

## 第15章

### ジムの瞳の優しさ、しかし母は「ひとりの生活を楽しめ」と助言

<1970年8月11日、母より>

[暑熱の大都市からの便りとも思われぬ、爽やかな便り嬉しい、、、。どうかいつまでもその豊かな心を失わないで、、、。あの大写しで見たジムの瞳の優しさが、あなたの心を素直に、ふくよかにしているのでしょう。]

今年の東京は酷い暑さで、遂に32度から35度が21日間続き、不快指数は連日80以上、わが家もクーラーを応接間に付けてはみたけれど、狭い部屋の冷房というものは、閉め切ったが最後、なんとも窮屈で息苦しく、一時間もすると、庭に出て水撒きをした方が気持ちが良いのです、、、。

東京も、いよいよサンフランシスコ並みの、オキシダント光化学スモッグの公害に蝕まれ、それへの対策で、車の動き、工場群の操業など、規制をやりだし、それはそれは騒然たる有様です。

<1970年8月24日、父より>

[ここ数日外出の予定無し、久し振りに“Go Review”の原稿と、両三日取り組む所存、、、。]

～ 石ばしる 垂水の上の 早蕨の  
萌え出づる春と なりにけるかも ～

## Chapter 15

### ”Jim’s eyes, so gentle, so soft,” but my mother tells me to enjoy life alone

Mother’s Letter Dated August 11, 1970:

< I am so glad to have received your letter, filled with refreshing news.... May you never lose your rich spirit.... Jim’s eyes, so gentle and so soft, that I see in that blown-up photo you sent us, must be keeping your spirits high and agreeable.

We are having oppressive heat, day in and day out. We have had 32°C to 35°C temperatures for 21 days in a row, and the daily discomfort index has been above 80. We have installed an air-conditioning unit in our living room, but the result is that we feel totally cramped and unable to breathe in there. I’d rather go out to our small yard, and put water on the ground to cool down. Tokyo is now approaching San Francisco in having to fight the air pollution. The traffic of automobiles and the manufacturing plants’ operations are constantly monitored under the government’s exacting regulations. The whole world is in turmoil. >

My Father’s Letter Dated August 24, 1970:

< I have no plans to go down to my office the next few days. Well, I’ll work on my article for the “Go Review” magazine for the next three days.>

Here, my father quotes two of the ancient Waka, known to every Japanese soul, and says:

～ 人はいざ 心も知らず 古里は  
花ぞ昔の 香に匂ひける ～

今ふとこんな古歌が思ひ浮かんだので、エラソ  
ウニ書いたが、こういう詩歌は、横文字ではど  
うしようもなからう。良い悪いとか優劣をいふの  
でなく。

日本の古いものは、歌に限らず独自だった。不  
思議な国である。今は話にならぬ。すべてテレ  
ビとクルマと飛行機のお蔭なれど、、、なんと  
か順応し、活路を見出す外ない、、、

オニイ、現在、さっぱりゼニにならぬようだが、  
どっち向いてもタレントばかりの世に、もがいて  
顔を出すことあるまじ。悠々と構えてよし。]

<1970年9月4日、再び父より>

[、、、自分を見つめながら前進する、それ以外  
にないのを重ねて。前進だけで後悔を覚悟、も  
しくは無視するなら話は別で、それも良からう  
が、自分を見つめる、是が狡いかも知れぬが  
大切。無我夢中とどっちだろうか、、、]

<1970年9月21日、母より>

[ジムの従弟を入れてのドライブ、それからホー  
スレース観覧後、ハイウェイでのジムの友人の  
スピード違反、はちぎれるような毎日らしく、こち  
らの澁みきった生活に比べたら危険も一杯、驚  
くばかりです。日本人の男たちも色々現れるよ

< I just felt like quoting those two Waka for  
you. I don't think there's a way to  
appreciate the beauty of such Japanese  
poems translated into English (Note at the  
end of this Chapter). I don't mean to  
compare the two totally different  
languages or cultures and say one is  
better than the other, but what a strange  
country Japan is! Not only the poem but  
everything old and ancient created by our  
ancestors was unique. We don't have  
much to speak of among the stuff we  
created in our modern age.... TVs?  
Automobiles? Airplanes? Well, I'll have to  
survive this modern age somehow. Your  
brother is not making much money  
currently. The world is teeming with what  
you call "TV talents." I don't think he  
should struggle and join that one-  
dimensional group of people. No need to  
yearn for a successful life. >

Again from my Father, on September 4,  
1970

< ...Let me repeat what I said to you  
before. You should simply go forward,  
knowing what's within yourself at all times.  
Moving forward, while being ready for  
regrets and sorrow, or moving forward,  
totally ignoring the possible regrets and  
sorrow that might befall later.... I don't  
know which is better. To always look  
within yourself is most important. Can you  
be totally self-absorbed? >

My Mother's Letter Dated September 21,  
1970:

< Driving with Jim and his cousin on the  
Chicago expressway. Going to a horse  
race with Jim and his friend. His friend

うですが、何処までも謙虚に付き合っ欲しい  
ものです。

法律文章も慣れて味気ない由、そういう事は人  
生当たり前のことで、あらゆる場合同じでしょう。  
なにかもっと求めるものがあるなら、やって見る  
までです。ジム一人に甘えているようでは、駄  
目だと思いますが、、、どうか『ひとり』の生活  
を楽しんで下さい。思うままになる人生は人生  
ではなく、『誰もが思ひを残して死ぬ』ものなの  
です。]

この母の手紙には、曾野綾子さんが「人はみな  
思いを残して死ぬ」といったことを述べている、  
朝日新聞の切り抜きが入っていました。

<母の手紙は続いて>

[二・三日前にも、その又二・三日前にも、あな  
たから例によって長文が届き、私は何べんも繰  
り返し読んでいます。

でも、あんな風に時間を取って、大事なこと、例  
えば食事をする事、考えることがなおざりにな  
っては困る、と思いながら、反面、あれは両親  
への報告であるばかりでなく、一種の日記であ  
り、立派な反省の記録になっているのだ、と思  
い、安心もしています。

*driving too fast, being stopped by a squad  
car, and all three of you being taken to the  
police station. Your life over there is full  
of thrills and exuberance, compared with  
our slow and stagnant life here. I'll have to  
say I marvel at your eventful life. A few  
Japanese men also appeared in your  
recent letters. Be nice to them, too.*

*You tell us that you are now so used to  
legal writings that they lost the attraction  
you felt initially. That's no surprise. That  
applies to everything in life. If there's  
something that you want to search, well,  
search and tackle it. Accepting Jim alone  
and leaning on him totally, not striving for  
further improvement of yourself, is not  
good, I'm afraid... Try to enjoy life alone.  
Easy life where everything comes your way  
is not a meaningful life. Everyone dies  
"with certain regrets."*>

My mother enclosed in her letter above a  
newspaper clipping from the Asahi  
Newspaper. It was a short article by  
Ayako Sono (one of Japan's well-known  
contemporary novelist/essayist), entitled  
"We all die with regrets."

#### My Mother's 9/21/70 Letter Continues

*< We received your usual, long letter a few  
days ago. We had received yet another  
long letter a few days before that. I read  
both, two or three times. You must not  
spend too long a time writing letters to us,  
ignoring the time to eat, or think. On the  
other hand, I tell myself that it is good that  
you write to us as often as you do. Your  
letters are, of course, your report to us,  
but they are also your diary, or daily*

ところで、先日の貴女の写真、あれは和服か洋服か。長い紐をぶら下げたのは、ヒッピー風に見えるけど、、、。日本もファッションだなんだと、デパートの商魂に吹き回されて、まことに、ケツタイな、奇妙キテレツな服装が盛んになっています。どうか自分の服装にも、自分を失わないで下さい。

ワイマン父子のこと、貴女と一緒によく観た、テレビの『プレストン父子』を思い出しました。>

上記、母の文章から、この頃私は既に日系法律事務所は辞めて、純然たるアメリカ弁護士事務所の「カミングス・アンド・ワイマン」で働いていたことが分かります。

1960年前半に、日本でも長期上映された、なかなか見ごたえあるアメリカの法廷物テレビ・シリーズがありました。題名は“The Defenders”で、母と私の大好きな番組、毎週欠かさず一緒に観たのですが(日本語題名記憶せず)、プレストンという名の父子弁護士が活躍しました。

「カミングス・アンド・ワイマン」法律事務所の筆頭弁護士の片方、老ワイマン氏とその息子が同じ事務所で働いており、私は息子の方の秘書として配属され、新しいポジションに就き、仕事のこと、オフィスの有様を、逐次両親に報告していたに違いありません。

ところで、かなり居心地良かった日系法律事務

*records of your life, which make you search your inner soul.*

*Incidentally, what on earth was it, that photo of yourself, enclosed in one of the letters? Is that a half-Japanese half-American compromise, with a long, unsightly rope hanging in the front? You looked like a hippie. The way the Japanese young people dress these days is simply freakish. They think they are fashionable. The shrewd salesmanship of all “fashion” vendors keeps pushing the trend to the point of no return. The way you dress is how you are. Don't follow suit.*

*Your description of the father and son lawyers, the Wymans, brought the memory of the American TV series, The Defenders, which you and I watched together every week. >*

From what my mother said above, it was apparent that I was no longer working at the Japanese-American law firm, Masuda, Spivack & Funai, and I was now employed by an American law firm, Cummings & Wyman. One of the senior partners was Mr. Wyman, and his son, Wyman, Jr., was also working there. I was Mr. Wyman, Jr.'s secretary.

I must have sent lengthy reports to my parents, describing my new position and the people I worked with at this small-size law firm. As my mother said, she and I used to watch The Defenders, starring the wonderful E.G. Marshall, on Japanese TV in the early 60's.

を、一年そこそこで辞めてしまった理由は、同僚且つルームメイトだった太陽娘のメイが、結婚準備で仕事をやめ、しかもその頃、故郷の両親の元へ帰国してしまい(カナダはブリティッシュ・コロンビアのとある町)、急にオフィスに魅力がなくなったためです。

<父より>

[10月1日、国勢調査、亮子の不在をしみじみ思ふ、。。。]

～ 世の中に 絶えて櫻の なかりせば  
春の心は のどけからまし ～

世の中に絶えてテレビの無かりせば、である。  
もう文句言はず、告別したらいいのだが、、幸いすることはあるから、もう少し何とか時を稼がねばならぬ]

<1970年10月18日、母より>

[今日は随分元気に満ち溢れた手紙、向こう鉢巻で、叩き売りでもしているよう。お父さんが気の弱いことでも書いたのかしら。それともあなたの心の中に、うつぼつとしたものがあって、手紙の中に溢れ出たのかしら、。。。]

[Note from Page 2:](#)

My father loved to quote ancient Japanese “Waka” in his letters to me. Here’s what Wikipedia says about “Waka:”

The reason I left the Masuda, Spivack law firm in only about one year was that my good friend May quit the firm to go back to her parents’ home in Canada to get ready for her upcoming wedding. The workplace without the energetic and vivacious May became all of a sudden quite dreary.

Again, from my father:

< *It is October 1st. It is the national census taking day. Your absence is keenly felt....*

(My father again quotes an ancient Waka here.)

*I wish there were no TVs in this world... Well, I should no longer complain about anything, and say farewell... but fortunately, I still have things to do. Well, I will still hang around a bit longer.>*

My Mother’s Letter Dated October 18, 1970:

< *Your letter today is immensely upbeat, full of spirit. I thought I heard your voice as I read it. I wonder if your father wrote you a negative, defeatist’s letter, prompting you to write in that fashion? Or, had you just yearned to voice what’s within yourself, and everything came out in your writing naturally? >*

< “Waka is a genre of classical Japanese verse and one of the major genres of Japanese literature. The most ancient Waka were recorded in the 20 volumes of the “Man’yōshū,” the oldest surviving Waka anthology compiled around the 8th Century.” >

A few of my American friends suggested that I translate the Waka that my father often quoted in his letters. I bring your attention to what my father said on page 1 of this chapter:

*“I don’t think there’s a way to appreciate the beauty of such Japanese poems translated into English.”*

I am totally in agreement with him, and I don’t want to embarrass myself, trying an awkward and inept translation or transliteration of our exquisitely beautiful Waka. There must be sites where native English speaking people who know Japanese well translated major works of Waka into English and posted them.

< *End of Chapter 15* >