A PLACE TO STAY

MEMORIES OF PENSIONERS FROM MANY LANDS

COMPILED BY AGE EXCHANGE THEATRE COMPANY

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This book has been researched with pensioners from the West Indies, India, the Far East, Cyprus, Poland and Italy. In their own words, contributors recall their homelands, their arrival in Britain, settling in London and their varied experience here. In all cases, stories appear in the original language as well as English.

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Stories are anonymous, at the request of contributors, but there is a language and gender key, as follows:

It = Italian  Gj = Gujerati  G = Greek  P = Polish  T = Turkish
Pj = Punjabi  Ch = Chinese  H = Hindi  M = man  W = woman
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INTRODUCTION

We all came for four or five years, but the time went on so fast, we just didn’t think, until we end up doing twenty-five, thirty years instead of five. Now we’re here to stay. Where people had sold out their little holdings, they didn’t have anywhere to go back to. They remained here continually trying to work to see how much they could accumulate to go back and start setting themselves up again. But time run out, y’see. They’re still here and without anything accumulated to go back. So it’s much better for them to stay where they are. Some are really prepared to stay. Others are compelled to stay and they accept it. “I have to stay — well, I must be satisfied”.

I think our policy makers too have just realised what is happening. They too didn’t realise that in time it would go on as it goes and that so many people would be here. So of course they are just beginning to take some notice or trying to see what can be done to make these people happy so they can enjoy their old age.

I don’t think we exactly want something different. There are little bits of our cultural background we would like to keep as elderly people and enjoy. We would like more of us to be together, so that sometimes, if we go out to the park, we can sit together and talk together of old times. I think that would make us happy. I would like to see what I call clusters. Really you know, I don’t want us to be isolated from other elders, but if we have two lots of Caribbean homes together, then houses for other elders, and then another couple of Caribbean houses further on. My main concern is that we should not be separated from the people of our cultural background. We want some others to be there. We want to speak of old times. We may even sing some of our old songs. We may remember the days that were spent at home, the moonshine nights we sat under a tree or in a big yard and sang together. Our elderly people at home did that too. They were happy. I think the outdoor life helps elderly people to survive and be happy.

As you go along in this environment today, you find elderly people you would like to talk to, but they look as if they’ve got the world on their shoulders so you’re even afraid to approach them. We really want to be more together, more united, because old age should not have us isolated, old age should not bring us to the point where we are forgotten. Some elderly we don’t even know where they are. Perhaps to draw them out of their loneliness we should have people of their own background in touch, making a survey if we have to, visiting house to house and letting them realise we are not coming to push them away into almshouses or places like that, but wanting to make friends with them. I look at it this way; whatever is being done, there should be people of their background to approach them. That is important because I believe they would give such people more confidence.

I think a lot of young people are interested, and I think we could get them involved too, because whatever happens they’d be very good; they’re strong, they have the energy to get around.

We all have loneliness, but thinking of old people of the Caribbean, this loneliness is new to them. Old people welcome a visitor, and for that reason, back home we would always remember that Granny Margaret lives next door and it would always be my duty to send my children over to see how she is getting on, and she welcomed them. Here nobody wants to know. Everybody is too busy looking after their own business and the elderly then remain on their own, until it forms a part of their life.

There’s barriers between old and young, there’s barriers between neighbours and neighbours, there’s barriers between old and old. This country is full of barriers. This country is full of people who are in pain and longing. If we break down our own barriers, because we too can be isolated, then maybe we can help somebody else. We are short of places to meet. We want more of such places. Some people will want to be together with people of their own kind; some will prefer to be mixed. People will want to know they are welcome to visit these places. People shut themselves in and decide to stay in. Sometimes it’s despondency. We have to have a future of using whatever we’ve got as long as we are here. Life is worth living. We can be cheerful.

MRS MABEL CARTER
The reason I came to England was that my Father died and my Mother had to work. In the end I decided that I must go out to work. It wasn’t right for my mother to work so hard and earn so little money. My brother was already here so I wrote to him and he had an invitation made out to me to come to England. When I came, I came to work and stay.

I don’t know what I expected England to be like because I knew nothing about it. But once here I didn’t find it strange at all, I liked it. Now I regard it as my home.

When I first came I stayed with an English family who were very kind. They taught me a few words like “scissors”, “thimble”, “needle”. They knew I was going to start dressmaking. “Yes”, “Thank you”, they taught me a few words.

My first job was dressmaking. A relative introduced me to the factory. I was a dressmaker, but I didn’t know how to use the electric machine. The boss wanted work not chatting.

If the boss ever wanted to tell me anything, he would have to do it through an interpreter.

One day he wanted me to work on a Saturday because he needed the work, so he told another Cypriot woman, who understood English, to tell me. Well she didn’t, so of course I didn’t know. The following Monday I went to work and he started to shout at me in English. Well, I didn’t understand what he was saying, so I started to cry and left. I went to Charlotte Street where there was a grocer whom I knew. I asked him to please come and see what this man wanted and why he was shouting at me. I was frightened you see in case he gave me the sack and, without the language, where would I find another job?

The man came with me and sorted out what was happening. As it turned out the woman didn’t tell me, so I couldn’t come to work if I didn’t know.

After that little mishap the boss and I got on quite well, because you see I can’t work and talk, so I only worked.

During the war I was making government surplus clothes, trousers and jackets. I was sewing a brown piece of paper, triangular in shape, covered in a solution which melted the pads of your finger. It was for the soldiers to put on their cuffs, so that if the Germans dropped the gas it would change colour.

We would make one hundred pieces for two shillings. They used to have buckets of liquid so we could soak our fingers to try and heal them. I worked there for a long time. We used to earn £1/10 shillings a week.

I remember one year it snowed so much, the snow turned into slush, that was difficult. I used to go to work with a hot water bottle on my stomach.

During the war we used to sleep in the Underground. After doing this for some time, we decided to go to Wales.

They were dropping bombs, flying bombs. When the planes came the tail of the planes were red, when the tail turned black you knew they were going to drop the bombs. After that they said they were going to drop a silent bomb. That’s when I said to my husband “it’s time we left this place, for about a year. Then we can see what’s going to happen. Otherwise, as we sleep, we could find ourselves dead.”
Π άντια του ήταν στην Ατλαντή ήταν εκείνος εκβάλλει ο τίτλος μου
τις ή μέρα μου έφερεν και ουδές. Στου τέλους απεφέρανας καις
κρεμες θα έδωσες να εκβάλλει, εγώ είναι αυτή την μάστο
μου κάθε χρόνο τις περιτες τις άλλες περιτες. Είναι μου
και μου μπορεί με γλώσσα και με φωνές
που θα καθεμέρα τις περιτες τις άλλες περιτες. Είναι μου
και μου μπορεί με γλώσσα και με φωνές
που θα καθεμέρα τις περιτες τις άλλες περιτες.
We went to Cardiff, near the harbour.
That’s when I had an idea about opening a Dry Cleaners, because all the officers and soldiers came here, and they would need their clothes cleaned, ironed and maybe some alterations. Quickly, my husband went and bought me a sewing machine. He made a table and bought an iron. This was all in a ground floor flat. He put a sign outside and we were ready to start.

The soldiers came and the work was plentiful.
All the Greek Cypriots who left London met up in Cardiff. We made a little cafe where we would all gather, play records and enjoy ourselves. I really enjoyed myself at Cardiff.

Near our Cafe there were some Greeks from Greece; we made an arrangement with them and set up a bigger Cafe with music and coffee. We passed away our time wonderfully just as if we were in Cyprus.

The Captains used to come to us, so I could charge their stripes.
I used to ask them “When do you want them back?” They used to reply “Not tomorrow, the day after.” I used to write on a ticket, “Must be ready for Wednesday.” All sorts of things, I used to do, turn up hems on trousers, turn the collars round and cuffs. My husband used to iron the trousers, also use a liquid to take marks off, of course the baby next to us in the pram.

I used to be embarrassed to charge a lot. They would ask me “How much?” “Ten shillings? Is that all right?” I would ask. “Oh yes, dear” they replied. My husband would say, “Charge them a bit more if they find it cheap.” I couldn’t, it was such an easy job, I couldn’t charge them more. They used to pay me ten shillings and also drop five shillings in the baby’s pram.

My husband and I got on very well, but he met another woman, she won him over, so he went off with her, and left me with the baby. Then I had a lot of problems.

I somehow knew what to do. I am the one who got things going for the divorce on my own with no one to help me.

When you love your husband, and he goes off and leaves you with the baby what are you to do? But somehow with God’s help, my child went to school, I worked, he became a educated man and he is in Africa at the moment working.

I make do with what I get.
I went to visit Cyprus and enjoyed it a lot, my Mother was also very pleased but, after about a month I started to get homesick, for England. “My God,” my Mother would cry “This is your home, tell me what does England do to you that you want to rush over there?”

I knew that over here I could work, earn money, set myself up and dress in nice clothes, I didn’t want to stay in Cyprus.

Life in Cyprus has changed, it’s become worse than in England. They used to put England down, but I am afraid they’ve got worse. Before, a girl would never go out with a boy walking along the street, but now they do, and the Mother sees and doesn’t say anything.

Now I would be happy to go back to Cyprus for a holiday, but to stay, “No”.

The only thing I want is a telephone, they won’t put me in a telephone. I made an application years ago, and still I don’t have one.

I live on my own, if something happens to me no one will know, and I could die. The other day when something was wrong with me, if my friend had not come round to see me, something terrible could have happened. I could have died and rotted here and no one would have found me.

They say that I am all right, that I am not ill. Are they waiting for me to become ill, and shouting from my window for help before they do anything? Why shouldn’t they help me? I’ve been in this country for so many years, why, why?

I want to go on holiday, my bones are so stiff.
I miss my son, when Easter or Christmas comes, and I am on my own . . . now if my son was here, I think I would be the luckiest woman. I wouldn’t care if I didn’t have anything else, so long as I had my son near.
Οι κατευθύνσεις ερευνήσαμε σε μια, έτσι τις είμαι αλλάζουμε τις
τρομημένες, έτσι τους κάτα τα θέλουν πάνω, τέτοιες απαντήσεις μου
πέτσα "Ως σήμερα, αφήνων.
Έφηβα πάνω στέκεσε πενήντα χρόνια έτσι έτοιμα την τατάρην.
Επειδή έτσι η σκέψη με συνοδεύει, εξελίχθηκε
τα μονοπάτια, τα τοπία, τα ακόλουθα μικρά αφέναις τότε πάνω,
τέτοιες αντικείμενοι εσείς τα κατευθύννει, τέτοιες δύναμες τέτοιο
υγόνων πάνω για να δείχνουν σας πολλοί. Συγκατά τότε το μωρό μες
ήταν κάτω δέχασε με μέσο στην κοινωνία του.

Εν τέτοιες πολλά να τους τακτοποιούμε πολλά, εμποδισμένη με "πάση
κάθεπα" δέχεσαι ελάχιστα, ελάχιστοι, "εν τέτοιο" ελάχιστοι.
"Εν τέτοιο" ελάχιστοι μας. Ο άντρας μου ελάχιστα μας να τους τακτοποιούμε
παρακατά, τούτος κάθεπας, τώρα έλεγκε τα, εμποδίζοντας, 
η αυτολειτουργία δέχεσαι τέτοιες εξήλθαν τέτοιο πάνω
στόχος μέσο στην αρχή του μωρό.

Με τον άντρα μου επανελέγαμε πολλά καλά, ολά ερμηνεύσαμε με
άλλες γενιές τότε εξελίχθηκαν του και μένα, έρωτα με το μωρό.
Τότε είχα πολλά προβλήματα, παραμένω, με κατά κέφιού τρόπο ήθελα
ήτανοι να δέχασα να κάνω, έρωτα η πρώτη, τοπία είχα μία μεγάλη
για συμπεριφέρθηκαν τέτοιες κανένες δεν με πολλούς.

Αμείβεταις τον άντρα μου σε τέσσερα πάνω με αλλες γενιές
άλλοι ήθελαν σε μέρος μωρό, τη πρώτη, τοπία, με με την ομαλότητα
του θεού και μωρό, εμποδίσης στο σκοπεύοντα, έκτακτα ευρέως, έτσι
έτσι και πολλοί εννοιούσε να επέλεξε επίσης στην αριστοκρατία δύναμες
τέτοιες μέσα.

Η βασική επιστολή της Σένα, άρεσες μου πολλά, άρεσες της μαμάς μου
τότε όταν ερμηνεύσαμε, ολά μετά τον ένα μήνα δέχασα να
κάνω μεγάλη στην αγάπη. Φέρεις το πράγμα σαι σε μου, με κάθε
ατακή σας τέσσερα να φάεις τοπία γλυκά;

Τίποτε άλλο με το πράγμα, με σας τοπία, το πράγμα να δέχασα
τέτοια, είχα πάνω σας. Πολλά χρόνια σας κοιμήτησαν σας
τέτοια τέσσερα να φάεις τοπία γλυκά λόγια;

Πώς ήταν όταν σου την ανάγκη εμποδίζατος να δύναμε, να
ημειώνοντας τον κανένα μας, να στέκοντας με το θέλω, 
δεν είχαες με πάνω σου. Χρόνος σου τοπία, 
μένας ήτανες σας τέσσερα να δέχασα εμποδίζατος
τέτοια σας,

γιαγιά σοι μου, σου είχαες με τέρμα, 
πολλά, πολλά. Άρεσες μου εικόνα
τέτοια σου τέσσερα
τάσης τέσσερις.

Εικόνα μου σου είχαες τέτοιου, σου έμεινα μέχρι τη
κοιμήσατος σου τέσσερα
τάσης, τάσης.
I started school at seven years. At twelve years I went to a convent. After a year my Mother couldn’t afford the payments so we made an arrangement that I would clean the school and that would do as payment.

But after a while I started to get tired, so I left at the age of fourteen.

I started work with a News Company as a projectionist. I cleaned, painted and did a bit of carpentry. I would start work at 5 a.m. and finish at 1 a.m. As a result I did nothing but work. I worked there until the day before I came to England. I had heard that the Government was looking for some people to go and work in Wales under contract.

We were sixty Greek girls. We left from Limassol in a small boat and made for Italy. As we were pulling away I got very tearful and wanted to go back.

They dropped us off at Italy to wait for the morning train to Calais.

While we were waiting in Italy we had to sleep on our suitcases in the Station.

We got quite thirsty and wanted water. I went up to an Italian and asked for “Neron, neron” and did the sign for drink, he replied “Agwar, agwar”. In Greek agwar means to hear. He kept saying “Agwar agwar” I would reply “I can hear, I can hear. It’s water we want”. We somehow sorted it out.

In Wales I worked on a conveyor belt canning fruit. We were Spanish, Greeks, all races mixed.

The first time I saw snow was in Wales. I woke up in the dormitory, and I couldn’t see out of the window, “Who’s painted the windows?” Everyone gathered round the windows and one woman in a deep voice said “They should have a bad year, they’ve painted our windows, and we want air”.

Because I had come to England under contract I was obliged to stay with the job until the contract finished. Then I would be sent home. I wanted to stay on. As time went on quite a few girls left, leaving only fourteen of us, so we fourteen decided to leave. There was an English man who owned a caravan who was willing to get us to London. I went straight to my brother’s house.

Once I had arrived it wasn’t anything as I expected. I was expecting to find educated English people like those I met when I was a child in Cyprus.

I saw a lot of strange things.

The first time I went to Regents Park I saw a man and woman naked, I was shocked, I panicked, I started shouting to my brother, “Come quickly, call the police, look at what they are doing”. “Be quiet,” my brother said. “This is how things are done now in England”. And that’s what I’ve stayed with.

My biggest problem started once I left my brother’s house and moved in with a woman I worked with. I didn’t know the language or dress making. I worked in various dress factories. By this time I was an illegal immigrant because I had broken the contract in Wales. The police eventually found me and sent me to an immigration office, where I was asked many questions.

“Why did I stay in England and not Canada, America, Australia?” I told her I liked the people and that I had a brother here also. She also asked what work I was doing and what I was doing with the money. I told her that I sent my Mother some and the rest I lived on, and that I had never asked the Government for anything.

She asked me to leave the details with her and that she would do what she could. Within twelve days she sent me a visa allowing me to stay, also work, do anything. The only thing is that if I go to Cyprus and stay over two years my visa will expire. Now I am a legal citizen, but the visa still applies.

I returned to Cyprus just after the War of 1976. Things have changed. Everyone has moved away, I couldn’t eat because of all the suffering. It’s a tragedy what has happened to Cyprus.

I want to go home but I have to wait and see what’s going to happen to my health. I’ve got used to this place, but to stay forever? No. I miss my relatives.

When you live on your own, you get depressed. I like it when someone visits me, one of my friends, and we go to Oxford Street to have a Pizza. It is lovely. You can go out and enjoy yourself if you have someone with you, but on your own you get very lonely. If I was to leave England, I would miss my friends. I do and I don’t want to go back.
ήσυχα να πει η αγαπημένη σου, η οποία έχει αρχίσει να περιμένει να σε κάνει να αναζητήσεις την πρώτη φορά. Μάθε να μην την αναζητάς μόνο, αλλά να σχεδιάζεις για να την βρεις.

Είναι εύκολο να είναι εύκολο να μην την βρεις, αλλά σώσεις την ζωή που είναι εύκολο να κατακρατήσει. Μάθε να μην την αναζητάς μόνο, αλλά και να σχεδιάζεις για να την βρεις.
GW

My Mother died when I was three years old, my Father was a shepherd in Cyprus. I went to school when I was seven years old and left when I was ten years old.

I started work with my Father looking after the animals. He didn’t have any aspirations for me because it was the done thing to go and help with the job your parents are doing.

I came here, after I married, with my husband. He had visited England twice before.

I thought England would be different. What I really liked were the parks where the children played.

The first year we arrived it was very cold. We weren’t used to the cold. We lived in one room, we used to light the paraffin heater and huddle round it.

I never used to go out because my youngest was only three years old and my husband didn’t want me to give her to a minder, so I could go out to work. As a result I never went out.

The first house we lived in was in Bermondsey. There was a Cypriot man who was renting a house. He couldn’t afford the £200 deposit so my husband decided to share the house with him. We paid £100 each and we took over one of the flats. The rent was £3 a week, I don’t know if that included the rates. My husband dealt with these matters. We moved into the house in October. The following March I became ill, I went into hospital, I lost a baby. There was something wrong with me, pain, I had another operation.

Meanwhile, the house was up for demolition and the owners were looking for the official tenants so they could give them a flat. They wouldn’t give us a flat because we were only sub-letting the house. So my husband had to start looking for somewhere else to live.

My Uncle found us somewhere to live in Harrow Road.

My youngest daughter was going to school now, and I was tired of being home so I found work in a dress factory.

My husband decided he wanted to go to Australia, so in 1968 we got all our papers ready. In the meantime, he heard about a shop being sold, so he had to make up his mind whether to go to Australia or buy the shop. In 1970 we bought the shop.

We had to work hard and save every penny. Between 1962-1970 my husband used to go to Cyprus every two years on his own and take gifts. As a result, we never had any money. Somehow we got a mortgage, and the rest we borrowed from relatives.

Between 1962-1970 I used to save money secretly and I used to put money away for the girls, in the Post Office.

My first job was finishing in a dress factory with Greek people. I had a go on the over-locker, but I wasn’t experienced so I only lasted a month on the over-locker.

Then I went to a factory where they sewed bags, I worked for about 2 weeks there. I didn’t know how to use the machines, so they sacked me. I then did some under-pressing with some Jewish people who were sewing wedding gowns. I worked there for about 3 months.

The way I learned to use the sewing machines was through a relative. One day a relative came round to invite me to her wedding. She asked me what work I was doing.

“Well this and that”, I replied. “I am under-pressing during the day, but want to learn how to use the sewing machine.” “I’ll take you with me to my work, you can sit beside me and I’ll teach you”, she said, and so it was.

Oh, when I first came to England I found the language very difficult. I was working with Greek people most of the time, so there was no real need for me to learn English.

It’s only been in the last ten years that I managed to learn any English I was working in a factory with English and Indian women, so I had to pick up the words and try and make some sense out of them in order to communicate.
Πρωτά δεδομένα μετα τον καταρρέπτη με τον άντρα μου. Τζίζενος είδει ενώπιον ενδοκεφαλία στην αγγέλη.

Άνθιζε η αγγέλη εντός κοιλοπλακής. Τέσσερις που μου έδειξαν πέτρας ήταν τα πέραμα που επίσημα το μιρά.

Ο τρόμος χρώνον που άρχισε από την παλίρροια. Ήμεστος συνεργασιών στο κράνος. Βιαστικοπισμένοι οι άνθρωποι, αφησονταίκοι την οδήγησαν τον πετραλιάν τ'επαρθόμενου τομό της.

Ποτέ μου εν έρευνα είχα, επειδή η τυττάσσεσα μμράλ μου ήταν τρόμος προφήτες ήταν τα πέραμα που επίσημα το μιρά.

Το τούτο μου στέγεται ήταν στην ακόμην. Ο νοικοκυράς ήταν η ακόμην. Και εγώ έπεσαν τον δίκαιο βίντεο, τζίζενος ήταν έχοντας να ανακοινώσει σε παραμένει την επιστήμη στην ουδέτερη, για τον τρόμο εν έρευνα ποτέ μου είχα.

Πέντε προφήτες ήταν μιας άλλης έρευνας της ομάδας ο προφήτης κατά εν ελεύθερης η ουδέτερης μας αντικείμενο ήταν ο προφήτης της ανακοινώσεις η ουδέτερης.

Περιέχει της μεταφόρα προμήθεια ενδοκεφαλία με τον άντρα του τουπαγών. Τον άντρα της μεταφόρα παρατάσσεις, μπότακι στο νοσοκομείο, έχει ένας άντρας και έχει είχε παθεί, έχει ακόμη μετα την επιστήμη. Σε μια μεταφόρα παρατάσσεις, μπότακι στο νοσοκομείο, έχει ένας άντρας και έχει είχε παθεί, έχει ακόμη μετα την επιστήμη.

Πώς ο άντρας μου έρευνε και παραταράτα το μιγήτα αυτός να μιλάει πολύ.

Ο θείος μου έδειξε μας ένας στέγεται στο κάρεμο ήδη. Η παρατηρήσεις κόρη μου υπόγραψε στο σκελετό προφήτα της εικόνας της ημέρας ουδέτερης ήταν ένας άντρας που επίσημα το μιρά.

Ένα时代 του 1962 με το 1970 έχει κατά κατά προφήτα της έκθεση στη μεταφόρα της κοπελλασίας στον περιφερειακό.

Η μάστι ουδέτερης ήταν ένας αυτός τον άντρα με την επιστήμη.

Ένας άντρας μου μιλάει πολύ στον άντρα, αλλά είναι κατά κατά, έτσι είχε είσοδο. Και είχε παθεί, έτσι είχε είσοδο. Και είχε παθεί, έτσι είχε είσοδο. Και είχε παθεί, έτσι είχε είσοδο.
I came here in 1948. In Cyprus I was a policeman and I went to the American Academy so I knew how to speak English. I came with my brother Mustafa but my wife stayed behind at first. We had a cousin who lived in Berwick Street in Soho.

In those days you had to come by invitation, so our cousins sent us an official invitation vouching for us. We had no trouble getting into England. As long as you had an invitation you were all right. It was after the war but there was still rationing. When you had visitors, obviously the household got more coupons. We didn’t eat bacon, so we used to save our coupons and get more butter and other meats. Only liver, and kidneys, and I think mincemeat, wasn’t rationed. All other meats were.

As I said, I could speak English so I had no difficulty in talking to other people, and soon I found a job, I did a bit of carpentry in Cyprus so I worked as a carpenter for a time, I used to get six pounds a week. Then I did lots of different jobs in the factories. It didn’t bother me, to do something like manual work. I was educated, but when you come to this country you have to do what you can find. I couldn’t be a policeman here. So I had to do something else.

We eventually opened a shop called Ankara, on Essex Road, where Kervan Hotel is now. It was winter and heating was very difficult. It took us a long time to register with the Council for coal. The coalman wouldn’t deliver any coal if you weren’t registered. The fireplaces were very big and we tried burning bits of wood but the whole thing used to flare up and die down very quickly, so we used to go to bed early. Not having a television there was very little else to do. Anyway, it was the best place to keep warm.

Working in the shop was more difficult in those days. We had to do door-to-door deliveries; people used to ring us up and ask us to deliver. Only sometimes they’d go out, and I would be left with the groceries. As it was part of the service I couldn’t charge them for the petrol.

My wife and I always spoke English in the shop. It was always “Pass the whatever it was Sir or Madam” “Please and thank you!” There was no Cypriot food here in those days, most of the food was what we could buy here. Later on, when my wife learned to drive, she sometimes drove to Turkey and Cyprus and brought back some cheese and other bits and pieces, to sell at the shop.

Lots of things happened which, looking back, are funny.

Where we lived, all the houses looked the same. A friend I knew from Cyprus lived near us. Although he knew approximately the address of his place he used to leave his milk bottles outside the door as markers, so that when he came back he could find the house without difficulty. One day he left as usual to go to work with the milk bottles outside but when he came back he couldn’t see the house with any milk bottles. The poor man, he couldn’t find his house and was wandering around the street. Fortunately, he saw another friend who showed him to his house.

Another memory I have is during the coronation of the Queen in 1952. We didn’t have a television, so we agreed to go to a relative in Bermondsey to watch it on their television. When we walked into the room where the television was, the room was full of mirrors. He placed mirrors in all angles facing the TV so he could watch it from anywhere in the room. I’ve just remembered that, I just looked at the mirror and saw the television.

There wasn’t many of us in those days but, what there was formed a club.

We have been quite contented here, our children have grown up and lead their own lives here. We are now retired and are fortunate enough to divide our time between here and Cyprus.

My daughter developed a lump on her back from an early age so when we could afford it my husband and my daughter came to England, to have my daughter see a specialist. This was in 1960. In Cyprus we lived in a small village near Karpaz which is, if you look at the map of Cyprus, the finger part.

He was a shepherd, and while he was away I looked after the sheep.

We were poor really, we sold the flock and he and my daughter left for England. I and the rest of the children came two years later. He worked and sent us money for the ticket. We left from Limassol and travelled to Italy and then to France. It was May or June but we still felt cold. We had to share the bunks in the boat and the train. On the ferry across the Channel, they wouldn’t let us into the boat. We had to stay out on the deck for hours until we came to Dover. My son was eleven months and I had to hug him and cover him all the way. I thought we wouldn’t make the journey.

The biggest problem we ever had in this country has been housing. We lived in one room and rented accommodation for nine years.

My husband lived in Stoke Newington and we all had to live in this one room in a house owned by a Turk, who had another eight families living in the same house. We had to queue up for everything from the toilet to cooking on the same cooker. Five of us in one room, I’ll never forget that. We had a small house in Cyprus but at least we had the fields to walk or run about in. We slowly started to work, machining.

Eventually we saved enough money to buy a house and my daughter went to see an Estate Agent just a few doors from us. He saw us living in one room and thought we had no money. When my daughter asked him to show us some houses he wouldn’t, he said he didn’t want us to waste his time. As God is my witness he refused to help us buy a house, he thought we were too poor to pay for one.

My life in this country has been all right. I’ve looked after my children, I didn’t go out much. Now I look after my grandchildren while my daughters work. One of the rooms in the house we turned into a workroom and my daughters machine in there. My husband died two years ago from cancer of the bladder. He suffered for nine months. It was a relief and a mercy when he died. While we were looking after him we all died within every day seeing him suffering in pain.

I will live with my daughters as long as they’ll have me. I don’t have many needs, Cok Sukur (Thank God).
"KRALİCENİN TAG GİYİSİNİ
AKRABA İLEĞİ"
In Cyprus we lived in a village called Karli Dag (Mount Snow). When I was one, my father died. My grandparents took me in while my Mother moved to the city of Nicosia to live. I lived with my grandparents till I was ten. Then my Mother came and took me with her to Nicosia. I lived with her until I was married at the age of twenty-seven.

From the beginning I have had a lot of problems with my marriage, for both personal and economic reasons. We decided to break up. He asked me what I planned to do, I told him I wouldn’t stay in Cyprus. I said I would either go to Turkey or England. He thought about it for 10 days and then said to me that he didn’t want a divorce. We decided to stay together and to save up to come to England. We saved what we could and then went to see a man called Behrat. He told us that he would fix our Passports and we need’t worry about anything. He had men who worked for him in England and they would meet us at the train station, when we got to England and find us somewhere to live and work. We believed him.

We left Cyprus by boat to Italy and then by train to France and from there by ferry to England. We arrived in London. On the train station we waited and waited and waited. Everybody left. There was only us and another man left standing at the train station. We couldn’t speak English. We could do nothing. Eventually someone came to pick the other man up. My husband heard them speak Turkish so he went up to ask for help from this man.

There was only one thing he could do for us and that was to take us to the Turkish Club at the West End. He was sure these compatriots could help us to find somewhere to stay.

The taxi dropped us off at the Turkish Club. We went in and he introduced us and asked the men there to help us find somewhere to stay. We told them of our circumstances and how we had been cheated and lied to. They didn’t help us one little bit and they were supposed to be Muslims and Turks too.

We sat there. What could we do? Nothing!

When the man, who took us to the Turkish Club got home, God knows he must have thought about us, and instead of going to work that night, he came back to the club to see what had happened to us.

He asked us if anybody at the club had helped us and how much money we had on us in English currency. We said that no one had helped us and that my husband only had a pound in English money. He then asked if we knew anyone at all in London. My husband said he had an address of a couple of old friends of his. The man called another taxi and took us to the address.

The landlord of the house, another Turkish Cypriot, opened the door. The man told him about us and that our friends lived at this address. The landlord said he would go and tell them. My husband’s so-called friends said that they didn’t know anyone of that name.

My husband said, “How could they not know me? We’ve been friends for years. They even wrote and asked me to look them up when I arrived here . . . and now they say they don’t know me?”

The landlord felt sorry for us, he said he could perhaps help us, but he really didn’t have any room. He said he would have to ask the other tenants, who were mainly young Turkish Cypriots, if they could double up and vacate one room for us. They did and the landlord showed us to the room.

They say people differ and it’s true. The next day we slept till about ten. I was very cold that night. It was the middle of October.

We got up, dressed and sat around afraid to go out of the room in case the landlord asked us to leave.

At about eleven o’clock there was a knock on the door. My husband went and opened the door. There stood his two friends who had previously denied they knew him. My husband asked what had happened to them last night. They said that they thought the landlord was lying to them, playing a trick. “Could it be, because you were afraid that we might come face to face you decided to come and see us. Was it to save yourselves any embarrassment?” my husband asked. They said “We just didn’t believe the landlord. Now we’ve come to take you out.”

They took us to Aldgate Market. We walked to the bus stop. The bus came and I tried to get on it. Before I could sit down, it moved. I nearly went flat on to my face I felt so embarrassed.

Worse was to come. We went to the Underground, I was scared stiff of the escalators. I’d never seen one before, I thought it was going to chew my foot up. Eventually I got used to it. We walked round the market. It was pretty cold and I wasn’t feeling well and on top of everything we hadn’t eaten. My husband said he was starving. His friends sent me back home to cook while the men went to a Turkish cafe at the Angel. There my husband asked if anyone knew of a place we could stay for that night. Nobody did. Finally, one man said he did have a room but it was in a very bad state. There was no covering on the floors and the bed mattress had its springs sticking out of it.

The man took us to this room which became our new home. It was one room and we had to share a toilet, bathroom and the kitchen with four other families.
Kıbrıs'ta, Karlı dağı'ya bile bilyen bir köye yaşamaktır. Ben bir yaşlıjuven babam Bül'le anne'me widen sonu türeçleşe
Leafyaya taytmasıyla beni deyeller yerez, elde.
On yaşına kadar dedemler y cyasam. Daha sonra annen benni yaşına Leafyaya altı. Törenle yaşam, yiit evleninceye
kadar anıma birlikte yaşamış. En belliğimiz de bini biri
belgesi byrimmye korar verdim. Bana birbiri ne plasum olup olazdırırı.
Kıbrıs'ta banyan nıyetin olazdırırı Türkçeye yada Ingilizce
yünün ISTErepidiiyle sularydır. On gün kadar benen zaman istedi,
aha aysıtılmış重要意义. Verdiği kar "haxa'mmsarəs"
takar birlikte olma korar verdim.
Birlikteşideşef paralya Beşaltı tesmi bir adama Iğıttı.
Passport ışičı haldeyecini, merak etmeyin, kendini
izin alzszam olazdıren olanı tren tasayymada bini karsılayacalarını ve bizi biri yeyerleştirmelerini sularydı.
Dinde ne İndan.
Kıbrıs'ten genuşla ayrılık, Italya'ya ordun Fransaya, Fransadan
da arabadı yaprağı Ingilizce geldik. Londera geldik. Londera
yağlınlıne, tren islayışından bizi karsılayacak olanlar
örülmiş leavesle beklentiyle, beklendi, beklendi. Herkes get-
nip, işlayışında bizi ve bir başka umudun başka ayıka
belgesi baska kitне kalındı. Biraz sonra o adan almak için
birleri geldi. Kocan aralardında konstokularının Türkçe olu-
dıranı esmut, yenilere gidip yarım istedi. Bizim için
yapılabileceği yalnız birkaç sayi verdim, biri West End'de bir
Türk hükümeti'nde. Ozar Türk hemenlerini, kalacak bir yer bulmak için bize yarın odedekeleme emildi.
Taksi, biz Türk köşune inonu biraktık, iciyeyi geldik,bizi
dergüzlerle taştrıram ve onurkarlarından bize kalacak bir yer
bulmadı yarın odedekelemin istedi. Önlere durumdum, yüz
kendine anlamlısı anlaktı. Biz hıza olun dahi yarın odedekelem.
Baskındır ve Soğas odedekele: güya.
Onda sorduk kalıbı, ne yapabilirlik, Michelyi;
Bizi Vìne köşune getiren adem evine getirdi. Allah altay
bizi duşümü onlarla ikiği ise gideceği klume gelir geldi ve ne
olup bıttığit, kimneme bize yarın odedekelemini söyledi.
"Eminem bize ya da odedekeledi"Süleyd
Londerunde tamamızını kine olup olazdırırıyordu. 
Esinin eski arkaşlarından birininin adresini verdim,adam
bir takvi çalıçyan ve bu adreslerde doğru yilla çiyik.
This man found me work in the same week, in a dress factory as a machinist. Eventually he found my husband work too.

The work wasn’t difficult, but not understanding English was. I’ve spent lots of sleepless nights crying because of the language barrier.

This particular time I had some of the women at the factory translate for me. My landlord’s sister was very helpful, but she had a friend who wasn’t so helpful. She took a shine to my husband and started to dislike me. Before that week was out, the manageress came and tapped me on the shoulder and said something. I asked this woman, who disliked me “What did she say?” She replied, “The woman said that there is no work for you. She wants you to stop working.” I was angry “If that’s what she wants, then I’ll stop” I said, and left.

When the landlord saw me at home, and not at work, he asked me what had happened, I told him. He said he was only talking to the owner the other day, and he was very pleased with my work. He promised to find out what had happened. A week later he told me that the manageress was saying what good work I was doing, not that there was no work. He said “The woman who translated for you says she misunderstood the manageress. They’d like you to go back”. By that time I had found work where my husband was working in another dress factory, so I didn’t go back. I was getting five pounds and my husband was getting six pounds. The wages were like that in those days.

The biggest problem for me was always the language and the cold. There were times when I wished I could go back to Cyprus, but going back was like admitting failure of myself and my marriage. I did go back 1956 for a holiday and to get myself together again.

When I came back our relationship with our landlord was never the same. We used to have disagreements over the use of the kitchen.

He used to get twelve shillings in total from the four families to cover the gas bill. Of course, some used to use too much and others too little. It always worked out that the damn thing used to finish half way through my meal and I used to be the one who had to ask him to put more money in the meter, and he didn’t like that.

It was difficult to keep the kitchen clean because people used to take advantage and it used to end up that no one used to do it, expecting someone else to do the cleaning for them. It was at this time that I became pregnant and the landlord became more and more difficult and inquisitive. He used to ask my husband how many weeks I was and when the child was due. It became clear to us why he was asking. He wanted to evict us when the child was born. We asked around to find another place but all our friends said that it was the rule in this country that lots of places didn’t have tenants with children. So we had no alternative but to find another solution to our problem.

One day my husband’s friend suggested we bought a place. He took us to an Estate Agent and we found a place for nine hundred pounds leasehold.

We saved two hundred pounds and that went on the deposit. The man told us that if we can complete payments in time, he can then offer us the Freehold for another two hundred pounds on top. This we did and eventually bought the Freehold.
ITALY

I came from a very big family; we were in all five brothers and three sisters; I was the one before the last. We came from a small village not far from Piacenza in the northern part of Italy, and my parents were farmers. We had to work really hard and were very poor, but on the other hand we used to know everybody in the village and lead a very communal sort of life. Somehow, in the midst of so many problems, there seemed to be room for everybody. Anyway, two of my sisters emigrated to London and opened a worker's cafe for the workers in Covent Garden Market. In 1962, they were left alone and without any help, and I had to come here to help them. I wasn’t sure at the beginning that I would remain in England. Slowly I started realizing it, rather than deciding it, while I was also getting more accustomed to England.

As soon as I came to London I went to live with my two sisters, and I always lived with them, until they died, I never married, and now I am left alone. I never had any problems with my papers, because having to help my sisters in the cafe, I got a working permit very easily. So the beginning was difficult, but in no way terrible. I learned English little by little, by myself, using a book and talking every day to the people in the cafe. At the beginning I was sick with nostalgia, and in a way I feel like that even now, but I think it is the same for everybody, and that it is not possible to leave one’s own country and get completely accustomed to somewhere else.

When I arrived, my sisters used to open the cafe at half-past seven in the morning, but, being a man, I was able to start earlier, so I opened at half past five and worked non-stop until seven in the evening. At nine o’clock I would be ready for bed. Luckily the house where I used to live, and where still am, was very close, but working so hard I didn’t have time for anything, and all my life was spent in the cafe. With many of my clients I had established an almost brotherly relationship, seeing each other every day and working in such close contact.

It is true that it was a very heavy job, but now that I am retired and my sisters are dead, I miss it dreadfully. Now I find it very hard to fill my days, I read the paper for a while. Then I go out, I sit in the park, look at the other elders and think, I am like them now. Yes, if I could I would really like to change. In Italy, in a small village, everybody is very close to each other, even if they belong to different generations. We have a stronger feeling not only for family, but for our friends too! Here they send children away from home at seven years of age. How can they grow attached to their parents, or establish strong friendships? On the other hand, I must say I have been very content here.

The first thing that really impressed me about England was the sight of people queuing, queuing for everything! And how tidy it all was! Now I have grown accustomed to all this, and I think it could never exist in Italy; I have not been there now for seventeen years, and I miss it dreadfully: though if I have to say what exactly I do miss, I could not answer. I have no idea how I would find it now, and if it is at all changed. It must be, mustn’t it? My nephews are very nice to me, thank God. They write to me and sometimes they even come up here to see me; I feel really at ease with them, I think we are very much alike.

If I have to be really honest, I must admit that if I had known what my life was eventually going to be like over here, no, I don’t think I would have come. But unfortunately for me it was never a matter of choice, but simply a must: I had my sisters and I had to help them.
THE FAR EAST

I was born in Hong Kong in 1922. I was the only child in the family. I grew up in the New Territories. I was married in 1940. In 41, Japan invaded Hong Kong. At that time my father worked in Canada but he did not send any money home. There was nothing to eat, not even sweet potatoes, and my mother was starved to death. The Japanese were very much liked lettuce, so I and my husband often collected the vegetables in the field and carried them to Fanling to the Japanese in exchange for army tokens. The belt linking the bamboo stick and the basket was so worn out by the load that it eventually broke. We lived beside the road then.

In 1941 a lot of people escaped from the mainland to Hong Kong. They had nothing to eat, not even water to drink. My father-in-law was a Christian. That year the rice crop pool he belonged to had made a profit of a few hundred catties of crops. So he made some congee, set up a stall beside the road and gave the congee to the refugees.

Peace came in 1946. I was really happy. In 1948, my eldest son was born. My husband was a van driver in Hong Kong then. Life was difficult so he applied to come to Britain in 1960, because he had a lot of relatives here. He came by ship, the journey taking more than a month. He told me the sea was rough during the journey. Many people were so sick that they could not eat anything. Just before he left for England, I gave birth to my youngest son.

In 1970, I and my youngest son also applied to come to Britain. The day when I arrived, my husband came to meet me. It was Spring then but snow was falling heavily. It was very cold. I had no English and three days after I arrived, I found a job in a restaurant named Nan Wah Lau, where my husband once worked. There were very few Chinese here during that time and it was difficult to find someone to talk to. My husband made a living by picking bean sprouts for others on his arrival. Later he became a chef in a restaurant. He was in an even more difficult situation than I was when I first arrived. I was very glad for our family reunion but the job was really tiring. I worked till midnight everyday. But I never regretted it. I had my work and I could make a living. That’s enough.

When I first arrived, I rented a room at Stoke Newington, where the whole family lived together. Later we felt the room too small for us. Through a friend’s help we rented a flat in Angel whose landlord was a British. I got to know the friend who helped us find the flat when I worked at Nan Wah Lau.

I didn’t have any English. I was totally in the dark, but I managed to carry on. My youngest son entered a primary school on arrival. He was very afraid of the blacks around the neighbourhood so he always went to Nan Wah Lau for me after school (Nan Wah Lau was near Piccadilly, now it is called May Dao) and waited for me to go home together after work. Once when we were on our way home, we were stopped and asked by a policeman why I took a child to the street so late at night. I wished to tell him my son was afraid of blacks, that he wished to have me by his side, that I was taking him home to sleep. But I had no knowledge of English, I could only mutter “solly, sorry” (sorry, sorry).

My husband was in bad health. He often had to stay in hospital. Because of this, I had to work to make ends meet. After I arrived in England for a week, he had again gone to a hospital. Life was then really difficult.

In 1975, my husband died and we were evicted from our flat. I lost my husband, and I had no English. Suddenly I felt life was very miserable. Before that, though my work was hard, I had never felt that miserable. I had to prepare my husband’s funeral. An Englishman talked about cremation or what. I didn’t understand a word of his. I only kept nodding. He told me to select a coffin for my husband and I picked one at £500. He told me it needed not be too expensive and picked a £300 one for me instead.

At that time, there was an Englishman who was kind and eager to help me. But I didn’t understand English and could only mutter “I don’t know” to whatever he said to me. He helped me to apply for widow’s allowance. Then I didn’t even know what a cheque was. I thought they were useless bits of paper and just threw them away. He tried to explain to me that these were money, but I didn’t understand a word. Now I know what a cheque is. Things would be easier then if I had someone to translate for me. That period was really difficult. My eldest son worked far away in Holland. My youngest son knew nothing at all. I had to decide everything. However I was satisfied merely to be able to raise my son through all these hardships.
我是一位出生在香港的女子。我是独生女，父母均在香港工作。我父亲是香港的一位律师，母亲是一位教师。我的父母在20世纪70年代移民到加拿大，我在纽约州的Stoke Newington长大，然后返回香港定居。我的父亲非常喜欢踏外，他经常带我去香港的各大景点，包括中国银行、中环、尖沙咀和香港仔。我的母亲则是一个热爱烹饪的人，她经常会教我做各种美食。我在香港的学校里学到了许多中国文化，包括中文、英文、历史和文学。我在香港大学主修中文，毕业后在大学中教中文。我的丈夫是英国的一位商人，他在伦敦有一份稳定的工作。我们在伦敦有一所房子，房子坐落在一个美丽的花园中。我们的女儿小名叫做“丽”，她是一个非常聪明的孩子。我们的家庭生活非常幸福，我们经常一起外出旅行，到世界各地去探索。
Q: How did you feel when you first arrived in Britain?

A: I did not feel very sad then. But I found difficulties in adjusting myself to life over here. I felt very lonely and empty.

Q: Were your children in close contact with you then?

A: Yes, by the time I came to Britain, my whole family was over here. I really rejoiced in this family re-union.

Q: So why did you say you felt lonely and empty?

A: Language was a problem for me. Although my family was in Britain, some of us lived far apart. It was only in occasional family gatherings that we saw each other. I felt very happy when the whole family was spending the time together. But I had no English and I could not communicate with the British. Shopping was not too great a problem for me, though. I just picked what I liked, put them into the basket and paid on my way out. You didn’t need an interpreter. But as I could not read the labels on the packets, there were times when I dared not try something new. I could not be sure if they were edible.

Q: Did you find other difficulties in life in Britain apart from the language problem?

A: The food here is different. The tomato soup here is crimson and has a creamy surface. When the soup boils, the tomatoes sink to the bottom of the pot. It may have something to do with the different growing methods we use. We fertilize our crops with nightsoil. The British can’t stand the bad smell and discard it. They use chemicals instead. So the vegetables they grow are not as good tasting as ours. We don’t eat foods that are out of season. We only eat what is fresh from the market and we don’t freeze our food. The food here is very different.

Q: Can you tell me something about your life in your home country?

A: Our house was in a street in a small rural town. I lived in a small rural town, not in a village. People living in the villages usually worked on lands and they lived in huts. I was a hawker then.

Q: Did you ever think of returning to your country?

A: I still got an elder brother in Mainland China. Everybody would like to go back but it needs money to do so.

Q: Do you find it difficult to communicate with your grandchildren?

A: They grow up here in Britain and therefore know little Chinese. They cannot express themselves well in Chinese nor can they write in Chinese.

Q: What was your impression of Britain when you first arrived?

A: I felt very much out of place and I missed my home country very much.

Q: Then why did you leave your home country?

A: I was a carpenter then. I worked very hard but the pay was bad. Life was very hard in China.

Q: What made you decide to stay in Britain?

A: It’s easier to make a living here and the living conditions are better. At first I found it difficult to adjust myself to life over here. But after a while I became used to it. Britain is a free country and I enjoy freedom here. A pound’s effort is a pound’s worth. If you work hard enough, you can enjoy life. To me this is a kind of freedom.
你和老林的時候感觉得怎么样？（问阿林）
阿林对那时候感觉不太想，但不能适应這個生活，觉得有点闷。
阿林说他比较不适应这里的生活。
你觉得整个环境对你来说怎么样，你觉得这里怎么样？
我觉得这里的环境不错，比较安静。
东北的冬天太冷了，我都不喜欢待在那里。
东北的冬天太冷了，我都不喜欢待在那里。
东北的冬天太冷了，我都不喜欢待在那里。
东北的冬天太冷了，我都不喜欢待在那里。
东北的冬天太冷了，我都不喜欢待在那里。
I first came to England when my father passed away. In Singapore we had a business as a tailor's shop but when my father passed away, my brother and I sold it. Then I worked in a solicitor's office, helping my brother who was a chief clerk. After a while, I got fed up and said, "I'd like to go to sea and see the world." It was just at the beginning of the war and I was twenty-six years old. From 11th November 1939 I signed on as a steward on a Shell petrol tanker and came to England.

I arrived in London on Christmas Eve, and I had never known such cold weather. We did not have nearly enough clothes. We were shivering coming ashore. They took us to a boarding house. There were lots of seamen's hotels for Chinese in London; one in Pennyfields and one in West India Dock Gate. I remember, but they have all gone now. We had a meal and we stayed there in Pennyfields. There used to be a Chinese restaurant nearby, and Shell had a contract with them for seamen's meals. Every day we ate there twice, in the morning and afternoon. Even if there were no ships, you had to report in, in case you were needed. We had signed on for three years and the agreement was that I would be repatriated to Singapore. When I left, my little boy was two years old and a girl was just born. I brought summer clothes and winter clothes; just one suitcase.

On 3rd January, I joined an oil tanker in Southampton. We sailed to Trinidad and then back to Liverpool where we were paid off as the ship went into dry dock. I stayed in Liverpool for a while and they put me in charge of translation for Chinese seamen. I was doing the paperwork for 4,000 Chinese seamen. When any ship came in and they required sailors for the engine room or catering department, I had to organise the men for them. In the seamen's rooms, I knew where the sailors were staying, so I'd go to their boarding houses and tell them to report to the office and see the doctor. If they were not considered fit enough, I'd find someone else. I travelled a lot at that time, taking the whole crew sometimes, as they couldn't speak a word of English. Shell paid all the expenses.

Up to 1944, Shell had paid half my wages, and sent half to Singapore. But then my wife and two children passed away during a Japanese bombing raid on Singapore. After the war, most of the Chinese seamen returned home, but I did not. Singapore is a British colony and I was a British subject. I brought by birth certificate with me. The other sailors were not from Singapore, but from China and they had to be repatriated.

I found a new wife in Liverpool and was married at St. Anne's Church on 24th June, 1944. After I got married again, I was in touch with my family in Singapore, but at the end of 1943 we lost touch. I lost their address and they apparently stopped writing to me. Up to that point, my brother had written once a month asking how I was keeping. One day I found the explanation. My second wife had feared that, as they had suffered from the bombing, my family in Singapore must keep asking for money, so she tore up their letters without letting me know. For the next thirty-eight years I had no contact with my family. Later I found out that my brother had been searching for me and my niece had come to England and could not find me. They thought maybe I had been killed in the bombing.
姓名: 江亚佳

英文名: KUNG AH KHAI

出生年月: 9219

照片:

入司: 1929年

在多伦多任职 lúc: 1929年

在多伦多任职期间，因工作需要，他于1929年被派往多伦多，在那里担任多伦多分公司经理。在多伦多期间，他主要从事多伦多分公司的工作。在多伦多期间，他积极参与多伦多分公司的工作，为多伦多分公司的发展做出了贡献。
在利華再焉之后，我时要写信给我在新加坡之哥哥和姐姐通信，但他们在英国，伦敦波斯顿，哈佛大学学习，他们要我寄信给新加坡波斯顿之信报。因他听从我的要求，问我邮钱！我每天要邮四封信报，因此，他们寄给我一个信封，寄信报我，但我不写信！他们都以为我可以用邮寄报被炸死了呢。

在一次比赛中，我便退休离开在利华石油公司，我用了一间餐馆，一天，卫生人员来检查我的餐馆，他们告诉我要我必须把餐馆重新油漆。但我告诉他我没有时间，但我坐下来，他们就去看油漆使不再被检查。我认识一个海盗，他知道我来，我告诉他，他帮我重新油漆，他帮我解决我的问题。他在我离开后有一个星期是我认识的兄弟，他帮我很久，但我找不到你，你帮不了我呢！你是勇敢又智慧的人！

他对我说：
「你认为我这个地方还行吗？」

「我当然认为，这是我的好地方。」我答他。

他说：
「他想知道现在怎样，我们已经很久没有我姑父了。」他说立刻打电报给我！我姑父和姑父之丈夫，他们都在伦敦住。我姑父之丈夫是一位医生，他们有四个孩子，一个七岁，一个九岁，一个十岁，我在东京回来见我。我很想见她。
「我想见你，我想见你。」

「我不想见你，我见不到她。」她告诉我，她要回新加坡，我的哥哥告诉我，新加坡在三十年后，我再见到我的姐姐。

「我们要在这里住吗？」
「我们不能来新加坡吧？我们不能来新加坡吧？我们不能来新加坡吧？」

我在新加坡住了很久，和我的姐姐们同乡，新加坡，你回来了，通知我，我的姐姐

This is how we resumed contact. After I had worked for Shell for 35 years, I retired and took over a restaurant to occupy my time. I had been working in the kitchens of the London Shell Centre, often cooking Chinese food for the directors there. The Sanitary Inspector came to my restaurant and said I had to repaint everything. I said I couldn’t do all this by myself, cooking as well, but he said I must or he would not renew my licence. A seaman I knew said he would get someone to come and paint it. One of the men he sent along was my sister’s husband’s brother. He had been asking everywhere but he could not find me. At last he said, “Do you know this name?” I said, “Yes, it’s my sister.” He said, “She wants to know how you are”, and went quickly to phone my niece and her husband, who were living here in London with their two children. My niece came straightaway to see me, and together we telephoned her mother, my sister, and I was in touch with her again after so long. She wanted me to go out to Singapore with her daughter who was going soon. She said, “We looked everywhere for you, but we could not find you. Are you coming out to Singapore?” I did not go then and shortly afterwards I heard from my niece that my sister had passed away and would have liked to see me.
最难是，便可惜她不能与我再执手一面。

我的妈妈问我：
「你将来要改变主意吗？请旧东家带我们一走吧。
最后，在一大热天，我决定跟妈妈、姐姐和家人。
去了新加坡之后也继续来这里工作，找到了
我的姑娘。到了新加坡慢慢觉得一切都改变了。
我就像一个白人一样，生活的事情也变了，走路也变
了，住处也改了。我很容易一家人叫我在他们的
家里住，但那时我觉得我很怀念从前的环境。
在新加坡，好像被85° C的天气，就像在家。

回来当年，我老到什么地方找工
工，然后休息，用了这钱来买些东西，就是现在
得以前也在来的事，不是那么一样。

大战前，我们很轻松，现在却要工作一整年才能赚到
到一个便士。现在更是一年，然后在大热天工作，便要带上

雨伞。每天中午买饭自己吃，吃点西餐，但有时
要吃中餐，因为有有些同事及主管等高级职员不肯吃中餐
的地方。我喜欢吃中餐，让我的同事工作，他们便
要陪我吃。

我的朋友大多数是在餐馆工作之厨师。我常常
回老家杭州三次，一次是春节，一次是
十一月。在英国没有中国新年，也两次，在英国没有中国新年，
也回老家。回来时有中国新年时，我去参加大
排，有时会，有时会到别人做菜，那就有点排队。
大排不仅是中国传统的，也有人喜欢
去。

我在这里的生活也很好，我的太太和我都是
遇到，我过去的面貌，是也！
At last, in 1977, I made up my mind to go over and see the family. It had all changed. It was just like being a stranger. All the houses where I had been before as a child had all changed. It was all new flats, new roads and even new names. They did ask me to stay, but I have been here in Britain such a long time that I cannot stand the heat. I am happy to live here, and she looks after me very well. I met my wife in the restaurant in 1976 and we were married in 1977.

In old Chinatown most English and Chinese people know me very well, because I have watched them grow up. When they see me on the street they say hello. They call me Jimmy. Other Chinese people of my age don't mix with English people. My own generation, I even know about six or seven people now. A lot of them have passed away. When I came to London there were many more, but some of them went back and some passed away.

We have got a Chinese club now where the old people are always invited to go for Chinese New Year or any big Chinese occasions to have tea and cakes and a big dinner. And this year they have started carrying the dragon through the streets in old Chinatown. If the younger people ask me about the old customs I will talk about it.

Now I don't work any more, as I like to go out. I have my free bus pass and I like to look around everywhere. I like to travel, see the shops and so on. My best time is June, July and August. I go out, come back to eat and then go out again. If they are busy in the cafe, I sometimes help them out. They have been good friends to me in the past.

I still see my niece and nephew; they often come to see me. Their generation, when they come to London to work, they like to go home after one or two years to see their family. When they come to England and their children are born here, they speak both languages. In school they are taught English and at home they talk Chinese. That is very important and how it should be. They are learning Mandarin in a Chinese class too, so they know their own culture.
My grandmother was the manager for the white people's guest house. I lived with her from when I was eight. The lodgers at the guest house used to take me to school and bring me back. I was the only child there. Then, at a certain age, my grandmother resigned and went home. I got married and I started a business. I opened and ran a bar and grocery while my husband was working on the estate.

The estate was a huge place, a massive place where all the rum and the sugar is being made. We lived in the small town which served the estate. People came from different parishes all over Jamaica to work there, and they were my customers, especially on Friday nights.

When the owner of the estate died, it passed on to his two sons. One had a brain like a calabash cup and he couldn't manage, so he had to get a book-keeper for this, a manager for that, and he goes away all the time, all over the place on holidays. So the management, these great men with plenty of education, were grabbing everything. Everything just melts out, and the business just run down like that. Everybody stop working, say a hundred people not working this month, and within another month they are laying off a couple of hundred more. The tractor department, where my husband worked, closed down as well.

He thought, "Well, I can work with heavy machinery. I can get work in England with heavy machinery." He was a good mechanic. He could scrap down a tractor in pieces. I've seen him. I've stayed all night with him, see him scrap it and put it up on the ground there without any book, because he couldn't read the book, and that's how he was. But when he came over here, he had to go to a factory and work for £8, which was not even enough to buy food.

I couldn't convince him not to come. I didn't want to come at all. I had my feet on the ground. But my mother called me down and say "You have to go. You have to make sacrifices, sell the business, and go over to join him." In those days, you obey your parents, don't mind how old you are. My dear blood nearly come out of my eye. It's only blood that didn't come out of my eye.

When I came, he was very sad he didn't have a proper house to put me into. The landlady had said we couldn't walk through the front door, we had to go through the back, and no-one could visit there. He bought a right big basin, and said, "It's in here you have to wash, cos they are not going to let you use the bathroom." I wanted so badly to go home, but my mother said, "Stay where you are. You're not coming home. That's where you belong." So I carry on from there. I just pick myself up and carry on.

The first job I find was sixteen miles out of Leeds where we were living. I am not afraid of talking to anybody, so I just say to the bus conductor, "Where are you going? What kind of jobs are going there?" He tell me there's a steel factory near the airport, so I just whip on. When I got to this factory, the manager came and tell him I want to earn. I tell him I have no references, never worked in a factory before, but I will take any job he's got. "Suppose I give you a try", he said, "what time could you start?" I said, "Now. I've got an apron in my bag, another pair of shoes and sandwiches. I came with the intention of working." He couldn't believe it. So I started.

The next day he called over a woman. He said to me, "This is Marion. She's understanding, she's one of the best. You don't have to go to college to be an intelligent woman and she is. Sit with her and eat with her." And if you go to my room now, you see Marion's daughter's photo and all the family. And I move with that family on and on. I've been to Scarborough for weekends with them; all over with them. After she left the factory, she came to visit me every Saturday. When I eventually got my house, she showed me where all the wholesale places were, so I can get curtains and china and bedding.

There was a time when I took a job at the hospital. It was not a set job. Anywhere they had a bank-up of muck, they sent me there. I was so fed up. I had to stop. I couldn't take any more. Then Marion says to me, "You don't have to look for any jobs. I'll take you somewhere." She takes me to the Town Hall and I register for four children. I am interested in small children. They sleep with me Monday to Friday, and go home Friday evening to Sunday evening. Also I took two students as lodgers. I went to America, taking two children to their mother. The second time I went out there, I wanted to stay, but my husband wrote to me saying, "No dice. I am not coming to America. I told you before you leave. And I am not allowing Jane to come either." Jane is my daughter and she had joined us in England when she was twelve, and she also wrote to me in America saying "Please come back Mum." And when I got their letters I had to come back.

We got on all right, my husband and me. We used to go to a show or go to the pictures. We didn't have a car, but we'd take the bus and we'd just tour, stopping to have a meal somewhere. He is dead now, and I am living near my daughter in London.
I was brought up in Guyana with my mother and grandmother. My mother had to go to work. My grandmother looked after me. My grandmother was a good cook — she could take nothing and make something out of it.

My favourite meal was metagee. The main vegetables, you put plantains, cassava, sweet potatoes — you have to be careful to add the potatoes when it is nearly finished. You put the plantains at the bottom. Then you grate coconut and squeeze the milk through a linen cloth over the vegetables. When the plantains at the bottom begin to burn you mix your duff and add it. If you have it, you can put dried fish or meat in to steam. Oh, we children used to fight for the bottom of the pot!

Evening — dusk used to be the best, the favourite time — after you had dinner. In New Amsterdam all the houses were built on stilts. We had a little porch and we had a gallery. My grandmother used to sing with us “Jesus bids us shine” and “Lead kindly light”. We had one of those old gramophones. We used to sing, with the beatles chuchuing in the background and the people next door — children screaming, dogs barking or somebody swearing at somebody.

And in the mornings, early mornings, cocks crowing, freshness at 5 o’clock in the morning, cocks crowing, hens clucking — in the yard we had pigeon peas, ochres, boulangue mangoes, star-apples, custard apples, sapodilla — and papaya. We used every bit of the papaya — the green leaf, we used to wrap a papaya leaf around meat to soften it. I tell you, you wrap a papaya leaf round your leg and in ten minutes it start to decay — the leaf has that strength. I didn’t believe it. I tried it on once and you see it straight away. Many plants have strong powers.

My grandmother died 34 years ago. Where we lived, in New Amsterdam, there were lots of Americans and Canadians, the big companies. It was a small place but so many churches! Sunday morning when the bells start ringing you can hear them from one end of town to another. You don’t hear that now. Then there would be such activity you would rush to church.

It was an advantage being brought up in Guyana as far as living in England was concerned. There was some common ground because Guyana was a British colony and some of the old habits die hard. We used to have to learn a lot about Britain in school: British history, geography, etc. So when I went to Manchester I did not feel a stranger. There were a few who were very suspicious, but after they got to know you, they accepted you.

I began to feel different after I came down to London. It was then I started feeling this way. I don’t know the cause. Sometimes I really feel as if I don’t belong here any more. I came to Britain because I wanted to see a new country, get some experience, restart life all over again. Other countries didn’t attract me. No, I could contribute here because it was a British country and I was British. I still am.

I’ve been back to Guyana four times in twenty-four years. If Guyana was the way it was when I left it in 1960, I would have gone back, you know, taken my time. But not now. Everything has deteriorated as I see it. It’s everything, everything, the running of the country, the problems, the economy; to me everything is gone. Many people there feel people like us are darned lucky to be out of it all, y’know, and that is true.

I like to mix — I like to know people. I wouldn’t like to stay only in my community. It’s no use being a multiracial person and just be in a ghetto. I would be most unhappy if it was my people alone. I have all sorts of friends.

So the dread I have has to do with separateness, and some of those geriatric wards. I’ve been there to see some old people. — They are there because they’ve got the age — they look so woebegone — and being a bachelor with no relatives — I can imagine myself like that — that’s why I worry.

You see this luncheon place? On the other side of the road is the real thing run by the government. Black people are not welcome. Even white people don’t go there. I have a friend who says she doesn’t go there. It’s too clichey and they gossip. When I think of these things I start to feel a lot of things. A lot of Caribbean people feel they are outsiders — but they have to come out of their shells more, become more like themselves. Some are tired of overcoming difficulties — tired of trying — tired of hanging on to hope. Well I try to keep my body as healthy as possible, and if it breaks down I hope to die.

I love Hyde Park on a lovely summer’s day. I usually sit under a tree because I like to be near the sun. I sit under a nice shady tree reading a book, watching the other people passing by or the kids y’know playing with a ball, people with their kids — because that is a pleasant sight. I walk all the way. It’s nice, especially if the day is sunny.
My father was from Barbados and my mother and her family are from Lodge Village in Guyana. My Grandfather came from India. My Grandfather was Indian. My family was all mixed as most Guyanese are, you hardly find a pure black. All mixtures Indian, Chinese, Portuguese, Cubans, blacks, they all mix.

We never knew any prejudice. We all lived side by side.

I grew up with Indians. They are very clean. They used to eat out of brass pans and drink water out of brass cups. They used to get the ashes from the fire and scrub these brass cups and pots. They used to get them very clean. We got along quite well. We got along so nice with Indian people. You never gave it a thought that they were Indian people and you were black. Of course a lot of me family are Indians.

In my time you had to pay for secondary education. My mother was the kind of person, she will educate the boys but not the girls. That was wrong. I had to come out of school and learn to sew. Parents would say that we girls have to learn to cook and sew, because we can then be dressmaker or something. I loved teaching. I wanted to be a teacher. So many women left school to do service and domestic work.

At home I done a bit of everything. My brother had a business that he started at home selling perfume, then when he open the business I went and worked for him. Not for long, because I don’t stay in one place for too long. I did most of the work with the customers in the shop.

Then I done a bit of domestic work and after that the last place that I worked was with me brother and that was before I come here. During the War I was with the A.T.S. for eight years in the food section as an orderly there. Oh I done some shorthand and typing.

I came here 21st October 1961.

Finding somewhere to live was very hard. When you see the little mice running all over the little room.

Back home everybody got their own house, so when I heard about a flat, I thought it would have so many rooms. So when I come here and find a husband and wife and children in this one room and you call this a flat, I was disappointed.

I had that experience of living in one room and that room was like a box 8ft x 6ft. I had to do everything in that room. I fell off the bed more times than I can care to remember. I remember cooking a meal one day in that same room and I put the meal on a table and the whole table collapsed. I cried.

The picture I had of England in my mind’s eye when I left my home in Georgetown in Guyana. I was so disappointed I couldn’t believe. I said to myself is this the place they call England? I was disappointed.

When some people came here and saw the conditions they went crazy. I know a lot of educated people I saw on the buses, because they couldn’t get into the Civil Service. I saw fella I knew from back home. He was a guard on the train, educated man, Junior and Senior Cambridge which is very high, and he was at the back of the train. His education was the same as here because all the papers and exams came from here, Cambridge.

When I came here and I notice this sort of prejudice, I couldn’t believe it because you never have time to notice things like that in your country.

It’s just here you know.

I then got a job with London Transport 14th December 1961. I spent 20 years and 4 months with the Tube. I retired two years ago. I didn’t come to this place to stay that long anyway. I have no regrets mind you, because I have learnt so much with the every-day people who come through your barrier. You talk to them and I tell you something. A white person would come through and talk to you, a black collector, more than they would talk to a white one, because the black man is always listening. He has always got a listening ear. He would listen to somebody’s troubles. I am a good listener. But white people don’t bother me, I don’t feel uncomfortable with them.

Guyana is different now. I went home 11 years ago and it’s not the British Guyana I used to know. I mean all the beauty has gone out of it.

I planned to go home after retirement a few years ago. I kept ringing up me family and they say “You better stay where you are, the conditions here are terrible”. Now you know if you have got a British Passport you got to have a visa to go home. You can’t go home without it to Guyana now.

England is not a home for us, it’s a different sort of thing here anyway, because here if you want to go and see somebody, probably they are at work. And even if that person wasn’t at work, they are not working, you have to get on the phone and ring them and tell them that you are coming. Back home it’s not like that, you jump on a bike, we ride a lot of bikes back home. You can always go to this person’s house, here you’ve got to plan make appointment and things like that.

What I miss most from my youth in Guyana is the way of life. I miss the freedom. I knew a lot of people back home, nice people you know, when you want something done you just up there and tell them so, so, so.

Why I stay here? Well you saw more opportunity here. I can be a woman here. I can get a house. I can save money. The conditions were financially different to home. Well this country, there is more work for you.

Also I had two daughters back home. One of them marry an English man there and they came to live in England and the younger one she got married to a Guyana boy and they also came over here. So the kids are here, so I am stuck.
During the war, I worked back home in Jamaica for the Red Cross and the A.T.S. Many people came to Jamaica as refugees during the war. Jamaica is just a little hill, and ships came and hid underneath you know, and we workers had to go on the ships during the night and take off the wounded and sometimes the dead.

When I was younger, I regretted coming here because the life I was living home I could not live here, but I am a woman that trusts in God and I fight my way out from when I came in 1966 up to now. I am all right now, thank God. I have nothing, but I am happy because I feel peace within myself.

What I see here and I can’t come to it is this. Back home, a grandmother looked after the grandchildren and lived in the house. So then, if the grandmother took sick, the family is there to look after her. We don’t have to send our grandmothers to homes. Grandchildren grow up to respect the grandmother, and anything that happens, those children are there to help. You see they support one another. This is still going on in Jamaica in the country, but not in the city. In the villages, say twelve or fourteen houses, everyone combines together, you are a family. If I need and you can help me, that’s how we work it. We help one another. Grandmother plays a vital role as protector of that family. Grandfathers have their own role to play too, but grandmother, she is the greatest.

There is nothing like that here in England. I think they should not build all these old people’s homes. Give the people a home that all the family can live together and die together. How nice it is for an old person in her bed with her grandchildren around her, and she die in peace with her grandchildren around her.

After the war, we were invited into this country by the Government. Enoch Powell was one of them that sanctioned for the West Indians to come to help clean up this country after the war. Well, I was at home in Jamaica doing nothing at the time, so I decided to come, expecting a decent job and to be treated as an equal. That’s what I believed, but when I came here and see the picture, it was a different, different thing altogether. What do I get? I go to Mile End Hospital and get a job there, and I was placed on the corridor with a bucket, a scrubbing brush and a mat to kneel on. I never do that type of work in all my life. I cried night and I cried day. Coming into this country was the hardest work I have ever done.

I remember when I went to Mile End Hospital, a little old woman, a nice little woman, she take me, she look at my hand, and she couldn’t understand. She said, “How is it that the middle of your hand is white and your skin is black?” She feels my hair and I just sit and let her do that, and I said to myself, “poor thing”. I would not say that she was ignorant. When you don’t know a thing, you just don’t know, because they never learn anything in school about black people. Of course I knew about white people because I have them in my country, trying to get all that was in that country to bring it into this country.
In Jamaica and in any other country where the white people are, we live together. There weren’t colour question there. There were people that were in classes according to their financial standard, rich black person, rich white person or whatever, not colour. A person was just a person, in spite of what colour they are. And now, when we come here, we thought it would be the same. But that is where the barrier comes in. It’s not us, because we let them in, but they won’t let us in.

What could bring a change? Not a thing, not a thing as I see it. We have tried everything. Not a thing. They would have to open up. Then there would be a solution. What would make them open up? Well we don’t know. We try conversation, offering a hand, it don’t work, Conscience? We try all sort of different things. Imagine the days we go to the home, and they are there but they don’t open the doors because they see your black face.

We are the ones who try, since we are used to that way of living there. We didn’t want to form any barriers between them and us so we try to get in as much as we can, but they give a smile here and they thinking something else there, so we couldn’t get in.

Minister came to us. We were going to sing one day at a special service and our song was not called. The people was so much waiting for this song and at the end of the service, people came to us and said, “Why you didn’t sing?” , and we say until thence we don’t know, because it was in the programme. So we find out from the Minister and he said our kind of music does not fit in so we couldn’t get to sing. And from thence and on the groups of us that used to sing, that’s finished. So we can’t sing there, we have to sing on our balcony.

Do we care? No, we say “you stop us from singing there, we sing somewhere else” — but yes, we still care. There is something, because we feel that because we are a person we shouldn’t be treated in that way, and it does leave a feeling there and though we say, “Well, don’t bother me. I don’t mind about them.” But there is still a something that’s left there.
In the West Indies I would say they love dominoes and cricket. I don't know how it started. I used to make the dominoes as a sport. I used wire, cut the wood, heat up the wire and make the holes in the wood. Nobody taught me to play the game. I just stand up and watch and learn. Over here you don't slam the dominoes that much, because not everybody likes the noise that it makes. In the West Indies when you play you knock it loud. When you make noise, that's the way you get the sweetness of the game. When you play the game quiet it's not the same. You have to concentrate on the game because when you play you don't like to lose. You watch what your partner play, you get to know what he has. You play what he play and he play what you play. So you have to really concentrate on the game. This is a beautiful game. People come and sit and watch.