

Subject: farewell**Date:** Fri, 11 Jun 1999 16:38:05 PDT**From:** Livia Melo <liviausa@hotmail.com>**To:** oscargamo18@hotmail.com, erick2705@aol.com, slademail@netcentral.com.au, garoul011@yahoo.com, drama5256@yahoo.com, ck18926@aol.com, kellyvo@zipmail.com.br, vmethod@yahoo.com, torresdemelo@starmedia.com, kat@baydenct.com.br, taranicole02@yahoo.com, paz@peace-inc.org, raissa_usa@hotmail.com

Hi guys...

This is probably the last email that I'm going to send to all of you from the U.S.A, next time you hear from me I'll be in BRASIL!!! I'm leaving tonight to atlantic city and when I come back I'll be already leaving to my beloved country...

I'm really excited to go back and at the same time it hurts a lot to leave everything and everybody behind. The painful part is because I am letting behind not just something that I've lived, but something that I build myself.

When I got here I didn't know anyone, not even my host family, so I came with just the courage to begin everything by the point 0. I didn't have my home, I didn't have my family, I didn't have any friends... In the first week I got desperate when I realized that I've trade all that I had for nothing. The only thing that held me together was the dream of victory. I wanted to come back to my country and say: "I won. I lived by myself in the U.S.A and I held on until the end."

What put me in this exchange student thing was mostly my parents. They wanted to give me this opportunity more than I wanted to take it, so I did it mostly to please them.

One of the moments that I can surely remember forever was the trip that I went with all the exchange students to New England. Not just because of the getting away from school, but because I got to see all of my friends and got to know them better, and the most important: on that trip was that I met new people that have been making until now my life a little more colorful. I was so tired of the U.S and I wanted to go back to my country so bad, until I went on that trip. It gave me the strength that I needed to hold on a little more, it revitalized me.

On my senior prom I had the most amazing time. It was so awesome! I couldn't believe how unfair it is not to have a prom in my country and I was so deeply glad that I had the opportunity to be a part of one. (My date was also someone that I met on that trip.)

Last friday was my graduation, that I've waited so much for... That's another thing that we don't have in my country and I was happy to be a part of. It's an amazing feeling when they call your name and when you receive that diploma... When they presented on the end: "The class of 1999" and everybody threw their caps up, I started to realize that that was the end of my year in here. I just thought: "On my God... I did it! I won... I held on until the end and now my dream is over..." I started to cry when everybody else was screaming satisfied because of the fact that they were out of school... What they didn't realize was that graduation is a beginning of their new lives and for me, the end of a dream....

THANK YOU to all of you that made my dream come true, and to them that made it more beautiful.....

I love you all...

Livia Melo

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