

Letter from Tsuruno Meguro to Yoneko Takano, [June, 1942]

Thank you for a letter, Yone-san.

I think it is hot at Santa Anita now, and it is hot at Pomona, too. Please do not drink water too much; otherwise you would turn to be a fish. It was too hot to stay inside the house, but it is not that hot today and I have been able to manage it. My place is too close to the mess hall, and if I open the windows, the soot from the mess hall comes into my house. Since I can't open the windows, the inside of my house gets really hot. I felt like I were in heated water. If the wind blows from different directions, it would be better. But the wind blows from the same direction every day, and we have been in trouble.

Does the blouse fit well on you? I alternated it after Yoshiko sewed it. If you need an umbrella, I will send one to you. When it is hot, everyone uses an umbrella outside.

I received a letter from our insurance company. I had Masako to write to them, saying that we would not be able to send money to them. They replied that we would lose the eligibility if we do not pay for 3 years. It seems useless, and we decided not to buy insurance until peace comes back again. I asked about our luggage at home. After that, I have not heard anything.

I think that I should have brought a sewing machine with me. I do the same things every day. Everyone works here. Every morning, I do laundry, sweep and wipe inside the house, and do the ironing. I'm pretty busy. There are various classes, such as sewing, flower arrangement, and "ragu-koshirai" [= patchwork], and I will attend the patchwork class.

A lot of entertainments are planned to celebrate the 4th of July. Judo activities, movies, and dances, and others are planned. Then, we practice every evening.

Our backyard is a wheat field. Papa goes to see it every evening. He takes a bath in the daytime, takes a nap, and sleeps at night again. Papa sleeps often.

I thought he could go later, but Papa got up early this morning and went to get in line to receive coupons without eating breakfast. As there are many people here, he had to go early in the morning; otherwise he might not have been able to get the coupons.

Mama and Papa receive \$4.00; \$2.50 for people age 16 years and over; and \$1.00 for people under age 15. I was told that we had to spend them all within a month. I heard that the people who have jobs receive the monthly salary. How is everything in Santa Anita?

Just a variety of hoaxes are going around. We do not know where the people in Pomona will be transferred next because the story changes every day. No matter where we go please do not worry. Be patient until it becomes peaceful and the day when we meet again.

Yoneko,

Can't you read my Japanese letter even if it is written in Kana? It's embarrassing to ask your father-in-law to read my letter for you!

If you do not get up early, you can't eat breakfast, can you? Even while you are sleeping, you still get hungry and need to eat. It sounds restless.

You told me that Shingo Abe has come back, but I think he is not Mr. Abe that I know. When I spoke to Mrs. Utsushigawa about it, she was very angry and said that how you got such information. There is something wrong. I did not ask for the details but she is still doing well as usual.

The family next to my house has a 4-year-old girl whose name is Itsuko. She talks a lot and is very funny. She visits our place every day and chats with me. She said that her father has been interned in a camp in New Mexico.

I heard that Dr. Smith is going to come to speak to us on this coming Sunday. We often have white people come to talk. They tell you a lot of good things. I suggest that you go to church sometimes. If you have faith, it is helpful when raising children. I wish I would have been going to church when I was young. We wouldn't have had a chance to go church like now. God gave us time to fully polish our souls.

Yoshiko dropped a steam iron yesterday and the handle is broken. Instead of spending money for the repair, I left it aside.

According to people, we are going to move to another place in September, probably to Arkansas.

This war won't last too long. Be nice to each other until it is over. Did your sister-in-law give birth to a baby? Hope you are all well. I will write again. Be well and get along well with your husband.

From Mama

To Yoshiko and Fumio,

Food here is sufficient for old people and women. I see younger people getting seconds, that is, food is better now.

Yoneko, the letter of "day" in Kanji that you wrote was missing one line at the bottom.

[Written at Pomona Assembly Center]