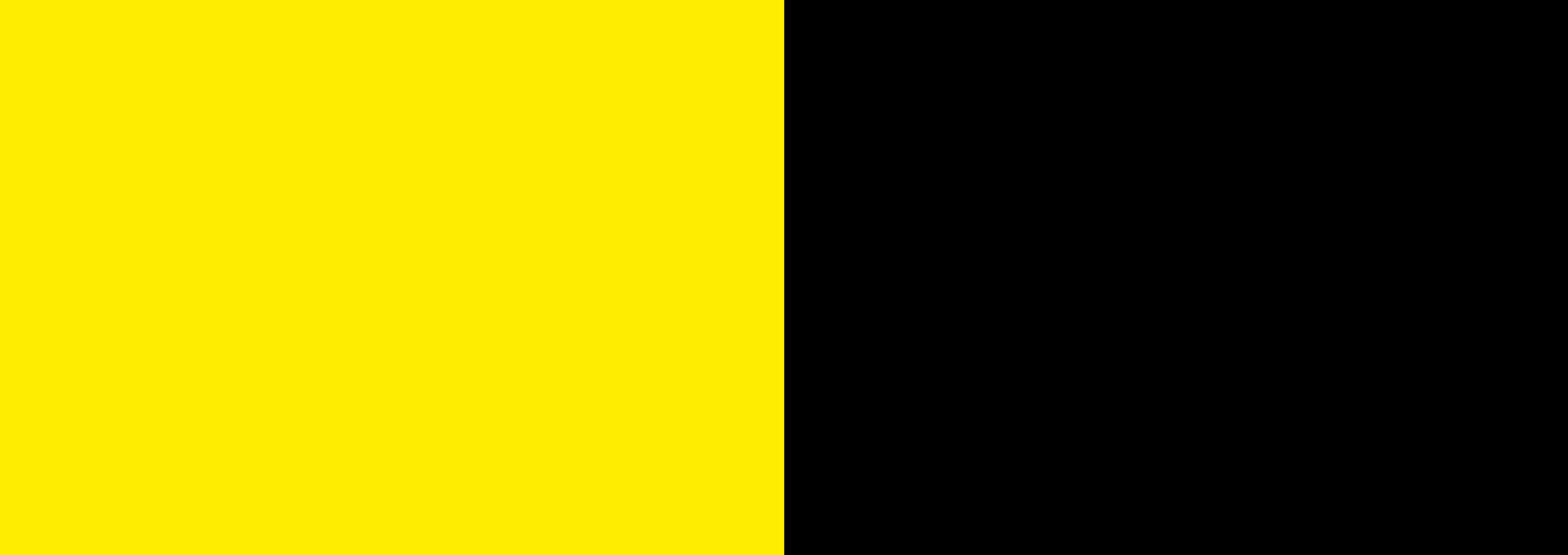


A man with dark, curly hair and a beard is shown in profile on the left, looking out a large, multi-paned window. The window looks out onto a park with green grass, a tree with bare branches, and a paved path. In the lower right pane, a person is walking on the path. The overall scene is bright and clear.

Here There

*About my experience in the
country of salty lakrids.*

Marià Codina



Here I am

I arrived in Kolding the 23rd of August 2008. Once here I spent two weeks living in the city hostel, looking for a place to live during my exchange.

Finally I found my place, only 2 minutes from the school, in a house called Carlsberghus. Instead of my initial thought, in Denmark I pay less than in Barcelona.

I live with 4 other people: Jakob from Germany, Andrea from Canada, Alexander from Danmark and Christine from Switzerland. That's multicultural.



Not There

In my sofa from Barcelona it is a new hole filled for a danish student called Tue. He is living in my room while I'm not there, paying my rent.

The flat is very good (to be in the city it is): big, not very expensive and well comunicated. It's just 15 minutes walking from the school, distance that for some people in my old class is like about one hour.

I was living with two other guys: Aleix, from Vic, and Nolo, from Galicia. It was multicultural too, but in an other way.



Here I sleep

In this school I'm never stressed, in fact, coursing one course at the same time, who can be stressed?

This thing let you focus a lot in the subject that are you studing and, if you like what are you doing, you can pass really good times exploring and experimenting.

For this reasons I'm always very relaxed, I expend in bed more time and I look quite better, this is almost what people in my environtment say.



Not There

Probably is for the time of my classes, from 8 o'clock until 14:30, and also because I have to present work every day, that makes me going to bed aproximatelly between two and four in the morning.

This last thing is not because the work is very interesting, most of the things we have to do are really useless exercices that doesn't apport anything to you.



There I have a lunar landscape in my room

In my room in Olot, my hometown, I have a painting on the wall of a lunar landscape from "Explorers on the Moon", one of the books of the series "Tintin" by Hergé.

The rocket, in fact, is the door to my closet, one of this secret things that you love when you are a kid.



Here I have a huge fungus

During the first month in Kolding I was unable to live in my room. This big fungus was threatening my health.

So we decided to kill it. We took off all the wallpaper from the room, we cleaned the walls and we began to put new paper. I say began because we never finished.



Here it's cold

Now I've pressed F12 to open Dashboard and I've seen that Barcelona is 12°C, Olot (my hometown) is 5°C, and Kolding is 3°C. Between Olot and Kolding the weather is always quite the same, but in Kolding is a little more grey, it rains more but softly and now in winters it's getting dark at 16:30. Night is long my friend.



Hot is There

Barcelona is a very hot city and with a high percentage of humidity. In summers is like having a sticky layer all over your skin.

Some people there loves to take sunbaths and lay under the sun rays. Not me. I like to go to the beach, but once there I prefer to stay under the umbrella and looking to not to be burned by the killing sun.



Here they say 'L' like this

I heard something very funny from the german students, they say that danish is like german while you are eating potatoes with your mouth full of it.

I can't assure that this is true, in fact because my level of german is the same as my level of danish. But the thing I perceived is that sometimes, when I hear someone speaking in danish, it seems that he don't finish the sentence, like running aground.

This in the begining is strange, but once you use to know it it's also kind of funny.



Not There

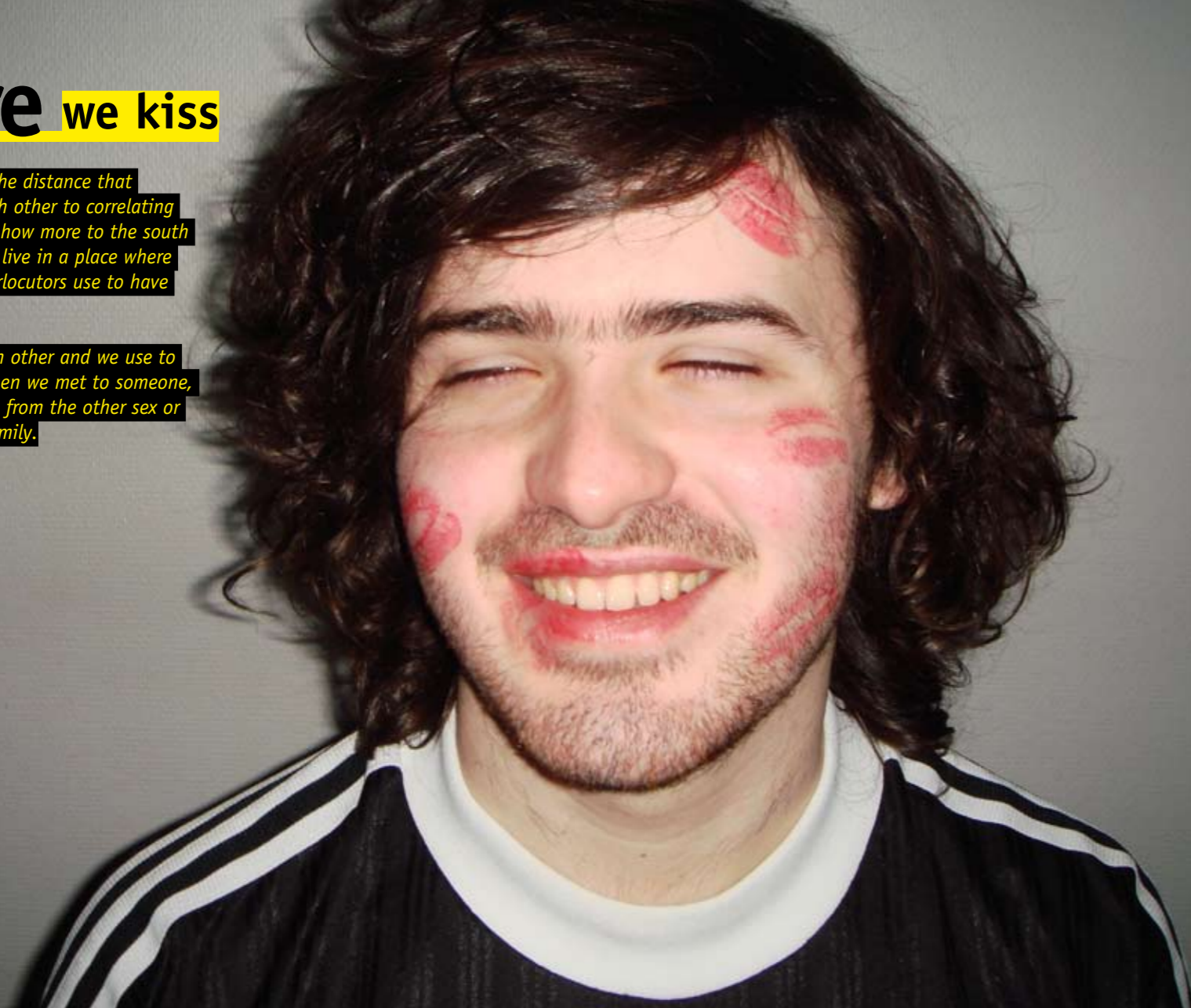
We don't have this kind of fonems in my language, but the language for itself it's more melodic and we use to speak so much louder than danish people. This is a thing that always makes me very affraid when I'm in other countries because I'm always thinking that other people will think I'm shouting to them.



There we kiss

Once I heard that the distance that people leave to each other to correlating is exponential with how more to the south are you living. So I live in a place where sometimes the interlocutors use to have corporal contact.

We touch more each other and we use to kiss both cheeks when we met to someone, specially if they are from the other sex or members of your family.



Not Here

I will always remember the first day of class. I thought that in Europe it was normal to kiss people when you met them, so I was kissing all the girls I met this morning. They became quite shocked and I found it kind of strange but I was not giving it importance. At the end, finally, a girl advertise me.

Since this day in Denmark I only give the hand when I met someone. I only kiss Giuseppe and Giovanni the two exchange italian guys.



Queen Here

Yes, I don't like her at all.



King There

Yes, I don't like him at all.



A plug There

Once you travel you begin to appreciate all these things that would make your life easier, like international standardizations. PAL or NTSC, Letter or A4, manual change or automatic...

Well, this last one is more like a personal preference. Anyway, with plugs is one of the best ways to illustrate this problem. I remember, since I was a kid, to be amazed with all the possible shapes that a plug can have.

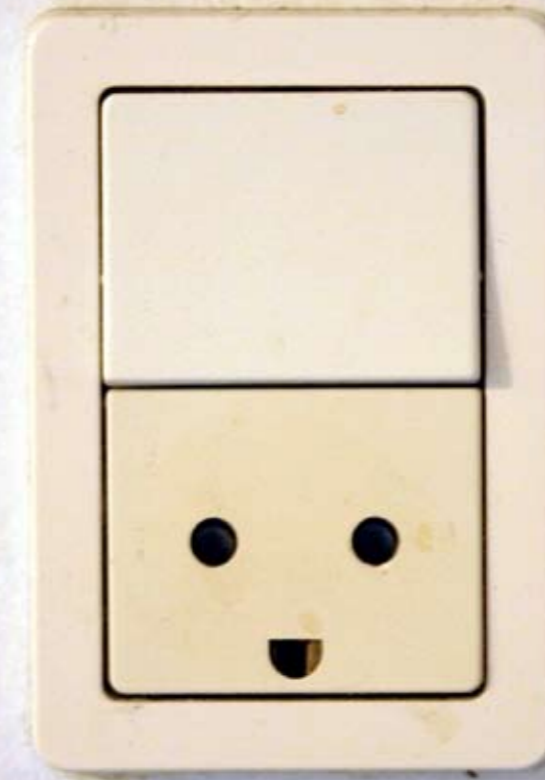
In Europe now, thanks to the ISO, we are all using the type C plug, or most commonly called like Europlug.



Here it smiles

In Denmark it's quite different and it seems that the designer of the type K plug didn't like kids at all, or maybe it's because in this country electricity is seen like an educational thing. Let's investigate!

We'll never know, but it's curious because in the south of Europe we use to think that people from the northern countries are more "civilized", and we use to think that they are more serious too. This could be the reason.



Here I live with an asianamerican girl

She is Andrea, or To. She came from Vancouver, where she is studying cinema, but is originally from Hong Kong. She speaks english and cantonese.

Andrea is the one who speaks with a most genuine english accent. Sometimes is hard for her to understand me, for my pronunciation and latin based constructions.

Here in Kolding, Andrea is looking to do illustration, but she have not found any class for the moment. She can make a very good chinese desert called Ginger Milk. Mmmhhh....!



There with a celtic man

He is Manuel, or Nolo. He is from Galicia, a place on top of Portugal. He is studing graphic design in my school. He speaks galician, spanish, a little of english and now he is trying to say something in catalan.

He likes a lot listening to Rock and Roll, smoke Lucky Strike and think about where will be the next piercing. He used to have long hair before he arrived in Barcelona.

Sometimes he is a little lazy and maybe he looks like a rude boy, but he is very sweet and a very good friend.



There I have a girlfriend

She's called Ota and I met her two years ago. She is studing Graphic Design like me, but in an other place. We also plan to make a band, but we are quite bad.

Ota likes to dance and the little pleasures of life: eating well, drinking well, smoking, culture, art...We spent a lot of time together and with her dog too, that it's called Otto.



Not Here

And then I have to spend my time in other kind of affairs.



Here beer

People here use to drink beer, like in all the north of Europe. The weather from here is better to produce beer than wine, so it's perfect, cheap beer and good also.

The other factor is the way to drink. There of course people drink a lot too, but they distribute the amount of alcohol during all the week. Here they use to take all the amount in only one day, specially during the weekends.



There wine

In my country the weather is optimum for wine. There, more or less, I drink wine with every meal.

Maybe this is because my family is into the bussiness of alcohol, we produce a liquor called Ratafia. As a child my father introduced me into the idea that alcohol it's a pleasure for you: taste, smell, colour...

I will always remember his sentence: "Marià, if someday you planned to get drunk, spend a little of money and buy something good that you can enjoy while you're drinking, otherwise it is stupid".



Here I am Maria

I know that my name is peculiar for non catalan speakers. Marià, with this last accent is a name for boys, biblically it means "the follower of Maria".

The difference, when you pronounce, it's only in where you make the tonic syllable. If you make it in the last A then it's my name. If you make it in the I then it's the girls name. For non latin based speakers it's quite difficult to make this difference.

So here all the people call me Maria, like a girl, and I have to tell the story of my name every time. I always have subject of conversation.



There Marià

Here and there I am definitely a boy and anyone can discuss it. But in my country I have troubles too, because usually they forget to write the accent in my name.

So I have my ID card with Marià, my driver license with Maria, and for some years I was in the civil register with Maria and feminine sex.

Here and there the first days of class are always the same. The teacher is reading the list and he asks "Maria Codina?", then a boy put his hand up and answers "It's me, it's Marià, Mari-AH!". For all my life will be the same, but I like my ambiguity.



Here There

a book by:

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