

Being alone

“Are you feeling better? Does the throat still hurt?” Greetings from the other side of Earth come through the phone.

“I’m fine mom, it has already got well. Don’t worry about me.”

“How can I rest assured? I told you don’t eat fast food and instant noodles that much. Don’t stay up late! Did you do what I said?” The volume of sound increase suddenly.

“I know, I know mom, I can take care of myself, I promise.”

“Mom I’m supposed to sleep now.” Cecilia tries to stop the conversation immediately.

“Fine, I will call you next time.”

After hanging up the phone, Cecilia keeps eating the instant noodles that has just been made and continues to finish the paper before the deadline. As time went by, she completes her assignment finally in the early hours of the morning. Cecilia falls back on the bed with her barely sober brain, but she cannot fall asleep.

Cecilia is an 18-year-old international student. This is her first time of leaving her hometown and parents and coming to Canada alone. The life of studying abroad is totally different from what she had imagined before. There is no variety of Canadian cuisine here, only endless coffee shops and various fast food restaurants. There are not a lot of social activities and friends here, only the endless assignments and the tests that can't be finished. Also, the difference in culture and lifestyle cause lots of misunderstanding and trouble. In addition, language barriers prevent normal communication and make friends with others. Cecilia feels lonely and misses home because there are no friends and parents.

Also, Cecilia developed a habit of saying good news and avoiding bad news to her family. Perhaps it starts when she saw her mother's tears during a video call, and she realized that telling her parents about the troubles cannot get help but only cause the worry of parents.

Living alone in the unfamiliar environment is so difficult, Cecilia thinks on the bed. She thinks back the tough time the first several days when she just arrived in Canada. It's a lonely and helpless time with all kinds of troubles and challenges. She had to wait for three hours when she got off the plane because she couldn't connect with the driver. She did not eat for two days because she could not find any restaurant or supermarket. She misses her family and the food her mother made. She cries suddenly and all negative emotions broke out. Cecilia could not stop it. Finally, she falls asleep since she cries tired.

The next day, she decided to find a part-time job to help herself. She hopes that this job will help her to know more people, improve her English and better integrate into this society. Finally, she finds a part-time job at a cafe, and she starts to become busy. In the beginning, she is always in a muddle because she is not skilled. She also has to listen carefully about the requirements of guests. Her brain is always in high working conditions. She always feels tired after work and slumped into bed when she is back home.

But things are getting better and better over time. Cecilia makes new friends with local people who also work at cafes. Through the introduction of her friends, she knows more and more about Canada and a lot of delicious food stores. At the same time, her English is really improved that before.

“Hello, mom.”

“How about your life?”

“ Great! I make a new friend, she knows lots about Canada that I never heard about. She told me lots gourmet food store...I also went to lots of famous place... These are pictures I take at Niagara falls, and I also start to learn to ski...”

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Cecilia finds the way that can reassure her parents which is let them know how good she is.

Near the end of the term, Cecilia decides to quit her part-time job and devotes one hundred percent of her energy to the exam. When she came out of the exam room of the last exam, she completed all the tasks of the first year, and she can return to her country. The next day, she packs her luggage and gets on the plane. She suddenly realizes the best way to deal with maladjustment about going abroad is to integrate into it. Everything can be overcome if she can go all out. She can do better when she comes back next year.