

**Three foreign countries,
Six airports,
Nine flights,
Eighteen days:
The Asian Tour**



Three foreign countries, Six airports, Nine flights, Eighteen days: The Asian Tour was written by Jeffrey Copeland, recounting his recent sojourn. It is intended for mailing number 226 of the Southern Fandom Press Alliance and selected others. It is published by Bywater Press, 3243 165th Ave, SE, Bellevue, Washington 98008. The text of *Three foreign countries, Six airports, Nine flights, Eighteen days: The Asian Tour* was composed using the T_EX typesetting system, and is set in 10¹/₂ point Palatino. The original of this publication was printed on 30 March 2002, and it was reproduced by the Xerographic process.



Those of you who were paying attention know that I'd been expecting to make a trip to India sometime over the past two years. You'll also know that after I decided to change jobs a couple of months ago, I expected that trip to never happen. Surprise of surprises, off I went in my last month working for the Indian Development Center, to Tokyo and Hyderabad.

This is the e-mail I exchanged with Liz and Allie while I was gone. I've also included some of the notes I sent to folks I work with in Redmond. Jason Zions, the current lead developer for our product, is due to leave for India on the Tuesday following my return. Paul Cayley, our customer guru, was responsible for Asian customers in his last job and has been concerned about the state of the Asian economy.

For reference, I first visited both India and Japan in my father's sabbatical year of 1969. Our travels in India were restricted to Bombay, but we spent more than a month in Japan, and traveled extensively across the country. I returned to Japan on four occasions during 1987 and '88, when I was doing some work for Hitachi at Interactive Systems. I've always found Japan to be a fascinating, hospitable, friendly, civilized country.

In summary, it was an interesting trip. I accomplished a lot in getting my current project handed off, but I'm not convinced that the new team is completely clued in. I hope they come up to speed in short order. I had a good time in Japan — as I always do — but was shocked again by the contrasts (both economic and otherwise) that India provides. What can you say about a country where megabit internet connections are common but you can't drink the water?

Twenty-three-odd thousand miles later, I'm home, safe if not completely sound — nothing like a bit of intestinal flu to remind you to avoid curry. In a week, I start my new job. If I'm lucky, that one may take me back to Tokyo, or perhaps to Ireland.

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Tuesday, March 06, 2002 5:36 PM
To: Liz Copeland
Subject: article in Tuesday Seattle Times

I got a copy of the Seattle Times on the plane, and there's a first section article on how left-handed people have differently wired brains. Did you see it?

Miracles of modern technology: I'm composing this about abeam of Anchorage, I'll transmit it sometime Thursday my time, but I have no clue what time that is for you.

I love you, and wish I had a dirty haiku for you. (Well, I have 12/17ths of one, so you'll have to wait.)

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2002 10:11 PM
To: Liz Copeland
Subject: Travelogue of the day

So here I am at 10pm in a tiny hotel room in Chofu, after sharing a bottle of wine and dinner with my good friend Tak. We've shared an evening of food and drink, and we work for the same company — we must be great good friends. (That's not intended to be cynical: Tak's a really good guy, and is really interested in doing good for the product, and is really pleased that I made the effort to come work with his guys. He insisted that we have dinner someplace where we could get something to drink. And proceeded to quiz me about leaving SFU and how I thought the company was dealing with Linux. I answer the first in a very elliptical Japanese way that left no room for doubt about my feelings on the Hyderabad guys.)

The flight arrived dead on time. (And this keyboard is a complete pain in the ass. It should have gotten cleaned out before I left.) And then traffic into town from the airport was terrible: it took an hour and a half to get to Shinjuku station. Then I discovered that I'd forgotten how to read a Japanese subway map! But I remembered how to use the ticket machines, at least. Found my train, got out to Chofu, found the hotel, which is right across the street from the station, on the top three floors of a ten story building of shops and restaurants — a strip mall in the sky.

[Actually it was a completely self-contained department store, Parco. If Takashimaya is Bloomingdales, then Parco is Penney's.]

Tak is meeting me at 8:30 to make sure I don't get lost in the ten minute walk to the office, so I must go to sleep.

I miss you and love you,
Jeff

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2002 10:21 PM
To: Allie Copeland
Cc: Liz Copeland
Subject: things

(1) I'm copying your mother on this, so she'll nudge you to read your e-mail.

(2) On your flight to Hong Kong, did they show a nifty animated video of how to get off the plane and through customs?

(3) My Japanese buddy Tak would like to know where to go for a beer and light food after 10pm in Seattle. I told him you would know.

From: Liz Copeland
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2002 7:05 AM
To: Jeff Copeland
Subject: Re: article in Tuesday Seattle Times

Yes, I saw the article. The one that talked about there being a gene for right handed dominance, but if you don't get the gene, you can choose handedness....

I wanted to talk to you today. I realized that I can't just pick up the phone, so I'm going to send you chatty emails, so you're caught up on all the daily going ons.

Yesterday, I dropped the quilt off, and got to see some of the other ones that have already arrived. There are 10 quilts that haven't shown yet, so I was actually in great shape delivering the day of the deadline.

.....

Do you want to know what happened on Buffie?

Today, JJ's teachers lost his Iowa test sheet. We're hoping they find it this afternoon, so he doesn't have to retake it. Charlie and Susie went to the vet, and susie needs her teeth cleaned. I installed Buzz Lightyear, which wanted to reinstall DirectX so we'll have to wait and see what breaks because of it.

That's about it. Love you and miss you. I hope your talk goes well.
Liz

From: Allie Copeland
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2002 4:57 PM
To: Jeff Copeland
Subject: Re: things

Hmm, there's the Sit and Spin, Polyesters is literally right across the street from the space needle, there's a few others give me a half hour and I'll send you the info. Nope they did not give me the kewl animated video, that would have rocked. How are you? How's the trip going?

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2002 10:07 AM
To: Allie Copeland
Subject: RE: things

It's going great. I'm procrastinating from the work I should be doing by going through my e-mail. Gotta get back to it. I wish you were here — some of it's just too weird, and you'd think it was a hoot.

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2002 11:08 AM
To: Liz Copeland
Subject: RE: article in Tuesday Seattle Times

Yes, I want to know what happened on Buffy ... I'm not going to be able to catch up when I get home. But first you have to tell me what happened in the last 15 minutes of last week's, after Riley comes in, finds Spike and Buffy in bed and says "Hello, Doctor."

Cool about getting the quilt there on time.

I hope JJ doesn't need to retake the Iowa test. He's getting the normal accomodation of someone reading it to him, right?

This is the "knock her out and scrape her teeth" thing for the Suzemeister, right? Poor little pain-in-the-butt.

I'll send you more later.

My talk this morning went pretty well, though I realized that they knew a lot of the stuff already — these guys are very good, unlike the folks in India. They asked good questions. I realized I need to rearrange the slides a little, and I'll do so before I get to Hyderabad.

I was 100 e-mail messages to the bad this morning – took 15 minutes to download them, and it's now 2:30pm and I'm still getting through the pile. I've still got to write tomorrow's talk, so I expect a lateish night.

More later.

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2002 4:45 PM
To: Liz Copeland
Subject: travelogue thursday afternoon still avoiding working

My hotel room is tiny, but it's got a bathroom that is a complete installable unit, made by Matsushita, and dropped into a corner of it. The thing includes a short bathtub, and a toilet complete with bottom-washing apparatus. When you sit down, it runs some water into the bowl for ten seconds so that the really cold water is out of the pipes and your bum doesn't get turned to ice. (I've got to get a disposable camera: the warning label under the lid is hilarious. Maybe I can use a photo of that for my SFPA cover.)

Also, I just tacked the NASA patch onto my backpack with a V in each corner. Blue thread to match the backpack. Did it while I was waiting to board the plane in Seattle. Band-aids make very nice thimbles.

On the plane, I read Scientific American for the last hour into Tokyo. There was an article about reading in the March issue. The folks who wrote it explain clearly that phonics is it for teaching reading, period, end of subject. It's a quick read, so you might look at it next time you're at the library.

From: Liz Copeland
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2002 2:59 PM
To: Jeff Copeland
Subject: Re: Buffy etc.

Okay, I'd be glad to tell you the last 15 minutes of the last episode, except I haven't seen it yet. Remind me which tape it's on.... I haven't asked JJ what accomodations he's getting, but he mentioned staying to finish during tutorial time so I think they're not timing him. I'll ask him later today when the rest of the world wakes up. (I seem to have shifted into nap mode for sleeping. *Sigh* So here I am, awake in the middle of the night....) Yes on the scraping teeth thing for Susie. She has one tooth

that has rotted thru at the gumline so they will probably have to extract that one. And a bunch that need cleaning. And on that note....

Love ya,
Liz

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2002 3:58 PM
To: Liz Copeland
Subject: FW: etc

You need to read this from the bottom up. After he sent the first message, I walked around the corner to talk to him – his office shares a wall with mine – and he was very nervous about actually *speaking* English, and so missed half of what I was saying to him. I'm just greatly amused by his last response to me.

—Original Message—

From: Satoshi Sakamori
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2002 5:14 PM
To: Jeff Copeland
Subject: RE: etc

Please see inline.

—Original Message—

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2002 5:07 PM
To: Satoshi Sakamori
Subject: RE: etc

Your English is very good, Satoshi. I hope I am giving you a chance to practice :-). But I am afraid my spoken English is a little sloppy since I sometimes mumble a little, so it is my fault if you do not understand me.

Thank you for your tender solicitude. (T-T)

I have to build up my English skill and I will stroke it.

Perhaps 18.00 is a good time for dinner?

OK. I will go to your desk at 18:00.

—Original Message—

From: Satoshi Sakamori
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2002 5:00 PM
To: Jeff Copeland
Subject: RE: etc

Please see inline.

—Original Message—

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2002 4:40 PM
To: Satoshi Sakamori
Subject: RE: etc

Just to go ahead and respond to your message.

I'll send you the slides as soon as they are finished, but this will probably be after dinner. Maybe we should plan to copy them in the morning?

#I could hear this sentence. :-)

Yes, anytime is OK.

I would like very much to have dinner with you. It is very kind of you to c/jfer. 7F cafeteria is fine.

#I had misunderstand what you said. :-)

What time do you want to have a dinner? It is OK that you want

Yes, I think I can find the way back to my hotel. Thank you for your concern.

#I could have understood a little bit in what you said.

I always leave my office about 7 or 8 pm. I will tell you when I go home.

—Original Message—

From: Satoshi Sakamori
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2002 4:24 PM
To: Jeff Copeland
Subject: etc

I'd like to prepare tomorrow's meeting.

So, would you send me tomorrow's meeting material?

And I have some concerns.

1. Have you already decided today's dinner? If there are no plans, I'll take you to cafeteria at 7F.
2. Do you remember the way to your hotel? If you don't, I'll take you to your hotel.

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Friday, March 08, 2002 8:52 AM
To: Liz Copeland
Subject: I am a very happy man this morning....

I still have two slides to write for my talk in two hours — I quit last evening when I started making stupid mistakes — but it is a bright, very clear day in Chofu, and I can see Fujiyama from my hotel room window.

From: Allie Copeland
Sent: Friday, March 08, 2002 10:10 AM
To: Jeff Copeland
Subject: RE: things

LOL thanks dad. I wish I could see it. Right now your chores are killing me, how do you do it. Good luck at work and such. We all miss you!!

From: Liz Copeland
Sent: Friday, March 08, 2002 11:19 AM
To: Jeff Copeland
Subject: Re: I am a very happy man this morning....

Well, I'm glad you're happy, we're getting snow... It's also thundering which is an interesting combination. The teachers found JJ's test booklet, and even copied the answers from the temporary sheet into the booklet for him. Allie stayed home today because she overdid in dance class a couple of days ago and ached all over. And I slept the whole day away. I've gone past nap mode into reversing night and day. I'm going to try and straighten myself out tomorrow so I can finally go to a cqa meeting on Saturday. And finally, the trash pickup people called and said they'd credited our account as of March 1. So, how was your day?

Liz

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Friday, March 8, 2002 10:38 PM
To: Liz Copeland; Allie Copeland
Subject: Friday's adventures

I worked quite late Friday evening, and finally left the office about 8:45. It was a beautiful evening, and I was enjoying my walk back to the hotel, looking at the buildings, noticing signs, like the one that said "Shalom Watanabe", with no corresponding kana or kanji. There's a Japanese temple about halfway between and it was a nice parklike setting in the dark.

Of course, I hadn't gotten any dinner, so cruised down the little street of restaurants near the hotel, like any *saraiman* (that's "salary man", Allie, or office worker), looking for a place to eat on the way home. I picked a place that had its menu posted in the window. It was one with pictures and showed some dim sum, which seemed like a good idea.



The view north from the sidewalk in front of Matsuzakaya at Ginza-go-chome.

So first off, there are slightly wide eyes through the windows at the gaijin outside looking in. And *then* the gaijin comes in! And then he orders two dishes at once, rather than one at a time. But he does it by pointing, because – silly gaijin – doesn't speak a civilized language. "Kore wa to kore wa?" the waitress asked several times. "Hai!" I confused her by ordering two similar things, which were several pieces each. She kept thinking what I was trying to do was order one piece of each. I finally counted out all six pieces on the menu and said "sore wa, to sore wa, to sore wa, to sore wa, to sore wa... roku." (That one, and that one, and that one... six.) But, even if the silly gaijin couldn't speak, he did understand how to use hashi, and had reasonable table manners.

I spent about an hour, watched the two groups of guys working late having their beer and unwinding time together. I felt like I deserved it: I spent the bulk of the working effort trying to get the internationalized libraries to build again, which I should have done in Redmond, but didn't have time for. Very frustrating. I started running into problems when I realized that I needed pieces from both Redmond and Hyderabad, and finally ended up copying pieces of the compiler to my machine here. Anyway, the libraries are not quite right yet. I still have some work to do. Overall, though, I had a very good day. Started with seeing Fuji, got through my "how to internationalize" talk without embarrassing myself too badly, and solved nine (!) bugs.

I should have sent you a note before I left the office Friday night. I may not be back into the office until Monday morning, so you won't see this until then. I don't have network connection at the hotel.

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Saturday, March 9, 2002 8:30 PM
To: Paul Cayley; Stephen Walli; Jason Zions; Donn Terry
Cc: Liz Copeland
Subject: the state of the orient

Paul had asked how I thought the Asian economic collapse is affecting life on the street in Tokyo. Well, I spent my Saturday wandering through Shinjuku and up-and-down the Ginza, and I have, if not answers, at least observations.



Entrance to Meiji Shrine: There is a picture taken in 1969 of a twelve-year-old me leaning against this torii.

I had both lunch and dinner in restaurants in the big department stores. Both times (and at breakfast at the hotel, for that matter) I got little moistened towelettes, rather than a rolled hot towel. (The mom-and-pop place where I had dinner Friday night — which is another story — had real towels.) There are no longer bright-eyed, uniformed shop girls at the front doors of the department stores continuously intoning “Good morning! Thank you for coming! We’re happy to see you today!” Nor are there women with white gloves standing at the bottom of the first floor escalators continuously wiping the handrail (though frankly, the last time I saw *that* trick was 1970). I didn’t make it up to Nihonbashi to the mothership Takashimaya, but I can’t imagine that things are different there than at their newer store in Shinjuku. On the other hand, the Baccarat crystal shop in the Matsuya department store is pouring Taittinger to serve to their customers for testing purposes.

Further, they’ve made the same fundamental mistake privatizing their railroad that Britain made, and that the US made with the phone company: they’ve split up a system that worked magnificently as a unified whole. I had to ride three different train lines to get from Chofu to Ginza-yon-chome. This is the same as 15 years ago. However, now the lines are all operated by different companies. They all use the same ticketing hardware, but I couldn’t buy a through ticket, I had to buy three separate ones. Nor can I buy a day-use pass, like I used to be able to do — though I could buy three, one for each line.

I’m not sure if all this is economic, or if it’s creeping American crass-commercialism, or if it’s just a sign of the ongoing action of entropy. Anyway, that’s the curmudgeon’s view from the east for today.

(By the way, Paul: the three (contradictory) main stories in this morning’s *Japan Times* were: “GDP falls as recession deepens”, “Bouyant Nikkei flirts with 12,000 level”, and “Chobu Bank [a second-tier bank] collapses”. This following the Thursday/Friday two-parter on the spike in the suicide rate.)

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Sunday, March 10, 2002 10:18 PM
To: Liz Copeland; Allie Copeland
Subject: Sunday’s adventures

I’m sorry I missed you guys when I called this morning — your Saturday afternoon. I’ll catch you Sunday afternoon, which means you won’t have seen any of these stacked messages, since I haven’t been to the office to send them.

So you aren’t allowed to make calls on your cell phone on the train. It might explain why text messaging is so popular.

There was a cell phone ad on the train today. For a cell phone with streaming video display. Shows a dad at a boardroom table, with everyone else looking up to the left with serious expressions, but the

guy in the ad with the phone is looking down and smiling, and we see the pictures of his kid walking along the bottom of the ad. Very un-Japanese to celebrate being a daddy — being a father's fine, but this is the first time I've seen being a daddy held up as a virtue.

One trendy teen girl outfit is shirt & pants with white gauze overskirt. Then there was the 20-something on train platform at shinjuku in black leather jacket, black leather mini-skirt, black leather spike-heeled boots — seriously looking on the kinky side. . . except for the tiny teddy bear fob on her cell phone bouncing out of her pocket. At least it was a black bear.

I went out to Meiji Shrine, where they were having a very formal wedding. (I wonder: is there such a thing as an *in, formal* Shinto wedding?) I paused in the inner shrine to say a few prayers, though I was a little embarrassed to clap three times — I am still getting over Friday evening's "hey the Gaijin's eating gyoza with hashi" episode — but I'm sure Ameratsu was paying attention anyway.

The Treasure House Museum at Meiji Shrine was open! This is the collection of artifacts from Meiji's reign. It includes portraits and kimonos and furniture. It's apparently now open every Sunday. It never was open on a regular schedule as far as I know when Hirohito's was alive. The centerpiece is a ceremonial carriage, but that's a "who cares" next to the textiles. The obis are simply magnificent, and even though they're a century old, they look quite modern. One was white on one end with cranes and that oriental orange-red on the other with a textured chrysanthemum, and it had been woven to fade from one color to the other through about 10cm in the middle. It was gorgeous. I would have taken a picture except that there are "no photographs" signs all over, and it was right across from the guard's desk. And their gift shop had books of the paintings and furniture, but only a token photo in each book of a kimono. Didn't seem worth the 1500 yen. They also had on display in the annex a set of 5 scrolls displaying the shrine itself being put up. There was a whole scroll dedicated to the construction, including some details of the joinery. Very fascinating. (And I impressed myself: Each of the little cards next to an item said something longwinded in Japanese, and then in English "writing desk used by Emperor Meiji." I was able to pick out bits and pieces of the Japanese, at least to the extent of figuring out the dates for each item.)

And then I took some pictures of the teenagers who express their rebellion by dressing up and occupying the in the Plaza between Harajuku station and Meiji Shrine. I was utterly amazed: those kids haven't changed in the last 15 years, but now Harajuku is hemmed in by skyscrapers. It took something away from the serenity of the forest surrounding the Shrine to be able to see a huge building every now and then. In Meiji's reign, Harajuku was out in the country — there were rice paddies a kilometer to the north.

I tripped over a place in Shinjuku called "Hobby Base Yellow Submarine", which I just had to go in, even though it was in a slightly seedy building, up 4 flights. It occupies two floors, and is an source for all those card games, like Magic, but not, it seems Pokemon. I wish JJ had been with me, because he could tell me from the cartoons what each of different set of cards was for. They had single cards in little wrappers: 100 yen, 250 yen, 5000 yen (!) But I got him 100 yen worth of Gundam Warrior cards in Japanese. (I also got him a Gundam Warrior action figure yesterday, but don't tell him.)

Why was I back in Shinjuku? See my diatribe yesterday about train lines. To get from Chofu to Harajuku, you have to change from the Keio line to JR at Shinjuku, and since I couldn't buy a through ticket — at least not that I've figured out yet — I got out and wandered around Shinjuku, which really is a happenin' place. I haven't been to Roppongi since I was here with my parents, and Tak knows a brewpub there. We've got tentative plans to go one evening this week.

Anyway: I need to eat dinner. I got takeaway from Keio depato, and grabbed a beer at the Family Mart on the way back from the station. Then I'm going to watch one of the movies I brought with me.

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Monday, March 11, 2002 12:42 PM
To: Liz Copeland; Allie Copeland
Subject: let me tell you about hand dryers

I just got back from a trip to the men's room, and remembered something else I wanted to tell you: Japanese rest rooms usually don't have paper towels for drying your hands. It's one of the functions of a handkerchief. (You never use a handkerchief for blowing your nose in Japan — why



Rebellious Japanese teenagers, dressed up on the plaza near Harajuku Station, politely posing for pictures.

would you want to carry used snot around? That's what tissues are for.) But the restrooms in the department stores over the weekend had those hand dryers that blow warm air. This is relatively new, I think. But these weren't the wimpy kind you find in the US, that blow a little stream of slightly warmed air for 30 seconds. No: this has a photosensor, and when you stick your hands in it –not under it –it sounds like a jet plane taking off. It really, really blows air at your hands, and the air starts at room temperature and warms up to pleasantly toasty. 15 seconds and your hands are really dry. I want them imported.

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Tuesday, March 12, 2002 8:25 AM
To: Liz Copeland
Subject: Monday in Japan

Eleven hours in the office, starting off with a three-hour bi-lingual meeting. Raja – the guy from India – is a little green, but not completely dense. We'll see how he turns out. If his boss, the virtual Jason, would read the stuff I've sent him, we'd be better off. I'm not sure Raja's read it, either.

Spent the technical part of the day looking at details of bugs. Got all Friday's bugs closed, and finally got my libraries to build. Took some serious hammering.

Had dinner with Tak and one of the Japanese kernel guys. Kernel guy has good English, and we had fun. Talked about food, and cooking, and teenagers (Tak's are 5 and 7, so he's not there yet), and kanji characters and Indian alphabets. Rolled into the hotel about 10:30. Busy and productive, but not nearly as interesting a day.

From: Liz Copeland
Sent: Tuesday, March 12, 2002 6:32 PM
To: Jeff Copeland
Subject: Re: Monday in Japan

Ha, I slept all day Monday. What a difference from your day. Of course, I was out doing the grocery shopping at 2am because I can't seem to sleep during the night. Oh, well, I'll do my best to sleep when I can and not worry about getting other stuff done (except for mailing the checks, of course.) You'll be thrilled to hear that Allie has decided you have too many chores to do so she is volunteering to keep on with the litterboxes and the bathrooms after you come back. She and JJ will do the bathrooms, JJ will sweep the floor in the kitchen/Dining area, and that leaves you doing the

dishes and dustmopping on Sundays. Of course, if you'd rather do the litterboxes, I'm sure she'll let you insist....

I'm enjoying your little tidbits of life in Japan. I agree on importing the really good hand dryers. I hate standing there rubbing my hands for so long...

I miss you lots,

Love,

Liz

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Wednesday, March 13, 2002 6:25 AM
To: Liz Copeland
Subject: RE: Monday in Japan

Think of your sleep schedule this way: For once, we're sleeping the same hours — just on opposite sides of the ocean.

Had another 11-hour day in the office on Tuesday. Got a mess of code slung and a bunch of bugs dealt with. I'm wearing out, though.

As I think I mentioned, there's a department store under my hotel, so Raja and I ate at the sushi bar on the restaurant floor last night. His mother told him to try sushi, and he bravely soldiered through it, but I think he was a little put off. He took one sip of the sake, and said "no, this is very strong." But he did eat the tuna sashimi, and the salmon. The kappa maki was interesting: "This is paper?" "No, seaweed." "You eat it?" "Yes, it's toasted leaves." "Ah." (My Japanese at least extends to the names of the fish — and other vital necessities like "sake" and "biiru" and "mizu" [water, as opposed to "miso"] — so I was able to get us through the meal.)

I was going to work on SFFA after dinner, but I was toasted, and I watched the last half of *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*. I'd been dubious about bringing DVDs with me, but actually there have been two evenings where I wanted to just zone out.

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Wednesday, March 13, 2002 6:28 AM
To: Liz Copeland
Subject: RE: Monday in Japan

Also, on Allie and my chores: I guess I've become my mother in that I've made the work of the elves look invisible. I'm certainly willing to renegotiate what I do. Given the amount of homework help I do with the little guy, I'm willing to give up one of the daily things for an additional weekend chore.

From: Liz Copeland
Sent: Wednesday, March 13, 2002 7:56 AM
To: Jeff Copeland
Subject: Re: Monday in Japan

Actually, I must have been unclear. I think you end up with only one weekend chore which is dustmopping and only the dishes & homework help as daily chores. And of course taking the trash out on Wednesday. Am I missing some of your chores? Anyway, I'll show you the new plan when you get back, if you like.

Allie & I are off to a college for juniors program at Sammamish tonight, so Hal is going to babysit JJ for me. ... Anyway, I gotta go so I can have some dinner before we leave.

Love,

Liz

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Wednesday, March 13, 2002 8:02 AM

To: Liz Copeland
Subject: RE: Monday in Japan

Cool. Even better. We'll talk about it when I get back. (I'm really happy that she cares about this stuff. You've raised wonderful children, Liz.)

Have fun at the college thing.

From: Liz Copeland
Sent: Wednesday, March 13, 2002 5:30 PM
To: Jeff Copeland
Subject: [Fwd: Unexpected images]

Here's a cool site for when you need a little mind break....

Eileen Doughty wrote:

Here's a fun one: Camera fished from pond now takes surrealistic photos

<http://www.ljworld.com/section/arts/story/85743/>

The photographer's expensive digital camera fell in a pond. He tried for days to get it to dry out, even tying it to his car's windshield wiper for a few days. Look at this web page to see the images it takes now. way cool.

eileen doughty

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Wednesday, March 13, 2002 5:31 PM
To: Liz Copeland
Subject: RE: [Fwd: Unexpected images]

Boy, you really *aren't* sleeping if you're up at 4 in the morning....

I'm trying to get my ass out of here and get some dinner. I'm toasted.

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Wednesday, March 13, 2002 7:47 PM
To: Liz Copeland
Subject: the saga of the ATM machine

So, I underestimated the amount of travelers checks I needed. Bad move. I'm down to just \$50 worth, and I've got \$80 US in cash. If I can get out of Japan with those intact, I should be fine, since in India, I suspect I'll be mostly eating in the hotel, but I need to have enough cash here to get back to the airport and eat for the next couple of days, and I'm down to about 4000 yen, which is a minimum of 3000 short. So, I call up American Express. "I'm signed up for getting cash from an ATM with my Optima card. I'm in Japan and need to get some cash. I want to confirm what my PIN is." "I can't tell you that." "That's fine, let's just change it." "Can't do that either." "Um, you've confirmed I'm me." "I can give you the 800 number for the automated. . ." "I can't dial the 800 number, I'm out of the country." "Oh, I can transfer you." "Great, but first, where's the nearest ATM to the Chofu train station that I can do that at?" "What state is that in?" "Um, Japan. That country in Asia." "Oh. Hold on."

So, she reads me a list of three places, two of which sound like Post Office box addresses. I say "look, it would be easier if you just told me the names of the corresponding banks whose ATMs you use. Then I could find one of those banks fairly easily." "But I don't have that list, I just have a list of ATM locations." "But you used to send out a wallet card with the bank logos on them for international travel." "I just have a list of ATM locations." "But. . ." "You have to find one with an Amex sign on it." "OK. Let me deal with the automated system, and change my PIN."

The automated system asks for your existing PIN before it will change it. Oh, great. I figured it might be the same as our regular ATM PIN. Yup. So I did a no-op change. "This change will take effect immediately" says the automated voice. Great. Now I just have to figure out where these ATM machines are.

The nearest machine by their reckoning is 15 miles away, in a town I've never heard of—I look it up later, and it's a town on the coast the other side of Yokohama. Sigh. Other side of Yokohama's not going to work, so I go to the Amex web page, which is so horribly designed, it's ridiculous. You can find stuff only if you know the trade name for it. If you search for "cash now", (which I thought was the name), you get information on withdrawals from your brokerage account. The right thing to look for is "express cash." Turns out that once you do that, you can search by country, and you get a list of the corresponding banks, and the ATM logos to look for. Voila! I print out the page, grab Tak to translate for the illiterate gaijin, and run next door to the ATM at the grocery store. As we're going down the stairs, I realize that one of the logos is the JCB card one, and Tak explains that the other is the Postal Banking network. So, in principle, that means about every major bank ATM in the country. And it explains that the ATM at the town on the coast was a Post Office, not a PO Box. And not only do we now know what to look for, but the ATM machine has 2 of the appropriate three logos and an Amex one to boot.

And *mirabile dictu!* The ATM machine recognizes that I've put an Amex card in, and starts displaying messages in both English and Japanese. Now we are truly cookin' with gas! Except that the machine spits out a receipt slip that says "I'm sorry, this credit card cannot be used from this machine. Please contact the issuing agency." So I need to spend another 15 minutes talking to the brainless phone droids at Amex tomorrow. I can't imagine that they've contracted to use only one ATM every 100 miles. Not when their web site has the network logos on it.

I wonder if spending \$300 a year for a Platinum card would make it better. Would I at least get to talk to someone who wanted to solve my problem, rather than someone who can just read me what her computer says? I'll let you know what happens. Absolute worst comes to absolute worst, I'll trade Tak some of my American cash for yen. He's going to be in Redmond next week and the week after.

Speaking of Tak coming to the States: He's been very helpful. I think he realizes that us keeping in contact is a good idea. I'd like to have him for a meal. We could ask him to the house, or I could take him out. Your call.

From: Allie Copeland
Sent: Thursday, March 14, 2002 10:03 AM
To: Jeff Copeland
Subject: RE: things

The Graceland's a good place YOU work too much. Have fun in Japan because you deserve it.

— *Jeff Copeland wrote:*

Chores? I just don't get to spend any time with your mom in the evenings. Did you think of any other places to hang out at night? I should ask Sean, too.

From: Allie Copeland
Sent: Thursday, March 14, 2002 10:13 AM
To: Jeff Copeland
Subject: Re: Friday's adventures

WOW!! You sound like you are having adventures and amusement. I'm really glad that you're getting things done and soaking in a place you love; that is true fortune. Be sure not to work too hard though daddy, because you know for a fact I'm making you take a vacation when you get back, at least a 3 day weekend. Plus you're gonna have to hang out at home to tell us stories and let us hug you. I miss you and I'm glad you're doing well.

From: Allie Copeland
Sent: Thursday, March 14, 2002 10:22 AM
To: Jeff Copeland
Subject: Re: Sunday's adventures

man I've been thinking about the over skirt thing, does it look cute because I kind of want to try it. hmmm Hey by the way, thank you SOOOO much for thinking about me and the fashions. And as for the cell phone ad, what can I say you're a trend setter with your loving the dad-ness and all. Wow it sounds fun, all the stores, and the shrines. I am SOOOOOOOO envious. Have fun

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Thursday, March 14, 2002 10:31 AM
To: Liz Copeland
Subject: the saga of the ATM machine, part 2

So, I started the morning by stopping at the Sumitomo bank branch across from the hotel. There's a sign in *their* window with all the appropriate Japanese ATM logos with which my Optima card is supposed to work, plus an Amex logo. The lobby (with an array of ATM machines) opens at 8:45, main office opens at 9am. Their ATM machine let me put in a card, asked for a PIN, and then said "no, sorry, that won't work here" and spit the card back at me. I noticed that there was a machine that said "money exchange," except that it was closed. Since it was still 10 of nine, and we had a 10am meeting, I decided to come back later.

I didn't have time to call Amex for an explanation before I took off for the bank at 11:15, but by the time I got back there at 11:30, the pre-lunch crowd had gathered, but I took a number — they have a number-dispensing machine, and you wait on couches until your number is called. Then you go up to the counter, and sit down in a chair opposite a very competent clerk. If you need something complicated, she begs your indulgence, asks you to sit on the couch for a few moments, madly shuffles and stamps and staples, and then calls you back, to hand you your bank book, cash and other papers.

After a few minutes of waiting, I realized that I knew where the post office was, and rather than wait for an English-speaker, I'd try the post office. [As an aside, one of the largest savings banks in the country is actually the post office. They have postal savings accounts, and ATM machines, and everything.] I know where the post office is because when I wanted to mail post cards the other day, and insisted on actually paying for the stamps myself rather than have them stamped by the company, Tak's admin printed me a map of the neighborhood.

About a fifteen minute walk, and a wait for a slightly addled college student (no, I don't really think he was addled, I think the machine wasn't letting him take out any money and he couldn't figure out why), I got to the machine, and discovered that it has a button — touch screens on all these machines, by the way — that says "English transaction." *Wow!* It walks me through the whole transaction, asks how much money I want — it will give me up to 100 one thousand yen notes if I want — and even shows me pictures of the right mechanical buttons to press — "enter your pin on the keypad below, and then press the [kanji] key if correct or [kanji] to cancel." Three minutes later, and five thousand yen heavier, I'm a much happier camper.

I need to send Amex a note, though. Their service was a little screwy on this.

From: Allie Copeland
Sent: Thursday, March 14, 2002 10:26 AM
To: Jeff Copeland
Subject: Re: let me tell you about hand dryers
seriously your hands get wetter when you use those american driers.

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Thursday, March 14, 2002 12:28 PM
To: Liz Copeland
Subject: you were asking if we wanted (just us) to go down to ConJose
I'll point out that the only extant bid for the 2007 Worldcon is in Japan. . .

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Friday, March 15, 2002 6:42 AM
To: Liz Copeland
Subject: indian food

So, we had dinner Thursday night at an Indian restaurant in Chofu. Tak wanted to find a place that would have something familiar for Raja, and he was interested to try it himself. We had a good time, and I spent more for dinner than I have any night we've been here. The waitress was quite multi-lingual, and was quite happy flipping back and forth between American English and Japanese in the same sentence.

Do you remember when you called GE about our stovetop, and said you were pretty sure you were talking to someone in India? Yup. The GE call center is at 3rd Floor, HiTec City, Phase I, Hyderabad. Microsoft's address? 9th floor, HiTec City, Phase I, Hyderabad.

One minor worry. Today is the first Friday since the Indian supreme court ruled that nobody can use the disputed temple land in Ama-whichever-bad. They've flooded the region with riot cops. Raja tells me that there's a weekly riot in Hyderabad by the Muslims, "but that's in the old town, you'll be in the new town." I'm not sure how to evaluate this information. I'm not sure if this is Hindu racism on his part, "oh, that's just the poor folks in the slum, don't worry" or if it really just is a simple protest, and the cops repress it quickly. My defense clearly is that I can keep a very low profile: I'm not staying at the Sheraton, where most of the foreigners do, but rather at the second rank hotel, and I'm going to be going strictly from hotel to office and back by limo. I also think being an obvious foreigner gives me some protection: I'm not part of this fight.

I'm just venting a little bit, so don't be too concerned. I'll be frighteningly careful, and make sure I've got both the Thai airlines timetables and the Jet airways ones in hardcopy at all times. Remember that I rebooked this trip so I was making safer airline connections. I may be worth a lot of insurance money dead, but that doesn't do *me* a damned bit of good — I'd much rather be around, thank you. I'll keep whatever wisdom I've gained about situational awareness from you and Rob and Cosmo in my head at all times. And I'll be careful to not get too tired that I can't take advantage of it.

(Do I sound like I'm getting ready to go into a combat zone tomorrow? Remember that the only part of India I've ever seen is Bombay, one of the foulest, stinkiest, rotting cities in Asia. And I'll be coming from Tokyo, the cleanest, most polite, safest big city in the world. I'm mentally girding my loins to change gears.)

I'll give you guys a call when I hit the Hyderabad office about 10am Sunday my time, which will be about Saturday at 11pm your time, I'm afraid. If I can, I'll call you guys from the hotel when I get up, which will be a couple of hours earlier, but I don't know if I'll be able to make an international call from the hotel. You'll hear from me one way or another Saturday evening your time.

I love you and I'll talk to you in about 48 hours.

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Friday, March 15, 2002 9:55 AM
To: Takuya Oikawa; Satoshi Sakamori; ...
Subject: domo arigato

I wanted to thank you all for your help and support during my visit to Chofu. Your kindness to an illiterate foreigner was much appreciated. I had a wonderful time and think we made some real progress. I hope that I will be able to work with you all again when it is time to do globalization on my new project.

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Friday, March 15, 2002 9:57 AM
To: Liz Copeland
Subject: last thought before I dash for the airport

When we were in Las Vegas, you commented on the \$15 for the disposable camera being about normal, and I said my benchmark was 1000 yen in Japan. Paid 880 yen on Saturday for the 27-shot

camera I just got the picture back from. (Developing was 1500 yen – somewhat higher than in the US.) But I picked up another disposable camera for 570 yen. So I have a new, lower (and still wrong) benchmark.

From: Liz Copeland
Sent: Friday, March 15, 2002 12:01 PM
To: Jeff Copeland
Subject: [Fwd: NQR Peeps and Bunnies]

It's the silly season again.... Also, they now make the little cadbury eggs with a crunchy shell in the big bag... We bought 2 and I'm saving one for you and me after you get back.

Love, Liz

MarlaQuack2@aol.com wrote:

<http://www.pcola.gulf.net/~irving/bunnies/index2.html>

<http://www.learnlink.emory.edu/peep/surgery.html#results>

I thought you might like some humor today. I don't know if the rest of the world gets so into candy associated with Easter like we do in the USA, but marshmallow bunnies and peeps show up in a variety of colors each year at this time.

Blessings,

Marla

From: Liz Copeland
Sent: Friday, March 15, 2002 12:12 PM
To: Jeff Copeland
Subject: Re: the saga of the ATM machine

So sorry to hear about your ATM/Amex problems. I hope everything gets straightened out okay. A platinum card would almost certainly make it easier, but are you going to be traveling that much? Would Tak be shocked to be invited to our house? They don't do that in Japan, do they? Either way is fine with me, but he might get a kick out of going to a good steak house and being shocked by the low prices....

Liz

From: Liz Copeland
Sent: Friday, March 15, 2002 12:51 PM
To: Jeff Copeland
Subject: Re: indian food

It's amusing that I could tell the GE guy was Indian. There was no accent, it was a matter of phrasing and pausing in sentences. I know nothing about their languages so I don't know why that carries through so much, but it does.

The news today was saying that the government is not going to tolerate uprisings so they are moving more troops, etc. into the trouble areas. I'm going to assume you'll be okay, and not even cross my fingers. (that would make my typing hard to do anyway).

... and stay safe. I want you back here with us.

Love, Liz

From: Satoshi Sakamori
Sent: Saturday, March 16, 2002 5:41 PM
To: Jeff Copeland
Subject: RE: domo arigato

I am really glad what you said below.

I'd like to talk with you *in my smooth English* in someday:-)

#I wish I could work on globalization of your new project.

Anyway, I have my web site <http://www.sakamori.net> and if you have a web site on internet, please let know me. I'd like to add web link if you don't mind.

#My site is multilingual site, but it is updated only Japanese. Because some my friend and my parents are not good at English. Some day I will update English page,too.



From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Sunday, March 17, 2002 11:07 AM
To: Ulrika Anderson O'Brien, Hal O'Brien
Cc: Liz Copeland, Allie Copeland
Subject: housework and clutter

Hal and Ulrika (through a posting by one or the other in [rec.arts.sf.fandom](#)) pointed me at an article in a recent issue of *The Atlantic* on clutter. I read it while I was in the queue to check in at Narita. Which is why I'm composing this note now offline on the laptop on the way to Bangkok rather than waiting until I get to India and can log into Caltech again...

Anyway, Flanagan seems to make a couple of interesting points: Keeping house and keeping de-cluttered are to some extent related. That in the feminist ideal, everyone participates in the housework. That there really wasn't anything wrong with the pre-feminist idea of one spouse working outside the house and one working in it.

The reason this is all on my mind is Allie's very kind offer to take over some of my household chores on an on-going basis. (Ulrika, you're not in the loop directly, but while I'm in Asia, the kids have shared out my daily chores, and Allie's come to the conclusion that I do an awful lot around the house. Without meaning to, I've become my mother and managed to make it appear that some of the household is maintained by elves.) (And Allie, I am touched by your concern and realization. I'm more than willing for you to take over some of the daily stuff. Let's talk about it when I get home.)

In any event, we don't live in the ideal post-feminist world, but I think some of what Flanagan says is so. I think it's important for the kids to understand that elves do not magically do the dishes and the laundry — which is the opposite of what my mother thought. However, I think that in our household we do an okay — not perfect, but okay — job of both spouses participating in the housework. (Though I think my most important daily chore is homework with JJ — it's my inisistence on being home to do that that's caused more friction with Jason than anything else.)

Anyway, I'm not sure those are completely coherent observations, but I did have two glasses of wine with dinner. The article's "Leaving It to The Professionals" by Caitlin Flanagan in the 3/2002 issue of *The Atlantic*. It's on their website, which is where I got it to load it into my Palm.

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Sunday, March 17, 2002 11:07 AM
To: Liz Copeland
Cc: Allie Copeland

Subject: some thoughts on the way to Bangkok

This is the grabbag message from the last couple of days in Tokyo, composed from things I remembered while I was getting back to the airport on Friday, my time.

Apparently, there's a bunch of about two dozen people who eat breakfast together on Friday mornings at the hotel I stayed at. I recognized some of them this morning from last Friday. Which is really interesting, because it's a hotel on the top three floors of a department store building. So why do they pick it? I wonder if it's the executive staff of the store? Or if they've been at the hotel for the whole week and I just hadn't tripped over them again until today.

Anyway, one of them had his cell phone go off this morning, while he was getting something from the buffet line. It played "The William Tell Overture" for a good long time before he hit it. Even to a gaijin, he looked monumentally embarrassed when he got to it.

And then there was the Rotary Club luncheon. The Chofu Chapter of Rotary International was having their monthly lunch when I was on my ATM quest and stopped in at the hotel mid-day on Thursday. Civic boosters in blue suits with sashes look the same everywhere on Earth and I'm sure on other planets, too.

(Speaking of other planets: I saw the first twenty minutes of *K-Pax* before dinner was served. It looked really intriguing, but I thought I'd wait till I got home rather than watching the hacked airline version.)

[One of the frustrations of the laptop keyboard is that the E key is not working consistently. Maybe I should stop picking English words that use it. My left hand is getting beaten to shit pounding on that key.]

Saw a poster for a concert by the Kodo drummers on June 18th. Actually had enough Japanese to read the particulars: it's at Chofu stadium as part of the World Cup Soccer festivities. If they'd played earlier in the week when I was there, I would have been downright bummed. Like the time when I was commuting to Austin and I discovered while reading the newspaper at the airport on the way back to LA that I'd missed Two Nice Girls the evening before.

By the way, my pants are looser, so my "go to Japan and lose five pounds" diet seems to be working.

I was sitting next to a genuine buppie on the bus back to the airport, with emphasis on bloated in bloated urban professional. He took up slightly more than his seat, and my hips got screwed up as a result. Fortunately, the business class seats are wide enough that it's better.

And speaking of business class, being able to take the business class check in line made it possible for me to make my flight. I got to the airport just two hours ahead, and the economy check in line was two hours long. The Japanese baggage inspection was thorough as usual. They x-rayed my checked luggage before letting me check it, and mine got pulled out for a secondary inspection — the woman doing the inspection didn't have enough English to answer my question about whether the x-ray saw something or if it was a random check — but she apologized, asked if she could look in my suitcase, and put on white gloves to do it. She looked carefully, was gentle about moving things aside, smiled when she saw the toy I got JJ, asked if I had any aerosol cans or lighters, zipped up the suitcase, thanked me and apologized again. And then, the checkin clerk apologized for making me wait. I thanked her.

At Tokyo, they've finally got a United Red Carpet Club — which takes up about as much space as three gates, which is part of why United and the Japanese government are constantly in a pissing match, since Narita's perennially short of gate space. Since overseas both 1st class and business get to use the club, I got about 15 minutes of hangout time there before going to the gate to board. After the bus ride and the rush, I needed a coke and a few minutes quiet. The place was filled with guys madly typing into their laptops, I sat watching the planes on the tarmac.

Last thing, then I think I'll get some sleep: We pulled away from the gate in Tokyo, and were in the queue for a runway, when an old man appeared in the aisle just ahead of my seat with his belt undone and holding up his pants. The flight attendants were up and had ahold of him just as I was thinking "oh, fuck, what's going on here? the guy sitting behind me is pretty big, and between us we can tackle this guy." We went back to the gate, and the pilot and four flight attendants, including both the male stewards, all trotted back to coach to surround this guy. I don't know if they took him off the back of the plane or what, but the pilot went back up, came on the PA system, apologized and said

something about needing to make sure all the passengers were in order. I don't know what happened, but I'm going to thank the pilot for being cautious, blowing his take off position and going back to the gate when we get off the plane.

OK, that's not the last thing. I don't want to leave you guys worrying about me.

There's an international edition of *USA Today* — pretty disgusting, isn't it?: first we force McDonald's on the world, then McPaper — which they handed me with my first glass of wine on the plane. It's got an article about young women singers who are Britney Bimbo's age, but aren't doing the mindless bubblegum thing. I'll clip it and bring it home for Allie. (I'm spoiled: I've been reading the *Japan Times* for the past ten days. Now *that's* an international newspaper. Though I discovered this morning that the hotel would have slipped the *International Herald Tribune* under my door if I'd asked.)

More tomorrow. Love you and good night.

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Saturday, March 16, 2002 12:56 PM
To: Liz Copeland; Allie Copeland
Subject: saturday morning in the business class lounge at bankok airport

So, let's start where I left off last evening on the plane:

USA Today had three interesting articles. The first was on non-bubblegum girl singers who aren't sluts. I'll bring that one home. The second was a mostly anecdotal survey about how middle school kids are starting to have sex more often. They compared surveys from 1995 and 1988, and the number of 15 yr olds who'd had sex before they were 14 had stayed the same for boys, but increased by a third for girls. Mostly anecdotal like I say, and the folks they quote for prescriptive measures wrote a book about dealing with your teenager through the power of prayer. I'll bring it home too.

The third article was particularly interesting, in light of the UN resolution the other day — which the US didn't veto — affirming the right of a Palestinian state. (I presume that got covered there: it was the lead story in the *Japan Times*.)

Anyway, one of the leaders of the suicide bombers asserts that he's been acting to direction from Fatah, that is, Arafat directly. And Arafat gave a (pardon the expression) come-to-Jesus speech on Palestinian TV saying that his followers need to "sacrifice themselves in jihad for Palestine." I'm getting to the stage of saying a coalition of Western powers should go in, build a wall around 'em all. Anyone trying to enter or leave will be shot, until they work it out among themselves.

Anyway: on with the travel adventures. . . .

The x-ray machines in US airports now are cranked up enough that any film is toast, but the machines at both Narita and Bangkok have signs that say "won't damage film up to 1000 ASA." Maybe that's cause the US ones are made by GE, and the Asian ones by Hitachi? On the other hand the x-ray of my checked bag here in Bangkok was a joke. It went through the x-ray machine, but I was the only one watching the screen.

Again, business class is a god-send. I was three hours early to the airport (easy when you're at a hotel across the street) and the checkin line was one deep. For economy, it was an hour long. And then, I get to hang out in Royal Thai Business Class lounge until boarding. The thought of being on the (un-air-conditioned) main concourse for three hours wasn't appealing. But I'm getting ahead of myself. . . .

I got in at about 11:30. United Airlines flew straight over Hanoi getting here: boy how times have changed!!! Flight was on time even though we had to go back to the gate to latch down a passenger. Temperature in Tokyo: 60F. In Bangkok: 91, humidity off the scale. My glasses fogged immediately I walked down the stairs onto the tarmac. Customs and immigration was painless. Even got \$25 worth of local currency from the automated machines. (Normally, I wouldn't bother for a 12 hour stay, but you need to pay the airport exit tax in local currency, not by credit card. It's 500 baht, or about \$12. And I'll need to pay it coming back.) By the time I'd found the hotel (it's attached to Int'l terminal 1, not the domestic terminal as Jason described) and gotten to my room it was 12:15.

The room was fascinating. It was decorated in Hong Kong (actually I suppose Bangkok) Whorehouse Modern, complete with diffuse lighting and a sculpture of bare-breasted dancing temple girls on the wall above the bed. The king-sized bed was actually two twin beds side-by-side, and made

separately — kind of hard to have sex in, I'd think. The whole thing was offset by the three rubber duckies on the rim of the tub. I took a couple of pictures. We'll see if the film survives the Indian x-ray machines.

(And now there's an American businesswoman sitting across from me in the lounge, and shouting into her cell phone. I *like* the Japanese "don't use your cell phone here" signs.)

The problem with the hotel is that while it's connected by a pedestrian bridge to the airport, the airport train station is in the road between the two, and there are screaming train whistles all night. I'm underslept and a little fuzzy as a result. Not the state to be in when I need to be aware. I caught myself twice doing stupid things before I got to the lounge, like standing in the open rearranging the tickets and receipts in my purse. I've now had some more tea (coke actually, since I'm not sure I trust the water — I've got my filter bottle filled) and I'm feeling a little more awake. The two times when I need to have maximum awareness are going to be the transition from the international to the domestic terminal in Calcutta, and the plane change in Bombay. I'll get a nap on the way to Calcutta.

The other interesting thing about the hotel is that even though the décor was Whorehouse Modern, it's apparently a fairly serious business hotel. There was a stapler and box of pencils and hole punch and scissors in the desk. In all, the room was huge after the tiny room in Chofu.

This really is a third-world airport, and *every* airline has both first class and business class lounges so that the wealthy can be protected from the *hoi polloi*. As an egalitarian, I'm offended, but as a tired guy 10000 miles from home, I really appreciate it.

I've got about 20 minutes to plane time, so one last thing so I can pack up and hit the loo before I go: I flipped through the TV channels in the hotel while I was having my 400 baht room service continental breakfast. There was MTV Singapore (did you even know there was a Singaporean version of MTV? I can't imagine them showing any of the racier videos given the local government), CNBC, BBC, the Spanish and German CNN analogues. There were three local channels: one was showing the local version of the Mickey Mouse club (yeech: talk about exporting American commercialization!), one was showing an American scifi movie dubbed into Thai (which I think was pirated, I recognized the actress as of the last decade, though can't name her, but the color was oddly saturated, like it was a third-generation video-tape copy), and the Thai channel showing a local garden show. I suspect part of this list of channels was a result of being an international hotel, but I wonder how much is a function of the mass globalization of culture?

Off for India. Write to you tonight, and talk to you tomorrow.

Love and kisses. . . .



Bangkok hotel room decorated in Whorehouse Modern. It's not quite so obvious in black-and-white, but it's fairly garish.

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Sunday, March 17, 2002 1:52 PM
To: Liz Copeland; Allie Copeland
Subject: FW: Canadian Joke

OK, even I know enough French to get this one. It helps if you read Sean's joke below, first.

—Original Message—

From: Stephen Walli
Sent: Friday, March 15, 2002 10:51 PM
To: Interix Team in Redmond
Subject: RE: Canadian Joke

Old jokes never die. They just keep coming around and around :-) Le meme rire en francais from 2 years ago from a friend in France (including the male stripper), though note the embarrassing job in this version:

C'est le premier jour de la rentrée des classes. Le prcf s'adresse aux élèves :

- Vous allez me donner votre prénom, et me dire ce que votre papa fait comme métier. A toi.

- Je m'appelle Solange, et mon papa est cuisinier.

- Moi, c'est Yann, et mon papa est facteur.

- Moi c'est Sylvain, et mon papa, il est strip-teaseur dans une boîte de pédés...

Stupeur dans la classe ! Mais, la maitresse passe rapidement à un autre sujet.

Evidemment, à la récréation, Sylvain n'arrête pas de se faire chambrer, et un de ses copains lui demande :

- C'est vraiment la vérité vraie? Ton papa se fout à poil devant les pédés ?

- Non, il bosse chez Microscft, mais j'avais trop honte de le dire...

s.

—Original Message—

From: Sean Ives-Hayes
Sent: Thursday, March 14, 2002 9:50 AM
To: Interix Team in Redmond
Subject: Canadian Joke

THIS REALLY IS THE JOKE OF THE YEAR!!!

It's the first day cf school and the teacher thought she'd get to know the kids by asking them their name and what their father does for a living. The first little girl says: "My name is Mary and my daddy is a postman." The next little boy says: "I'm Andy and my Dad is a mechanic." Then one little boy says: "My name is Jimmy and my father is a stripteasedancer in a cabaret for gay men." The teacher gasps and quickly changes the subject, but later in the school yard the teacher approaches Jimmy privately and asks if it was really true that his Dad dances nude in a gay bar. He blushed and said, "I'm sorry but my dad plays hockey for Team USA, and I was just too embarrassed to say so."

From: Jeffrey L. Copeland [copeland@alumni.caltech.edu]
Sent: Wednesday, March 13, 2002 4:57 PM
To: Jeff at Caltech
Subject: konichiwa sekai

OK, kids: I was going to write a long riff on "Back in the USSR", but I just can't get the damned thing to scan. I'm on the other side of the planet from y'all, but I'm working on *my* SFPazine, and hope you are, too. The deadline's two weeks from today – that's today my time, tomorrow yours – with institutionalized slop to Saturday. I'll be back in the states a week ahead of the deadline, so the mailing will go out on time.

(And the subject line? "hello, world.")

From: Janice Gelb
Sent: Sunday, March 17, 2002 11:38 AM

To: Jeffrey L. Copeland [copeland@alumni.caltech.edu]
Subject: Re: konichiwa sekai
— *Jeffrey L. Copeland wrote:*
Janice Gelb wrote,
Cool - hope you're getting to do some touristy things.
Oh, here and there. As much as I hate trip reports, I may do a zine of the e-mail I've been sending to Liz and the kids.
Well, you've got a precedent with Rich Lynch's postcard diaries.

From: Jeffrey L. Copeland [copeland@alumni.caltech.edu]
Sent: Sunday, March 17, 2002 2:04 PM
To: Janice Gelb
Subject: Re: konichiwa sekai
Janice Gelb wrote,
Well, you've got a precedent with Rich Lynch's postcard diaries.

Yeah. I've also been collecting all the interesting ephemera, like the cabin baggage tag for the domestic airline in India with stamps from all the security checkpoints. I gotta say, travelling in business class in Asia is making all the difference between this being interesting and absolutely nerve-racking. And after being on the ground in Hyderabad for 18 hours, having a driver at my disposal here makes all the difference between local traffic being nerve-racking and fatal.

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Sunday, March 17, 2002 3:14 PM
To: Satoshi Sakamori
Subject: RE: domo arigato
Some day I will be able to speak to you in Japanese, I hope.
Please feel free to link to
<http://alumni.caltech.edu/~copeland>.
If you follow the link to
<http://alumni.caltech.edu/~copeland/work>,
you'll find some articles I've written. You've already seen some of them!

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Sunday, March 17, 2002 3:42 PM
To: Liz Copeland; allie copeland
Subject: message 1 from my palm: on board the flight from bangkok to calcutta

On board the plane to Calcutta.
Of course after I shut down the laptop, I thought of a bunch of other things I wanted to tell you. There isn't laptop power on the Airbus, so I'm composing on the Palm and I'll just mail you this note directly.

I nearly screwed up big time. The luxury lounges in Bangkok are outside the security checkpoint. And I took a wrong turn for my gate and cleared the checkpoint for gates 11 through 15 rather than 1 through 5, and then had to backtrack and do it again. (I should have known. The stairs down to gate 1 is a landmark on the way to the lounge. Way too tired here.)

Just to add to the confusion, all the clocks in the terminal are set to different times – as I was backtracking, the clock at gate 11 said 11:12 and a minute later the one at gate 12 said 11:08. Both passes through passenger screening and hand luggage check were as much of a joke as the screening of checked baggage. Again, the woman running the machine was talking to someone and not even looking at the screens at one of the checkpoints.

Like at Narita there aren't enough gates, so for some flights – like this one – they put you on a bus to go out on the tarmac to go up the external stairs. It's how I arrived last night.

(The stewardess just gave me a glass of juice. The orange juice in Thailand is redder and has a deeper sweetness than from American oranges. The juice I had at breakfast was the same.)

Next to the elevator in the Bangkok hotel was a door labelled "Senior Executive Assistant Manager." Think of an organization structure that requires such a title!

The safety video on this flight is alternating between Thai & English, but the English has clearly been overdubbed. I keep expecting to hear "Oh, no: Godzilla! Call out the army!"

Business class pays off again: the economy line to board was a seething mass of Indians. Most of the Thai passengers – including the saffron-robed monks and 12-year-old shaven-headed acolytes – are in business class, which is only half full. (Apparently Buddhist monks, like Pentacostalists, don't take vows of poverty.)

Bangkok airport is a mass of wall-to-wall duty free stores. I mean, *really*. It's almost impossible to describe. And then there's the barrage as you step out of customs on arrival. Guys crowding around offering you taxis. Hawking for the duty free shops. Offering a limo to the train station, which is across the road.

One of the taxi stands in the arrival area boast that they are ISO 9002 certified. I've forgotten which sub-standard 9002 is, but now I'm gonna have to look it up. [As I'm transferring Palm notes into e-mail, I've checked. 9002 is "Quality systems – Model for quality assurance in production, installation and servicing."]

Well, southern efficiency in Asia is like southern efficiency in the Americas. We finally got the plane loaded up at noon for an 11:40 departure, and now we're waiting for our turn in the departure queue.

And damn! I hate Airbuses. This thing is bouncing all over on the taxiway, and I don't think it's just rough pavement. The Boeing I arrived on was much smoother over the same ground.

But then, as wierd as Asian travel is already, I saw a plane on the tarmac here that I'm glad I'm not taking: an Aeroflot Tupelov.

I had ordered the Thai curry prawns for lunch from the stewardess as we were getting the plane loaded. The steward, whose English is better just came by to say it's quite spicy and that he thinks I want the sweet & sour chicken instead.



From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Sunday, March 17, 2002 3:45 PM
To: Liz Copeland; allie copeland
Subject: message 2 from my palm: more on board flight from bangkok to calcutta

Well, that note got to the maximum Palm note size, so you get my "on the way to Calcutta notes" in two parts. One nice thing about the Palm rather than the laptop with it's stiff keyboard is I'm not hammering the E key. A couple more disjoint observations.

There was an Indian guy on the bus from the gate to the plane wearing a button that said, "I've lost 20 kgs – ask me how." Multi-level marketing weight loss schemes even in Asia! [Indeed, I note, again as I'm transferring from the Palm to e-mail, that there was an Herbalife meeting at my hotel here in Hyderabad Sunday morning! Didn't they go out of business in the US?]

It was always very quiet in the office in Chofu. Even though it was a big open space with cubicles. People kept their voices down when talking, and there are no speaker phones. All very calm and Japanese. When I needed to make an international phone call, like to Jason back in the office, I found an unused conference room, so the raised voice wouldn't be disruptive. I don't think Raja ever caught on to the local custom, since he used a louder-than-normal voice to counter my lowered one. Not my place to teach him manners, I fear. (Allie, JJ: it *is* my place to teach *you* manners, though, so watch out.)

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Sunday, March 17, 2002 3:50 PM
To: Liz Copeland; allie copeland
Subject: message 3 from my palm: at Calcutta airport

Calcutta airport domestic terminal, waiting for my flight to Bombay:

Think of a third-world airport complete with flys and armed guards inspecting baggage. Got the picture in your head? You're looking at the view I'm seeing over the top of my Palm.

Step back an hour. The baggage handlers on the international side of the airport unloaded the Indian package tour group's luggage first and left the business & first class for last, or nearly so. So the very nice Star Alliance "priority handling" tag was counter-productive.

And then my checked bag x-rayed positive for electronics, and had a chalk mark to indicate it, so the customs inspectors wanted to know what was in it. I had to think hard. I finally figured out it was spare batteries for the laptop. "Spare? Why do you need spare parts?" "Batteries. For when I am away from mains power." "Where is the computer?" "In my backpack. All the computer equipment I am bringing into India will leave with me." "OK." There is no native Indian computer hardware industry and they are desperately afraid of losing import duty. So I got through customs again without having my bags actually opened.

Got local currency while waiting for baggage. The Bank of India has paid the bribes to have their money changing kiosk inside the customs area – actually, they're the government, so I guess they get to do it by force rather than bribery. If you want anyone else to change your money you need to clear customs first. 'Twas okay: Bank of India's rate was actually a spot better than anyone else's.

Now, the Indian rupee is baseless and worthless, so the largest coin that exists is a 5 rupee. Everything else is paper money. Fortunately, I got a single 5 rupee coin as part of the currency exchange, as will become important in a moment. (And this explains why in Japan Raja kept being upset about all the loose change he was carrying.)

Anyway, to the customs hall exit. I asked the tall uniformed chap with the beret & the rifle where the domestic terminal was. Next building down the road to the left. And so through the gauntlet...

It's perhaps a 300 meter walk from the front door of the international terminal and the front door of the domestic. I got offered 3 taxis – one actually followed me for 50 meters, honking – and I was followed by one frighteningly persistent alms-seeker who wanted a tip for giving me directions. I finally flipped the whole of my local change – the aforementioned 5 rupee coin – at him.

(And now after another hand luggage inspection, I'm on the plane ready to head to Bombay. I didn't get a nap on the flight from Bangkok because my adrenaline was pumping. Oh, yeah, and cause I was writing the previous parts of this note. Ditto here, I bet, but we'll see. Anyway, I was okay on situational awareness in Calcutta, not great but okay – though I should have paid off the pan-handler earlier to make the distraction go away.)

Anyway, we were getting to the domestic terminal. Past the machine gun emplacement – no, I'm not making that up ... a soldier and sandbags and a light stand-mounted gun and everything – into the terminal. My ticket got inspected by armed soldiers before they let me into the door, and then by another one to get from the entrance hallway to the checkin desk.

Boarding passes, and then you have to wait until they announce your flight for security check before you're allowed into the gate area.



Security here was a bit more serious. I wondered why the ticket agent insisted on my having “cabin baggage” tags for both my backpack and purse. Hand baggage is x-rayed and hand inspected at the entrance to the gate area. Standing metal detector, hand-wanding, and a frisking for me. Then the airline does another pat-down and carry-on luggage inspection. After each inspection the baggage tag gets a stamp and after each pat-down the boarding pass gets one.

The Americanization of the world extends to the ubiquitous television sets. These were tuned to cricket.

Now we’re in the air and on the way to Bombay, so I’m going to hunker down and read SFPA for the two-and-a-half hour trip.

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Sunday, March 17, 2002 3:52 PM
To: Liz Copeland; allie copeland
Subject: message 4 from my Palm: still on the flight to Bombay

Still on the cross-India trip to Bombay. So I lied. A couple more disjoint thoughts.

I had questioned whether Raja’s reaction to the muslim protests in Hyderabad were hindu rascism. His comment about my flights home at least says it’s regionalism: much better to leave the country via Bombay (that is, in his familiar south India) rather than my booked departure through Delhi (in unfamiliar north India).

In the same vein, Tak was curious about how many countries I’d visited when I told him about my visit to Japan as a kid. He was utterly amazed at the itinerary of that trip. “I’ve only been to two countries,” he said, “Japan and the US.” Yes, but he was with DEC before Microsoft, and so did extensive east coast US travel for them – both in New England and to DEC’s Charlotte NC dev center. “My English was not as good then and the accent was very confusing for me.” “It’s okay Tak, the accent is sometimes confusing for Americans.”

The very nice 1st class flight attendants for Jet Airways – that’s the new Indian domestic carrier that I insisted on using – keep wanting me to eat more. “Surely you want dessert?” “No, really, I’ve been on the move since before dawn your time and I’ve been eating the whole way.”

My water bottle, by the way, caused some confusion in the second hand luggage inspection. “What’s this?” “My water bottle.” “What’s in it?” “Um, drinking water.” I could almost see the “crazy westerner” thought balloon above her head.

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Sunday, March 17, 2002 3:55 PM
To: Liz Copeland; allie copeland

Subject: message 5 from my palm: on board the plane from Bombay to Hyderabad

I seem to be compelled to write today. Now I'm through Bombay airport and sitting on board the plane for Hyderabad waiting for takeoff. The door is closed and we appear to be about 15 minutes early.

Stuff you learn from listening to the air plane announcements: Photography is prohibited in all airports in India and from the air over Indian territory. Neither smoking nor alcoholic beverages are permitted. And life jackets are only supplied in the first class cabin. (That last is okay, I'm actually flying first even though the itinerary says business class.)

The transition in Bombay was painless. The only complicated thing was that, even though it was already tagged, I had to point out my suitcase and have a crew member initial the tag and the claim check before they'd put it on board this plane. I guess it's the late night arrival in Bombay as a port of entry followed by having to change from the international to the domestic terminal that's really a pain even for the Indians. The domestic and international terminals are a fair distance apart, and the ever helpful cab drivers are there to take the westerner.

Two left overs from Japan:

They don't make the little 250 ml cans of Coke anymore – though they do make 500 ml cans now in addition to the usual 350 ml/12 oz cans. Other things come in 250 ml cans, but I can't find a replacement for the lost Coke can.

However there was one grocery item I wanted to bring home, but I only saw it in the vending machine at the office, which was a fountain dispenser, not a can machine: Ko cha ka den tea. Now if you sound it out, it's almost Japlish for "culture garden tea." And sure enough, the corresponding kanji for "ka den" are in fact garden. Very odd.

Also, it looks like the Indian government managed to come to an arrangement with the muslims in the east over this disputed temple. For the moment I'll be more in danger from the limo driver's skills in traffic than sectarian rioting

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Sunday, March 17, 2002 12:04 PM
To: Liz Copeland
Subject: RE: indian food

Yeah, the uprisings apparently continue. Headline in Saturday's Hyderabad paper was "only 5 stabbed this week." I'm being careful, and there's more in the messages I composed on the way here, which I'll send shortly.

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Sunday, March 17, 2002 4:14 PM
To: Liz Copeland; allie copeland
Subject: message 6 from my palm: arrived in Hyderabad

I've now sent the complete notes that were on my Palm. This one is composed Sunday afternoon from little snippets I put into my Palm after I arrived at the hotel last night.

After the hotel in Chofu, with a room slightly smaller than my office at Microsoft, the room at the Taj Residency is the size of a cricket pitch. Full-sized bed, couch, desk, closet, and a full-sized bath. The room and bath are tiled in marble, and the room has a thick wall-to-wall carpet. True to Indian form, the marble is polished, but the carpet is mis-fit and bulges in places.

On my arrival at the airport last night, I waited for my driver. I figured he might be a little delayed since the flight was actually 15 minutes early getting in, but then a helpful chap from the hotel booking desk came up to offer me a hotel room. When I explained that I was being met by a driver, and I was looking for his placard, the chap explained that drivers had to wait outside, that the terminal was open to passengers only. Well, there were *some* drivers meeting people inside the terminal, and people who were clearly relatives inside the terminal to meet passengers, so what's the difference?

Anyway, I went outside into the scrum. "Hotel room, sir? Taxi, sir?" "No. No. No." Driver finally appeared. He'd been over to one side, out of my line of sight. I spotted him, pointed and said "yes,"

loudly. He hurried over, grabbed my bag, and we were followed to the car by only one alms-seeker. Once he'd opened the door for me, gotten me and my baggage safely inside, he climbed in, turned around and said "Microsoft? Yes, Hi-tec City?" "Yes, tomorrow. Now, go to Taj Residency hotel." "Not Microsoft?" "No. Hotel."

Zoom. Off we go. I was sorry that there is no liquor on board Indian jets. Look, Liz: I apologize for everything I've ever said critical of your driving aggressively in traffic. Traffic in Hyderabad is huge lorries, bicycles, motor scooters, motor cycle cabs (a little open cart built on top of a motor cycle that carries passengers for hire), and regular cars. And the lane markers are suggestions. The traffic signals may be just suggestions, too: I was groping in my luggage for a rosary about then. (OK, not true: But I was watching the buildings go by, not watching this guy navigate through traffic. He knows to the half centimeter where his fenders were, and I didn't. It's like Denis Jenkinson talking about running the *Mille Miglia* with Sterling Moss driving: Jenks said he couldn't possibly be scared, he didn't know enough to be.)

Even though the room is huge, the mattress is like a rock. And so, we settled in one place for a couple of days, and to sleep. . . .

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Sunday, March 17, 2002 4:36 PM
To: Liz Copeland; allie copeland
Subject: message 7 from Palm: from Sunday morning's notes at the hotel

There's a shot near the beginning of *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* where Bond has checked into the hotel, and we fade from a shot of the pool during the day to one of the "Casino" sign being reflected in the pool after dark. Well, I had that experience in reverse this morning. I looked out my window last night, and noticed I was overlooking the pool, which looked rather nice in the dark. This morning when I got out of bed, I went to the window, opened the curtains, and found myself in the bright sun of an equatorial morning. Wow!

And then there was the satellite dish on the building across the way. It points straight up, or nearly so. (Where's the geosynchronous satellite? Over the equator. Where's the equator from here? Well. . . here.)

And there, on the lawn next to the pool was a woman, sweeping the lawn with a palm frond. Not a rake, not a broom. A palm frond.

And then there is the laundry bag. It's not disposable plastic, it's burlap, with the hotel's name printed on it. They don't slide a newspaper under your door, you get *The Times of India (Hyderabad edition)* in a burlap bag with a loop fastened to your doorknob. And that's the fundamental Indian economic truth: materials are dear, and labor is cheap.

I had ordered room service last night, but there had appeared under my door a chit for the breakfast buffet, so I thought I'd go down and sit in the atrium to eat. Called and cancelled room service before I got my shower. Had to remember not to open my mouth under the shower — can't drink the water.

The orange juice here is the same color as in Thailand, but not as sweet. In fact, it's a little on the tart side. And the little packets of artificial sweetener are lined with cellophane, so the powder doesn't get wet and clumpy.

Took a walk around the pool and circumnavigated the hotel. Confused the doorman horribly be coming in from outside. And then it was ten o'clock and my driver was due, so I ran upstairs to take my vitamins and grab my backpack.

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Sunday, March 17, 2002 5:10 PM
To: Liz Copeland; allie copeland
Subject: message 8: in the office Sunday afternoon

So if travelling in Hyderabad traffic in the dark is scary, imagine what it was like in the daylight. As we were pulling up to the HI-Tec complex (that's actually an acronym, by the way — Hyderabad

Information Technology Enterprise Center, I think), I was realizing that a gin-and-tonic would have been really nice.

This morning's driver had no more English than yesterday's, and when we got to the complex, the guards wouldn't let him pull in. He had to decant me outside the gate. I showed my Microsoft badge to the gate guard, who led me to the guard shack, where the man at the desk tells the guard to take me to the inside security desk, where I fill out a form, where I'm handed to the elevator guard, who presses the ninth floor button for me, and then off the elevator I'm retrieved by the Microsoft floor elevator guard, who hands me to the Microsoft lobby guard, who hands me to a factotum, who actually has a local badge for me. Full employment.

The factotum showed me my office, and I took a wander around. All the familiar faces are here. I ran into Amit almost immediately. Saw Shakar (he's a very good NFS guy who spent nearly a year in Redmond), and then Niraj and Dhruv. Rana stuck his head in about noon, and he and I and Niraj and Dhruv went downstairs for lunch. They made sure to order me white guy curry, and mineral water (rather than the filtered tap water).

It's taken me four hours to get through my accumulated e-mail, and get these messages out to you. (Though I did take about half an hour to get expense report stuff sorted out and add the \$5 American Express charged me for the ATM adventure. All the work I'm doing on the road should make it pretty painless to file the expenses when I get back.)

It's about 5pm now, and I want to get my slides rearranged for tomorrow. Then Rana and his girlfriend and I are going to go out to explore a bit at about 5:30, when it will have cooled off. I'll feel safer with a native guide.

It was really wonderful to hear your voice this morning, sweetie. Like I said, I was ready to come home and sleep in my own bed with my own wife about last Thursday. After a day of shuffling papers and mail, I'm exhausted, and I'd almost like to beg off the excursion with Rana, but it's going to really be my only chance to see any of Hyderabad.

Love you, and I hope you got back to sleep.



The view from my office window in Hyderabad. There are no cows in the field below, but note the satellite dish on the building opposite pointing straight up.

From: Liz Copeland
Sent: Monday, March 18, 2002 12:30 AM
To: Jeff Copeland
Subject: [Fwd: Draft of Sunday afternoon at home]

I tried sending this earlier and the mail server was down, so I saved it in Drafts folder and am trying again....

Liz Copeland wrote:

Hi! I've gotten almost 7 hours of sleep since we last talked (and in only 2 chunks, that's amazing...) so I'm practically perky. Allie ended up sleeping over at Rachel's party and came home exhausted at 6:30 this morning. I'd been up since 5, and had showered, cleaned the kitchen and started reading the paper so I dragged her out to breakfast at Lil John's where we could chat about the party and my new ideas for making a living as an artist. She started falling asleep at the table so we came home.

.....

I hope you finally get some sleep yourself.

Love, Liz

From: Trinlay Khadro
Sent: Saturday, March 16, 2002 6:58 AM
To: Jeffrey Copeland
Subject: Japan!

Oh cool! Be sure to take time to see some of the cultural stuff. If I could go I'd be sure to take in a few days in Nara & Kyoto as well as Tokyo. The Nikko shrine, which includes the tomb of Tokugawa Iyeasu is really splendid (Japan's answer to Rococco) in photos so I'm sure it's better in person. See if you can reply to this email ok. I don't know why mail from you is bouncing... Everything else comes through fine-I think. Got one recently from Guy & Rosey. This week I've been drawing lots of aliens, which should delight zine-eds everywhere.

From: Jeffrey L. Copeland [copeland@alumni.caltech.edu]
Sent: Monday, March 18, 2002 9:24 AM
To: Trinlay Khadro
Subject: Re: Japan!

Trinlay Khadro wrote,

Oh cool! Be sure to take time to see some of the cultural stuff. If I could go I'd be sure to take in a few days in Nara & Kyoto as well as Tokyo. The Nikko shrine, which includes the tomb of Tokugawa Iyeasu is really splendid (Japan's answer to Rococco) in photos so I'm sure it's better in person.

Yes, if I'd had a little more lead time, I'd have gone down to Kyoto to visit Katsura, the imperial palace. It's open to the public, but you need to reserve a space on a tour quite some time in advance. Unless you're a foreigner, in which case they reserve some number of slots for short lead times. When I was first in Japan as a child, I was too young to be allowed to go to the palace, and so I had to wait at the hotel with my brother and sister while my parents visited. I've been to Nikko and Nara before. But I forgot until it was too late that the tomb of the 47 ronin is in Tokyo, and I've never been to *it*. I did get a lovely afternoon at Meiji Shrine, and a day just soaking up the bustle of Shinjuku and the Ginza. I'll send you a copy of my trip reports.

Anyway, this week I'm in India, which is a remarkable contrast, but more about that in print....

JLC

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Monday, March 18, 2002 10:55 AM
To: Liz Copeland; allie copeland
Subject: Monday morning in the Hyderabad office

I don't know if I made the observation yesterday, but the contrast here is amazing. I'm looking out the window of my office, in one of the most wired and internet-connected buildings in Hyderabad, and I can see a massive apartment block being built next door. I can see a building about half a kilometer away with a massive satellite dish on its roof. And then down below my window is a red scrub plain with little walls separating plots, and little cinderblock sheds on the plots and there are cows wandering around.

Sign I noticed on the way to the office this morning (when I was brave enough to peek out from behind the newspaper): “Silicon Fast Food”. They take Hyderabad being an information technology city seriously, even providing fast food for computers. (Or is that *cf* computers?)

Spent a couple of hours last evening driving around town with Rana and his girlfriend Adita. We drove out to the massive lake in the middle of town, and walked around on the shore for a bit among the families lounging on Sunday evening. There’s a huge statue of Buddha on an island in the lake, carved out of a single piece of stone. Then we went up to the Hindu temple on the highest hill in town. Beautiful white stone with a gold bell tower, and marble steps leading up to it. There were police checking backpacks at the bottom of the steps, but I apparently look sufficiently unlike a Muslim terrorist that they waved me past. (Or as Rana said, they have no worries, because you can’t be carrying a bomb: the bomb store is closed on Sundays.) I took some pictures, but it was dusk by then, and I don’t know if they’ll come out.

By the time we’d done those two stops I was all in. I dropped Rana and Adita off back at the office so they could pick up his motor bike, and had the driver take me back to the hotel. Had the buffet dinner — they kept wanting me to eat more — and called it a night. (Interestingly, the buffet dinner was 575 rupees including the two bottles of tonic water, but the gin I ordered to go in one of the tonics was 600 rupees.)

Part of the traffic problem is that motor bikes ride in the middle of the lane, rather than to the side of the road. For all the honking and lane changing going on, though, the drivers are fairly smooth. Unfortunately, none of the cars has had back seat belts. But then, the motor bike drivers are in the middle of the road without helmets, so what the hell?

Two more bits of contrast: There are fairly luxurious houses on the main road leading into the Jubilee Hills — that’s the district in town where the office is. And in front of many of them are vendors hawking fruit at little folding tables.

They’re also working on widening the road here. They’ve got most of it graded, though I saw them working on a stretch of it: Guys with hand tools leveling the ground. Then there was the fellow with the hand sledge hammer pounding on the rocks along the 200 meters that had its underlayment down. The interesting thing is that there’s no order to it. It’s clear which stretch of road is being widened, but there’s a patch that’s graded, followed by a patch that’s had nothing done to it, followed by a patch that’s got underlayment. All very odd.

I need to have the camera out on the drive tomorrow morning to take pictures of this contrast.

Anyway, Peri’s mother had a minor heart attack this morning, so we’ve put off my talk until tomorrow. I very much want to get this talk over with. I’ll spend the day doing the planning lists that I would have done tomorrow, instead.

Love you all. . . .

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Monday, March 18, 2002 2:54 PM
To: Donn Terry; Jason Zions
Cc: Liz Copeland
Subject: hyderabad telephone numbers

I’m at x3311 in the office. The hotel is 001-91-40-339-3939, where I’m in room 208.

(Liz, the main office number is 001-91-40-666-1000, though I bet Donn and Jazz have it on their speed dials. It’s my experience that you can’t use the voice mail system in the India office though a US phone –if you dial 3311, it will say, “I’m sorry, but I can’t dial that extension for you”, so you’ll have to wait for a human being. If you call after hours, you’ll get a guard, who will probably speak Telugu (that’s really the name of the local language) instead of English. Just patiently keep asking for the extension number. Of course, after hours here, I’m probably back at the hotel, where their English is quite good.)

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Monday, March 18, 2002 3:40 PM

To: Liz Copeland; allie copeland
Cc: Guy H Lillian III, Chris Kostanick
Subject: Monday afternoon in Hyderabad

I just went out for a walk around the building, and coming back up the elevator, I was getting sideways glances from the other occupants. "Wait a second: that's a white guy. Aren't we supposed to be doing their software now? What are we doing importing Americans to do software? Jeez, think of the economic dislocation!" I was amused.

Anyway, I watched the bus drop the next shift of telephone answers off downstairs while I was walking. (Guy, Chris, one of the other occupants of the building is the General Electric call center. If you call GE with an appliance question, it gets actually answered in Hyderabad.) Since they're hiring shift workers, they supply buses to get people to the office.

But, it was the manufacturer's label on the front of the bus that caught my eye, and made me think of Guy and Chris. Chris already knows that there's an Indian software school of the name, but I hadn't realized that they made motor vehicles, too. In fact, my car this morning was made by them. You might even have said it was a bodacious model.

The company's name? Tata.

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Monday, March 18, 2002 3:42 PM
To: Siddharth Rana
Subject: two things

OK, I just went downstairs for a walk around the building. It's a dry heat, but I wouldn't have wanted to be out there for more than ten minutes, and I certainly wouldn't have wanted to do that in May or June. I stand corrected on the local climate.

From: Siddharth Rana
Sent: Monday, March 18, 2002 3:49 PM
To: Jeff Copeland
Subject: RE: two things

Good that you tasted it, but please do not do that for the second time; I do not want to write the whole of i18n code myself

From: Liz Copeland
Sent: Monday, March 18, 2002 8:46 PM
To: Jeff Copeland
Subject: Warnings from your wife...

Don't take any field trips to Pakistan. Don't hang out with any american embassy people. And don't go to church.

Love ya, see ya friday....

Liz

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Tuesday, March 19, 2002 8:25 AM
To: Liz Copeland; allie copeland
Subject: Monday night after dinner

I finally left the office at about 7:40, and it took 10 minutes to go down the nine floors on the elevator, since we were into shift change at the call centers. Then in the ensuing zoo on street level I couldn't find my driver, and actually ended up crossing the road three times. [I twitted Rana last night at a point when we were doing something similar that if he got me killed in Hyderabad traffic he'd have to write all the i18n code. He played the line back to me later.]

Then, of course, we got caught behind the busses taking the off-shift folks back to town. Then we happened up to the Andhra Pradesh (or however you spell the name of this province) Governor General's residence, just as he was due back from some outing, and we had to wait while they closed traffic down both ways so he and his entourage could arrive. This evening's driver had more English than any of the past ones (but still not an amazing amount) and kept apologizing. Don't worry, I kept telling him, my dinner will wait.

Finally got back to the hotel about 8:30, and then read SPPA over dinner. I must have gotten sucked in, because when I finally looked at my watch after three trips through the buffet line, and it was 10. So much for my good intentions of doing some work on the Hugo software tonight.

As I may have mentioned earlier, my talk got put off till Tuesday, because Peri, the new lead developer for Interix, had a family emergency. So I need to get some sleep so I'm coherent in the morning. I think I'm going to make a point of seeing how much Unix experience there is in the room before I start. Amit'll be there, and I want to emphasize to him how much of a problem he's gonna have.

Rao Remala was visiting from Redmond, by the way, and he and I had a nice chat. He's fairly disgusted with the politics at the moment, and is [upset on our behalf] that the Interix development is all getting moved to India.

Anyway, it's now 10:30. Gotta snooze. ...

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Tuesday, March 19, 2002 8:41 AM
To: Liz Copeland
Subject: RE: Warnings from your wife...

Yeah, I saw that, but wasn't going to mention it. I'm keeping as low a profile as possible. Guards at all the gates at the office complex. Second floor of the hotel (that's British second floor, not American), surrounded by Indians. Car doors locked.

But tired people do stupid things, like my mindlessly rinsing my toothbrush off under the tap last night. I caught myself only after I had my mouth open and the toothbrush in it, but before I bit down.

Anyway, more later, but I've got a meeting with Amit in 15 minutes.

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Tuesday, March 19, 2002 6:49 PM
To: Liz Copeland; allie copeland
Subject: Tuesday evening before I leave the office

I just spent a horribly long day, starting with an hour with Amit, giving two back-to-back internationalization talks, watching the last half hour of the India-Zimbabwe cricket match with some rabid fans [what *are* the rules to that game?], spending three hours reviewing the release plans for the Japanese edition, and then finally (at 4:30) getting to my mail, which included three code reviews.

It's 6:30, but I wanted to get some random observations off to you folks before I left for the hotel.

First, I remembered Arthur C Clarke's observation about civilized transportation: any form of transportation that he can use while he's reading is civilized. That is to say, while having a driver in Hyderabad is the difference between terror (I'm merely occasionally scared) and fatality (driving in this would kill me), it's really nice to sit in the backseat and have someone else do it.

Second, I finally got the waiter at breakfast to dilute my tea with boiling water so that it was merely strong as opposed to able to die a full bolt of fabric after stripping the enamel from my teeth.

Saw a woman driving a motorscooter on the way to the office this morning. Wearing a sari.

Also, I finally twigged to what the little inset steel poles are at the gate of the office complex: a cow grate.

Anyway, the contrast between rich and poor really struck me today, watching the laborers working on the road and then on the apartment block next door. I'm reminded again how privileged I am materially, and it will be a while before I take it for granted again.

I love you. More mail tomorrow.

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Tuesday, March 19, 2002 6:58 PM
To: Liz Copeland
Subject: RE: [Fwd: AMERICA traveling exhibit venues]
Wow!!!!!! Very cool. But hey, you got to Spain before your quilt this time!

—Original Message—

From: Liz Copeland
Sent: Tuesday, March 19, 2002 6:35 PM
To: Jeff Copeland
Subject: [Fwd: AMERICA traveling exhibit venues]

Hubba, hubba....

Karey Bresenhan wrote:

Several cf you have contacted me to make sure that Kansas City is still on the definite venue list for AMERICA: From the Heart, since it did not appear in Amy's posting. YES, it is. Here's the definite list.

April 4-7 - Patchwork & Quilt Expo - Barcelona, Spain - Palau del Congressos

May 17-19 - Spring Quilt Market - Kansas City, Missouri - Bartle Hall

June 8-9 - NY Quilts! - Troy, NY

July 18-20 - Embellishment - Portland - Oregon Convention Center

We are in the process cf completing the traveling schedule now, and I'm happy to say that many venues have either requested the exhibit or expressed great interest in it...including an intriguing phone call from the cfice cf the Secretary cf Defense the other day! More when I have more...please bear with me.

Karey Bresenhan

From: Liz Copeland
Sent: Tuesday, March 19, 2002 10:56 PM
To: Jeff Copeland
Subject: Re: Tuesday evening before I leave the office

I have two comments:

1, I quote Tom Clancy, regarding cricket: why spoil it with rules?
and two, about that cow guard, you are such a city boy....

Love, Liz

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Wednesday, March 20, 2002 9:03 AM
To: Liz Copeland; Allie Copeland
Subject: quick note after getting back to the hotel Tuesday night

In 1956 at the 24 hours race at LeMans, there was an horrific accident in which a magnesium-bodied Mercedes flipped into the air, landed in the grandstands at the straightaway and burst into flames, killing 60-odd racegoers. As I recall, the accident was precipitated when British driver Mike Hawthorne squeezed into a space that he had no right to be able to get through, starting off a sequence of bumps which resulted in the Mercedes becoming airborne. Hawthorne claimed he touched no one, but there was a smear of his green paint on one of the cars involved.

I now know how Hawthorne's car felt squeezing through that space.

My driver this evening saluted when he met me at the office reception desk. (I've finally figured out the protocol: I wait in the office. The driver comes up, and tells the guard at the front desk that he's here for me. The guard calls me. I collected the driver at the front desk and go down.) Down we went. He asked me to wait at the driveway, and ran, literally ran, to get the car, zooming up with about 6 inches to spare from running over my feet. And off we went. . . .

He put the car through spaces that he had no right to get through, and then, passing a motorbike on the two-lane road about 2 km up from the office, he swerved mostly into the opposite side of the road not worrying about the motorbike coming towards us. Except that it was a dump truck with its drivers side light out. (I'm looking for anything to hold onto about now, and chanting "hare krishna, hare krishna, . . .") He again manages to squeeze us through.

Zoom, swerve, honk, flash brights. For twenty minutes. There were four — FOUR — additional occasions when I was sure we were goners. And five other times when I was sure he was going to run over a motor bike or a pedestrian. I almost pulled a hundred rupees out of my wallet and said "this is for you if you make it without killing anyone, and I'll double it if it's not me."

And then, in one sentence after he almost killed another motorbiker (though the motorbiker was actually on the wrong side of the road himself), all was explained. The driver said, "I am kingdom of Saudi Arabia. I am driving car, chauffeur car, for two year in India."

It's all a plot by muslim terrorists.

But at least this time, I survived unscathed. (Though it's a good thing I'm wearing my brown pants.) I'm going to order room service, and then go down to the garden to have a cigar. It was a long day, and my talks went well, and I earned it.

I love you. And, Allie, I promise to never warn you about a bicyclist when you're driving again.

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Wednesday, March 20, 2002 9:03 AM
To: Liz Copeland; Allie Copeland
Subject: dinner tuesday, and amusement

So I ordered room service. Flipped on the TV while I was waiting, and managed to catch five minutes of the Hindi version of "The Weakest Link." Very, very odd.

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Wednesday, March 20, 2002 10:27 AM
To: Liz Copeland; Allie Copeland
Subject: more from Tuesday evening written Wednesday morning

After I watched a few minutes of the the Hindi "Weakest Link", I flipped channels, and found the last ten minutes of "Quiz Show", Robert Redford's movie about the rigged TV game shows of the '50s. Nice contrast. But it was followed by "Entrapment", which I started watching, except that half-an-hour into it, the thing being broadcast on that channel changed to some Telugu news show.

Not wanting to read, and not ready for bed, and my dinner dishes cleared away by the very nice room service waiter, and having decided against the cigar, I flipped channels again, and ended up in the middle of "The Man Who Knew Too Much." And that (after the car ride) probably set me up for the nightmare:

I woke bolt upright at 6am after a nightmare in which you and I, Liz, were on the ninth floor of a ten story building in Kosovo, which was bombed. The building spun around, and ceiling tiles fell down, but none of us seemed to be in any hurry to leave, and I kept picking up Alan Winston's purse instead of mine. It was (as nightmares are) very odd. But now I've talked to you on the phone, and all is well.

The contrasts still amaze me. One of the armed guards was apparent this morning — he was sitting on the wall next to the steps, his automatic rifle between his knees, his peaked cap balanced on the barrel. (If I was Robin or Cosmo, I could have identified it for sure, but I think it was an M-16. If I was Robin or Cosmo, I would have found even more gun safety violations in that one picture.)

And the lack of consistency is interesting. I've had three different newspapers in the four mornings I've woken up here. Not to mention the elevators.

The office building is circular. There are four banks of elevators at ninety degree intervals. Each bank has three different kinds of elevators — which makes a certain amount of sense since it gives them a larger one for equipment, and two different people sized ones. Also remember that material is dear, so it may be what they were able to get. Except that some banks are arranged in an L, as though

they added an extra elevator shaft later. And then the light covers are just hacked out of scratched plexiglass and glued on with sloppy brushwork. The glass over the floor indicator is held on in two elevators in my bank with yellow electrician's tape.

I don't get it.

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Wednesday, March 20, 2002 9:53 AM
To: Liz Copeland
Subject: RE: Tuesday evening before I leave the office

Yeah, I'm a city boy, but it just never occurred to me that an office complex would need a cow guard.

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Wednesday, March 20, 2002 1:40 PM
To: Allie Copeland
Subject: you need to know...

Hearing your voice this morning was a very melancholy experience for me. It was really nice to hear you, since I hadn't for more than a week, but it made me really sad that it's going to be Friday afternoon before I'll actually see you. I guess it wasn't until just a minute ago that it struck me how homesick I am.

From: Liz Copeland
Sent: Wednesday, March 20, 2002 9:45 PM
To: Jeff Copeland
Subject: Haiku Houses - Country Houses of 16th Century Japan

There's apparently a show on cable about extreme houses. Someone mentioned this webpage in the ensuing discussion. I thought you might be interested...

<http://www.haikuhouses.com/alive.htm>

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Thursday, March 21, 2002 8:53 AM
To: Liz Copeland
Subject: boy am I ready to come home

The food finally is catching up with me, and I am about to gobble some Immodium. Actually, since this is my first dose of the stuff since I've left home, I guess I've been doing okay. And then my nose has started massively running this morning. And I only slept about 4 hours last night. Clearly something I ate at dinner last night was contraindicated.

I've got a frighteningly hectic day: I'm giving a talk on the architecture of the internationalized libraries, plus everyone has tried to internationalize some code, and we're going to do a group code review and critique. If I'm lucky, I'll have a slightly quieter afternoon. However, I've got to make sure to spend 15 more minutes with Amit to ensure he knows how much he's getting saddled with here: he's got a team of people who think they know how to do internationalization ("well, we did it for this other (Windows) product, so we must understand") and who think that Unix is the plural of palace guard, and he's planning to release the Japanese version in August, which means sending to manufacturing in July. Mark and I could have done that, but not these guys. [That's part of why I want to keep in touch with Tak: he's going to bear the brunt of this, since it's his customers in Japan who'll be shorted, and he may be able to use a little advice and technical know-how.]

Anyway, no time for much more... I have to go round up some bottled water to take the Immodium, and sort my slides for today's talk.

Love you.

From: Amit Chatterjee
Sent: Thursday, March 21, 2002 3:39 PM
To: Services For Unix Team
Cc: S. Somasegar; Stephen Walli; Doug Miller
Subject: Jeff Copeland is moving on.

Jeff Copeland will be leaving the Interix team and joining [a new] project at the end of the month. 3/29 is going to be Jeff's last day at work in our team.

Since the Softway acquisition in 1999, Jeff has been a key member of the Interix and SFU team. Over the last 2+ years we have had many milestones to meet, and he has contributed significantly in several different areas of Interix. Jeff was one of the experts of the "user-mode" code in Interix, making several improvements in the utility and library space. While Jeff's not going to be around in our team when we ship the 3.0 JPN version, he laid the foundation for that release (from Interix's perspective) by building the I18N version of lib.c. Later, because of needs of the project, Jeff moved into the sub system area and has contributed heavily there too - both during the security push as well as in solving several difficult deadlock and stress issues.

Apart from his contributions to the product, I always felt that Jeff set a good example for others in the team in how to schedule work items into small enough chunks that are easy to estimate, and how to prioritize and track progress against those.

With SFU 3.0 getting close to being done, Jeff has been looking for opportunities to get back to user-mode application space. [This new] project provided him with a great opportunity. He is going to be working in the GDI area, and will once again be drawing up on the several years of experience that he has in typesetting and internationalization issues. It was too good an opportunity for him to pass up on, and Jeff, Jason and I decided that a transition starting the beginning of April would be appropriate in this case.

Losing a person with so much of experience and context in this product space is a big loss for us. As Jeff and I were talking today, we figured he has been designing and writing code in this space since before the youngsters who have recently joined the team were even born!

But I am happy that Jeff has found another great group and technology area for his next innings here at Microsoft. I also want to thank him for this two-week trip to Japan/India, to push forward the plans for the SFU 3.0 JPN Release.

Jeff - thank you being a super team member, and wish you the *very best* for the future.
Amit.

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Thursday, March 21, 2002 4:39 PM
To: Liz Copeland
Subject: after I forwarded you Amit's effusive message....

Sundar came down to ask me a question, and made up an excuse for us to walk down to the kitchen, where...

Everyone had gathered to have cake in my honor. Amit said some nice things, and I was able to make up some nice things off-the-cuff to say in reponse. (I guess four days of doing presentations to non-English speaking audiences is good for my reaction time on thinking on my feet, eh?)

I was actually pleased and touched, not just by what Amit wrote in his message, but by the fact that people actually were interested in what I had to say while I was here. It was very nice.

Still a weird damned country, though.

From: Liz Copeland
Sent: Thursday, March 21, 2002 8:20 AM
To: Jeff Copeland
Subject: Re: after I forwarded you Amit's effusive message....

This is very nice. I'm glad Amit wrote such a nice email. Does a copy of it go in your personnel file? (Okay, I'm being a cynic again. Sorry...)

You have done a fabulous job for them and worked hard to help the team succeed. You deserve to be recognized.

Love, Liz

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Thursday, March 21, 2002, 11:30PM
To: Liz Copeland
Subject: on board Thai airways flight 816 out of Delhi

If the rugger scrum leaving Hyderabad airport last Sunday was bad, the transition from domestic to international terminals in Delhi was worse. There is supposed to be a bus, but each airline runs its own, on an Indian (that is, random) schedule. My flight was supposed to arrive in Delhi from Hyderabad at about 9:20, but by the time I was leaving the terminal it was 10. (Apparently, first class on the Jet Airways flight was full of some lump of dignitaries, who were having a back room meeting at the Delhi airport. The plane was already 20 minutes late and then the bus from the plane to the terminal stopped at some outbuilding, and none of the airline folks stopped me getting off and following them. Their security guy finally did when I was in the meeting room. I apologized, backtracked, got back on the bus, and rode to the terminal. Joking with the guys from the company in Ohio who build call centers: they were visiting GE in Hyderabad today, downstairs from me.)

Anyway, I ended up threatening the driver of the bus for Indian Air — if I'd known the bus was difficult, the simpler thing to do would have been to just get a prepaid taxi. (That's where you go to the counter, tell them where you want to go, pay in advance, and they whistle up a taxi from the queue. If I'd been foolhardy, I would have taken up the truly unsavory character who claimed to be a cab driver and offered to drive me there for \$5 American. I suspect a mugging would have ensued. It was the first occasion I felt the need to resort to Anglo-Saxon in India.) Of course, once I got the bus driver moving, at 10:45, we had to contend with Indian traffic getting across the airport. (The airport is a square, with the int'l and domestic terminals in opposite corners, and the runways in the middle, so you can't cut across.)

I got to the sidewalk in front of the terminal at 11:05. My flight left at 12:05. And the sidewalk was blocked by an extended Indian family with 10 ancient members, each with 14 pieces of luggage, trying to hug all their grandchildren as they blocked the entryway. (Actually, it was probably some old-folks packaged tour, but it was just what I needed.) I got through with liberal use of elbows and toes to shins. Then I managed to miss the checked baggage screening point, so they had to send a baggage handler back to get my bag checked. (Which they wouldn't have done for a coach passenger, I'm sure.) And I managed to lose my embarkation card somewhere, and had to fill out another one, and the twerp at the immigration desk wanted me to rewrite a couple of entries — no petty tyrant bureaucrat like an Indian one. And the hand-luggage screener failed to stamp my baggage tags, so I had to go through again, and the second time the guy running the machine saw something he wanted checked out but couldn't explain what it was, so I couldn't turn it on or take it out for the hand screener. Finally, seeing that I was frustrated too, and that I was neither muslim nor Pakistani, the hand-screener just stamped the damned tags.

And then... anyway, I got on the plane without killing anyone. I had had the presence of mind to toss a clean shirt in my backpack before leaving the office, and changed on the domestic flight, since I could then put the dirty one in my checked bag, which I'm not going to see again until Seattle. (I would have changed in the office, but Niraj stopped by to see me off. He was actually very sad to see me go.) So, I'm now two glasses of wine to the good (even if they were allowed to serve booze on Indian domestic flights, I wouldn't have dared, knowing that I still had another Indian airport too contend with) about to eat dinner and get a nap. Bangkok at 5:30am, then depart for Japan and genuine civilization at 7:30. Am I sounding like an ugly American? Yes, I am. I know better, but for about an hour there, I wasn't sure I was going to make it out of India tonight, and the next flight to Bangkok from Delhi is Sunday.

Anyway, I'm safely on my way home, which I'll reach 21 hours from now.

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Friday, March 22, 2002 1:09 PM
To: Liz Copeland
Subject: United Flight 876 — Bangkok to Tokyo

Relatively painless transition in Bangkok. Well, give or take that it was 5:30am, and I'd had two hours of sleep after only four Wednesday night. The United folks insisted on hand checking all the carry-on, which (I'm sure) is a reaction to the nearly non-existent Thai native security. And the lady at the desk got on the radio to make sure that my checked bag actually made the transition. She wanted to know if there was any electronics in the bag — yes, some cables and spare batteries for the laptop — so I conclude they re-x-ray the checked stuff, too. I've had a glass of champagne, breakfast, and another two hours of sleep. I feel much happier, and am now collecting the e-mail we exchanged.

From: Jeff Copeland
Sent: Thursday, March 21, 2002 4:02 PM
To: Liz Copeland
Subject: Tokyo, Narita airport, United Airlines Red Carpet Club

So, life is definitely improved. Here I sit, a glass of scotch and water at my elbow, on the lower level of the United lounge. Turns out you can get a shower here. I did. Life is looking up. Wish I'd thrown two changes of clothes in my carryon, but then nothing else would have fit. I should have remembered that the shower suites were here, and not bothered changing clothes until now. Oh well, the frustration of fifteen hours ago in India seems.... well, 15 hours and 5000 miles ago.

The flight starts boarding in 45 minutes, and I want to finish my expenses now, so I can continue working on SFPA and get some sleeping on the last leg.

Last thought: I'd talked about how quiet the Chofu office was. The Hyderabad office was sufficiently noisy, that I often worked with my door closed. Utterly fascinating contrast.

Anyway: I'll see you in about 14 hours.