



Thomas

from

Tillsonburg

to

Italy

“Don’t Blink”

I have been on exchange for over eight months now, and I didn't really have a concept of time while I was here. Now I knew that it was going to be ten months, and I knew that they were going to go by faster than the blink of an eye, but I didn't realize just how fast we blink. It took me till just over a month ago to realize why they prepare us for exchange and why they prepare us to take advantage of every single opportunity that comes along on exchange. It's not because you only have ten months or that the opportunities will help you grow beyond imagination, but it's because they know you'll be sitting in the room that your host families so graciously opened to you, writing your last Beaver Tale thinking of every second of your exchange. Regrets will come to you, but it's not the things you did that you regret, but the things you didn't do. Now I'll remind you though that my decision to come on exchange was the best one I have ever made in my life, and I honestly believe it will be on of the best ones for many years to come.

The months since the last time I wrote have been jam packed. With so little time left, I am trying to do everything possible. From March until now has just been hectic. To kick the adventures off, I was able to have the opportunity to go with my school on the class trip to Germany. We went to Munich and Nuremberg. Munich is a beautiful city, and to be able to see it with my friends from school made it so much better. They got mad at me for wanting to take photos with my flag all the time, but they were still happy to be a part of the photos. The time spent with my friends there were priceless and some of the best memories of my exchange and life. I wish we had more than only five days though.

Only two short weeks after that, it was time for me to do my tour of Italy, and what better travel partner than my brother. We only had seven days to travel, but we made sure to visit some of the more important/famous places of Italy. First we headed off to Pisa for the

day. It was my second time going so I got to pretend to be a tour guide for a little bit. The next stop was just a half day trip to the beautiful Lecco. We took a day of pure vacation where we literally didn't do anything to get us rested for the jam packed weekend. That Saturday we did the impossible and the only way to describe it is with a quote from that day. "Rome may not have been built in one day, but we made sure that we saw it all in one day." - Myself. That Sunday was another full day. I gave the grand tour of Milan. Though my favourite day of the weekend was that Monday. We took our last day to travel to go to Venice. The city was absolutely beautiful, and it is a place that I wish to go back to sometime. It wasn't hard saying good bye to my brother and the homesickness didn't hit because I knew I'd be seeing him again soon.

Again I only had a two week break before going on another adventure. This one was a little different though, and one that won't soon be forgotten. It was the district trip to Sicily, but we also had the Milan district coming with us. It was five days of constantly taking photos, catching up with friends, and making memories that'll last a lifetime. Traveling with exchange students is the best way to experience anywhere and anything, including the sea side and the top of a mountain, and everything in between. When we had to say good bye though, we knew it wasn't for long though, because it was only three weeks before the two districts got together again in Mantova. It was almost as if we never skipped a beat from Sicily, back at it again with the photos and making more memories. Saying good bye now though was tougher, because we know that we may not see each other again after, because people are starting to head back in only a few weeks.

I know my days on exchange here are limited, but that's not going to slow me down. I am going to jump into my last days of exchange head first and make every second count, and everyday one worth reliving. Also since this is my last Beaver Tale I have to give a special thanks to my parents. They brought me into this world and gave me life, but it wasn't till the day I left them and came on exchange that I truly learned how to live. I would also like to thank every single person involved on my exchange from the Rotarians, to my host families for even making this opportunity possible.

Grazie mille!

Thomas