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TO DOROTHEA LANGE

Oct. - Dec. 1942

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Block 34- Building 3407A
Tule Lake Relocation Center
Newell, California
October 19, 1942

Dear Mrs. Lange:

Thank you for your kind letter. I, too, have often thought of you - your husband - and your work. When I see my many acquaintances and friends leaving for various universities in the East, I know that the energy you have put forth for us has born fruit.

Harvey Stans lived a few barracks from me - his leaving has put a restless urge within me to try and find a niche for myself somewhere in the East - away from Tule Lake and all what it represents.

I feel as if I am imposing on you when I make this request - what with our short acquaintance - but I am going to ask a favor of you. Could you please give me your honest opinion of the general sentiment in the East as far as finding employment is concerned? Is there any suggestions that you could make as to how I could go about finding employment? I know there is a demand for labor in the beet fields but I'm afraid it is just a little too strenuous work for me to attempt. (I almost did go to the Montana beet fields with last Saturday's contingent -

the desire for freedom comes over me in such wild surges that I can't think calmly at times — but my parents finally convinced me as to the folly of my impetuous thinking.) There was a Mr. Drogier down here about a month ago looking for girls who were willing to do domestic work. When I went to see him, it was too late. He told me to wait — that there will be more positions coming in — but I can't wait with no definite assurance of a job. I am not asking you to find a position for me — that would be asking too much of your time — merely some suggestions as to who I might contact for information. Any work will suffice for me — domestic — personal maid — (defense work — janitress — anything). My real field is Hairstyling — but I know that's out of the question at the present moment. As far as recommendations from Caucasians — I have two teachers in Nevada — a nurse, a missionary and half dozen or so women whose husbands are engaged in all fields of work (doctor, engineer, farmer, etc) in Sacramento — who are more than willing to vouch for my character, honesty, willingness to learn & work).

It's getting very cold up here — Winter is surely pecking around Mt. Shasta — waiting to pounce on us at some unexpected moment.

In the mornings when I awake, it is still rather dark. Through the morning mist and the smoke that hovers so close to the ground, I can discern - faintly - the dark outlines of hundreds of geese winging their way southward. Almost I can picture them wagging their saucy tails rudely at me and de-code their noisy "honks" as to mean "Ha, ha, ha - you can't catch me! Ha, ha, ha - don't you wish you were me!" And then, as if waiting for the last few straggling geese to disappear into the distance, the mist gradually rises and the sun sleepily shoots its rays over a hill (which is called "Abalone" due to its striking similarity in shape) - rays which act as messengers to his coming. On mornings when there are clouds over that hill, the sun rays play tag amidst their ~~billowy~~ billowy whiteness and makes "Abalone" look as if it is truly trying to imitate its forefather - a volcano.

When I first came to Tule Lake, I was given the position of organizing the Community Beauty Shop. It was a great thrill to have a part in the building up of this community. After it started going smoothly, I turned the shop over to one of my operators. I am now teaching Cosmetology to a class of 30 students.

4. The football season is in! I can hear the voices of young boys raised to a frantic pitch - "Tackle him! Don't let him through! Aw, nuts!" It brings back memories of when I used to wave and flap my arms and jump around as if the bees had stung me - watching my brother play in the Foothills Park in Sacramento. Nostalgia grips me sometimes and it's all I can do to keep burning within my heart, the motto: "Never look back - always forward."

I wonder if anyone is sending you the Tulare Dispatch. If not, I will be more than glad to mail some of my copies to you. I don't believe I ever did thank you adequately for those oranges and cakes you gave me - ~~the~~ nothing that I can remember tasted more delicious.

I really do hope I am not asking too much of you - that I am not imposing upon your extension of kindness.

Friendly yours,

Yukie Zukumtse

P.S. To think that you remembered the meaning of my name!

Block 34-Building 3407a
Newell, California
December 8, 1942

Dear Mrs. Taylor:

I am deeply sorry I didn't answer your letter sooner than this. You can't begin to imagine how thrilled I was to read its wonderful contents. It really was my intention to answer sooner, but something of such a great importance came up since I last wrote to you—something that I have to consider into my future plans and which I didn't have to prior to my last letter—that I was muddling around in confusion—wondering what to do. The thing of such an importance, Mrs. Taylor, is that I am engaged now and we are planning to get married in the very near future. My fiance has a position offered him in Colorado and we are deciding whether to get married and go together or wait till he gets settled over there before I attempt joining him. At the present moment I am of the opinion that I would like to work shoulder to shoulder with him—meeting all obstacles together.

I don't know how I can ever thank you enough for your encouraging letter and all the trouble you must have put yourself to in order to aid me. Refusing the position seems like letting you down, but I know you will understand. I have been inquiring around for a girl that I could recommend to you or Mrs. Zischke and believe I have found her. I shall have her write directly to Mrs. Zischke if she should definitely make up her mind.

There are many girls and boys here who honestly do wish to leave but are held back by one reason or another.

For me - parental objection. I believe this objection arises from hearing stories brought in by the returning beet workers as to the racial prejudice and antagonism on the outside towards even the Japanese-Americans. Secondly, very few desire to leave by herself. They are afraid of loneliness in case the public will not accept them. Most of the girls seem to want work where at least 2 can leave together for the same town. As far as I'm concerned, I am not afraid of loneliness because I have experienced loneliness and have learned how to combat it.

Dr. Taylor quotes a wire from Mrs. Zischke that she desires a girl before Christmas if possible. There is so much red tape in leaving this center that I doubt very much if any girl can leave as soon as that. It takes at least from 6 weeks to 2 months to get your papers cleared — and transportation is really hard to get (soldiers first, civilians second.) I doubt if there are any short cuts.

There is a girl who lives in this same block who desires clerical work and is willing to leave anytime provided the wages are satisfactory. She filed her application to leave sometime ago so I believe she will be able to leave much more easily than most if a definite job is offered her. I can thoroughly recommend her as far as work & character goes. At the present she's the secretary for the Co-op here.

I sincerely believe that when spring and summer rolls around again, this center is going to find majority of the "Nisei" out and working. Farm labor is a poor substitute — as far as positions go — for those who have been working as secretaries, bookkeepers and auditors, or as lab technicians, or as private business owners — But for freedom of movement I believe any Americanized Japanese would do anything to obtain it.

Newspapers shouted forth that Americans of Japanese ancestry will be showing their loyalty to this country if we evacuated according to government orders. We did. Newspapers now shout forth that Americans of Japanese ancestry will be showing their loyalty if they help harvest the beets. They did. It seems as if that as long as the Japanese Americans do the work no Caucasian American will do, we are showing our loyalty. What can't concerns give us work in their defense program? Suspicion? Distrust? And yet they ~~clamor~~ clamor for demonstration of loyalty. Boys are going out by the dozens from this center to Camp Savage to enter the Intelligence Corps. There are over 5000 Americans of Japanese ancestry in the army. The public clamors for demonstration of loyalty — we were doing as much as any white skinned American was doing — parents gave up their sons (and these sons can't even come to see them on their furlough because Tule Lake is in the Western Defense zone.) — women's club sewed for the Red Cross — we bought bonds — we gave parties to raise funds for the stricken — we gave when giving was to be done. What did we not do that the majority of the Americans did?

But enough of this crazy outburst on my part — I still have faith in the Constitution of our United States and in the words "that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights — that among these are life, liberty, & the pursuit of happiness."

We had our second snow fall this last weekend. If the wind wasn't blowing so hard, I would have loved to have walked in it. I call them my brothers & sisters because my first name means "snow-maiden". Wish I could send you some a snow ball.

Please thank your husband for his letter and his kind interest. It actually brings a lump to my throat to think that I have so many wonderful friends.

We had a very pleasant Thanksgiving. I didn't think I'd ever see a turkey again — at least while I was here — but turkey I did see on that day. After dinner, the master of ceremony called upon various diners to donate their musical talents. I was one of those who sang for our meal. I hope you folks had as nice a Thanksgiving Day as I did. So many things to be thankful for despite everything.

I know you are very busy so you really needn't answer any of my letters — I shan't be expecting any reply. I shall enjoy writing to you even though I receive no reply because I know you have me in your thoughts.

Thank you for everything.

With best regards.

Jukie Dickinson

Block 34 - Building 3407a
Newell, California
December 17, 1942

Dear Dr. Taylor:

I knew you and Mrs. Taylor would understand the circumstances that caused me to write as I did - yet, until I received your understanding answer, I felt guilty deep down in my heart. Now - I am light at heart to think that two such grand people like you are wishing us good luck.

I have ~~not~~ given Mr. and Mrs. Fischke's address to two girls - one who was interested in domestic work and the other in clerical. The girl who is interested in domestic work - Mae Yamada - is also interested in beauty work and was a student in my cosmetology class. She wishes to work for a year or two to earn enough money to see her through a beauty college. I can assure you that she is dependable, has had experience in domestic work, is sweet, and is very sociable. She has no parents - but she has two grand older sisters who've all worked together for one aim - the betterment of themselves and each other. One of her sisters is a registered nurse - having received her diploma from your university; the other is working here as assistant dietitian in the formula kitchen for babies.

Ariye Ada is the name of the girl who is interested in office work. She, too, is a student of my class - but am studying this course only to learn the fundamentals of good

grooming for personal use. I know she's experienced as she had been handling bookkeeping and other business angles for 4 parties prior to evacuation. She also has high recommendations from Mr. K. Smith, the head of our co-op. From what I understand, she wishes to be the "pioneer" for her family - eventually she wants her mother and sisters to join her. I believe her sisters are also interested in outside work. Arie has a brother in the U. S. army - so you can see she has more reasons than me for feeling more close to this country. I sincerely believe that any concern who hires her will never regret their action - above all, she is very intelligent.

So much for the two girls - now for myself and Tule Lake and life in general.

Ken (my fiance) and I haven't what one could say were definite plans, but one thing that is definite - we're going to get married sometime in spring. He has no parents so - from the Japanese standpoint and traditions - it makes it harder for him to get married. I don't desire anything elaborate but my parents and his uncle want our wedding to be impressive - putting on a face, so to say - hence we know there's going to be some money involved. What savings Ken has is tied up in life insurance and in the Sumitomo Bank so it means that he will have to depend on his uncle to foot his bills. Ken is terribly proud about accepting aid from anybody so we've decided to save our \$16.00 a month that we both get from the government

for our services, and hope to have at least \$100 saved by April to help pay for the wedding expenses. I guess Ken would have had more saved if he didn't have to help pay for his brother's college education and if he hadn't been in the army (prior to evacuation he was P.F.C. at Fort Ord but was honorably discharged at the height of ^{bad} sentiment towards the Japanese.)

At any rate, after marriage - if everything goes alright - we want to leave for Colorado. At the present moment we have planned that he will work at whatever job that is offered him (at the present moment it's farm labor) while I work as a school girl to attend a beauty school in Denver so that I may be eligible for Colorado's operator license. From there on we're going to let the future take its course - I will stick with Ken, Mr. Taylor, "for better or for worse, for richer or for poorer". I know we'll come out on top.

We had a nice Thanksgiving day - and I do believe we'll have a white Christmas. It was quite a surprise to me to have turkey served - especially after believing that I'd never see a turkey dinner as long as I stayed in camp. Each block had their own little entertainment after dinner in their respective messhalls. Our block must have been pretty hard up on entertainers when they had to beg me to sing. The only unpleasant incident was that we had a slight case of diarrhea that night - and my friends insist that it was due to my singing - that they couldn't stomach it (I didn't know I was that bad!)

My uncle bought us a little Christmas tree so we were busy decorating it. It's all home made decorations - the star being cut out of a tin can - But there's ~~some~~ nothing like a tree to give that Christmas feeling around the house - "Peace on earth, good will to men". Next to our barrack is the recreational hall which has been converted into a classroom for 4th & 5th graders. I can hear them loudly practicing Christmas carols - the girls endeavoring to drown the boys out, and the boys only thinking of volume and not music.

Tule Lake has so much fog and smoke in the early mornings that I never get to see a beautiful sunrise anymore. One can tell that the sun is up only by the appearance of a red eye coming out of nowhere. It glares down at us balefully - as if to say "Hey, what's going on down there under that blanket of smoke!" Just a humdrum life, Mr. Sun!

In closing, could I ask you to apologize to Mr. & Mrs. Fischke for my ^{not} living up to their expectations?

Sincerely,

Yukie Fukumitsu

My regards to Mrs. Taylor