

4/20/90

Ever since he overheard his mother telling her friend that she was getting a little tired of Columbia smelts and Vienna sausages, Shosuke has started to ~~plan a trip to some outside town to pick up ~~some~~ food to add variety to their camp messhall fare.~~ ^{get of some way} ~~It had been nearly 9 months since the government had gathered all the people of Japanese blood from the West Coast and packed them off inland in a whirlwind decision.~~ ^{assent} ~~He was in one of 10 camps and this particular one was set in the middle of Idaho's desert country.~~ ^{them like} ~~It was organized into barracks stretched in a loose chain of about 2 miles long. There were about 44 blocks each with about 12 barracks organized around their own laundries, mess-halls, and lavatory-shower buildings.~~ ^{under} ~~How did the government get 10,000 people in here so quickly? Pearl Harbor was December 7, 1941, and here only a year later all the people were living out their days in a pattern routine as if this was as normal as could be.~~ ^{mad genius} ~~It made him wonder if some people had had some master plan in mind before the explosion at Pearl Harbor. Some mad genius.~~ ^{was}

He remembered his mother's comment ~~because~~ ^{when} he heard one of the Isse men talking about the bridge not having guards posted. Apparently, ^{the other fellows a great} he had been out ^{wood} to the sagebrush country to gather manzanita brush. ^{to pass time} The men had picked up the ^{hobbyist} hobby of gathering this wood and after peeling off the outer bark, they would polish the trunks which were a beautiful blend of light and dark wood. It became a fad for them to hike outside of the immediate country around the barracks and come home loaded with the heavy sticks. Many of the adventuresome men were ^{now eyeing the land outside the camp boundaries.} ~~now eyeing the land outside the camp boundaries.~~ ^{of some were now eyeing the land} They would have to cross the bridge over the canal ~~but the bridges were guarded by soldiers.~~ Being January, the snow crusted ground was frozen, and the soldiers must have decided that noone would be foolhardy enough to try hiking out to the desolate icy desert. Shosuke knew that if he could cross the bridge undetected, he could make it to Eden and return before roll call at 5 PM.

~~After breakfast at the messhall~~ [#] This morning there had been no work after yesterday's attempt. He had joined a ditch repair crew to while away the time. The others were teenagers and they called him the "Prof" because he always took a book along. ^{They had been seen when they were} The project engineer would pick them up in his truck and drop them off by the ~~canal ditch~~ canal which had been emptied for repair work. Their first task was to dig up the pilings with the pickax but with the severe cold weather, ^{the ground was frozen solid a good foot down.} ~~the ground was frozen solid a good foot down.~~ ^{It was like digging cement, rather futile.} After giving out the assignment, the engineer had climbed back into his truck and taken off. Joey, the youngest kid in the group had been told to climb up to the top of ^{a branch to make} the rock and make sure that the truck could no longer be seen. ^{was no longer in sight}

1/2

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There were 6 ^{to the crew} members, and they all started scrambling around the bushes for kindling and ^{kindling}. Soon they had a cheerful fire going and they spread out a blanket and sat around a deck of cards. Shosuke was the only one that left the group and went off to the side to resume his reading. It was during one of these reading spells that he realized it would be possible to hike to Eden. Across the canal and in the distance he could make out a dark mound in on the horizon. That would be the small town with a grocery store. He knew there were some Japanese living in that town. They had been there for many years previous to the war and since they lived farther inland than the West Coast stretch zone, they had not been required to pull up stakes.

Suppose he left right after lunch and started walking in the direction of Eden. He should be able to cover the 4 miles to and back before roll call ~~time~~ at 5 PM. It was a clear cold day with no snow clouds in sight. He ~~had never~~ ^{seen} such high ^{his} heavens. The desert sky was indeed an exhilarating sight. He decided that today would be a great day for the trip. He told his mother what his plans were and ~~together they looked for a sack that he could carry~~ ^{she found cardboard for the groceries} the groceries. She reminded him about the 5 o'clock curfew and he nodded ^{to her} ~~to~~ her. With his knit cap and leather high tops, he was as ready ^{to leave on his} ~~as he could~~ ^{hike} be. ~~as he trudged off away from the barrack.~~ ^{small} It took him less than half an hour to reach the ^{small} bridge which was, ^{which} ~~as he had been told~~, unattended. ~~Quickly~~ he crossed it and set his sights on the little town of Eden. Faintly he could discern a stand of poplars. He felt ~~ready for the adventure~~, an excitement that he hadn't imagined could come from ^{or} ~~this~~ solitary hike for a bag of groceries.

4/22 3

mountains

The scrubby scenery stretched out in front of him to the mountains in the distance. IN the fall they had ~~appeared~~ ^{looked} like blue dust but now they had turned into white ranges. The low bald hills no longer looked dry. He saw a rabbit scurry across his path and stop behind a sagebrush. He remembered a neighbor had trapped one and come over to ask Shosuke if he would like to try a piece of the meat. He ~~had~~ ^{was} the rabbit thrown down on the porch in front of his doorway. The eyes were open and the legs looked like frozen rope.

"They say it tastes like chicken," said Mr. Yamamoto. "Have your mother cook a little piece of it. ^{I know to cook the lungs part.} They say that if the lung tissues are white, the rabbit doesn't have tularemia."

~~A fragment of a thought~~ ^{it was} that it looked like the size of cat made him say hurriedly, "No, thank you. ^{it's not good, it's not good} Maybe next time." ^{he} added ^{to} not to be abrupt. ^{Thinking little bit about it.} Actually Mr. Yamamoto himself ~~was~~ ^{looked} sounded like he was looking for moral support. Shosuke wondered how Mrs. Yamamoto ~~was~~ ^{felt} feeling about cooking it. He never did hear how they liked it. Well, people were trying so many new things to break the monotony. Time was starting to hang heavy and the outside world felt so faraway. A lot of the younger and energetic people had gone out to the sugar beet farms during the fall season to help out the farmers who were feeling of shortage of labor. ^{Defense industries war} The war effort was drawing the normal work force away from the farms. Most of ~~them~~ ^{at that time} complained of not making money but at least they returned ~~refreshed in spirit.~~ ^{without being bored.} ^{hadn't been bored.}

There was no movement as far as ^{he} could see and ~~only~~ ^{the} sound of the crunching frozen snow of his own leather hightop s. Good thing he had thought to bring them with him. ^{man by} He thought about his mother ^{knitting} probably knitting by the pot bellied stove or ^{reading} reading some frayed book Japanese. He had ~~gone~~ ^{to} fill the coal bucket so that she wouldn't run out. ^{perhaps} Perhaps, by now, some neighbor had come by to visit her and she would be talking and listening while ~~actually~~ ^{really} thinking about how he was faring on his solitary walk across the frozen desert. Since his father had died many years ago, he and his mother had lived by themselves. She ^{believed strongly} was a great believer in reading and education, ^{they} they had managed to see him through college. He ^{had been} was a economics student of promise but the war had stepped in to halt whatever he might have gone into. The future seemed pretty blank at the moment. ^{there were} There were a lot of strange ideas being expressed around camp ^{now.}

Listening to the young kids while he sat on the side reading or working with pick and ax alongside ^{he} had ^{gained} insight into some of their thinking. ^{Actually} ^{what} ^{was} ^{going} ^{on} ⁱⁿ ^{the} ^{thoughts} ^{and} ^{rumors} ^{around} ^{camp} ^{surfaced} ⁱⁿ ^{their} ^{random} ^{conversations.}

X Shosuke
symptoms
of
tularemia

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As a matter of fact,, there had been a very intense conversation a few days ago. Ususally he just listened butthis once he couldn't help but jump into the discussion.

Joey said, "I asked this guy from the Army recruiting at the volunteering meeting if they'd release dad from the ^{felony} ~~internment~~ prison in Louisiana, at least let him join the family here if I joined up. He said he didn't know."

Sam, who ~~had graduated high school just before~~ would have graduated high school if he had been allowed to stay a few more months in Seattle piped in with "What you talking about....you're only 17, you can't joion up even if you wanted to, you sad Jap,"

"Hey, it's our only chance to show our loyalty. I've got to show them. I promised all my Caucasian friends that if I ~~only~~ had a chance I'd show my full loyalty. I just got a few more months before I'm 18." The other two, Yo and John had been out of high school for a couple years and they had a few working years in the market stalls under their belt, ~~and~~ they were listening~~k~~ and staring into the fire.

That wass when ^{Bill} Shosuke walked over to the group and said, "So they'll let you prove your loyalty. What's the hurry? Don't get on the band wagon and rush down to the volunteer office. Think it over carefully. You going to support a regiment that's going to be based directly on race discrimination? Think about it....you'll be in the army, you're dad might be allowed to leave the ~~internment~~ prison or he might be allowed to come here, the rest of the family's here behind barbed wires. I say you got to hang on to something more positive than that. Why don't you think about applying for school outside of camp. Study. It's the chance of a lifetime. Look what an ordinary individual has against him. What looks like protection in the form of soft padded conventions, security, old fashioned ideas of life; you've had a chance to see what life is really aboutThis calamity has taken ~~out~~ the naiveness out of your thinking. Your mind is free to discover the real trukths. You're young. If you go out to study you'll have a chance to maybe get some ideas that might help to bring around a new ^{the better} ~~good~~ world that's around the corner. You got a long future."

"Hey, Professor, we don't understand that heavy stuff. You know how it is," said Yo. "I can't go back to the old Hirohito's island. They kick us around in here but this is where I got to stick it out. I can't understand any of that lingo-lingo back there. We got to prove ~~out~~ loyalty now, here. I'm going to volunteer tomorrow." John kept staring into the fire but Joey and Sam looked~~k~~ at Yo with admiration. Shosuke felt like his sober arguments didn't stand a chance against the call to arms and glory that Yo's ~~thought~~ arguments promised. He thought back to that afternoon and knew that there ~~would be many~~ already many had rushed ~~up~~ to sign up.

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