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All JETs in Hyogo are encouraged to send in articles, musings, photos, poetry, prose, and any ideas to improve the Hyogo Times for the betterment of the Hyogo JET community. Submit by the 15th of each month to hyogotimespublications@gmail.com

Ah, the rainy season. Fortunately, Starbucks is this year presenting us with a baked cheesecake frappuccino, which sounds intriguing and with the potential to be incredible. Keep those waterproof accoutrements around you yet (for frappuccinos spillages, and the rain, I guess)!

My first June in Japan, I jetted off back to Portland for a torrential downpour of important family events. These included my brother's high school graduation, my grandparents' 55th wedding anniversary, and my aunt's 50th birthday (this year she'll be celebrating in style— right here in Kansai! Those of you on the 1pm Nada Sake Tour will be graced with her presence). Between these, trying to visit all of my friends, and an impromptu visit to New York with my father, I was stretched rather thin and had little downtime, or the chance to spend quality time with my mother. Nevertheless, it was a great whirlwind of a trip and helped me avoid the slow pace of June at my school.

Got downtime? We have articles you can read! On offer this month are musings on the [arbitrariness](#) of most educational systems, [Captain America: Civil War](#), a [Final Fantasy](#) concert, [Busan](#), and yet another on [Taipei](#) (seriously; there's so much to do and eat there!). Mandy brings us [book series](#) recommendations, a poem entitled "[away](#)" and a recipe on [tomato rice](#). In the refuge is a sweet tale featuring [Mount Rokko](#). Our alumni this month is [Christine Chase](#).

As we head into the final months of this contract year (and for some of us, our final months of JET), make sure you get out and do what's left on your list. Make the most of this experience! At the same time, don't forget the necessities. Like a car needs oil changes, new tires, and to not overheat, we need breaks (even from the fun!), boxes shipped off for those leaving, and to not overheat (the muggy heat is nigh upon us). Take care of yourselves out there!

Brittany Teodorski

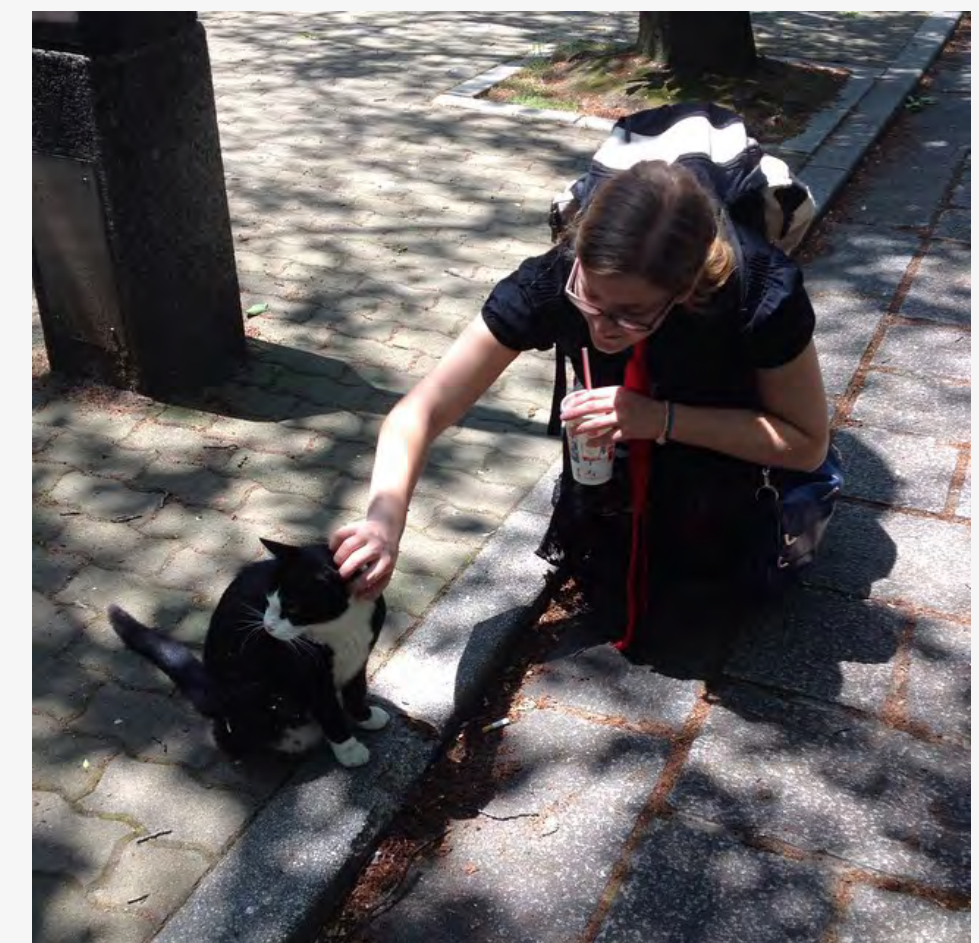


Photo courtesy of Ryan Hertel.

STOP DROP AND ROLL!!!!
ERRRMAGGEERHD!!!!

Now that your attention has been grabbed, prepare to be saturated with the torrential deluge of information that is like being caught in the torrential deluge of rain during “Tsuyu– the rainy season” soaking you right down to the bone, however in this case the rain would be “Information” and the soaking would be... um... DELUGE!!! Kworr!!! Splosh!!! Slash!!!

As ever so briefly mentioned, June is June (yes, really it is) and is at the heart of rainy season which is Japan-wide... with the sole exception of Hokkaido. To flaunt this fact, Sapporo in Hokkaido hosts The Yosakoi Soran Festival! This festival celebrates the arrival of summer with Japan’s favorite modern dance– yosakoi. It is a huge dance-a-thon with hundreds of dance troops descending on the streets to dance and in some cases sing their way into your hearts. It is estimated over a million spectators take in the revelry and the event is considered the number one dance/competition/festival in Japan. So my advice? Get to the chopper!!! Go and see it!!! Giddy up!

Sapporo a little too far to travel? How about Kyoto you filthy boat-hugs!!! If you like traditional Japanese performance style events, then Kyoto, with its culture rich environment is the perfect place in June to catch Noh performances!!! You don’t know Noh? To use someone else’s words that are not my own, “Noh (能) is a form of theater involving music, dance and drama, originating in the 14th century. It was developed together with kyogen, which are comical pieces performed during interludes of the

main noh performance.” (end copyright infraction) So now you know Noh, and for more information visit [this website](#).

On another note, my sources have also revealed to me that June is the time of the phallus matsuri!!! Yes!! DONTSUKU MATSURI– a festival where young women ride around town, a-whoopin’ and a-hollering while riding on a giant, wood-carved (eh-hehehe.... wood...) phallus! Well, my details are a little sketchy, but it certainly seems like an interesting festival nevertheless, with various wood carvings, dango and other food all shaped like... well, Richards I guess. Shizuoka is the proud host of this matsuri, with the purpose being to pray for good marital relations and fortuitous fortune and fertility among couples and their decedents.

Basically, what I am trying to do is encourage and enable you my fellow Hyogoan JETs! The month of June has secret treasures waiting to be discovered! From the wonderful to the weird, they are there! Be sure to keep an eye on the Hyogo AJET web page/ FB group for locally organized or HAJET endorsed events and activities and as always, feel free to contact one of your friendly HAJET reps if you need some advice or assistance with anything that boggles you. Also feel free to check out [this website](#) for more information.



This has been the wonderful me, reporting in for June... ENJOY!!!

Chris Goodman

I’m a big fan of meals that are simple, delish, and can be thrown together quickly, so when my friend showed me a video for this simple dish, I thought: why not, let’s give it a crack. This recipe uses ingredients that you probably already have on your cooking counter and will add some flavor to your bowl of rice accompanying your usual choice of protein.



Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 Cups White Rice (you can try brown or mixed rice for a variation)
- Water
- 2 tsp Olive Oil (you can use fancy flavored ones as well ;>)
- ¾ tsp Salt
- ¼ tsp Pepper
- 1 Large Tomato
- Your choice of protein or topping cooked as

desired. I like avocado!

Instructions:

1. Add **rice** to your rice cooker pot and wash as usual.
2. Fill **water** to the proper line as indicated on the pot. For drier rice, subtract 6 Tbsp of **water** from the pot (to account for the liquid in the tomato).
3. Mix in the **salt, pepper, and olive oil**. Swish to combine.
4. Wash the **tomato** and cut off the stem and butt part. Place in the middle of the rice, butt side up.



5. Put the pot in the rice cooker. Close the rice cooker lid and set to cook normally
6. When the rice cooker has indicated that it is finished cooking, use the rice cooker paddle to mix the rice together.
7. Serve with desired **topping/protein**.

Stay cool as summer rolls in!

mandy

Education is arbitrary: what we learn is arbitrary; how we learn is arbitrary; whether we learn is arbitrary. This was something I suspected as a student and have had fully confirmed for me while on the other side of the chalk board.



Photo courtesy of Mandy Wongl.

To put forward a very obvious example, there's the seating plan. Quite naturally, I start the lesson at the front of the room¹ and I like to wend my way around during the hour, checking the students are learning correctly and check out who has the coolest clear file. Of course, this means the students nearer the front are more likely to get my help because I'll encounter them first.

Students at the back also get their worksheets last and are always called to collect the sheets and hand them in, meaning they have to stop writing first and thus, if the activity has a time-limit, they get less of a chance to finish the sheet. I attempted to counteract this slightly by

handing out sheets face down and only telling people to start when everyone's got a sheet but this doesn't really help— they just turn it over and start anyway. I could try handing out the files to students individually myself instead of passing them back along the lines, but my arms are short and I'm not good at holding lots of paper simultaneously. Sheet-valanches tend to happen. And then I'm in deep sheet. (Sorry.)

And, of course, students at the front get the best stickers. They get Snoopy and Pikachu and Elsa and the multi-coloured four leaf clover; the kids at the back have to make do with Woodstock², Rattata, Hans and that horrid pure blue clover³. They have it rough man. I'm surprised they even bother to show up.



Photo courtesy of Ludie Cochrane via flickr commons.

The most unkindest cut of all however must be the homework. I'm tasked with going around the class and checking who's done their homework and who hasn't, but of course I have to start somewhere. The cannier students at the opposite end of the class get precious extra minutes to jot down those final few answers or just put a random mark next to a multiple choice question.

I know this is happening, but there's nothing I can do unless I actually see them writing. It's like we're playing Granny's Footsteps— I can only impede that which I actually see moving.

I don't really know what I can do to correct even these rather overt arbitrarities (there are a million more subtle ones to be found in the classroom). I could move counter-intuitively, make a bee-line for the back of the classroom without checking anyone's work and then start my rounds but then I waste time when I could be helping and as a result fewer people receive the benefit of my wisdom. Is that a good pay off?

I'm almost tempted to suggest instituting a Mad Hatter Policy where after every grammar point the students switch places but Depp's tainted anything to do with Wonderland. And I've never found a top hat which fits my enormous head. Other solutions which I consider during my downtime is to clone myself, learn to teleport, use ravens to scry on the students when I'm not looking or ask the teacher to check half the class' homework. But then I think I'm just being ridiculous.



This article doesn't have a conclusion— how can it? These are problems without answers; education is a game of solitaire— it's better than nothing but not by much, no one really gets the rules or enjoys it and you inevitably have to cheat to make progress— everyone knows this. Everyone's known it for centuries and I don't magically have the solution to a human-history-spanning problem. You're asking far too much of me: I'm just a classroom assistant. One with a large head, stubby arms and who can only attack the people stupid enough to move in front of him...come to think of it, I'm kind of like a T-Rex.



Rory Kelly

1 I say "quite naturally," but actually I guess one of the advantages of having an assistant is that they could feasibly start at a different position; I would try this except I think it would make it look to the students like the teacher and I had had a fight and weren't talking at the moment.

2 *Shudder*

3 *Shudder shudder*

My love for Uematsu Nobuo goes back many, many years. I was first introduced to the *Final Fantasy* series when I was a wee 3rd grader. A friend told me about FFXII and we role-played on the playground for a while before I was able to convince my dad to buy me the computer version (I wasn't fancy enough for a PlayStation by that point). Over time, I delved into many of the other entries and spin-offs (the one I was most excited for pre-release and which my father was most skeptical of was *Kingdom Hearts*) and while I've enjoyed the characters and the plots to different degrees, I've loved the music— especially that composed by Uematsu Nobuo— across it all. I don't recall the first time I heard of the Distant Worlds concert series, but I knew I wanted to go the first opportunity I got. Naturally, this meant that it finally came round to Portland while I was here.



Last year, I was able to go to the Bra☆Bra concert in Osaka, which was a gigantic relief after failing to get Distant Worlds tickets. Everyone was given a pamphlet detailing the tour, short bios about Uematsu (who served as the MC), the Siena Wind

Orchestra, and the conductor, Kurita Hirofumi, available goods, and most importantly, the setlist (or プログラム), along with a million flyers and a plastic tambourine. The first selection was a battle medley, which was the same this year. This is potentially confusing if you're unaware it's a medley. Having forgotten, and lacking a pamphlet this year, hearing songs I definitely knew were not from the same game was disorienting at first (though enjoyable nonetheless). In the last quarter of the concert, there were several smaller groups who played. Perhaps my favorite among these was the saxophone quartet who played a more soul-inspired version of FFX's *To Zanarkand*, especially as I used to play half of their instruments once upon a time. I was also caught unawares by the orchestra inviting up anyone with an instrument to play *Mambo de Chocobo* following their encore.

This year followed a similar format to last's. Uematsu was once again the MC along with Yamashita Mami, and both were wonderful. Kurita was as animated a conductor as I'd remembered. Fortunately, I was able to borrow a friend's flute, and roped another friend into bringing her violin so we could participate. We both fussed about the timing and when we should go up, but it all turned out marvelously.



The concert is highly interactive, and Uematsu enters the stage at the beginning, calling on people to shout certain phrases. One of my favorite parts was when we were instructed in the ways of clapping/stomping along with a piece. The final rhythm is a little tricky, so everyone was laughing at their screw-ups. The instructor is also extremely animated when cueing the audience to join in. Following the recorder song (I am still in shock that they can sound so not terrible, though I suppose if anyone can, it's the professionals), those who have brought their own (along with the music, downloadable on the website) can join in (unsurprisingly, this was more ear-splitting). As was true last year, the final song (*Mambo de Chocobo*) is performed by both the Siena Wind Orchestra and any audience members who want to join them on stage. You can bring your own instrument, sing, or use one of the plastic ones provided. This year, a fellow Hyogo Times contributor and I joined in on the fun, and I highly recommend it. It was my first time playing in an ensemble in nearly seven years, so it was super 懐かしい。



To fully enjoy the experience, brush up on your FFXII and FFXIX soundtracks in particular. If you have a DS and *Theatrhythm* (especially *Curtain Call*), that's also a great way to interact with

(all) the music to pump yourself up. Also, if you have an instrument and decide to join the full ensemble and all the other musical fans, print out the sheet music for your part and bring a stand or some other means to hold the music. Or, you know, memorize it, depending on how dedicated you are.



You have several options for purchasing your tickets, as well as where you choose to experience the magic. As of the publishing date, there are still tickets available for the most local show: July 23rd at 神戸国際会館, which is smack dab in the middle of Sannomiya. You can check on the official [website](#) for other upcoming locations and purchasing methods. If you have even the slightest bit of fondness for Final Fantasy music, this is not an event to be missed!

Brittany Teodorski

For perhaps the first time since I moved to Japan, a movie I was interested in seeing was released here before America! To celebrate such a momentous occasion, a visiting friend and I saw *Civil War* in IMAX 3D. On its own, it was enjoyable, but I was pleased with our decision from the moment the Rogue One trailer started. I dunno about you guys, but I'm so hyped for that movie. The next time I saw it, a fellow Ono ALT and I split a (very reasonably priced) large half & half popcorn for the second time that weekend, having seen *Zootopia* the evening previous (which is a great movie; so-called children's media has been on-point lately). If you haven't seen *Civil War* yet, you should start with *Age of Ultron* (even though it's terrible), *Ant Man*, and, of course, *Winter Soldier*. Otherwise, you'll be confused by the presence of three characters and the absence of certain organizations. Also, there will be spoilers from here on out, so beware.

First: the positives. I felt most of the characters were sympathetic and had understandable motivations. Much of the action was character-driven, which is a welcome change from some of the recent MCU entries where characters would behave in unusual ways so the plot could progress. I (and many others if the whisperings on the internet are to be believed) found T'Challa, AKA Black Panther, to be a standout in regards to compelling characters. Witnessing first his father's death as a result of Zemo-masquerading-as-Bucky spurs him into seeking vengeance. At the film's climax, he sees how the lust for revenge-masquerading-as-justice has clouded

the judgment of so many other characters and turns away. His arc was compelling, and made all the better by my having first watched unaware he would be in the movie. Spiderman was another enjoyable character. He at last behaves like a teenager and there's finally a plausible origin story for his tricked-out suit. Additionally, both factions, those for and against the Sokovia Accords, had worthwhile points about the pros and cons of being subject to the UN's whims. Having lived through many of the hoops Japanese bureaucracy makes one jump through, I'm not sure that this is a plan I would support as-is.



Second: the pitfalls. While audiences are left to form their own opinions on the Sokovia Accords, much of this is because the movie becomes

horribly distracted from this premise. Plot threads are introduced and dropped nearly as quickly. This isn't to say the film is bad or unenjoyable, but it could've been great had the writers stuck to one over-arching plot instead of many. The debate over being at the UN's beck and call could easily have occupied the entire film. Instead, we're treated to a convoluted plan of a rather forgettable antagonist. Zemo (intentionally?) misleads the Avengers into thinking he wants to take over the world with five additional winter soldiers. This causes them to follow him all the way back to a defunct Hydra base in Siberia, where he then (cue dramatic music) SHOWS THEM A VIDEO OF BRAINWASHED BUCKY KILLING TONY'S PARENTS!!! What a twist! What, though, would he have done had Tony actually followed the Accords? There was very little to be gained without both Bucky and Tony there (and Steve, too, really; Tony would've straight-up murdered Bucky in the heat of the moment otherwise). This great, evil, diabolical plan hinged on many small details that could've easily gone awry. There were probably much easier ways to sow discord amongst the Avengers which weren't quite so susceptible to failure. Honestly, Zemo (and Bucky, for that matter) could easily have been written out of the script. A more streamlined approach would've been better for the characters, the plot, and the emotional punches they could pack. Illogical convolutedness is hardly compelling (and I enjoy many, many convoluted messes! JRPGs tend to be prime examples.).

As has tended to be the case, the MCU still has a problem with portraying diversity in meaningful ways without brutalizing their characters (if they even bother to include certain groups at all). A black man's death and his grieving mother are the

impetus for Tony to accept the Sokovia Accords. Another black man's death— and the king of an exoticized, imagined African nation at that— is Black Panther's primary motivation through much of the movie. Of the Avengers, the only one to suffer a serious injury is Rhodes, whose paralysis will likely take him off the team permanently, despite however much money Tony will throw toward his rehabilitation. Representation for women of color is even worse. The only major WOC characters I can think of off the top of my head come from the TV shows. And would it kill anyone to have even just one queer hero? I think not. Hogarth, her wife, and her mistress of *Jessica Jones* are a decent first step (and shows that sexuality has nothing to do with how much of an asshole you are; many forms of media shy away from this, usually opting to kill queer women instead), but I want more! And not just as minor characters!

Civil War does a great many things well, but also falls into the same traps plaguing the MCU as a whole. As a summer blockbuster, it gets the job of entertaining audiences done well. Hopefully, the next MCU entry will avoid handing out disparate plot threads to everyone who goes to watch it.

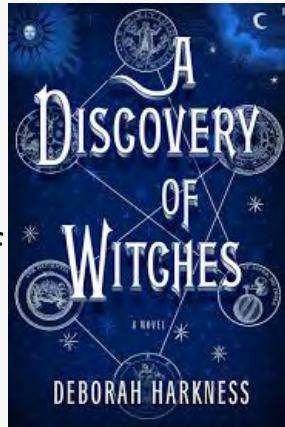
Brittany Teodorski



The All Souls Trilogy

A Discovery of Witches #1, Shadow of Night #2, The Tree of Life #3

by Deborah Harkness



*"It begins with absence and desire.
It begins with blood and fear.
It begins with a discovery of witches."*

For those interested in: universities, libraries, witches, vampires, daemons, foreign countries, time travel, historical figures, secret societies, mysteries, alchemy, intense relationships, love stories, mythical creatures, deep characters, architecture, houses with personality & olden day fashion

Walk through time with Diana Bishop as she tries to uncover the mysteries behind a strange alchemical book. These books sweep through the world in a whirlwind of characters and happenings, but those who like magic and love will hang on for the ride.



The Archived Series

The Archived #1, The Unbound #2, "Leave the Window Open" short story #2.5, #3 TBD

by Victoria Schwab

"The Archive means that the past is never gone. Never lost. Knowing that, it's freeing. It gave me

permission to always look forward. After all, we have our own Histories to write."

For those interested in: keys, doorways, secrets, memories, romance, eerie corridors, mysterious deaths, fight scenes, revolutions, & interactions with the dead

You must read these books. Victoria Schwab pulls you into the life of young Mackenzie, a keeper. You'll have to read it to find out what that means, but these books take you into a world that takes a while to come back from.

The Divergent Trilogy

Divergent #1, Insurgent #2, Allegiant #3
by Veronica Roth

"I have a theory that selflessness and bravery aren't all that different."

For those interested in: dystopias, intrigue, facing fears, love stories, idyllic communities, fighting, personality tests, choices, & jumping from trains and other high places

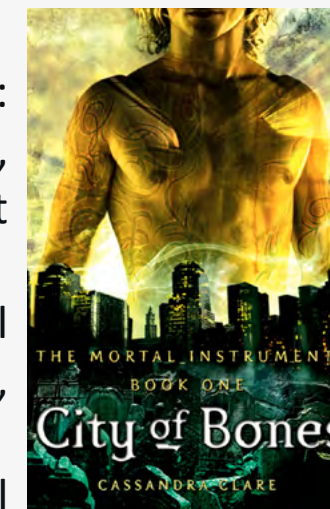


Step into a world where your community is defined by the ideals you value most. Is it selflessness, honesty, peace, intelligence, or bravery? These books take you on a dangerous adventure and along with the characters, looking inside how our choices define us and in turn, the world around us.

The Shadowhunter Chronicles

The Mortal Instruments Series: 'City of' Bones #1, Ashes #2, Glass #3, Fallen Angels #4, Lost Souls #5, Heavenly Fire #6
The Infernal Devices (prequel series): 'Clockwork' Angel #1, Prince #2, Princess #3

The Dark Artifices (sequel series): Lady Midnight #1, #2+ TBD
+ The Bane Chronicles & Tales from Shadowhunter Academy
by Cassandra Clare



"That's why when major badasses greet each other in movies, they don't say anything, they just nod. The nod means, 'I am a badass, and I recognize that you, too, are a badass,' but they don't say anything because they're Wolverine and Magneto and it would mess up their vibe to explain."

For those interested in: vampires, werewolves, warlocks, faeries, angels, demons, and all that jazz, family histories, true love, magical tattoos, weaponry, fight scenes, mysteries, nerds, awful band names, unique characters, inflexible laws, & laughing out loud

What happens alongside our normal seeming world? Find out in this multi series books beginning with Clary Fray in the streets of New York in The City of Bones. Expanding through time and a wide array of characters, these books will lead you into the world of Shadowhunters as it draws links between racism, sexism, morality, immortality, and love in the battles to keep the world safe.

The Raven Cycle

The Raven Boys #1, The Dream Thieves #2, Blue Lily, Lily Blue #3, The Raven King #4
by Maggie Stiefvater

"There are three kinds of secrets. One is the sort everyone knows about, the sort you need at least two people for. One to keep it. One to never know.

The second is a harder kind of secret: one you keep from yourself..."

And then there is the third kind of secret, the most hidden kind. A secret no one knows about. Perhaps it was known once, but was taken to the grave. Or maybe it is a useless mystery, arcane and lonely, unfound because no one ever looked for it."

For those interested in: legends, treasure hunting, curses, cars, the supernatural, forbidden love, smart alecks, & creative swearing

Refreshing writing style, unique characters, witty humor, ley lines, and a sleeping king that will grant a favor to the one who awakens him? Yes, please!

This series is exceptional and most certainly top tier as far as book series go.



Mandy Wong

Japan is perhaps one of the most intriguing travel destinations the world has to offer. However after living here for nearly two years I can safely say that once you've done the major tourist rounds and found your own handful of hidden gems, you begin to look across the water. As an Australian who is used to paying ridiculous amounts of cash just to leave the country, in the most basic sense coming to Japan and encountering the utter majesty that is Peach airlines sales was hands down one of the greatest moments my travel bug has ever experienced.



With discount airlines galore, the whole of Asia becomes your playground: heading to Seoul, Hong Kong or Taipei can be done for less than 20,000 yen round trip if you book in advance. Often these tickets can be booked for even cheaper if it's done during one of the numerous sales that happen every few months. In addition, each of the surrounding countries have cheap hostels, hotels and homestays on offer, meaning that you can do a very comfortable long weekend away for less than 50,000 yen. In particular, I recommend Meander Hostel in Ximen: cheap, clean and rooms for up to eight people right near the center of the city.

Of all the places that one can go on a budget weekend away, the one highest on my list of

recommendations is Taipei City. While travelling the whole of Taipei itself may take a little longer than three days, the city can easily be done in this time. The flight itself is around three hours, so if you take an afternoon's nenkyuu you can make the 4pm Peach flight and be in the city by 9pm which isn't bad considering that Taipei is literally a 24 hour city. Most shops don't close until at least 10pm, with some staying open as late as 12am and even then, Taipei's most famous attraction—the night markets—last the rest of the night. Like their Japanese neighbors, the Taiwanese are big on combini too, so you'll never go more than 500m before you see a Family Mart or 7/11 in your peripheral.

So what's there to do in Taipei? As mentioned above, the night markets are a must. They sell everything from tourist trinkets to heavenly street food to high fashion. They are also everywhere, like actually. Every district has a night market, the biggest being Shilin, so you never have to walk far to find one. For the most magical market experience, try the Juifen markets, tucked away in the coastal mountains; it should certainly be on your list. It's about an hour from the main city and stated to be the inspiration behind Hayao Miyazaki's classic *Spirited Away*. Once you see the red lanterns light up at nightfall, you will definitely understand why.

For themorehistorically inclined, there's the National Museum, Sunyatsen Memorial for the changing of the guards every hour



on the hour, the military museum and more art galleries than you can wave a stick at. Most are either free of charge or less than one thousand yen entry. For the most part, the locations can be found on any tourist map that can be found at the metro stations and tourist information desks around the city.



If you're looking for a more traditional experience, you can catch the gondola up to Maokong in the mountains. You feel like you're in the middle of the jungle but in reality you're less than an hour from the city center. It's a scenic wonderland full of street side restaurants and tea houses, especially nice for a relaxing afternoon away from the hectic ways of the main city.

And of course the main and perhaps most essential reason for visiting Taipei—the food. It is the stuff of legends, the flesh of the gods, the holy ambrosia among we mere mortals. ALL. OF. IT. Their hotpot is glorious, the street food magnificent (cheap too), the milk tea delightful and the spices to die for. A right cornucopia of flavours and styles to choose from: if you want it, Taipei has it. There was no food I did not like in Taipei; everything, and I mean everything, was

delicious, even the overpriced sandwich I bought at the airport on the way home.

So if you're looking for a decadent but affordable long weekend away, or a brief jetset over the summer holidays, then Taipei should definitely be on your list. I assure you, you won't be disappointed.

Raëlle Beaman



Check out our previous articles on Taiwan [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).

South Korea's second largest city, Busan, opened its port to the Western World back in 1876. Since then, it has expanded in a rather Western way (out instead of up, though they're making up for that with some of their department stores now). The city is much more relaxed than Seoul and makes for a nice extended weekend getaway.



Getting There and Around

While Peach does have one flight a day to Busan (and one returning), it is midday and therefore requires 年休 to make worthwhile. Should you have this luxury, this is what I suggest. Most of the Korean airline websites do not play well with non-IE internet browsers or foreign credit cards. My traveling companion and I had a hell of a time trying to purchase Jeju Air tickets. I cannot even tell you how many times we tried to buy the damn things (one time made Visa block my card due to suspected fraud), before it was seemingly approved. It took longer to be

completely confirmed than the pending limit on my account, but happily it went through anyway.

From the airport, you can take either the bus or the train into the rest of the city. Both are quite affordable (especially if you get the ₩5000 All-Day Metro Pass), but the bus is honestly terrible and the driver may kick you off before you get to your stop. Also, the train system and its staff are great. They'll even help you track down your passport which you've let go on a joyride! To aid their rescue efforts, try to take pictures very soon after you step off the train so you can narrow down which train you were riding.

Should you screw up as badly as I did, Air Busan will work as a backup return flight to Japan. You can buy tickets and get checked in at the same time (though if you manage to get the WiFi to cooperate, the online price is cheaper). This will deposit you into Fukuoka, where you can catch the 新幹線 at Hakata Station and ride the 2 hours to Shin-Kobe. Expensive, but when you have class the following morning and the Busan Airport closes at midnight, you gotta do what you gotta do.

Where to Stay

We stayed at this Airbnb spot, which was great and within walking distance of Haeundae Beach. There's a convenience store on the first floor of

the same building, as well as many restaurants both nearby and along the walk to the beach.

What to Do

The very first thing we did after arriving and eating was pick up some drinks from a convenience store and enjoy them on the beach. Until 3AM. We liked this so much that we returned the next evening to do it all again, including our timing.

Near Jeonpo Station is Dola 100% Chocolate, along with a bazillion other cafes and restaurants. There, we had a chocolate dinosaur egg filled with chocolate ice cream (and a baby dinosaur, of course) over かき氷 with cookie bits and chocolate chips. It was delicious and is easily split between three people. Two if you're ambitious.

The observatory at the Lotte Department Store was really cool. You can see a bridge that changes colors from one part of it! Somewhat nearby is BIFF Square, which houses a lot of street food. If you want to explore yet another gigantic department store, there is also Shinsegae. You can hit up the Busan Museum of Art while you're in the area too!

My favorite part of Busan was easily the



Gamcheon Culture Village. You can take a bus to avoid walking up the incline for fifteen minutes. Even though we KNOW we hate climbing up hills, we still opted for this. That's how awful the buses are. Once we arrived, we were quickly swept up by a volunteer tour guide who was very sweet and taught us way more about the area than we probably would have ever bothered to learn if left to our own devices. The buildings are beautiful and make for some incredible pictures.

Last Minute Points

- Littering, smoking, and setting off fireworks on the beach are prohibited and subject to fines. This stops no one after dark.
- Gwangalli is apparently a really nice bridge.
- Kimbap is essentially a giant sushi roll stuffed with a whole bunch of goodies (one we got had freaking tonkatsu in it!). If/when you come across it, eat it and love it.



Brittany Teodorski

Where and When

I was lucky to have been placed in Ono, about an hour away by bus from Sannomiya, in Kobe. I had originally planned on staying in JET for about 2 years, but almost immediately after arriving, I knew I wanted to stay for five! Ono is considered rural for sure, but over the years it has been growing steadily. I was there when the schools had air conditioning units installed, when the Saty department store turned into an AEON, and when an actual hotel was built nearby!



Favorite JET Memory

I got to live in the same apartment building as six other JETs, and in my earlier years we hung out together a lot, playing video games, going to karaoke, having dinner parties, and going out to restaurants. There's a particular yakiniku place in Ono called "Ikkyu," which was our go-to place for special occasions, especially when it was time to say goodbye to departing ALTs. It became a tradition when I was on JET, and of course when it was my time to leave Ono, that's where we went!



Most Valuable Lesson

As a full-time elementary school ALT (one of the very few at the time), my greatest lessons were learned on the job. I didn't have younger siblings or any experience with children, and when I applied to JET I wanted to be in high school because I felt like I would've been able to relate to them better. After five years of teaching children, I learned to exercise patience and discipline— sometimes having a homeroom teacher in the room didn't always mean the class would be well-behaved, so I would have to take charge and it wasn't always easy! I was surprised at the amount of praise my co-workers gave me on my lesson plans and execution. I thought they were just being kind, but after seeing how much my students enjoyed English class and how well they were learning, I realized that I had a talent for teaching. My experience with teaching language at a basic level has helped me after coming back to the US, as I am now teaching Japanese words to my two-year old niece using gestures and repetition.



Advice for Current JETs

Do more than you are asked to do, even if it seems unnecessary. Your effort is what's important, and there is always something to be learned even if you feel like you could have gotten by doing "just enough." At the very least, your co-workers and students will appreciate your work!

Regrets and Reflections

JET was one of the best experiences of my life, so I have no regrets! Teaching in Japan is a different experience for each person— some people love it and some people end up seeing it as a nightmare. It depends on the person and the working conditions. I loved it, so if there is anything I wish I could have done, it would be to continue teaching in Ono!



Present Day

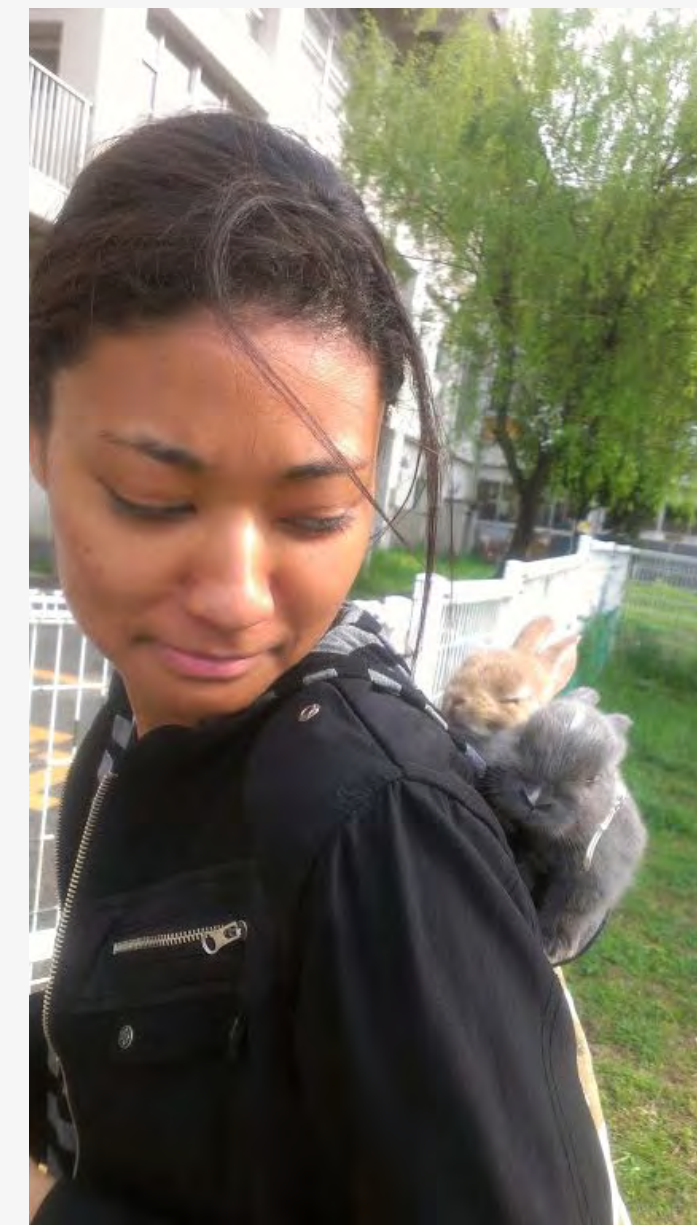
I'm currently taking a sabbatical from work— although I enjoyed teaching, it was very exhausting, and combined with living so far from the city, it didn't leave me much time to enjoy my hobbies and better explore my passion, which is

cosplay! I've been spending the past few months making costumes, attending conventions and taking mental notes about the cosplay community and the convention scene for a possible thesis. I will be applying for graduate school this fall, and hopefully attending school in Japan by the end of 2017. If that does not work out, I'd love to become a teacher in Japan again!

Where to Find Me

You can e-mail me at sooyong@gmail.com. I'm also in the Hyogo AJET group; although I'm not really active there, feel free to look me up and send a message if you have any questions!

Christine Chase



The first time the Englishman climbed Mt. Rokko, he was in a foul mood. The day had been hot— unbearably so— and now people he didn't even know and wasn't sure he liked were forcing him, via social pressure, to climb a mountain. He hadn't spoken to anyone on the way up, partly to save his breath but also to tacitly show his disdain for all around him.

That disdain evaporated once at the top. It lifted out of him and dissipated into the sky like a noxious gas. The view was beyond stunning. Beyond awe-inspiring. Beyond beautiful, magical, breath-taking, stupefying, sublime and paradisiacal.

It was perfect.

He tried to etch it onto the back of his eyelids, so that he might see it when he closed his eyes. He wanted to drink it in, to allow it to suffuse his body. He had to settle for just looking. He was only human, after all.

To no one at all, and not entirely sure why, he said "If I ever ask someone to marry me, it will be up here."

At that moment, a red string tied itself around his little finger. He didn't notice— he couldn't take his eyes off the view.

Eventually, his friends dragged him away from the sight and took him home. But he never forgot.

The red string remained and he ignored it (well, he was English). He went to work and sometimes the string would pull taught and he'd find himself drawn to follow the string to its origin, wherever that might be, but he ignored it.

One week, he had a Monday off and he decided, on a whim, to fly to a city he'd never visited before, had no connection with. As he journeyed there, the string grew slacker and slacker, started to

spool around his feet and trip him up when he went to the lavatory. It was losing tension. He was getting closer.

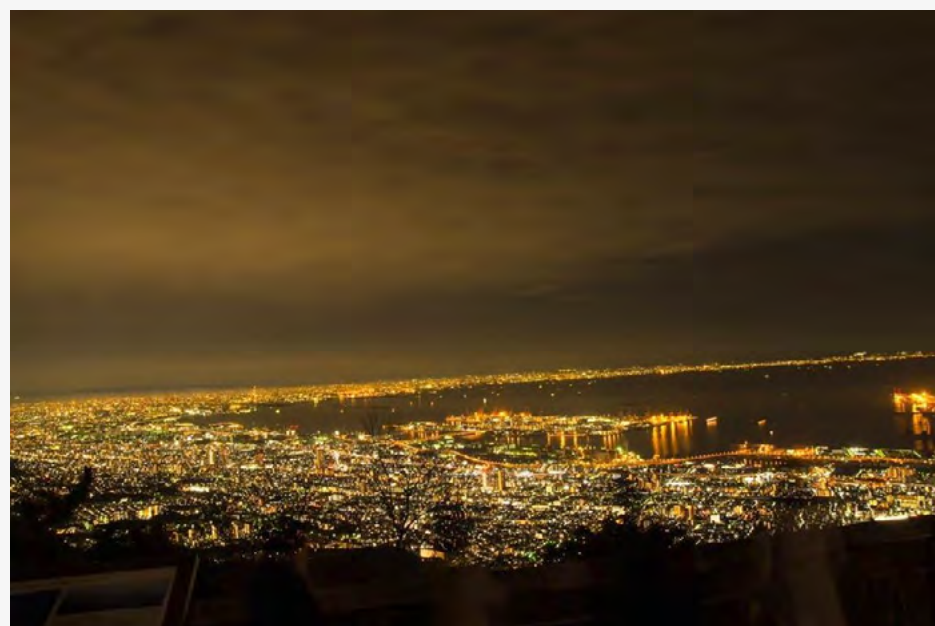
He landed and the string led him to a bar. He ordered a drink and took a seat, carting around a mountain of scarlet string. Suddenly, there was a commotion at the door— someone had fallen. The Englishman got up to help and found the man had tripped over the string. The Englishman was mortified (well, he was English) until he found that they shared the string— it was tied to both of them.

They discussed it long into the night, drink after drink, joke after joke, neither noticing that the string had grown shorter. It didn't need to stretch anymore; they were together.

Several years later, a new string appeared, and the Englishman knew it was time. He'd been considering it, of course, but this made his mind up for him. This string was different— it was longer (they'd left Japan years ago), it was less vivid (a sort of pinkish violet) and his paramour couldn't really see it (maybe if he was considering the future; if he really thought about it). But, most tellingly, this string lead back to Mt. Rokko.

And it was tied around their ring fingers.

Rory Kelly



**i peel down the postcard
a memory of you
a you who doesn't exist. not anymore
i know this to be true
it hurts to know that people go
in such a silent way
be relieved. be brave. be sad. be kind. be happy.
you did live one day

there's tragedy in each of us
intertwined with change
which parts of us will fade and die?
which parts remain the same?

so when we meet in a future past
brought together by the fates
will you be there to stay with me?
or will you have gone away?**

16200420

mandy wong

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
		1	2	3	4	5
					Yumura Onsen Matsuri	
		Japan Brickfest 2016				
		Belgian Beer Weekend (Osaka)				
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	Guitar and Flute Concert	Candle Night @Osaka City	My Song My Takarazuka		Tamba Happiness Market	HAJET Book Club
					HAJET Nada Sake Tour	
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
					Takaishi Seaside 祭り (Osaka)	
		Fete de la Musique au Japon (Osaka)				
		Iris Matsuri				
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
					Minatogawa Mart	
Fete de la Musique au Japon (Osaka)		Himeji Yukata Festival			Kyoto Grand Antique Fair	
Iris Matsuri						Nishinomiya Taiko Festival
27	28	29	30			
			Aizen Matsuri (Osaka)			

