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Uchida

I have A Daughter to put away

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article outline

I HAVE A DAUGHTER TO PUT AWAY

by

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I HAVE A DAUGHTER TO PUT AWAY

Outline for possible article

by

Yoshiko Uchida

"One hot night in August, Mr. Toda, dressed as formally as was possible in the summer heat of Tokyo, and perspiring profusely, arrived at the home of his friends, the Rev. and Mrs. Yamada. With him came his mother, dressed especially for the occasion in her formal crested black silk kimono and coat, and bound up in at least three feet of heavy brocade by the obi around her waist. With much bowing and many words of gratitude, they presented the Yamadas with a large basket of fruit and a box of sweet bean paste cakes - "unworthy tokens of their appreciation," they called them - for in a few hours the Yamadas would be introducing the young man to another prospective bride."

Description of what follows thereafter: The arrival of the younglady, accompanied by her retinue. The meeting (omia) over vast quantities of food prepared by Mrs. Yamada, who had spent the major part of the day in a nervous frenzy of cooking and cleaning. There follow two days in which the couple are given an opportunity to "get acquainted" - mostly by visiting with relatives! Then events move swiftly, and a formal engagement ceremony takes place three days after their first meeting.

Not all matches progress with such alacbtity: Story of how it all began... "One day, the girl's father had come from his home in the island of Shikoku to visit his sister, Mrs. Okada, in Tokyo. With the somewhat wearied hope of a father who had already "put



away" four daughters, ( the Japanese term to indicate the married status of a daughter literally means 'to put away'), he had sighed, 'You know, I must think about putting my youngest daughter away.'

"Now telling a Japanese woman of an eligible male or female is like leading her to a bargain counter and giving her a fat roll of yen. It is both a challenge and a source of infinite delight."

This gets things started. Description of events that led to the "omiai": The first visit by Mrs. Okada to the Yamadas to ask if they might find a suitable husband for her niece; The Yamadas did indeed - they knew a fine young man for whom they had arranged three previous meetings without success. There follow initial inquiries, an exchange of photographs and biographies, and at last the summer meeting.

"In Japan, one never knows just what curious set of circumstances or what chance conversation might result in the acquisition of a spouse," Examples: For instance, two women who meet only occasionally in the waiting room of a masseuse's home, compare the "statistics" of young marriageable people they know, and part with promises to secure photographs which might eventually be exchanged in view of a possible meeting.

Advantages of the "omiai" system: Although there are more love matches today than in the years before the war, there is still a lively demand for "go-betweens" and many young people admit themselves that they still rely on this method, and find it highly successful. For the good "go-between" matches his statistics carefully - comparing the family, education, economic and social status of the two individuals involved - and then, if there is "en" (if the fates so decree), he is responsible for an "omiai", and usually, *as many Japanese will testify,* for a happy marriage.



# I HAVE A DAUGHTER TO PUT AWAY

(outline of possible article)

One hot night in August, a ~~peerspiring~~ <sup>named Mr. Ida</sup> young man, dressed as formally as is possible in the summer heat of Tokyo, arrived at the home of Rev. and Mrs. Yamada. He was accompanied by his widowed mother, a gentle ~~sweet-faced~~ woman, who, to be dressed properly for the occasion, wore her formal crested black kimono and coat, ~~around her~~ <sup>and</sup> ~~was bound up in~~ <sup>up in</sup> at least 3 feet of heavy brocade by the obi around her waist. ~~They carried with them a~~ <sup>they carried</sup> square silk furoshiki in ~~which were wrapped~~ a large box of fruit and a box of ~~sweet bean paste cakes, which~~ <sup>-</sup> These were gifts to the Yamadas, ~~who had~~ <sup>presented</sup> unobtrusively, and with apologies for their ~~of appreciation for~~ <sup>worthlessness, as a token of appreciation for</sup> ~~their efforts~~ <sup>for</sup> The Yamadas have arranged ~~a meeting~~ <sup>for the young man, Ida-san, to meet a prospective bride.</sup>

Shortly thereafter, a young lady arrives. She too is accompanied by her mother, but has brought along her sister and brother-in-law as well. She has come from a small town in the island of Shikoku - a good 17 hour trip from Tokyo to meet this young man. - through the <sup>son</sup> offices not only of the Yamadas, but of her aunt in Tokyo. It is a big night for her.

With much bowing of heads to the well-scrubbed tatami floor, the formal introductions are made, and the ~~you~~ Ida-san and the young girl, Tomeko, meet for the first time, with a half-dozen people looking on. <sup>There is polite chatter and laughter</sup> ~~There is talk~~ cups of assorted edibles Over tea and a vast quantity of ~~food~~, and about 2 hours later, the party ~~disbands~~.

~~The next day, both the man and the woman~~ The next day, I-san and Tomeko are supposed to have a day together - alone - and the following day, Mr. I comes to report to the Yamadas, ~~but~~ before he even arrives the Y's and the girl's aunt are talking about the wedding date. When I-san comes to tell the Y's that he is pleased with the girl, he is only confirming a fact that had been taken for granted. When he asks what his next move should be, the Y's waste no time. "Tomeko and her family cannot come ~~up again~~ <sup>up again</sup> all the way from Shikoku again too easily," Mr. Y. tells I-san, "I think it best if you make your engagement formal." How would this Sunday be? And so, 2 days after ~~satnandata~~ they first met, Tomeko and Mr. I. become engaged.

Not all matches proceed so smoothly or with quite such alacrity.



and for I-san, altho' this meeting came to a successful conclusion, he had had twice

3 previous meetings which had ended in polite refusals from the young ladies, in a hurried retreat himself from a rather homely candidate.

and once ~~from a rather homely candidate~~. After Each unsuccessful meeting, or omiai, the Y's - anxious to help their young friend, ~~time, he had to be helped to find a new one~~ would begin a new search for an eligible young lady.

In Japan, one never knows through what strange means ~~such a meeting~~ one will find a mate. (If there is "en<sup>2</sup>" - or if the fates decree) Two people almost unknown to you, might at some strange place be determining your fate. I ~~have~~ once heard 2 women talking as they waited their turn with a masseuse. Tea had been served to those who waited, and as they sipped their tea, the two women ~~talked~~ who met only occasionally when their paths crossed in the sitting room of the masseuse, began to talk of many things. Talk veered from the weather to their respective children, and then, as almost inevitably happens whenever 2 J. women meet - to various ~~eligible~~ single men or women eligible for marriage. Almost like matching a Jack in one hand with a Queen in another, vital statistics are quickly compared. Age? Occupation? Family background? ~~Do~~ Education? If the statistics match fairly well - photographs are next exchanged, and when that test is successfully passed - then the all-important omiai. One of These two women ~~explained~~ had a young banker looking for a wife. How fortunate! Why, the other just knew of a young girl who had her heart set on a young banker? "But can she play the piano?" The young banker wants a wife who can play the piano.." and so the conversation spun itself out - ~~to the~~ and ended with promises ~~from~~ from each party to uncover more information from the principals and to try to secure photographs.

I have heard Mrs. Y. plaintively as In Japan, any unattached individual is a commodity for sale. I have heard Mrs. Y. ~~ask~~ ask plaintively, ~~and through the~~ ~~man's~~ "Don't you need any brides? We know so many nice young ladies?" It was almost as though she had an over-supply of eggs, and wanted to dispose of them before they spoiled. All young women in J. assume that they will eventually marry. For one thing, ~~most girls~~ it isn't as easy for a woman to go into a career in Japan, for it is a highly populated country and there are enough men to crowd them out of most jobs. A woman, in J, is still expected to become first - a housewife



and a mother, and if she can fit a career into that - fine. Girls are reared with marriage as the ultimate goal, and ~~girls~~ young marriages be girls are always well-prepared, not only ~~for~~ through training, but with a set of good portraits ready for distribution at the proper moment.

Before the war, most young people left the selection of a mate to with sep. schools, and little or no informal dating, their parents, for there were few opportunities for them to meet and mingle with the opposite sex. Today, however, ~~xxx~~ more and more people are marrying thru' so called "love matches" in which the go-between has become a mere formality. However, there are still a good number of "omiaai" where young people are introduced by means of a go-between or baishaku-nin.

In the case of Tomeko and Mr. Ida, it all came about ~~when~~ because Tomeko's father came to visit his sister in Tokyo one day, and said, "You know, I must think of putting my youngest daughter away."



"I have a daughter to put away..."

One hot night in August, a perspiring young man dressed as formally as is possible in Tokyo's summer heat, arrived at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Y. He was accompanied by his mother, who, ~~hadn't been prepared~~ in order to be dressed properly for the occasion, ~~she had worn~~ wore ~~her formal crested black kimono and jacket coat, and of course was bound up in at least 3 yards of heavy brocade by the obi she wore around her waist. They carried with them a/silk furoshiki in which they were wrapped a large box of fruit and a box of sweet bean cakes - gifts for the Y's, which were bro't unobtusively to the kitchen and presented/with apologies for their ownrthlessness.~~ The young man, Mr. I, and his mother were ushered ~~to the upstairs sitting room~~ to the upstairs sitting room and then were asked to wait.

About 10 minutes later a young girl of 25 arrived, accompanied by her mother, her sister and her sister's husband. The young girl and her mother had just arrived from Shikoku (about a 17 hour trip) a few days before. Also present was a Mrs. O. the aunt of the young girl, ~~who had come from Shikoku~~ and a close friend of the Y's.

At about 8:00 p.m. - these two parties were brought together in the neat tatami-matted room on the 2nd floor. There was an elaborate exchange of greetings, much bowing to the floor ~~and for the first time in his life, the young man, Mr. I, laid eyes on the young girl (Tomeko) from Shikoku.~~ This was the evening of August 5th. Three days later, on the afternoon of August 8th the young couple became formally engaged, thus bringing to a successful conclusion ~~the first of a series of formal Japanese Omiai - (or meeting).~~ another formal Japanese Omiai - (or meeting).

~~the first of a series of formal Japanese Omiai - (or meeting).~~ Although ~~the first of a series of formal Japanese Omiai - (or meeting).~~ events



took place at a pretty fast clip once the Omiai took place, the preparations ~~for this meeting began~~ fates that brought these two people together had been in motion since \_\_\_\_\_ actually, the whole business was set in motion as early as May when the girl's father took a trip to Tokyo to visit the aunt, Mrs. O.

"I would like to put away my youngest daughter, Tomeko," he had said with the wearied hope of a father who had <sup>already</sup> "put away" (this is a literal translation of the Japanese "katazukeru" which is used to indicate marriage) four other daughters. ~~in~~ She had evidently been a problem from the time of her birth, for already burdened with five daughters, he had <sup>ingenuously hopefully</sup> named her "Tomeko" - which <sup>and evidently successful</sup> actually means "Stop" - in the simple hope that the name would somehow be translated into actuality.

Now it is both a challenge and an honor to be presented with ~~the problem of an unmarried female or male~~ such the problem of an unmarried female - or male - for I think every Japanese - basically possesses the inherent makings of a go-between. (one of these is a lively curiosity about personal statistics - ~~Excuse me, but how old are you?~~ "Excuse me, but how old are you?" is a question ~~asked~~ ~~almost~~ invariably asked of any unmarried individual, sometimes as soon as 5 or 10 minutes after meeting a total stranger. And always behind this question is the thought of finding a suitable mate. ~~If~~ The sister, Mrs. Okuda, rose nobly to the occasion, and promptly bro't her problem to her friends, Mr. and Mrs. Y.

~~Now fate sometimes has a happy way of working~~ The Y's were delighted. They had just ~~completing~~ completed a third unsuccessful "omiai" for a young man who had been looking for a wife for the past 2 years.



"It has been especially hard to find a wife for him," Mrs. Y explained, "Because of his sisters." You see, he has 3 unmarried sisters, and one of them has had infantile paralysis."

"But surely, everyone knows that isn't inherited," I said,

"I know," Mrs. Y. sighed, "But still, no young girl wants to be burdened with ~~the burden of~~ a semi-invalid sister-in-law, when there are other young men who don't have such problems."

From the very beginning, those who arranged this match were most hopeful. For one thing, both were Christians and both sought Christian mates. For another, Rev. Y. had baptised the young man in question, as well as the father of the young girl - a most fortunate set of circumstances.

Mrs. Okuda set to work with the zeal of a dedicated soul. She promptly acquired a set of personal statistics from ~~Tomeko~~ her niece, Tomeko. This included such vital statistics as age, schooling grades, a full description of the girl's ~~teaching~~ experiences as a <sup>her talents,</sup> kindergarten teacher, / plus a roster of her family, ~~real~~ trees - And with this, of course, came the inevitable photograph. (Every young J. girl has an "omiai" photograph in readiness for such emergencies.)

*In other cases, when go-between not so trusted - send to school for records - of age, as reply, send to girl student -*  
These were taken by Mrs. O and Mrs. Y. to Mr. I at his home sometime in June, for his inspection and approval. He approved, and as an expression of this approval, he brought over a photograph of himself and his own "personal history" - written on black sumi ink on white rice paper. He was a graduate of B.... College, he was 33 he worked at with a salary of , he smokes but doesn't drink...



and with some reluctance, I suppose, wrote of his living with his widowed mother, and 3 unmarried sisters.

Shortly thereafter, Mrs. O. came to the Y's with the news that Tomeko was attending a conf. of k. teachers in Kyoto in August, and that she would be able to extend her trip by another 8 hours to come to Tokyo to meet Mr. I. She would be acc'd of course by her mother.

A date was set for the meeting - August 5th. - and there followed a period of waiting.

As Aug. 5th drew closer, Mrs. O. made several trips to visit the Y's to discuss the details of the meeting. She would come early on the morning of the 5th to help clean the house and for any necessary preparations.

On the day before the Omiai, Tomeko's mother came to visit the Y's. She bro't with her a gift of 2 large dried cuttlefish, used in J. homes to make soup stock. (J. give most practical gifts). She explained that her daughter was clumsy, ill-trained and homely, that she would like the Y's to meet her once, so they would not be shocked by her crude country manners.

The day of the big meeting was one of the hottest of the summer. But from early that morning Mrs. Y. began to prepare for the evening meeting. ~~Mr. Y.~~ The house was swept and scrubbed ( and this means getting down on hands and knees with a bucket and rag) Water was scprinkled at the front gateway, and Mrs. Y. spent most of the morning chopping ~~veg~~ and cooking vegetables to make osushi ( z a rice dish of vinegared rice in which all kinds of cooked vegetables is added and mixed) Early in the afternoon, Mrs. Okuda came red-faced and perspiring, to help with the preparations. The meeting was to take place in the upstairs sitting room, and Mrs. O. spent at least 2 hours sweeping and scrubbing the tatami. She



took ~~inn~~ several trips to the market for Mrs. Y. (who can't walk because of her rhum.) bringing back Karupis (a popular cold drink in J.), sweet bean paste cakes, and salted rice cakes.

In Japan food and hospitality are practically synonymous. Therefore the general idea is that the greater the amount of food the more degree of hospitality is measured by the amount of food presented. Thus, even in a short morning's visit, I have been offered a quick succession of ice cream, chilled fresh peach, appearing like courses at a dinner iced tea and french pastry. And for something as important as an omiai, the ~~extraordinary~~ effort is doubled.

A short while after the 2 parties got together, I could hear the sound of laughter drifting down to my room on the first floor. When Mrs. Y. came into the kitchen about 8:00, I ~~cornered her~~ <sup>cornered her</sup> and I got the first report on the proceedings.

"How is it going?" I whispered.

She smiled happily, "They are all very relaxed. Everyone is talking freely and with a light heart. I think it will go well."

Then began the procession of edibles... First cold karupisu ( the sweet milky looking drink) for by that time, everyone was about to perish from the heat. "The brother-in-law has not put down his fan once," Mrs. Y. informed me with a sympathetic sigh. Then, big plate fulls of the osushi sprinkled with dried seaweed and sweetened egg and red ginger, a bowl of cold noodles with fresh ginger, sliced peaches, and the sweet bean paste cakes and rice cakes. All this only 2 hours after dinner.

By 9:00 the party disbanded, amid much polite chatter and bowing, and only Mrs. O. stayed behind to indulge in the luxury of a bath and post-omiai chatter. She sat at the little table in



the kitchen with the Y's, and I could get a few stray wisps of their conversation.

"Have just a little more osoba (cold noodles)," Mrs. Y. was urging, and Mrs. O. would say, "well, just a little". After that, they had some cold rice on which they poured tea, washing the whole business down with some pickled ~~xx~~ eggplant.

~~Their talk was~~ They were in high spirits. ~~They~~ "Tomoko-san told me how nice she tho't Mr. I's mother was," Mrs. Y. offered.

"And they all talked so freely," said Mrs. O. "Now, since T. is going home on the 11th, if they could announce their engagement about the 8th."

And so the talk went - ~~on and on~~ No one seemed to doubt for a moment that the wedding would take place.

The following day, it had been decided that the couple would be given an opportunity to meet alone. A trip to a nearby park was suggested, after which they were to go to Tomoko's sister's home nearby. All day at the Y's, there was frequent talk of the couple. "I wonder how it is going... I hope it doesn't rain..."

I, for one, was greatly relieved that they were given this one day. Together, for early plans precluded even this. I had been horrified. "But they should be given at least a day alone," I had protested, and the Y's had agreed. Mr. Y. had tho't they might go off to the country somewhere, but Mrs. Y. was more practical, "But it will be no matter where they go. If it were I, I'd go to T. Dept. Store. It's air conditioned, and they could sit down on one of the store benches and talk until the store closed!"

The following day, the couple met at the home of the young man, and then, the young man came to the Y's to report. He



was pleased with the young girl. (He ~~didn't~~ wasn't as enthusiastic about the girl as she was about him ...) What should he do next?

The Y's advised him that it would be a good thing for them to announce thier engagement promptly and to bring things to a head as soonas possible. "After all, " they added, "They've come a long way, and it would be nice if you could save them another trip up here bythaving the engagement <sup>ceremony</sup> ~~annoucement~~ take place now." This was 2 days after he had met the young girl!

However, the young man had great faith in Mr. Y. His attitude was simply, "Ahshtever you say..."

And so on the afternoon of the 8th, I heard the doorbell ring, and shortly thereafter, there was the sound of voices singing hymns and the engagement ceremony was under way. This was followed again by tea - and sandwiches (which, incidentally, I had ~~helped~~ Mrs. Y make during the greater part of the morning) - and when all was over, , Mrs. O. shed tears of joy.

There remained now, only the setting of the wddding date. The girl's mother wanted to wait till March - so she could teach her daughter some sewing, etc... but if the go-betweens and the aunt have their way - it may be aother story. As Mrs. O. talked with the Y's I could hear her saying, "November would be a nice month for the marriage, don't you t ink?"







about folk art, and the first exhibit of folk art was followed by two more. <sup>the article only play "pleasure" in case</sup> Gradually, the public began to take interest. Department stores were willing to sponsor exhibits of folk craft and dealers ~~began to~~ <sup>is rural area</sup> ~~xxxxxbuyxxxx~~ <sup>of their own</sup> anticipating the growing demand, began to ~~xxxxxxx~~ go out on buying trips into the countryside.

~~xxxxxxx~~ Interest in folk art was definitely growing, but there was still no museum. Suddenly, one day, in 1935, Magosaburo Ohara, a well-known philanthropist called on Soetsu Yanagi. He had heard of their hopes for a folk art museum and he would give them the funds to build one.

<sup>at that time</sup> With this gift, what had only been a vague hope, suddenly took shape, and a typically Japanese structure was erected in Meguro-ku Tokyo, to house the folk art collection <sup>that had been</sup> so carefully gathered by Mr. Yanagi and his friends.

~~With the building of the museum~~ The museum ~~seemed to~~ <sup>with</sup> and its director, Soetsu Yanagi, became a natural center for a group of artists, artisans and scholars who shared <sup>not only</sup> a love for folk art but a determination to see that it would not die out. Gradually, a folk art movement was organized, ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ with over 20 branches throughout Japan. A ~~xxxxxxx~~ An informal, intimate association, it has no rigid organizational rules, but seeks ~~only to~~ mainly to encourage the development of leaders among the artisans of the countryside, in an effort <sup>sustain</sup> ~~not only~~ to preserve but to constantly improve the quality of ~~rural handicraft~~ folk art.

~~xxxxxxxx~~ Just as the fine objects of the past are preserved in the folk art museum as an example are examples for the present and the future, Mr. Yanagi feels that all artisans need and look to leaders to help them maintain a high standard of work.







Mrs. O, ~~Mr. M's sister~~, rose nobly to the occasion. She <sup>upon hearing of her bro's plight.</sup> promptly brought her problem to her good friends, Mr. and Mrs. Y. ~~in whose home I have been renting a room.~~ The Y's were delighted. They had just completed a third unsuccessful "omia" (or meeting) for a young man who had been searching for a wife for the past 2 years.

"It has been especially hard to find a wife for him," Mrs. Y explained. "You see he has 3 unmarried sisters and a widowed mother living with him, and that seems to frighten all the young girls away."

To make matters worse, it seemed that one of these sisters was partially paralyzed from infantile paralysis, and apparently <sup>along</sup> no one wanted to take on a semi-invalid/with a new husband.

"Poor <sup>Tomek</sup> I-san," Mrs. Y. would say with a sigh, and then add, as though ~~he were~~ he were condemned to die of leprosy, "And he's such a nice young man!"

NowWhen Mrs. O. told the Y's of the availability of her niece Tomek, there was a feeling of general rejoicing all around. The young lady was a hard-working, ~~dependable~~, kindergarten teacher <sup>also</sup> serious-minded, and a Christian. I-san also was ~~a~~ serious-minded hard-working, and a Christian. Furthermore, Mr. Y. ~~knows~~ had known the girl's father ~~from his father's time~~ at one time, and had been like a father to I-san. It seemed a most propitious match, and Mrs. O. set to work with the zeal of a dedicated soul. She promptly acquired a set of personal statistics from her niece. This included such vital statistics as the girl's age, schooling, grades, her experiences as a kindergarten teachers, ~~and~~ her talents, (she plays the piano), data on the ages occupation, etc.. of her immediate family, and of course, the inevitable photograph, which



every young J. girl usually has in readiness for just such an occasion. In many cases where such statistics are not so readily available and where the go-between knows less of both parties, a formal investigation is often <sup>conducted</sup> made by a special org'n called \_\_\_\_\_. They will secure any information a young man may desire of a prospective bride, usually writing to the girl's school for copies of her record. When the school does not reply, it can be assumed that her <sup>Feeling that</sup> ~~or depre~~ ~~ge~~ ~~seen~~ grades were poor. A teacher or principal can thus assure/ve her of a good marriage ~~or else~~ most girls ~~seabtoxtbtthabx~~ bring fitting gifts to them as they graduate and join the mass of eligible females.

Tomeko's photograph and personal statistics were then taken to Mr. I's home by Mrs. Y. and Mrs. O. thus opening formal negoti~~aa~~ations. Mr. I. inspected <sup>these</sup> ~~and approved~~, and expressed his approbation by submitting a few statistics ~~and~~ of his own, accompanied by a photograph for the young girl's perusal. Written on beautiful white rice paper with a Japanese brush, his record revealed <sup>such facts as the fol</sup> ~~that~~ he was 33, was ~~working~~ an engineer working with a communications co, He was a graduate of the Butsuri \_\_\_\_\_ College. He liked to \_\_\_\_\_, he smoked moderately, but didn't drink. And I suppose, he ~~had~~ added with some reluctance that he lived with a widowed mother ~~and 3 unmarried sisters~~, who operated a sports goods shop, and 3 unmarried sisters - one of whom had had infantile paralysis.

~~For Tomeko, however, this~~ Happily, this didn't seem to disturb Tomeko in the least. Furthermore, ~~her~~ family was very much impressed with Mr. I's background. "And," the aunt confided to Mrs. Y., "They are especially pleased to learn that they do not come from a line of ~~business~~ ~~people~~ merchants, but from the samurai (warrior) class." The business enterprise was only a post-war emergency development,



just as it had been for Tomeko's father.

Both families seemed equally matched economically and intellectually. "I'm sure it is going to be successful," Mrs. O. would predict each time she came to make a report on any progress.

One day, she came to visit the Y's with the news that T. would be going to Kyoto for a conference early in August, and could be persuaded to take the additional 7 hour journey to Tokyo to meet Mr. T. She would be accompanied by her mother, and would stay ~~with her~~ as her sisters's home in Tokyo. August 5th was set for the day of the meeting, and until then, there was nothing more to do but to wait. During this time, Mrs. O. made several visits to the Y's to discuss details of the meeting - what time it would take place, <sup>who would come,</sup> what they would eat, ~~what she would eat,~~ and finally, suggesting that she would come to help clean the house the morning of the 5th.

On the day before the Omiai, Tomeko's mother ~~arrived~~ came to make a formal call on the Y's. She brought a gift of two large dried <sup>bonito</sup> ~~cubana fish~~ from Shikoku - a practical gift in view of the fact that shaved bonito is used to make soup stock in all J. homes. She explained that her daughter was clumsy, ill-trained, ~~and~~ country child, who was not at all pretty. She wanted to tell the Y's beforehand, so they would not be too shocked the next day.

*Sumi  
clear* <sup>Mr. I.</sup> At 6:30 p.m on August 5th, a perspiring ~~young man~~ dressed as formally as is possible in Tokyo's summer heat, arrived at... He was accompanied by his mother, who to be dressed properly for such an auspicious occasion, wore her formal crested black kimono and coat, and was bound up in at least 3 yards of brocade obi wrapped around her waist. They brought with them a large box of fruit and a box of sweet bean cakes, wrapped together in a large



square silk furoshiki. These were bro't to the kitchen by Mr. I. unwrapped, and presented to Mrs. Y. amid much bowing, and apith apologies for their worthlessness. Mr. I. and his mother were then ushered into the upstairs sitting room and offered a bup of tea while they waited.

About 10 minutes later, Tomeko arrived, accompanied by her mother, her sister and her sister's husband.

"Her sister is the attractive one in the family," Mrs. O. had told Mrs. Y., "It's too bad Tomeko doesn't have her good looks."

Anyway, her sister is coming without makeup and in order not to

~~detract~~ distract the young man from ~~the~~ the young lady intended thoughtfully for him, she had/come that night without wearing any makeup.

Tomeko and her retinue retired to a small room to/freshen up/greet Mrs. O.'

who had just emerged pink and dripping from a bath, and who hurried put on her best black kimono. Tomeko, her sister and mother ~~had~~ ~~xxxxxx~~ ~~xxxxxx~~ preferred comfort to tradition and had come in western clothes, choosing cool-looking pastelcolored cottons.

At approximately 7:00 p.m., Tomeko and her party were taken upstairs, the Y's made the formal introductions, and there followed much and exchange of pleasantries ~~xxxxxx~~ accompanied by much bowing of heads to the <sup>clean</sup> wellscrubbed tatami floor.

~~xxxxxx~~ ~~xxxxxx~~ ~~xxxxxx~~ ~~xxxxxx~~ In a short while there was much talk and laughter. <sup>she had already been told</sup> When Mrs. Y. came down to the kitchen about 8:00 to bring out the refreshments, I got the first report on how things were proceeding.

Mrs. Y. smiled happily, "they are all very relaxed. Everyone is talking freely and with a light heart. There is much laughter. I think it will go well."

Then, there began the procession of edibles from the kitchen







ingly well. Their talk no longer bore any traces of doubt, ~~but~~  
~~here~~ The biggest obstacle had already been successfully hurdled,  
The three of them huddled over tea and cold rice, were already making plans for the official engagement ceremony. Because her niece was leaving for home on the 11th, Mrs. O. suggested the 8th - exactly two days hence. There was general approval, and after that was settled, the three of them proceeded to plan ~~the~~ how the next two days should be spent by the young couple.

Mr. Y. - influenced somewhat <sup>by my</sup> by my horror at the t o't of these 2 young people having to announce their engagement without ever having spent some time together alone - suggested that they go off somewhere by themselves the next day.

"~~But~~ Maybe out in the country somewhere," he suggested.

"But it will be hot no matter where they go," Mrs. Y said, mopping her own face, "I think they ought to go to T. dept store and sit on a bench there. At least it's air conditioned."

"Well, we don't want them to cool off too much," Mrs. O. said, laughing hugely at her little joke.

And so the talk went. <sup>2/</sup> Tomeko and Mr. I. ~~might just as well~~ have ~~been~~ had any doubts, they would never <sup>have</sup> be accepted by the enthusiastic go-betweens who had all but set the wedding date.

Somehow, ~~the~~ ~~braxy~~ Tomeko and Mr. I. got together the next day, and that evening ~~the~~ I-san came to report to the Y's. He was pleased with the young lady. What should be his next move?

The Y's wasted no time. They advised him to make the engagement official as soon as possible, adding, "After all, they M's have come a long way, and it would be nice if you could save them another trip up here. How would Sunday the 8th suit you?"



Isan didn't have a chance to back down after that. After all, the Y's had gone to the trouble of arranging three previous meetings for him, surely this time, he must accept gracefully. And, ~~maximant~~ if he didn't show any great enthusiasm for this little round-faced plump country girl, at least, he didn't dislike her either.

And so, on Aug. 8th, two days after they had met, Tomeko and I-san came together to the Y home. Mrs. O had again come from early morning to ~~swere~~ help ~~ceian~~ clean house, and I had helped Mrs. Y. make an enormous stack of ~~lex~~ sandwiches for tea.

~~Because of some misunderstanding, the girl and I~~ neither of the mothers were present. The little group marched upstairs to the sitting room, and soon I heard the sound of voices singing a few hymns. This was followed by a short talk by Rev. Y., and the engagement was solemnized by a brief ceremony. When all was over, Mrs. O shed tears of joy, and there was much general rejoicing over the ~~taxand~~ glasses of iced cider, sandwiches, and ~~axixitie~~ ~~xxservinx~~ of red rice which Mrs. O. had ~~brought~~ made, ~~inxthannunah~~ ~~customxofncelabratingnanspininxoceanixx~~. Red rice is always served in Japan on auspicious occasions ~~suchxan~~ requiring celebration, and this, certainly, was a matter ~~for~~ which needed celebrating.

The young couple then spent the next few days exchanging calls. First, meeting at the sister's house, then having dinner at I-san's home. I-san's mother had been so pleased with the young lady, she had made up her mind on the night of the omiai, and then had hired a carpenter to make ~~repax~~ immediate repairs in the house, preparatory to her coming.

There remained now, only the setting of the wedding date.

Tomeko's mother suggested March. "Then, I can teach her some sewing, and a few other housewifely things," she suggested,



But, the go-betweens and more especially, Mrs. Okuda would have none of that. March was a long way off.

The last ~~time~~ time I heard Mrs. O. talking to the Ws, I could hear her saying, "November would be such a nice month for the marriage, don't you think?"

~~and when~~

~~I have just~~  
A letter has just come to me from  
Rev. Y, ~~the whom~~ in ~~2 days~~  
in 2 days, in whose whom I - tested  
a room for one year. "You will be  
that to hear" he wrote "that Mr. T  
Thinks we were united in marriage  
today."

I was indeed in luck, for  
I had been ~~in~~ <sup>at</sup> Rev Y's home  
when they met, and I engaged 3 plates.