A Japanese Expatriate

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Introduction by Mike Hudnall

Chapter One

In 1919, my father, Takeda Tatsuzen, responding to his burning desire to some day seek adventure in America, left his country for a voyage across the Pacific. While he had known that leaving Japan would mean abandoning his birthright as heir in the Buddhist priesthood of the family owned temple, he also knew the teachings of Buddha would go with him, for it was an internal part of his personal undying spirit of adventure to explore the land that he felt would welcome him with its many exciting opportunities. The year was at the turn of the century. He had literally abandoned his Japanese birthright as heir to the Buddhist priesthood and while the teachings of Buddha had become an integral part of his persona, his fondest dream was to some time in the future freely experience the customs and lifestyle of America where he hoped to form many new friendships. Because he left his roots at the ancestral family temple with three younger brothers as well as his young sisters, he was disinherited by his grieving and indignant father.

When my father arrived in the United States it was not difficult for him to join the other immigrants who had preceded him in the Japanese neighborhood in Los Angeles. It was

in those days when marriages were arranged between families by matchmakers and it was through such an arrangement that my father found himself at the harbor to meet the ship that carried his intended "picture bride", the only daughter from a prominent temple in southern Japan. My mother, Yonemura Tomoko, was a schoolteacher of above average education having been graduated from Normal School as was required of all teachers. She was 25, and my father who had studied Indian Philosophy during his university days in Kyoto was 39 years old.

One might say my father was well versed in the English language as was soon discovered by those in the Japanese community. He proudly displaced in his bookcase a collection of the original works of Shakespeare, poetry by William Wordsworth, and the book, Ben Hur. He tutored several interested men in English while my mother made lasting friendships with the wives. While Japanese was the spoken language in our family, I have been told that out of necessity, my mother soon learned how to ask questions like "how much?" whenever she went shopping. She and my father lived in a small house in a town called "Little Tokyo." Since my mother was frugal by nature, it eventually became possible for my father to buy into a partnership in a small-sized hotel,

then called St. Albans Hotel, located on the edge of "Little Tokyo." I have been told that it was always my mother who was the one to collect rent, because sadly, my father was far from being an entrepreneur.

There were three of us children, I, Momoko, with two brothers, Shinya and Kohei. When my mother saw any one of us crying, she would run to us, hug us and ask, "Osu malla?" (Her version of "What's the matter?") My two brothers and I adored her.

We had moved away from Little Tokyo to a district in Los Angeles where my father saw to it that we were able to attend good schools. This was our new home, and it never occurred to us that our mother would ever become homesick for the old country. Her entire life focused on her children—but she would always call Japan her home.

It was not long before we started nodding greetings with our friendly neighbors. Across the street from our home, lived Bob, a teen-aged boy who would come to our front yard and yell, "Momoko," at the top of his voice until I reluctantly went out and sat with him on our front steps. I was only about eight years old and was frightened of him. One day, when I went out responding to his call, he saw me eating some seaweed. When he asked what I had, I ended up telling him after much

hesitation that it was Japanese paper. In total disbelief he asked me to get him a pencil and attempted writing on the seaweed. Had my mother seen what was happening, she would have been horrified, but with her own lack of familiarity with English words, she probably would have said the usual "Go home!" a command she seemed to have saved only for Bob. Then he would jump on the sidewalk and tell her that the sidewalk was public property. As young as I was, I felt sadness and frustration that I was powerless to protect her from such personal insult.

My friend, Betty also lived across the street. She was a classmate of mine, and her parents and older brother and sister all treated me like a member of their family. Fortunately, Bob had eventually moved away, and Betty and I were together every day after class, and on weekends. There were times when we would walk to Westlake Park (now called MacArthur Park) about two blocks away to play on the lawn, or walk around a man-made lake inside the park, and watch the boaters, or listen to the band playing on the small island in the middle of the lake. There was a bamboo grove in which we would sometimes explore. We would touch and feel the bamboo stalks and not knowing that there was a difference between bamboo shoots and stalks, I explained to Betty that the

Japanese ate them. Both of us wondered how my mother cooked the bamboo stalks to make them so tender that anyone could even eat them.

One day when Betty was home alone, she suggested that we dress up in her mother's clothes, wear her shoes, and play house. Then we walked to the park pretending we were grown-ups with her mother's clothes dragging on the sidewalk. We thought it was fun, and felt important.

I didn't think to ask Betty what the consequences were after her mother came home.

Scholastically, I was an above-average pupil and consequently having skipped a class, I became a new classmate of Catherine Jane who happened to live two or three houses away on my side of the street. Her mother was very kind, and once invited me to ask my mother's permission to spend a Sunday with them at the beach. I was thrilled to spend a day at the beach, but later learned from Betty's mother that her daughter had spent most of the day in her room, crying, because I did not stay and spend the day with her. Since she was beautiful, with a face like a porcelain doll, with long curls that cascaded down to her shoulders, and was the youngest sibling of her family, I recognized

that Betty was spoiled and used to getting her way.

Also, on the corner of our street lived a Japanese family. They had two sons, Henry and Issei, about the ages of my brother Shinya, and me. We were family friends, and sometimes, I would join Henry, Issei, and my brothers in our back yard, and together we would play hide and seek, marbles, or roller skate on the sidewalk.

Years passed, and suddenly and unexpectedly, tragedy struck our family. My five year-old brother, Kohei, died of what they said was a stomach infection. Shinya and I both told ourselves that it was all a mistake, that it was not true. Kohei was a sweet, innocent boy, who was loved by everyone on our street. He had just started kindergarten where he was proudly taken every morning by our mother. How could he be dead? It was impossible. When we arrived at the hospital, my mother was sitting by his bedside, weeping as though her heart would break.

The funeral held at the Buddhist temple was an experience that I would never forget. It seemed everyone in Little Tokyo was there—except my mother who was so grief-stricken that she was bedridden at home with a Japanese private duty nurse who came daily to take care of her.

Kohei lay in his little coffin so life-like that I found myself waiting for him to climb out and come and sit with us. He was wearing a blue and white sailor suit, a white cap and a whistle around his neck and, on his feet were black patent leather shoes. There were three priests on the podium who were joined by my father, and in loud, steady voices, they chanted the sutra, while their voices echoed and reverberated throughout the temple. I noticed then that everyone even the grown men were so moved by my father's send-off for his beloved son, that they were weeping.

Soon, we all stood in line while the portion of the floor on which Kohei's casket lay, opened up, and he was slowly lowered to the crematory while Shinya and I stood in line with all the grown-ups and tossed flowers into the casket for little Kohei to take with him. I knew then for the first time that he was not going to ever come back. That night, as I lay awake in bed, I heard my father, alone in the next room, crying.

Chapter Two

Although Kohei's death had created an enormous void in our lives we painfully pulled ourselves together recognizing that life must go on. Our father encouraged us to carry on, and he stoically resumed his work regimen while Shinya and I returned to class. As Mother's health improved, she became increasingly pensive and her thoughts turned to future plans for a formal Japanese education for both my brother and me. She was convinced that some day, she would take us to her homeland, where she would enroll us in Japanese schools. There was now a purpose in her life and occasionally she would call us to her bedside and read to us our favorite Japanese stories. We relished those intimate periods with our mother, and one day, when she joyfully informed us that some day soon she was going to take us to Japan, she had to convince us that this was mot merely another story.

"Mama, may we tell our friends?" we happily asked.

"Yes, you may tell all your friends."

We knew then that this was not just another story.

Our parents firmly believed that Shinya and I needed to more fluently speak the Japanese language, and learn to read and write beyond

the basic syllables. Upon agreement that it was a language that they wanted us to learn thoroughly, our parents now faced one major dilemma. Father would definitely need to remain in the United States to keep us financially provided for. Although it was a sad state of affairs, it was one they would face squarely.

When we arrived at San Pedro Harbor on a balmy spring day, moored at the pier was our steamship! My brother and I simply stood there awe-struck, and stared at Tatsuta Maru, the massive ship that was going to carry us across the ocean. It was an unforgettable sight, and there were people milling about everywhere, on the boat, and on the pier. I breathlessly exclaimed, "That ship is bigger than our house!"

Since there was still time, we stopped at a Chinese restaurant for some lunch. We all knew that in those days the political climate between China and Japan was treacherous. War was imminent between the two countries, and because of Japan's policy of expansionism, her Imperial troops were behaving badly in China. But this was the United States. After we were seated, Shinya looked suspiciously at his dinner and said, "There might be poison in this food because we're Japanese." Our parents were taken aback and admonished him to behave. He

was finally convinced that it was all right to eat the food after he saw that the rest of us were eating it, too.

I was eleven years old and Shinya, nine, when we bade our tearful farewell at the boat. In retrospect, this separation was an enormous sacrifice our parents made to ensure that my brother and I could receive a solid Japanese education.

The year was 1933, ironically in the midst of the great depression. The stock market had crashed and there were millions of men looking for jobs that did not even exist. Many respectful citizens were facing starvation, and so great was their need for food that some of them were seen searching in garbage cans.

Sadly, in extreme cases, some had lost their life's savings, and simply gave up, resorting to suicide. Father had taken a job as night custodian of a couple of medical buildings. This freed his days to occasionally visit Little Tokyo and his partner, Mr. Kida, at the St. Albans Hotel.

Shockingly, Mr. Kida had been victimized by a case of tuberculosis and all those years, had carefully kept his illness a secret until his death. No one had suspected there was anything wrong until my father received a call of desperation, and rushed to his bedside. Mr. Kida had died all alone, not even having sought

help until the very end. There was blood everywhere, in the bathroom, on his bed, on the floor, and there was even a blood-soaked rag in the toilet. My mother sadly commented that now she knew why Mr. Kida never married.

By Father's own admission, his partnership in the business had been made possible only by Mother's ability to systematically manage and save money. However, in those days, business in all aspects of life was severely affected by the depression and the hotel was not spared from this phenomenon.

These sad memories and her worry over Father's well being cast a shadow on Mother's anticipation of our own life in Japan.

It was hard to not be emotional. Fourteen days across the Pacific was an exciting adventure for Shinya and me. We quickly made friends with other children and explored the ship from top to bottom, played on the decks, or visited the crew, and enjoyed the food that was delicious and abundant. Neither my brother nor I were at all ready to see our voyage come to an end. However, when we spotted land on the distant horizon, we knew we were approaching the shores of Yokohama. We were met by a relative who, much to our surprise approached our ship by tugboat.

He came aboard, helped us with our belongings, and escorted us to Aunt Ichiko's

home in Tokyo where he left us after briefly exchanging greetings with her.

Aunt Ichiko was my father's youngest sister and the widow of a businessman. She lived all alone, not having had any children. I was enthralled by the beautiful simplicity of her home, the first Japanese house I had ever seen. We stepped into the entryway through a sliding door of thick opaque glass neatly latticed with smooth, unpainted wood. This entryway led us into an area where we removed our shoes and stepped up to a vestibule of only about two or three mats. The number of straw mats in each room determined its size and each mat was about an inch thick, approximately 3 1/2 feet wide and 5 feet long. Each mat had an attractive black, fabric border, and the size of an average room was about six or eight mats.

There was a low table by which there sat a hibachi. The red glow of charcoal burning in the hibachi gave us a warm feeling of welcome. Hot water hummed in the teakettle and Aunt Ichiko gave each of us a cushion on which to seat ourselves, and served us hot tea from the kettle. An alcove in one wall, called "tokonoma", displayed a flower arrangement, and on its wall behind it, there hung a scroll of about six feet on which there was a work of formal Oriental calligraphy. Such a "tokonoma" can be seen in the living room of any traditional

Japanese home, and is viewed as a place of honor and the focal point of the entire room.

The art of flower arrangement and calligraphy are two of the many ancient disciplines that fall under the mystic umbrella called Shinto (The Ways of God). These "Ways" encompass "Sado (Way of Tea)", "Budo (Way of martial arts)", "Kendo (Way of fencing)" and also the popular "Judo (Way of wrestling)". By following any one of these "ways" one seeks enlightenment under the guidance of a Master. It's a great accomplishment to be formally recognized by the Master as having ultimately arrived at a state of enlightenment.

Thick, sliding elegant paper panels with shiny black lacquered borders separated the rooms. It was possible to remove these panels and increase the size of the rooms.

Overlooking outdoors were sliding wooden shutters all of which, when opened were gently pushed into a wooden encasement to the side. These heavy doors were always closed at night, or also during the day if there happened to be no one home. Appropriately enough, they were called "rain doors (amado)" because they kept out the rain.

Aunt Ichiko welcomed us warmly, wanting to know everything about our lives in America. Our conversation seemed endless over the

delightful dinner. She urged us to stay a few days, but with promises to remain in touch, we said our fond farewells the next morning and departed by taxi for the train station.

Japan is an archipelago of four islands: Honshu, the main island with Hokkaido to its north, Kyushu to its south, and Shikoku to its west. All of Father's six brothers and sisters lived on the main island while Mother's home was on the island of Kyushu. Needless to say, we had lots of traveling ahead of us before arriving at our ultimate destination, Mother's hometown.

We managed to pay brief visits to each of Father's brothers and sisters. This ordeal was a family obligation, and a custom that could not have been omitted very easily without hurt feelings. Our first visit was to Aunt Yoshiye, whose family lived in the prefecture of Yamaguchi. Years later, my father would tell me that Aunt Yoshiye was his favorite sister, being the most feminine and the most gentle of all three sisters. She was married to a hemorrhoid specialist and they had two sons and two daughters. Mother was a little ill at ease in front of Aunt Yoshiye because she complained bitterly that Father, whom she adored, was left "all by himself."

Uncles, Tassei and Tatsumon both lived in Osaka. Uncle Tassei's home was what was

called the Bukkyo Kaikai (Buddhist Research Institute), and he seemed successful in his work. His wife was stepmother to a little girl, whom I later found out belonged to his mistress who lived elsewhere. He was the only uncle who openly supported a mistress. Naturally, his wife was unhappy, but she silently endured her predicament because those were the days that a wife and mother leaving her husband for whatever reason was virtually unheard of. Ironically, it was the "kept woman" who met with scorn, not the man.

Uncle Tatsumon was a loner and an enigma. If he and his wife had any children, I was not aware of it. The two of them lived in a cluttered modest home, cluttered because he was a self-proclaimed unsuccessful inventor. It did not occur to me to ask what he was trying to invent.

Our next stop was Hiroshima, the city where father was born and raised in the family temple, now run by Uncle Tatsudo, his youngest brother. Uncle Tatsudo had inherited the priesthood when Father, the original heir, had departed for America. The temple was large and prominent, being supported by substantial donations from its congregation. I had been told that our family name being Takeda, we were descendants of one of the ancient warlords, Takeda Shingen. Through the years, Takeda Shingen has been mentioned in Japanese

history and in the 1980's he became the protagonist of a Japanese movie entitled, "The Shadow Warrior." This movie won international acclaim and was also shown here, in America.

When we entered the large gate of the temple, the tall trees in the open area welcomed us with their green branches gently swaying in the soft breeze. It was exciting to meet our Aunt Shigeko, Uncle Tatsudo and four cousins—three boys and a girl—Satoru, Masaru, Itaru and Yukiko. Aunt Shigeko's younger brother, Akira, also a priest, lived with them. We stayed several days at the temple and participated with the family in their daily worship, which began early in the miniature shrine and listened to them chant the sutra in unison with their father. During this short period of worship, Aunt Shigeko busily supervised the maids with breakfast preparations in the kitchen. Throughout the day, members of the congregation would come to the main chapel to worship, or to observe special Buddhist holidays, or attend funerals and at times, memorials of loved ones.

We continued our journey and finally arrived in Kumamoto. Mother was in her element because this was her hometown. Father wrote to all of us regularly, and his letters to Shinya and me were always in English. My brother and I wrote back also in English,

because it was still easier than tediously trying to form a letter in Japanese.

Going to school even on Saturdays was a brand new experience, and it was incredible that I spent twelve hours a day, studying that hard. Carrying out the chores that my mother assigned me was a personal sacrifice. If Shinya was having any difficulties, I was unaware of it, so engrossed was I in my own frustrating efforts. With unshakable determination, I attained my goal of graduating with high honors, third from the top of the class. A total of six years of my efforts, beginning with a year of elementary school had not been in vain.

My year as a pupil in grade school was an unforgettable grueling experience, but necessary for future admission to a secondary school. The day started with an early morning assembly of the pupils and teachers for a half hour of calisthenics. The pupils were not allowed to enter the classrooms until they had changed shoes at the hallway lined with rows and rows of assigned built-in shoeboxes. There, they would change into sneakers, and put away their street shoes until after classes. The wooden floors of the school building were always shiny and immaculate.

Each class had a monitor, and when the teacher came into the classroom, the monitor would stand and command "Arise! (Kiritsu!)"

The teacher and class would then bow to each other and classes would resume only after the monitor commanded the class to "Sit! (Suware!)" The profound respect accorded the teachers in the Japanese education system has always been remarkable.

My brother and I were introduced by our mother to the principal on our first day of school. We were then tested to determine our aptitude in the Japanese language. Shinya must have done well, for he was admitted to his normal class level. On the other hand, my own aptitude in Japanese was only at the second grade level. This startled my mother immensely, and so at the kind suggestion of the principal and teachers, I received intensive tutoring daily. By hard, hard work I progressed smoothly spending one and a half months in each class. It's hard to believe that in the beginning, I didn't even know the Japanese word for "classroom." Nonetheless in one year, I had completed the six-year curriculum and, combined with my formal American grade school education, I was now sufficiently prepared to move on to a high school. The interest and encouragement that I received from highly dedicated teachers were nothing short of inspirational. My mother kept close watch over Shinya's and my progress and was extremely happy over what she observed.

Over a year had passed since our arrival in Kumamoto, when along came a letter from Hiroshima bearing the sad news of the death of Cousin Yukiko. She was the only daughter of Uncle Tatsudo and Aunt Shigeko, and had died of tuberculosis. Still in high school, she had been a quiet, intelligent girl who enjoyed literature and at any time would just as soon be by herself with a good book. Unfortunately, she would not have passed away so young if only antibiotics had been discovered by that time. Obviously, the same logic could have applied to the loss of my brother, Kohei. Then, a few years later, we lost Satoru, the eldest of Yukiko's younger brothers. We had no inclination that he had been critically ill, and were stunned to learn of his untimely death. The letter did not go into much detail, but ambiguously stated that there were serious complications involving his spinal cord. Cousin Satoru was seriously studying for the priesthood, and looking forward to joining his father in serving Buddha and their congregation.

Our arduous, long journey had finally come to an end, and we were able to relax at the temple, Mother's birthplace of many nostalgic memories. Uncle Kenshi, the older of her two younger brothers was the priest, handsome, and occasionally known for his flamboyant ways. In his earlier years, he and his wife, Mitsuyo, had

been in China where, I am told he served in a Buddhist temple. During their relatively short stay, Aunt Mitsuyo learned, and achieved an excellent knowledge of Chinese cuisine. After their return home, my family looked forward to occasional invitations to Aunt Mitsuyo's Chinese dinners.

Uncle Kenshi had developed an enthusiasm for the game of mahjong (Chinese chess) and had brought home his newly acquired fascination for the game. His wife worried that his interest in mahjong had reached the point of near addiction and that sometimes had even become secondary to his priestly responsibilities.

Some of the young ladies in the congregation were attracted to Uncle Kenshi's tall, handsome appearance and priestly demeanor. He seemed pleased with his own popularity, but sadly, his beautiful wife, in her loving devotion to her husband suffered deeply, becoming unreasonably jealous and suspicious of the women. Her emotional health suffered steadily until she lost her senses and could no longer be held responsible for her actions. I was told that it was a common sight to see her sitting all alone in the chapel with a stack of newspapers by her side, and grinning to herself painstakingly shredding the paper. She finally was admitted to a hospital, but never fully

recovered, and tragically at the beginning of World War II, she escaped trying to run home to her family to make sure they were safe. Tragically, she was hit by shrapnel of an incendiary bomb and died instantly.

It naturally followed that Uncle Kenshi married Sachiko, one of the ladies of the congregation. They had been endeared to each other for a long time, and now could freely pursue their love affair, becoming husband and wife.

However, Aunt Mitsuyo had left one son, Ryuji, and two daughters, Yoko and Keiko, each of whom openly resented their new stepmother. Nonetheless, so strong was the love between their father and his new wife, that they were unresponsive to any expressions of animosity on the part of the three children.

Also living at the temple was Uncle Junshi, a struggling artist, and the younger of mother's two brothers. In his quest for subject matter, he discovered a nearby village that was unique in its bucolic scenic beauty. It was there that he met and married Hisako, the lovely daughter of the village chief.

My cousin, Yoko, happily married to a councilman of a neighboring town, worked as a kindergarten teacher, and was very dedicated. She enjoyed the children enormously, but

unfortunately, had never been blessed with children of her own.

Her sister, Keiko, who had inherited her mother's looks entered a beauty contest by the encouragement of her relatives and friends, and won the title of Miss Kumamoto. About 1940, she tried for a screen test and was given a minor part in a movie, but later gave up her career to become the wife of a newspaper columnist, whom she had met between locations. They now live in Tokyo, and are the parents of four adult children; two sons and two daughters. I am still in touch with Keiko, both by correspondence, and by monthly international phone calls.

In the meantime, Uncle Kenshi had died due to diabetes and tuberculosis. His son, Ryuji, a university student in Tokyo, was suddenly called back home and unwittingly inherited the priesthood. His stepmother, who had learned much about Buddhism from her late husband, continued to live on at the temple. She was a help to Ryuji when there were requests from members of the congregation for small religious services in their homes. Her professionalism was well received and appreciated by all the members of the congregation.

Ryuji now has a beautiful wife, takes his vocation very seriously, and his daily

incantations of the sutra are the most melodious and beautiful I have ever heard.

At the risk of regressing, it seems important enough that I now go back to my school years in the late 1930's when Japan was at war with China. I was then in my last year of Janice James School (Kyushu Jogakuin). It was a five-year Mission School run by Lutheran missionaries from Pennsylvania, and accredited by the Japanese Ministry of Education.

We were not precluded from the War effort, and as such, with the fall of Shanghai and Nanking and other prominent Chinese cities, all of the high school students paraded the streets, carrying banners of their schools that proclaimed the fall of city. I was chosen the standard bearer, and while feeling somewhat of a notoriety, I marched through the streets, leading my entire school.

In 1940, because of the instability of economic relations between United States and Japan, and at the urging of his brothers and sisters, Father decided it was time for him to consider returning to Japan. He was approached by a prospective buyer for his partnership in the hotel business, agreed to sell, and trustingly signed a contract neglecting to read the fine print. In essence, he had been swindled. One would imagine he would have been outraged and embarrassed by his predicament, but I

believe he must have conveniently rationalized the incident as the "will of Buddha." He returned to Japan penniless.

We had moved to Tokyo by that time, and I was working my way through a business school as its switchboard operator between classes. Shinya was attending high school.

In order to alleviate a perpetual need for raw materials, Japan invaded the southeastern islands, i.e., Sumatra, New Guinea, Malaysia, etc., and named this group of islands the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. It is not difficult to imagine how important these islands were to Japan's survival, for she is a country with very few natural resources. United States had enforced an embargo against Japan, and consequently, the extent of Japan's dependence on the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere was considerable.

Chapter Three

Unstable economic relations between the United States and Japan in 1940-41 steadily worsened, global conditions were precarious, and in the face of an embargo proclaimed by the United States, supplies of scrap iron and steel became a thing of the past. The shortage of petroleum became critical because the East Indies, Japan's chief source of petroleum, suspended contact with Tokyo. A shocking scenario in those days was enterprising Japanese taxi drivers desperately resorting to the use of coal as alternate fuel for their vehicles.

Japan formed a bond with the Axis countries and joined in the signing of the Germany-Italy-Japan Tripartite Pact. General Hideki Tojo had taken power as the Premier of Japan, and under his edicts, Japan steadily increased her military power. Emperor Hirohito, traditionally a divine figurehead, remained only a figurehead, discouraged.

However, during one of my coincidental visits to my hair dresser, she informed me of a good friend of hers who strongly disagreed with the bureaucratic policy of eliminating English from the classroom and from the people's daily lives. He was searching for someone who would secretly help him keep alive his ability to

speak English. This friend was none other than Miki Takeo, the youngest member of the Parliament, and whose career over the years would span the positions of Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Munitions, and even Prime Minister, replacing Tojo after Japan's surrender in 1945.

During his youth, Mr. Miki finished his university education in Tokyo, and attended an American college in Washington, D.C. While in Washington, he enjoyed his leisure travels to Los Angeles, where he befriended many Japanese-Americans (Nisei), my hairdresser having been one of them.

I was elated over Mr. Miki's desire to practice English conversation, and looked forward to meeting him. An interview took place at a coffee shop on the Ginza. His proposition was that I visit him two evenings a week at his residence, join him and his wife for dinner, and then proceed with our English conversation. He firmly believed that the knowledge of English was vital, especially because hostilities between countries should never be the reason to curtail verbal communication. Our sessions were enjoyable and refreshing. He commented that I was fortunate to be bi-lingual and versatile in two cultures.

Mr. Miki's convictions were substantiated in early 1941 when I received an unexpected call from the head of the Business School from which I had been graduated. She informed me of an opening in the American Embassy for the position of translator/interpreter. Feeling confident, and despite unstable relations between the two countries, I eagerly applied for the position against the advice of my father. I was assigned to the Commercial Attaché's Office, reporting to the Vice Consul.

One morning as I was hurriedly leaving for work, my father, who had been listening to the radio, warned me to be very careful because Japan had bombed Pearl Harbor. My immediate reaction was, "Incredible! There must be some mistake. How could a tiny country like Japan be foolhardy enough to attack such a giant country as America?" The only way to find out was to report to work. When I mentioned the news to my boss, I was amazed to discover that not one of the diplomats including Ambassador Grew was aware of the announcement. This, then led me to believe that what came over the radio must have been a mistake.

Suddenly, we were jarred by the clanging of the iron grill gates and the stomping of boots worn by the Japanese gendarmes. When we realized what was happening, all the American officials emptied their file cabinets and

frantically ran down to the basement with reams of secret documents, and tossed them into the furnace. At the same time the gendarmes were destroying all means of outside communication by yanking out short wave radios and telephones. We then were virtually locked up as hostages under the scrutiny of Japanese guards with no contact with the outside world. While the Embassy officials remained incredulous over what actually happened, they were confident that the American government would intervene and negotiate a rescue within days. So confident were they that they held a victory celebration that evening after receiving a pep talk to "stay calm" from Ambassador Grew. It was at that celebration that I tasted a martini for the first time in my life. I was only twenty years old and decided I had never tasted anything as horrible. I do not recall what I actually did with that one drink.

It cannot be denied that everyone's morale was at a very low ebb and the topic of conversation consisted of who was going to get "mattress marks on his back" that night. A few willingly shared their beds and it was anyone's guess what transpired between them. After all, they were hostages, and tomorrow was just another day. All of the Foreign Service employees lived in apartments within the

Embassy compound and I considered myself fortunate to be offered accommodations by Ambassador Grew's secretary in her apartment.

We awoke at dawn to the noise of an oxen driven cart carrying barrels of excrement that were customarily processed as fertilizer. Much to our amazement, the farmer came to a stop and suddenly and deliberately emptied the barrels on the iron gate of the Embassy! This expression of hostility by the farmer could only be interpreted as total submission to General Tojo's dictatorship, and also his blind support of Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor.

In contrast to the regret and humiliation that any average Japanese would have felt by this incident, the Americans thought it was the funniest thing they had ever seen and showed their humor and excitement by running to get their cameras. Eventually General Tojo arrived on his white horse and seemed to be issuing orders to the guards and to anyone else who happened to be there. Shortly thereafter, the gate was cleaned up to appear as though nothing had happened.

Later, that same morning, my mother having heard what had happened over the radio, arrived with some change of clothes for me and handed them to a gendarme. We did not get to see each other, and I did not know she had been there until after she had left. In the package

were also included my toilet articles and cosmetics. I would later learn from my mother that the gendarme emptied the box of face powder in front of her on a sheet of paper, twirled the powder with his face powder in front of her on a sheet of paper, twirled the powder with his finger and examined it for secret messages.

Because I lived locally, I was released at the same time as the Japanese employees after a short stay of only about three days. In about as early as three weeks, the exchange of Embassy personnel with Japanese diplomats was successfully negotiated through Switzerland, a neutral country who provided the ship, the Gripsholm, for this purpose. Although I, too, could have returned to the United States by virtue of being an American citizen, I would never have left my parents.

World War II had formally begun, and in the United States, racist sentiment against the Japanese was at its peak. Beginning the day after Pearl Harbor, the Japanese immigrants (were dismissed from government jobs, their licenses to practice law and medicine were revoked, and in some communities, even businesses and farms were confiscated. the hate campaign against the Issei and Nisei was pervasive particularly on the West Coast where the Japanese population was the greatest. Many

insurance companies cancelled their policies. Some grocers would not sell them food, and some banks declined to honor their checks. Life became frightening for the Japanese and they had nowhere to escape. It has been reported that some were refused gas at filling stations, or the use of public toilets.

I am reminded at this point of a humorous incident that occurred when my Nisei friend, Mary Nanbara, a civil service worker in Washington, D.C., was having her lunch in a restaurant. She was ordered by another customer to leave because she was Japanese. Mary's response was, "You're mistaken. My name is Mary O'Nanbara, and I'm Irish." So saying, she calmly continued with her lunch.

Pursuant to evacuation plans of the War Department, the Issei and Nisei citizens were given convoys to eleven designated internment camps in various desolate federal lands in Utah, Arizona, Nevada, Wyoming and other inland states. They were permitted to carry only personal belongings in hand luggage and were forbidden to take razors or liquor.

They were housed in barracks, and I am told that in each camp they shared a community laundry, mess hall, latrines and open shower stalls where even women had to bathe with minimum privacy. The camps were surrounded by barbed wire and the internees were watched

with searchlights from watchtowers. The American Civil Liberties Union was outraged and it's been reported that they called the internment "the worst, single, wholesale violation of civil rights of American history."

At no time were there any disturbances in the camps. Life went on, and marriages were performed, babies were born, and while food was rationed by the Government, some families farmed and grew some of their own fresh vegetables. They had much to endure, but the willingness of the Japanese to cooperate with the authorities was remarkable.

Numerous Nisei men voluntarily served in the United States Army and not only fought valiantly against the Japanese in the Pacific Islands, but joined the famous all Japanese-American 442nd Regiment and gave up their lives fighting in the European Theatre. No one ever deserted, and it has been reported that collectively they won 3,000 Purple Hearts with 500 oak leaf clusters, 810 Bronze Stars, 342 Silver Stars, 47 Distinguished Service Crosses, and 17 Legion of Merit Awards. It was recognized that "no combat unit in the Army could exceed them in loyalty, hard work, courage and sacrifice." Lives lost and the casualty rates were appalling.

After World War II had been fought and won, the internees whose homes and property

had been confiscated, would successfully sue the government for restitution and, by act of Congress, each family would be awarded a flat sum of twenty thousand dollars in reparation.

On the other hand, in Japan, their war effort was becoming increasingly desperate to the extent that housewives were asked to contribute whatever metal objects they could spare, such as pots and pans, iron, bronze, aluminum, gold, silver, and even jewelry to be melted down and used in the manufacture of weapons. They even confiscated my mother's wedding ring. Despite the propaganda of victories emanating from General Tojo's Public Information Bureau, The Japanese public was not fooled that easily, and it was obvious that Japan was not winning the war.

The scarcity of food was pervasive, and easily witnessed in the scarecrow appearance of most Japanese citizens walking the streets of Tokyo. Although the women were able to conceal the pallor in their faces with make-up, this was not the case with the malnutritioned men.

Food, such as rice, fish and vegetables rationed by the government simply were not sufficient to feed the citizens. Food became a scarce and sacred commodity, and it was the farmers, not the bureaucrats who held the key to survival. Homemakers gave up some of their

clothing to take to the farms and bartered to augment their food supply, or if lucky, at times, they were able to buy food on the black market.

There was a small patch of land behind our house on which my mother was able to raise some cabbages, tomatoes and cucumbers. Fish was rarely available because most of the fishermen were away at war. Sugar was rationed to augment the small amounts of rice. Steamed rice was a thing of the past because we cooked and stretched it until it was gruel.

One day when Mother heard me mutter how nice it would be if we could have some bread, she took the small amount of noodles that had been rationed, rendered it to dough, and baked bread with it. Here was this one small loaf of bread, which she presented to me and insisted that I eat all of it! Of course, that was out of the question, and after much persuasion on my part, my parents and I each had a small feast of the doughy bread made with noodles.

Shinya was not with us, because he was among all the able-bodied University students who had been called to war. He was sent to the Philippines, and was killed in action apparently within days of his arrival. We had received only one post card from him, telling us that he had been wounded in his leg, but that we should not worry because help was on the way.

A few weeks after the postcard, we, too, like many other families received an official letter from the Government. Enclosed, were a medal and a lock of my brother's hair. Unlike the death of my youngest brother Kohei, one might say Shinya's death was for his country. Sadly, we surmised that the "help that was on the way" never arrived.

While mourning Shinya's death, I prayed that his demise was not an endless, lingering death. My grieving mother chanted the sutra every morning in front of our miniature shrine and prayed to Buddha for the eternal, peaceful rest of both her sons.

Chapter Four

Upon the departure of the Embassy personnel, diplomatic, political and economic ties between the two countries came to a halt. Japanese yen currency was frozen by the United States, and likewise, dollar assets, by Japan. My personal income became non-negotiable because I had been getting paid in dollars. Fortunately, my boss and I secretly agreed upon a trade, and we exchanged his yen currency, which he no longer needed, for my American money, which I was not able to use.

With a letter of recommendation in hand from the Commercial Attaché, I was now in the predicament of having to seek another job after only eight months of employment with the Embassy. How fortunate I was, however, that my French teacher, Mr. Yamada, of L'Athenee Francais, the night school where I was attending, was able to offer assistance! He suggested the possibility of an opening at Domei News Agency (Domei Tsushinsha), later renamed Kyodo News Agency (Kyodo Tsushinsha). Its function was to disseminate news items to the media through its reporters and foreign correspondents; perhaps similar to our U.P. or A.P.

After an informal interview with Mr. Ian Mutsu, Chief of the Overseas Department, I

was employed as his secretary. He was well known in the Japanese community because he was a member of the aristocracy. His grandfather had been the first Foreign Minister of Japan in the 19th century. Of English birth, Mr. Mutsu was dignified in demeanor, and I perceived him as a gentleman whom I would enjoy working for. Because of the closeness of our work relationship, it seemed only natural that we would become good friends, and now, after fifty years, we are still in touch with each other.

Among the employees, there was Rose Toguri, who had been caught in the war during her visit from Chicago to visit her ailing aunt. She spoke no Japanese, was hired on the evening shift, but mysteriously disappeared as soon as she reported for work. Nobody knew where she disappeared except of course my boss, who eventually informed me that she was working at the transmission station. Years later, I would learn that she was none other than Tokyo Rose, hired to persuade the American GI's in her soothing voice over the short wave that they may as well give up because their sweethearts or wives were home, waiting for them. Truthfully, her work at the transmission station, where no knowledge of Japanese was required, was the only logical source of income that she could find. Sadly, she could not even

have worked as a waitress. It has been reported that after her return home following the War, she was arrested for her alleged un-American activities.

Those were at an age when espionage lurked everywhere and I was not spared from becoming a victim. On two occasions, I was presented with alarming propositions, first by a Japanese gendarme, and later by a member of the secret police.

I do not recall when or how the meeting was arranged with the gendarme, but I vividly remember the conversation. He stated that he had been carefully stalking my daily activities, that he knew I led quite an unexciting life, for all I did was go to work, go to school, go home, go to work, go to school, go home every day without any deviation. Then he suggested that he would arrange to have my income greatly enhanced if I would be willing to resign from the News Agency and accept a job at a foreign Legation as its switchboard operator. His proposition was that I listen in on every conversation over the telephone and report to him what was said, and by whom. He further stated that he would match whatever salary I would earn at the Legation. I certainly was not interested in performing as a spy, and so saying, firmly refused the proposition. I felt uneasy,

and too frightened to report the incident to anyone, including my parents.

Again, I do not recall where or how the member of the Secret Police found me, but he instructed me to give him a phone call. I was too frightened not to, and called him from a public phone booth. He requested that I meet him on the second floor of a necktie shop on the Ginza.

The stairs leading to the second floor were narrow and dark. They led to a single Japanese style room where we sat at the table on cushions on tatami mats and were served a cup of tea by the proprietress of the store after which she left us alone. The secret policeman reminded me of a recent widely publicized arrest of a German spy by the name of Zorge. The arrest had taken place at Roppongi, an area known to be frequented by Germans and White Russians. He further made a ridiculous and outrageous allegation that my boss was also under suspicion.

This secret policeman's proposition was two-fold. One was that I frequent the neighborhood of the Germans and White Russians and win their trust by befriending them. He requested that I report to him everything I was able to find out about their covert activities.

The second proposition was that I watch my boss at the Domei News Agency and report to the Secret Police anything suspicious that I might observe of his activities. Certainly I was unwilling to listen to such an audacious and presumptuous request and in the final analysis, vehemently refused each of their ridiculous propositions.

It's incredible how a person without guile such as I, actually had two occasions to become involved in espionage. How perceptive of Mr. Miki when he once stated that I was a "daughter of the age"!

In 1942, when Mr. Mutsu was unexpectedly hospitalized due to ill health, I reflected on my year's employment at the News Agency, and decided that the time had come for my swan song.

Knowing that I was in need of a job, Mr. Miki founded a club to serve as a convenient gathering place of the members of the Liberal Democratic Party who would assemble in Tokyo when the Diet was in session. He named the club, League of the Members of House of Representatives (Kokusei Kenkyukai) and I was its sole employee. My hours were only in the afternoons and I felt incredibly fortunate to be working for the approximately twenty eminent politicians. It was a unique job and Mr. Miki personally paid me out of his pocket for

no dues were collected. My duties consisted of mailing notices of scheduled meetings to the members, and to just be there for any Diet member who happened to drop in. Occasionally, one would bring a sack lunch and eat at the club just to relax. It was exciting to meet each one of them on a personal basis.

Incredibly, World War II was now right at our doorstep and Tokyo was invaded day and night by the B-29 bombers and fighter planes. The efficacy of the Japanese anti-aircraft left much to be desired, and the sound of air raid sirens did not discriminate day from night. Incendiary bombs were raining upon us and there was fire everywhere. We covered our windows at night with black curtains so that our lights would not be visible from the planes. There were whispers among the Japanese that in spite of what the Military would have us believe, "Japan was not winning the war. Young volunteer pilots were recruited to become the legendary Kamikaze (divine wind) suicide pilots who crashed their planes into the American aircraft carriers, thus giving up their lives in Japan's desperate effort to "win the war."

It was a nightly occurrence to be awakened from a sound sleep at 2 or 3 o'clock. So exhausted were we physically and psychologically that we did not even bother to

get up and run to the air raid shelters. Nonetheless, when the shelters were too crowded, some jumped into the river thinking that it was a good way to escape the bombings. The shocking result was that they ultimately scalded themselves to death, not realizing that the temperature of the water was just as hot as the fires caused by the bombings.

Although we lived in the rural area of Tokyo we were not able to escape a small fire to the overhang of our house caused by a sudden air raid attack in the middle of the night. It seemed a near-miracle that the fire was successfully extinguished by my mother with the help of our neighbors. Incredibly, Mother had picked up a barrel of water that she kept outside our door which she used to keep clean our walkway, and in sheer desperation to save our home, amazingly, with divine strength, she tossed the barrel of water up at the fire! One can only imagine how heavy the weight of the water must have been. Because of my mother's alarmingly quick action, we narrowly escaped the loss of our home, and quite possibly the loss of the homes of some neighbors. I worried that the weight of the barrel may have injured my mother's back or hip, but thankfully, she did not appear to suffer any discomfort or pain.

Tokyo was annihilated in the course of two days. Each air raid attack seemed strategically

planned, the transit system being the first target. The railroads were methodically destroyed and people were reporting to work by walking great distances. Not knowing if we would live to see tomorrow, we could not help but become quite fatalistic. After all, where would one run to Homes were lost, and people who lost their dwellings were living on their bombed out land in makeshift shacks that they put together with scraps of what was left of their houses. Salvaged aluminum was useful as roofs

After the two-day bombings, I decided to try walking to work and, the view that confronted me as I approached the tree-lined street was awesome. The trees had lost all their branches to fire, leaving only the trunks burning like huge candelabra throwing flames at each other. At the risk of sounding sacrilegious, it was an aesthetically beautiful sight that I shall never, ever forget.

It was wildly whispered that the American troops were going to land in Japan, and that the young women had better be prepared. Those who had contacts in the countryside sent their women there along with what personal possessions they were able to carry. The women who remained in the city wore kimonos that were altered to look like jump suits or work clothes, probably an attempt to inconspicuously protect their virtue. In rare, extreme cases,

tablets of potassium cyanide were made available to those women who were determined to protect their virtue at all costs. Incredible!

The trains were running again, and wives, mothers, sisters and lovers were seen at the train stations holding long white linen cloths. They would stop everybody who was willing, and ask them to stitch a French knot on the cloth until they had one-thousand knots, each knot representing a prayer for their loved ones at the battlefront. These sashes, called Sen-nin bari (a thousand prayers) were proudly worn around their abdomen by the soldiers who were fighting for their lives.

The war came to a decisive end when on August 6, 1945 an atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, and two days later, a second one on Nagasaki. The two cities had been completely annihilated, each by a single bomb.

In Hiroshima, Aunt Shigeko's body was buried in rubble of charred humanity and of what was once the temple. Uncle Tatsudo, who was returning home from his priestly duties at the distant home of a member of his parish, also became a victim. He died a lingering death, having received extensive injuries on his face and parts of his body. Their three sons who had been away at school or at war, were unaware that there was no longer a home or family.

Today, the temple has been reconstructed on a smaller scale, with two of the surviving sons having solemnly taken over the priesthood. The third son, also a priest, became heir to a temple after he married his wife who was an only child residing there with her parents.

Chapter Five

With the destruction of Tokyo by B-29 bombers and the annihilation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by the atomic bombs, even General Tojo seemed to awaken to the fact that Japan was soundly defeated. In August of 1945, for the first time in Japanese history, the people heard the voice of the Emperor over the radio, proclaiming the surrender of Japan. It was then that their centuries-old belief that the Emperor and all the emperors before him were gods, became a myth. This realization bewildered the citizens who had worshiped the Emperor as a living God. However, when they realized that the Emperor's proclamation of surrender meant there would be no more bombings, they cheered. Come what may, they could now look forward to welcoming home their soldiers and rebuilding their lives.

Japan's surrender meant many things to many people particularly in the political world. Long meetings in the Diet were followed by caucuses in my workplace and hours were spent on speculations of the future of the Liberal Democratic Party. The Club was on the eighth floor of the building, elevators were not running because power was at a shortage, and electricity was rationed. Trying to be helpful during one of their meetings, I decided to make some tea, and

ran down the stairs with a kettle for some hot water. As I reached the first floor, I was unexpectedly confronted by three soldiers who had wandered into the building. Delighted to see American faces, I innocently walked up to them and said, "You must be lost. May I help you?" Needless to say, they looked thunderstruck to be addressed in English by a Japanese woman. Of course it did not occur to me that they had come straight from the battlefield, and had not spoken to a woman for God knows how long. They looked at each other, and one of them said, "Yes, we're looking for a Japanese department store and you're going to take us there."

I replied, "I can't. I'm on duty now. Besides the department stores are closed at this hour."

"You're still going to come with us."

For the first time in my life I was shocked to feel a gun against my body. In desperation, I said, "I can't leave without permission from my employers. They're on the eighth floor."

The soldier holding the gun replied, "We'll get permission for you," and, ordering me to lead the way they all followed me up the eight flights of stairs.

Feeling doomed, but still desperately hoping that the group of fifteen or so Diet members would somehow be able to get me out of this mess, I entered the room and blurted in

Japanese, "These men are going to abduct me. Please help me!"

It was difficult to guess what the politicians' immediate reaction was, because without expression, they lowered their eyes in total silence. What were they thinking? Finally Mr. Miki broke the silence, and quietly said, "You may go."

Feeling defeated, I had to admit to myself that if the Diet members were powerless to help me, I had no choice but to submit to the whim of my abductors. After all, they were armed.

"Come on, let's go!" So saying, the soldiers forced me down the stairs with their gun, out of the building, and into an obviously stolen Japanese car.

I reminded them, "All the department stores are closed at this hour."

The driver of the car replied, "We'll see about that. That's not going to be a problem."

There was nothing I could do except guide them to the nearest department store. There, they banged repeatedly on the locked door while one of them continued to keep watch on me with his gun. Finally, they aroused the night watchman, shoved him aside and forced themselves into the store. It was going to be a long night. One of them announced that they were going to get souvenirs and some silk Japanese flags.

When I explained to the watchman that I was being abducted and informed him what the soldiers wanted, he said he did not have any of the silk flags that they were hoping to find.

Meanwhile, the soldiers were already ransacking the store and wildly helping themselves to anything they could stuff into the pockets of their large field jackets. Eventually, one of the men actually discovered a stack of silk Japanese flags! The soldier who had his gun on both the watchman and me, shouted angrily, "You lied to us!" and punched the watchman in the face until he fell to the floor. I had never in my life ever seen anyone get punched in the face, and what unfolded before my eyes filled me with horror.

After they finished looting, they again shoved me in the car, and brazenly announced, "Now you're going to round up two more girls and we're going to have a 'geisha' party at your house." My heart filled with terror when I wondered how I was going to protect my mother from this horrible predicament. At least my father, who had gone to Osaka to see about a job, would not have to face this nightmare. Had he been home, he would undoubtedly have had to face the same fate as the watchman at the department store.

I thought, "Somehow, I must circumvent this trip to my house, but how?" Fortunately, I had

never gone to my house by car, and could not begin to show them the way.

I said, "You can't come to my house, because I'm not able to give you directions by car."

"Well, how do you go back and forth from your house when you're not with us?"

"I only ride the train."

"OK, we'll follow the railroad tracks."

My immediate thoughts were, "I can't involve anyone else, I certainly am not going to compromise myself, and I am not going to play it their way. I must do the best I can and rely on divine guidance. There is nothing stronger than the power of speech and certainly God will speak for me. On the other hand, the worst that could happen is that I would probably die."

God did not let me die. He had me say, "I am very glad that I am not your wife, your sister, or your girl friend, because if I were one of them I would die of shame over your conduct as such poor representatives of your country. You don't even deserve to say you are Americans and the reason I feel I have the right to tell you this is because I am really one of you who was born and educated under your same flag, and learned the same Christian morals. And this is why I can look you in the eye and tell you how terribly ashamed I am to even recognize you as fellow Americans."

God must have been eloquent for the soldiers seemed stunned and I did not hear a word from them. I know I must have said much more than what I now recollect, and certainly it was God with His divine power that was moving my tongue.

After traveling for a while in silence, I came to the realization that we were lost. Spotting a police box by the roadside, I said, "I really can't find my house. There is a police box up there. Why don't you let me ask him for directions? The police are harmless because since the surrender all weapons have been confiscated."

When they stopped the car so that I could speak to the policeman, I said, "I am being abducted by these Americans and I really need for you to rescue me from this horrible predicament." Looking uncomfortable as though he would like to run away, the policeman scratched his head and said "Saaah" [meaning "Well, now..."]. He had no weapon except a hilly club hanging at his side. When one of the men got out of the car to curiously examine the billy club, the officer seemed terrified, did a round about turn, and ran for his life. These Americans thought that was hilarious and almost rolled on the ground laughing. At that point, I tried to escape, but the one who had the gun grabbed me by the arm, and yanked me back into the car. We just drove

on with nothing said, and they didn't even touch me.

In those days, since no one had cars unless one was wealthy, a taxi driver, or a person of great importance, I did not even know that cars were run by gas or that they depended on fuel. Thus, when something was said between them in the middle of the rice paddy, I was not able to understand their conversation. When the driver stopped the car and said, "You may get out now," I was so startled that I was at a loss as to what to expect. Then he searched in his pockets, got out a handful of items and handed them to me saying, "I want you to have these."

Repulsed by their well-meaning but ridiculous offer, I said, "They don't belong to you any more than they would to me."

"You were pretty nice to us. Take them."

He stuffed them into my hands, and they drove away, leaving me stranded there. It seemed incredible that I was finally free of those obnoxious abductors. After walking well into the night, I finally found my way home and faced my mother who was beside herself with sheer worry and frustration. After I explained everything that had happened, she was livid. She could hardly contain herself from her anger and the realization that such an unforgivable experience could have happened to her hard-working daughter.

In the morning, she took the first train out and resolutely headed for the Metropolitan Police Board in the heart of downtown Tokyo. She stormed into the police station and demanded to speak to the Chief of Police. I knew how deadly her voice could become when she was indignant, and at that time, I am sure she neither yelled nor screamed when she was greeted by the Police Chief. She simply expressed her rancor in her deadly voice as she was capable of doing and tossed the stolen items on the counter explaining to him in detail, the nature of her visit. She voiced her objection to an ineffective police force and after stating the need for much better protection she came home ostensibly feeling better for it.

I stayed home that day, physically and emotionally spent, and convinced that it was a well-deserved day-off. It seemed incredible that after the nightmarish ordeal, I actually came home totally unharmed.

The following day, we received a surprise visit from Mr. Miki and another member of the Parliament, both of whom expressed grave concern over my state of being, and with some hesitation in their voice, asked how I was. My mother, not being able to conceal her rancor, blurted, "How do you think she is?" She also told them how disappointed she was, that there I was only one woman, and fifteen of them

could not come to my rescue. She then mentioned her visit to the Metropolitan Police Board, and exclaimed, "Tell me, what kind of men are running this country?" The Diet members, appearing embarrassed over the entire incident, could say nothing. On the other hand, I don't think my mother would have been receptive no matter what was said. But I secretly thought, "Granted, there were fifteen men, but my mother was unreasonable to expect them to rescue me from the Americans, because after all, didn't she realize they were armed?"

When I returned to work, I was called to the office of the son of the Minister of Welfare, the owner of the building, and from whom we were renting office space. The conversation that ensued was devastating.

Assuming an air of superiority, he stated that he was ashamed of me and that I should be ashamed of myself, too, for "fabricating" the story about being abducted. He continued, what had happened was my own fault and that I had brought it all on myself because I went around flaunting myself to those men hoping that they would take me and show me a good time; and that I wanted all this to happen because I was "man-crazy."

He continued, "You wanted them to shower their attention on you. You know very well

none of this happened the way you said it did. You're an immoral woman."

I was so devastated by the arbitrary, false allegations that all I could do was burst into tears. So egotistically overpowering was he, that I doubt he even saw me struggling to assert my innocence with tears streaming down my face.

Even Mr. Miki confronted me with questions, asking for whatever reason, which direction the car was facing when my abductors freed me. I could not understand the relevancy of that question, but could not help but wonder, "Was he suspecting that I was raped and not admitting it?" Mr. Miki seemed distressed, and I suppose under the circumstances, even he could not help but doubt the veracity of my story. Couldn't he see that I could not defend my conduct, when I was blameless and there was nothing to defend?

I must admit in spite of the inexcusable behavior of the soldiers, their attitude towards me personally, was basically honorable, and most importantly as incredible as it may seem, they definitely did not even try to molest me.

Chapter Six

For the first time in the history of Japan, the country had been defeated and transformed into a vanquished nation searching for new direction. Historically, Japan had been known as a nation of group orientation, each group with a leader at its helm, and always, their direction had been by group consensus. The Allied troops found the weary Japanese to be excellent followers of General Douglas MacArthur's capable leadership.

The Japanese welcomed MacArthur as their benevolent and charismatic leader who was able to give them much needed direction and a foothold in their fragmented day-to-day existence.

For the first time in world history, Emperor Hirohito paid a formal visit to General Douglas MacArthur. It was truly a moving, historical occasion, and the media carried pictures of the visit, the tuxedoed Emperor, dwarfed by the tall, statuesque, uniformed Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers. The Japanese people were glued to the news, and spellbound by the scintillating aura carried by their new commander, General Douglas MacArthur.

The Ministers of the Cabinet were summoned individually, and briefed by the General as to what was expected of them. Mr.

Miki, then the Minister of Munitions, was among those summoned by the General. He was awe-struck by the General's demeanor and his eloquent delivery as he carefully explained his expectations of Mr. Miki's new role in the Ministry. He said the General came straight to the point, and paced, while observing Mr. Miki with piercing eyes. So moved was Mr. Miki by MacArthur's impressive delivery that he departed with nothing but the highest regard and deepest respect for the great General.

The Occupation of Japan progressed smoothly with Honor Guards posted daily at the main entrance to the eight-storied Dai Ichi Building where MacArthur and his Aides held office on the top floor. Each morning when the General arrived for work, there was always an enormous crowd of Japanese citizens, young and old, men and women, patiently waiting for a glimpse of the General as he arrived in his chauffeur-driven limousine. They would then how reverently, lower than they ever did to their Emperor, with their heads reaching below their knees. Then in the evenings, they would again mill about at the building and look up at the eighth floor patiently waiting for the light to go out at the window, again bowing their heads low in the usual manner when the General left the building. MacArthur was magnificent with his sharp military salute when responding to the

crowd crazed with love and admiration for their great leader.

An important issue that would contribute to the success of the Occupation was necessarily the designation and purge of the Japanese war criminals. General Hideki Tojo was among the few tried at the War Crimes Tribunal and executed. In addition, over 200,000 military and naval men who were held largely responsible for leading Japan into war were purged and prevented from openly participating in politics.

Soon, more members of the Occupation Forces would be arriving, and construction of military housing was begun for families of officers and troops. Mansions that were spared from the well-planned bombings were confiscated to be used as housing for higher ranking officers (field grade officers) and their families. Housing construction meant well-paying jobs for the Japanese. They were thankful for their newly acquired work, thankful to be financially getting ahead in their own lives. Several of the men and women applied for employment with American families and were hired as maids or boys. They proved to be very loyal employees, and were proud of their jobs. Their American employers became endeared to them, and generously provided

them with food and clothing to take home to their families.

Payment of salaries and utilities were the responsibility of the Japanese Government as a part of wartime reparations. Through their employment, the Japanese were presented with a unique opportunity to learn and speak English eight hours a day. They were eager to become fluent in the language, and were proud to be associated with the Americans. They worked hard and kept the homes spotless for their employers.

Independent storekeepers catered to, and valued their American customers. The signs in front of their stores frequently displayed English translations, or were entirely in the English language. There was a two-storied tailor shop on the Ginza, where the men's fitting room was on the first floor and the ladies, fitting room, upstairs. The enterprising storekeeper innocently and proudly displayed a large English language sign in front of his store, which read, LADIES HAVE FITS UPSTAIRS. He was convinced that his sign must be greatly appreciated by the Americans when he noticed that it was not only a cause of much good-natured laughter, but also a famous landmark that many Americans captured on camera.

It's recognized widely among linguists, and rightfully so, that the most difficult expression

in any foreign culture is humor, frequently causing a breakdown in inter-racial communication. This brings to mind an incident when one of my Japanese war bride friends was washing her windows, and an American neighbor expressed what was intended as friendly humor with the comment ". . . don't stop there when you are finished, just keep going towards my house..." Rather than accepting this comment as friendly humor, my friend interpreted it at face value, and was highly insulted and speechless with anger because her pride was deeply hurt. She was convinced that she was being observed equally as one of the maids who worked for American families.

During the Occupation, my employment was with the Civil Censorship Detachment of the Civil Intelligence Division where all of the employees were bi-lingual. All media including books, magazines, newspapers, the theater, the radio were censored for violations of the censorship code. The code consisted of numerous items such as incitement to unrest, leftist propaganda, criticism of the Occupation, and others, which I no longer recall. The theater, radio and books containing flagrant violations of the censorship code were suppressed, and objectionable passages from publications were deleted even at the expense

of many creative works losing some valuable meaning or the original intent of the writer. Leftist propaganda was one of the main reasons for the work not passing censorship. While Communism had been outlawed before the war, it was only after Japan's defeat that the Communists were given the freedom to start writing and publishing as they never had before. In addition, the Communist Party was formally recognized in the Parliament, and the Party issued a daily paper called The Red Flag (Akahata). This, and all the other leftist publications were closely examined at a "Special Censorship Desk," to which eventually I was transferred from my original assignment at the Press Department. It was an arduous task to try to detect all the leftist violations of the censorship code.

It seemed ironic that the Japanese publishers, producers, and writers were at the mercy of the bi-lingual censors who submitted problematic material to the American Department Chiefs for their final action. Without doubt, it was devastating to have one's work suppressed, or deleted to such an extent that the entire creative effort had to be revised or even suspended.

After a few months of operation, there occurred a crisis involving those of us who were American-born but hired locally. A

military officer appeared in our office with a directive from the Personnel Office, saying that all the American-born local hires were disqualified from working in the higher pay category of "foreign nationals" because we lived in Japan during the War, putting us under suspicion of wartime Un-American Activities. There were about four or five of us in that category, and we were all fired immediately without any prior notice.

All I knew was, I needed my job and was not willing to be intimidated by this unsubstantiated allegation. After all, wasn't I an American citizen who had previously worked for the American Embassy? In my predicament, clearly the first logical step was to cancel my status of dual citizenship by going to the Ministry of Foreign affairs and denounce my Japanese citizenship. This having been accomplished, I was advised to go to the American Consulate and firmly re-establish my citizenship by going through the process of what they called "overcoming my presumption of expatriation." This process required filling out reams of paper to document in complete chronological sequence all my activities and employment during the war. As expected, I was questioned in detail regarding my previous employment with the League of the Members of the House of Representatives, because they

needed to be satisfied that I had not been active in Japanese politics. I anxiously waited roughly a year before I was notified by the Consulate that I had successfully "overcome my presumption of expatriation," and therefore remained an American citizen. How elated I was, for never before had I realized how precious citizenship was! During this one-year waiting period, I had been officially declared "stateless" and had continued working as a "foreign national". The concurrent dismissal of the four or five other Japanese-Americans was also reversed, and they were reinstated in their original jobs.

Now that I was qualified to apply for a job as an American citizen, I happily went to the Personnel Office for reclassification of my job. The Chief of the Personnel Office was a Lieutenant Colonel who seemed indifferent and received me coldly. He bluntly stated, "I am a Texan. And I have a wife and family to care for. I cannot help you. Why don't you go to the Japanese bank downstairs and see if they will give you a job." It was incredible that this man was so out of line, and yet assumed the rank of a Lt. Colonel. Not to be outdone, I went directly to the Inspector General and reported the entire incident. He had his secretary record our conversation in shorthand. A few days later, feeling ambivalent, but still wanting to be

employed in an American civil service job, I had no choice but to go back to the Personnel Office. I was pleasantly surprised to see that my visit to the Inspector General had obviously brought quick results. Lt. Colonel Alexander was no longer there, and I was told that he had suddenly been transferred to an administrative job at the Military Hospital.

Feeling as though I had moved a mountain, I was able to return to my job no longer as a foreign national, but as a full-fledged American citizen with a promotion to the rank of GS-7, equivalent to that of an officer.

Chapter Seven

With the orderly arrival of the Occupation Forces, the Japanese were enormously excited, and enthusiastically welcomed the Americans. There were soldiers everywhere and, most interesting was the reaction of the Japanese to the Black soldiers for this was the first time they had ever met face to face, a person who was African-American. These Black soldiers were a novelty and were treated with great respect by the curious Japanese.

Without question, the American soldiers, Black or White, were the most attractive that the Japanese women had ever seen. They were not only handsome, but also incredibly kind. Their tall stature, and their mannerisms when they walked with such loose, long strides, with such self-assurance, were just as the Japanese had seen in the movies.

The soldiers, on the other hand, were captivated by the demure, graceful demeanor of the women who seemed so willing to always please. Inter-racial romances naturally followed and these love affairs developed into serious relationships. Nevertheless, these romances were sadly short-lived, because the tour of duty of the soldiers was only three years.

Occasionally, however, extensions were applied for by these soldiers and readily

granted, thus saving the army the considerable cost of processing discharges and replacements. In any case, separation was inevitable and consequently tragic, for rarely did the women hear from their American lovers again. Unfortunately, it was in an age when inter-racial marriages were prohibited by military regulations. Some of the soldiers who had become so helplessly involved with their Japanese sweethearts even had wives and children waiting for them in America. Some Japanese women had become pregnant, some by their African-American lovers.

Just around this time, fate extended its hand, and Madame Sawada, the wife of the Japanese Ambassador to Brazil, came to the rescue of the frequently unwanted Occupation babies of African-American fathers. She established an orphanage, equipped it piece by piece with necessary furniture, and named it the Elizabeth Saunders Home. She hired caretakers who provided excellent care for the orphans of all ages and race. Among Madame Sawada's many interested visitors was her good friend and well-known writer Pearl Buck, who always had words of praise and encouragement, and offered assistance when needed.

One of MacArthur's directives was, "Fraternization with Japanese women is prohibited" but interestingly enough it turned

out to be a directive impossible to enforce. The oldest profession in the world conspicuously permeated the vicinity of all the military installations. It seemed ominous to see mysterious shacks sparsely sprouting along some of the obscure streets of Tokyo. I would notice soldiers going in and out of these shacks, and in the beginning I naively wondered what they were doing there. Eventually, I learned that these strange shacks were called prophylactic stations. Exactly what the soldiers did in those stations piqued my curiosity, but I remained silent, and thought better of asking any questions.

It must be mentioned here that most women who were romantically involved with the soldiers spoke little or no English. Recognizing that sex is a universal language, it seemed as they became more and more endeared to one another, they gradually learned each other's native tongue by augmenting their speech with abundant gestures. Also, the soldiers were kind and generous, and the impoverished Japanese were always glad to receive canned foods, cigarettes and candy.

There was no denying that the officers who lived alone because their families remained in America for whatever reason were lonely, but they seemed to enjoy a social life by dating those of us who worked for the Occupation in

the role of Department of the Army Civilians (DAC's), or the few women officers (WAC's). These officers lived in hotels procured by the Occupation.

It was enjoyable dating some of the officers, one in particular from Brockton, Massachusetts. Always, we would go to the rooftop of his hotel where they had nightly dinner dances with a lovely band. Dinner was always delightful, and we had a wonderful time dancing our favorite two-step. Colonel O'Leary was fun to dance with, but our friendship lasted only the few remaining months of his tour of duty. On his last day in Japan, he presented me with a crystal necklace as a souvenir of our short friendship. I wore it to work almost daily, reminiscing our fun-filled dinner dances.

During my employment in Censorship, I continued to date, but those dates were frequently a disappointment because my idea of a date was not exactly what those married "bachelor" officers had in mind. Tiresome.

Then, along came my heartthrob, a Sergeant First Class, my future husband. It all started when Rose Suzuki, the secretary to the Department Chief, formed me that there was a very nice man she wanted me to meet. My firm response then was, "Rose, I'm so disillusioned by men, I don't think I'm interested in meeting anyone."

"But this person is a barracks mate of Warren, my boy friend, and we think he's exceptional."

"No, Rose."

"But he doesn't have a girlfriend . . ."

"Rose, I really don't feel like meeting him."

"Jane, you would like him. Won't you even give it a try? We want to show him a good time."

"You know how I feel about men these days. I'm just not interested."

"Go out with us just this once, please? And I won't ask you again."

"Oh... Well, I suppose so then... but just this once."

"All right, shall we plan on this weekend?"

"OK. . . . By the way, what's his name?"

"His name's Bob."

Just as Rose had anticipated, we had a wonderful time that Saturday. In time our dates became spontaneous, and gradually they were no longer with Rose and Warren, but just between Bob and me. Our conversations were enduring, and I became increasingly interested in Bob, and his background. He had fought in Okinawa, and had been wounded in 1944 by a hand grenade. There was fine shrapnel dust still embedded under the skin on his face and chest area. After a year's break in service, he had re-enlisted, and was assigned as Chief Clerk to the

office of one of the Aides to General MacArthur.

"Isn't that quite an honor?" I asked.

"Yes, I don't know exactly why I was chosen for the position, but they did test me for IQ."

"Oh, that means you have a high IQ . . . " "I did score highly on that test."

I thought it incredible how well mannered and considerate he was, always making sure frequently, and somehow we knew that we would be sharing the rest of our lives together. But the public was not ready for the announcement of our decision to be married. We had known each other for less than six months, and despite my American citizenship, our marriage would still be inter-racial, a rare occurrence in those days.

Warren said that he thought I would be very happy with Bob because this was his first serious love affair.

"Why, you impulsive child!" was an admonition I received from a well-meaning elderly lady whom I barely knew.

As for my parents, even though they were fond of Bob, they were taken aback by our sudden decision, and their surprise was certainly justified. My father, in all his wisdom, suggested that we give ourselves more time. Understandably, my parents felt that our decision was too hasty.

As for Bob's mother in New Mexico, a letter had previously arrived with the words, " I haven't heard anything from you for a long time ...who is she?" When suddenly informed of our plans to be married, her reaction was warm and supportive. After all, Bob was her only child and his happiness was her priority.

She had excitedly shared the news with her sister in Oregon, which prompted an alarming letter to Bob, expressing her strong objection to our marriage, and accusing him of deliberately choosing someone of enemy nationality for his wife, and adding that should he ever choose to take me to meet her, she would hold her head high while she held open the door for me.

So angry was Bob that his response to his aunt's letter was, "I am very happy that you feel the way you do about Jane, because now I won't have to explain to my wife why I have such a crummy relative as you."

In addition, Bob's mother expressed her rancor over her sister's attitude by writing her that their relationship was henceforth severed, and that she never wanted to hear from her again.

During the holidays, there was a card from Bob's aunt with the words, "This is a year of forgiveness." The card accompanied a box of chocolate cordials. However, she received no response from either Bob or me.

Our day of excitement arrived on our wedding day at St. Ignatius Church attached to the Sophia University in Tokyo. We were married by Father Nicholas Roggen, a Jesuit priest from Germany, and Dean of the English Department. It was Father Roggen who had given me private instructions and baptized me when I had decided to convert to the Catholic faith.

Since my father was out of town working for the Occupation Forces in Osaka, I had asked Bob Zahn, who was then our Department Chief in the Censorship Detachment to give me away. He joked that he would like nothing better than to "give me away."

Rose and Warren were our maid of honor and best man. Mrs. Miki had kindly offered me her own wedding gown because so shortly after the war, such western wedding dresses were considered a luxury item, and simply not available. How fortunate that she and I were of the same size! Rose was stunning in her bridesmaid's gown of shimmering, pale green and silver brocade.

We had a large reception at the American Club with a lovely band that played the wedding march when Bob and I entered the room. There was feasting, drinking and dancing and the two of us were able to slip away in the midst of the celebration, leaving Warren in

charge. Our week's honeymoon was spent up north in the beautiful mountainous snow country. We stayed in a hotel procured by the military for recreational purposes, and were mildly surprised that we were not the only honeymooners. We exchanged pleasantries with other newlyweds in the dining hall, and Bob was delighted to be able to get in some skiing while I quietly stayed in our room and wrote letters, or took walks.

It was exciting to set up housekeeping in our new home which was nothing more than half of a Quonset hut, but was intimate and adequate for our needs. Each Quonset hut, divided in half, was designed as apartments for two couples, one on each end. This military housing development was called Palace Heights. There was a Japanese guard stationed at the gate, and all visitors were required to sign in when calling on the residents. Almost as soon as we were settled in, we were contacted and interviewed by a newspaper reporter for a human-interest story about our inter-racial marriage. The news item carried a large photo of us, blissfully and lovingly talking about our lives and our future together.

Happily we did not live far from my mother, and we looked forward to our occasional visits. While my father, still in Osaka spoke fluent English, Bob said that he had the best mother-

in-law in the whole world, because she did not speak English and was not able to "give him hell."

My mother and I enjoyed a good laugh when I repeated in Japanese what Bob had said. I loved his forthright attitude, his intelligence, and his usual dry humor. I was 26 years old, and Bob, 27.

Chapter Eight

One day when my husband came to my office to take me to lunch, he seemed unusually restless. As we quickly walked out the building, I sensed that he had something urgent on his mind. Then he suddenly commented, "You sure are observant."

Taken by surprise, I said, "Thank you, dear."

"Janie, don't you notice anything?"

"Notice what?"

"I'm not going to say." There was a tone of disappointment in his voice.

"Say what?"

"Look harder."

He wanted to surprise me Then I saw it! Master Sergeant stripes on his sleeves!

"Darling, you've been promoted."

"Well! You finally noticed."

I snuggled up to him and whispered, "How wonderful! Isn't it great? I'm so proud of you."

When we sat down for lunch, he said, "Unfortunately, there's a slight drawback

"Oh, really? What is it?"

"Well, much as I enjoy my current job, it doesn't call for the higher rank of Master Sergeant, and while I'll still belong to the Chief of Staff's office, I'm being transferred to its Visitor's Bureau, located in the Imperial Hotel. It will not be as sensitive a position as what I

now have, but it does call for the Master Sergeant rank. I will be working with a Major and a Lt. Colonel, and three civilians, two of them, bi-lingual Japanese. The other is an administrative assistant, Miss Alexander. This office is where we receive the dignitaries from all over the world, defer to their 50 needs, and help them get settled in. Frankly, I only hope I'll not get bored with this job." Bob's boredom was very real to the extent that he literally developed ulcers.

Unbeknownst to Bob, and to my great astonishment I later learned from one of my well-meaning co-workers, that he was informed by one of the officers in the Visitor's Bureau and incidentally a friend, that the basic reason for my husband's transfer was that he married me, an alien! Naturally I was deeply offended and shocked, for as Bob's wife, I expected to be nothing but an asset to his career. If the Chief of Staff's Office considered me a blemish to Bob's position without even bothering to investigate my record, I could only judge them as naive. They would have discovered that in my position as a censor I had been granted a security clearance.

Soon after his promotion, Bob was due for a 3-month re-enlistment vacation and we joyfully started making plans to spend it in New Mexico

where his parents homesteaded a ranch in the Capitan mountain range.

Although I eagerly looked forward to meeting my in-laws, I must admit it was not without feelings of trepidation. When we finally drove up to the ranch after having traveled weeks by land and sea, Bob's mother came running out of the house and embraced both of us. She warmly welcomed me as a member to their family, and instantly made me feel at ease.

Already feeling deeply fond of her, I found myself saying, "I will try my best to not let you down," So eager was I to make a good first impression that I can still recall how nervous I felt. Bob proudly watched us get acquainted and, I secretly reminded myself that I certainly must not let my husband down.

Being at the ranch was almost like a second honeymoon in a foreign country. It was late afternoon when Ross, Bob's step-dad, came home from working in the field, and happily joined us in the large kitchen. Taking off his Stetson hat, he had entered the house full of smiles and 51 welcomed us good-naturedly. His demeanor was like that of a barrel-chested, hard-working sheriff that one sees in a Western movie. As we sat around the kitchen table, chatting, my in-laws were full of questions about our trip, our life in Japan, how we lived, and what the Japanese thought of Americans.

All through the conversation, Bob was beaming with pride while lovingly watching and listening to my light-hearted responses to his parents' questions. Ross looked at us, and jokingly said to me, "Hell, you don't act like a Japanese gal. Don't Japanese women always wait on their husbands? As near as I can recall, I must have said something like, "Yes, Ross, that may be so, but Bob and I wait on each other." I knew he was enjoying himself, because whenever I said anything, he looked at his wife, and together they would laugh. Actually, they seemed charmed, and at the same time, exuberant.

It was not hard to see what pioneers my in-laws were. The house had been freshly painted, and there were new curtains on the windows.

Lighting was by means of intriguing kerosene lamps. Outdoors, there was a windmill and an outhouse, the only toilet facility available. Such was their infrastructure. The kitchen sink had a little pump at its side for soft rainwater; hard water from the faucets was used for house-cleaning purposes. Cooking was done on an old-fashioned wood stove. My mother-in-law was an accomplished cook, and it was remarkable the way she prepared meals complete with dessert, all on her wood stove.

On our approach to the ranch, there were two or three ranches before the road forked, the

main road leading to the Flatley Ranch, Flatley being my in-laws' name. There was a sawmill inside the gate, and because part of the ranch was forest country, it seemed lumber was always available. I was frightened of the cattle grazing near the sawmill, and felt uncomfortable being stared at by the bull. I wasn't sure I would ever get accustomed to ranch life, or even like living on a ranch. I was aware however, that whether or not I liked a place had much to do with the people I was with, and I was fond of my in-laws.

The entire town of Capitan consisted of a single street in the mountain range. It included a post office, two bars, a grocery store, a cafe, a Laundromat and a women's clubhouse. There were schools, homes, and a church on the side streets. It was a town where everyone knew everyone, but not necessarily liked each other.

Occasionally, Bob and Ross would each mount a horse to inspect the fences and mend the ones that needed repairing. The size of the ranch was substantial, and this project was easily a half-day's work. It was important to keep the fences in good repair particularly after the deer season when hunters were all over the mountain range, carrying guns and wearing red clothing to make themselves conspicuous to other hunters. Ross said they were rough on his fences when chasing deer. Some of the hunters

were from Texas as was evident by the license plates on their vehicles.

I did not enjoy hunting season and was not happy when my mother-in-law handed me a red jacket, and a cap and asked me to go with her because she, too, was going hunting. I reluctantly tagged along wondering how long deer season was going to last, and wishing that I was back in Tokyo.

Surprisingly, Bob and Ross came home with a deer, and Bob's mother hung it, dressed it, froze some of it, and the next few days, venison steaks or roast were on the dinner table. The taste was gamey, a new experience for me, but I quickly became accustomed to the taste.

Of course, it was an era when dishwashers were unheard of, and it seemed no sooner than the stacks of dishes were washed by hand and put away, it was time to cook again. I would say the highlight of each day was in the evenings when the last dish was put away and we would join our husbands in the living room and quietly read, or at times play cards, or just talk. There was something to be said for this type of life. It was a time when we quietly reflected on the entire day and immersed ourselves in a great feeling of togetherness.

As Bob's vacation neared its end, we were careful not to bring up the moot subject of our departure. But when we slipped into our

bedroom to pack our suitcases, his mother looked in and sadly voiced her objection to our "hurry to leave." She hated to see us packing, but it was time and, true, we were in for our long journey back.

Early the next morning, my mother-in-law and I tearfully embraced and lingered over our goodbyes. As eager as Bob and I were to get back to our jobs and our familiar routine, separation was difficult. Ross, who had been working in the barn came up to the car, saw the tears streaming down my cheeks, and half-jokingly remarked, "You're a pretty nice gal. Sassy, sometimes, but pretty nice." I silently kissed him on the cheek. Bob stoically shook hands with him after his fond farewell with his mother. Finally, we were out the gate, on our long journey back to Japan! We would embark on a military transport at San Francisco and sail approximately two weeks across the Pacific.

While at the ranch, I had received a letter from my boss, Bob Zahn, informing me that the Civil Censorship Detachment had folded. It was not unexpected, because after all, freedom of expression could not be curtailed forever. Under Occupation however, censorship was an effective means of enforcing democracy.

My dear boss, who had walked me down the aisle on my wedding day, felt a calling to become a Catholic priest, entered the

Maryknoll Seminary in New York, and after his ordination, he applied for, and was granted, his own parish in Mie Prefecture, Japan. Today, after five decades Father Bob and I are still in contact with each other, and his dedication and work in Japan have been phenomenal.

My new job when we returned to Japan was in the Employee Suggestions Program of the Personnel Department. I genuinely enjoyed my job and got along well with all my co-workers. Soon, as enjoyable as my work was, fate intervened and made me husband and I were exuberant for we were beginning to wonder if and when it was ever going to happen. We had waited a long time for this and I couldn't wait to surprise him.

Chapter Nine

"Darling, this is the second happiest day of my life..."

Bob looked ecstatic when he visited me at the hospital. I smiled and vaguely wondered, "What could be happier than now?We just had our baby . . ."

He continued, "The first was when we were married."

All I could do was continue to smile.

Childbirth had been incredible in every aspect. But I thought to myself it's miraculous how as soon as the mother meets her newborn, all the pain and suffering are instantly forgotten. Slowly I recalled how frightened I was at seeing huge amounts of blood on the linens and even splattered on the doctor's white gown. I remembered his frantic shouts of "Push!"

Then I screamed, "I can't."

"Do you want this baby or not? Push!"

Every fiber of my body was screaming with excruciating pain. The baby was asphyxiated in the birth canal, and it was up to me to push him out on my own strength. Finally, I heard a faint whimper and the doctor shouting, "Resuscitator!" Numerous stitches were taken, and my placenta was sent to the lab.

With this incredible nightmare behind me, I asked my husband, "Did you see our baby in the nursery? Did he look all right?"

"Of course, dear. He looked fine."

The birth of John Patrick had added a new dimension to our marriage. We were delirious in our new role as parents, for this was a deeply emotional experience for both of us.

Several days later on my return home from the hospital we lay on our bed upstairs with our beautiful child between us, both of own overwhelming thoughts. Little did I realize how prophetic I was, when I wistfully told my husband that our baby was going to become a president when he grew up. Our son did not fail us, for he is now at the helm of a corporation, here in Arizona.

Our home in Tokyo, was in a housing development called Grant Heights. As in any military housing, there was a guard stationed at the front gate. We developed an unforgettably close relationship with our friendly neighbors, and became one large family. We shared our happiness, anxieties, or any problems that arose in our ordinary everyday living. Our children were virtually raised together, and played together. Occasionally, they were left in the care of our maids who filled the role of excellent nannies while we would walk outside the gates and go shopping for souvenirs and

curios at the little shops that catered to the Americans. On these occasions, my ability to speak Japanese was appreciated by both the storekeepers and shoppers.

Our carefree lifestyle, however, abruptly came to a halt by the alarming news that General MacArthur was fired by President Truman by reason of insubordination. The Korean Conflict had erupted and the peninsula was being invaded by the Communist troops from the North, and the General and his troops in its defense from the South. MacArthur's strategy was to lead his troops as far north as was necessary, while Truman's plan was to contain the invasion only halfway up the peninsula. Truman had ordered a meeting with MacArthur on Wake Island. For whatever reason, General MacArthur arrived later than the President, keeping him waiting. They failed to arrive at an agreement regarding the defense of Korea, and thus the dismissal of the Supreme Commander.

Interestingly, it was whispered among some circles that another factor that contributed to the dismissal of MacArthur was that Truman could not forgive him for his power and immense popularity.

According to my friend, Mrs. Miki, her husband was distraught with President Truman, claiming that he was mistaken to have fired

MacArthur, who was not only a great general but also a leader who commanded the admiration and devotion of all the Japanese people. On the other hand, Mrs. Miki, whom I have frequently admired for her objectivity of viewpoint, was adamant in her praise of Truman. She believed that he was a great president to have shown such strong conviction as to have so courageously dismissed such a powerful and popular General.

At the time of MacArthur's departure from Japan, there were thousands of Japanese at the airport to express their affection, and their sorrow over the loss of their great leader.

Among the crowd was my mother, in tears, as she watched General and Mrs. MacArthur and their young son, Arthur, wave their final farewell to the Japanese populace.

That same year, in 1951, Bob's three-year tour of duty again came to an end, and I was beginning to get a taste of the traditional, rootless army life that Bob had warned me about so many times. His new assignment was Camp McCoy, Wisconsin. It was to be 7-month old John Patrick's first voyage across the Pacific. On this journey, we befriended a lovely couple, Bob and Cornelia Riser, from Houston, Texas. They were childless and loved our baby as though he were their own. We shared the same dining room table, played cards, or just

relaxed on our deck chairs while day dreaming and breathing the wonderful salt air of the Ocean. The vast, boundless Pacific serenaded us with her restless, loud roar that seemed to carry all the secrets of the universe. Sometimes we took walks aboard the steamship, and explored it from top to bottom, stem to stem. So enjoyable was our voyage that when we clocked in San Francisco, I inwardly wished that our voyage had not been quite so short.

As we stood on the deck and gazed at the shores of San Francisco, I was surprised to briefly experience a déjà vu illusion of another city—Los Angeles. How could it be, for it had been fully two decades since I had left my hometown with my mother and brother for the last time.

After we boarded the military bus in San Francisco, the Risers, who sat across the aisle from us, would not stop laughing as they watched me stare out the window wide-eyed at the strange metal poles protruding out of the pavement.

I nudged my husband and asked, "Bob, what are those ugly poles sticking out of the sidewalk?"

"Those are parking meters that you put your money in when you want to park your car."

"Really?! Do you have to pay just to park a car?"

"Yes, dear. That's right."

"That's strange."

My husband lovingly put his arm around me and he, too, could not keep from laughing. Then I noticed the huge Sunday paper on his lap, and asked, "Why did you buy so many papers?"

It seemed the Risers were thoroughly enjoying themselves at my expense.

Stifling another laugh, Bob said, "This is one paper." Incredible!

Soon we arrived at our destination, the naval base, where they inspected and processed our military orders. We vowed with the Risers that we would always keep in touch, and alter bidding each other lingering "goodbyes", they traveled on to Texas, and Bob and I, this time with our baby, headed for the ranch to again spend some time with his parents before reporting to Bob's new assignment.

My mother-in-law came running out of the house when she saw us driving up. She tenderly held her grandson, kissed him, cuddled him, and lovingly placed him in his crib, covering him with 59 one of the many blankets that she had crocheted for him. Our little baby peacefully slept through all of this excitement.

Since our last visit three years ago, many improvements had been made to the house. There was now indoor plumbing, they now had lighting, and there were new appliances in the

kitchen. The barn had been painted dark red, and the house, white. The kerosene lamps and wood stove had all been retired to the barn.

Bob wasted no time in helping his step dad at the sawmill. This time, I could not help but notice that there was something about Ross that seemed a little indifferent. He ignored the baby, and seemed ill at ease to have an infant in his presence.

One day when my mother-in-law and I were working in the kitchen, I was able to confide in her that I had problems understanding Ross.

She said, "I don't blame you for feeling that way, because he is totally unpredictable. He has a temper and will flare up at anybody over nothing, and the next day he will forget anything ever happened, and expects everyone else to forget, too. He sulks easily and will not tell anyone what he's sulking about. He's just that kind of a person. But sometimes, he can be fine."

I appreciated my mother-in-law's forthright response, even though it was her husband we were talking about.

One day Bob walked in the kitchen and said, "I've had it with Ross."

Startled, I asked, "Why? What happened?"

"Remember, a long time ago, when mother wrote that they had sold some cattle and that they now would like to pay me $500 that I had

loaned them several years ago? And when I mentioned it to you, you said you would just as soon they kept the money, because that was something that had happened before we even knew each other?"

"Yes, what happened at the sawmill?"

"Well, over the last few days, Ross kept asking me persistently if I wanted the $500 back, and of course, I kept repeating, 'No, it wasn't necessary.' Well, he wouldn't let up, and kept at it daily until I finally became exasperated and said, Ross, anyone can use $500, but I don't want it. Well, that did it. It was almost as if he was waiting for that kind of an answer. He hopped in the truck and just drove off."

Much to our amazement, and my mother-in-law's rancor, Ross had gone to the bank, borrowed $500 and walked into the kitchen while we were wondering what to expect next. With very few words, he handed the money to Bob and spitefully stalked out of the house.

Because of Ross' temper, Bob's mother feared for our safety and checked to make sure none of the guns were missing! We were sickened by what his behavior was doing to her, and decided that the best thing to do was to simply leave. We packed our suitcases, and on our way out of the house, Bob stood at the door and said, "Good bye, mother. This is the worst

vacation I have ever had." She had been crying and could say nothing to stop us. No matter what I could have said to comfort her, I felt that it would only have exacerbated the situation. Bob gently informed her then that we were going to stop to visit the Risers on our way up to Wisconsin. In the final analysis, I had witnessed a new side of Ross, which in my estimation, had reduced him to a *persona non grata*.

The Risers were surprised to see us so soon, but warmly welcomed us in their usual manner, and made us feel right at home. When we explained to them all that had happened, they were alarmed, very sympathetic, and suggested that Bob leave Johnny and me with them while he reported in to his new assignment and looked for a place to live at Camp McCoy.

Unfortunately, Camp McCoy did not provide dependent housing, and the married soldiers with their families lived off camp. My resourceful husband found an attic apartment on a 90-acre dairy farm! It was comfortably furnished, and possibly the most interesting accommodation I had ever seen. The owners, Ruth and Darrell Riggs, were unassuming, friendly farmers who had several milk cows in individual stalls. Their morning chores consisted of milking their cows, pitching hay, feeding their chickens and gathering the eggs.

They had two teen-aged sons and a daughter. The sons pitched hay before school, and the daughter helped her mother feed the chickens and gather in the eggs.

Each morning, we literally awoke to the cock's crow. John was now a toddler and the entire backyard was his playground. While John was taking his morning and afternoon naps, I was often invited downstairs to join Ruth and Darrell for coffee. The delicious, freshly backed pastries from their own milk and eggs were heavenly.

Bob enjoyed his new assignment, and during the cold, winter mornings, when the ground was covered with snow and ice, his men would come for him on a tractor.

It was one of those cold mornings that I received alarming news from my mother that my father had died with a diagnosis of lung abscess. She said in her letter that he slipped into a coma while he wept, and cried out my name repeatedly. The news tugged at my heart so deeply that I prayed that some day Bob would get another assignment to Japan so that I could again be there for my mother and share her moments of loneliness. Of course, the thought that I, too, would never see my father again, filled me with sorrow, and I grasped at fond memories of the times that I had enjoyed

so long ago when I was still a small child being held lovingly on my father's lap.

"Momoko, when you grow up, you must become a great lady," he would say. Father was a man of many dreams, and he had fond ambitions for me, his only daughter. His hobby was 62 cooking for his family on weekends and, Mother gladly turned over the entire kitchen to him. It was Father who made my brother's and my birthdays so special. He knew that our favorite food was spaghetti and chocolate cream pie. On our birthdays, my brother, Shinya, our friends and I would go to Westlake Park to play, and come home just in time for our scrumptious dinner that Father had so lovingly prepared

Time raced on, carrying with it my indelible childhood memories and it was only with his last breath that Father even tried to convey to me how much he missed me and longed for me.

Chapter Ten

At daybreak, in August of 1953, I was suddenly awakened by a stir in my body. Then again, and again. The baby was not due for another two weeks, but there was no time to waste, and when we arrived at the hospital, the doctor and my baby arrived at the same time.

"You just had a fine baby boy," the nurse had said as she laid him on my stomach. My beautiful baby had bushy, black hair, and his cry was lustful and strong. I mused, "Today is Sunday, and John, too, was born on a Sunday morning . . ."

"How are you feeling?" Bob asked as he gently leaned over and kissed me.

"I'm fine," I smiled, "but I'm ravenously hungry."

My husband tenderly held our baby while I devoured my breakfast.

"My mother will be surprised when she gets here, because I'm sure she doesn't expect to see her grandson this soon."

"I know. Our baby certainly fooled us."

John was barely awake when I left home, so I called our neighbor, Annelise, to look in on him. "I better hurry home, but will be back later this afternoon."

"OK, dear."

After only about three days, the baby and I were allowed to go home. Michael melted my heart with his big, cheerful, toothless smile.

His grandmother, after a long drive from New Mexico, arrived late one night, exhausted, after we had gone to bed. She, too, was ready for a good night's sleep.

The next morning, she fondly and eagerly picked up her new grandson from his crib, cuddled him, kissed him, and said, "Your mommy and daddy had the right idea, after all." The baby looked up at his grandmother's face and cooed.

John was mystified and seemed entranced by his baby brother. He stood by the crib, and gazed at him, full of wonder. Finally, he said, "Mommy, may I touch the baby?"

"Of course, darling, you may touch your brother and love him as much as you like." I felt as though my heart would burst with happiness and indescribable feelings of endearment for my two babies.

Michael was always hungry, and nursed with literally razor sharp gums until I was bleeding at my breasts. He was put on a bottle, and I realized I was ill, but had no idea how ill, until I was rushed back to the hospital. Being delirious with spiking fever, I had reached the point where I couldn't even stand the sound of my own voice. Alarmingly, I was diagnosed

with breast infection. My poor mother-in-law certainly had not bargained for this.

I would later learn that during my hospitalization, John seemed bewildered by my absence and continually asked for me. He needed a lot of explanation as to why his mother was not there and why his grandmother had come. He obviously suffered from separation anxiety and would not go to his grandmother, as though thinking she had something to do with my not being there.

Under doctor's care, my fever gradually subsided, and I became stronger, eventually being able to recuperate at home. I felt sad and terribly disappointed that I was not able to make my mother-in-law's stay more enjoyable, and that she had to endure such unavoidable crisis. She had been away from the ranch almost a month. Although Ross was capable of taking care of himself, it was only natural that he would want her home after such a long absence. However, I was thankful that she and Bob were able to enjoy a few good visits during her stay.

When Michael was only about three months old and, Bob's tour of duty almost over, he was granted approval to attend the Army Language School in Monterey, California and learn Japanese. We of course, optimistically hoped that he would again be sent to Japan upon

completion of the course. The languages taught at the School were by total immersion, requiring the students to read, write, speak, and even think in the language of his choice, eight hours a day. In addition to Japanese, a variety of languages, such as Chinese and European languages were also offered, and throughout the one-year curriculum, only a few days of semester break were scheduled. Because the mental stress of becoming reasonably proficient in the language was so intense the students were told at the beginning of semester break to forget school, get drunk and to have a great time. The stress of the sudden change in life style as soon as one was admitted to the School could not be over emphasized. Many of the students were married, a situation that often exacerbated the tension at home unless the wife was very understanding. A case in point was a student having to withdraw to save his marriage. However, perhaps because the students were all military personnel being disciplined to live the military life, the attrition rate from school was considerably low. There was one tragic death of a student who had pre-existing cancer, and another incident of a student's short stay at the hospital for hemorrhoids causing him to get seriously behind in his classes.

Regardless of the rigid linguistic regimen of my husband and his classmates, I loved living in Monterey, with its spring-like climate all year round, the flowers in full bloom, and the troops never having to change out of their winter/spring uniforms.

In 1954, Bob's student life at the Language School was finally completed. However, the wheels of bureaucracy turn in mysterious ways, and he was sent to Korea on a special assignment on loan to our Air Force. Of course, this took us by surprise, and he wrote us from Korea that his involvement there was in the training of ROK (Republic of Korea) troops. My husband successfully applied for a transfer to Japan after his year's assignment with the Korean troops and the Air Force.

Once in Japan, there ensued a few more months of waiting before my husband was assigned dependent housing in Camp Zama, so that we could all be together again as a family.

Before we were united, Bob had written daily from Korea and Japan, and in each letter he had enclosed a short loving note for his sons. While Michael was still a baby, John loved to hear from his father, and eagerly looked forward to having me read the letters to him and his little brother. Perhaps because of longing for his father, John would develop frequent stomach upsets, and just as frequently,

I would call our wonderful pediatrician, Dr. Lucignan who would always find time to come to our house to examine our little patient. He occasionally gave him a shot to settle his stomach, and jokingly had said that I, too, probably needed one.

Once, over the holidays, John was suffering another stomach upset, and after Dr. Lucignan's usual house call, I had sat down to write a check, as usual. He then put his hand on my wrist and said, "This is on the house." So overwhelmed was I by his unexpected compassion, that I broke down and cried. Then, he seemed surprised, hugged me, and said, "If I had known you were going to do this, I would have charged you double. Besides, I think you're one of the finest mothers I have ever known. Call me in the morning and let me know how John is." The following morning when I made the call, I said, "I really am not as good a soldier as my husband." It was wonderful to hear Dr. Lucignan's reassuring laugh before I reported to him that John had slept soundly during the night and seemed much better.

With the much-awaited military orders in hand to join my husband, we could not leave without stopping by Dr. Lucignan's office to bid him "goodbye." We had established wonderful rapport over the past year, and parting was not

easy. I thanked him with "all my heart", promising that I would write to him. I received a short response to my letter, which I read over and over, and in my idle reminiscences of our life in Monterey, it has always been with very fond memories of my favorite pediatrician. Miraculously, throughout John's ordeal, Michael did not have a day of illness.

The military transport again carried us across the Pacific, and this time our voyage had seemed endless. Daily, 1 would stand at the deck and gaze at the horizon, wondering how much closer we were to the shores of Yokohama. I shall never forget how exciting it was to see my beloved husband standing at the harbor in a crowd of soldiers and anxiously trying to spot us among the wives and children all of whom had also come to join their husbands. I could hardly wait for the ship to drop anchor so that I would be that much closer to running into Bob's arms. He hugged and kissed the children, and he and I spent a long time embracing. How we had missed and longed for each other!

Bob's new assignment was a high profile job at G-l in Camp Zama Headquarters. Our new home was very spacious, with three bedrooms upstairs and a room by the kitchen for a live-in maid. Sadly, Michael did not even remember his father for he was only a few months old

when Bob left for Korea and Japan. He was now 2, but in the beginning, he regarded Bob as only John's daddy. One morning, when he stood at the head of the stairs watching his father leave for work, he innocently asked, "Mommy, is that man coming to see us again, tonight? We were stunned, and that evening, Bob spent a particularly long time with Michael. All three played together, my husband even gave them their baths, and lovingly tucked them in bed, kissing each one "good night". We were again a family.

My mother visited us often, and of course relished her visits with her grandchildren. She never came empty-handed and when John and Michael would spot her walking toward our house, they would run to greet her in Japanese, saying, "Obah-san, konnichi-wa (Hello, Grandma)." She would beam with happiness, and hand them the bundle, saying, "Hai, omocha desuyo (Here, toys 68 for you)." She had given each of her grandsons Japanese names. John was named Fumio (Man of Letters), and Michael, Yasuo (Man of Peace). She would address them in Japanese, using terms of endearment such as, Fumi-chan for Fumio, and Yasu-chan for Yasuo.

After she had become a widow, my mother started teaching Japanese calligraphy at her house. This was the art of formal brush writing,

in which she had achieved the title of Master, and was given the professional name of Spring Vine (Shuncho), by the head Master, Spring House (Shundo).

After years of tireless training in the discipline ("Way") of calligraphy, the ultimate goal is to successfully be recognized as having achieved the level of a Master, and just as in the case of my mother, to be given a professional name bearing an ideogram from the title of the Head Master.

There are many recognized schools, such as Spring House among others, in the "Way" of Calligraphy.

Chapter Eleven

I was extremely happy during our 3 1/2 years in Camp Zama. It was a military camp large enough to be a small town in itself. We had our own elementary school, a church, an officers' club, and an NCO (Non-commissioned Officers) Club. I was fascinated with the slot machines, and could hardly pass them up when Bob and I enjoyed an occasional evening out. There was also a movie theater and even a hobby shop where my dear friend, Pat Maas, and I spent many enjoyable evenings together learning how to create things with ceramic tiles. We had met through our husbands, and today, forty years later, Pat and I are still close friends, living within walking distance from one another.

An achievement of mine at the hobby shop was a very special copper waste paper basket that I made together with much help from the instructor. Each of its four panels illustrated a short story written by my husband and published locally in a magazine called Today's Japan. The four stories were titled, "Above the Falls", "The Mystic Pool", "Wild Grow the Pansies", and "Early Harvest". It had meant a great deal to see my husband's creative effort in print, and throughout the years, he continued his writing.

Bus service was available to go into Tokyo, and there was a shuttle bus to ride anywhere within the Camp. A car was hardly necessary. We had our own medical facilities, a commissary where we purchased our groceries, and also a post exchange (PX) where we would go to buy clothing, books, stationery and other sundry items.

The children attended school by bus, and the mothers were required to take turns riding with them as bus mothers. In the evenings, Bob and I took turns reading stories to our boys, and during their summer vacations, I would frequently give them a page from a magazine and instruct them to 70 write a few sentences of what they saw in the picture. Occasionally, a couple of their friends who had become interested would enthusiastically join in the activity.

One summer day, when I was upstairs, quietly tending to housewifely duties, John came running to me, sobbing as though he had met with a terrible crisis. Almost incoherently, and gulping between sobs, he said, "Mommy, I stole something." I quickly hugged him, and quietly asked what it was that he "stole".

He sobbed, "I was playing with David Smotkin and I stole his caps."

"Ohhh, I see. That really wasn't a very nice thing to do, John. Now, you must go tell David

you are sorry, and give him back those caps. Do you understand?"

"Yes, but I can't give them back, because I popped them on the sidewalk."

"Well! In that case, you did the right thing to come and tell me about it. Where did you get the caps?"

"They were on Mrs. Smotkin's wash machine."

"I see. Then, you must go to Mrs. Smotkin and tell her you're sorry. Can you do that?"

He nodded, "Yes," and surprised me with his willingness.

A few minutes later, the doorbell rang, and there stood Masae, David's mother. John was with her, holding a cookie in his hand

"How could you do this to poor Johnny!" Masae said. "Those caps were nothing. They happened to be in David's pocket when I was sorting my laundry. Johnny's a good boy and you don't have to be so strict with him."

The Smotkin's lived down the street from us, and Masae was a Japanese war bride whom I admired considerably for her many accomplishments. She was taking lessons in Japanese doll making, a very expensive undertaking. I once accepted her gracious offer to make a doll for me in 71 class providing I was willing to pay for the necessary materials. I ecstatically agreed, and the doll, poised

gracefully in her delicately white, silk kimono, caught my breath with her ethereal beauty. It was the most elegant doll that I had ever seen, and when Masae proudly presented it to me, she said that it was Madame Butterfly. Today, after over thirty years, the doll now resides in a glass case no longer in my house, but in my son's beautiful living room. When he asked for it, I could not help but being reminded that beauty is eternal, and that we are but its temporary keepers.

As may be recalled, Masae is the same person whom I previously described as not fully understanding American humor and consequently feeling insulted by a comment made as a joke by an American wife. She was a very serious person with an enormous amount of self-awareness as a Japanese in an American society. Masae and I were together almost daily, and my mother, when visiting us, enjoyed her as an unusually gifted person and became very fond of her.

As I watched my sons develop and mature in their different personalities, they seemed so alike, and yet so different. Different, because while John was serious and sensitive, Michael was without doubt an extrovert. On one occasion when the two were sitting on the couch looking at our photo album, they came upon a picture taken of John and me at a zoo in

Washington, D.C. so long ago, when I was still pregnant with Michael. It was a short side trip in one of our travels and in response to an invitation by Claude Sturgis, Rose Suzuki's husband. Her romance with Warren had ended in disaster, when she learned by an alarming letter from his wife that he was a married man.

My two boys gazed at the picture, and there ensued a lively conversation with John saying, "When we were at the zoo, I saw Smokey the Bear, and you didn't."

"I did too see Smokey."

"How could you have seen Smokey?"

"I saw him if you did."

"You did not. You were inside Mommy's tummy."

"I saw Smokey because I was peeking through her belly button!"

Michael, being of a spontaneous nature readily made friends even with the Japanese workmen outdoors. They would chuckle over his innocent mannerisms and were never too busy to playfully talk with him in a mixture of broken English and Japanese. One day during lunch, he ran out of the house with his sandwich and offered it to a workman for one of his rice balls. Seeming somewhat startled, the workman broke into a good-natured laugh and gave Michael a cold rice ball in exchange for the sandwich. The two sat together on the

curb enjoying each other's lunch, and perhaps each other's company, too. Amazing.

On another occasion, John came home obviously upset over an incident that had occurred with a couple of his classmates. He sat in the living room and looking very determined, announced, "I'm going to get even with them. I'll show them..."

I don't recall what the incident was, but I remember saying, "Two wrongs don't make a right, John."

He looked startled, but always wanting to have the last word in any discussion, he blurted after a short pause, "A penny saved is a penny earned." His choice of response struck me as so funny, I could hardly keep from laughing. But in John's own way of thinking he must have convinced himself that he won our discussion because he had the last word.

There was also an unforgettable incident when Bob and I were awakened by John's voice at Michael's bedside.

"Michael, wake up. Wake up!"

"What."

"Did you see the dream I just had?"

"Yeah."

"Wasn't it scary?"

"Yeah." So saying, Michael rolled over and continued with his sleep.

Time raced on, the Smotkins had departed for the United States, and in 1959, and our unforgettably wonderful years in Camp Zama came to a close, with inevitable orders for Bob's next assignment. It was to Fort Dix, New Jersey. This, of course meant another voyage back to America, but I dreaded leaving our present assignment and could not bear to face leaving my mother. Not having any idea what we had to look forward to, and being a Californian at heart, I felt as though New Jersey was going to be like the end of the world. Separation was very difficult and poignant. With empty promises to some day be together again, we chocked back our tears, and I watched my mother walk alone that night, heading for the gate for the very last time.

Chapter Twelve

Bob's assignment at Fort Dix was different from anything he ever had in his military career. As First Sergeant of the Fourth Field Hospital, his responsibilities included the training of his troops to be combat ready at all times. He led them on maneuvers to a mock combat zone where they were trained to set up hospital tents with full equipment in a matter of minutes. Many times, these maneuvers took place at night. This tour of duty lasted two and a half years until the end of Bob's twenty years of military service. It was now time to rethink his career.

Arizona was our choice for retirement because we were attracted by the State's reputation for being a fast-growing, fairly new State. Bob enthusiastically applied for admission to Arizona State University, and because of credit hours previously earned from extension courses offered by the Universities of Maryland and California, he was accepted with sophomore standing in Mass Communications, specializing in Journalism.

We briefly visited Bob's parents in New Mexico on our travel West and left the boys with their grandmother for two or three days while we came to Arizona to look for a place to live. We chose a brand new three-bedroom

house two miles south of the campus in which I still live after more than thirty years.

In order for us to financially qualify for a mortgage, the real estate agent who coincidentally was a graduate of Arizona State University suggested that I consider employment at his alma mater. I felt ambivalent, but at the same time excited about working in the academe, totally remote from any military installation.

The very next day, I was sent for an interview to the School of Nursing, later re-named College. As a result, I became one of the two or three women in that office working towards a PHT 80 (Pushing Hubby Through) degree. There was a purpose in our work and we enjoyed our common bond because of it.

However, so inexperienced was I that it was the first time I even saw a typewriter that was electric. Moreover, it was the first job I ever had in this country, and I didn't even know enough to inquire what my salary was until after I was actually hired. Even the Director had forgotten to orient me to such important "minutiae" and apologetically said she forgot to discuss it because "she liked me." Her unorthodox unorthodox remarks made a strong impression on me and because of it, she had immediately put me at ease. I was classified as

clerk typist, and in a few months, was promoted to School Secretary.

John and Michael had been brought back from the ranch and enrolled in a new school within walking distance from home. They were 10 and 8 years old. One day, Michael proudly showed a straight-A report card to his dad, and was jokingly asked, "My God, can't you do better than that?" Michael was used to his dad's humor, and knew that his father was always proud of his grades. He nonchalantly replied "No," and went to explore the refrigerator, a daily after-school ritual.

When Bob received his diploma in 1964, he became a full-time employee of the Arizona Republic Newspaper. It was time for me to resign and return to being a full-fledged homemaker. I must say during my three years of working, I had never seen such an outstanding group of women as among the Nursing faculty. Their teaching standards were extremely high, they demanded much of their students, and the students performed well. No mistakes were tolerated during clinical practice, but I was saddened to see a student having to repeat a course because of one mistake.

Months passed, and in the mid 60's I couldn't help but notice and feel vaguely anxious about my husband's deteriorating health. Beginning with symptoms of colds,

there was the excruciating 81 passing of a jagged kidney stone, gall bladder surgery, followed by yet another major surgery, which was an exploratory laparotomy, involving another incision in his abdomen. This last surgery led to the diagnosis of a third stage of Hodgkin's Disease. We had never heard of Hodgkin's Disease and I could not have been more shocked when I learned that it was a form of cancer of the connective tissues. I shall never forget the day when I was called into Dr. Estrada's office and was told, "Your husband is a very sick man, a very, very sick man."

My personal reaction was, "It can't be true! Exactly how sick is very, very sick?" I asked, "Does Bob know all of this?"

"Yes, I told him, but he didn't want you to know because he wanted to spare you from this. I have contacted an oncologist who will do a bone marrow test and corroborate my diagnosis. Your husband will undoubtedly be started on chemotherapy. He will be very sick after each treatment."

"Will these treatments help him get well?"

"Like I said, he is a very, very sick man."

My poor husband, in his sheer determination to get well, was in and out of the hospital God knows how many times. As can be surmised, my emotional state of being was fragile, and the

daily, numerous phone calls from well-meaning friends were incredible and exhausting.

The Estrada's lived next door, and I don't know how I would have coped with an untimely hysterectomy had it not been for Dr. Estrada's wife, Pat. I had fainted one morning in the hallway from loss of blood, which was the contributing factor to my need for the surgery. Pat couldn't have been more supportive throughout the entire ordeal, and my recovery was quick and uneventful.

Bob's parents had come to be with us, and spent most of their time at his bedside. When the nurse called me to the hospital informing me that Bob's condition was critical his parents and I immediately rushed over. I prayed that he was being kept comfortable and was not in pain.

Bob had been hallucinating, and speaking to his mother, he said, "Remember the time the people from the other planet came and told us to synchronize our clocks with theirs? Well, Radiology here is so inefficient, when I was there this morning, they were still going by the old clock." It was almost as though my husband was plotting **a** science fiction, but confusing the plot with reality. Could his brain have been affected? What was happening? His mother must have been trying desperately to be brave, and she managed to appear very calm, going

right along with what Bob was saying. However on our way home, when I expressed my concern that Bob was hallucinating, his mother emphatically stated, "No! You heard him say that there was something wrong with the clock in Radiology! That's all it was." I secretly thought, " She is not going to accept what is happening to her son."

The following day, after my in-laws had already left for home, I again received a call from the nurse. My husband had suffered a massive hemorrhage, and had expired. The news was not expected so suddenly, and certainly, it was more than what I could bear. I rushed to the hospital, clung to my husband, and sobbed, "I love you, I love you."

Michael was a senior in high school, and John, a sophomore at Arizona State University. The boys had visited their father often, and after all these years, a poignant scene that still lingers in my mind is John, sitting on his father's bed and lovingly shaving his whiskers.

Bob had passed away without even knowing of two scholarships that had been awarded Michael, one, to any university of his choice, and the other, to the University of Arizona in Tucson.

John, who was studying Engineering Sciences at Arizona State University, had also won two scholarships. One was a tuition

scholarship to Arizona State University, and the other, to a drafting school in Colorado. I will never forget how Bob's weary face beamed with pride when told of John's awards. How happy he would have been had he been alive to see Michael's 83 scholastic achievement as well! On his deathbed, he had admonished both boys to take care of their mother, and to attend college here, in Tempe. Michael, however, transferred to Northern Arizona University in his third year of college, to pursue a degree in biological sciences.

My mother-in-law, being so overcome with grief was bed-ridden and could not even come to the funeral. Ross arrived alone, and went straight home immediately after the ceremony. He was undoubtedly concerned about his wife. The date was late winter, in 1971.

I don't know how I would have coped without the Estrada's next door. The day after the funeral when I answered the door, there stood the Estrada's with their children, the whole family in descending order and each carrying a platter of Mexican food. Silently, they walked into my family room, and placed the food on the table. Dr. Estrada hugged me as I wept and just as silently, they walked out.

My heart literally ached from the loss of my husband, and it was with a great deal of effort that I even applied myself to my daily routine,

reminding myself that I had to carry on for the sake of my sons. One day, when John saw me cooking with a great deal of emotional difficulty, he was so alarmed, he ran next door to fetch Pat Estrada. She came over, and through her own tears she hugged me and let me know that she was there for me.

To cope and to carry on—how difficult it was to carry on in such a void that I could not even reach out and physically touch my husband, nor even chat with him and, yet feel his presence everywhere!

Realizing that things do boil down to economics, I was not in any position to turn down an unexpected job offer through a casual friend at the University after seven years of break in service. I started in October as a widow of only eight months, in the Office of Grants and Contracts. Because this was an administrative position, I could not help but miss the students with whom I so enjoyed working almost a decade ago. Of course, all those students were now making impressive contributions all over the world as Registered Nurses.

Like it or not, the holidays were almost upon us, without my beloved husband. For the first time, I walked alone down the shopping mall, listening to the nostalgic Christmas carols sounding through the Muzak, and was

reminded of so many past Christmases when Bob happily hummed the carols in my car as we walked hand in hand, full of the holiday spirit. The memories were so unbearable I had to turn around, and not knowing how I ran to my car, I drove home with tears streaming down my cheeks.

I REMEMBER YOU

Let me savor the beauty, my beloved,
of the trees you planted, the grass you sowed,
as pearly blossoms spill their fragrance
and dance with emerald blades
to whisper of breeze.

Must I anguish and diminish in sorrow,
mourning the years of tender passion,
the sharing of joy and laughter?
Tell me you have not died, my beloved,
who has lavished me with profound endearment.
Let me touch you under the tree
where I see you standing.
Don't leave me, my precious,
tell me my tears are but a dream
of half the person I have become

—Jane Hudnall.

Even though my husband had died, I strongly felt as though his soul lived on in my heart. Then, in my mourning, I suddenly realized, almost as though struck by an epiphany, I must live my husband's share too, and not be half the person that I thought I had become, twice the person.