

CROP

English Journal

volume 5

EDITORIAL

Kyohei and Jin (Editorial Staff, CROP 5)

Cool!! We believe that you read CROP and think it.
This consists of ideas springing out of a treasure box named
power of creation. We sometimes ask how students
feel about writing stories, making poems, using
imagination. They answer,
“Oh, how difficult. I feel ashamed!!”
We should say NOT!! This world is made from our
ideas. If you do not bring out fantastic ideas now,
when will you!? You have an energy which can change the world.
Please open your head for everyone and yourself.

Reading is enjoyable. Novels, essays, poems,
magazines, and a letter from someone attracts you.
We experience nostalgia, knowledge, opinion, thought, surprise, and love.
We go on journeys to many places
through reading. Why don't you turn over the leaves with
your expectation. This is CROP. It's compact enough to put
in your bag, isn't it?? But the content is infinite imagination.

Opportunity to exhibit...where is it?? Here! CROP is it.
Especially, freshmen will write many treatises.
(You should not start writing just before deadline!!)
University is blessed with good chances to express, but
are you really satisfied?? You want to share with people, don't you??
CROP is an opportunity for you to be Shakespeare of MGU.

“Pen is mightier than the sword.” Bulwer-Lytton said so.
We agree very much. Let's bring about revolutionary
changes in our world. You think you are not good at English??
You cannot have confidence?? Please do not fear!!
“A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.”

A SHOUT AGAINST THE SILENCE

Paul Hullah & Michael Pronko (Executive Editors, CROP 5)

Why write creatively?

Life is constant creation. We speak, write, think, dream, and move in constantly creative ways. Life is a series of creative acts packed together so tightly that they merge into one flow of creating. That flow is called LIFE. The writing in CROP is highly creative, and it's full of LIFE.

Why write in English?

School uses the 'front surface' brain more than the 'back deep' brain. The intuitive, energy-filled part of the brain is often ignored in education. Learning to use English is not taking tests and memorizing words and grammatical patterns. Learning a language is learning to CREATE in that language. CROP is a container for this important creativity, filled with brave and exciting new ways of using English, ways that are expressive, meaningful, and unique.

What's your story? What's your poem?

Everyone has a story, in fact, a lot of stories. And if you think of it, everyone writes poetry all the time. However, most people keep their most interesting stories and poems to themselves. But isn't it better to share them? That's how we get to know each other. That's how we grow as people. If all the untold stories and poems in the world could somehow be shared, what would happen? There is too much silence already. CROP is a shout against the silence.

Aren't you embarrassed to publish your writing?

Writing creatively is expressing one's own thoughts without caring too much what others think. (Not caring can be a bad thing, of course, but so can caring too much!) Whose ego is bigger? Someone who publishes his or her feelings and ideas? Or someone who hides them away forever? Every act of writing is an act of bravery because it makes the writer vulnerable. A vulnerable life, though, is one that rests on feeling, openness, and honesty. CROP is a step away from the shyness, a way to be unafraid.

But I'm not creative, am I?

We all love creative works that touch us, move us, give us new ideas and views. We live in a society that pushes us to respect and adore creativity, but to love it passively. The consumer world wants us to buy creativity, not be creative. CROP is about being creative in an active way.

Life is... a journey?

Life as a journey is the oldest metaphor in the world! But it remains true. It is what we do every day. We journey through time. We travel in language. So, join us for the journey. Welcome to another wonderful CROP. You'll find many maps of experience, pictures in words, souvenirs, and memories in here. CROP is a place to explore, investigate, and experience the journeys in language that we all can enjoy. Whatever your metaphor — an old borrowed one, or a new one of your own — the creative work you read in CROP will inspire you, make you think, and maybe even move you. We invite students to join us for the journey next year: writing, editing, and organizing CROP!

We hope to be seeing you all —and we hope to be *reading* you all — next year!

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Shiho Takizawa

Fortunate Black?

Once upon a time, there were many conflicts and wars in the world.

It was concerned with religion, nations or race.

People fought with each other.

Their faces were seemingly sorrowful.

Meanwhile, a crow gazed at that scene.

Then he thought: "Provided that I absorb their grief, they may be filled with vigor."

He gathered the lament from people all over the world.

And his two wings turned black.

Now it is said that crows are ominous animals, but it's not true.

They carry our misfortune

Makino Ichige

The Tale Of The Triumphal Top

“Don’t stop! Spin! Spin! Spin!” I shouted.

Although Daney’s spinning top was pushing my piece, mine was struggling to keep spinning hard. A lot of trees surrounded the place where the contest was held, so it appeared that forest kept its eyes on the two tiny fighters. Secretly, I stole a glance at Daney as he stared at the situation of the battle with fiery eyes.

His expression made me recall the first time I had seen him. My island was a very small and isolated place, so the big news that a transfer student had come to my hometown spread quickly. The new student’s name was Daney Lean. His appearance was dazzling because of his excellent clothing, while I wore my dress with patches all over it.

After school I invited Daney to play spinning tops. The day of the spinning top contest was coming. “Join us, Daney. Let’s practice together!” I called to him. “No, thanks. I do not have a spinning top,” he replied dully. “Well, come to my house and my grandfather will make a spinning top for you!” I suggested.

We decided to go to my house. No sooner had we reached my home than my grandfather warmly welcomed Daney. I introduced to him my dear grandfather, Ginji. Ginji looked like a big old tree, for his broad mind always wrapped all living things. Moreover, he used to be a spinning top champion, so he was very popular on my island.

Immediately, I asked Ginji to make a spinning top for Daney. “Sure. Now, Tachi, why not show Daney your spinning top, so he can see the design?” he said pleasantly. I brought my beloved spinning top that was colorful as a rainbow. Because the top was only toy I had, it was a precious treasure for me. “Look at my spinning top! This is made only with wood. My grandpa has a genius for making spinning tops!” I boasted to Daney about the tiny toy. Suddenly, Daney made a sour face and he went off without saying good-bye. At the time, I was too young to

realize Daney's mood. Since then, Daney had not spoken to me. After all, I could not give him handmade spinning top.

On the day of the contest, everyone was surprised at the spinning top that Daney brought along. It was colored dark and made of a strong material like rock. "An intelligent machinery produced my spinning top, so mine can be spinning forever." Daney said to me with a victorious face.

It was just as his words. Daney's spinning top did never stop, as if it were a big typhoon that blew over trees. I could not help gazing at the fight. Soon, the scent of rubbing alcohol pervaded the air. The rain began to come down and it was a great blessing to me. Daney's spinning top made such a noise like a piece of ice being shaved off, then it did not move.

Although I won the game, I had no time to delight in the victory. Quickly, I held the two injured tiny fighters and called Daney. "Hurry up! We ought to have our fighters treated by my grandpa." On the way to my house, we saw a big rainbow arched over the sky. If there had not been help from nature, what would have happened? The fight of a tiny toy announced that we must never forget the strength of nature, and we always have to show respect for nature.

Aika Takazawa

Rivers

However long or short or wide or narrow,
Rivers never run the same way.

Bright, vivid, lively flowers
Never blossomed the same petal.

Deep green, young yellow, blood red leaves
Never budded the same as before.

The favorite scene on screen,
Aromatic coffee steam,

The voice called me,
The caress on my cheek,

The person I met that day,
And the person who loved me

Never return to me again.

Did I say thank you?
They never would be seen.

Did I say thank you?
They never would be touched.

Did I say thank you?

They never would come back,

Same as rivers never run

The same way.

"Who Is Winner"

"He will enjoy going shopping, watching movies, and eating dinner at the restaurant with me. And he will love me and he will tell me that and..."

I always imagine these things but my hopes can't be realized without changing the present situation — the absence of her.

Yuka and I have been best friends since we were elementary schoolchildren. We have been together every day. I like her very much and she may think so, too. We started taking lessons to play the piano together. However we don't like to play the piano much because our mothers made us take the lessons against our will.

One day, when we went to the lesson, we met a boy, Shyota, who took the lesson too. I fell in love with him at first sight. After that, we made friends with him. We never met without talking. We were getting along very nicely.

I loved him more and more. At the same time, I had more and more doubts. The tones sound like the song of the bird. Today is the piano contest. The winner can go abroad to study music. I mustn't win; otherwise I have to part from him.

"How are you? Do you feel nervous?" Shyota asked me and Yuka. I answered, "A little. And you?" Shyota answered, "Just so-so." As is often the case with him, he didn't express what he thought. He was always mysterious. Yuka was keeping silent with downcast eyes. Her state was enough to worry me.

"Yuka, what is the matter with you?" I didn't only think of her though. Shyota was with us too.

"I'm sorry. It's my turn soon. I will go." Then I came to and found that he was speaking to us.

"OK. Good luck!" When Yuka saw Shyota walk away, she started to talk.

"Moe, I want you to listen to my feelings." Her voice was like a voice when you say farewell. "Actually, I like..." I interrupted her words.

"I know. You don't need to say." My suspicion turned to conviction. Yuka liked Shyota and she had realized that I like him, too.

"Listen to me, Moe!" she said. "I practiced playing the piano every day for today to win the contest. If I win, I will go abroad and you can stay with him. It's my turn. I must go."

How stupid she is! My feelings for her can't compare with those for him. She started to play. The sound she made was very beautiful. I was relieved to hear that, as if my mother sang me a lullaby. I felt her tenderness from the sound. It was my turn. I sat and put my hands on the keyboard.

Should I mistake intentionally? Do I want to stay with him? Do I want her to go abroad? I thought it through and I started to play. I played as well as possible because Yuka had done so.

At last, it was time for the results to be announced. Yuka prayed hard next to me. A master of the contest said, "Winner is... " My heart was beating like a drum. "Winner is Shyota! Congratulations!" What happened? Taken by surprise, Yuka and I looked dumbfounded. Shyota said, "I'm sorry. I was silent, but in reality I have always wanted to study abroad." My gaze met Yuka's and we laughed in spite of ourselves.

She will enjoy going shopping, watching movies, and eating dinner at the restaurant with me. And she will say, "I love you, Moe!" and I will say, "I love you, too!"

Maika Narasawa

Go Straight

Please watch out
somehow
justice is not always blind

Dig out your soul
little by little

Go straight
the ways
to get what you want

Manami Tanaka

What Is My Regret?

The flash came toward me. I heard somebody shouting and warning me but all I could do was standing on the point. I was covered with this flash of light and suddenly my eyesight turned black.

William opened his eyes slowly and found himself on the white floor. Not only the floor but also everything was pure white. He tried to get up and see around this white place absent-mindedly. In his head, there were a lot of questions floating one after another. Who am I? Oh, it's a silly question. I'm William. Well, then, where am I? Why am I in this strange place? I remember that I was hit by a large truck. Wait a moment, William, am I dead? Suddenly, William's eyes opened wide and he forgot his tiredness completely. William couldn't recover from the shock. He tried to remember clearly what had happened at that time but suddenly he had a heavy headache and he couldn't remember it. All of a sudden, he heard a young man's voice behind him. He looked back to see the person but there was no one around him. The voice seemed to talk to William, but his words didn't make any sense to him. While he was searching for him, he could hear the calm voice clearly. He tried to talk to the voice.

"Who are you?"

The voice stopped talking. There was a momentary stillness and then he talked to him again. At this time, William understood the language.

"I'm a guardian who watches people come to this place. Here is a temporary place where dead or dying people can stay safely. However, this place can't keep the shape of a room. It means this area will disappear soon. You have to leave the room and go to the next place."

"Wait, wait, I can't follow you. I only remember a car accident. I was hit. Am I dead? What happened to me? Can I go back to my house? If you're a guardian,

you must know it. Please tell me." William was confused because this talking was beyond his imagination.

"My job is only watching people coming here and leading them to the next place and so I can't explain to you in detail but all I can say is that you don't have your own body now. It's like a ghost. Your soul is separated from your body and comes here. Oh, this place will disappear soon, I'll take you to the next place."

William couldn't say anything. His face got paler and paler. However, the voice didn't mind him and kept on speaking.

"Sometimes people who come here have regrets before their death. As long as they have such a feeling, they can't ride a boat to heaven. Can you see the boat? That is it. That's why they try to accomplish what they couldn't do before death as a ghost."

Suddenly, the white area disappeared like sand and William found himself near a large gray river. The weather was cloudy and gloomy. When he looked at the river, he soon found many boats on the river. There were five people on each boat. They seemed to move toward the same destination.

"Where are we now? Where's the white room?" Poor William only could ask questions to the voice.

"This place is located between the earth and the other world. This large river is called Styx. It leads people on the boats to the other world. If you don't have regret in the earth, you should ride on the boat as soon as possible, because spirits are absorbed into demons wandering here."

"What? Why did you bring me to this dangerous place? You said the white room is a safe place for me, right? Please let me go back."

"Sorry, I can't do that because that room has already disappeared. All we can do is to advance. Let's go."

"But..."

While William was talking to the voice, one boat appeared in front of him. He tried to get into the boat, but his body passed through the boat and couldn't get into it.

"Why can't I get into the boat? If I can't do that, I will be absorbed by devils and my mind will disappear. What should I do?"

"Calm down. You must regret something in the earth. That's why you can't get to the boat. You have to remember what it was and then feel no regret. As long as you don't remember your regret, you can't move from here."

William tried to remember it but when he tried to do so, he had a headache. At that moment, the easygoing voice talked to William again.

"Sorry, it's time. I have to go back to my job. Someone is waiting for me and I'll lead him to here. I believe you can do it. Good luck."

He seemed to disappear. William called him again and again but he could no longer hear him.

During that time, from the distance, a black fog appeared and came close to him slowly but surely. The closer the fog came to him, the less he remembered. He ran away from it, but the fog followed him. Suddenly, he was covered with this black fog and there was complete darkness around him. He realized that he was absorbed. The black fog held thousands of peoples' minds and they talked to him in a loud voice at the same time. William, who became only a spirit, was mixed into their minds and his mind almost disappeared. At the very time, William heard someone call him. He couldn't remember who he was but his voice sounded familiar. While he was listening to it, William found that the black fog was stepping away from him and so he tried to focus on the voice to recall him. He felt as if he could have seen his back in the distance. Who is he? I can't remember his face but he must have been my friend. I'm sure I would usually play with him. Think deeply. Oh, I had to say something to him. I remembered him completely. That's Fred. He's my best friend and I had to apologize to him. I said a terrible thing to him and I hurt his feelings. I want to apologize to him!

Suddenly, shiny strong light appeared so that William couldn't keep his eyes open. When he opened his eyes, the black fog completely disappeared and he found himself in the white room again and he heard the young man's voice again. A little while ago, William had a terrible experience because of him.

"Why did you leave me near Styx? I was nearly sucked into the black fog because of you."

"Sorry, but I have to lead many souls like you to the next world in a day and I also have to apologize to you for another thing."

"What is it?" William asked glumly.

"It is true that you were hit by a truck but you're not dead yet." The voice said to him awkwardly.

"What?"

"I'll show it to you."

As soon as he finished talking, a small white well appeared in the center of the white room.

"Look into the well."

William walked to the well doubtfully and looked into it. The water didn't reflect the white room. It showed a room in a hospital. William himself lay on the bed. His eyes were closed and he didn't seem to wake up. However, he was breathing. William, who was looking into the well, felt very relieved that he was alive and felt strange because he watched his own body. The door of the sickroom was open and someone entered. This was Fred. William tried to stretch his arm toward him unconsciously but he couldn't.

"Your friend has been to the hospital and visited you since you met a traffic accident."

While the voice was continuing, William remembered the past. Fred, he was William's best friend and he and William always played together. One day, when they played in the playground as usual, their teacher ran toward them in a hurry. His face was very serious and he looked shocked and approached William directly.

"Calm down and listen to me carefully. Your parents died in a traffic accident. They were carried by ambulance, but...."

William didn't remember well what he said because of his terrible shock. Fred tried to comfort him but William rejected him.

"You can't understand my sorrow. Leave me alone!"

He couldn't forget Fred's face when he said so. William left in a hurry. On his way home, he remembered Fred's parents also died and he was raised by his grandparents and he regretted deeply and he tried to return to the playground. It was then he was hit by the truck.

William found himself crying. He wiped his tears away roughly and asked the young man's voice.

"You said I'm not dead, didn't you? But, I can only see my body sleeping. How can I get to the previous world? Please tell me."

"I've told you just now. Didn't you listen to me? Your body was dying right after you were taken to hospital. Your body didn't have enough power to connect with your soul. That's why your body and your soul were separated, but now you are better and so I'll take you to your world. The simplest way is dropping into this well." Suddenly, William was pushed by unseeable hands and dropped into the well. He closed his eyes instinctively.

William opened his eyes. He lay on the bed in the hospital. Finally, he could return to his place. His heart was filled with joy and he found a well-known figure by the window. He was putting flowers in a vase. William called his best friend and then Fred turned around and smiled to him.

Hinako Sugawara

Hope

Inspire the next
Leading Innovation
Innovation that excites
Make believe
For the colorful
Happiness is a state of mind
Last Forever
Your vision, Our future
Make it possible with
Smiles for All

Ayaka Handa

Something New

Please Do Not Use
Other than Original Use
Just do it
Faster than you think
Exceed your vision
Show 'em
What you're made of

Coming Soon!

!



El signo de exclamacion dentro de un triangulo significa

“!precaucion!”

O ponto de exclamacao dentro de um triangulo significa

“atencao!”

Il punto esclamativo all'interno di un triangolo significa

“attenzione!”

Le point d'exclamation dans le triangle signifie

“Attention !”.

Das Ausrufezeichen in einem Dreieck bedeutet

“Vorsicht!”

Het uitroepteken in een driehoek betekent

“voorzichtig”.

The exclamation point within a triangle means

“caution!”

A Promise

There was a small pub on the outskirts of a village. Although it was old and small, many villagers gathered in the pub. Those who came to this pub knew each other and strangers rarely appeared. A man in a thick black coat walked to the pub and stood in front of the entrance. He seemed to be looking for something, and he looked up at the shop sign. The picture of a lute was painted on the sign. He smiled and opened the door quietly.

The pub "Lute" was always filled with villagers. There were no pubs in this small village except Lute and so people visited there after work. Moreover, there was another reason that the pub was popular. That was the owner's personality. He seemed scary because he was like a big brown bear but he was kind, cheerful and a good listener and he laughed very often. Everyone liked him and his pub. On that day, the pub was crowded and the owner was busy dealing with regular customers as usual. As it got darker and darker outside, he lighted candles around the walls. He looked up at the face when the bell of the door rang. A tall man entered the pub. A hush fell over the room and people in the pub gazed at him curiously because they rarely saw outsiders. He wore a warm, faded black coat and had a musical instrument. As he looked around the room uncomfortably, the owner warned regulars. They turned their eyes away and talked to each other again but some of them glanced at him while chatting. The owner breathed a sigh and looked at the man.

"Sorry, they don't mean any harm. They have too much curiosity. They rarely see travelers and so they're impatient to listen to the outside of the village. As you may know, this village is very small."

Then the man opened his mouth.

"I get used to it. Don't worry. And I also understand their feelings. There were such people in my hometown."

He took off his coat and hat and so he looked younger and thinner.

"I'm a wandering minstrel. I've visited many places and made a lot of poems and songs about them."

As soon as he said so, people in Lute cried out excitedly and several of them asked him to sing a song. He smiled to them and picked up his musical instrument.

"Please listen to my song. This song may be different from what you want to listen to but I want to give you this song."

He tuned his lute with a practiced hand and then sang a song.

Tell me what I could get

On my journey, I answer my own question

My heart was as fragile as an egg

Yet, I could experience many things

Find my own way at last

Return to my hometown and visit my best friend

I'm relieved to see your cheerful face

Everlasting journey is waiting for me

No one can stop me

Decide to make songs until I'm dead

The song was quiet and delicate but full of emotions. People stopped talking and listened to him carefully. There was a short silence among them. The owner sitting on the chair broke the silence.

"I remember my old friend when you play the lute. I had a close friend from childhood. He was good at playing the lute and we used to sing songs all day long. That was a good memory. I thought such a life would continue. However, he left our village to become a minstrel and to see a lot of strange places 15 years ago. Before he left, we promised that we wouldn't meet until both of us could make our dream come true. I hope his dream comes true."

"That was a good story. By the way, what was your dream?" The minstrel asked to him, putting the lute down.

"My dream is to make this Lute bigger and more popular. I took over this pub 6 years ago. When I became an owner, first of all I renamed it Lute. It's a nice name, isn't it?"

"Yeah, I think so, too. I think that your best friend will come back if he's sure to become an experienced minstrel."

"Thank you. I really hope so and I also have to make Lute bigger."

The owner smiled to the minstrel and then he turned around his back and spoke in a loud voice to the villagers.

"I am sentimental about my memory although a new customer visits my pub. Everyone, drink up! This is my treat."

Everyone in Lute cried out excitedly and ordered drinks one after the other. Someone shouted out that the owner was big-hearted. The minstrel also was handed a beer mug by someone before he knew it. The pub Lute was filled with laughter and excited cries. The minstrel left the pub quietly while people enjoyed drinking. He looked up at the sign painted with the picture of a lute again and smiled. Then he turned around and walked down the road. No one noticed him leaving the pub, and his figure was a crow in the dark night.

Shiho Takizawa

Trip To Where?

It all began in chaos
Everything, every you
There is no foreign land
It is the traveler only that is foreign
You might meet someone
Who will be precious
It will all begin in chaos
Pack up your baggage
Let's set off on your journey!

Manami Tanaka

Music

Do you hear the people sing?

Listening to music is part of

Everyday life

NO MUSIC, NO LIFE

Physical music sales

Have been

Declining

It's our future

Shiho Takizawa

Five Musicians

With my fingers, I can pick up everything I want, but they can also make the melody.

My thumb often comes up, and he plays in a core sound.

My index finger and middle finger walk around by turns, and sing sweetly.

My ring finger sometimes reaches to the string, and she sings in a dainty voice.

My little pinky finger watches for them secretly with envious eyes.

All five fingers are naughty and occasionally disobey to me; nonetheless they play awesome tunes. I will be counting on you from now on!

Why Is A Coffee Bitter?

One day in winter, Mr. Coffee fell in love with Ms. Sugar. The fair-skinned girl was so lovely that slightest touch would dissolve her. It was a sweet love. They were always together. So everyone used to say "You're so hot!" as a joke. Their love was filled with warmth like a hot coffee. But when hot summer came, Mr. Coffee was fascinated by Ms. Simple syrup who opened up to anybody. And their sweet love cooled off. Ms. Sugar asked "Why did you change completely?" Mr. Coffee answered "We can't understand and melt together now. "That because you cooled off toward my lover like an iced coffee." So she left him. After that, the seasons turned and cold winter arrived once more. Lonely Mr. Coffee thought back the sweet love with Ms. Sugar. His past love changed bitter. "I would never meet anyone more than her. I can't fall in sweet love like that." Thus, Mr. Coffee has been waiting someone who gives hot and sweet emotion for him again.

Akiko Okayama

The Black Bird's Bravery

Suddenly, the spring of the string touches my sting. Then, I realize it is the sound of the brown which makes my heart pound. I sit up on the floor and open the door, slowly. The visitor intrudes into the room with the scent of a bloom. It takes me a little time to notice that mother brings father's acoustic guitar, which reminds me of the nostalgic feeling.

Two years ago, my father, Tomoharu used to play this guitar with his big curved mouth on his face. His performance, especially "The Black Bird" always makes me feel free from the ill world, though he has been up to his ears in debt there. One day, I hear the draft shrieking from the door of his room. My curiosity keeps flicking a whip at my body until my eyes capture him hanging like a condemned criminal. From that day, I begin to doubt his death, and the chain of sorrow connects me with this room. As my wrinkle increases, this room begins to be a huge bird cage which captures me all the time. Now, I spend my life like livestock instead of humans. "When are you going outside?" After mother stands the guitar up, she feeds me some words and leaves this dark hutch.

One day, after mother bears my dish, I noticed the advertisement hiding under the guitar. I invite it onto my hand and notice that it is about the guitar contest for grown-ups which takes place today in Tokyo before the sun sets. Suddenly, I find the message from the edge of it. It says, "Son, I like the way as you used to be like a bird flying into the light of the dark black world. Be brave. I'll always cheer you on from heaven." As I read these words, the smell of the rose flies around the room from the advertisement and jumps into my heart. Then, something inside of me begins to flick a whip. It isn't the curiosity which I experienced two years ago. It is the courage which is given from my only family. When it penetrates me, I am already standing in front of the borderline and shaking hands with the doorknob.

Abruptly, the winds burst into the room. Then, I find myself stopping at the precipice which makes me feel dread. And I plant myself down. The quiet room keeps me safe and sound from the outer world. I hold my guitar. From the guitar, I feel a father's warmth. Then, I recall the words which are written in the advertisement. "He is now living in the sky and watching me fly..." I say to myself. Suddenly, the memories flash back into my brain, and I finally recognize that he is gone. Little by little, my red little drum begins to beat. As it beats, I pick up the guitar, and start to move my broken wings to fly into the dark black night.

When I finished playing the number, the clap flaps from the gap of this room.

"That was nice performance, Syuuichi!" Mother is standing on the passage with her scared hands making the sound. Suddenly, my eyesight captures her with the obscure figure. My eyes draw many polka dots on the tatami. Then, I jump to my feet and run up to mother. The scent of the rose becomes closer and closer. Little by little, I sense the fresh air saluting me which I haven't accepted for two years. It is then that I triumph over the precipice. While I land on the passage, I hug mother tight and I feel the kindness through her arms. Maybe, I was only waiting for this moment to arise.

Nao Gocho

New World

Be the World's No.1
Top of the world,
Bottom of the sea
Born to create drama
Just do it
Love crush blue
Paint it music
Color is Magic
New ME, New WATCH
Finger lickin' good!
Small Gift Big Smile

Celebration Cooking Contest

I feel tense feelings of strain and smell of some dishes to be filled from the steam on my nose. I am not used to this even if I have experienced this tension at a Japanese cooking contest many times. On my chest, there is a name plate on which is written “4: Sakura”. I like this name myself because I like cherry blossom, a traditional flower of Japan. My mother, Hiroko, says that my father who also likes this flower named me Sakura.

From the neighboring kitchen, the savory scent of soy sauce is floating toward me. When I glance at the next counter, she is there. She is Maki, my best friend and my biggest rival. I am short and pale-complexioned, but she is tall and dark-complexioned. At a single glance, she does not seem to be delicate and dexterous. However, the artistic dishes which are made from her hands look quite beautiful, and certainly their tastes are delicious. Maki is like a towering wall for me.

I think that you may already have noticed, but I do not have a father. My father died in a traffic accident when I was a baby. After he died, my mother brought me up all by herself. Generally children who have no father feel lonely, but I have not felt it like that. In addition, I have not thought that I am misfortunate. I do not tell a lie and pretend to be tough either. One of the reasons is that my mother became both my mother and my father. When I made a mistake, she was angry with me like a father scolding his child. When I met with a painful matter, she was near me tenderly. Especially, she always made delicious and healthy Japanese foods for me even if she was very busy. I was brought up to see the figure of my mother, and little by little I was interested in cooking. My mother is supportive and always cheering for me entering cooking contests. The results at some contests conflict with her great boost. In other words, I never win.

Maki is my biggest rival among many others, but I am not on bad terms with her. She is my best friend, and we are advisers to each other. Maki has a

serious worry about her family. Even if I have no father, I feel happy to live with my respectable mother. In contrast, Maki has her father, mother, and grandparents, but their relationships are not good. She usually says to me, "Your family love and respect each other, and I envy you."

Luckily or unluckily, today is the anniversary of my father's death. I am sure to win the contest today. This thought is in my heart strongly. Mysteriously, I have a hunch that I can become a champion through my mother's advice. She said to me at yesterday night, "How about trying to cook your father's favorite foods, nikujyaga?" At other contests, I made new creative Japanese foods, not traditional ones. Today's menu is foods of remembrance. I am pushed for time, but I am getting through it, cooking carefully. It is important for me to win at this contest, but now my mind is filled with the feeling that I want to please my mother and my father who is in Heaven.

I complete my compositions, and I feel flavor and it is so comfortable that I never smelled anything so good in my life. Then closing bell rings. From now, the judgment begins rigidly. The nervous air is swallowing up all contestants. The host appears in front of us, and his voice is resonant all over this hall, "The champion is...4:Miss.Sakura!" I can not believe my ears, and big teardrops run down my cheeks. When I look at Maki, she smiles at me while clapping.

What is a family? I can understand through this contest. There are various forms of family. Family is always fathers, mothers, and children. Some people think a fatherless family or a motherless family is not a form of family. This idea is wrong, because it is essential not what kind of form it should be but what kind of relationship there is. Being a family is to respect, support and love each other, and it becomes a power for accomplishing hard matters like this contest.

Aika Takazawa

Spring

In sharp shivery winter night,
I feel the coming of spring.

My cheek is red
For a nippy wind.

But suddenly, gentle warm breeze
Caress my chilly cheek
To joy of red.

Surrounded with
Flowers rich mellow
And nice air in the warm,
I feel my heart is leaping

In sharp shivery winter night.

Ryohei Tokuchi

Chagrin Is Chance to Change

Out of the blue, English attacked me. The fortune telling was about to become true.

One day in July 2012, it was sunny and suitable to go out, so I decided to go somewhere. Before I left my home, I watched fortune telling on TV vaguely. According to that, my star was not good. But I didn't care. Then I went to Ueno, Tokyo and shopped there. I was happy because I could buy a thing I had wanted to get. This pleasure, however, didn't last long.

"Excuse me, #\$\$&#\$\$?" That was the very moment I took a knock. Two tall foreigners spoke to me. I skipped a beat because I'd not talked with non-Japanese so much. What was worse, no words came out from my mouth except for an excuse. All I could do was say, "Sorry, please ask others." I was smiling but "Oh no!!" My mind was screaming.

After that, I stopped dead in my tracks. The divination had been true. I got a bitter and bad experience. I felt that I was tangled in a Chain of Chancy Chaos and that I was being hit by 26 letters as the alphabet rain hit me. "How futile I am." I muttered to myself. The darker it got, the darker my feeling became. While I was coming home, I sensed my legs were like heavy iron.

On coming home, I reflected carefully what I should do from that time. Fortunately I knew that "Weakness is a seed of good point," so I wasn't depressed for a long time. I noticed that even though I studied English hard, there were few occasions for me to talk in English. "Make more opportunities, and I'll make it," I thought.

By the time the day had passed, I found two things that would make me be a good English speaker. One was the Radio English Conversation Programs and the other was talking with native-English speaking teachers in or after my classes. I was glad to find such good materials. I'd never felt as happy as that moment. "I'm motivated!" I said unconsciously.

Ever since I made a resolution, I've been full of vim and vigour. I listen to the radio at least 40 minutes a day to master the ABC's of how to speak clearly in English. In addition, I talk with my teachers actively in English when I have a chance.

Thankfully, my English-talking skill is getting better day by day. At one time I regarded Ueno as a bad place like a smoky and dirty factory due to the terrible memory. But now I consider it a wonderful place, as a sweet and beautiful garden, for I can rally my spirits through recalling what I went through. I've never been so grateful for a heavy occurrence.

Having frustration contains the best of both worlds. First, it gives us hints of how to improve our bad situations or poor abilities. More importantly, it pulls out our real motivation to begin something useful to strengthen ourselves. That's why "Chagrin is Chance to Change."

ENDWORD

We would like to say “Thank you” to all of you first. Thank you for taking our CROP Volume 5, and reading it. We are sure you will like it, and hope you stray into the creative forest.

Yuki Hosokawa

When I was junior, I joined the CROP and became a member of editing staff. The main reason was that I wanted to make new friends in my university life, and to come in touch with creative world. Most of works moved me, and I strongly felt writer’s inmost thoughts through their works.

— *Imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited. Imagination encircles the world.* — Albert Einstein (1879-1955)

If you want to be more creative, just takes a little imagination! Imagination might change your life and world, and it will enrich your heart.

Ai Hoizumi

Do you find a difference between CROP and other English journals? That is, CROP gives you a chance to use English in “your own way”. If you want to know what others think, you can be a reader. You can get others’ ideas and thoughts, which may be so different from yours. These will be hints that make your life better. If you want to express yourself, you can be a writer. You can write essays, poems, stories, create anything that you like. Since we editors are not strict about mistakes, you don’t have to care so much about that. We would like to open up your possibility, so we focus on “what you think”. Being a reader and writer is good because it makes you to be active and creative. But if you become an editor, you can get more. Making an advertisement, having meetings in English to exchange your ideas, giving advice to writers, designing and editing-these are my great experience and you can also get it for sure.

Chihiro Nishimura

We only know a peace of the world now. Words lead us another universe.

Finally, we deeply appreciate everything Dr. Hullah, Dr. Pronko, the English Department offices staffs, all the CROP editorial team, all the committed creative writers, and you.

Thank you for reading to the end!!

Writers Wanted!

CROP

**This is an original journal
that MeiGaku students create.
Express yourself using English!**

英語のエッセイやストーリー、ポエムなどを募集します！

書くことが好きな人もそうでない人も自分の英語を作品にするチャンスです！

ネイティブの先生や英語が大好きな先輩たちに添削してもらうことができるから心配なし！
さらに、アドバイスももらえるから英語力もアップ！

Forms of writing and guidelines

Essay: up to 2,000 words

Short Story: up to 4,000 words

Poem: up to 1,000 words

Other Original Works: up to 2,000 words

DEADLINE 31 October 2014

質問はこちらまで

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Meiji Gakuin University Student Creative Journal CROP

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— エディターって何をするの? —

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|---------------------------|---------------------------|
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ツイッターやってます♪
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Meiji Gakuin University Student Creative Journal CROP

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