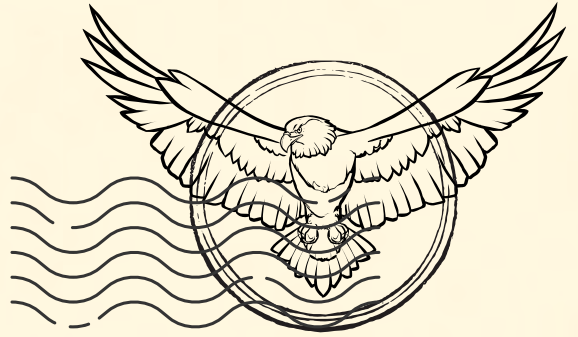


Matrix



SHATIN PUI YING POST
POSTAGE PAID

To our Cherished Reader:

.....

.....

.....

Correspondence

ISSUE 27

NOVEMBER 2021

**FIRST CLASS MAIL
PLEASE DO NOT BEND**

Message from the Editor:



"No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main." – John Donne, English Poet (1623)

Humans are highly social beings and interactions have always been indispensable to our existence. Yet, recent technological advancements have revolutionized the ways we communicate with each other. Traditional ways of correspondence, like letters and emails, have been replaced by instant messaging and video calls. Without doubt, geographical distances have been completely transcended, but contrary to our belief, humans are feeling more isolated than ever.



In this issue of the *Matrix*, our young writers expressed their feelings and opinions about communication and correspondence through writing in different genres. It is our belief that their pieces would provide you with inspiring food for thought!

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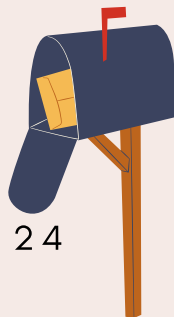
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Attn: The desk of the Editor
Matrix Headquarters
Secret Building
Avenue

Correspondence

Chan Lok Yee, Eunice

5B (2)

Correspondence

Letters and pigeons
Discussions with nods and laughs
Calls without feelings

Dear Editor,
I'd greatly appreciate it if
my poem for publication
in this issue of the Matrix.
I'm a subscriber and enthusiast
for many years and gratitude

From: The desk of the Editor
To: Typesetter
Please include in Issue 27 w/ the
following Editor's Note:

A haiku is a Japanese poem of seventeen syllables, in three lines of five, seven, and five, traditionally evoking images of the natural world. The poem written by Eunice is a modern version of the haiku.

Outlook

The Matrix's Perspective

- *Our junior correspondent provides an overview of how communication has changed over the years.*

The definition of 'communication' is 'imparting or exchanging information by speaking, writing or other means.'

Animals have their own ways to communicate with one another. Fireflies glow to attract mates, wolves howl to call other wolves, and dogs sniff butts to greet each other. If there is no communication, no method that animals and humans can use to share knowledge; no information can be transmitted.

For humans, the oldest known form of communication is cave painting. The first cave painting is believed to have been painted about 40,000 years ago. It is speculated that cave paintings recorded what people had seen, but they might also have had religious purposes.

Written language appeared in around 3,200 B.C. in Iraq and Egypt, and in about 1,500 B.C. in China. Back then, people wrote on



papyrus or parchment until paper was invented in 200 B.C. By the mid-15th century, printing had been invented and people started mass-producing books, which gave rise to a very rapid spread of information. Later, newspapers, radio messages and television became a part of daily life.

Nowadays, the development of the Internet has allowed us to know what is happening around the world without leaving our homes. We watch the news on our television sets or via online media, and chat with friends on smartphones, transcending barriers of time and space. While online communication flourishes, it also symbolizes the decline of more conventional communication methods.



From cave painting and letters to phone calls and instant messaging, communication has become more convenient but arguably less intimate. Face-to-face interaction with friends and family has become rarer. They are slowly being replaced by 'chatting' on WhatsApp, Instagram and other instant messaging applications.





Despite not being mentioned in the definition above, we all know that the essence of communication is the sharing of feelings and emotions. The many brief posts we leave on social media are limited in their ability to convey such

emotions, especially when compared to traditional face-to-face conversations. Without a doubt, relationships between people are slowly moving to a more superficial level and human connections are growing to be less intimate.

Face-to-face conversations form the foundation for more personal exchanges as we all feel more secure when we actually see others' facial expressions and body language. Therefore, we should all meet confidants directly to foster genuine relationships.



The rapid development of technology has given rise to methods of correspondence that no one could have imagined decades ago. However, reliance on these speedy methods may not be entirely beneficial. The human touch unique in face-to-face interactions is still irreplaceable. Therefore, it is imperative for us to strike a balance between the ways we connect with one another.

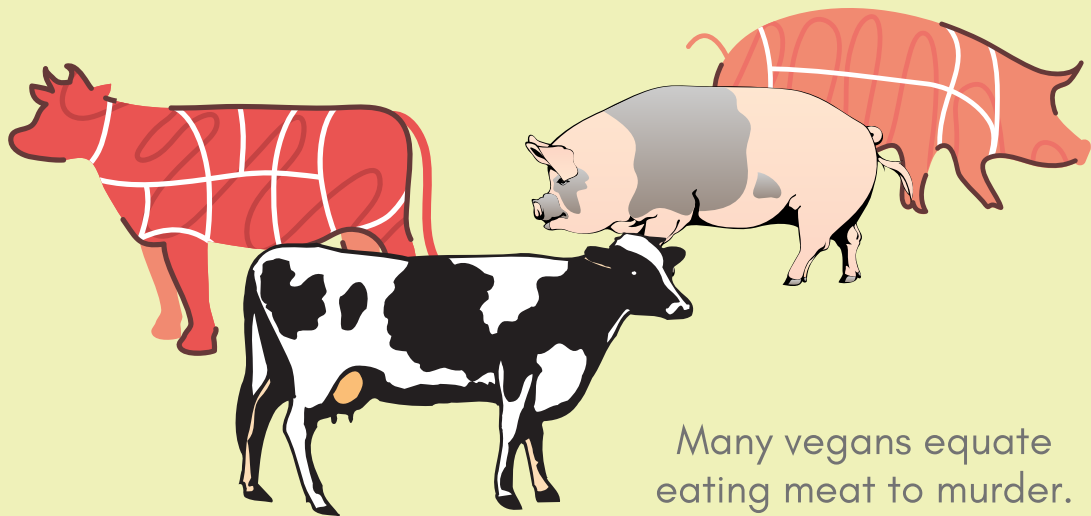


Letters to the Editor

*Toxic Veganism
Intimidates People*
Chow Cheuk Nam, Alicia
4B (11)

Dear Sir / Madam,

I am writing to respond to the article "Toxic Veganism Turns People Away" published in your newspaper recently. I most definitely agree that some vegans are too extreme in their promotion of veganism. Toxic veganism is manipulative and gives people a poor impression of vegans. There are in fact many other positive approaches to promote veganism.



Many vegans equate eating meat to murder.

Many vegans nowadays encourage people to switch to plant-based diets in order to put an end to animal cruelty. Their message is important to everyone but some of them have chosen manipulative ways to threaten others to become vegans. They promote the idea that "eating animals is murder"

through various ways, such as guilt-tripping people into thinking consuming meat means they support animal cruelty and bombarding non-vegans with unfair criticisms. However, it is a generalization to say that eating meat means encouraging animal cruelty. Threatening and manipulating people to become vegans is surely not an appropriate way to promote veganism.

Switching to a plant-based diet is beneficial for humans and the environment. It is worth promoting, but should be done in a welcoming manner. Instead of telling people about every disadvantage and negative impact of consuming meat, vegans



Highlighting the benefits of a vegan diet is a more productive method of promoting veganism.

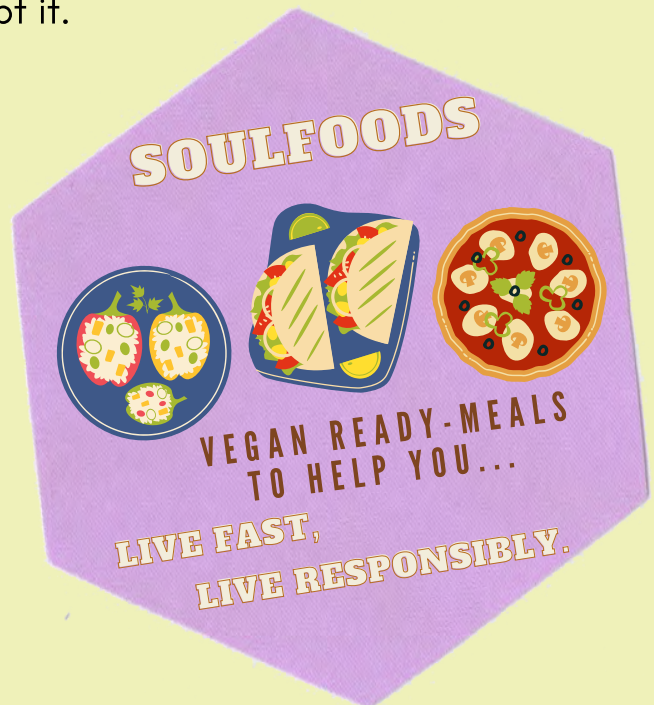
should show them the benefits of becoming a vegan and encourage them to achieve it step by step. For example, people can start by eating a full vegan meal once a week, searching for alternatives of meat products and avoiding buying products made out of real fur. By portraying a positive side of veganism, people are more likely to accept it.

Toxic veganism is a guilt-trip and leaves an unpleasant impression on people. That is why vegans should promote veganism through welcoming and informative ways. If the vegan community strives to become a more encouraging community, people will understand them and start to see the benefits of veganism.

Yours truly,
Alicia Chow

**GOT A HOT
TAKE?**

**SEND US A
LETTER TO
THE EDITOR!**



**OUR CULINARY
CORRESPONDENT'S
NEW COOKBOOK IS
THE IDEAL
CHRISTMAS GIFT!**

SNEAK PEEK:

Stephanie Salsa's recipe for
meatball spaghetti with
meatless meatballs -- pg. 18

**OUT
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**25% OFF UNTIL
12TH DECEMBER**

Letters to the Editor

*Equal Pay
for Women*
Chan Pui Ying, Angel
5B (3)

Dear Editor,

I am writing in response to the article entitled ‘The history of women’s work and wages and how it has created success for us all’.

Since World War II, women have been indispensable to the workforce. If it had not been for women who had worked when men were off fighting in the war, the world would not be how it is today. However, patriarchal values



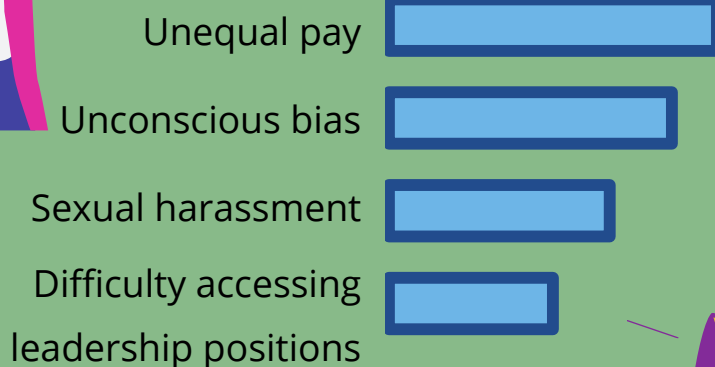
Our reader adds her voice to the discussion on gender pay disparity.

are so deeply rooted in most societies that men continue to get paid more than women. To this day, women in the United States earn 79 cents for every dollar earned by men – an astounding difference of 21 per cent. Without a doubt, we have to change that.

HAVE YOUR SAY!



We asked you to tell us the greatest problem facing women in the workplace:





It is certain that women are as capable of pursuing any aspiration as men are. However, many people harbour misguided notions about women's biology

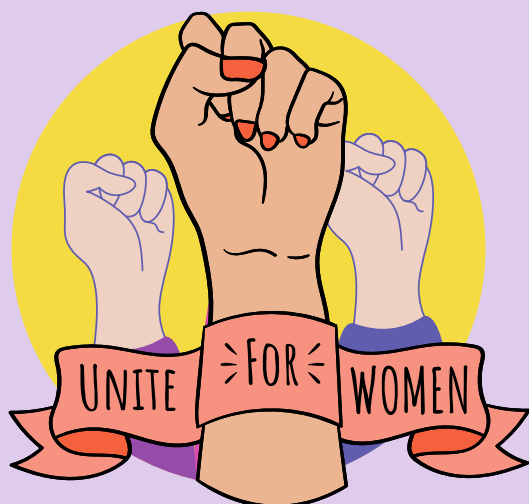
('women become "too emotional" around a particular time of the month') and personal choices ('the organisation will suffer losses if women get pregnant and go on maternity leave'), believing that these will diminish their competence and professionalism. This is simply not true. Despite the numerous challenges

women face in the workplace, such as being held back by limited access to top-level positions, they strive to thrive and leverage their potential. This has proven that they are as strong as, or even stronger than, men. With the right qualifications and other personal attributes, women absolutely deserve to earn the same wages as their male counterparts.

"WOMEN ABSOLUTELY DESERVE TO EARN THE SAME WAGES AS THEIR MALE COUNTERPARTS."



It is not that women have never stood up for their rights to narrow the gender pay gap. In fact, equality for women implies for men the loss of the unfair advantages that they had previously enjoyed. Some men neither see the need to level the playing field nor the importance of equality. Each time women try to balance the scale, the other side finds a way to tip it back in their favour.



Nevertheless, it is worth noting that pay equality is not just a women's issue, but also one that brings far-reaching positive effects to the economy. A 2015 McKinsey Global Institute report found that \$12 trillion could be added to the global GDP by 2025 if the gender pay gap was eliminated. It anticipated a boost in the economy – an increase in household incomes

and job opportunities as well as a reduction in the number of people who need government financial assistance.



Women's pay has been growing, but at a very slow pace. It is undeniable that there is no silver bullet to this issue.



In spite of this, it is high time our society took more action to eradicate unfair treatment at the workplace to defend our basic human rights to be respected and treated fairly, not to mention to bring benefits to society as a whole. Without strong leadership and commitment on a societal level, women are at risk of losing the small victories they have achieved in gender equality in the past two centuries.

We all should ask ourselves one question: How many more decades do women have to wait for their pursuit of pay parity to be finally achieved?

Yours faithfully,
Angel Chan

YOUR VOICE



We asked you for messages of encouragement for women fighting for equal pay. Here are our favourite responses:





A Letter to Santa

*Pun Ho Yan, Angel
4C (11)*

Dear Santa,

Hello, Santa, my name is Alanna. I

have been very good this year and have been thinking of what present I would like to get for Christmas. I honestly wish that you can take all the mobile phones and tablet computers away.



With so many electronic devices at home,

my parents are always on their mobile phones or tablets. My classmate, Olivia, said her parents are also attached to their electronic products. I wonder why these devices are so attractive to them. I hate that they are always using their phones and neglecting me. What's more ridiculous is that, even though my parents are both at



home, they will instant-message each other. When we are having dinner together, they keep looking at their phones. I miss the happy old days when we chatted with each other heartily at the dinner table.



My grandma says it is because they are working from home. I don't understand what 'working from home' means; I just know that it does not sound like a good idea.

Although I'm really delighted about my parents staying

home with me all day, we seldom interact. Instant

messaging has changed the way people connect with

others. The mobile phone may be a device that enables a

lot of convenience, but without seeing people's facial expressions, I can't see the

genuine feelings of the person I am talking to. It seems like we are conversing

with machines, not human beings.



Even when I am at school, there are still people wired to the tablets

given by their teachers for class activities. My best friend, Daisy, used to

be an outgoing girl. In the past, we went to the

playground, snacked and hung out together.

Now, she is constantly holding a tablet and she

never takes her eyes off it. There is almost no exchange between



us at recess. I am also extremely worried that she is visiting websites with inappropriate content. This may explain why she has been behaving strangely lately.



Little by little, mobile devices have left terrible effects on our lives: feelings of isolation, reduced social interaction and loss of important social skills.

A wall has been erected between people. This is exactly why all mobile phones and tablets should disappear.

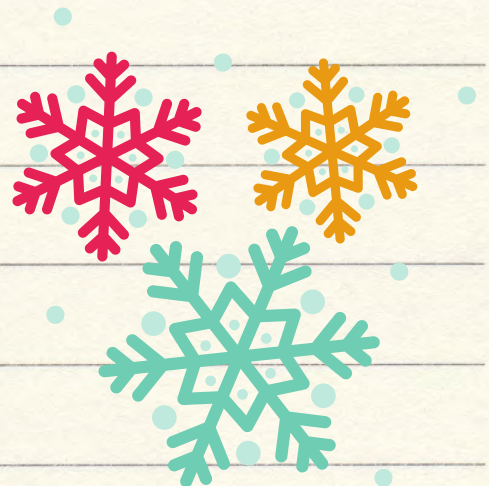
Dear Santa, please make my wish come true. I am very excited about your visit on Christmas Eve and I hope you will like the freshly baked cookies and glass of cold milk I will leave for you, the elves and the reindeer.

Thank you in advance, Santa!

Love,

Alanna

P.S. Please send my regards to Mrs. Claus.



A Letter to My Daughter

Leung Ching Hei, Lois
5A (10)

Dear Daughter,

I am writing to you on this US military plane packed with people like us - horror-struck, lost, buried in the stench of death and blood, homeless. We are in mid-air, a boundless stretch of blue, flying from Afghanistan, which was once our home, to Germany, our refuge.

You are here, on my lap, resting soundly as though all the monsters I have told you about have never existed. But yes, they do. We have just escaped from one.

Remember the time when you were hopping around at the front door, thrilled at the thought of finally being able to go to school for the first time? You were halfway to the school building when a bomb exploded out of nowhere, engulfed everything in fire, and reduced it all to ashes and smoke. An overwhelming surge of terror ran through your veins as the scene unveiled right in front of you. You could barely sleep for the rest of the month, troubled by repeated terrifying nightmares. You were six then.

We are all children of the war and pieces in the game played by politicians. That was never our choice - no. But you know what, little girl? We are wrong.

In 1892, a grizzly bear was spotted atop a hill near Pierce Mill. It was obviously not his home, nor was it anywhere he would choose to spend the night if he could. Yet, he did. And he did it with pride. The bear was three (merely twelve when converted into the lifespan of a human) when he escaped from Yellowstone National Park eight months into his captivity. Every day he had been living in agony. Its hope of enjoying the taste of freedom became dimmer and dimmer. Yet, he never for once let go of his hope. When the opportunity presented itself, he made a run for it and escaped. The bear made the choice, regardless of the consequences, and he fought for his life.

You see, daughter, we always have a choice, even when the world tells you otherwise, even when the light at the end of the tunnel seems to be fading away, further and further out of reach.

I will be honest. We are the lucky ones. Still, I have not the slightest idea what the future holds. What plans Germany and the world have for us I can barely imagine. Yet, there is one thing I know for sure: You, my girl, are the product of the conflict that

has been forced upon us for decades. It does not make you any less of who you are. It has made you stronger. You are the daughter of the war and you will one day be the bear that had freed itself.

I love you,
Your Mother



Refugee
Document



I

Your Letters

Li Wing Ching, Winnie

5C (11)

14 October, 2023

Dear Dolores,

How are you in Paris? I have always wanted to be embraced by the gorgeous, romantic rain, wind, sunshine and snow there.

Have you received my package? I have sent you the photos you wanted – those we had taken at Disneyland. You told me that you wanted to visit Disneyland Paris someday. Now you are residing in your favourite city. Your surroundings must be lovely and enchanting.

I have been sending emails to you since the day you left but I never received your replies. I guess you have probably forgotten your password. Therefore, I am writing to you this letter, using the pen you gave me on my birthday, spraying the perfume you liked the most on the page and telling you how much I miss you.

It must be getting cooler in Paris. Please stay warm.

*With love,
Avery*



II



29 April, 2024

Dear Dolores,

Je t'aime. I learned this phrase today. It means "I love you" in French.

The iris pallida are coming into blossom. Have you seen them growing where you are? I remember, the first time we went on a date, you could not help but fall in love with the bluish-purple flower at the florist's we passed by. You gently leaned your head against my shoulder, saying softly with the most endearing voice in the world, "I like those flowers." Yes, of course I knew. I knew that you like flowers. You liked them as much as I adore you.

I also remember the last day we were together. You were abnormally quiet, with your doe-like eyes closed, and smiling, just like how you did on our first date. Perhaps you were asking for the last flower I could ever give you. So, just like what you wanted, I gave the most graceful flower to you, put it gently in your hand and sent you the greatest love in the world.

Day after day, I miss you as always.

*With love,
Avery*



III

25 November, 2024

Dear Dolores,

Time flies. It is winter again.

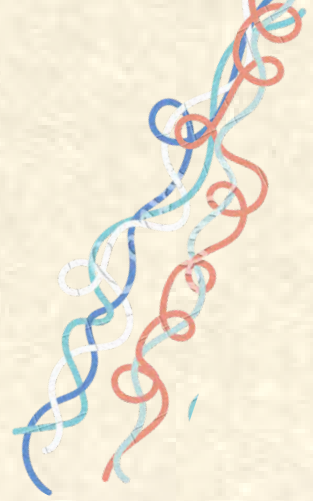
My mother discovered the previous letter I had written to you. She asked, "Why haven't you sent this?" I did not answer. I had no need to.

I am going to get a new cardigan as my Christmas gift this year. The old one, which you gave me when we graduated from college, is worn. I have tried having it mended by asking my mother to patch it up. However, it just did not work. I am sorry. Please don't get mad at me.

Do you still remember the letters we sent to each other when we were in Year 1? I found them when I was decluttering my drawer recently. Your sister and I had a chat on the phone yesterday and she told me that your family is moving to France next month. I am happy for you as you will finally not be alone. Maybe I can ask them to bring you some of these letters, as well as those I have been writing to you after you left – the letters that will never be read.

With love,

Avery



IV



22 December, 2025

Dear Dolores,

I heard that Paris is snowing. It is romantic, isn't it? You were born on a snowy day, like a gift sent from God. Perhaps that is why you are as pure as an angel.

I was invited to Joseph's wedding last week. He looks more mature and handsome now, different from how he was in college. I also saw many of our old schoolmates there, like Hillary and Emma. We all miss you tremendously.

Oh yes, I have almost forgotten to tell you: Joseph had sent you an invitation too and asked me to pass it to you. Although it is a little bit late, I have enclosed the card in this letter.

(But what should I put for the address?)

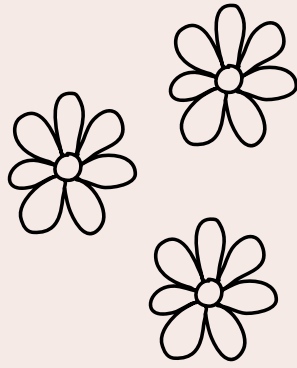
I am planning a trip to France in the summer. Your parents had invited me to drop by before they departed for Paris. I cannot wait to see you again.

Anyway, happy birthday to you.

*With love,
Avery*



V



4 March, 2000

Dear Avery,

Hi :-D I am Dolores, the girl you met at the canteen.

Thank you for your message. However, I am not used to seeing somebody I've just met. If you don't mind, can we be pen friends instead?

And yes, I would be delighted to grab a cup of coffee with you... later, when we have gotten to know each other better. Until then.

Best wishes,

Dolores





www.matrixmail.com/mail/v/2

Awaiting Response
Law Long Ching, Cyrus
5D (22)

Compose



Inbox

Favourites

Saved

Sent

Drafts

Junk

Files

More

Calendar

Search contacts

From: anonymoussilence@matrixmail.com

Subject: (No Subject)

Dear Friend,

It's been a while, hasn't it? I hope everything is going well for you! You have gone radio silent since your departure, so I bet you must have met a ton of new friends!

You might think, "Who's this lad over here speaking nonsense?" Well, it's okay to forget about me when your life there is as vibrant as the electromagnetic wave spectrum! I'm just your plain old friend back in Hong Kong. Nothing of importance, really. I wrote this email just so I can recall the things you've done. So, treating this as junk mail is fine by me.

You were probably the most reckless person I've ever seen and that's a compliment in my book. You did things you deemed fun and did not worry about anything. I have always admired your bravery. Um... maybe not always, because some of the things you've done were – let's just say they were worthy of a facepalm: running in the opposite



18:32
13/10/2021



Compose

Search mail



02:53 (16 hours ago)

- Inbox
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- Saved
- Sent
- Drafts
- Junk
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- More

- Calendar

From: anonymoussilence@matrixmail.com

Subject: (No Subject)

direction of an escalator, climbing over fences, screaming in public, just to name a few.

The most memorable moment was that time we walked past a toy shop. I still can't believe that, when you saw some kids playing a popular card game, your first reaction was to immediately buy a deck of cards and start playing with the kids. It was too ridiculous to watch, so I left the scene, thinking about how shameless you were. The next day, you even proudly announced that you had beaten the kids and won! I am conscious about everything I do, so seeing your mischievous behaviour made me kind of jealous.

The reason I stuck with you, though, was not because of your carefree disposition. I used to be a loner because I had trouble talking to people, and I especially disliked outgoing people like you. But you exceeded being "outgoing" by a long shot. When I ignored you, you somehow found my email address and started bombarding me with mails. I insisted on not responding. A few days later, I

Search contacts



Compose

Search mail



02:53 (16 hours ago)

Inbox

Favourites

Saved

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Search contacts

From: anonymoussilence@matrixmail.com

Subject: (No Subject)

found my phone chiming non-stop because a certain someone discovered my phone number and kept texting me. I did not respond either. It was after you kept staring at me funnily at school that I decided to finally reply to the messages you had sent me. After all, it's better to talk it out than to get myself into an even worse situation.

Surprisingly, you and I got along pretty well. With the help of emails, I could communicate without talking face to face, which helped me share my thoughts with more ease. It felt magical as that was the first time I had fun socialising with others in a long time. Weeks passed and we knew each other well enough for you to start inviting me to hang out. They were all supposed to be for fun, but most of the time, they just turned into speech therapy sessions. However, thanks to your efforts, I started becoming more socially active and have made a bunch of new friends.

“What’s up? I’ve been paying attention to you ever since the school year started. You are a bit of an



Compose

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Calendar

Search contacts



02:53 (16 hours ago)

From: anonymoussilence@matrixmail.com

Subject: (No Subject)

extra, aren't you? Well I'm about to change that. 'Why?', you might ask. Because seeing you behave like this makes me sad and I hate feeling sad. Prepare to be interrupted by me every day!"

This was the first message I received from you. Aged like milk, if you ask me. All of your friends were pretty sad when you left, including me. It was so sudden, too. I instantly returned to my old ways because the reason I became an extrovert was gone. Don't worry, I will eventually get over it and become functional again.

Enough about me. How has your life been? I bet you are having fun abroad now, aren't you? There must be a lot of cool stuff out there. It would be nice if you could share some interesting stories with me. Drop me a few lines like we did in the good old days – the days when we exchanged emails back and forth at midnight.

Yours truly,
XXX



*If undelivered,
please return to
the hard-working members of
The Matrix Team:*

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Angel Pun (4C), Lois Leung (5A), Eunice Chan (5B),
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