



## March News from Oman

We are sitting in the car on our way to Nizwa, a city two hours west from Muscat.

The conversation goes something like this.

Pirge, "Heidi asked us to send pictures from all the rooms of our flat."

Me, "What? Why?"

"Well. She had heard from somewhere that we have a new table and she wants to see how it looks like in the flat."

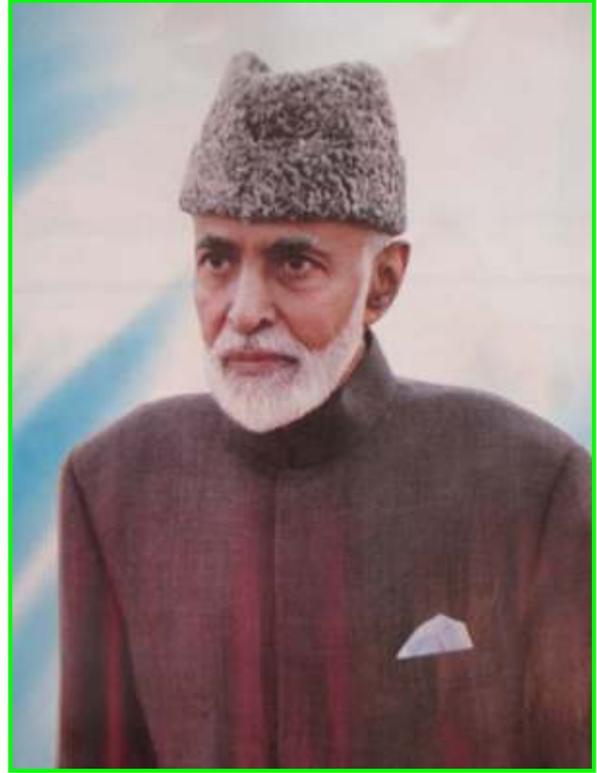
Me, "Heidi!!! Saudi-Arabia just attacked Yemen; The Sultan returned after eight months absence and I don't even know which table is she speaking about."

Silence.

Later on we agreed that our flat could use a couple of Heidis.

We miss the Niukkanens family dynamics.

I hope the Yemen conflict and tensions between Saudi-Arabia and Iran will not ruin our dream to have them back here in the fall.



After eight months of cancer treatments in Germany the sultan finally returned to his home country. The nation was out on the streets celebrating their beloved leader's return. "Now I can breath normally again", said one of the happy citizens. The sultan is seemingly genuinely loved by everyone. Next day newspapers had hundreds of his pictures.





Previous newsletter's male dominated pictures disturbed some people. This time I decided to add some photographs of the Omani women. Maybe they will explain the past monotonic view. In many places the role of women is still considered to be exclusively the mother and up-bringer of the children. One friend of mine told that his grandfather had 84 children from sixteen wives. Yes, things are a little different here.





The Gulf countries have employed millions of guest workers from Asia. The churches are filled with believers from India, Pakistan, the Philippines as well as believers from the traditionally christian countries such as the UK and America. The government has helped the churches to build their temples here.

These two students are from Kerala, India.

The church parking lot is packed on Fridays from early morning till late. Two pastors of the Protestant church of Oman are from the States, one is from England and one from India. The congregation is made of people from all possible denominational backgrounds.



On April 8-11 I will participate in a big art fair called World Art Dubai.  
You are welcome to visit at booth B 10.  
Oman is still very quiet for the art market. Dubai, which can be reached by bus in 5-8 hours is loaded with art events and opportunities.  
In the picture I'm together with one of the best sculptors of Syria, Mustafa Ali. He has been living already several years in Paris, but works often in Dubai.



Thank you all for your support and encouragement and prayers.

P. Matti Sirviö

<http://www.pmattisirvio.blogspot.hu/2015/04/paintings-speak.html?m=1>

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