

## An Ode to Gary

by Catherine Tucker

I'm very sad to say that my friend Gary will be leaving at the end of this term. As a friend and a roommate, he is quite the great companion. Alas, it is time for him to move on to new adventures. Luckily, he won't be too far away in Malaysia, so I definitely see some visits in our future.

Gary was one of the last Super teachers I met when I moved to Thailand, but we had an instant connection. After talking for a while, I realized that we have a very similar sense of humor and very similar tastes. There have been many times when Gary and I have been in fits of giggles over things that others may deem inappropriate, but to us is hilarious. He even shares my affinity for combining words.



Before I had even met Gary, I had heard about his legendary cocktails. He has an amazing talent of infusing liquors and then making scrumptiously delicious drinks out of them. Having worked as a bartender for a year, his knowledge of mixology is vast and I will definitely miss his cocktails. (Insert Gary and I giggling here).

Not only is he great at making drinks, but he is also a great drinking buddy. Sipping on drinks on the porch of the new house on the weekends is one of my favorite things to do. We just sit, watch the activity of the neighborhood, and gossip, which were all things I loved doing back home. Plus, if I ever had too much, I knew he would always have my back and not let me do anything too ridiculous.



Whenever I needed my Super class covered, Gary was the guy I went to. My students loved Gary and aptly named him Mr. Bean because of all of the goofy faces he makes while teaching. Even at home when I would see him planning and talk with him about his lessons, I would always admire the kinds of things he was doing with his students. It all seemed so sophisticated and Gary always seems to put in his best effort.

Gary was also always coming up with great ideas of fun ways to hang out. For example, he had a great big part in organizing our “weekly” TV

nights. We either have friends come over or go to another friends house, eat some snacks, maybe have a beer or two, and watch one of our favorite shows, *Happy Endings*. \*Side note: If you have not seen *Happy Endings* I highly recommend it! It's a hilariously written show, with some great actors that always have us in stitches. End note.\* I always look forward to this night when we can get together and laugh alongside each other. I'm so glad Gary not only thought to do this, but keeps it going most weeks.

Additionally, he likes to celebrate holidays almost as much as I do and is always down for a holiday celebration. On the way to one of Surat's many festival markets, when stopped in a Tesco Lotus for drinks and left with a ton of Christmas decorations. These decorations still adorn our house as we both feel it should be the holidays all the time. I even spent my Christmas with Gary, going to Central, having Western food, drinking Christmassy Starbucks, and reading a Christmas book by the 4-story Christmas tree. It was quite a special night, and one that made me glad to have friends to celebrate with.



Today is Valentine's Day and because Gary's partner is in Malaysia, he and I have decided to be valentines. I am looking forward to going out to eat Under the Bridge tonight as we celebrate this silly day of love. I'm definitely going to miss Gary and all the fun we have together, but hopefully I can keep TV night going, still celebrate the holidays like they're going out of style, and try to emulate some good Gary cocktails as best I can. When the time comes, I look forward to my visit in Malaysia, but as for now, I look forward to the rest of our time together in Surat. Good luck Gary! We'll miss ya!