United Kingdom, the USA, Ireland, Canada and Australia.

Our intention in recording this range of voices was neither to collect as many accents as possible, nor to find the most typical or strongest accents. Rather, our aim was to illustrate a range of regional pronunciation in English. By listening to the tapes the reader will hear the differences in the way native speakers communicate in English, and get an idea of how the language is spoken in such diverse places as London, New York, Manchester and many other parts of the English speaking world.

“Accents” is part of a series of language books designed to expose students to English as spoken by native speakers in a range of situations. Its companion books are: “Examination Topics”, and “Short Stories”.

This book, however, differs from the others in the series, in that while the stories the speakers tell were also recorded and transcribed, they were not edited in order to rid them of unnecessary repetition or other grammatical errors. This gives the stories the authentic flavour of English as it is spoken.

The book’s aim is to expose the student to an actual informal, conversational style. Educationalists are currently debating the factors which influence the way in which English is spoken, such as the speaker’s thought processes as they mingle with the demands of grammar and syntax, and sometimes it is unclear which usage of the language is “correct” or not.

What is evident, however, about conversational style is that in the process of speaking, while expressing thoughts and ideas, it is impossible to avoid afterthoughts, interrupted thoughts, repetition and retracing of ideas. So the way we have commented on the text is by detecting grammatical mistakes in the words and sentences that did not occur under the influence of these extra-linguistic factors. Mistakes of the type belong to non-standard English(NSE). The other uses of technically “incorrect” English should be considered as current conversational style(CS).

“Accents” can be used for listening and reading practice, for identifying regional accents and analysing various informal types of speech. The book can also be used for teaching and learning how to present a personal story in a concise and interesting form.

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First you will hear one or two sentences from a different speaker each representing a different accent. Listen to this chain of accents and try to identify as many as possible!

1. ...and here I am, back here today, still writing about the bars and restaurants in Hungary, writing about the bars and restaurants in Warsaw, and even writing about the bars and restaurants in Prague and Slovakia, and Croatia...

2. Restaurateur and restaurant manager, it's always great to eat there. It doesn't help my figure or anything, but it's a great hobby, you know. Good food, good wine, good company - what more could you ask for? It's good.

3. When I was younger, I used to enjoy playing soccer, which is known as football in Europe, and it served me well, because when I was twelve years old, I came to Budapest, Hungary, the land of my mother's birth...

4. He was working for VSO, which is Voluntary Services Overseas, and he met her at a festival for rain which they do occasionally, each year, for the crops, and the rain gods to rain down on the crops and give a fruitful harvest


6. I've developed many hobbies here. I play guitar for fun and I write poetry and I'm writing a novel at present, none of which have been published. I work on computers, and I enjoy creating things in general.

7. It was also in some ways kind of educational, to see the different reactions you got from people when you appeared on the doorstep, and just peering into different people's houses and the reactions they got.

8. I'm also interested in the textiles and the folk culture, and I've travelled in Romania extensively to collect different kinds of weavings and embroideries that are made by the peasants who live there.

9. And, in between, I went to live in Berlin for a year, which was good. It was less exciting than when the wall was there - the wall had come down in '89, and I was there '92, '93, but it was still a very interesting experience.

10. So I worked in a bakery baking bread every morning at four o'clock in the morning. That was a tough job getting up at that hour. And it was such a horrible, badly paid job - about a pound an hour - that that was the incentive for me to get some education.

11. "Todd, where are you?". "Well, I'm in Jackson Square". And I wasn't actually in Jackson square, I was just in the most convenient place that the dispatcher wanted me to be, so I would tell them whatever they wanted to hear, because it was easy to get round the city, so it was no problem.
12. Like I said, I want to stay here. I will work on this project through the summer and in the new year I plan to go to Asia again, to Korea, and there I will help a friend of mine with her English language school.

13. My father owned a pub, and in the pub he used to have, occasionally, live music, and this, as I think, was the first time I was introduced to live music, in pubs, which is maybe why I was influenced to become a musician.

14. So I needed some money to run the car, and I was doing things like gardening and filling up supermarket shelves at night time, and... and also even working in a pub, picking up glasses and picking up plates, and things like that.

15. Sometimes we would just go to Tenerife for maybe two or three days, or even once to Morocco, just for a weekend. Life out there was so different it was incredible. Every day was a holiday.

16. I was a big reader growing up as a child. I read voraciously, I read constantly, and when I was in school I always excelled in history and English. I was always terrible in math and science.

17. which is what I've been doing for the last four years, off and on, in between various trips to various cities I love, such as Zagreb and Prague. The next step I'm not too sure of, but I'm sure it involves a drink, a few friends and some more music.

Story 1

Adam

My family lives in North London, in the Irish part of town. Although part of my family is from Ireland, most of it, half of it, is originally from Lithuania and Belorussia, on my father's side, and on my mother's side they're from Scotland and Ireland - but I'm not quite sure how we ended up living in Kilburn.

I went to school nearby, in a place called Willesdon, which is a nice middle class suburb. I used to walk to school every day. My mother used to come and get me, and walk me home with my little brother - he's called Jason; he's 31 now. He still lives at home with my parents. I went to a Jewish school, because I went to... my family's Jewish, so I had quite a Jewish upbringing. We used to... at school we would keep the festivals and the Sabbath, and all the main events of the year.

When I was eleven I left that school - it was called the Northwest London Jewish State School, and I went to another school, in a part of town called Camden, which is in Northwest London, and that was also another Jewish school, and I stayed there until I was eighteen, and after that I took one year off before I went to university when I was nineteen.

In that year I worked for six months, and then I went on a kibbutz, to Israel for six months. That was very interesting. A kibbutz is... was set up about sixty or seventy years ago, as little islands of socialism. In the real hard-core ones they used to have pictures of Lenin and Stalin on the walls, and I used to spend my time working there, and learning Hebrew.

My family... my parents are sort of semi-retired now. My mother used to be a model. Then she worked as a secretary in a hospital for about ten years or so, and her family is very artistic. Her father was a craftsman, a French polisher, who used to polish cabinets and repair wooden antiques and things. She painted for quite a while, and then she took up sculpture, which she was really good at. I've got lots of her sculptures in my flat.

My father works, and he works part time as a salesman for a company that makes linings for clothes, and curtains and things in the east end of London. He goes there two or three times a week. He's supposed to go there four or five, but he doesn't, most of, or half the time he stays at home with my mum and pretends he's at work.
I don't have any grandparents unfortunately - they've all died. The last one to die was my grandmother, my father's mother. She was ninety-two. I was quite close to her, so I quite miss her sometimes.

At university I studied Arabic and History. After I left university I got a job as a press officer with a UN organisation, which is... they have these years every year, like Year of the Child and Year of the Tree, Year of the Goat, or whatever. It's like the Chinese New Year, every year there's a new thing. So this was the Year of the Youth. So I was the press officer for United Nations International Youth Year, which was quite fun.

After that, I helped set up a youth magazine called Fairly Serious Monthly, which was an interesting magazine because it was written by its readers. It was me and some friends that set it up. It wasn't a bad magazine, it was.... the first couple of issues were a bit ropey, but it got better as time went on, and we sold it. It was a proper magazine on sale every month.

Then I got a job with the Daily Telegraph magazine, which was interesting, because it's a very right-wing magazine, and I'm not very right-wing, and I managed to get some good articles in there about racism and quite serious issues, but eventually they - I was on a six-month contract - they didn't renew it. Because they said, my approach wasn't right for them, which is good really, because I would be a bit worried if it was right for the Daily Telegraph, because it was a very right-wing newspaper, still is.

Then I worked for the Daily Mail, on their Lifestyle magazine, and I worked on a tabloid newspaper, which was very good experience, because you have to do things extremely quickly. Sometimes you have to do things so quickly that there isn't actually any chance to find out what people actually think, or what's really going on, and you're basically expected to... not exactly to make it up, but to, let's say, stretch your material as far as you can - basically make it up half the time. Then I got a bit a bored with that after a year, because that's not really why I became a journalist, to make things up, and then I went to work for a serious newspaper called The Independent, and I stayed there for about a year or so, and then I came to Hungary as a foreign correspondent. I'm what you call a stringer, which means you have a contract with a newspaper, and they pay you per article, and your expenses as well, and sometimes a retainer also. But it's not actually the same as being on staff, so you don't get a car and a house and a secretary and all the things that staff reporters get. But, then again, you get a lot more freedom, so you can do what you want. And I've been in Hungary ever since - that was in June 1991, so... five years, almost exactly five years to the day.

And, in between, I went to live in Berlin for a year, which was good. It was less exciting than when the wall was there - the wall had come down in '89, and I was there '92, '93, but it was still a very interesting experience, because the city was still divided into two, quite severely in the people's mentalities. They used to say the wall on the ground is gone, but the wall in the head remains. But still, Budapest called me so, I came back to Budapest after a year, and now I'm working as a journalist, working much more for magazines than newspapers, and in the last year, couple(* 1) of years, I've written a book about Muslims in Europe, which I got the basic idea for from when I was in Bosnia. I got very interested in this whole question of Islam in Europe, and that's going to come out, probably, this winter, or early next spring. That was very interesting, because I went to ten countries, to France, and Britain, and Bosnia, and Germany, and America, and Turkey, and Albania and Bulgaria, to talk to Muslims. There have been lots of books about Islam, sort of very theoretical things, but this is a book about people, about Muslims themselves, how they live and what they want, and I found it very interesting, and I hope it's going to do well.

NOTES

CS: conversational style

1. CS = or couple

originally adv coming from the beginning of something
Middle-class adj an average class of people, socially, economically and culturally
hard-core adj seriously involved in something
craftsman n someone who makes things with their hands or simple tools
to set (sth) up v to make the preparations necessary to begin something
Story 2

Tim

I was born when I was very young, in the English shires. First of all, I lived in the shires, not far from where my parents lived, and later they sent me off to Somerset, some two or three hundred miles away from my parents, where life was not so easy, and then, I suppose easier. Of course, it was easier because I was away from my parents, and they weren't there to tell me what to do and how to do it, and then I came home, every holiday, for four weeks or eight weeks in the summer, and went out and shot little birds, chased(*1) rabbits round with a shotgun. Three dogs and one gun, and I could go anywhere. So that's how I began.

Eventually I escaped this education, which, at some stage, featured Latin, cricket, and beagling. For those of you who do not understand beagling, this is chasing hares with a pack of hounds. The difference to fox-hunting is that the huntsmen do not have horses. Fortunately, hares run in circles, except, that is, in the mating season, when male hares, who may not be on home territory, for obvious reasons, run in straight lines. Thus, for those of you who don't know the expression "march hare", mad if you're a huntsman, you've got to chase them miles and miles in a straight line.

After I'd left school, I spent a little bit of time in Nottingham, and then in Leicester. Nottingham was then a fast emerging city, a place where, I was confidently assured, there were three or even four girls to every man, and for me, a sort of rich, young, ex-public schoolboy with my own Mini Minor motor car, there was no problem. I went off to discos, and generally enjoyed myself. Eventually, somebody thought that I might be having too good a time, so they sent me to Chelsea. Ah, dear, that was a pity. Chelsea in the sixties! There I was, enjoying myself - Kings road, The Beatles, The Rolling Stones - and when it got too hot or too boring, went off(*2) to holiday in St. Tropez.

Not quite the way that a young business executive should live, so shortly I parted company with the more formal company I had, and the fact that there were(*3) of course full employment then - in the sixties, in England, if you wanted a job, and you were half serious, well, hey, you could get one. So what did I do? I went and became a disc-jockey. Much more fun. And I worked around clubs, night-clubs, private parties, and really enjoyed myself. I even made money - enough to live off, anyway - and lived very well. Of course, I eventually found private parties were
really boring. You know, you had to get up, drive miles into the countryside, put in all this equipment together, get drunk, play records all night, get in the car, drive back to London in a state which maybe it was preferable not to drive back in... but, of course, in those days, drinking and driving was just part of the norm. Everybody drunk and drove. Hell, you know - "Hello officer, of course I'm drunk. Why don't you go away and get drunk as well?". "Well, sure, sorry Sir, just be a bit more careful!", that was the attitude. Christ, how things have changed!

So, that's what happened for that time, and then, finally, I suppose things began to change. And 1973 saw a lot of changes, and I began to appreciate that changes might be happening, and somebody offered me a job in Turkey. Now, unfortunately, Turkey in 1974, which is when I went there, was not quite the place to be, because the Turks took exception to a bunch of Greeks disposing of an Archbishop, and the result was the invasion of Cyprus, which rather finished off the tourist business for that year, which I was supposed to be there to help. So, I spent a few months helping stranded tourists get home. So that was the end of a pleasant year in Turkey, and I returned at the end of the summer, and went and worked in a pub, a pub run by a friend of mine - and, actually, it was then the busiest pub in Chelsea. We had a great deal of fun there, a lot of fun, and, eventually, I thought, I was having so much fun running a pub I might as well get my own pub. So, I bought a hotel - well, actually, it wasn't a hotel then, it was a small pub, a rather grotty village pub in Oxfordshire - not really the place to have a pub when you come from Chelsea, but there you go. Eventually, I converted this pub into a hotel, which subsequently became Egan Ronay recommended. Unfortunately, shortly after it became Egan Ronay recommended, the wife decided that she didn't really like the lifestyle that we were now living, which I barely say was surprising, because, I mean, well... I've never been the greatest, and monogamous, I believe is the word, so she left, and I was left with a pub. Unfortunately, as these things happen, she also left with most of the money.

So I had to sell the pub, which I did, and then set off(4) on a varied career, working for various pubs and restaurants, driving for friends of mine who owned motor cars, and basically just getting on with life and doing the things that one does, you know, going there and enjoying oneself. But, of course, all that had to come to an end, and I bought another pub. I bought a pub just near Southampton, but this time I got it right, it was actually a pub on the waterfront, which catered mainly to the sailing community, and it was highly successful. It actually became one of the most successful pubs on the south coast.

So that went on for five or six years, and I enjoyed myself enormously getting fatter and richer, and generally doing all the things that one does when one has a very successful business. But, of course, I'm always a great believer that after five years somewhere time is at an end, you've learnt enough, you've done enough, time to go, time to disappear, so I sold and decided that I would head off to Central Europe, which, of course, at that time had just been opened up, as they say. This was mid-1990, and so, September, October 1990 found me driving around from Prague to Budapest with the idea of opening a pub in this region. In fact I'd already gone back in February. We had a... with an ex-partner of mine, we had visited Warsaw, Prague and Budapest and looked at the idea of doing various things, but these had all been delayed because things were not going quite so well in the UK, and the sale of the pub took a bit longer.

Where I was to come to live, or basically spend most of my time, was Budapest. The reason for that was, of course, I sat one day in a bar in Prague discussing, with a man who I was quite sure was an ex-secret policeman, exactly how I could get a pub in Prague, and he said to me, "Well, of course I can find a pub for you in Prague, but I need ten thousand pounds a year as a retainer." I said, "Don't be stupid, I'm not going to pay you ten thousand pounds a year, what I'll do - you find me a pub, I'll give you a good commission." That's the way most business is done. "No, no, he said, I want ten thousand pounds a year." I said, "For what?". He said, "Well, if you don't pay me ten thousand pounds a year, you won't get a pub here, because I know everybody who owns them anyway." So I decided that I'd move on and go to Budapest, where they'd be much more co-operative.

Of course, in Budapest things didn't happen, because in Hungary they say "Yes" when they mean "Well... maybe", and they say other things, and as a result it went on, and it went on, and it went on, and I never actually bought a pub in Hungary. However, I have had a good time in Hungary. I've advised people on running pubs. I've done various things which have been a lot of fun, and here I am back here today, still writing about the bars and restaurants in Hungary, writing about the bars and restaurants in Warsaw, and even writing about the bars and restaurants in Prague and Slovakia, and Croatia, and all the rest of it. So, yes, I've enjoyed myself. I'm not complaining.
I was brought up, mainly, in Southeast London, in a strange part of the world known as Deptford, which was full of second-hand car salesmen, gangsters, drug dealers and punk bands.

I went to school in some dreadful part of the home counties, in England, and hated nearly every minute of it. I had to escape to London by the time I was sixteen or seventeen. In Deptford, I learned a lot of things I didn't know about from home. I learned about shoplifting. I learned about bands. I learned about music. I learned about women. I learned about alcohol. I learned about how to stay up for three nights in a row drinking, partying, enjoying(*1) myself. None of this had much to do with education or with work, and eventually it was time to leave the dole queue and do something else with my life.

The only thing I was any good at, apart from drinking, drinking and more drinking, was languages, so I went to a language school because in those days the English government gave you money to study, for a language course four years(*2), and one of those years would be spent abroad, in bars, drinking at government's expense. I spent a whole year drinking in the south of France and in the Ukraine, watching and playing football and chasing women, all in the name of education.

When education came to a stop, I had to find other work. The only thing I knew how to do was a bit of writing, so I decided to try at a local newspaper in Deptford where things worked out fine. There I covered Deptford. I covered crime. I covered local issues. I covered the music scene. I covered everything and anything that was happening in the place I was living in.

From then, I'd had enough of England. I hated England. I hated English people. I hated English attitudes. I hated English food. I hated English women. But most of all, I hated English beer. It was time to leave.

I discovered Hungary through a strange twist of fate. And I decided to come to Budapest to learn how to drink more, to write more, and chase more beautiful women, which is what I've been doing for the last four years, off and on, in between various trips to various cities I love, such as Zagreb and Prague. The next step I'm not too sure of, but I'm sure it involves a drink, a few friends and some more music.
## NOTES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CS: conversational style</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. CS = and enjoying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. CS = for four years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>second-hand adj</th>
<th>something owned previously by someone else</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>gangster n</td>
<td>1. someone working for organised crime 2. criminal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dreadful n</td>
<td>very bad or unpleasant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shoplifting n</td>
<td>stealing goods from a shop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to party v</td>
<td>to drink alcohol and enjoy oneself at a party or with friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dole n</td>
<td>money given to the unemployed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to cover v</td>
<td>here: to write about</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>off and on adv</td>
<td>on and off: now and again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a twist of fate n</td>
<td>an unexpected event that changes a situation or a person's life</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Story 4

#### Janet

My name is Janet Hill. I am twenty-two years old. My mother is Lao, my father is English. He met her as a teacher in Vientiane, Laos, when he was about twenty-eight. He was working for VSO, which is Voluntary Services Overseas, and he met her at a festival for rain which they do occasionally, each year, for the crops, and the rain gods to rain down on the crops and give a fruitful harvest.

I was born in Laos, and left two years after, due to the Vietnam war and Laos getting more and more involved in the Vietnam war, with my mother and father, to Thailand. We then went to the UK, where my father did his MA in applied linguistics, and then he started working for the British Council. His first job overseas for the British Council was in Tanzania. We were at Mwanza in Tanzania for four years and after the four years my father went to Senegal for six years. During that time I lived in Senegal for four years, and went to... started going to school in the UK, at a Quaker school, called Friends school, in Saffron Walden, Essex, at the age of twelve.

My secondary education was in the UK at the Friends school. After I did my A-levels, which is the eighteen-plus exams (it is customary for the school-leavers in the UK to take a year off which is often referred to as a "gap" year...) I went to India, where I was a voluntary teacher at a primary school for native Tamil village children, although it was under the umbrella of Auroville, which is an international community based on the philosophy and the vision of a man called Sri Aurobindo, who was some sort of yogi with a white beard, I assume. It was created in 1969 by a woman called "the Mother", a French impressionist artist, who was a great disciple of Sri Aurobindo. She had a dream about this community, or whatever, and thought it would be a good idea to create it smack bang in the middle of the Tamil Nadu desert.

After India, I returned to Malaysia, where my parents were currently posted, and got myself a job in a graphic design consultancy firm, called William Harold Wong & Company, later to be called The Design Circle, in Kuala Lumpur, which is the capital.

After three months in Derby, I returned to Malaysia, returned to my job with the graphic design company, and when my parents moved to Hungary, basically Budapest, they... I came with them, immediately(2) got a job at the British Council, and then I finally went to England,
Manchester, for temporary posting, to cover someone's maternity leave, in the Overseas Appointment Services, which was a department of the British Council which hired professionals and consultants around the world, including Central Europe, which is my field, and I have recently been offered an unconditional offer at the School of Oriental and African Studies, which is part of the University of London, to do South-East Asian Studies, and I would say that is predominantly my interest, as I would like to be involved in a region that I believe will be the leading region in the world - the West has had its time, and I think Asia will be an economic superpower, and engulf all the others, including the Pacific ring, which includes Japan and South Korea. And my main interest actually lies within Indochina, because of my roots, because of my mother being Laotian, and because of the historical evidence - the fact that it has not exactly been a region that has profited, with war, which is rather unfortunate.

What do I like? I did used to like water-skiing until my knees buckled under me at one point. I did a lot of swimming when I was young. I did a lot of swimming for the school, did a lot of swimming for my county, did a lot of swimming for Quaker Schools Anonymous, whatever... and... I like to travel, and I think the main reason why I chose a subject which will take me overseas is because, hopefully, I will become a consultant in something or other to do with the region, and be sent, shuttled off everywhere around the world.

I sometimes wish that I had chosen Africa, having been brought up there for the majority of my life, and having spent my childhood in and around the Afr..., East and West Africa, and travelling lots off(*3) South Africa. I once remember that we went up, when my parents were still posted in Mwanza in Tanzania, we drove down through Zimbabwe and Zambia, down to Malawi, and got to the South African border. And this, granted, was about ten years ago, so apartheid was pretty strong - Nelson Mandela had not been released from prison. We got to the border of South Africa - and I believe it was Malawi(*4), but my geography is not altogether strong right now, and we were not allowed to cross the border on the same bus as my father because he was white, and my mother and I were brown. We were not allowed to travel on the same public transport, we were not allowed to use the same toilets, we were not allowed to sleep in the same hotels, let alone in the same rooms. I think that was my first brush with racism at such a scale(*5). I don't really have much cause to fear racism, except on days in Hungary when there are nationalist overtones, but that doesn't thankfully happen often.

**NOTES**

**CS:** conversational style

**NSE:** non-standard English

1. CS = are
2. CS = and immediately
3. CS = Having travelled a lot in
4. CS = in Malawi
5 NSE correct: on such a scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>CS</th>
<th>NSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>crops</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>plants grown in large amounts for food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quaker</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>a Protestant religious group found mostly in America and England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>voluntary</td>
<td>adj</td>
<td>working without payment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>customary</td>
<td>adj</td>
<td>something usually done in specific situations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disciple</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>a person who follows or learns from a leader or mentor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>smack bang in the middle of</td>
<td>(slang)</td>
<td>right in the middle of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maternity leave</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>paid time off from work for a woman to give birth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>predominantly</td>
<td>adv</td>
<td>mostly, mainly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to engulf</td>
<td>v</td>
<td>here: dominate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to buckle</td>
<td>v</td>
<td>to bend under pressure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to post</td>
<td>v</td>
<td>to appoint sb to a job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to shunt off</td>
<td>v</td>
<td>to move sb to a different place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>granted</td>
<td>adv</td>
<td>here: certainly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brush (with)</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>here: short unfriendly encounter with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>overtones</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>sth implied in addition to what is stated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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(*3) South Africa

(*4) Malawi

(*5) scale
My name's Nige, I was born in Hardwick, which is a district of Manchester. I was born in 1963. Now, Manchester is an industrialised city. The area where I lived was mainly... er, slight industry and heavy industry. But the area where I lived was, is, mainly... the housing was terraced housing, and it was a very close-knit community. Everybody knew where the children was(*1), everybody could leave their doors open at night-time with no problems.

My father was originally a butcher, and he had to give that job in(*2) eventually, because we had a tradition in Manchester where everybody buys their meat on a Monday - they would pay on Friday, when they got their dole money, normally their dole money, or a wage, which in them(*3) days was very occasional. When I was one year old, we was(*1) given a choice of moving areas, because Manchester was becoming more and more industrialised by the year, and they found that there was(*1) too many people living in Manchester itself. And my family chose Bradbury, so we moved there when I was one year old.

Now, it's only a small town. When we moved there, it was considered a village, and it's still not too big now - maybe five thousand, six thousand people. And... I started my education at Bradbury Primary school, and I went there when I was four years old, and you know all the teachers, they were all over fifty years of age. They all wore the old cap and gown, they all carried a cane, which wasn't very pleasant when it hit you. We always... capital punishment then, or corporal punishment, as I should say, was delivered with relish.

I eventually left the primary school when I was eleven years of age. After failing my eleven plus, I had to go to the normal secondary school, and... I sometimes studied there. Most times I would, what we call, be absent from school. In my final six months of school I think I attended, I don't know, maybe two weeks. We had a very stupid teacher them(*3) days. We used to go into his classroom in the morning for our registration, and then we would normally have him for a double lesson straight after. We would walk out(*4) the door. He wouldn't even miss us.

So I decided to leave school at fifteen and a half, because it held no interest for me at all. I passed a few exams - art, history and geography, basic things, but I was more interested, really, in doing my own thing. I wasn't particularly bothered about education.

So, I didn't work for approximately six months, and then I was very lucky. One of my cousins was an inspector for the... a large bus company in the area, and he managed to get me a job as an apprentice diesel fitter, which, for me, that(*5) was a good step up. So I attended college, night school, for approximately four years, when(*6) I received my full qualification as a diesel fitter. But as soon as I qualified, I decided it wasn't a job I wanted. So, consequently, I left.

And... I worked in various jobs. I produced milk from Soya beans, I became a pensions and life-insurance salesman for a short time, and then I eventually joined a company called British Aerospace, which, when I joined, was a job for life, so I was told. And I was there two years(*7) as a stationary supervisor, which, basically(*8) I made sure that all the factory was stocked with pens, papers, paper-clips and other useful things. And one day I saw a job advertised on the vacancy board for a fireman. So I thought, "I'll try for that." I knew the chief fire officer, I thought, "Maybe I have a chance." And, lo and behold, I got the job, which doubled my salary overnight.

We had some fun with that. We had to train, train, train, all the time. Everything, everything had to be done by numbers. You had to salute the chief officers, you had to parade every day - which got very very boring. But, sometimes we were seconded to different airports. Sometimes we'd work at Manchester airport and sometimes we would go to Birmingham airport, which made a change. But eventually I got tired of that job. I decided I wanted to try and do something different.

I went to various places. I went to various countries, and I decided one day to just leave my job. So I walked into work with my resignation and said, "That is it. In one month I am leaving." I did not give any explanation why, I just said "That is it." So a month later I picked up my, what is called, voluntary redundancy money, and said good-bye to my family, and I went to Manchester airport, and I looked down the departures board, thinking, where I could go, and I saw the sign for Grand Canaria, I thought "Okay, fair enough. That will do me." So I ended up spending eight months in Grand Canaria, and becoming very
very brown. And... lots of different activities. I was a barman for a short time, sometimes I was a waiter, sometimes I repaired jet skis. It didn’t really matter what happened, you always found some kind of work out there. Sometimes we would just go to Tenerife for maybe two or three days, or even once to Morocco, just for a weekend. Life out there was so different it was incredible. Every day was a holiday.

I left Grand Canaria on the twenty-ninth of September, and I went back to England for five days. I was going to go back for maybe two months, make some more money, then go to Budapest, but after five days - that was enough. England has gone(*9) very very bad. So, I didn’t have enough money to fly to Budapest, so I hitchhiked across Europe through Belgium, Holland, Germany and Austria.

NOTES

CS: conversational style
NSE: non-standard English

1. NSE correct: were
2. NSE correct: give up
3. NSE correct: those
4. CS = out of
5. CS = that
6. CS = after which
7. CS = for two years
8. CS = basically meant that
9. CS = has got.

terraced adj housing in which the buildings are connected to one another

close-knit adj describes people or a community that share interests and activities

gown n a long piece of clothing used in formal situations

cane n a long, thin stick

Capital Punishment n the killing of criminals by the state as a form of punishment
Corporal Punishment n punishment of people using physical force
registration n the recording of information about a person to be stocked with v to be full of
My name's Simon Evans, I'm from the north of England, from the county of Lancashire, in a town called Nelson. I was born in Nelson in 1970, and I lived there until the age of eighteen, when I went to university. And my parents both are from Lancashire. My mother was born in Nelson. My father's from a town called Bacup which is about ten - fifteen miles away, which doesn't seem far, but in that part of the world ten or fifteen miles away is another part of the world altogether.

And I have a brother called Bryn, which is a Welsh name. My family name is Evans, which is also a Welsh name, and on my father's side my family are historically Welsh. "Bryn" means "hill" in Welsh. My middle name is Gareth, which is a popular Welsh name.

I went to school there. I was always very interested in sport, played a lot of sport, played cricket for a semi-professional club, and played football, and then when I was eighteen... well, when I was sixteen I left school, and the education system in England it's not sure you know what you're going to do. Finish the exams in June, and then you start college or university in September. I didn't know - you don't get the exam results until July - so I worked in a bakery baking bread every morning at four o'clock in the morning. That was a tough job getting up at that hour. And it was such a horrible, badly paid job - about a pound an hour - that that was the incentive for me to get some education.

So I went to college and I studied British Politics and Government, Sociology and English Literature, and I was successful enough to get to Newcastle University. I lived in Newcastle for three years and studied Politics, had a great time, it's a lovely city, Newcastle. Three years there - accent is very difficult to pick up. If you hear a Newcastle accent... it really took me a good few weeks before I could start to understand what the people were saying.

So I had a good time in Newcastle, played football, got very involved in politics. I was a candidate for the president of the Student Union for the Labour party, and when I finished university I went back home to my home town and I was active in the Labour Party, working on the general election campaign. And then I worked for the local council as a sports co-ordinator, organising sports activities for children or unemployed people, and so on, which was great fun, had a really good time doing that, but I'd always wanted to be a journalist. I'd been involved in the student newspapers and involved in different things, and I always wanted to be a journalist, and I tried to get a job on a newspaper. I worked writing advertising copy, which isn't the same thing at all, and selling advertising, hoping that there would be a chance to get the editorial department of the newspaper.

Didn't really work out how I wanted it to, so I thought okay, I'm going to do something different, and I was a DJ, I used to DJ. I was DJing at a twenty-first birthday party for a guy who spoke Hungarian, who studied Hungarian, and who was going out here to work in Hungary, and he told me about Hungary, and I thought "Okay, I'm going to give it a try." So, I came out to Hungary, and I got a job pretty quickly, working for Budapest Week, which is an English language, just about, still, and was a pretty good English language newspaper at that time, and I had a great time there. Worked there for two years.

While I was doing that I was freelancing for different newspapers, mostly sports newspapers, playing football - I've played football for MÁV, Budapest, I've played football for Chinoin, and I had a trial with Väsas sports club, which wasn't successful, because I'm not a professional footballer and I've started to do more and more work with sports, and so on, and I'm writing a book about sport at the moment. It's a travel guide for football fans. I travelled all over Europe, to Spain, Italy, Portugal, Germany, Holland, everywhere, meeting fans, talking about football and the fan culture. I'm involved in the football here. I do some work here at Hungarian Radio - I have a sports show - and I also write for Nemzeti Sport, and I still play football, for a team called Hunyadi, which is a young team - until the new law that's just been passed by the Hungarian Football Federation, which will ban foreigners from playing in the lower divisions, the lower leagues, which is a very bad rule, and I'm very angry about it, and I'm going to write a letter to the UEFA and make sure that something happens about it, because I think it's a terrible discrimination. At such a level of football, it's not important what nationality people are, I think.

Apart from that, I've been living here now for three years, and I'm getting married in September to Gabriella, and it's going to be very interesting to have a Hungarian wedding. There should be some friends from England coming over, and friends here, and so on. My parents and family will be coming. So this is going to be a big change in my life situation. I think I'm going to be living in Hungary for quite a while now, which is not a problem, because I really like it here most of the time.
I live in Angyalföld. I like Angyalföld, it's a good working class district, and I've always lived in working-class districts, so I like to be in that kind of area. Before Angyalföld I used to live in Újpest, in Rákospalota, and enjoyed it. In Rákospalota. I lived in a house with a lady called Piroiska Neni, who was a very kind old lady who was the first person ever who started to speak to me in Hungarian. I didn't understand anything, and it's a really nice feeling now, three years later, to go and talk to Piroiska Neni in Hungarian. I don't speak so perfectly the language(*10), but I haven't learnt it from school but I've learnt it from the football fields, from the terraces, from the pubs, and I'm really enjoying it, 'cause I don't speak French or German. I didn't learn very well at school the languages(*11), so it's a great experience for me now to be able to speak a language, and I enjoy it a lot.

NOTES

CS: conversational style
NSE: non-standard English

1. CS = and in
2. CS = You finish
3. CS = I lived there for three years
4. CS = the accent
5. CS = I had
6. CS = into
7. CS = It didn't
8. CS = I worked
9. CS = the Hungarian Radio
10. NSE correct: I don't speak the language so perfectly
11. NSE correct: I didn't learn languages very well at school.

incentive
n something that makes a person want to do something
candidate
n a person trying to get an office, position, or honour
election campaign
n an organised effort to get someone into a public office
to freelance
v to work without a specific employer, to earn one's living by selling services to several employers
teach guide
n a book that shows places of interest to visit
fan
n a person who likes or supports an artist or sports team
I was born in the county of Fife on the East coast of Scotland, in 1953. Although I was born in Scotland, my parents come from Ireland, from the county of Donegal, which is further North in the North of Ireland. It's a fairly remote area, and I've visited it many times.

My father and mother came over in the nineteen twenties, when work was very hard to find in Donegal, being a rural community. They worked on the land when they arrived in Scotland. My father then moved on to the building trades, where he worked all his life(*1), really. My parents were brought up in Ireland. When they were born they were British citizens, because Britain still ruled Ireland at that time, up until 1922, when it then became the Free State of Ireland. They lived the rest of their life in Scotland, and became used to the towns and the conveniences of Scotland. They returned to Ireland on a regular basis to the rural side, but I don't think they would have wished to go back to actually work there on the land, as it was very hard to get a living(*2) there.

My father died last year, unfortunately, at the age of eighty-three, but my mother still works in Scotland and enjoys Scotland, and has many interests. She is very heavily involved in the church and the Irish community that is local in Fife.

Fife is (*3) basically a mining community when I was younger. It's across the Forth(*4) from Edinburgh, which is the capital city of Scotland. I lived predominantly in mining communities when I was younger, and attended a local Catholic school, which was St. Brides, until eleven years old, when I took an exam, which then determined which school you went to. I went on to St. Columbus secondary school until the age of fifteen. At fifteen I then moved on to a technical college to learn technical subjects - electrics, mechanics, woodwork, etc., for a one year period. At sixteen, I started work as an apprentice electrician, attending college one day per week, and sitting the final exams at twenty year(*5) old. At this time, I passed the City and Guilds(*6) with a merit, which was quite good, and this finished my technical training, and I became an approved electrician.

I then went on to work for a large company called James Scott & Co., which was based in Dunfermline. We done(*7) mainly Industrial work. We worked for factories, whisky distilleries, which were abundant in Scotland at the time, we done(*7) high voltage, low voltage, medium voltage - we were a very big company. I continued working for this company for three years after I passed my exams, as an estimator electrician - that was office work and on site, mainly industrial units and whisky distilleries - until I was twenty-three.

At this time, I started my own business as a self-employed electrician, working for myself, and doing domestic work throughout Fife and Scotland. I also at this time played with folk groups. Myself and a mandolin player worked the length and breadth of Scotland, mainly three, four nights a week, and this helped to subsidise the wages as an electrician.

After six months working self-employed, I actually had a car accident, and I could no longer work self-employed, and, at the same time, I received a letter from Tenerife, one of the Spanish colonies, asking me to go there and play the guitar. I went to Tenerife, stayed there for one year, and played the guitar in local bars, Irish bars, for the same owner always. There were many tourists in Tenerife - Swedish, Spanish, British, mainly British, German. The work was hard. It was not long - it was four hours - but quite arduous, for being four hours a night. You had to work ten o'clock(*8) to two o'clock in the morning.

I left Tenerife after a year and returned to Scotland, where I got married. After one year we had a child called Victoria who, unfortunately, was born with damage, which was cerebral palsy, which is damage to the central nervous system, and brain damage which causes damage to the central nervous system.

Victoria's at the Petö institute. I also have another two daughters, Rebecca and Hannah, who live in Scotland with my wife. They... the reason they live in Scotland and I live here is(*9) my wife is diabetic, so to travel to Hungary and stay with Victoria would be impossible without another carer to come in case anything happened to my wife at the time. Therefore it has always been myself that has come to Hungary for the last six years to look after Victoria at the Petö, where she is studying.

My other two daughters attend school at a local primary school in Ben Island. One is at the kindergarten stage, and the other child, Rebecca, is ten. She enjoys very much her school(*10). She enjoys poetry. She is quite good at poetry, and has entered two or three competitions. She also has dancing, French lessons... a very varied and social life. We thought about bringing them to Hungary, but the trouble is that that is their community, in Scotland, they enjoy their community,
and it'd be very hard for them to live here, and also financially it would be impossible. The house in Scotland I must support, which is very expensive, and also support Victoria here, which I also have some help from the government, without which I could not survive in Hungary.

In 1990 we watched a television program called "Standing Up For Joy", which was shown throughout Britain. This encouraged many families to come to Budapest, mainly to seek out a therapy called conductive education, introduced by András Pető in the nineteen fifties. I came here in 1990, and at that time Budapest was a very different country. It was quite a cultural shock. It was very much different from Britain, and from Western countries. Things were hard to get, I found it very strange - the language, to settle here - very strange. That was six years ago. I've been here six years, and I find that it's changed drastically. It's better - I can understand some Hungarian, speak some Hungarian - and, in general, I quite like Budapest now. I've developed many hobbies here. I play guitar for fun and I write poetry... I write... I'm writing a novel at present, none of which have been published. Computers, I work on, and I enjoy creating things in general. I write a great deal of poetry and song - I always songwrite and play music - and play a lot of Irish music here.

NOTES

CS: conversational style
NSE: non-standard English

1. CS = for all of his life
2. CS = to make a living
3. correct: was
4. CS = the river Forth
5. CS = years
6. = City and Guild examinations
7. NSE = correct: did
8. CS = from ten o'clock
9. CS = is that
10. NSE = correct: She enjoys her school very much
11. CS = to which
12. CS = for six years
13. NSE = correct: I work on computers

remote adj far away and isolated
rural adj in the countryside
conveniences n things one enjoys; sth useful, helpful or suitable
to make a living v to earn enough money to live
approved adj recognised as good or capable
abundant adj in large quantities or amounts
voltage n electric force measured in volts
estimator n a person who approximates the price or value of something
arduous adj needing a lot of energy to complete
therapy n the process of improving the health of someone with physical, mental or disease-related problems
drastically adv extremely; severely
Story 8
Patrick

Hello, my name's Patrick. I come from Belfast, in Northern Ireland. I was born there, in the fifties, and I was also educated there. My father owned a pub, and in the pub he used to have, occasionally, live music, and this is, I think, ...was, the first time I was introduced to live music, in pubs, which is maybe why I was influenced to become a musician. My mother came from the west of Ireland. Both my parents came from farming communities. My mother was a fluent speaker of Gaelic, but, unfortunately, she didn't use it with us very much, only when she was angry. That's why we didn't really pick it up very much.

My father was from Northern Ireland, but in the west of Northern Ireland, County Tyrone. Ancestors... well, there is one famous ancestor, who was an Archbishop of Tume in the county Galway, who wrote many books on various subjects concerning the famine days in Ireland.

I was educated... first of all, I started nursery school at the age of three, and after that moved on to primary school at the age of five, where I stayed until I was eleven years old, having moved on then to secondary school, where I did the usual thing, with(*1) studying for O-levels and A-levels exams. I took seven different subjects in it, and passed six. I was never very good at mathematics.

I went on to college after that to learn basic accountancy, where I got very bored with it, and I started to play music. My parents wanted me to continue my college studies, but, unfortunately, I was too fond of music to do this, so instead I joined a rock'n'roll band and began touring around the whole of Ireland at the same time as other groups, like Thin Lizzy and people like that, were doing this sort of thing. So that was my main job. I had some other jobs as well, but not for very long.

Then the trouble broke out in Northern Ireland, in 1969, and I remember coming back from a concert in Derry, driving back to Belfast, and it was the night in August, the fifteenth of August, where(*2) internment was introduced, and the whole city looked as if it was on fire. So we arrived amidst smoke and complete confusion. A few months after that I decided it would probably be safer for me to leave Northern Ireland, like many people before me, and move to England. So I actually moved to London, in 1972, whereupon I started many, many jobs. I was a driver, I was working in factories, I was working in restaurants, I was working in bars, I just did about every job I could think of there.

I didn't start music immediately in London, because of the need to earn a steady wage every week. I was working in all sorts of different menial jobs. After that, I slowly started getting into bands, playing bass guitar and singing. The first band I got into was a band that wrote original music. We began playing in pubs around London, and it was a five-piece band with quite an unusual taste, perhaps a bit Genesis-type music, and things like that. I then started to get more serious about my music, and eventually I started to join some half well-known bands, and began recording in studios around London. At the time, one of the bands I joined was (*3) a guy who's quite famous, called Screaming Lord Sutch, and we toured all over England, Ireland and Scotland and Wales in that band, and some countries in Europe as well. Many many good experiences I had with that band, I really enjoyed myself, and we always had a great time, driving around different parts of the country.

I got married in 1982, and I got divorced in 1990. I have a daughter, who's living in England now. She's eleven years old. Her name is Tess. I like to get over and visit her sometimes, perhaps two or three times a year, because now I'm actually living in Budapest, Hungary, at the moment.

My interests, apart from music, include reading, swimming, and I enjoy very much, cycling(*4). Now that it's coming into the summer, I actually... most weekends, if I'm not working, I take my bicycle and cycle up into the north of Hungary, where there is a beautiful mountain range called the Pilis hills, and I follow the River Danube up there, which can be very very good. It keeps me fit, and it's very nice to call into the occasional pub on the way, and quench one's thirst.

Also in Hungary, I perform music with(*5) parties, and people invite me to play sometimes. Some of these can turn out to be quite interesting parties. I find that Hungarians are very interested in Irish folk music, and Irish traditional music. They listen to it with great enthusiasm, and, since I've been here now, I think, four years altogether in Hungary, I've learned to speak a little bit of Hungarian, though it's a very, very difficult language. The grammar, especially, is very hard, not to mention the pronunciation.

Apart from that, my Hungarian girlfriend is now expecting a baby, so I'm going to be a father again, and it's going to be a Hungarian-Irish baby. We haven't really decided on a name yet, but if it's a boy it may be Patrick, it may be Seamus, so I'm not quite so sure. But I'm looking forward to teaching my son or daughter English. One of the things that
myself and my lady have been talking about is that it's hard to know which language to speak to the baby, because obviously it will naturally speak two languages - it will be bilingual, in fact. But, because of my knowledge of Hungarian now, it's quite easy to slip into a term called "Hunglish", which is half Hungarian and half English!

**NOTES**

CS: conversational style
NSE: non-standard English

1. CS = with
2. CS = when
3. CS = with
4. NSE correct: I enjoy cycling very much
5. CS = for

**fluent** adj to be able to speak a language as a native
**famine** n extreme lack of food
**accountancy** n the profession of maintaining the financial records of a company
**menial job** n a job of low status
**to quench thirst** v to satisfy the need to drink something
**bilingual** adj to be able to speak two languages fluently

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**Story 9**

**Andrew**

Hello, my name's Andrew Nieland, *from*(*1) Dublin, in Ireland, south side of Dublin. *South*(*)2) side is a beautiful part.

Okay, I'm twenty-three years of age, was born in Ireland. Parents(*3) are both Irish, father(*4) butcher for twenty-five years, mother(*5) housewife, and was(*6) schooled and educated in Ireland, first of all in an all-Irish school. *Speaking*(*)7) English now, but native(*8) tongue is Irish, and then, after that, to Blackrock college. Where, I left school at eighteen years of age, and decided to end my education at that point. Then *started*(*)9) into *working*(*)10), always in restaurants. I'm now a restaurant manager here in Budapest, but prior to that, I was fourteen years of age, *started*(*)11) *work*(*)12) part-time in restaurants and things, and then progressed from there. How I got out here was... it's called Becketts, It's an Irish pub here in Budapest and I worked for the sister pub back in Dublin.

In school, I liked to play rugby, chess. Hobbies - I like hiking, camping, and then, of course, in the restaurant trade, hobbies like eating out, swimming and things like that. But back to Dublin when I was a child, you know, growing up in Dublin was always great, great fun, you know, good small city, close friends, good crack.

My father, *butcher*(*)13) for twenty years, grew up in the butchering trade, like my grandfather. *Got*(*)14) fed up *at*(*)15) that at twenty-five years of age, and went into life-insurance, got up to Chief Executive, Canada Life Insurance, and then got fed up *at*(*)15) that as well and went to college, at fifty years of age to become a barrister, and is now a barrister at law.

Me... in Dublin, I had my own restaurant, got fed up with it, sold it, and moved out here to Budapest. Irish people are very impulsive, and do what they want to do when they want to do it. It's funny. It's dangerous if you're at your first swimming lesson, though!

Back when I was a child... a few little things. *Went*(*)16) to an all-boys school, back in Dublin... of course, in an all-boys school, it's everybody for themselves, especially in Dublin. So the rougher the sport you did, the better it was, so... in an all-boys school in Dublin, say, in County Dublin, you've got to do rugby, okay, so we all played rugby. And junior rugby, at thirteen to fourteen years of age, on the first fifteen, the first team, and then you sort of reach fifteen or sixteen, and you start
smoking and you go from the first fifteen to the nicotine fifteen. It's quite a thing. What I experienced from rugby was that played a winger, which was, if you could run fast, it was(*17) the safest position. You never got tackled hard. So I got the ball, out on the wing, and was running down the wing - the wing is the side line - and, of course, there was somebody running after me, and he wasn't catching me, and he went to tackle me, and he pulled down my shorts around my ankles. So I was running butt naked, tripped on my shorts, so then I thought, "Right, I'm definitely going to start smoking and give up rugby. It's too embarrassing!", you know.

But then... other interests, like eating out, you know. *Restauranteur *(18) and restaurant manager, it's always great to eat there. It doesn't help my figure or anything, but it's a great hobby, you know. Good food, good wine, good company - what more could you ask for? It's good.

**NOTES**

CS: conversational style
NSE: non-standard English

*Note: Special case: very impulsive mode of speaking.*

1. CS = I'm
2. CS = the
3. CS = My parents
4. CS = my father was a
5. CS = my mother was
6. CS = I was
7. CS = I'm
8. CS = my native
9. CS = I started
10. NSE correct : working
11. CS = I started
12. CS = to work
13. CS = a butcher
14. CS = he got
15. NSE correct : with
16. CS = I went
17. CS = was

18. CS = Being a restauranteur

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>native tongue</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>language of the country one raised in</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to progress</td>
<td>v</td>
<td>to move closer to a goal or end</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to be fed up with</td>
<td>v</td>
<td>to be bored or impatient with something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>winger</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>a forward or forward player position on a rugby or football team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to tackle</td>
<td>v</td>
<td>to grab someone and throw them to the ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to be butt naked</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>(slang) - to have no clothes on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>embarrassing</td>
<td>adj</td>
<td>something that makes you feel uncomfortable around others</td>
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PART TWO
Cassette 2

CASSETTE TWO
SIDE 1

Story 10
Gerson

I was born on December 27th, 1970, in San Francisco, California. I was raised by my mother and father, who shared the "immigrant and heartland" experience. What I mean by that is my mother came over on a boat from Hungary, in the year 1956, after the revolution, and my father was born in the heartland of America, in Indiana. He can trace his parents back to the Mayflower, coming over on that boat.

I had a typical upbringing in San Francisco, and enjoyed the multicultural aspects of life there, where you can meet people from China and Vietnam, Mexico, Russia, all parts of the world, all melting in one beautiful mosaic.

When I was younger, I used to enjoy playing soccer, which is known as football in Europe, and it served me well, because when I was twelve years old, I came to Budapest, Hungary, the land of my mother's birth, along with my grandmother, to explore roots and to spend a wonderful summer in a wonderful city. When the young children saw me playing in the park, when I was about twelve years old, they asked me where I was from, and I told them I was an American, and they couldn't believe it, because they said "How can an American know how to play football?", or soccer, and I explained to them that I'd learned since I was aged six, and that I'd played on touring teams, and they didn't believe me, but they ended up calling me an American Pele - I guess the Hungarian version would be Ferenc Puskás.

When I came back from Budapest, I entered high school, and high school for an American is basically comprised of fast food, studying, sports, and chasing girls, who are faster than you at the time, so they never get caught. After high school, I went back to San Francisco and entered college, where I studied International Relations and Politics.

Going to college in San Francisco was probably like no other experience because of the amount of people that were at my university - close to forty thousand people, and all of them from such different backgrounds, both economically and politically and culturally, but from
that college experience... it kind of helped give me a platform or a base in order to develop into maybe a more cosmopolitan person, which definitely helped, because in my senior year of college, I was accepted to come to Budapest again, to study economics at the University of Economics in Budapest.

Ever since then I've been living in what I call "The New Europe", which after the fall of communism in 1989, has been a very interesting and exciting time, at least for an American in Europe. As for the people who live in Europe, going through the transition from, what I guess could be called communism to capitalism, but what I would prefer to call, perhaps, Sovietisation to free marketeering, has been very interesting, but it's been very difficult for the people, the friends that I've met living in Sofia in Bulgaria, or Bucharest in Romania, or in Budapest in Hungary.

That pretty much sums up my education. After graduating I was accepted to work at the American Embassy, here in Budapest. I worked as a Deputy Attaché for Environment Science and Technology. Basically, what that meant was I was dealing with nuclear and environmental issues that pertained to Hungary, and how the US government could be of help in correcting some of those problems or in providing assistance, and in basically documenting and monitoring the situation for the State Department back in Washington.

Obviously I've spent a lot of time here in Budapest, Hungary, and that is probably because of three reasons. One, my standard of living is much better here in Europe than it would be in San Francisco or anywhere else in America, where the competition in the marketplace is probably more severe and intense. I'd say the other reason of..., that quality of life is better, is because Europeans tend to enjoy themselves a little bit more. Perhaps they don't put as much importance on work, and they put a little bit more importance on family and in friends.

I think back to my time when I came to Budapest at age twelve, and I remember sitting around with my uncle and his friends and family, and we would sit there and we would eat our pork chops and our French fries, and watch the world cup football matches on the television, drinking cokes and, later, having ice cream. And the whole eating experience was a celebration, was a time to talk, a time to unwind.

In America the pace of life is a little bit faster. I guess that's why we are the creators of McDonalds and other fast food items. Everything's in a rush, as in, I guess the American saying goes, time is money.

Anyway, having stayed in Budapest, and finishing my tour in the State Department with the Foreign Service for America, I decided to stay on, and now I currently run a news program. It's a radio program that's broadcast via satellite throughout Central Europe.

My interests include many things. I enjoy playing guitar. Someone once said that the arts are mainly a male-dominated profession, for the simple Freudian fact that - men like to... I guess in the form of a peacock - like to show off, or like to strut their stuff. I don't know if that's necessarily the reason why I picked up playing the guitar, but it definitely has helped in getting dates. I enjoy playing acoustic guitar, and that basically means I play Bob Dylan tunes, or other folk music from America. Sometimes the blues music, which is perhaps the original folk music of America. I also enjoy playing electric guitar. That allows me to play rock music, anywhere from U2 to Nirvana.

I also enjoy listening to various types of music, in particular jazz. Maybe jazz is the closest music to my heart because it represents, maybe, the American spirit, which is basically flexibility and freedom, and the lack of borders, the lack of constrictions.

The music I'm currently listening to is a combination of jazz and rhythm'n'blues, and soul music with a little disco thrown in, so you can dance, and that's called "hip-hop" or "rap" music in America. It started in the early eighties, and I've always been drawn to it because of it's, I guess what you could call, post-modern look at music. Basically, hip-hop or rap music incorporates other elements of different styles of music, and blends them together to create samples of music that you can't hear anywhere else. It grew out of New York, out of the Bronx, and the reason that it grew out of that situation, or that time and place, was mainly a result of an economic situation that black Americans found themselves in, which was a lack of funding, so they had no ability in school to play musical instruments that many people take for granted throughout the world. Basically, black Americans could only use what they had at their disposal. That was basically a radio and their voice, and by using a turntable, which is a record player, they would do what is called "scratching", and sampling for beats, and over that they would rhyme, or "rap". Rapping is basically talking in a poetic manner, and now it's become an international phenomenon. One of the things that's interesting about living in Europe is watching people dress in a hip-hop fashion with the baggy clothes and the tennis shoes and the baseball
cap. And to see how this music that's basically the newest export from
America has spread not only here in Europe but throughout the world.

NOTES

heartland n the centre of a country
upbringing n how one is trained and cared for growing up
to explore (one's) roots v to find out about the past of one's family
transition n to go from one position, situation or
to monitor v to observe and record information
standard of living n the quality of one's living situation
unwind v to relax (wind read like kind)
to show off v to display one's ability to get attention from
flexibility n the ability to change or bend
to incorporate v to use different elements to create sth.
to take something for granted v to assume sth to be true
turntable n record player
baggy clothing n clothing that hangs loosely from the body

Story 11
Sarah

I was born in Seattle, Washington. Washington State is in the
Northwest of the United States, and it's full of rain forest and high
mountains - the Cascades. There's the Wenatchee valley. It's full of
vineyards and orchards, and then you come to the Columbia river and
the Blue mountains, and there is a small town called Walla Walla - an
Indian name - and that's where I'm from. I grew up there, after my father
decided to give up stockbroking in Seattle. So, we started farming,
mostly wheat, barley(*1). My mother is a schoolteacher in the
elementary school, teaching about five, six, seven year-old children. My
oldest brother is now farming with my father, and my other brother is a
high school teacher in Seattle.

Walla Walla has only about twenty-five thousand people, and the
Indians who are originally from there got a very bad deal. They...
there's(*2) not so many of them left, and the river has been dammed up,
so the original atmosphere is, has totally changed.

I went to Whitman College. It's a liberal arts college, where I studied
- only for a couple of years - American literature. I was in Yokohama,
Japan working with high school students. They were interested in
improving their English, so we did a lot of workshops about pop culture
and American and Japanese influences through music and through film.
That was in 1986-87.

When I went back to the United States, I finished up studying mostly
literature, American literature. I decided to go for a big travel, so I went
to Anchorage, and San Francisco, Los Angeles, Boston, New York, and,
and of course, New York is the best town in the whole world. Incredible big
change had happened, and there I got influenced incredibly, by mostly
music and visual artists, and I took that with me.

But there came a time, so I decided to move on and try something
new. I went for a holiday for four months to India, and there I was
mostly impressed by Hindu festivals in the southern part of India, a
little(*3) town called Hampi. It's a pilgrimage place for Hindus, and
there we were in time for "the throwing of the colours festival", which is
three days of beating on drums and trying to prepare yourself, mentally
or spiritually, for this festival, which starts quite early in the morning.
Everyone buys bottles of water and fills them with dry powdered colours
and throws them on everyone three(*4) or four, five hours, lots(*5) of
food and lots of music, and then everyone parades together to the river. We wash off what we can - mostly everything stays. And... and then we can go to the temple and bring flowers and bananas for the monkeys.

Like I said, I stayed there four(*6) months, and in that time someone became ill, so we had to rush them back to Holland, and when I came to Holland I decided I would stay there and I would work then in a shipyard. A friend of mine had a very large ship, and we wanted to make a sort of tourist boat out of it, so, from a forty metre long river barge, we made rooms for twenty-five people to sleep, and six showers and a kitchen, and we could take them around in the summer.

From Amsterdam to Budapest! I started the trip here nearly two years ago, and since I've been in Hungary, I've only been working with video. The last documentary that we made, the first one that I made, is... it's about the "techno culture" in Budapest today. This twenty minute, twenty-two minute, video is giving a sort of basic view about who is going there, what they are doing when they are there, what dangers are there, what bonuses or surprises are there, the opinion of the police on the subject, the opinion of a psychiatrist, of a cultural anthropologist, of parents, people working in the buffet, dancers and DJs, the people whose music is provided. This video was well-received, and we will probably show it here in Budapest in one or two theatres.

We want to work now on two more videos this summer. Hopefully we can get into some kind of talking business deal so we can have real airtime on television - that's where video needs to be. I... like I said, I want to stay here. I will work on this project through the summer and in the new year I plan to go to Asia again, to Korea, and there I will help a friend of mine with an English language school.

NOTES

CS: conversational style
NSE: non-standard English

1. CS = and barley
2. CS = there are
3. CS = in a little
4. CS = for three

5. CS = with lots
6. CS = for four

- vineyard n land where grapes are grown to make wine
- orchard n land where fruit trees are grown
- to get a bad deal v to get less than one deserves
- atmosphere n the special way a place feels
- documentary n a film which gives information about a specific topic
- well-received adj liked by audiences and/or critics
- to be impressed by (sth) v to be filled with admiration and respect by something
- to prepare spiritually v to be ready in one's spirit to do something.
- barge n a boat used for transporting goods
- pilgrimage n a trip by religious followers to a holy place
Story 12
Todd

I'm from Sacramento, California. Sacramento is the capital of California. It's not too interesting if you are, say, between the ages of eighteen and thirty-five. It's not a great place to live. There are lots of trees, granted, I'll give you that, but... so, there are lot of retired people. There's a lot of families raising children. There are two military bases, one of which has closed, I think, recently, but I haven't been back to Sacramento in a very long time, so I'm not quite sure about that.

My father works at one of the military bases. He is a meat cutter, which is distinct from a butcher. So a butcher is the person who cuts the meat up - so when you take the skin off, then the butcher cuts the animal up. The meat cutter then takes those larger pieces and cuts them into smaller pieces for the consumer.

At any rate, I grew up in Sacramento, went to school there, K through 12, which means that I went through my - there are three schools in the California system, in the Sacramento system, and there is the kindergarten through sixth grade, seven and eight being the middle school, and nine through twelve being the high school. Unlike European... some of the European systems, American schools, generally, everyone goes to the same high school, which means that there's no tracking system outside of the school. There's a tracking system within the school, but not outside the school. And as for the middle school, seven and eight, I think that they put all of the puberty-stricken students together, and I don't think it's a very good idea. I had a miserable time there. People picked on me all the time, but you get over these sort of things. You develop and you grow.

After high school, I applied for the University of California, at Berkeley, which I was accepted, to which I was accepted. My friends were very surprised that I got accepted. I knew absolutely nothing about university at all, about college. And I thought...I couldn't make the distinction between Bakersfield and Berkeley, which drew a few laughs from some of the people who knew the distinction, Bakersfield being a city at the bottom of the Great Imperial Valley of California - it's a dump, basically. Berkeley being the centre of intellectual learning... so I didn't really know what I was getting into, I have to admit that. While I was still in high school, I had the idea that I would be an engineer, because my friends were applying to be engineers. I didn't know anything about engineers, but, as I said, my mother... my father's a butcher, but my mother's a maid in a department store. So I knew nothing about college. No-one in my family had gone to college. Nobody told me anything about college. The few things they did tell me... I didn't really believe them, because I'd seen "Animal House", the movie, and I had a good idea what college was like, you just drank a lot of beer and hung out in a fraternity - boy, was I wrong there.

At any rate, I applied, I was accepted, and in January of my final high school year I started to get the idea "I'm going to college, I'm going to college" - I was really excited about it, and knew nothing about it. I'd only made one application. I subsequently found out that most people, when they apply to college, they apply to about five, and they use one as their main one, and a bunch of back-ups, etcetera, but for me, I thought I would get in, and I was very lucky to do so.

I started there in the fall, which means late August, of 1985. I finished in the... you could say the beginning of the spring semester, but basically in January of 1989. I took a semester off in that period of time, at which point I worked as a bike messenger in San Francisco. Great job, by the way, the best job I've ever had. There's no boss, really. So you can ride around, they call you on the walkie-talkie, "Todd, where are you?". "Well, I'm in Jackson Square". And I wasn't actually in Jackson square, I was just in the most convenient place that the dispatcher wanted me to be, so I would tell them whatever they wanted to hear, because it was easy to get round the city, so it was no problem.

I came to Europe in October of 1990, and since that time I have not been in the United States. I miss it, in a little way. I used to miss it much more, but now - you know, you forget some of the things, and the things that I don't forget, I ask my friends to bring me. Usually it's food. So, today I finished off a bag of Doritos, which is a type of potato chip, to an American, or a crisp, I think British people call it a crisp. But it's like a... it's a corn tortilla with this special Mexican-type of cheese flavoured stuff, and... you can't miss it. I've said to some of my friends I'd like a way to get a slurpee here, which is a drink that's special to 7-11. It's a frozen ice drink, but it's made in a special machine. It's very hard to describe, but you can't get 'em in Europe.

I have since lived - I spent a year in... so I spent ten months in Portugal working in a bar. I spent three and a half months in - well, practically four - yeah, three and a half months in Spain, ten days in Madrid and three and a half months in Barcelona. In Barcelona I worked
on a construction site, just before the Olympics. If you ever see a picture of Barcelona, you will see, down at the river - down at the water - there are two very tall skyscrapers. One of them has an external frame which is Xs, big white Xs, and I worked on that building. And that was interesting. I made a lot of money - I made a hundred and sixty dollars a day. I worked six days a week. I also washed dishes at night, so my days consisted of working from... getting up at six o'clock in the morning, being at work at seven, working until six in the evening, coming home, taking a shower, taking a half hour nap, then going to the restaurant at eight thirty, eating my dinner... nine o'clock, start washing dishes, until one, then go to a bar and drink two or three beers, until about two thirty, get in bed at three and get back up at six. I did this for six weeks, and you can imagine how tired I was. After the end of the six weeks I was finished with that.

We met... one of my friends had the idea to come to Eastern Europe, because we had some money, we could open a bar, and by chance... we talked about it over those beers that I had at the end of the night. We talked about this bar thing, but it was never a serious thing until one night we met a Hungarian woman, and she said her friend had a bar, and he would help us, and we actually drew straws to see who would come in advance and meet this woman and see if we could open this bar. That was me, and that was in January of 1992. The bar never opened, and I have been in Hungary ever since.

NOTES

CS: conversational style

1. CS = there are
2. CS = and cuts
3. CS = in American
4. CS = It was a great job

consumer n general term for people who buy products
tracking system n a system to put students in different classes according to ability
Story 13

Theresa

Hello. My name is Theresa Agovino, and I am a native New Yorker. I was born in the Bronx, thirty-three years ago. I'm an only child, the child of Phyllis and Joseph Agovino who are first-generation Americans, all four of my grandparents were born in southern Italy. My parents are bi-lingual, but I'm not.

We grew up in a very middle-class normal New York neighborhood. My mother was a home-maker. My father held a variety of jobs, he... mostly to do with writing. He always wanted to be a writer, and that's what my grandfather encouraged him to be, because my grandfather actually set type for a newspaper and wasn't educated himself, so he really wanted his children to be educated. And all three of my uncles, including my father, went to college on the GI. Bill of Rights.

Since my father always liked to write, I was a big reader, growing up as a child. I read voraciously, I read constantly, and when I was in school I always excelled in history and English. I was always terrible in math and science. So I basically decided that I too wanted to be a writer, and I wrote on my school newspapers and did... that was basically my big extra-curricular activity, was(*1) writing. Early on I was also taking ballet and gymnastics lessons, and if I had known that I was going to stay this petite, perhaps I would have taken my gymnastics career more seriously, especially in the light of the Olympics(*2) are on now, and I watch these women and I'm a little envious.

But I like being a writer. It's been a fun job. For the past eighteen months I've lived here in Hungary as a freelance journalist, and I've gotten to travel throughout the region, which has been very interesting. But my career didn't have such an exciting beginning. I actually started my career working at an advertising agency, where I was pretty much a glorified receptionist. But when I was at the agency I basically decided that I did not want to be a copy writer, because people spent hours upon hours trying to think of exciting things to say about cat food and dish washing liquid and other really dull household objects, and I thought "This is not what I really want to write about", and I got my first big break when I went to work at "17" magazine, which is a very popular magazine in the United States for young girls anywhere from twelve to fifteen, sixteen years old. I worked there for about a year. That also wasn't as fulfilling as I thought I would be... as I thought it would be, because I spent a lot of time writing about mascara, acne, how to get a date for the prom and other kind of somewhat silly subjects, although when you're an adolescent these things seem to be more important than they really are in life, but I guess you don't really learn that until later.

After I worked at "17" I got my first real job working at a publication called "Crain's New York Business", which, as the name would imply, writes about business in New York. And this was a wonderful job, and I worked there for about six years, basically covering the hospital industry, the hotel/restaurant industry, and the non-profit industry, and it was just a great job, because covering the hotel and restaurant business was just a great way to eat lots of fabulous food, and I'm one person who really enjoys good food and good wine, so I've been able to eat at some of the best and the most expensive restaurants in New York City as part of my job. That was a definite fringe benefit to that job. When I was not out enjoying fine cuisine I was talking to people in the medical industry, which is interesting in a different way. I would spend, you know, mornings in labs talking to people who were trying to find a cure for AIDS, or find a cure for diabetes. So it was kind of the best of both worlds, because I had one fun part of my job, and then a very serious part of my job, where I talked to people who were doing really important work. The other people that were doing important work were a lot of the people that worked in the non-profit industry that I used to talk about, I mean, people who were trying to do things for the homeless, and for battered women, for the illiterate... I used to write about these people as well. So that was a pretty fulfilling part of my job.

But after about six... six and a half years, I kind of burned out a little bit, and I went on a little sabbatical, actually had a romance that took me to Minnesota for a while, but then came back to New York, and I worked for a Japanese wire service called "Quick Nikkei News", where I wrote about American small cap(*3) stocks, and mostly health-care and public-relations, rather health-care and biotechnology, and I did that for about two and a half years, where I learned a lot about the stock market and how it works.

But I didn't find it very fulfilling to write about why stocks go up and down, because the truth of the matter is one stock will be up two points one day and be down two points another day, and it just seemed like it was just too... there was no consistency, and I didn't really like it that much, so when I saw an ad to move to Budapest to work for one of the local English language newspapers, I decided to take it. I thought it
was a great sign when the editor called me on my birthday and offered me the job. I thought this was some kind of karma or cosmic sign, so I accepted the job, moved here the end of January 1995. Unfortunately, the job itself did not work out. I did not really like the editor who hired me over the phone, so I quit the paper after about four months, but decided to stay here in Hungary because I enjoy living here. It's a wonderful place to live. It's not very expensive. There's wonderful cultural activities, from the opera to dance, ballet, all for relatively low prices, compared to New York. For example, I went to see the very famous Martha Stewart Dance Company... not Martha Stewart, Martha Graham Dance Company, for about ten American dollars. That performance in New York would have cost me about forty American dollars. So, I really do enjoy the cultural benefits of living here. I don't know how much longer I will live here, because I... sometimes I miss home, and I miss my family. I miss New York, although I just got some articles from the New York Times sent to me by a friend discussing how expensive the rents are in Manhattan - thousands of dollars for apartments that are only very few square metres - and here I have a very large apartment that only costs me about two hundred and fifty dollars a month, and I will never be able to replicate that in New York, but there are things in Hungary, that I can't see myself living here just because I can't speak the language, and I think, sooner or later, everybody wants to go back to where they're from.

**NOTES**

CS: conversational style

1. CS = was
2. CS = the fact that the Olympics
3. = capital
4. CS = and moved
5. CS = there are

homemaker n housewife
My name is Lars Samuel Lapp III, although my friends call me Bob. I was born in 1936, the only child to, actually, very wealthy parents. My mother, though, she(*1) was not born wealthy, she was born in a poor farming village in Sweden, where her family participated in an experimental programme of rice farming. Unfortunately it didn't work, and they were left destitute and forced to emigrate to America.

Now, my father also was born in a simple background - he was Amish, born in Pennsylvania, spoke Pennsylvania Dutch at home, but he was a bit of a rebel, and while he was not supposed to be worried about money, he saved up a little bit of money here and there, over the years, and started playing the stock market, without his family's knowledge, of course. And before he knew it, he had made a fortune in beans, and then left the family household, and, finally, with the courage to strike out on his own, he lived in Manhattan as a wealthy trader of stocks. Very clever he was, actually. Six months before the crash, he sold everything he had on the market, and therefore preserved the family fortune through the depression, during which I made my entry into the world.

My first memories are of learning to play chess with the deaf/mute cleaning girl, Martha. I don't know what ever happened to Martha, actually, but later on I attended boarding school in Connecticut, and was pressured by my family to go into the medical field. My parents were deadly afraid of all sorts of exotic diseases, and therefore wanted me to become a doctor of contagious and communicable diseases, but I felt that just wasn't cut out for me, so I told them I was not going to go to medical school, and had a falling out with my parents, and ran off to Africa when I was eighteen. Now, in Africa, that's where my real education began, of course. I was in Egypt in October '56, during the Suez canal crises, and, seeing an opportunity, filed a story for the Washington Post, and that's where my journalistic career took off.

I covered all sorts of great events in Egypt, including hijacking at Entebbe, and independence movements from Algiers to Rhodesia. I caught malaria twice, diphtheria, smallpox, all the diseases my parents were afraid to catch, but I survived. They, unfortunately, died in a tragic accident, when a glider crashed into a garden party in Hyde Park, New York, hosted by Eleanor Roosevelt. But... so, I continued my career... but, in 1976, at the age of forty, I decided that I'd like to take a little change, and I moved back to the States, and began life as a writer - novels. And since then, I've published four titles - in 1978 "Death in the Desert", 1982 "Blood on the Nile", 1988 "The Battle for Africa", and, finally, in 1993, my magnum opus, "The Definitive Guide to Zulu Cooking", which made the New York Times best-seller list for about sixteen weeks.

Now, on the money that I made from that, I decided to retire in comfort, and have since taken up glider piloting.

NOTES
CS: conversational style

1. CS = she

wealthy adj rich
experimental adj something that has not been tried or tested before
to emigrate v to move to another country permanently to live
the crash n the day when the stock market fell in the 1930's beginning a world-wide depression
family fortune n the accumulated wealth of a family
defa adj unable to hear
mute adj unable to speak
exotic adj unusual and different because it comes from a different country
contagious adj describes a disease or sickness one can get from contact with someone else
to hijack v to take over an aeroplane using force, usually for terrorist purposes
tragic adj very sad and / or unfortunate
glider n a plane that flies without an engine
Story 15
Christina

My name is Christina Crowther, and I was born on January 21st, 1969 in Portland, Oregon. Portland is a city of two million people situated in the northern part of Oregon, which is on the coast between Washington and California. I grew up in a suburb of Portland called Lake Oswego, which is somewhat more south on the Willamette river and surrounds a small lake.

My parents are also from Oregon. My father grew up in Eugene, Oregon, and my mother grew up in a small town called Mill City, which is farther up the Willamette valley, near Salem. Their parents also came to Oregon quite early in its history. My mother's side of the family is Finnish, and they came to the United States around the turn of the century, from Finland. My father's side of the family originates originally in England, they came to the United States in the seventeenth century. They settled up the McKenzie river, which is another river further up at the end of the McKenzie valley near Eugene. They were farmers and filbert growers, and eventually settled in the town of Eugene, which is where my father was born.

I also have a sister named Lisa, who is now twenty-three years old, and is studying geology at the University of California in Santa Barbara. She's interested in studying the geology of the land underneath the ocean.

My parents both work for a small community college in Portland. My father is a computer analyst and administrator and my mother works in the personnel department. In their spare time they both coach soccer teams for young people in the state of Oregon.

I grew up in Lake Oswego, and went to school at the local high school. Afterwards, I went to college in Tacoma, Washington. The school is called Pacific Lutheran University, and there I studied history and anthropology.

In the middle of my studies, I went to England and studied for a year there, and was able to travel around and get a chance to see some of the English countryside and study at an English University. At that time, I also took my first trip to Hungary. I came to Hungary for the first time during the spring vacation. I travelled with two girls, and we came to visit a friend of mine who lived in Budapest. That was the first time I'd ever heard Hungarian music, and I went to a "tázház" and was very interested in the folk culture. But I had to leave and go back to school, and I continued to study in England, and then went back to the United States.

After I graduated from high school, I started working in Seattle. I was a ski instructor, and a ballroom dance instructor, and I worked in the coffee shops in Seattle, and also down in the Pike Place market, which is a very famous farmers market and quite a rare thing in the United States, because very few farmers actually sell their produce to local markets. At that market I worked in a bakery, where we made fresh cinnamon rolls, and sweets, and cookies, and also I worked as a honey salesperson.

Later I also picked up work as a musician in Seattle playing Irish music, and that's when I first discovered the accordion, which is now what I do for a living, professionally. In Budapest I play in a band that plays traditional Eastern European Klezmer music, but I'm also interested in Irish music and Bulgarian music, and Hungarian music, and music from the entire Eastern European region.

I have now lived in Budapest for almost three years. Like I said before, I came to Budapest for the first time in 1990, and at that time I became so interested in the music that I decided that I had to come back. In 1993 I returned to Budapest to travel around and experience a little bit of the Hungarian countryside. But, as it turned out, I ended up staying. I've been travelling around the region extensively, and studying music and folklore and culture, and studying the Hungarian language as well. In the meantime, I've also been working on my musical projects.

As you might imagine, my hobbies include travelling, and I've enjoyed seeing different parts of Hungary and travelling throughout the region. I'm also interested in folk dancing, and I've been studying folk dance by going to the "tázház" on a weekly basis. I'm also interested in the textiles and the folk culture, and I've travelled in Romania extensively to collect different kinds of weavings and embroideries that are made by the peasants who live there, which includes shirts and handkerchiefs and costumes and tablecloths and all those kinds of things.

My other pastime is cooking, which I do a lot of, with my boyfriend Attila, who is also studying to be a chef, and we spend a lot of time sharing recipes.
Story 16
Michael

I was born in Toronto in 1972. My father is a professor of Political Science. My mother currently works as a vice-president at a chemical corporation. Ethnically, my father is Hungarian, my mother is Czechoslovakian. They both emigrated to Canada in the late 1940s with their parents - they were both children at the time escaping from the communist regimes. I was raised in a suburb of Toronto. There was a large green patch, big houses, boring little schools, that kind of thing. It was a nice place to grow up. I went to a small public school there for several years.

My sister was born in 1975, and we lived there for a while, then eventually my parents sent me to a boys private school in the downtown of the city which, I have to admit, I didn't like very much. It gave me a good academic education, but it was a bit restricting in terms of other things.

In nineteen eighty-four to eighty-five I went to live in Switzerland for about a year, and I spent that at the Ecole Chantemerle over there. Part of the idea was for me to learn French, and that was rather a strange place. Most of the students there were children from all sorts of strange families who had sort of dumped them there, so it was a bit of sort of this international baggage of children, and a lot of them had rather strange ideas about life and the world, and a number of odd complexes, but it was a beautiful place to live, and it was very good for my French. I don't regret staying there. While I was there I also had a chance to travel through Italy - Venice and Florence - and parts of France. I'm certainly not sorry about that, although at the same time my parents divorced, or at least they separated, anyway. They divorced about a year later, so that was a bit of a strange period.

Following that I came back to Toronto, and went back to St George's College again, and there I attended high school. It was a pretty vigorous education. There was a lot of work involved, and that kind of thing, although I did have time to do some amateur drama and photography and things like that at the same time.

My father remarried, and my younger brother was born in 1986. In 1989 I started... I began studying at the University of Toronto, and I have to say I preferred university, vastly, to high school. It was generally a lot more interesting and a lot less restrictive. We were free to more or less
study whatever we wanted, and in the first year that I was there, actually, I was able to stay in an apartment of my own for about nine months. At the age of seventeen it was probably a bit too much freedom, but I quite enjoyed it.

I didn't really work very hard at University, whereas in high school I had this more or less clear goal that I had to get good grades to get into university. I didn't have, by any means, a clear idea of what I wanted to do when I left university. So I just sort of mucked around, and I took a variety of courses in English, and history, and things like that. I also worked part-time during that period. I think the courses that I enjoyed most, in the end were the English literature ones, so I started to guide my studies more that way, and in the end I managed to finish up with a degree in English Lit.

At the same time I was also working in a variety of part-time jobs, including office help - I worked as a file clerk at a couple of different insurance companies. These were really excruciatingly boring jobs that I did purely for the money, although it was useful for my résumé.

One of the more unusual ones was working one summer for two months with this thing called the Student Employment Venture. Basically this was this business idea started off by a philosophy student, and he decided to buy garbage bags, large black ones, in bulk, and package them up in bulk, then he'd send you around to various neighbourhoods of Toronto, knocking on peoples doors and offering to sell them a pack of garbage bags, and you basically got a flat commission on them. Yeah... I wouldn't exactly want to make a living out of it, but for a nice sunny summer it wasn't bad, you know. I managed to wander all around Toronto, and I saw a lot of different neighbourhoods I might not otherwise have. It was also in some ways kind of educational, to see the different reactions you got from people when you appeared on the doorstep, and just peering into different people's houses and the reactions they got, and at one point I ran across a fifty year old man who told me that he'd have to ask his mother to see whether they wanted bags or not.

During most of the early nineteen nineties I had a bicycle, and I used to cycle just about everywhere in downtown Toronto. To be honest, cycling is a lot more feasible in a city like Toronto than it is in some place like Budapest or any other bigger European city. The city's not so congested, the roads are more open, and the drivers aren't quite as crazy.

In fact, getting around with a bike was probably the best way to get around the city, I decided. And furthermore, you didn't have to worry so much about being assaulted or robbed if you were on a bicycle, since you could always cycle away a lot faster that anyone could chase you. People more or less left cyclists alone.

Meanwhile, I was still going to university, and at the same time I was working at the Victoria College Strand newspaper. This was a small sort of college paper, with a circulation of about four thousand, and I wrote a variety of arts and features pieces on that. It was around that time that I started getting a bit frustrated with this rather sort of middle-of-the-road attitude of a lot of people at the college, and I started reviewing more obscure and unusual music, recordings and movies, and things like that. One of my specialities, or at least favourite habits, was going around to record stores and digging up the more unusual music, in areas like gothic and industrial or ambient, some of the more really alternative and experimental music and things. And I got quite heavily into that during university.

And that more or less sums up my university life. Well, not really. I had a lot of other personal things going on, but eventually I graduated in 1994, and, with the wonderful job opportunities that were going on in Toronto I decided to leave the city and head to Europe.
Story 17
Anthony

I'm thirty-six years old, and I'm single, and I grew up in Australia. Now, my family is quite an interesting family. I think it's a big family compared to Hungarian families. There are five children, and I'm in the middle of this family - I've got two older brothers and two younger sisters. Now, my father... unfortunately he died last year, but my father was actually German, and he had a very interesting life, because, of course, he had to come into Australia and learn English, and learn all about living in Australia as a migrant.

Mum... mum's background is also German, so basically you could say that I'm a German-Australian, or an Australian-German. Mum's background is that in the eighteen fifties, when the catholic church had a big fight with some of their members - there was a breakaway movement, and a lot of them came to Australia, so that's her background.

I've got some interesting brothers. My oldest brother is the Dean of a University in New Guinea. It's just north of Australia - you'll have to look that up on a map, I think, to find out where New Guinea is. It's very tropical very hot(*1), but he's enjoying it there, and he's been there for about three years now, and my other brother, he's working in Canberra, and, of course, Canberra's the capital of Australia. It's an interesting city. It's not so big. He's working in TV - he's making commercials, and he's got a nice little family of two boys, and I'm the godfather to one of the boys.

Now my sisters are both very beautiful, I'm very proud to say, and one of them is raising a little boy of three years old, and she has been a receptionist and a desk-top publisher, ast(*2) a person who makes brochures and advertising material for companies. And, of course, my other sister - our younger sister - is in Townsville, in the tropics of Australia, and she was a social worker, but now, of course, she's raising her family, so she is busy at home too, and she hopes to go back to work in the next few months.

So that's my family. It's kind of a big family. It's a nice close family, and we... because Australia is so big and we kind of live very far apart from each other.

And... well, myself, well here I am in Budapest. I'm kind of learning a bit about other cultures here. It's not too easy for Australians living so far away from home, but one good thing here is that it's such a friendly city. It's so interesting - so many(*3) things to do. So... I can't really tell you too much more about my time here. I've only been here for about nine months, but what I've seen of Budapest and Hungary is(*4) it's really great.

I finished high school, and... I enjoyed the high school. I made some great friends and I still keep in touch with some of them. And at the end of high school I had to decide what to do, and I went to Brisbane University, The University of Queensland, actually, it's called. It's in Brisbane - that's the capital of Queensland. And I started my science degree, and studied maths and biology, some(*5) ecology also included, and I didn't really like university, because it was away from the coast. I was really addicted to surfing and the beach, so living away from home and living away from the beach was quite hard at first. I made some friends who were also from the coast, so we'd always comfort each other, talking about surfing and how we'd love to get back down there.

And after my three year degree, I did my Diploma of Education, and that helped - that enabled me to get into teaching, high school teaching actually, as a maths/science teacher. And that more or less started my working career, then. But of course, before that I'd had casual jobs. I'd always wanted to earn extra money so that I could do some... well, for example, run my car. My first car was an old bomb, which is a kind of broken-down old thing, but I really loved it. I think everyone who has a first car loves their first car. So I needed some money to run the car, and I was doing things like gardening and filling up supermarket shelves at night time, and... and also even working in a pub, picking up glasses and picking up plates, and things like that. So I think I... I had a good time, and I think I appreciated it. You have to work to get things. You can't just get things given to you.

I was working in Queensland, teaching the high school kids, and I thought "Well maybe it's time that I tried something different", and I'd always wanted to work overseas, as well. Now, one of the best ways to work overseas was to teach English, so I headed off, and went to London, and I organised a course where they teach you how to teach English. Now, you can't just walk into a language school and teach English just because you speak English. You have to study how to teach English. So I was in London, and I organised a course that was running in Spain. So I went to Valencia - this was probably four years ago - and I had a really interesting month learning intensively how to teach English, and met some nice people. Of course met(*6) the Spanish people, who
are really interesting - full of life and very very friendly - and I really
don't know how they keep their hours going, because they can party all
night long, those people, but... back to English. After my course I went
to Lisbon, and I was teaching English there, and it was my chance to get
back to the beach, so I kind of combined things. I was living an hour
outside of Lisbon on the beach, in a place called Estoril. Maybe you've
heard of Estoril from the car races. Well, I was living out there. I was
surfing in my free time, and teaching in Lisbon when I had to work.

I had my first visit to Budapest, and I worked here for four months,
and it was my introduction to Budapest and it was my introduction to
snow. Now, it might seem strange to you, because maybe, if you're
European, you see snow all the time, but... my first falling snow flakes, I
can still remember them. One Friday morning I saw this white stuff
outside, I saw these flakes falling down, and I immediately grabbed my
umbrella, walked outside, and started walking around in the snow. It
was... it was like something we only saw on TV. So now I'm used to
snow. I still enjoy it, but it was great.

After my four months in Budapest I went back to Australia. I went
back to my job as a running a small high school in North Queensland,
but, being a adventurous type of person I decided well, I have to get
back to Europe, because I really wanted to see more of Europe, and here
I am. I'm back in Budapest.

NOTES

CS: conversational style
1. CS = and very hot
2. CS = as
3. CS = there are so many
4. CS = is that
5. CS = with some
6. CS = I met
7. CS = as
8. = an