

KILEY: THIS IS CLICHE BUT I LOVE CREPES SO MUCH LIKE A LOT OF PEOPLE HAVE TRIED THEM IN AMERICA AT LIKE IHOP OR WHATEVER BUT LIKE ONCE YOU GET THERE AND LIKE YOU HAVE THE REAL THING MADE FRESH, IT'S LIKE AMAZING.

KENDALL: FRENCH FOOD IS HAS THE EXPECTATION OF BEING AMAZING AND NO ONE KNOWS THAT BETTER THAN AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOLER, KILEY GARDENER. OKAY, MAYBE NOT THE PERSON YOU WERE THINKING ABOUT BUT KILEY SPENT THE SUMMER OF 2017 LIVING IN FRANCE. SPEAKING FRENCH AND EATING ALL THE FOOD SHE COULD WHILE HAVING WHAT SHE SAYS WAS THE BEST EXPERIENCE EVER THROUGH THE INDIANA UNIVERSITY HONORS PROGRAM FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGES.

LONG TITLE BUT SUPER COOL PROGRAM THAT SENDS INDIANA HIGH SCHOOLERS TO COUNTRIES ACROSS THE GLOBE TO SPEAK A FOREIGN LANGUAGE. MY NAME IS KENDALL FAHEY AND IN THIS EPISODE OF PARLERAI OR WILL SPEAK IN FRENCH, WE ARE GOING TO SPEND A LITTLE TIME IN FRANCE THROUGH KILEY.

[INTRO]

THE SIX WEEK LONG TRIP TOOK KILEY TO BREST IN THE WEST PENINSULA AREA OF FRANCE. WHAT IS UNIQUE ABOUT THE I-U HONORS TRIP IS THAT THERE IS NO ENGLISH ALLOWED.

SCARY RIGHT.

KILEY: SO THE FULL IMMERSION STARTED, LIKE NO ENGLISH WHAT SO EVER, THE SECOND THAT THE PLANE TOUCHED DOWN IN FRENCH AND IT ACTUALLY TOUCHED DOWN IN PARIS SO THAT WOULD BE SIX, SEVEN HOURS ACTUALLY WAS THE BUS RIDE FROM PARIS TO BREST THAT WE WEREN'T ALLOWED TO SPEAK ANY ENGLISH. IT WAS GETTING INTO IT BEFORE WE MET OUR HOST FAMILIES AND IT WAS SILENT. NO ONE WANTED TO SPEAK BECAUSE THEY WERE ALL AFRAID. I WAS AFRAID.

KENDALL: THE I-U HONORS PROGRAM HAS A STRICT RULE THAT YOU ARE NOT ALLOWED TO SPEAK ANY ENGLISH WHATSOEVER. NO ENGLISH MEDIA. NO FAMILIAR BOOKS THAT YOU READ IN ENGLISH. YOU GET ONE HOUR OF INTERNET PER WEEK SO THAT YOU CAN TALK TO YOUR FAMILY THROUGH FACEBOOK. SEEMS HARSH BUT THE PROGRAM DOES IT SO THAT STUDENTS ARE ABLE TO BECOME BASICALLY FLUENT BY THE END OF THE PROGRAM.

KILEY: I THINK DEFINITELY THE MOST HARDEST PART WAS UM HONESTLY JUST EXPRESSING MYSELF SOMETIMES BECAUSE THERE WERE A LOT OF MOMENTS WHERE I WOULD BE TALKING TO MY HOST FAMILY AND IT FELT LIKE WE WEREN'T EXACTLY ON THE SAME WAVELENGTH. THEY WOULD SAY SOMETHING AND I WOULDN'T UNDERSTAND IT OR I WOULD SAY SOMETHING AND THEY WOULDN'T FULLY UNDERSTAND BECAUSE OF MY ACCENT OR MY LACK OF VOCABULARY. BUT IN THE END YOU FIGURE IT OUT.

THERE UPS AND DOWNS WHILE WE WERE THERE AND THAT WAS KIND OF UNIVERSAL AMONG ALL THE STUDENTS. WE HAD SUPPORT GROUPS WHERE WE COULD TALK ABOUT IT. SO THERE WERE SOME DAYS WHERE YOU KNOW "I'M UNDERSTANDING EVERYTHING TODAY. LIKE I UNDERSTAND THE T-V. I UNDERSTAND THE RADIO. LIKE I DIDN'T NEED TO ASK MY MOM TO REPEAT WHAT SHE SAID TO ME THIS MORNING." AND THEN THERE ARE OTHER DAYS, IT COULD BE THE NEXT DAY EVEN WHERE YOU ARE JUST LIKE, YOU KINDA FEEL LIKE YOU ARE STARTING OVER AND IT JUST KINDA GOES BACK AND FORTH BUT AS YOU GO LIKE WEEKLY. YOU REALIZE THAT YOU ARE DEFINITELY UNDERSTANDING MORE THAN

YOU DID BEFORE, YOU ARE TALKING WITH MORE COMFORT THAN YOU DID BEFORE. AND IT NOT SOMETHING THAT YOU FEEL HAPPENING. YOU ARE NOT LIKE “WOW I AM REALIZING THAT THIS IS CHANGING” BUT IT IS KIND OF AFTER A COUPLE WEEKS WHEN PEOPLE WILL BRING UP SOMETHING AWKWARD THAT HAPPENED IN THE FIRST WEEK AND YOU ARE LIKE “I CAN’T BELIEVE I USE TO TALK LIKE THAT”.

KENDALL: THE STUDENTS STAY WITH HOST FAMILIES DURING THE SUMMER AND IT IS UNDERSTANDABLE THAT THEY BASICALLY GET ADOPTED BY THE FAMILIES BY THE END OF THE SUMMER. THEY EAT MEALS TOGETHER, PLAY GAMES TOGETHER, AND ENJOY THE FRENCH SUMMER.

KILEY: I GOT REALLY LUCKY WITH MY HOST FAMILY. SO IT’S ACTUALLY A REALLY BIG FAMILY BUT I ONLY LIVED WITH THREE OF THEM. I HAD TWO MOMS. THEY HAVE BOTH COME FROM PREVIOUS MARRIAGES AND THEN THEY WERE MARRIED AND ONE OF THEIR CHILDREN WAS LIVING WITH THEM. SHE WAS A SIXTEEN-YEAR-OLD GIRL. SHE WAS REALLY GREAT. WE WERE LIKE BEST FRIENDS AND THERE WAS ALSO TWO OTHER KIDS THAT THEY HAD, LIKE ADULT KIDS, AND SO I ALSO HAD A HOST BROTHER AND ANOTHER HOST SISTER AND MY HOST SISTER HAD TWO DAUGHTERS OF HER OWN SO I HAD TWO KINDA LIKE HOST NIECES AND THEY WERE THE CUTEST EVER AND ALL OF THEM WERE REALLY, YOU KNOW, WELCOMING TO ME AND THEY REALLY MADE SURE THAT I DIDN’T FEEL INTIMIDATED WITHIN THE FAMILY

THEY WOULD, LIKE I SAID, THEY WERE REALLY POLITE, REALLY WELCOMING. THE FIRST DAY I WAS THERE THEY ASK ME LIKE IF THERE ARE ANY FOODS YOU DON’T LIKE, ANY THINGS YOU’RE NOT COMFORTABLE WITH. AND SO THEY WOULD LIKE ESTABLISH BOUNDARIES AND THEN WHENEVER I WAS LIKE STRUGGLING WITH A WORD OR STRUGGLING WITH UNDERSTANDING, THEY WOULD TAKE A STEP BACK AND THEY EXPLAINED IT THE BEST THEY COULD. THEY WERE JUST REALLY ACCOMMODATION THE ENTIRE TIME.

SO WHEN I WAS TALKING ABOUT MY HOST FAMILY TO PEOPLE, I WOULD SAY “MES MERES” WHICH IS MY MOMS PLURAL AND SO THEY WOULD KNOW THAT I HAVE TWO MOMS. I WOULDN’T SAY MY PARENTS OR LIKE MOM AND DAD BECAUSE OBVIOUSLY THAT WASN’T MY SITUATION. SO ONE TIME I WAS INTRODUCING A FRIEND TO MY MOMS AND I WAS LIKE THESE ARE “MES MERES” AND THEN THEY STARTING DYING LAUGHING AND THEN LATER THEY TOLD ME THAT “MES MERES” LIKE THAT PHRASE IS ACTUALLY ANOTHER WORD WHICH MEANS LIKE OLD PEOPLE. AND SO I WAS LIKE “HERE ARE MY OLD PEOPLE” AND THAT WAS HOW I WAS INTRODUCING THEM WITHOUT REALIZING IT BUT IT CAN MEAN MY TWO MOMS TOO. IT JUST DEPENDS ON THE CONTEXT YOU USE IT THEY JUST THOUGHT IT WAS FUNNY THAT I DIDN’T REALIZE WHAT I WAS SAYING.

SO IN FRANCE, WHAT I FOUND IS THAT GENERALLY PEOPLE ARE MORE ACCEPTING SO ITS LESS COMMON TO HOMOPHOBIC PEOPLE ON THE STREET. IT’S MORE COMMON TO SEE GAY CHARACTERS ON T-V AND STUFF. I WATCH A LITTLE BIT OF FRENCH T-V WHILE I WAS THERE. AND MY MOMS ACTUALLY, ONE OF THEIR SONS, HE WAS MARRIED TO A MAN AND SO I NEVER RAN INTO ANY HOMOPHOBIA WHILE I WAS THERE. BUT THERE IS, IF YOU ARE CONSIDERING THE WHOLE L-G-B-T COMMUNITY, THAT THE TRANS [GENDERED] PART OF IT IS KINDA NEGLECTED. PEOPLE DON’T REALLY UNDERSTAND IT THERE OR THE COMMUNITY IS PRETTY SMALL AND DOESN’T HAVE THAT SUPPORT THAT THE GAY AND LESBIANS DO. AND SO IT’S A LITTLE MORE ACCEPTING THAN AMERICAN BUT AT THE SAME TIME THERE IS A LITTLE BIT OF GROWTH THAT COULD BE DONE STILL.

SO I FOUND OUT ABOUT THE PROGRAM, I THINK SOPHOMORE YEAR BUT I DIDN'T REALLY THINK THAT I COULD NECESSARILY DO IT BOTH BECAUSE YOU KNOW I DIDN'T THINK I WAS VERY GOOD AT FRENCH, IT WAS A LOT OF MONEY, IT SEEMED LIKE A BIG COMMITMENT BUT THEN ALEXIS O'BRIEN, SHE DID THE PROGRAM LAST SUMMER AND SHE TOLD ME ALL ABOUT HER EXPERIENCE, ALL THESE STORIES, HOW GREAT IT WAS AND IT WAS KINDA LIKE HER EXPERIENCE THAT CONVINCED ME TO APPLY PLUS YOU KNOW ALL THE PRESENTATIONS THAT THEY DO AT THE SCHOOL. SO YOU BASICALLY GO ON, YOU HAVE TO LIKE APPLY TO APPLY ACTUALLY BUT LIKE EVERYONE MAKES IT PAST THAT STAGE AND THEN ITS LIKE LONG APPLICATION PROCESS, LIKE A COUPLE OF MONTHS. YOU HAVE TO FILL OUT A PERSONAL APPLICATIONS. YOU HAVE TO GET LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION. YOU HAVE TO SUBMIT YOUR TRANSCRIPT. IT'S A LITTLE BIT LIKE APPLY TO COLLEGE.

I HEARD MY PHONE GO OFF AND I THOUGHT IT HAD BEEN A TEXT FROM MY MOM SO I LOOKED AT IT AND IT SAID THAT I HAD GOTTEN AN EMAIL FROM IU AND THEN IT SAID 'CONGRATULATION! YOU'RE ACCEPTED" AND I LIKE GASPED AND THEN MADAME YOCUM KIND OF LOOKED AT ME AND KINDA GAVE THIS DIRTY LOOK LIKE 'WHAT? WHY ARE TALKING OUT? WHY ARE YOU LOOKING AT YOUR PHONE?' AND THEN MADELYN LOOKED AT HERS BECAUSE SHE SAT RIGHT NEXT TO ME AND SHE LOOKED AT HERS AND FOUND THAT SHE HAD GOTTEN THE EMAIL TOO AND WE WERE KINDA OF LIKE SILENTLY FREAKING OUT TOGETHER.

AND THEN WHEN CLASS WAS LIKE COMING TO A CLOSE, I THINK WE WERE GOING TO BE RELEASED FOR LUNCH OR SOMETHING. MADAME YOCUM TAKES A SECOND AND WAS LIKE 'WHAT WAS GOING ON EARLIER? AND WE WERE LIKE "WE GOT ACCEPTED!" AND THEN SHE ANNOUNCED IT TO THE WHOLE CLASS AND IT WAS LIKE A NICE LITTLE LIKE EVERYONE WAS LIKE "GOOD JOB!"

ANYONE. WHO LISTENS TO THIS OR HEARS THIS, I JUST WANT TO SAY THAT IF YOU ARE IN A LANGUAGE, AND YOU ARE COMMITTED TO THAT LANGUAGE. IF YOU THINK THAT YOU ARE ON THE EDGE, LIKE I DON'T KNOW IF THIS IS COOL OR IF I COULD DO IT LIKE DO IT. I WAS ON THE EDGE BUT I'M SO GLAD I DID IT.

KENDALL: I AM KENDALL FAHEY AND THIS IS PARLERAI OR WILL SPEAK IN FRENCH. KILEY IS CURRENTLY A SENIOR AT CARMEL HIGH SCHOOL IN A-P FRENCH. IF YOU WANT MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE I-U HONORS PROGRAM, VISIT I-U-H-P-F-L DOT INDIANA DOT E-D-U. MY FELLOW WHJE PRODUCER, SHAE RICKEL-URAI TALKED TO ANOTHER PROGRAM STUDENT, ALEXIS O'BRIEN ABOUT HER SUMMER IN FRANCE. I HAVE LINKED THAT PODCAST IN THE DESCRIPTION OF THIS EPISODE ON WHJE DOT COM. FOR MORE EPISODES LIKE THIS OR MORE EPISODES OF PARLERAI, VISIT WHJE DOT COM. THANKS FOR LISTENING.