

61:1 Kakutani, Kay, Correspondence

1955-88

Sister

86/97

C

Sunday - Jan 23rd '55

Dearest Mom, Pap & Yo,

We do hope that Mom had a very happy birthday yesterday. You were especially in our thoughts, Mom, & we celebrated with you in spirit. It was so nice that you & Mr. Lehman could celebrate your birthdays together. He must have been so happy.

Our little Mich-chan is 2 weeks old today & yo, your wonderful book arrived a couple of days ago for her & we're so impressed with it. We think it's the best of your 3! The illustrations are really delightful - so full of life & vitality & yet with a lovely feeling of design & rhythm - they too are the best of your 3 books - much better than the other 2. S. & I read several of the stories together one evening & enjoyed them so much. I know Mich-chan will enjoy them too when she's old enough to understand them. Thank you so much for your thoughts. The book was wrapped so sweetly - darling paper & card. I shall continue to enjoy reading the

rest of the stories as I take my rest.

Nicki-Chan seems to get cuter & cuter each day. She seems to be growing fatter & bigger by leaps & bounds. We realize more than ever what a wonderful wonderful blessing it is to have her, how very very lucky we are to have been blessed with such a perfect baby - it's such a miracle to think how she grew inside of me for 9 months & then came out into this world so perfect - in every detail - finger-nails (so tiny) little fingers & toes etc. We certainly do give thanks to the Lord. We are so very very happy!

Her feeding schedule is still rather uneven & sometimes she goes for 4 hours between but sometimes only 2. It really keeps us busy & we're both having sleep at nights, but she's really been an angel after the first couple of days & nights which were rather rough - adjustment to the change, no doubt. I'm just so thankful that I have plenty of milk & can nurse her so easily.

I'm feeling stronger everyday & went down stairs for lunch on Thurs. & for lunch & dinner on Friday. My stitches have just about healed up,

2045 Walnut Street
Boulder, Colorado
23 October 1952

Mr. Norman Cousins
THE SATURDAY REVIEW
25 West 45th Street
New York 36, New York

Dear Mr. Cousins:

I am taking the liberty of suggesting that you might like to contact a talented young Nisei writer, Miss Yoshiko Uchida, who recently won a Ford Foundation Fellowship and is now in Japan, for a year, to prepare two juvenile books. She has had two books published here within the past three or four years, and her most recent article, "Saturday Visit", appears in the October issue of WOMAN'S DAY, along with a biographical sketch.

One of the things I enjoy best about SR is its intelligent approach to international relationships. That's why, it seems to me, a reliable report from Japan would be welcomed by your readers -- especially if it is written by an American girl who has rare perceptiveness.

My contact with the Uchida family has been through Yo's sister, Kay, with whom I had the joy of working in the Oakland, California, YWCA. If this idea appeals to you, further information could, I'm certain, be secured from Kay, now Mrs. Shizuo Kakutani, 207 Diamond Street, New Haven, Connecticut, where her husband is on the Yale faculty.

I think such an assignment would be a wonderful "break" for Yo, providing the conditions of her fellowship permit her to undertake extra projects.

Thank you for your consideration.

Cordially yours,

Lorraine V. Buckman

cc: Mrs. Shizuo Kakutani

The Saturday Review

of LITERATURE

25 West 45th Street, New York 19, N. Y.

October 27, 1952

Miss Lorraine V. Buckman
2045 Walnut Street
Boulder, Colo.

Dear Miss Buckman:

Many thanks for your letter of October 23. Miss Uchida certainly has an impressive background. I wish we were rich and grand and could commission an article from her; but we take pieces on speculation only, unless a particular subject is assigned to a staff member. Do you think that she would be willing to submit something on speculation? We would be delighted to see anything she sends in.

With all good wishes,

Sincerely,

Mary Sykes
Mary Sykes

Feb. 24, 1958

Dearest Jacks,

First of all I want to tell you how much I've enjoyed your new book. Really so, it's just wonderful! It was so interesting I could hardly put it down - the story line carries itself along with lots of suspense & the whole thing is so well written. The characters are very vivid & real & there's so much atmosphere & feeling throughout.

It gives a marvelous & warm picture of a Japanese child's life & home. I think it's the best of your original stories & I'm sure the children will love it as did I. And the illustrations are so good - so realistic - they're so full of life & so Japanese. The faces are real Nihonjin without "character" (sp?) Surely he must have been in Japan to catch the real atmosphere so well. ^{I've never heard all this} In all I think it's just perfect. Congrats, & more power to you. We're so very proud of you. We enjoyed the photostat

brochure very much too - it's an excellent
write-up & ^{good picture of you.} you're getting to be a famous
author. I can imagine how you dislike
giving talks but it's really good experience
& publicity go & you're doing such good
work in racial relationships. Good for you.
Wonderful you were asked to speak for the Writers' Confab.
Yesterday S. sat for me & I attended the
wedding alone. It was held in a private
home with a small group (only about 20)
& was so nice. Many of the young Jap.
wives & the bride wore Kimono which were
so lovely. I met some interesting people too-
esp. a couple who had been in Japan on
a Fulbright the same year as Yonagis &
who just loved Japan. S. & M. took me
there at 4:00 & came for me at 6:00
& she was very good with Daddy. They
renewed supper which I missed but it was
pleasant just to be out even for a couple
of hours without my little shadow.
I must plan to have these Japanese
young wives over for tea one of these

days. They're all so young & kawaii -
I really feel like an obasan next
to these "flowers." In groups like this or
when I meet Nihonjin, I'm always so grateful
to you, Mom & Pop, for teaching me Nihongo.
I really appreciate knowing nice Nihongo
& being able to actually converse easily.
I know S. is happy that I can too.
All his friends from Japan usually
remark on how well I speak Japanese.

Haven't seen Shirley Temple's program as
it's on Channel 4 which we can't get because
of that darn Hartford station. We miss
all the good shows. I've been seeing some
pretty good old movies but they go on late
so it's not nice - start at 10:45.

Oh, thanks for offering me those skirts.
They all sound nice - sure I'd be very
happy to have them as I live in skirt
& sweaters or blouses. M. hates me to wear
slacks. I don't think I want the raincoat
thanks.

Please tell me Hirata senrei's address
and whether I should send that stuff
besides the pen. S. gave me an old pen for her.

It's hard to believe that you folks can
see all those flowers & blossoms already.
We're still under a blanket of snow 'tho'
the streets are now all cleared. The temp.
hasn't been quite so cold the last few
days & some of the bulbs are beginning
to peep out. I bought 5 eels of the
valley pipe to bloom indoors & they all
are blooming now next to my African
violets which are all in bloom. I patted
2 of the ones I started from a leaf & they're
doing so well. I have 3 more still in
water with lots of tiny leaves coming out.
It's Tanoshimi & M. loves the flowers. Her
favorite colors are blue & purple (lavender)
so she especially likes these violets.

Had was the Hayaishi's visit. Hope it
didn't tire you out too much.

Keep well all of you.

Again congratulations to you - from us all. Love,
• Thank you for the copy. Kay.

10-31-62

Dearest Yo,

I read the story to Laura & M. yesterday & they were thoroughly absorbed throughout the whole story. It's a very sweet & gentle story & ever so much better now than when we read it last summer. About the title, I like "The Forever Christmas Tree" but both of the kids liked "Takashi's C. Tree". I think you should have C.T. in the title - that's important as it tells what the story is about.

I've jotted notations in red pencil - very minor thing. I did notice that you've started so many sentences with "and" and "but" & think some should be eliminated, don't you?

L. & M. thought the part where the neg. got trampled was hilarious & roared. M. said she liked the ending best (where the boy & old man felt the real meaning of Christmas) - which says a lot for your story. They both said they liked all of it - thought it was "real good."!

Too bad you couldn't get it out in time for this Christmas but I guess one book a year is already a good record!
Lots of love with this yo -

Dearest Mom, Pop, and Yo,

Dec. 28, 1964

We were all so thrilled to receive so many thoughtful and wonderful gifts from you. We have been using the beautiful lazy-susan daily in the center of our dining table and enjoy it so much. The wood is so lovely, it's really too good to use every day, but we thought we'd enjoy it daily and use it carefully. It's especially handy for breakfast with sugar, butter, jam, cereal etc. on it. M. was of course so happy and excited with your many presents - the two horse books are really very good ones with many good illustrations and she loves them - she was so happy to have the two little horses with their pretty saddles and harness, and has been using the darling book marks in her books. Yo, they're made so well and are so cute. You do make such nice things with your hands - we still use your felt stockings over the fireplace every year and everyone comments on how pretty they are. Also, the cards you sent us with the pressed leaves are especially beautiful and so well made. M. wore the bunny hat to the Rouses for their dinner and I wore those dainty pearl ear rings. The ear rings swing around so prettily and are very dressy and elegant. Many many thanks for everything. I know how hard it is for you to go shopping and to pack and mail everything, we doubly appreciate all your thoughts and gifts.

Yo, the nicest surprise happened yesterday. The Seligmans called us on the phone and excitedly told us that they thought you were on the radio. So, we immediately turned on this FM station and caught that interview you had for the "Carnival of Books" talking with the children about "The Forever Christmas Tree" and Rokubei. We missed the first part, but did catch most of the conversation with the children about your books. You sounded real good, Yo, - very natural and spoke so well - I never could have done half as well. Did you ever hear it yourself? We sure were excited. S. was home too, so all three of us heard it.

So glad that you liked all our gifts. Let me know about Pop's underwear and I'll be glad to get it any time.

We had a very pleasant and gay Christmas this year with a party at our house on the Eve and to the Rouses for dinner on C. day. It was a shame though,

May 12, 1981

Dearest yo,

So good to hear your trip to S.B. was so enjoyable & successful & it all went so well. Just hope your "atsukaré" hasn't emerged.

Your becoming so famous & well known in your field you'll be more & more in demand I'm sure. We're all so proud of you at all the success you've achieved & so thrilled that it's being recognized now. Mom & Pop would be so proud & happy.

We were invited by this young Japanese couple for dinner Fri & it was truly

6-5-81

which is exhausting.

So, we want you to use the enclosed check to celebrate the big occasion of the honor you're receiving - either for the match, your air-fare, or ^{toward} the gold chain + diamond or whatever may you like. We're so proud of you + are so happy that at long last you're receiving a most well-deserved honor. Congrats! Hope you have a wonderful trip + visit there. We'll be thinking of you. Love,
R.

Aug 29, 1983

Dearest Jo

I was worried about
you & sure am you
had another bad spell.
Please do be careful Jo.
Wish I could be there
to help you with the daily
chores like cooking & shopping.
It's all so time consuming
& tiring.

Just wanted to send
you the info you asked for:
The name of the Lake
(Webster) is in Mass. just
over the border of Conn.

actual
lake -
Mass.

CHARGOGGAFOGG

MANCHAUGOGG

CHAUBUNAGUNGAMAUGG

(give
next
to
Harris?)

The Indians called it that
translated

you fish on your side
I fish on ~~my~~ mine
Nobody fish in the middle

We've had 2 hot & humid
days & my hay fever is
terrible so feel really lousy.

Three of my friends
had an opening reception
for an exhibit yesterday but
too hot to change & get
into clothes so we shipped
it. Went to dentist today
as an old filling fell out.

Take care & continue
to put on some weight!
Much love, K.

Webster Lake,
AAA Bli, Mass.

July 12, 1984

Dear Kay and Shizuo,

I've been meaning to write to tell you how much we enjoyed the visit in your home and to thank you for giving us a copy of Yo's book, Desert Exile. It is very sensitively written. We all grew up in the Bay Area in the same era. Our families were similar in many ways - father a pillar of the church, mother befriending and serving afternoon tea for the piano teacher and dressmaker and ice tea in the summer to the mailman and delivery people, our Swiss mother eager for her unresponsive children to learn Italian, parental support for applying ourselves in school, mother preparing elaborate meals for visiting relatives and friends, family visits to S.F. museums and occasional operas and plays. But

our worlds were far apart in other ways. We were not sensitive to the social exclusion that Nisei felt during high school and college years. From my white vantage point, I had thought of students of Japanese and Chinese origin as very much accepted and admired for academic excellence and creativity and thoughtfulness. The evacuation in our minds was "a terrible thing," but we didn't do anything about it short of discussing the problem at the Campus Ym and Yw. I didn't have any close Nisei friends at the time.

Kay, you said you wept when you read Yo's book because it brought back memories of events and feelings you had

shared with her. I must admit that Ralph and I were "Choked up" a number of times as we read it out loud at supper time. We felt empathy for your situation, guilt at our insensitivity at the time, and sorrow that our country could have put Nisei and Issei through such an ordeal.

Ralph is now in the midst of a summer program that attracts scholars from various parts of our country as well as from abroad to make use of the excellent Slavic collection in the U. of Illinois library. In August we'll have a family reunion in Berkeley and in the Sierras. Abby will be back in

the States in early August.
He needs to pick up personal
belongings in Seattle before
settling ^{into} the new job at
Northwestern.

It was so good to have
the visit with you both
in June!

Warmly,
Lutz and Ralph

5-20-87

Dearest Yo,

S. + I are both
so happy & thrilled
for you - proud of
you & full of admi-
ration. Your book
about Hana is
a beautifully written
work & we think
the publisher did
such a fine job
& put out a very

8-3-05-2

Dear Mr. D + Z

I am sure that

you will be happy to

hear from me again

and I am sure that

you will be happy to

hear from me again

and I am sure that

you will be happy to

hear from me again

and I am sure that

you will be happy to

hear from me again

"Classy" looking book.

Not too many people
would have the
patience + perseverance
you had to keep
at it for so long!

Hallelujah!

S. + K.

Wish we could celebrate
with you -

P.S. Please use the
enclosed small check

to buy a bouquet
or pot of flowers or have
a good meal.

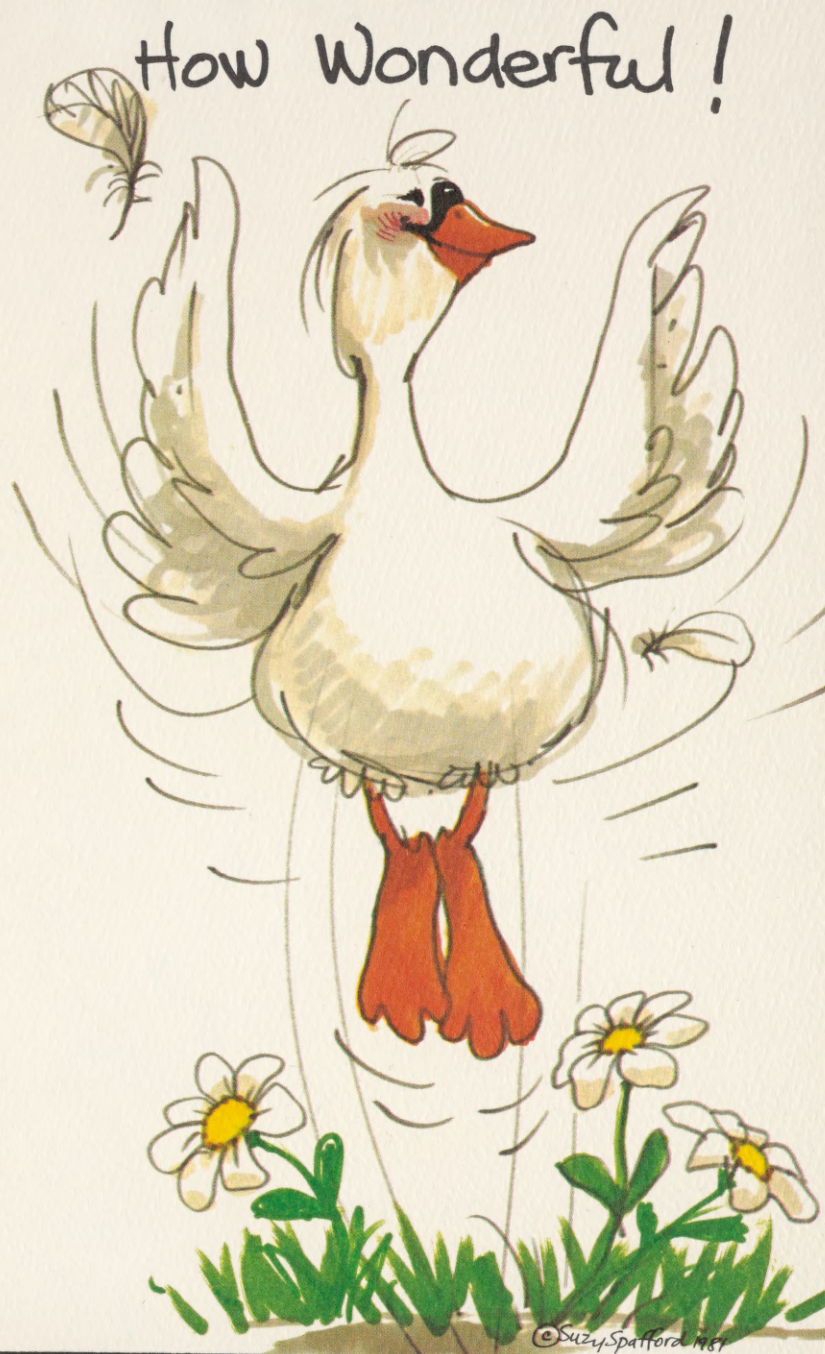


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Publication of
"Picture Bride"

May, 1987

Dearest yo,
You must feel
mighty special.



Congratulations!
Much love,
Shiruo + Kay

Mon. 8-15-88

Dearest -go,

Sure I was good to have
that nice long chat with
you Sat.

Congrats again from both
of us for your most recent
big honor. You've worked
so diligently & ^{pleadily} for so long
we're happy that at long
last you're receiving the
long over-due recognition
from many areas, not
only literary. Mom & Dad
would be so happy &
proud - as we are.

It's a good thing

you didn't over-exert
yourself to go to the awards
ceremony if it turned out
to be so awful!

Belated as typical
of us as it is, please
go, use the enclosed
check to get yourself a
really nice pot of flowers
from us!

Enclosed an article
on Eleanor Estes + ad abt.
M's book.

Over 90° heat + terrible
humidity for 2 wks straight.
I know I wouldn't have
survived without our a.c.
A.S. Thanks again for Love,
letter to Wash D.C. K.



Dearest yo,

Congratulations!

So happy
for you!

We're very proud
of you
much love,

Shizuo + Kay

S. says "yo wa Terikita mon da na".

Ditto. He translated the Translators' introd.

for me - it was very interesting.

Thanks for the copy. It's really wonderful yo.

By the way, how is your current book coming along? I've often thought about it & wondered.

So, your German Takao arrived on
Fri - my, we're so pleased + proud
of you. It's a beautiful book & the
illustrations are very powerful + striking.

Oh Yo, you'll be interested to know that M. is enjoying "Mik" sooo much. I've been reading her one or two chapters each day and she can hardly wait for the next one. I heard her telling Sara yesterday morn "You know Sara, my auntie writes books, real ones. She thinks it up on her own head and types it and then sends it to the book people who make it into a real book with pictures in. Isn't it wonderful". Isn't that cute? She sounded so proud. I had explained it to her as she asked if you had actually made the book, as such. I think too, that for her Christmas present, I would appreciate it most if you would send her books. Two that comes to my mind that she would love is the "Little Red Lighthouse" which she's been asking for.