

Meet Your Community

Through the Main Street Jogger, Cindy Morrow
Volume II

Language Barrier

Ester and I visited over lunch yesterday. She is mostly quiet, which I'm not, but it could be because we don't know each other very well. And she's 16 years younger. She's petite, pretty, and has the most gorgeous skin for a thirty year old, and could pass for twenty.

I'm not sure we understood each other, and it's not because she's younger and has two small children. Ester and her husband are new to Woodstock. They moved here when she was pregnant with their second child, Hannah.

They're also new to America. In Korea, Ester was a teacher before she met and married David.

It's hard work to actively listen as someone tries to communicate in a language new to them. You hate to keep saying, "I'm sorry?..." You feel for them, because if it's hard for you to *listen*, how hard is it for them to translate in their head from Korean to English and get it to come out right?

It's really hard.

Ester said in Korea after school hours it was normal—expected—for high school students to continue their studies until 11 pm. Education is a priority there. To parents and children. I wonder how they did that.

We ate ice cream after lunch and laughed at little John—he'd never had a cone before. Later on the porch we listened as spring revved up and the men played with John and Ester held Hannah on her lap. We talked about the differences in child-rearing here and there. They hold their babies more and worry about schedules less.

Hannah is a very content baby.

When they left, Ester said "thank you" way too many times. It was just lunch. Or maybe it was more. Korea is a long way away.

And now you've met Ester.

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