

Tim and Lisa both stared wide-eyed at their father. Then Lisa piped up, “Wait! We can’t leave in the middle of the semester!”

“Your father and I agreed that he’d go ahead, and we’d stay in Pico City until school finishes in June,” Crystal said. She kept her tone even, but she was roiling inside. Brian had come home yesterday and told her that the company needed him in Thailand immediately. He was just going to walk out with his suitcases. All the household packing, all the arrangements about what to take and what to leave, what to do with the house and cars, all the shopping for things they would need to take to Bangkok, she suspected that all that would fall to her to accomplish. At this point, she couldn’t even imagine what that would entail. But it did occur to her that Brian had never asked her if she would be willing to go, or if she would be willing to take up the responsibility for making the arrangements for the move. He had just assumed that she would be a good wife, following her husband and doing what was necessary. And she was going along with it, she thought, so she guessed she was.

Lisa, who was ten and beginning to look a lot like Crystal, was full of questions. “What do they speak in Thailand? Will we have to go to school in another language?”

Tim, two years younger, chimed in, “Can I bring my books and toys? What about my train set? Will we have a TV there? Will I be able to watch *The Jetsons*?”

Brian sighed. “They speak the Thai language in Thailand. I’m told it’s pretty difficult to learn. But there is an American school there—and Firstgas will pay the tuition. So, you guys will be going to school in English. Shouldn’t be a problem. And Tim, I don’t know the answer to your questions. I think the electricity works differently there. And I have no idea if they have TV or not. I guess we’ll find out when we get there.”

Still puzzled about what their life would be like in Thailand, Lisa and Tim went upstairs to do their homework.

Crystal told Brian that she was planning to tell her boss about the move tomorrow, before he heard rumors. “I hope you understand that giving up the job I love is going to be very hard. You know how important it is to me.” Crystal’s voice cracked, and she paused to gain control. Then she asked, “Do you know if spouses of employees of foreign companies are allowed to work there? Do you think there will be opportunities for me? I don’t see how I can work in radio if I can’t speak the language. But radio is what I know. Do you think there is an English-language radio station?”

Brian said, “So many questions! We’ll just have to wait and see.”

*Thanks a bunch for the comforting words, Brian,* she thought, but she said nothing.