



U. S. ARMY

AIR MAIL

Miss Yuri Domoto
6 F 5 C
Granada Relocation Center
Amache, Colorado

VIA AIR MAIL



January 4, 1943

Dear Yuri:

Hello again, and thanks a million for the surprise gift. In fact each and everyone of the twenty-four in my classroom enjoyed its content. It was brought into the classroom by one of my friend who works in the mail-room. Upon entering he said in a loud voice, "Package for Sgt. Shibata", and as an afterthought added, "Smells like candy". Naturally, with an introduction like that the response can be only one. Yup, it was "Oh boy ! We eat !" Actually, we're not allowed to consume any type of food (candies and drinks included) in the classroom but that didn't make any difference. The coated English Toffee was enjoyed without waste of time, but had a little difficulty with the "mochi". But by posting one man to watch for the inspecting officer (they roam around the various classroom to see if we are studying) we finally got the lonely "mochi" to puff up like a marshmellow on the coal stove. Only got a pinchfull but it was a treat. (first one since entering in the service) My family sent some last year while I was at Lewis but due to the Dec. 7th business, I didn't get it till a month later. (Was as hard as concrete with "kabi" all over.) I hear they received much "mochi-gome" at Tule Lake so I won't be surprised if they sent some too. The Pall Mall was also passed around.....its a good thing that the smoke had cleared away by the time the officer came around. Thanks again for the gift and the gang says, "Tell her 'thanks' for me too". (Probably the only one in the group you'd know is Tarno Fudenna of Warm Springs...remember the nice home they had?)

We're not doing much now days except for self-study period from morning till four at night. Most of the fellows devote their time to build up their correspondents...understand that letters are the most desirable item when overseas. Even more so than pay envelopes. (Pay checks are of no use if you're in some of the places cause there's no place to spend it.) We're off in the evenings so we have plenty of time for letter writing, washing, or for going into town for a steak dinner and a show. During the day when not on duty, you'll be sure to find many in the canteen. In cold weather like this, (minus sixteen today) the coffee they serve there hits the spot. Only costs three cents at that.

I gather from your "going home" letter, that you were quite rushed. Between shopping and your welfare work, you were quite occupied. It's too bad you didn't have at least a few days to lose some of the "Amachean" thoughts. Perhaps the reason that you didn't feel the 'surge of freedom' may be due to the subconscious mind saying, "Don't kid yourself. You'll have to go back." Your use of the word captivity reminds me of a letter from Gila Rivers. It went something like this....."They are making many improvements in the camp. Only yesterday, they started putting up barbed wire fences around the center to keep the Hakujuin out". I suppose that's one way to look at it.

If you weren't able to buy the paper that Kan's work require, I'll be more than glad to buy it here. The city of Minneapolis is as large as Oakland so I shouldn't have any trouble at all. That goes for anything else that you or the family may need. (Hats not included in offer)

Did a little impulse buying today. This typewriter. One of the fellows leaving soon for unknown destination had it.

He didn't want to take it with him so I bought it. It's a Remington Nois^eless Portable which still had its first ribbon. It's as good as new, and after negotiations which brought the remark, "The only one that can out-Jew a Jew is a Jap!" I got it. The only thing wrong with it is that at times it doesn't spell right. But with rationing of typewriters and such, I figured it was a good bargain at that. (May have to concentrate on Wimpy's specialty on future visits to town instead of steaks because of it)

Was good to hear that your dad is much better in spite of a certain young lady banging/^{her}~~their~~ fingers. (This typewriter needs grammar lessons too) The lady also failed to mention whether anything happened to the door.

The Leo Saito that you mentioned in the letter was a Cal. student wasn't he? Yes, I knew him then as well as another Cal. student with the same name. The latter was with us until a few months ago.

Your dining room incident on the train was interesting to hear. I think you're slipping, Yuri. (And I don't mean that Charlie is dying.) Being a welfare worker, I should think being stared at would be your least concern. When I brought some of the relocation recruits, they had the same self-conscious feeling. One explained that he felt that way because he kept wondering whether or not the other person was wonder~~ing~~g whether he was a Japanese or not. And not because of feeling inferior. (Does that last two sentence make sense?) The other week, I heard how one of the nisei from here treated an inquisitive 'white'. It seems that this person walked up to the nisei and said, "You're a Japanese, aren't you?" To this the nisei soldier said with exaggerated gestures,

"Well I'll be darned ! Now, isn't that a coincidence ! I was just wondering whether you were a dam German !" And from what the bystanders told me, the man's face dropped in exasperation. You might try it sometime. But to get back to self-conscious. The dictionary states: 1- Aware of one's actions and thoughts : 2- Aware of a defect, or 3 - Embarrassed by individuality. Of the three I'd say it was the last. Most likely, as you wrote, if you had another girl with you (or a little dog) it would have been O.K. And I agree with you. From personal experience, to walk into a dining car filled with people, and then to sit at a table with three other strangers, it's not too easy even for blueeyed persons, a girl especially. (On my trip it was downright hunger and let them stare attitude, that made my feet move into the diner).

I'm afraid if I wrote more, you'd have to read by installments. So will close with a question....Did you have time to buy a "hat"?

Yoshito