

Chapter 15 A Very Special Letter



Soon life is normal again for Negasi. People in Washington, D.C., are talking about other things: the election, the economy, and the weather. Negasi gets back into his routine—working for ten hours a day, seven days a week.

About a month later, the newspaper office forwards another letter to Negasi. Negasi opens it after work one evening. Ayana reads over his shoulder.

Dear Negasi,

I read about you in the newspaper a few weeks ago. Your story touched my heart. Like you, I was an immigrant to this country. I understand how hard it is to work and support your family. I know that your life isn't easy. It took many years before I was successful here. And I also worried about my relatives in a faraway country. Enclosed is a check for \$5,000. Please use it to help your wife and children, and your relatives in Ethiopia.

Sincerely,

Emilio Rodriguez



Negasi puts the letter back into the envelope. Negasi and Ayana cannot hold back their tears. "I can't believe this!" says Negasi.

"How very fortunate we are!" says Ayana.

"Mom and Dad!" yells Desta from the bedroom. "I have bad news!"

"There is no bad news right now," says Negasi. "But what's the problem?"

"Dawit stepped on my glasses again!" says Desta. "And they're broken!"

Answer the questions.

1. How is life again for Negasi soon?
2. What are people in Washington, D.C., talking about?
3. What does Negasi get back into?
4. What happens about a month later?
5. When does Negasi open it?
6. What does the writer say he understands?
7. How long did it take before he was successful here?
8. What did he enclose?
9. What can't Negasi and Ayana hold back?
10. What is Desta's problem?

Complete the sentences.

life
immigrant

country
newspaper

check
family

years
heart

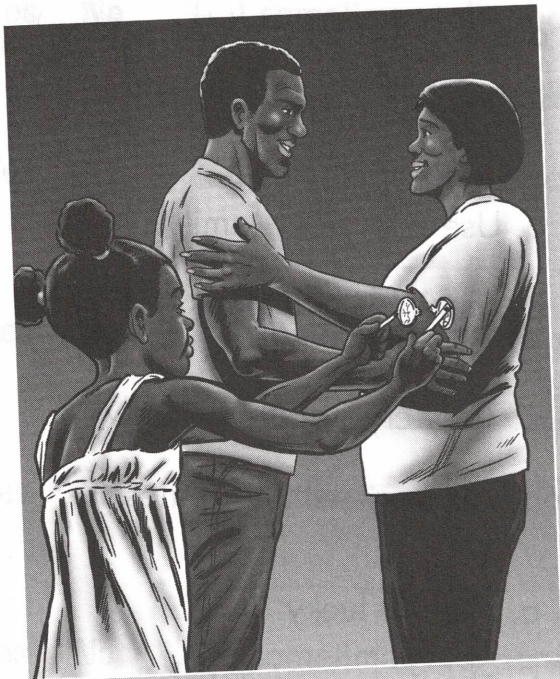
1. I read about you in the _____ a few weeks ago.
2. Your story touched my _____.
3. Like you, I was an _____ to this country.
4. I understand how hard it is to work and support your _____.
5. I know that your _____ isn't easy.
6. It took many _____ before I was successful here.
7. And I also worried about my relatives in a faraway _____.
8. Enclosed is a _____ for \$5,000.

Matching: Definitions

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| ___ 1. enclosed | a. earning a lot of money; doing well |
| ___ 2. faraway | b. cracked or in pieces |
| ___ 3. broken | c. usual; regular |
| ___ 4. successful | d. contained in something, like an envelope |
| ___ 5. fortunate | e. distant; not near |
| ___ 6. normal | f. lucky |

Talking About a Special Letter

Practice the dialog with a partner.



- A: I can't believe this!
- B: How very fortunate we are!
- C: Mom and Dad! I have bad news!
- A: There is no bad news right now.
But what's the problem?
- C: Dawit stepped on my glasses again!
And they're broken.

Checklist

Negasi and Ayana have a check for \$5,000. Check (✓) the things that you think they should use it for. Write other things they can use it for on the lines below.

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> medical bills | <input type="checkbox"/> a new computer | <input type="checkbox"/> an expensive cell phone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> credit card debt | <input type="checkbox"/> a big party | <input type="checkbox"/> relatives in Ethiopia |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a trip to Ethiopia | <input type="checkbox"/> repairs to the taxi | <input type="checkbox"/> a gift for Mr. Rodriguez |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a gold necklace | <input type="checkbox"/> new clothes | <input type="checkbox"/> things for the new baby |
| <input type="checkbox"/> living room furniture | <input type="checkbox"/> glasses for Desta | <input type="checkbox"/> savings for college |
- _____

Listening

Listen. Check (✓) the correct sentence.

1. a. Life is normal for Negasi again. b. Negasi is on TV again.
2. a. I had chest pains. b. I had strong feelings.
3. a. I was born in the U.S. b. I was born in another country.
4. a. Your life is easy. b. Your life isn't easy.
5. a. I had money problems, too. b. I got rich quickly.
6. a. Use it for your family. b. Use it for fun things.
7. a. They cry about bad news. b. They cry with happiness.
8. a. They're lucky. b. They're successful.

Pronunciation and Writing

Say the words from the story. Write the number of syllables in each word. Underline the stressed syllable.

- | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1. fortunate _____ | 6. weather _____ | 11. successful _____ |
| 2. immigrant _____ | 7. envelope _____ | 12. election _____ |
| 3. enclosed _____ | 8. faraway _____ | 13. country _____ |
| 4. letter _____ | 9. normal _____ | 14. routine _____ |
| 5. economy _____ | 10. shoulder _____ | 15. broken _____ |

What about you?

Circle **Yes** or **No**. Then write questions and ask your partner.

Yes **No** 1. I sometimes talk about the election.

Do you sometimes talk about the election?

Yes **No** 2. I sometimes talk about the economy.

Yes **No** 3. I sometimes talk about the weather.

Yes **No** 4. I understand how hard it is to work and support a family.

Yes **No** 5. I sometimes feel very fortunate.

Topics for Discussion or Writing

1. Do you have a routine? If so, what is it?
2. Do you know some immigrants to this country? If so, where are they from?
3. Do you want to be successful in the U.S.? If so, how do you think you will become successful?