JTown

Written by

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Pronunciation note:
JTown, from Japantown, doesn't have some obscure or complicated way of saying it, it is simply "Jay Town", as a single word.

Stage play formatting note:
Research has shown that regarding the Official Standard Playwriting Format that must be followed when writing a play . . . there are rather a few of them, and they are all different, and many of them absolutely demand to be The One Twue Only Format. This document basically follows what many Official Formats seem to agree on, with the rest of the formatting choice being some educated guess to best get the formatting done.

Staging formatting note:
This story has, basically, four groups of characters: Main characters, supporting characters, background characters, and a unified chorus, as needed.

There are more or less four main characters, one of whom ages in the story.

Supporting characters appear once and interact with main characters.

Background characters come and go as the main characters discuss them. Background characters can also be main characters of a sort who often have no dialogue, but are a very central part of the story --- and thus for background characters, they can be actual actors, they can be images on a backdrop, they can be puppet characters that come and go, all can be a matter of particular staging . . .

And for the chorus, there are multiple points in the story where there is a general collection of people, sometimes as supporting characters, sometimes as background characters.

Main characters:
Alice Dorothy Suzuki: Twenties or so.
Charlie Hawthorne: Early thirties to fifties, historian, pottery expert
Hiroki Kuwabatake: Staff member, Japanese Consulate
Ieyasu Ito: Japanese businessman and then priest, forties and then eighties
Noriko: Over one hundred years old

Supporting Characters:
Staffer: Staff member at the JTown elder care home
William: eighties or so, Retired priest
Nun: Staff member at Yonmitsugo Center
Abbot: Forties or fifties or so, Abbot at Yonmitsugo Center
Frederick: Sixties or so, Priest at Yonmitsugo Center
Alan Suzuki: late twenties, Alice's brother
Diplomat: Staff member, Japanese Consulate
Ju: Japanese business staff member
Kyu: Japanese business staff member
Hachi: Japanese business staff member
Maikeru Nezumi: Forties, Japanese business staff member
Donarudo Ahiru: Thirties, Japanese business staff member
Mineruvua Nezumi: Thirties, Japanese business staff member
Photographer One: A photographer
Photographer Two: A photographer
Waiter: Staff member at Nipponshoku Resutoran
Operator: Staff member at Garasu-Kai
Recorded Phone Operator: A recorded voice
Waitress: Staff member at Nipponshoku Resutoran
Guard One: Staff member at Garasu-Kai
Ichi: Temple priest
Ni: Temple priest
Cee-America: Temple support staff
Cee-Japan: Temple support staff
Cee-grandfather: Temple support staff
Cee-Samuel: Temple support staff
Cee-Noriko: Temple support staff
Cee-father: Temple support staff
Cee-mother: Temple support staff
Cee-Large-JTown: Temple support staff
Cee-Small-JTown: Temple support staff

Background characters:
Young Noriko: Five or six or so.
Adult Noriko: Thirties
Noriko's mother: Thirties, and then sixties
Noriko's father: Sixties
Samuel: Thirties or so
Older Samuel: Eighties or so
Franklin Delano Roosevelt
Kenneth Ringle
Curtis Munson
Bert Hellinger

Chorus:
Assorted Immigrant Japanese
Assorted Japanese-Americans
Assorted businessmen and politicians

Assorted kimono dressed dancers
Assorted boy scout troop members
Assorted high school marching band members

TIME

The main setting is the year twenty ten.
One scene in nineteen seventy four.
Background scenes in nineteen forty one.
background scenes in the mid nineteen fifties.
Background scenes in the nineteen seventies.

SETTING

Several locations in or near San Francisco's Japantown.
Three locations in or near a different SF Japantown.
The Yonmitsugo center conference hall and storage room.

Backdrop: The backdrop provides additional background staging details during each scene.

The backdrop can be a huge painting at the back of the set. The backdrop can be a sculpture piece that the actors work around. The backdrop can be a small display that is onstage with the actors. The backdrop can be a large puppet that appears on stage with the actors, and then vanishes again. The backdrop can be the chorus actors all dressed identically, or not, as needed. The backdrop can be a series of pictures that frame the actors. The backdrop will always be the background of the scene, where in being so, the backdrop can be . . . . . .

Act I

Scene 1: JTown elder care home front desk
Scene 2: Charlie's office
Scene 3: JTown elder care home meeting room
Scene 4: Charlie's office
Scene 5: William's living room
Scene 6: Yonmitsugo conference hall
Scene 7: Yonmitsugo conference hall
Scene 8: Yonmitsugo conference hall
Scene 9: Yonmitsugo conference hall
Scene 10: Yonmitsugo storage room
Scene 11: Charlie's office
Scene 12: Charlie's office
Scene 13: JTown elder care home meeting room
Scene 14: Japanese Consulate
Scene 15: Japanese Consulate
Scene 16: Masonic Avenue Conference Center
Scene 17: Masonic Avenue Conference Center
Scene 18: Western Gate Bar

Scene 19: Western Gate Bar entranceway
Scene 20: Sidewalk corner of Geary Blvd and Masonic Ave

Act II

Scene 1: Alice's living room/Charlie's office
Scene 2: Alice's living room
Scene 3: Nipponshoku Resutoran/Ieyasu's living room
Scene 4: Nipponshoku Resutoran doorway/Ieyasu's living room
Scene 5: Garasu-Kai lobby
Scene 6: Ieyasu's living room
Scene 7: Temple meeting room
Scene 8: Kimbell park/Alice's living room

ACT I

Backdrop: Geary above Laguna. JTown and the pagoda can be seen down the hill along Geary.

SCENE 1

Setting: JTown elder care home front operations desk.

At Rise: A Staffer is behind the desk.

Alice comes up to the desk. A Staffer looks up from behind the counter.

STAFFER
Hullo, how are you?

ALICE
Not bad.

STAFFER
What can I do for you?

A pause.

ALICE
How is Noriko doing?

Another pause.

STAFFER
She . . .

ALICE
Yes. That.

The staffer and Alice know what they're talking about, but.

ALICE
There is something . . . going on . . . Or . . not going on.

STAFFER
Yes.

ALICE
She . . .

STAFFER
She's fine . . . for someone over a hundred, she . . .

ALICE
But there's something . . . .

STAFFER
Yes. . . . . But.

ALICE
Mom's worried, grandpa's worried, no one can put a finger on . . . . . What I'm thinking is that I'll have a chat, go over stuff, I'm the youngest, so what can she tell me . . . and I wanted to see if anyone here had also noticed anything . .

STAFFER
Oh yes.

The staffer stares into infinity.

STAFFER
She's doing very well. There is nothing I can point to that is wrong. . . . . And it's like she's hanging on?? It's . . like . . . there's something, and she can't let go . . ?

ALICE
Yes. Right. There's something going on.

STAFFER
Gimme a moment.

The staffer grabs a phone, pushes a button.

STAFFER
(into phone)
Alice is here to see Noriko.

A pause.

STAFFER
Domo!

As the staffer puts the phone down.

STAFFER
She's in the green room . . . Definitely let us know what we can do to help you . . .

ACT I

SCENE 2

Setting: Charlie's office

At Rise: Charlie is sitting at his desk.

Backdrop: A poster for a major museum pottery exhibit. There are some pictures of California gold rush miners, a map of the early Bart line proposals, and more posters telling of Asian glassware and pottery.

Alice sticks her head in.

ALICE
Hi. Are you free?

CHARLIE
Never. But I am basically available at the moment.

ALICE
Oh, good.

She comes all the way into the room, bag slung over shoulder. A pause, then finally:

ALICE
I'm looking for a particular Japanese vase.

Backdrop: A huge emerald green cremation urn.

Charlie very particularly leans back in his chair.

Alice sits with her bag nearby.

ALICE
This is about my great-grandmother, Noriko. She was born in Japan about nineteen oh five, these days she's living in a residence home in JTown.

Backdrop: As Alice keeps talking, the two of them remain in Charlie's office. As they stay in the office, what is talked about comes

to them and around them, where at this point there is:

Backdrop: A steamship deck around nineteen ten, which is scattered with Japanese, many at a railing, peering off thataway.

Alice and Charlie keep talking, completely ignoring their augmented surroundings.

ALICE
When she was about five or so, she and her parents came over to America. Once they arrived, they settled in, they never left.

Backdrop: Noriko's mother is standing by a steamer trunk that is on the steamship deck. With the woman is a little girl, young Noriko, who is very particularly sitting on the steamer trunk.

ALICE
At the same time, when they came over, they brought with them a family heirloom, a particular vase from Japan that was given to her parents by her grandfather.

Backdrop: 1941 JTown . . . Geary street sidewalks are filled with people, mostly Japanese Americans. A trolley is rolling down the tracks that run down the center of Geary. Instead of a horizon with sky, above this horizon is a December 08, 1941 newspaper. The headlines read:

Final Morning Extra
San Francisco Chronicle
U.S. At War!
Paratroops land
In Philippines!

ALICE
At the beginning of World War Two, Noriko and her husband were living in JTown. Her parents had settled in JTown after they arrived from Japan, and either they owned some local business or worked for one. And also with the beginning of the war, there were the internment camps.

Backdrop: Adult Noriko's living room, as Noriko is in the room with Noriko's mother, who is now much older. With them is Noriko's father.

ALICE
Noriko and her husband had to keep track of her parents and in-laws as well as her children, and in the middle of all the chaos, someone had to take care of the vase.

Backdrop: Father has a box that is very carefully being handed to Noriko

ALICE
Her father brought it to her and told her to take it to a friend of the family, a monk who was at the local Temple.

Backdrop: The Temple, as adult Noriko is meeting with Samuel. The box is on a table. Samuel has two sets of paperwork that he is filling in as Noriko watches, he signs at the bottom of each, and then hands off to Noriko, who also signs. Samuel gets one set, Noriko gets the other, and they bow.

ALICE
She met with the monk and he wrote up formal receipts for his receiving the vase and holding it for them. And of course he's a good family friend so everything should be fine.

Backdrop: A poster for a major museum pottery exhibit. There are some pictures of California gold rush miners, a map of the early Bart line proposals, and more posters telling of Asian glassware and pottery.

Now just Charlie's office as Alice and Charlie keep talking.

ALICE
And then during the war, the monk and the vase disappeared. Noriko wants the vase handed on to her children, but she can’t do that until the vase is recovered. Also years later, while the monk is remembered, all anyone knows is that he died during the war, so there’s no telling where the vase wound up.

CHARLIE
What does the Temple say?

ALICE
The Temple's been gone for years.

Alice fishes a clear plastic folder out of her bag.

ALICE
The only trace of anything that anyone has is this receipt that he and Noriko signed, and a picture.

Backdrop: .The receipt, and a picture of adult Noriko, her husband, and Samuel.

ALICE
That was shot sometime in the late thirties, and that's Noriko and great-grandpa Jeffery, and the two of them with the monk.

CHARLIE
Does she have any pictures of the vase?

ALICE
No. She remembers what it looks like, sort of. She says it's green, and it has a rounded top.

Charlie very particularly stares at Alice.

CHARLIE
(very precise)
Just how large is this vase?

ACT I

SCENE 3

Setting: JTown elder care home meeting room

At Rise: Noriko is now definitely past one hundred years old. She is sitting in a chair, looking up at Alice and Charlie. Charlie has a somewhat fat, cluttered, notebook in hand.

ALICE
Hiibaba! This is my friend Charlie who I told you about, and he wants to ask you some questions.

NORIKO
(very measured)
Hello Charlie. Do you think you can find my grandfather's vase for me?

A pause.

CHARLIE
I don't know. But I may have some ideas, and you may be able to give me some directions. Tell me what you remember of the vase.

Backdrop: Rather a variety of vases of various colors.

Charlie and Alice sit in chairs in front of Noriko. Charlie opens his notebook and shows Noriko a picture. She shakes her head.

NORIKO
No. No. None of these pictures are the vase.

Charlie slips the picture into the notebook and sits back. Alice looks disappointed.

CHARLIE
I . . . didn't think those were going to be the vase.

He looks at Noriko very particularly. Then he shifts some pages about, and then holds up another picture.

CHARLIE
What about this?

Backdrop: A huge emerald green cremation urn.

Noriko's eyes widen. A finger comes up.

NORIKO
That's not the vase . . . but the vase is very much like that.

Charlie drops the picture back into the notebook. He definitely leans back into the chair. Alice peers over at the picture.

ALICE
What is it?

CHARLIE
This isn't a vase. This is an urn. This is a cremation urn, one that carries someone's ashes.

Alice stares at Noriko.

NORIKO
(softly)
Grandfather.

CHARLIE
You were very young when you came to America. Do you remember your grandfather?

Noriko stares into infinity.

NORIKO
(slowly)
I remember my grandfather. He waved to us as we got onto the boat. My parents said he gave us the vase so that he would come with us to America --- No. So that someone would come with us to America. They never said vase. They never called it a vase. They always said . . . sofu.

Alice inhaling could challenge a vacuum cleaner.

CHARLIE
Sofu?

ALICE
Sofu . . . That's grandfather.

CHARLIE
(to Noriko)
Your grandfather's father.

NORIKO
Yes.

CHARLIE
Your grandfather gave you the ashes of his father, to come with you to America.

Noriko stares at Charlie

NORIKO
Yes.

ACT I

SCENE 4

Setting: Charlie's office

Backdrop: A poster for a major museum pottery exhibit. There are some pictures of California gold rush miners, a map of the early Bart line proposals, and more posters telling of Asian glassware and pottery.

At Rise: Charlie is sitting at his desk.

Alice walks in.

CHARLIE
And what does the hall of records say?

ALICE
Entirely benign and sympathetic bewilderment.

A pause. Alice sits.

ALICE
I asked about a death certificate of someone who died several years ago.

CHARLIE
And?

ALICE
With someone who died sometime during World War Two, that could be anywhere. It was a war. He would only be listed in the hall of records if he died in San Francisco.
And we have a name, but we don't even have certainty on what his name is. There is the name on the receipt, but there might be a different name on a driver's license or something.

Charlie stares at the ceiling for a bit.

CHARLIE
All that anyone remembers is that he died during the war.

ALICE
He has Japanese ancestry, is probably Japanese-American, so he probably went to one of the internement camps, but that doesn't tell us which one.

CHARLIE
Or with uncertainty, what name to find him under.

A pause.

CHARLIE
Hmmm. Noriko is told to go to a friend of the family, a monk, and give it to him. But instead of just going to him, she goes to the local Temple.

ALICE
Well, that's where he was.

CHARLIE
Right. That's where he was. But he doesn't just accept the urn and that's it. Instead, he makes a point of writing out a receipt and getting it signed by the both of them.

A pause.

CHARLIE
That's what a staff person does, not some random religious practitioner. Think about it. When hearing of a monk, one often thinks of some celibate guy in a robe because that is what a lot of different sects do, Christian sects, Buddhist sects, whatever, but that does not always mean monk.

Backdrop: A picture of William, dressed as a priest, full regalia, who is seated with what appears to be his wife, also eighties or so. Standing around them are middle aged apparent children and much younger grandchildren.

CHARLIE
With a particular focus on a personal religious practice, that focus is what makes someone a monk, at least during the time that a particular ongoing personal religious practice goes on. In turn, a personal religious practitioner who is married and has several kids is totally normal . . . And, from there, Noriko got a receipt. Writing out a pair of receipts is what a staff person would do, that's what a Temple priest would do. And there have to be records of the Temple somewhere. Temple records should get us the staff, and we can see what staff of an old Temple may still be alive.

ACT I

SCENE 5

Setting: William's living room

At Rise: William is sitting on a couch, tapping on a picture. Alice is sitting nearby.

Backdrop: The receipt, and a picture of adult Noriko, her husband, and Samuel.

WILLIAM
Samuel. That's Samuel. Wow. I haven't thought about him in years. Yeah. He started at the Temple well before me, we were both there when the war started.

William hands back the picture.

WILLIAM
Yeah, Noriko sort of rings a bell, maybe --- Well, I don't remember anything about an urn, but yeah, at the beginning of the war there was just too much bullshit going on.

Backdrop: Definitely in 1941 or so, as Samuel is standing in front of the Temple, talking to someone who is waving assorted paperwork about, gesturing up and down the street.

WILLIAM
But, yeah, I could see someone wanting to hand off something like an urn for safe keeping. And then yeah, that Temple in JTown pretty much didn't exist after the war. After the internment camp, I and my family moved elsewhere, I finally retired after that . . . .

And then just William's living room.

ALICE
And that's the last that anyone knows, so far. All that anyone remembers is that Samuel died during the war, and no one knows where the urn went.

WILLIAM
During the war.

ALICE
Yes.

WILLIAM
Samuel didn't die during the war.

ALICE
He didn't?

WILLIAM
Oh no. He . . . Yeah, the war really scrambled up all sorts of things, and yeah, he completely dropped out of sight then --- or he wasn't anywhere that I was. Then he popped up out of nowhere in the mid sixties. Out of nowhere. And yeah, I and others hadn't heard anything of 'im for ages.

Backdrop: The Yonmitsugo Buddhist Center conference hall as a much older Samuel is greeting a collection of visitors.

WILLIAM
So of course some of us were asking if that really was him, but yeah, that was Samuel all right. He turned up at the Yonmitsugo center up north somewhere, one of those sort of monastery and meditation centers or so. And yeah, when he did actually die --- obituary and everything --- he was still up there. But yeah, that wasn't during the war, he didn't die until sometime in the early nineteen nineties.

ACT I

SCENE 6

Setting: Yonmitsugo conference hall.

At Rise: A Nun is sitting behind the check in table. Alice is standing in front of the table.

The Nun hands Alice a folder.

NUN
This has the complete schedule for the workshop. Also, our local tourism industry is very energetic, so for anyone who may be staying around here through the entire weekend, there's also a guide to some of our local restaurants, wineries, and hotels.

ALICE
Thank you --- Actually, there is a question I do have about the center. I'm helping with a research project where the name came up of someone who was one of the former priests here. At some point in the workshop, is there someone I could talk to about that priest?

NUN
Yes. You'll want the abbot for that. He'll be leading the workshop opening, so you'll see him there, and probably a good time to catch him would be during the morning break.

ACT I

SCENE 7

Setting: Yonmitsugo conference hall

At Rise: A number of people are seated on cushions as the Abbot is wrapping up the opening comments.

ABBOT

So we wind up with pretty much two different ways of perception, which will be some of what we'll be going through today. For one way, everything seems to be perfectly normal, totally unsurprising, life goes on. And then there is a sudden surprise, where actually there has been some different way of seeing things, of doing things, and suddenly one becomes aware of that different way. And at that point one has a very close up view of the differences, and more.

For an other view, there was a monk in the 1600s in Japan, named Bankei. What Bankei recommended was that one just remain in what he called the Unborn Buddha Mind, where particularly one just is already doing that --- as everything changes and nothing ever remains constant, in the middle of what might be ongoing chaos, one just continues on. When one needs to stand up and walk, then, generally, one just gets up. One doesn't have to figure it out, the Unborn Buddha mind takes care of the balancing and such. One hears a bird chirping, and again, there isn't any sort of shocked attempt at identifying some noise, one just notes Oh, yeah, that's a bird chirping. Therefore, between the two, on one hand, one can grasp at delusions, chase after random perceptions that one has been told of. Or, one can have an awareness of all as it occurs, being in the moment, assessing as one goes . . .

ACT I

SCENE 8

Setting: Yonmitsugo conference hall

At Rise: All the other people and cushions have gone away. Alice is chatting with the Abbot.

The Abbot is rather particularly staring off thataway.

ABBOT
I . . . have only been here for a bit over ten years . . . I didn't know Samuel, but yes, I do know who you're looking for. On another hand, we do have someone here who's been here for quite a few years, and he was here when Samuel was, and did know him. And yes, when we get to the afternoon break, we should be able to have a chat.

ACT I

SCENE 9

Setting: Yonmitsugo conference hall

At Rise: Alice and the Abbot are talking to Frederick.

FREDERICK
(methodical, picking through the details)
Yes, Samuel was here when I arrived, he'd been here for quite a few years already. When he died, he was cremated, and then we scattered his ashes here at the center. There wasn't anything about an urn, or his having an urn --- that I recall . . . .

Frederick and the Abbot look at each other.

FREDERICK
However. They definitely are not an urn, but he did have The Bottles.

ALICE
The Bottles?

ABBOT
(to Frederick)
Ah, yes. That's what I thought of when I heard about the urn.

The Abbot turns to Alice.

ABBOT
How about we show you The Bottles.

ACT I

SCENE 10

Setting: Yonmitsugo storage room

At Rise: There isn't an ocean of dust, but this is definitely the storage room.

Backdrop: Assorted stuph is parked here and there.

By one wall, there is a particular set of shelves with a cloth draped over something.

The door practically creaks open as the three of them enter.

FREDERICK
When Samuel died, by that point we were pretty all he had for family, . . . And by that point he really didn't have anything material, mostly.

The Abbot leads them over to the shelves. At the shelves, he stops and looks around the room.

ABBOT
Over the years, this is where we've put the . . . intermittent needs, mementos, lost and found.

He turns to the shelves.

ABBOT
And The Bottles.

Backdrop: The Bottles are a bit of tourist, utter tchotchke, fake porcelain glassware. There is a pair of fat Japanese castles that are joined by a thick archway with three sets of gold lettering. On one castle is a vertical company name, Garasu-Kai. On the other castle, vertically, is the number 1957. Across the archway is two lines reading; Welcome To Japantown.

The Abbot reaches up, pinches the cloth, and pulls, revealing The Bottles. Alice stares at the thing for a bit. Yes, it is definitely not the urn.

ALICE
(finally)
Yes, that's not the urn . . . but what is that thing?

FREDERICK
That, is Samuel's fondest possession, which he was very happy to own, which he took very particular care of.

Alice stares at it some more.

ALICE
JTown has a several story pagoda, but that got built in the late sixties. There was no castle or pagoda or something in the fifties. There is an archway over Webster street --- and another walkway over Geary --- but neither of them are near that one pagoda.

A pause.

ALICE
I don't know what company Garasu-Kai is, but there are lots of companies out there.

FREDERICK
Samuel always said this was a souvenir of Japantown that very specifically had been given to him by that company, by Garasu-Kai, just before he left Japantown.

A pause, and Frederick and the Abbot look at each other.

ABBOT
Before you pick it up, touch it first.

Alice looks at them. Obviously there is some joke going on. Alice looks at the tchotchke, then very carefully reaches out, touches it, and immediately yanks her hand back.

ABBOT
And I haven't heard of any explanation of why or how it feels like that. I believe our best description of what it feels like is Indescribably Odd, and so we simply recommend holding it carefully when picking it up.

Alice looks at him, then quite carefully picks up the tchotchke for a moment, puts it down, clearly again yanks her hand away.

ABBOT
I also don't know of any formal analysis that's been done, people have just commented that it feels, ah, indescribably odd, and then continued on.

FREDERICK
Samuel always said it felt perfectly fine to him . . . After awhile, we'd just use reactions as a discussion springboard, going into proper discrimination, awareness, detachment, and off we'd go from there.

ABBOT
The idea of a Buddhist center hanging on to Things is a little odd --- the details will be the issue --- but in this case, we've not been certain of what to do . . . So, I have a couple of thoughts. One is that you're not just looking for Samuel, you're looking for his past. I think that if you want to take this with you to help in your search, by all means, have it.

Alice notes this detail.

ALICE
Yes. Thank you. This could be useful.

ABBOT
The other thought.

He looks at Frederick.

ABBOT
The stories.

Frederick nods.

FREDERICK
Right . . . especially given looking for an urn . . .

Frederick turns to Alice.

FREDERICK
Samuel . . . got here in the mid sixties. I understand what you tell me of the search for the urn. According to Samuel, he came to us after living in Japantown, living there for quite a few years, and then it was only in the late sixties when he left Japantown.

ALICE
Well, the war and the internment camps were definitely one upheaval, and then during the sixties the powers that were chose to nearly completely tear down the neighborhood instead of letting it be supported.

FREDERICK
Ah yes. The Redevelopment. Even up here in northern California, I am familiar with all the problems that caused. But there's a further issue you're going to have. According to the stories that Samuel told, he definitely lived in Japantown after the war, but all of the details would always be different.

ALICE
Fading memories.

A pause.

Backdrop: Samuel walks into the room, without being seen by the others.

FREDERICK
I don't think so. All his stories were completely consistent, very clear memories. The issue was that after awhile, a few of us finally got a feeling that something just didn't fit ---

Backdrop: Samuel is very definitely listening in, and still not seen.

FREDERICK
--- There wasn't any problem with telling the stories, he was very much a very valued member of our community here. Over time, every once in awhile he'd tell a story of what he had experienced before he came here.

Backdrop: Samuel is still not seen, and wanders off after a bit.

FREDERICK
And over enough time, one or two of us would finally ask someone else about some odd story detail --- that's how I know it wasn't just me --- and after awhile we wound up with a collection of stories Samuel told that were just like this glassware. --- But they were just random stories, so I don't know if anyone asked him about any oddities.

ALICE
Like what?

FREDERICK
Well, there is the Japantown Cherry Blossom Festival, and particularly the Cherry Blossom Festival Parade.

ALICE
That came out of the redevelopment.

FREDERICK
That came out of the redevelopment. The very first festival and parade was in nineteen sixty eight.

Backdrop: SF City Hall plaza, and Samuel is standing at the foot of the City Hall steps with a clipboard, with a varied cluster of people around him.

ALICE
Yes, that's right.

FREDERICK
And every once in awhile Samuel would tell a story about meeting a number of groups in the plaza in front of City Hall, to get them organized and coordinated. The point of the story was of getting groups of people to work together.

Backdrop: Rather a collection of different groups are in different parts of the plaza. Some groups are kimono dressed dancers doing a bit of rehearsal, there is a boy scout troop in one spot, a high school marching band in another.

FREDERICK
With a few more details, because they were just background, the event would turn out to be one of the really large Cherry Blossom Festival Parades, and according to Samuel, he helped out with the parade for several years running.

ALICE
So he did go back to JTown, several times.

FREDERICK
(very precisely definite)
Ah, No.
(a bit more relaxed.)
As far as we know, Samuel moved up here in the mid sixties, he settled in here, and he stayed here until he died --- Oh, there was the occasional trip or festival here and there, but nothing like going all the way to San Francisco. And we
(MORE)

FREDERICK (cont'd)
have community members who go down to SF for the Festival, but no reports of Samuel,

Backdrop: Samuel standing in the plaza with a clipboard, talking to an apparent cluster of officials. In the background of the plaza are assorted cars, street signs, buildings, with everything clearly no older than nineteen fifty eight, nineteen fifty nine.

FREDERICK
except for his stories of when he was living there. And y'see another one of those mere background details is that every one of those parades and festivals that he was talking about took place in the nineteen fifties.

Alice recalibrates.

ALICE
So he's not remembering JTown.

FREDERICK
The parade was such a big event that it would assemble in and around the big plaza in front of City Hall.

Backdrop: SF Geary and Polk as assorted police and Samuel are waving a float around the corner and up Geary.

FREDERICK
It was such a big deal that once the parade started, it would march up to Geary, and then completely fill up Geary.

ALICE
Samuel said the parade would go up Geary?

Backdrop: SF Geary and Gough as the parade goes by.

FREDERICK
The parade was such a big deal that they would march up Geary into Japantown, they would march under the big archway on the east end of Japantown.

Backdrop: A large complex made of a multi story Japanese design castle, an archway over Geary, and another multi story Japanese design castle. Across the archway is two

lines reading; Welcome To Japantown.

FREDERICK
Sometimes Samuel had another story about some archway that joins together two different towers, and crosses over a really wide street --- and the archway would turn out to be in Japantown. For the parade they would even shut down the Geary street trolleys for about two to three hours. The parade marched up the hill into Japantown and through Japantown, and went past a big reviewing stand on the south side of Geary, where all the business people and politicians would sit.

ALICE
There was never an archway like that in JTown, that I remember, and there haven't been trolleys running up and down Geary . . for years.

FREDERICK
Oh, years are fine --- remember, these Cherry Blossom Festival Parades that he describes started in the nineteen fifties. Oh, and this is all while he was still a priest in the Temple in Japantown, and sometimes he was a part time bartender.

ALICE
Still in the Temple? I found out that Samuel was here because I talked to someone who was a priest with him in the JTown Temple --- and all the Temple records basically stop at the beginning of the war, because the Temple closed down. That's why that priest moved elsewhere, once the war ended and everyone left the internment camps.

FREDERICK
Ah, yes, details. Details are very important. Y'see, Samuel was a priest and definitely one who practices the Buddha-Dharma, and that's what he did in the Temple . . .

Backdrop: The inside of a bar called The Western Gate, with Samuel as one of the bartenders.

FREDERICK
. . . Aaaand in the evenings, as a part of his practice of the Buddha-Dharma in everyday life, he would go dancing, and then he would often go to a bar and work there as a bartender, and all of that is all a part of all of the varying and varied practice of the Buddha-Dharma.

A long pause.

ALICE
. . . . And then what were the details?

FREDERICK
Exactly. Samuel had been a priest in the Temple, and then he moved north from Japantown, as a sort of retirement from the Temple. And then when all the details get looked at, according to the stories that Samuel told, the Temple never closed, even during the war and definitely not after. For all anyone knows, that Temple is still up and running today, in Japantown.

ALICE
Still being an operating Temple.

FREDERICK
Still. And Samuel would go dancing. He would go to where the internment camp administration barracks used to be.

Backdrop: SF Geary and Fillmore, and the trolleys roll by on Geary. Across the intersection is a rather large building with a vertical four story sign reading FILLMORE. . .

ALICE
Internment camp? World War Two internment camp.

FREDERICK

FREDERICK
And the administration barracks of that internment camp was a really big building that later got converted into a dance and concert hall and that hall is --- or was --- on Geary . . . in San Francisco.

ALICE
So he was in a camp --- did he say which one? Not the same as Noriko.

Backdrop: The building is at least five stories tall, and extends down the block down both Geary and also Fillmore. Horizontally under the sign, there is a marquee with a list of upcoming acts and dance nights.

FREDERICK
I . . . don't remember any particular camp name ever getting mentioned . . . because that was just a detail, the overall story was always more important. Any time his being in the interment camp was mentioned, it was just The Camp --- and
(MORE)

FREDERICK (cont'd)
remember, for years, no one ever talked about the internment camps.

ALICE
Wait --- A really big dance hall on Geary.

FREDERICK
Yes. On Geary.

ALICE
Which used to be the internment camp

FREDERICK AND ALICE
(in chorus)
administration barracks.

FREDERICK
On Geary. In San Francisco. Which means that according to that story, there was a World War Two internment camp in the middle of San Francisco. And remember, after he went dancing, he would go work as a bartender.

Backdrop: The Western Gate bar, as off at the bar, Samuel is one of the bartenders.

FREDERICK
He was a bartender at a very famous bar called The Western Gate. --- Remember, a priest being a bartender is all part of the Buddha-Dharma and all part of going through everyday life. And The Western Gate was a big deal because it was the the most important bar for the visiting Japanese businessmen. --- again, all a matter of everyday interactions and working with everyone and that's how the story would start.

ALICE
And the bar is under the archway?

FREDERICK
No. The archway is up the hill on the east end of Japantown, and after the parade left City Hall, towards the east, the parade would come along Geary under the east side archway.

ALICE
So where's The Western Gate?

FREDERICK
West. He would leave the dance hall in the middle of Japantown, get on the trolley, and go west, up the hill to The Western Gate --- Every once in awhile, about once every couple of years, we get some large group of visiting
(MORE)

FREDERICK (cont'd)
Japanese that come here to the Buddhist center, for a look around.

Backdrop: A cluster of businessmen have arrived at The Western Gate, are looking about, bowing to the staff, staff are bowing back.

FREDERICK
And so when Samuel was alive, there was a story that he would tell to Japanese who were visiting us here. He would tell of the Japanese businessmen who would all come from Japan, coming east to America, to Japantown. They would all come up the hill to a bar that was in Japantown, where everyone spoke Japanese and English and they would all sing their company songs.

Backdrop: SF Geary and Masonic with street signs that are both English and Japanese.

FREDERICK
And all the Americans would go to the west when they went up the hill. Everyone is coming from the east and coming from the west, where everyone would all meet together at the bar at the top of the hill. And that was his story of people coming together, and all the visitors would applaud the absolutely wonderful story.

ALICE
At the top of the hill.

FREDERICK
Well, yes, that's one of those details. The extremely Japantown bar called The Western Gate is at the top of the hill, going west on Geary from the middle of Japantown.

Frederick and the Abbot are in the back room at Yonmitsugo as Alice stares into space, looking at the map details.

ALICE
Top of the hill, going west on Geary. That is Geary and Masonic, and that's not JTown.

FREDERICK
Yes. But every time he would be telling a story, well, it's a perfectly lovely story, which is being told <u>here</u>, and we <u>here</u> are off to the north, San Francisco is far away, and that's not the point of the story anyway. . . . and then a long time later after you've heard the story, at some point when Samuel is off somewhere else at the time, you remember
(MORE)

FREDERICK (cont'd)
that, according to the story, there is an internment camp administration barracks in the middle of Japantown, in the middle of San Francisco. There is a bar called the The Western Gate that is up the hill to the west and still in Japantown. That bar is so Japanese that they speak fluent Japanese as well as English. There is an archway that goes over the trolley lines on Geary, that the Parade goes under when entering Japantown, on Geary, starting in the nineteen fifties.

Frederick turns to have another look at The Bottles.

FREDERICK
And then once again, someone comes up and touches The Bottles. And every time that someone has touched The Bottles, the reaction is that the glassware feels totally, indescribably odd. And Samuel would say that to him, Samuel, that The Bottles feel perfectly fine, just like anything else, nothing the least bit unusual at all.

ACT I

SCENE 11

Setting: Charlie's office

Backdrop: A poster for a major museum pottery exhibit. There are some pictures of California gold rush miners, a map of the early Bart line proposals, and more posters telling of Asian glassware and pottery.

At Rise: Charlie is sitting at his desk. Alice is sitting nearby. The tchotchke is sitting on Charlie's desk.

ALICE
Don't pick it up right away, touch it very carefully first.

Charlie reaches out a couple of fingers, taps slightly on top of one of the castles, looks startled. He stares at the tchotchke for a moment, then puts another pair of fingers on a castle top, then presses down for a moment, then pulls his hand back.

CHARLIE
Who is Garasu-Kai and just what kind of . . . glass or whatever this is, do they make?

ALICE
Nobody at Yonmitsugo knows. When Samuel was alive he said it always felt perfectly fine.

Charlie looks at the tchotchke some more.

CHARLIE
It's a commemorative tchotchke. Commemorating what?

ALICE
That's another problem. I went back into the San Francisco business records before I came over. There doesn't seem to be any trace of a company named Garasu-Kai.

CHARLIE
As far as weird varieties of glass or pottery or so, I do know some people who might have some ideas.

ALICE
Could you? The only other idea that I've come up with is that Garasu-Kai is definitely a Japanese name. I wonder if the consulate might have some ideas, might know of a Japanese company that might have done something in the US for just long enough to have made that.

ACT I

SCENE 12

Setting: Charlie's office

Backdrop: A poster for a major museum pottery exhibit. There are some pictures of California gold rush miners, a map of the early Bart line proposals, and more posters telling of Asian glassware and pottery.

At Rise: Charlie is sitting at his desk. The tchotchke is now sitting on a fat envelope.

The door opens and Alice sticks her head in.

ALICE
What'cha got?

Alice has a seat.

CHARLIE
Soo, this is glass, and the glass is perfectly safe or so, nothing like oddly radioactive or anything.

ALICE
Could they tell why it feels like it does?

CHARLIE
Well, that report has a very long list of negatives, things that the tchotchke ain't. The much shorter list of what the tchotchke is has a disclaimer of Don't quote me.

ALICE
Oh, really.

CHARLIE
Y'see, this glass probably feels this way because it wasn't made on this planet.

Alice stares at him.

ALICE
So where was it made?

CHARLIE
If there was to be a formal report, the first part of the report would be a very detailed overview of making glass and what the molecular results are. Apparently the last page of the report wouldn't even say not from this planet, but would say not even from any definition of here, on the the planet, out to the moon, beyond . . . . Here. Somehow, Samuel was given this . . . and at that time he was being very much some kind of somewhere else. However, one of the appendices would be an analysis of the design, and with that, we need to go see Noriko.

ACT I

SCENE 13

Setting: JTown elder care home meeting room

At Rise: Noriko is seated in different chair or on a couch, Charlie and Alice are seated near her. The tchotchke is on display.

CHARLIE
Apparently in all these years, the researchers were the first people to actually have a detailed look at this thing, and probably because of it feeling so weird. It turns out that the reason the priests or Samuel or so called this The Bottles, is because this is actually a pair of bottles.

Charlie opens the envelope and pulls out a trio of plastic picture holders, and holds up one of them.

CHARLIE
Two of these items were in one of the bottles. This is a simple handwritten receipt of some sort, formally noting that a cremation urn, no other description, was formally transferred from Samuel to some Temple, somewhere.

Backdrop: Some yellowing newspaper article.

CHARLIE
This is a newspaper clipping. It tells about a Temple in JTown that is going to be rebuilt. Apparently some company --- named Garasu-Kai --- has bought all of the land that the Temple and some other buildings are on. Garasu-Kai is going to tear down all the buildings and build their own ten story business and research lab in JTown. Garasu-Kai is also going to host a rebuilt Temple that will take up a part of the ground floor of the new building, with all the rest of the building being all Garasu-Kai.

Charlie puts down the two holders, and picks up the third.

Backdrop: A huge emerald green cremation urn.

CHARLIE
The other bottle had this picture in it.

He flips the holder around to face Noriko. Noriko's eyes widen and she immediately straight armed stabs a finger out at the picture. Charlie hands Alice the holder. She looks at the picture, and the color is a little faded, but the picture very clearly shows an emerald green cremation urn, sitting on a shelf.

ACT I

SCENE 14

Setting: Japanese Consulate

At Rise: Hiroki Kuwabatake and Alice are in his office.

HIROKI
No trace of Garasu-Kai in the records that we can check. Nothing for a major corporation, subdivision, branch company, anything. There are a number of companies with glass in the name, but everything is, oh, Tokyo Glass Company, or Osaka Glass makers, nothing that is The Glass Company.

ALICE
I'm getting a lot of that with this search. Have you ever heard of the Great Hedge Of India?

HIROKI
No.

ALICE
In British colonial India, the British needed a border through India that could not be crossed, and the border extended for well over a thousand miles. After awhile, they started planting hedge sections, and in time they had a thick wall of plants that extended through much of that border. And then they didn't need the hedge any more, and they let it die out. Very quickly, it was almost completely forgotten. --- and then just a few years ago, someone found a very obscure reference to the hedge. He did a good deal of research, and soon published a book on the entire history of the almost forgotten hedge.

HIROKI
Very good. Now, in this case we can't find any trace of Garasu-Kai, but some of my coworkers heard about Samuel being a bartender at a Japanese bar, and helping with a Cherry Blossom Parade on Geary, and that has given them an idea.

ALICE
Yes.

HIROKI
In about a week and a half, a number of very assorted Japanese corporations, companies, research centers, are going to be sending a number of their staff over for a look around San Francisco and Northern California. Part of the
(MORE)

HIROKI (cont'd)
trip is to meet with Americans, have as many as possible new meetings with people around here who aren't from Japan, who haven't worked with Japanese before. --- And they want to have some fun.

ALICE
Fun is good.

HIROKI
Yes. They're going to be staying in Japantown, given the resources there. But, over that weekend, we're planning on hosting a Seventies theme party that will take place way down Geary and away from Japantown. We're going to set up the party in the meeting center at Geary and Masonic.

ALICE
That could be interesting.

HIROKI
So far, a number of staff from American companies will also be attending to meet with the Japanese companies. What we're wondering is if you would like to attend as well. The Japanese companies can talk to someone with Japanese ancestry who is definitely American. You can tell them about looking for a company called Garasu-Kai, and do they have any idea what that that might be.

ALICE
Yes. I accept. And I also know someone else you might be interested in. He's helping me with the search, but he's also a historian who knows a lot about the area, and he also has a hobby of researching Asian glassware and pottery.

HIROKI
Perfect! I would like to meet him.

ACT I

SCENE 15

Setting: Japanese Consulate

At Rise: Hiroki and Alice are meeting with Charlie and Alan Suzuki,

Hiroki shaking everyone's hands.

ALICE
And this is my brother Alan, the financial planner.

HIROKI
So good to meet you. Alice was telling me you might have something for the theme party.

ALAN
Oh yes. One of my clients is having to sort out an odd situation. Everything is and was perfectly legal, but his family wound up with a stash of several thousand dollars in cash, that has been sitting in a safe since nineteen seventy.

HIROKI
Wow.

ALAN
Someone in the family was going to do some investment forty years ago, the investment went nowhere, the cash got left in a safe, for later, and later never occurred. And then one of the family opened up the safe and everyone realized they had all this money lying around. The money is just money. They're old bills, but still perfectly legal for use today. I was going to arrange to get that handed off to a bank, and then Alice told me about your corporation theme party.

HIROKI
Excellent.

ALAN
Here's what we were thinking: Your corporate guests are coming here to America to have a look around, make contacts, show what effect they can have locally.

HIROKI
Yes.

ALAN
Normally there will be corporate expenses of modern money, credit cards, and so forth. On an other hand, what if you and your corporations had the currency instead? If every one of your guests was spending forty year old currency, that's going to get them noticed, that's going to get them introductions, that's going to get them new contacts.

HIROKI
That would be wonderful.

ALAN
All that will be needed on my end is a check or a money transfer for the amount of the currency, I can take care of all the banking paperwork, and my client thinks the idea would be hysterically funny --- He thinks providing cash for a historic theme party is far more entertaining than anything his family originally had planned.

HIROKI
Yes. Let's do that.

ACT I

SCENE 16

Setting: Masonic Avenue Conference Center

Backdrop: Intersection paired street signs for Geary and Masonic, with the respective signs reading Geary, Masonic.

At Rise: Sections of the meeting center have been sectioned off into different areas that quite a few people are milling their way through. In some of the event sections, assorted improvised hedge pieces in planters form separators, in other areas there's a potted tree here, a pillar section there.

Very particularly, some sections have tables set up as bars, one or two sections have actual bar areas.

In one of these event areas, Charlie, Hiroki, and a fellow Diplomat of Hiroki's are chatting.

CHARLIE
Well, things seem to be off to a good start.

HIROKI
Yes. All of our visitors really like the nineteen seventies currency that they get to play with --- Do you have yours?

CHARLIE
Yes.

HIROKI
Good. You were supposed to get a very fat envelope to help you be one of our major hosts.

CHARLIE
Yes. A very fat envelope. All I have to do is to manage all the talking.

DIPLOMAT
Do you speak Japanese?

CHARLIE
Well, I know Ninjutsu.

HIROKI
Oh, really!

CHARLIE
And about twenty other words in Japanese, mostly related to pottery glazes.

Hiroki and Diplomat laugh.

DIPLOMAT
That's going to be fine. They are particularly here to talk to and work with Americans, so they're going to be very interested in practicing their English.

CHARLIE
Oh good. That will help.

ACT I

SCENE 17

Setting: Masonic Avenue Conference Center

At Rise: Once again, for this event, very particularly, some sections have tables set up as bars, one or two sections have actual bar areas.

In a different area of the party, Alice is talking to Ju, Kyu, and Hachi.

JU
Do you work for one of the American companies?

ALICE
I do mathematical research at a local university. I was actually invited by the consulate because of a company that I'm trying to find that is probably Japanese.

KYU
What kind of company are you looking for?

ALICE
It might be a company that makes glass, or does glasswork, and apparently has been doing that for at least sixty or more years. The problem is that all I have to search with is a name, and all the records that anyone has found don't have any trace of the company.

HACHI
What is the name of the company?

ALICE
Have any of you ever heard of a company called Garasu-Kai?

Ju, Kyu, and Hachi stare off thataway.

JU
The Glass Company, or that is what the name means.

KYU
That is a Japanese company name.

HACHI
I do know of a lot of companies, but I don't remember hearing about that one before.

JU
That is a Japanese company name . . . But I don't remember hearing that name before either.

ACT I

SCENE 18

Setting: Western Gate Bar

At Rise: Once again, for this event, very particularly, some sections have tables set up as bars, one or two sections have actual bar areas.

In a different area of the party, a number of clusters of sararimen are scattered through the bar.

Charlie is chatting with Maikeru Nezumi.

MAIKERU
My company started with a research lab in Tokyo. After a few years our product was doing so well that in nineteen fifty five we built an entire new large development area to work with. We built that in Chiba, just east of Tokyo.

Charlie stares at the ceiling.

CHARLIE
I have heard of Chiba. At least.

MAIKERU
On this trip we're up here in San Francisco, but three years ago we opened another really large center in the Los Angeles area. That's been going really well, so we're looking at doing our next big project in Florida. I think we're looking at somewhere near Orlando, but we'll have to see.

CHARLIE
Sounds like you're doing really well.

MAIKERU
How about you?

CHARLIE
I do historical studies, mainly California related, but also the general western United States. For a hobby I also do research into Asian glassware and pottery, and that's how I wound up here tonight.

MAIKERU
Oh really.

CHARLIE
A friend of mine is trying to find information on a company that no one has ever heard of. We've found one of the company products, and then found an old newspaper story, but beyond that, all we've got is a name.

MAIKERU
What's the name?

CHARLIE
Garasu-Kai.

MAIKERU
Garasu-Kai.

CHARLIE
Yes.

MAIKERU
Which no one has ever heard of.

CHARLIE
No one.

Maikeru peers off towards another part of the bar.

MAIKERU
Over there somewhere are at least three people who work at Garasu-Kai.

Charlie stares.

CHARLIE
People who work at Garasu-Kai???

MAIKERU
Yes. I'm up here working with them because we're starting a new project.

CHARLIE
I would like to meet them.

Maikeru is staring off thataway again.

MAIKERU
That's what I was thinking, too. They might be in the middle of something, but let me see how they're doing. Stay here, I'll be right back.

Maikeru heads off. Charlie looks after him for a moment, quickly

looks around in various directions, then steps behind one of the decorative trees and slides his cell phone out of his pocket. In a moment he taps a fast note to Alice:

CHARLIE
(to himself)
Found a sarariman working with Garasu-Kai. Following up lead.

That done, he puts the phone away and steps back out to where he was.

After a moment, Maikeru comes back with businessmen Donarudo Ahiru and Ieyasu Ito, and businesswoman Mineruvua Nezumi. Ieyasu is in his forties, the other two in their thirties. Maikeru gestures at Charlie.

MAIKERU
This is Charlie Hawthorne. He is a researcher and historian with a particular focus on California, and also is interested in Asian glassware and pottery. And, according to people he has been talking to, there is no such company as Garasu-Kai.

IEYASU, DONARUDO, MINERUVUA
(in chorus)
Oooohhhhh!

Donarudo, Mineruvua, and Ieyasu, and Charlie, race each other in pulling out business cards. Charlie loses the race slightly, but he's pulling out three cards. Maikeru continues with the introductions.

MAIKERU
Charlie, this is Ieyasu Ito, a division head with Garasu-Kai here in San Francisco.

Ieyasu and Charlie hand off cards and each bow. Business card inspection occurs for a moment. Mineruvua and Donoradu look quite intrigued.

MAIKERU
Donarudo Ahiru is a project manager at Garasu-Kai, also here in San Francisco.

Donoradu and Charlie hand off cards and each bow. More studying of cards ensues.

DONARUDO
Interesting.

MAIKERU
Mineruvua Nezumi is also a project manager at Garasu-Kai, and also here in San Francisco.

Mineruvua and Charlie hand off cards and each bow. There is another round of studying of cards.

MAIKERU
Since the question comes up, no, she and I are not related, we just share a last name.

MINERUVUA
Very interesting. And call me Minnie, it's easier.

CHARLIE
And all of you work here in San Francisco.

IEYASU
All of us! We all work at the Garasu-Kai building, here in San Francisco.

CHARLIE
I've read about the building, and also kept getting told We can't find that company, We can't find that company!

Everyone laughs. Donarudo and Mineruvua are looking from the cards to Charlie.

DONARUDO
You know a good deal of California history and culture.

He then pointedly looks at Ieyasu.

MINERUVUA
You also study Asian glassware.

She also pointedly looks at Ieyasu. Ieyasu is looking intrigued.

IEYASU
This could be very interesting. You see, the reason that the four of us are meeting is to plan for a large joint company project that our respective company areas are all going to be involved with.

There is an interruption. Photographer One and Photographer Two turn up and demand a group picture. All five of them line up to face the two photographers, there are flashes of light, and the each of the photographers collects business cards to show who is in the shot. Ieyasu continues as the photographers wander off.

IEYASU
Part of the project will have quite a number of new staff coming over from Japan and working here, and they are going to need to get acclimated to working here in America, rather than in Japan.

MAIKERU
It would be very nice if we could get someone local who knows the area, who already has a general interest in what the company does, and can be on hand to combine all that information.

CHARLIE
That does sound very interesting . . . .

IEYASU
If you come and work for us, not only can you work at the company that does not exist, you can even work at the building that does not exist!

Everyone roars with laughter.

MINERUVUA
The building! How about we take him over to the building right now?!

DONARUDO
(to Charlie)
It's just a few blocks over from here. We can give you a preview.

CHARLIE
Yes. That sounds very interesting.

IEYASU
I can not join you, I still have to talk to some people here.

DONARUDO
I can take him.

MINERUVUA
I can take him.

CHARLIE
Well, then. Shall we?

MAIKERU
I have to talk to the same people as Ito-San, but I think this could be a very good idea.

IEYASU
A very good idea. Go see what you think. We may all meet up again at work in the morning.

All shake hands all around. Ieyasu and Maikeru head off to a different part of the party. Donarado and Mineruvua look around, then point off to the exit.

DONARUDO
That way.

ACT I

SCENE 19

Setting: Western Gate Bar entranceway

At Rise: A hallway.

Charlie, Mineruvua, and Donarado enter the hallway, then Charlie slows and then stops, peers around.

MINERUVUA
Do you need to go back for something?

CHARLIE
I . . . think I've got everything with me.

He looks around at the hallway.

CHARLIE
This does look rather like the main way in, the only way in? But I actually don't remember this hallway.

DONARUDO
Yes! This is the impossible hallway that leads to the building that does not exist of the company that no one has heard of!

The three of them laugh and continue on.

ACT I

SCENE 20

Setting: Geary and Masonic, The sidewalk outside the Western Gate Bar.

At Rise: The night is very foggy. There is an empty sidewalk outside the bar, with intersection paired street signs for Geary and Masonic, with the respective signs reading the street names in both English and Japanese.

Backdrop: Intersection paired street signs for Geary and Masonic, with the respective signs reading the street names in both English and Japanese.

The three of them exit to the sidewalk, and Donorodo and Mineruvua look around.

MINERUVUA
Did you drive or take the trolley?

DONARUDO
I walked.

Charlie is looking up at the nearby intersection paired street signs for Geary and Masonic, with the respective signs reading the street names in both English and Japanese.

MINERUVUA
I took the trolley, but I was running errands first and then came in.

Donarudo and Mineruvua see Charlie looking about.

DONARUDO
The building is just a few blocks down the hill. We don't have to wait for a trolley, walking should be fine.

CHARLIE
Oh, walking will be fine.

He waves in the direction of down the hill.

CHARLIE
I was just having a look at all this and noting that it's a perfect example of the old American proverb.

Donarudo and Mineruvua are impressed.

MINERUVUA
And what proverb is that?

CHARLIE
Toto, I've a feeling we're not in Kansas anymore.

Donarudo and Mineruvua laugh.

DONARUDO
Oh, that's good!

MINERUVUA
A perfect example of mixing everything together!

The three of them head off down the hill.

ACT II

SCENE 1

Setting: Alice's living room/ Charlie's office

Backdrop: A poster for a major museum pottery exhibit. There are some pictures of California gold rush miners, a map of the early Bart line proposals, and more posters telling of Asian glassware and pottery.

At Rise: Alice's living room has a couch, chairs, a table, and Alice is in her living room. In his office, Charlie is sitting at his desk.

Alice's phone rings. She picks up the phone, checks the number.

ALICE
Charlie! When did you get back? And how was . . . Wait . . . Where did you go, again? I should remember better than this.

Charlie is on his phone.

CHARLIE
Ah, yes. I . . . got back last night.

Alice looks very puzzled.

ALICE
. . . This is really weird. I knew you went out of town, but . . . I can't remember where you were going. Come to think of it, the last I'm remembering is that really weird barrage of text messages from the party, and I remember that because even the phone company called to ask me about that.

CHARLIE
A barrage of text messages. What was the barrage?

ALICE
I got fifty almost identical text messages, almost, they got a bit scrambled towards the end.

CHARLIE
I . . . don't know about a barrage of text messages.

ALICE
Oh, that's alright; Monday, after the party, I got a weird call from the phone company where they were asking me about the text messages. They also asked what I could tell them about how to reach you, but you were out of town . . . or so. Come to think of it, I haven't talked to or heard from Hiroki since the party, and that was three weeks ago. Have you talked to him? No, wait, you were . . .

CHARLIE
Ok, yes. I was what?

Alice is staring into space and definitely trying to figure things out. After a long pause.

ALICE
We . . . We were at the party. During the party you . . . sent me a text message, but it was fifty messages, sort of. And after the party you were . . . out of . . . town?

CHARLIE
I . . . have been . . . away, I did just get back last night, I have not talked to Hiroki.

ALICE
I haven't been out of town and I haven't talked to Hiroki since the party, I don't know why.

CHARLIE
Ok . . . This is very interesting. I . . am still getting reacclimated, but, how about this. Give Hiroki a call. I know that the moment he hears from you, he is going to have a whole bunch of questions --- and I am almost surprised, almost, that you haven't heard from him. Just like he hasn't heard from you.

ALICE
Huh. I haven't even heard from anyone at the consulate since the party, and . . yeah, I probably should have.

CHARLIE
Are you up for guests this evening?

ALICE
Yes. And. Ok, I want to know what has been going on, I will call Hiroki now.

ACT II

SCENE 2

Setting: Alice's living room

At Rise: Alice's living room has a couch, chairs, a table, and Charlie is sitting in one of the chairs.

Alice and Hiroki come in, Hiroki carrying a laptop. Charlie stands up from a chair and sticks out a hand.

CHARLIE
Hullo, Hiroki.

HIROKI
Charlie!

They shake hands

HIROKI
How was your trip?

Charlie basically just looks at him, waits. Hiroki starts staring into infinity, waitaminnit.

HIROKI
You . . . were out of town for the last three weeks . . . weren't you?

CHARLIE
That is basically what Alice was saying this afternoon, that yes I have obviously been out of town . . . but we haven't talked to each other since the party. And you also just happen to know, but what do you know?

HIROKI
Well, you were . . . .

CHARLIE
The last time I remember talking to you was at the party.

HIROKI
Yes! And . . . .

CHARLIE
So of that party, since no one has talked to anyone else in the last month, from the consulate point of view, how did the party go?

HIROKI
Absolutely brilliant.

He turns to Alice.

HIROKI
Using that nineteen seventies currency was the perfect touch. We're still getting questions, getting referrals, setting up new connections.

ALICE
Oh, that's great!

Hiroki turns back to Charlie.

HIROKI
Some of the company people and my coworkers had questions for you after the party, but of course you've been out of town, so we've had to wait . . . for . . . .

Hiroki stops and looks back and forth between Alice and Charlie.

CHARLIE
Each of you knew that I was out of town, and apparently more of the consulate staff knew, but how did you know?

Alice and Hiroki look at each other. Charlie sits down. Alice and Hiroki look at Charlie, and then look around, and then slowly also sit down.

ALICE
Oh, I knew that you . . were . .

HIROKI
Yes, after the party you were out of town, you . . .

ALICE
We were at the party, you were at the party, and then . . . you . .

HIROKI
Yes, we hosted the party, and then we got that finished, and after the party . . .

ALICE
Something is missing.

HIROKI
Something is . . . . there is something missing.

Alice looks at Charlie

ALICE
I . . . can't . . . tell . . . what. I can see that something is missing, but I don't know what it is.

HIROKI
Yes. I know, I knew you were out of town . . . I can't tell how I knew.

ALICE
Yes.

CHARLIE
Right. That is what I wanted to check, for the both of you. My being out of town is the exact same thing as everyone knowing that Samuel died during World War Two, but then he turned up again twenty years later . . . And I managed to get back last night, where I've been away for three weeks.

Charlie stares into space for a bit, then comments to Hiroki.

CHARLIE
So, what I'm also noting is that Alice being named Alice is rather apt. Do you know the two English stories, <u>Alice In Wonderland</u>, and <u>Through the Looking Glass</u>?

HIROKI
Yes, they're excellent. Are you going to lead us down a rabbit hole?

CHARLIE
Also right, sort of . . . Alice, it's been . . . . some time . . . but wasn't there some story of Samuel and some large dance hall in JTown?

ALICE
Yes. The story is that Samuel would go dancing at some really large dance hall on Geary. That's probably the Fillmore, or an early version of that.

CHARLIE
There was something about the building history.

Alice laughs.

ALICE
Oh! According to the priests at Yonmistsugo, that dance hall had first been the administration barracks of an internment camp. But that would mean there was an internment camp in San Francisco.

CHARLIE
Ah, yes, <u>that</u> was the story.

ALICE
There was no internment camp in San Francisco . . . They were all built elsewhere, and that was the start of why Noriko took the urn to Samuel.

CHARLIE
Yes . . . . Ok.

ALICE
Why do you ask?

CHARLIE
Because there was no internment camp in San Francisco, everyone had to leave and go elsewhere.

ALICE
. . . And?

CHARLIE
So, one would definitely have to go down a rabbit hole for there to have been an internment camp in San Francisco.

HIROKI
Oboy. That would be some rabbit hole.

CHARLIE
Yes, quite some rabbit hole. So, part of there being a rabbit hole sort of situation is that various odd things turn up.

ALICE
The tchotchke. But where did that thing come from?

CHARLIE
Oh, yes. The tchotchke is one. Hiroki, aside from the tchotchke, Alice says she got an entire collection of very odd texts.

HIROKI
Odd texts? When?

ALICE
During the party. I was talking to some of the visiting business people, and then I got a text from Charlie . . .
(MORE)

ALICE (cont'd)
and then I got another text from Charlie, and it was the same text, but also, the second text had the same time stamp on it. And then another, and then another,

HIROKI
How many texts?

ALICE
Fifty.

HIROKI
Fifty??!

CHARLIE
Oh. Oh, yeah, you did say fifty, didn't you.

ALICE
Sort of fifty. The later texts did have the same identical time stamp --- I know that because the phone company told me about it the next Monday --- but then some of the later texts started missing some letters, then missing some entire words.

CHARLIE
And then the phone company called you.

ALICE
And then the phone company called me. According to their text systems, one text got sent. That one text then got sent over and over again, but it didn't actually get sent. Somehow one text kept turning up. It was the one text each time because that one text was only sent once, with one time on the computer clocks. But even though all those copies of the one text got delivered to my phone, there also was no place for the texts to have come from, because by that point, Charlie's phone did not exist.

HIROKI
Charlie's phone did not exist.

CHARLIE
My phone does not exist. Years and years ago there was a priest named Samuel, and he had a Garasu-Kai tourist tchotchke that does not exist, and, years and years later, I have a cell phone that does not exist.

Charlie turns to Alice.

CHARLIE
Now that we have established that my cell phone does not exist, and that text did not exist, Hiroki has pictures of people who do not exist.

Hiroki stares off thataway for a moment, then turns to Charlie.

HIROKI
How did you know that the people in the pictures don't exist?

CHARLIE
Business cards. And you also got business cards.

Hiroki just about flinches.

HIROKI
Yes!! We have a collection of impossible business cards! How did you know?

CHARLIE
And no one wants to touch the business cards a second time.

ALICE
Wait, what do you mean impossible business cards? This was a party of Japanese sararimen. Of course they carry business cards. if they weren't carrying business cards, that would be very odd.

CHARLIE
What Hiroki is saying is that the consulate now has a collection of impossible business cards that introduce people who do not exist, from companies that do not exist.

HIROKI
Yes. How did you know?

CHARLIE
I was at the party, that is how I know.

ALICE
I know how! This was a nineteen seventies theme party, for and of Japanese sararimen, and some of the people showed up in character.

CHARLIE
Well, actually what Hiroki is also saying is that the consulate staff can not identify any of the impossible people in the pictures. Furthermore, even for a party where security did not have to be airtight, the consulate staff have no idea how these people got into the party, and no idea how they left the party. Oh, and by the way, the consulate staff don't like touching the impossible cards a second time because even just touching these impossible business cards makes people very uncomfortable, but they can't figure out why.

Charlie then turns to look at Hiroki. Hiroki is staring at Charlie with his mouth hanging open.

HIROKI
All of that is completely correct --- How did you know? --- Especially the part about the business cards feeling very odd.

ALICE
The business cards make people feel odd?

CHARLIE
Every one of the impossible business cards gives everyone who touches them a feeling that is best described as being indescribably odd.

ALICE
Just like the tchotchke! The impossible business cards are just like the tchotchke? How?

Hiroki stares at Alice, and at Charlie, and at Alice.

CHARLIE
Hiroki. Tell Alice and me about these pictures of impossible people.

Hiroki gets his mouth closed again, takes a breath.

HIROKI
Yes.

Backdrop: There are formatted pages of mixed pictures of people placed next to pictures of business cards. There is a picture of Alice and Charlie and a third party attendee. The card next to the picture is that of the San Francisco Consul General of Japan.

Hiroki picks up the laptop and goes rummaging about in it, then puts it down on the table. Alice and Charlie peer from either side.

HIROKI
This is a picture from early in the party. We can identify everyone in this picture, because this picture is the two of you talking to the Consul General. And that is his card
(MORE)

HIROKI (cont'd)
over on the side, where his card seems perfectly normal, and we know where we can find him.

Hiroki looks back and forth between Alice and Charlie. Then he looks back at the laptop and pokes at it some more.

Backdrop: The next page is the picture of Donarudo, Mineruvua, Charlie, Ieyasu, and Maikeru. Beside the picture are five business cards, one for each person. Charlie's card is all in English, giving his Nachfhacas University contact information. The other cards are two sided, with Japanese on one side and English on the other. Maikeru's card identifies him as being with The Bozzetto-Troppo Company. The cards for the remaining three all say Garasu-Kai / The Glass Company.

HIROKI
And then there is this picture, for one.

CHARLIE
Oh, Yes. Yes, yes, yes. A very famous picture.

Alice stares at the laptop for a bit.

ALICE
I only recognize Charlie. I don't know any of those others.

CHARLIE
Oh, I do. I know them very well.

ALICE
Garasu-Kai? Business cards for Garasu-Kai?

CHARLIE
Yes. Garasu-Kai.

He looks at Hiroki.

CHARLIE
So, Hiroki. Would you like a collection of very detailed notes on all of the mystery party attendees?

HIROKI
Yes!

CHARLIE
Because I am now going to take us all down that rabbit hole.

HIROKI
Oh, my fur and whiskers!

Hiroki opens up a notepad program on the screen, next to the picture display.

HIROKI
Ready when you are, Alice!

CHARLIE
Ok. Go back to the first mystery picture.

Hiroki backs up a few pictures. Charlie looks at the first for a moment.

CHARLIE
Right.

Charlie starts pointing to assorted different points in each picture set, giving all of the details in Japanese. Alice Just Stares, as Hiroki looks very startled, and then starts typing very furiously.

As a note, whatever Charlie says in Japanese really should be actual fluent Japanese, but then the point from there is that Alice doesn't understand it, and neither does the audience --- so for those who are actually fluent in Japanese, what should be doable is a short speech that might be a shaggy dog story, or could be a collection of one liners, or even a comment in Japanese that what is going on is a Major Plot Point, do note that Alice has her jaw hanging open . . .

At the second picture, Charlie suddenly points to a pair of different parts of the laptop screen.

CHARLIE
Ah, be careful of what character to transcribe that with. It's not going to be the usual character, because that name there is actually a pun off of that association there.

Hiroki looks at the picture and then at his notes.

HIROKI
Ah, yes I see.

Charlie then continues on in Japanese for a bit more, then finally stops. Hiroki keeps typing for a bit, clearly checking from picture to notes, and then stops. Alice is still staring, and finally;

ALICE
I didn't understand a single word of that, aside from the bit about characters.

Hiroki looks at the screen, looks at Charlie, then looks at Alice.

HIROKI
I understood every single word. That was totally fluent, Tokyo dialect Japanese.

ALICE
Tokyo dialect?!?!

CHARLIE
Tokyo dialect. It's not difficult to learn, it's considered to be a main dialect. And of course for all the businesses coming out of Tokyo, that's what gets spoken.

ALICE
You were in Tokyo?

CHARLIE
Oh, my, no. I was very careful to stay around here, where we did one trip east to Nevada, but that was it.

HIROKI
Three weeks isn't isn't enough time to learn a language . . . and at the party, you couldn't speak Japanese.

CHARLIE
Yes. How long have you seen it take to learn?

HIROKI
. . . Generally about three years or so, but that is going to depend on the person and the circumstances.

CHARLIE
Yes. Especially the circumstances. Lemme give you another odd bit for the rabbit hole.
(to Hiroki)
Go back to that first mystery picture you pulled up.

Hiroki moves the display to the picture of the five.

CHARLIE
Yes, that one. That is a very well known picture. The reason why is that several US and Japanese companies formed a joint corporation that soon branched out into semiconductor development and also medical and research glassware. That picture shows staff members of the two main Japanese companies, where that multicompany project got formally started three months after that picture was taken.

ALICE
Three months? --- that picture was taken three weeks ago.

CHARLIE
Yes, that picture was taken three weeks ago. By the way, how's your finger?

ALICE
My fin--Oh. Oh, my finger's been fine. My finger?

HIROKI
Her finger?

CHARLIE
A couple of months back Alice was doing a bit of picture hanging in here, got distracted, and absolutely bashed the hell out of one of her fingers, split nail, blood, big mess, band aids for a week or so.

ALICE
Continuing focus is a good thing.

HIROKI
That sounds painful.

CHARLIE
It turned out to be on the same arm as the stove burn.

Hiroki looks a bit alarmed.

HIROKI
The stove burn?

ALICE
That was when I was in college! I and my roommates were trying to cook something complicated, and we had too many pieces going in too many directions. And then the inside of one arm went into the edge of a really hot tray. I really couldn't drop the tray, we'd worked too hard. And then we went to the campus med center to see how things were.

HIROKI
Ouch!

ALICE
I wound up with a scar on my arm. I now watch where hot trays are.

CHARLIE
Alice and I commented on scars.

Charlie starts rolling up a sleeve.

ALICE
Charlie doesn't have any scars.

Charlie shows Alice and Hiroki an inside forearm.

The audience doesn't have to see it: Instead of attempting some makeup effect, just let the actors do acting.

Hiroki Stares. Alice attempts to do a classic cartoon eyeball pop.

ALICE
(finally)
That wasn't there three months ago.

CHARLIE
Right. That scar was not there three months ago, where instead, that scar has been there for about three years.

ALICE
Three <u>years</u>?

Charlie points at the picture with Ieyasu.

CHARLIE
Absolutely embarrassed the hell out of Ito-sama there. We were all going on the big American fishing trip, going up to Tahoe. I was to be the honored guest because I'd been getting so much done for everyone. And it was a complete accident, but during his fishing trip, I managed to get my arm ripped open. And then we did a fast trip to the local ER for a set of stitches.

ALICE
What do you mean three <u>years</u> ago?

CHARLIE
Three years ago. After I and everyone else in that picture had already been working together for two years before that.

The sleeve gets unrolled, back down the arm.

HIROKI
Five years?

CHARLIE
Yes. When you got far enough down the rabbit hole, that picture was taken five years ago. Furthermore, that location there also happens to be the bar called The Western Gate. And the bar is just a few blocks from the Garasu-Kai building. And then I got back here last night.

HIROKI
Got back? . . .

ALICE
Where is that building?

HIROKI
. . . From where?

CHARLIE
So, at the bottom of a rabbit hole, the question is not a matter of where in JTown did the urn go. The question turns out to be; <u>which</u> JTown did the urn go to?

Alice looks startled.

ALICE
San Jose?

CHARLIE
Nope. The urn was handed off in the JTown that is at Post and Buchanan. But the question is, which Post and Buchanan.

HIROKI
I know of just one.

CHARLIE
My scar is three years old because there are at least two intersections of Post and Buchanan.

ALICE
Where is the other one?

Charlie points at the picture.

CHARLIE
There. In the background of that picture.

Alice and Hiroki very obviously look at the group picture.

CHARLIE
To get to the background of that picture, what can the two of you tell me of the history of JTown? That history is actually how Garasu-Kai manages to come in. Actually very particularly, what can Alice tell us of JTown history, events happening in JTown, particularly going up to World War Two . . .

Alice looks at Charlie, then stares into space for a moment.

ALICE
Japanese started moving to the US in the late 1800s and early 1900s. My family members came over in the early 1900s. After the 1906 earthquake, a lot of Japanese moved to the Western Addition, which is the overall area where JTown is located.

Backdrop: 193something JTown appears, with assorted locals doing Stuph. There is no trolley here, that's a block over on Geary.

ALICE
By the late thirties, JTown was quite a few blocks, a few hundred businesses, all centered near Post and Buchanan.

CHARLIE
And Noriko.

ALICE
And Noriko. Noriko is my great grandmother, and today she's over a hundred years old. She came over from Japan when she was very young. She grew up here, married here.

Backdrop: The sky over the horizon changes to newsreel war footage. Everyone in JTown stops and turns to watch the newsreel.

ALICE
In the late nineteen thirties, World War Two got started in Asia and Europe.

Backdrop: Pictures of Kenneth Ringle and Curtis Munson.

ALICE
The United States started getting nervous, and did studies of Japanese and Japanese Americans in the US. The result of the studies assures the US government that the absolute majority of Japanese-Americans are loyal Americans and not a military threat.

Backdrop: The Pearl Harbor attack.

ALICE
In late 1941 is the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, and the US enters the war. At that point there were a lot of Japanese Americans in Hawaii, and a lot more here on the mainland. After the attack, there just were too many Japanese and Japanese-Americans in Hawaii to try locking everyone up. The logical solution was to do basic, site specific security throughout the islands, and that's what they did.

Backdrop: Stores with loyalty signs.

ALICE
On the American mainland, things were different. Even though the reports assured the US that there was no concern about Japanese Americans,

Backdrop: President Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

ALICE
President Roosevelt then signs an executive order stating that all Japanese, Japanese-Americans on the mainland, near the coast, are to be rounded up and moved to places chosen by military governors, to be treated as a wartime security risk. Temporary assembly camps were set up to collect everyone, and then more permanent camps were built, in California, Utah, Arizona, elsewhere--

CHARLIE
--- Elsewhere.

Alice stops.

ALICE
Elsewhere?

CHARLIE
Elsewhere. Even though the reports assured the US that there was no concern about Japanese Americans, President Roosevelt then signs an executive order to create the internment camps. And the best known and remembered camp is the San Francisco internment camp, the one that consisted of San Francisco's JTown and the immediate surrounding area, in San Francisco.

Alice and Hiroki Stare.

ALICE
How could there be an interment camp in San Francisco?

CHARLIE
I don't know what happened, or, I do know what happened, because I've been doing the research, but I also definitely do not know what happened or how. At the moment that the internment camps started getting created, something else also happened.

HIROKI
Something else happened elsewhere.

CHARLIE
Elsewhere. Down a rabbit hole, where what you find down that rabbit hole, is the same San Francisco, but starting at that point in time, there is an additional San Francisco.

ALICE
How do you get an additional San Francisco?

Backdrop: An aerial view of San Francisco.

CHARLIE
Wellll, for one thing, San Francisco was basically automatically going to become a major military resource because of its location.

Backdrop: WWII San Francisco.

CHARLIE
Also, as part of the wartime process, the entire San Francisco area was going to become a rather locked down military compound anyway.

Backdrop: WWII military classrooms.

CHARLIE
Also, as part of the war effort, America was going to have to mobilize all resources, including all cultural and social information.

Backdrop: the Tanforan Assembly Camp.

CHARLIE
Therefore, with one set of decisions, with one set of internment camps, there are all the internment camps that we all know about.

Backdrop: the Tanforan racecourse hosting a war bonds rally.

CHARLIE
And then somehow, with a slightly different set of decisions, at the same time, the military threat reports are considered to be really important. The State Department and military were going to need a large group of people to work with, and the JTown population meant that something like five thousand or so were already living in San Francisco. Therefore, the different set of decisions lead to choosing San Francisco to have one additional internment camp.

ALICE
In San Francisco?

Backdrop: San Francisco Camp walls going up.

CHARLIE
In San Francisco. In a matter of months an entire extra barricaded compound was set up, and another six to seven thousand Japanese Americans were brought into San Francisco to be put into the San Francisco internment camp.

Backdrop: The San Francisco Internment Camp Eastern Gate.

CHARLIE
The other camps had to be built from scratch. In San Francisco, the government just needed to use eminent domain and a lot of cash to take over the entire JTown area, and then put up really high walls.

Backdrop: The San Francisco Internment Camp Western Gate.

CHARLIE
The San Francisco Camp walls were fifty to seventy foot high steel and concrete, with double sets of gates and fences and barbed wire, with an entire no man's land surrounding the compound.

Backdrop: The San Francisco Camp from the south.

CHARLIE
The walls were built up and down existing streets, and basically the camp extended from near City Hall all the way to the Presidio. The camp area went more or less from Gough street to Masonic avenue, more or less from Pacific avenue to Hayes street. Again, more or less, basically, the camp walls were built to follow the hills around JTown.

Backdrop: The San Francisco Camp from the North.

CHARLIE
The entire camp area was just under 1.4 square miles, very approximately about 14 by 17 blocks. The train trolleys that already ran up and down Geary became the primary military transport to and from the main administrative barracks that were set up in the middle of JTown.

ALICE
And after the war, Samuel would go dancing in the huge dance hall that used to be an internment camp administrative barracks.

CHARLIE
Yes. And, in addition, very particularly, the interment camp had four distinct administrative gateways in and out. The northern gate was in the Pacific Heights overlooking JTown, with the southern gate also over JTown, looking from the south. There was the Eastern gate at Geary and Gough, looking over JTown from the east. And west on Geary, at Geary and Masonic, was the Western Gate.

ALICE
And after the war, Samuel became a part time bartender at a Japanese businessman's bar, on Geary, called

ALICE, CHARLIE, HIROKI
(in chorus)
The Western Gate.

ALICE
You found the urn.

CHARLIE
I found the urn. But, yes, things are complicated. And of course the biggest problem is that, yes, the urn is in

He points at the picture.

CHARLIE
that JTown.

HIROKI
Two Japantowns? In the same place, but not in the same place.

CHARLIE
But not in the same place. Therefore, back at the beginning of World War Two, there was indeed only one JTown.

Backdrop: Adult Noriko is meeting with young Samuel.

CHARLIE
Noriko clearly remembers that out of nowhere at the time, her father handed her the urn and told her to take it to the Temple. Noriko went to meet with Samuel and handed it off to him.

Backdrop: Samuel standing outside the Temple, looking up and down the street.

CHARLIE
And then at that point, Samuel and the urn stay in the Temple as an additional six thousand, seven thousand Japanese Americans join him in the new San Francisco internment camp.

Backdrop: The Tanforan Assembly Camp.

CHARLIE
And at the same time, Noriko and everyone else leave JTown, they all move out of JTown and move to the assembly centers, and then move again to the permanent camps.

Backdrop: The San Francisco Camp from the North.

CHARLIE
Once that is done, for Samuel and everyone with him, those other camps also exist, but with slightly different population numbers, because where Samuel is, and Noriko is not, there is one more Japanese American internment camp in the middle of San Francisco.

Backdrop: 1945 large JTown. It. Is. Big. At least fourteen by seventeen square blocks, and expanding further up Geary.

CHARLIE
By the end of the war, Samuel is in JTown with the urn, and has no idea where Noriko is. And he has no idea that there are now two different JTowns in two different San Franciscos. In the JTown that Samuel is in, when the war ends, some internees move out and back to where they had lived before, but the majority choose to stay where they are. When that happens, the post war JTown then fills up most of the post war Western Addition.

Backdrop: The admin barracks being converted into the 1945 large JTown Fillmore dance hall.

CHARLIE
For Samuel and everyone around him, after the war and going into the nineteen fifties, the military constructions are converted to peacetime use. The administrative barracks in the center of JTown becomes a dance hall.

Backdrop: The Eastern Gate walls and building footprint are being rebuilt as a pair of massive buildings with the start of a connecting archway to connect them.

CHARLIE
The Eastern gate is rebuilt, and that area becomes a two building hotel complex, where in time, the buildings become a pair of Japanese design castles joined by an archway over Geary.

ALICE
And that is the design of the Garasu-Kai tchotchke.

Backdrop: An aerial view of the large JTown, looking east towards the Eastern Gate.

CHARLIE
In time, as Japan recovers from the war and as Japanese businesses start to expand out, a natural magnet for businesses is the huge Japanese oriented area that already exists in San Francisco.

Backdrop: An aerial view of the large JTown, looking west towards Geary and Masonic.

CHARLIE
And, with all the economic expansion, there are all the sararimen visiting from Tokyo. And every one of them knows; when in JTown, go to the former location of the Western gate of the internment camp and go singing at the large bar called The Western Gate.

Backdrop: 1945 small JTown.

CHARLIE
And at the same time, at the end of the war, Noriko and her family move back to JTown, but it's not the same JTown that Samuel is in.

Backdrop: Another view of 1945 small JTown.

CHARLIE
For Noriko and everyone with her, everyone coming back from the camps returns to a much different JTown, much smaller, and everyone somehow just knows that Samuel died during the war, and somehow the urn got lost.

Backdrop: The start of small JTown redevelopment, with blocks of empty lots.

CHARLIE
In time, during the nineteen fifties and going into the 'sixties, redevelopment was declared with extremely so-so results.

Backdrop: An aerial view of the large JTown, looking towards City Hall from near the Presidio.

CHARLIE
For Samuel and his area, redevelopment also occurred, but with far more international money and interest and involvement. Geary was expanded, but with the trolley lines left running and still connecting to all the other trolley lines.

Backdrop: A stage area covered in businessmen and politicians with someone doing an announcement. Various signs are both English and Japanese.

CHARLIE
As part of the general community and business involvement, a JTown based Cherry Blossom Festival was started in 1955, to mirror the same sorts of festivals celebrated in Japan.

Backdrop: An aerial view looking east to the Eastern Gate with a Cherry Blossom Festival Parade marching through the gate and down Geary.

CHARLIE
With JTown being located where it is, the Cherry Blossom parade assembles near City Hall, comes up the hill ---

Backdrop: A review stand covered in businessmen and politicians as the parade goes by.

ALICE
--- and the parade comes up Geary, entering JTown through the Eastern Gate. It continues on down Geary through the middle of JTown, past a reviewing stand set up on the south side of Geary.

CHARLIE
Exactly. And by the way, in that JTown, the parade still does that . . . or the parade did that in the nineteen seventies, but I'll get to that in a bit.

Backdrop: An aerial view of the large JTown looking east from near Geary and Masonic with a large building being built.

CHARLIE
Also in nineteen fifty five, one of the new Japanese companies that was founded after World War Two moves into San Francisco. The company builds its own ten story building in JTown, where the company specializes in custom glassware, occasionally bits of pottery.

ALICE
And the name of the company is Garasu-Kai.

CHARLIE
Bingo.

Backdrop: The Gee Kay building formal opening in 1957.

CHARLIE
As part of the celebrations linked to the new building, Gee Kay made a limited series of the absolute butt ugliest tchotchkes to celebrate glasswork being done in JTown.

Backdrop: The Gee Kay formal opening.

CHARLIE
As part of the mid nineteen fifties building construction, Gee Kay had bought the land and the buildings on the land to replace with the new building.

Backdrop: The Gee Kay Temple formal reopening.

CHARLIE
One of the buildings that was displaced was a community Temple, which was rebuilt as a section of the Garasu-Kai ground floor. In that Temple, Samuel did indeed continue on as one of the priests, and then the stories state that Samuel died . . . there aren't any definite records confirming that he died, but the stories all say that Samuel died sometime in the nineteen sixties.

Backdrop: Alice talking to William.

ALICE
And Samuel is just known to have died in the mid nineteen sixties . . . Just like everyone just knows that he died during World War Two. And then in the mid nineteen sixties, former Temple staff realize that Samuel has reappeared, and isn't dead after all, but no one seems to notice where he's reappeared from.

Backdrop: Samuel's Temple receipt.

CHARLIE
My guess is that Samuel didn't have any idea where to find Noriko, or if Noriko was still alive --- If everyone thought that Samuel had died, then probably the same thing occurred the other way.

Backdrop: A very foggy rural cross country bus station, evening, as a bus pulls up.

CHARLIE
At the same time, the urn never left JTown because one JTown branched into being two different JTowns --- and then from there, Noriko wasn't in that JTown, Noriko was over in this JTown.

Backdrop: Samuel getting off the bus, carrying a shoulder bag, collecting a large backpack. The bus starts moving again, and then as Samuel is looking the other way, the bus disappears in the fog before it disappears into the fog.

CHARLIE
So, sometime in the mid 'sixties, Samuel somehow came wandering this way and brought the tchotchke with him --- but not the urn.

Backdrop: Samuel at the Yonmitsugo center.

CHARLIE
In time, he settled in at the monastery up north. At times over the next thirty years he would tell stories that didn't quite match what people remembered, but by the point that he's telling those stories, they took place a long time ago, and JTown was also so far to the south, so no one was going to really bother checking the inconsistencies.

Backdrop: Nineteen seventies large JTown.

CHARLIE
As all that was going on with Samuel, back in that larger JTown, assorted expansions continued, business plans continued, and sararimen still went to The Western Gate bar to sing songs. Approaching the mid 'seventies, man had reached the moon, semiconductors and the new electronics were the big new thing, still along with windows in houses and beakers in labs. Gee Kay and its partners needed to restructure, see of some new expansions, get more of a foothold in America.

Backdrop: The Western Gate, at Geary and Masonic.

CHARLIE
As part of that push, the Japanese consulate in San Francisco decided to host a party at The Western Gate bar one evening.

Backdrop: The Western Gate consulate party.

CHARLIE
And a whole bunch of sararimen all showed up, and they all brought their business cards, and everyone took pictures. Guests at the party included Garasu-Kai middle managers, who were openly looking for new staff in America. They wanted help with Japan to America liaison operations, translation, assorted office stuff.

Backdrop: Charlie meeting the large JTown staff people.

CHARLIE
And during that party, the people from Gee Kay met this American guy, who tells them that he knows about Gee Kay, but everyone else he talks to says there's no such company.

HIROKI
What year was this party?

CHARLIE
Nineteen seventy four, just like having a really detailed and dedicated 'seventies theme party. Except that in twenty ten, for one set of hosts who actually were staging a theme party, people showed up who actually were in the nineteen seventies.

Backdrop: Intersection paired street signs for Geary and Masonic, with the respective signs reading the street names in both English and Japanese.

CHARLIE
And in this case, one party is just like any other party, one can always go to The Western Gate for a party. So having met this American guy, where people tell him there is no Garasu-Kai, wouldn't it be a great idea to show off the actual Gee Kay building that is in JTown? So after I had sent you the text three weeks ago, I followed them out the door. And then for me, that was five years ago. The Gee Kay managers led me over to the Gee Kay building in JTown, just a few blocks from Geary and Masonic.

Backdrop: Charlie following the large JTown staffers down the hill.

ALICE
You went down the rabbit hole.

CHARLIE
I went down the rabbit hole. I told the Gee Kay staffers that actually I was indeed extremely available for quite detailed consultation work and immediately available. Now as part of being available, I had only just gotten back into the area for the first time in a very long time, so there were quite a few things I didn't know.

Backdrop: Charlie in a Gee Kay business meeting.

CHARLIE
However, while I was still sorting out what was where in the area, getting acclimated, if the Gee Kay staff were hiring someone to do social and cultural translation and
(MORE)

CHARLIE (cont'd)
explanation, then I'd be very happy to be considered --- and of course I would have to check every item anyway, so that would be part of the job.

Backdrop: Charlie as a Western Gate bartender.

CHARLIE
And, with The Western Gate being a definite link, I also got a job there, doing basically the same thing that Samuel had done . . .

ALICE
How did you get back?

CHARLIE
Rollerball.

HIROKI
Rollerball?!?! Isn't that ---

ALICE
My dad's favorite movie.

Backdrop: Charlie with others in The Western Gate under a sign reading Energy Corporation.

CHARLIE
A movie made in 1975 with James Caan and John Houseman. And, for whatever reason, it never got made where the large JTown is.

Backdrop: Charlie and others at the Rollerball party.

CHARLIE
As part of being an intercultural liaison, I arranged a futuristic corporation theme party at The Western Gate that would take place in twenty eighteen. That's still eight years from now for us, but for them it was an entire forty years away, so again, a historic period theme party.

Backdrop: Charlie at the party, gesturing towards party staff in football helmets and spiked gloves.

CHARLIE
The party was a complete success, very twenty tens. I and everyone else were going over international corporate details, issues in Rollerball. Did I mention the decade starting in twenty ten? We talked about the corporate wars, we talked about The Game, The Game, all glory to it . . .

Backdrop: Charlie at the party, making a phone call.

CHARLIE
And then I started calling my cell number as part of the party proceedings.

Backdrop: Charlie at the party, talking into the phone.

CHARLIE
And then the cell phone number started ringing. So at that point I headed out the door and into a totally thick fog. When I got across the street, I was at Geary and Masonic, and looking at English only street signs.

ALICE
And that was last night.

CHARLIE
Yes.

The three are seated in Alice's living room. Hiroki and Alice stare at him.

CHARLIE
And now I have a three year old scar that I did not have three months ago, and I am now fluent in Tokyo dialect Japanese, which I did not speak three weeks ago. And I keep wondering how everything has been here for the last five years, and then I remember that no, here, I've been gone for three weeks, not five years.

ALICE
You found the urn. But the only way to get the urn is to go to a completely different JTown.

CHARLIE
The urn is being held by the Temple, to be returned to a member of the family, and I'm not a member of the family. You are a member of the family, and you also have the receipt that Samuel and Noriko signed, and we also have the receipt that Samuel and the Temple signed.

ALICE
Hey, Hiroki. Wanna do another seventies theme party?

HIROKI
Oh my. I don't think consulates have any plans for this sort of scenario.

CHARLIE
I do have an idea, given that the Rollerball party got me back. Yes, Alice is going to have to retrieve the urn. At the same time, I think that Hiroki would be really helpful as well, if I'm right about the details --- the Temple building is merely a few years old, but that Temple --- not merely the building, the cultural organization --- dates back for who knows how long, very old, it's very Japanese, and that's where Hiroki would tie in ---

HIROKI
On behalf of the consulate and society and culture of Japan . . . .

CHARLIE
Yes.

ALICE
OK, but how do I get to the other JTown to get the urn?

CHARLIE
Hiroki. Tell us about hosting visiting sararimen, where as a very particular thought, particularly of the Japanese restaurants in the JTown area, is there any particular restaurant you would recommend to a bunch of visiting sararimen having a private dinner?

HIROKI
Yes. Nipponshoku Resutoran. Excellent food, and they also have large rooms that can be rented for events.

CHARLIE
If I give you credit card information, can you reserve a private room for us?

HIROKI
Yes.

CHARLIE
Excellent, thank you! I accidentally wound up elsewhere when your Seventies theme party turned out to be The Western Gate. I think there should be a way to do something of the sort again . . . . Or, at worst, we'll just have a nice dinner. Samuel came here, even if he may never have noticed. I accidentally went there, and did manage to deliberately get back. There should be a way to do this.

ALICE
How?

CHARLIE
Hiroki will make the reservation, and can you print out all the mystery pictures? And if you can bring the business cards as well, that would be perfect.

HIROKI
Yes.

CHARLIE
(to Alice)
You bring the receipt and the picture of Samuel. And I'll bring the tchotchke and the urn picture and newspaper article.

ACT II

SCENE 3

Setting: Nipponshoku Resutoran and then also Ieyasu's living room

At Rise: A cluster of sararimen are bellowing their way through a song.

Alice and Charlie are peering in from the doorway, with Hiroki parked right behind them. Each of the three are carrying a shoulderbag. A Waiter comes up behind Hiroki.

Alice, Charlie, and Hiroki are guided through a door to a private room and table. The waiter hands out menus.

WAITER
Let us know if there's anything else you need, and
(to Hiroki)
if anyone asks, remember to confirm that you're . . .

HIROKI AND WAITER
. . . with the consulate staff, not with the restaurant staff.

Hiroki and the Waiter laugh, and the Waiter heads out the door, closing it behind him.

ALICE
Consulate staff?

HIROKI
It's an old running joke we've got, that in this restaurant the wait staff and consulate staff keep getting mistaken for each other in the hallways.

Charlie pulls out his cell phone and puts it on the table.

CHARLIE
So, first off, we will watch me attempting to make a phone call.

He taps a number into the phone. There is a pause, then the special information tone rings, followed by an announcement from the phone.

PHONE
(voice over)
The number you have dialed is unallocated. Please check your number and try again.

CHARLIE
At this point I note that a specific phone number does not exist.

HIROKI
There's a lot of that going around.

He holds up a folder.

HIROKI
I have pictures.

He hands the folder to Charlie. Alice pulls out the receipt and the picture of Samuel.

ALICE
This is Samuel, with Noriko and my great-grandfather Jeffery, and this is the original receipt for the urn.

Hiroki looks at them as Charlie digs into a pocket and pulls out a tchotchke --- but not Samuel's tchotchke. He hands it to Hiroki.

CHARLIE
What do you think of this?

Hiroki looks it over.

HIROKI
Tourist, souvenir, glassware . . . basically looks like any number of items that can be found in Japantown.

Charlie pulls Samuel's tchotchke out and puts it on the table. Hiroki blinks.

CHARLIE
And this is what Samuel brought back from the other JTown.

HIROKI
Oh, my that is ugly!

Charlie pulls out the second receipt, the article about the new Temple, and the picture of the urn, and then the test report on the tchotchke. Hiroki looks at the article and the picture.

CHARLIE
This tchotchke is actually a pair of bottles, and these were inside it. Noriko has identified the urn in the picture as being the urn we're looking for. The article tells of a new building for the Temple, and this is a second receipt for the urn, handing it off to the Temple. Now, of the tchotchke, have a look at this.

Hiroki takes the report, flips through it, reads through the opening pages. As he does that, Charlie reaches over to his phone and taps on it again. There is a pause, then the special information tone rings, followed by an announcement from the phone.

PHONE
(voice over)
The number you have dialed is unallocated. Please check your number and try again.

ALICE
Is that a Garasu-Kai phone number?

CHARLIE
Yep. Back in the seventies, this was my direct desk number. These days, I'm rather expecting Gee Kay to keep a directory number going.

Hiroki puts the report down.

HIROKI
If I'm understanding the details, this analysis states there's something very odd about that glassware.

CHARLIE
Oh, just slightly. Apparently this is quite perfectly normal glassware, except that there is no way that this could have been made on this planet, or even near this planet.

HIROKI
That could fit for a different Japantown.

CHARLIE
And of course the report is just the report. Don't try picking up the tchotchke at first, but see what you get when you touch it.

Hiroki looks at him, then reached over carefully, touches the tchotchke, yanks his hand away. He looks at the tchotchke for a moment, then carefully tries two fingers for a moment, then pulls his hand back again.

HIROKI
Glass just does not feel like that.

CHARLIE
No, it doesn't.

Charlie taps on the phone again. The phone clicks, beeps, there is a pause, it beeps a couple of more times, and then is silent. Hiroki looks at the phone.

HIROKI
Where did the error message go?

Alice, Charlie, and Hiroki look at each other. Charlie taps on the phone again. The phone rings once, and then a Gee Kay Operator answers.

OPERATOR
(from phone)
Thank you for calling Garasu-Kai, how may I help you today?

Charlie grabs for an earphone and mike and slips it into an ear.

CHARLIE
Good evening, I'm in the middle of some research, and I'm trying to see if you might be of assistance.

OPERATOR
(from phone)
Certainly. What I can I help you with?

Backdrop: Charlie by himself, in the picture of Donarudo, Mineruvua, Charlie, Ieyasu, and Maikeru.

CHARLIE
I got the number I dialed from some very old records, and I'm trying to track down a Gee Kay employee named Chari, Chari Hawthorne, and was wondering if you might have any leads or recommendations.

OPERATOR
(from phone)
Well, let me check my records . . . .

There are clicking noises off in the distance.

OPERATOR
(from phone)
I do show a Chari Hawthorne, who worked for Garasu-Kai in San Francisco, apparently just from nineteen seventy four to nineteen seventy nine, and that is all the information I have.

CHARLIE
That is excellent, very helpful, and actually more information than I was expecting. Given that you did find Hawthorne, would you be able to check for four more names that might be listed?

Backdrop: The picture of Donarudo, Mineruvua, Charlie, Ieyasu, and Maikeru.

Charlie fishes the group picture out of Hiroki's folder.

OPERATOR
(from phone)
Give me the names, and I can see what I can find.

CHARLIE
All right, the names are,

Charlie taps on the people in the picture as he reads off names.

CHARLIE
Maikeru Nezumi, Donarudo Ahiru, Mineruvua Nezumi, and Ieyasu Ito.

Backdrop: Maikeru by himself, in the picture of Donarudo, Mineruvua, Charlie, Ieyasu, and Maikeru.

OPERATOR
(from phone)
Letsss sseeeee. Maikeru Nezumi . . . . was not with Gee Kay but did help with a Gee Kay project. He died a few years ago, but he worked in San Francisco and then transferred back to Tokyo, where he remained until he retired.

Backdrop: Donarudo by himself, in the picture of Donarudo, Mineruvua, Charlie, Ieyasu, and Maikeru.

OPERATOR
(from phone)
Donarudo Ahiru also worked in San Francisco for Gee Kay, also transferred back to Tokyo, retired, and I happen to know he became a monk.

Backdrop: Mineruvua by herself, in the picture of Donarudo, Mineruvua, Charlie, Ieyasu, and Maikeru.

OPERATOR
(from phone)
Mineruvua Nezumi transferred to the New York office, retired, and now lives in Tokyo.

Backdrop: Ieyasu by himself, in the picture of Donarudo, Mineruvua, Charlie, Ieyasu, and Maikeru.

OPERATOR
(from phone)
Finally, Ieyasu Ito also worked for Gee Kay in San Francisco, where he actually did not transfer back to Japan, he stayed as the regional manager in San Francisco. He too is retired, and actually he is known to still be living in San Francisco, in fact, he's living the new Gee Kay building apartment complex.

CHARLIE
Oh, excellent, I am delighted to hear about Ito, do you have any current contact information on him? I'm asking as I do know that he would be an excellent reference for Hawthorne.

OPERATOR
(from phone)
Yes. I do have a current phone number, are you ready to take the number?

CHARLIE
Yes.

OPERATOR
(from phone)
415-555-6789.

Charlie writes the number down on the back of the picture.

CHARLIE
Perfect. Thank you very much, you have been of excellent help and I should let you get back to your usual work.

OPERATOR
(from phone)
Happy to be of help.

CHARLIE
Goodbye.

OPERATOR
(from phone)
Goodbye.

Charlie hangs up.

ALICE
Chari?

CHARLIE
Chari. Our inhouse indicator for when someone was getting acclimated was when Chari would become Charlie. In the meantime, for one and all otherwise, I was Chari.

There is a knock at the door. Hiroki goes to the door, opens it, and in comes a Waitress in a kimono. The waitress bows. Hiroki bows. The waitress looks at the papers on the table, does a double take and sputters something sounding very apologetic in Japanese. Hiroki is now realizing he's seeing a waitress in a kimono. Hiroki turns to Charlie as Charlie stands up, bows.

CHARLIE
No problem, you may come in, thank you for coming in . . . .

The waitress relaxes slightly, takes another step into the room. Charlie looks at Hiroki, at Alice, at the table, at the waitress.

CHARLIE
And I am so sorry, my associates and I are delighted with the room, it will be perfect for our event . . . but with everything that we're doing, we've forgotten if we were just going to assess the room, or if we were also going to get dinner, and it would be wonderful if you could remind us what we were supposed to be doing . . .

The waitress's eyes get really wide . . .

WAITRESS
Ah, dinner can certainly be ordered if you wish to, that can certainly be done . . . ?

CHARLIE
Thank you very much, do not worry, we'll be fine. We got so involved in our discussion that we forgot, but we're basically done by this point, we should get everything wrapped up soon, and thank you very much.

WAITRESS
Excellent, thank you very much.

The waitress bows, Charlie bows, the waitress leaves, closing the door behind her. Hiroki stares at the door.

CHARLIE
So, Hiroki, when you were making the reservations, did the restaurant have waitresses dressed in kimonos who are also fluent in Japanese?

HIROKI
When I was placing the reservations, the restaurant did not have waitresses in kimonos, whether they spoke Japanese or not . . .

CHARLIE
Welcome to Wonderland.

ALICE
Wow. What do we do now?

CHARLIE
Now we go and explore JTown, after one more phone call.

Charlie picks up his phone and dials a number, while reading off the back of the picture. There is a bit of a pause, and then Charlie very evidently relaxes.

CHARLIE
Ito-Sama. Do you still shake your head at tales of a different and much smaller JTown?

There is a long pause.

Ieyasu Ito is now in his seventies, and is sitting in his living room, is on a phone.

IEYASU
Chari? . . . Chari!!! When did you get --- -ah, let me rephrase that. Where are you, and where have you been?

CHARLIE
Good to hear you too --- and this time I've got an even more interesting story. I and a pair of friends just got here and we are trying to find something here in JTown. I think we're in JTown, at least. Once we get outside, we'll have a better idea.

Alice and Hiroki start grabbing things off the table.

ACT II

SCENE 4

Setting: Outside Nipponshoku Resutoran and also Ieyasu's living room

At Rise: There is a doorway that Alice and Hiroki are walking through, with Charlie behind them. Charlie is still on the phone

Alice and Hiroki look around, and then pretty much just freeze and stare. Finally,

HIROKI
Are we even still in San Francisco?

Alice points down the hill.

ALICE
We have to be in San Francisco or really close by. They're using Muni shelters for bus stops here.

Charlie peers about.

CHARLIE
OK, I am outside, and . . .

Backdrop: A large complex made of a multi story Japanese design castle, an archway over Geary, and another multi story Japanese design castle.

CHARLIE
Oh, I know where we are, we're near the Eastern Gate. So, where do we find you these days, and does the Gee Kay building still have that Temple in the first ---

Charlie is staring off across JTown.

CHARLIE
Oh. Wow. We rebuilt the entire building, didn't we. Wow.

IEYASU
Yes we did, several years ago by now, in fact. And we do still have the Temple in the first floor. We have a much larger lab section along with all the office space, and we
(MORE)

IEYASU (cont'd)
also now have an entire apartment wing, and that is where I now live. And, in fact, after I retired from Gee Kay, I became one of the Temple priests.

CHARLIE
That, Is, Perfect, and is exactly what we'd like to talk to you about . . . Sooo, are you up for a set of sudden visitors?

IEYASU
Absolutely.

CHARLIE
Excellent.

IEYASU
How soon can you get here?

CHARLIE
We're coming down Post Street, we should be there in about ten, fifteen minutes.

ACT II

SCENE 5

Setting: Garasu-Kai lobby

At Rise: The lobby is large, understated industrial with foliage, Guard One and Guard Two perched behind a desk. One wall of the lobby is the current incarnation of the Temple.

Alice, Charlie, and Hiroki open a door, clearly edge their way into the lobby. After a moment, there is a hiss from a corner.

IEYASU
Chari?!??!

Ieyasu steps out from behind a decorative tree and walks towards them, stops a few feet away. Charlie and Ieyasu stare at each other, Alice and Hiroki watching as well.

IEYASU
You really did stay the same after thirty years . . .

CHARLIE
Well, it's been thirty years for you --- wait. How did you know?!

IEYASU
Yes, I can definitely tell you all about how I know.

He turns to Alice and Hiroki.

IEYASU
Your friends?

CHARLIE
Yes. Alice Dorothy Suzuki, Hiroki Kuwabatake, meet Ieyasu Ito.

All shake hands.

CHARLIE
And, we have brought you a gift.

Charlie pulls the tchotchke out of his shoulderbag. Ieyasu looks shocked and delighted.

IEYASU
Where did you find one of those?!

ALICE
It's been sitting at a Zen Center about two hundred miles north of ---

CHARLIE
--- About two hundred miles north from <u>our</u> six block JTown, not this JTown.

Ito nods.

IEYASU
Yes. That actually does make much more sense than you might expect. Let's go up to my apartment and I can tell you all about it.

ACT II

SCENE 6

Setting: Ieyasu's living room

Backdrop: An aerial view of the large JTown, looking towards City Hall from near the Presidio.

At Rise: The living room has a large electronic table with seats around it, and large picture windows looking out over JTown. Alice and Hiroki are practically glued to the windows as Ito follows Charlie out of a hallway.

Ito particularly notes the fascination.

CHARLIE
What is out there is definitely JTown, but they have never seen any of what this JTown has. As I've always said, what we come from is only six blocks of JTown these days. We have no idea how there got to be two different JTowns in two different San Franciscos, but it all started during World War Two. And the problem that brings us here is that something got left behind.

IEYASU
And I believe I know exactly what you're looking for. But first, let me show you large detail views of JTown.

Backdrop: An aerial view of the large JTown, looking west towards Geary and Masonic.

The four of them are gathered around a large electronic surfaced table, looking at various map views of JTown. Alice is tapping on a location in a map.

IEYASU
Robert Redford has his own film festival now? And his own theatre in JTown.

CHARLIE
And a theatre in JTown.

ALICE
And in our JTown, this is where the Kabuki Theater is.

Alice has shifted to a different spot around the table.

ALICE
Here is where the elder home would be, where Noriko is now.

She looks up at Ieyasu.

ALICE
I don't know what you would have there in this JTown.

Backdrop: An aerial view of the large JTown, looking east towards the Eastern Gate.

Everyone has shifted about and are now sitting at the table.

ALICE
And so Noriko's father said to take the urn to the local Temple, see if someone can hold it for the family, preferably see if she can ask Samuel for that.

IEYASU
That is the name!

ALICE
Samuel?

IEYASU
The Temple records tell of a priest named Samuel who had been part of the Temple staff since before World War Two. And the last that you knew of Samuel, he had the urn?

CHARLIE
Going into the war, he had the urn.

ALICE
Afterwards, all he had was the Garasu-Kai tchotchke.

IEYASU
Yes. That completely ties into what we've been able to learn over time. And yes, we've known for quite some time that there was something odd about the urn. Keep telling the story, and then I'll fill in.

ALICE
After the war, Noriko and her family move back into JTown, but of course with everything that's happened, everything
(MORE)

ALICE (cont'd)
after the war is just as chaotic as the start. And then by that point, no one has any idea where Samuel is, or the urn.

IEYASU
Or the urn. Or Samuel. And Chari, I remember, was quite fascinated by the Temple --- as well as always checking all the details for everything, which made him such an excellent staff member of ours --- But then again you were here looking for the urn, and Samuel was long gone by then . . .

CHARLIE
Quite. Then again, I had no idea I would wind up here, but as long as I was here, I study history, so of course I'm going to look around. So first I found out that the nineteen fifty seven building does exist and does include the Temple. And when that building is opened, the first thing out of the glass labs is one thousand of the ugliest tchotchkes ever made.

Ieyasu laughs

IEYASU
And now the very few that still exist have become quite valued collector's items. So yes, if you would like to make a donation, I would be very happy to add it to the Gee Kay collection.

ALICE
It's yours.

IEYASU
Thank you!

CHARLIE
And, therefore, about nineteen fifty seven is when Samuel would have gotten his, where staff of the Temple hosted by Garasu-Kai would indeed have that special access.

IEYASU
Yes. He would.

CHARLIE
So by that point, Samuel will have no idea where Noriko is, just that she did not return to JTown as far as he knows. Also, with the Temple continuing on after the war, the Temple can become a much better caretaker overall than he.

IEYASU
And we have a number of urns in the Temple which we hold for various reasons.

CHARLIE
Sometime after that, Samuel manages to shift from here to there --- I'm guessing that for him he was doing nothing more than retiring from the Temple, moving out of JTown ---

HIROKI
And never noticing a complete change . . .

CHARLIE
He wouldn't have to --- I knew that I had a different environment when I arrived here, but then this was definitely two different JTowns . . . As long as the background details all match up, and as long as he never returned to JTown, he may never have noticed. Or, maybe one or two details would be different, but he could just ignore those.

HIROKI
Other people did notice something different --- his stories were different.

IEYASU
He told people about this JTown?

ALICE
Weeell, apparently yes, however. According to the priests at the center he retired to, he would tell a story about being a bartender, or he would tell a story about working with groups of people. And then after some while later, or after several stories, only then did people start to realize that there were some odd extra details . . . But otherwise, the stories were perfectly fine, and Samuel was perfectly fine, so anything odd took a long time to be noticed.

CHARLIE
And at the center, he became a long time staff member. He finally died in the mid nineties. The tchotchke stayed at the center, where it and his stories gave the other priests just enough reason to keep it instead of giving it away.

ALICE
And then I turned up fifteen years or so later, and where I'm specifically looking for him and something he's supposed to have. But it's not the urn and Noriko even had a receipt for the urn.

CHARLIE
And when I have the tchotchke looked at, that is when we find a newspaper article and a picture.

Backdrop: A huge emerald green cremation urn.

Alice pulls out the newspaper article and the picture. Ieyasu looks at the picture.

IEYASU
Yes. That is the urn. It is in the Temple, and that picture does start to answer sooo many questions. But then you turned up in the nineteen seventies . . . .

CHARLIE
Yes. That is where Hiroki here comes in, with his consulate near the smaller JTown.

HIROKI
Last month, Alice came to us after she found the tchotchke, but then couldn't any trace of Garasu-Kai.

IEYASU
Last month?

CHARLIE
Last month. For us, all of this started one month ago. For us, that party where you and I first met was three weeks ago, not thirty years ago. But, the party three weeks ago was a nineteen seventies theme party that the consulate invited Alice and me to.

HIROKI
Alice had a question about Japanese businesses that the consulate couldn't answer. But at the same time, we were about to host a large number of visiting Japanese companies. Our idea was to recommend she attend our big party for the visiting sararimen, and see if anyone attending might have any idea. At the same time, the several visiting Japanese companies wanted to see a variety of aspects of America rather than just our Japantown. So with the theme focus, we rented out space in an event center outside of our Japantown, at Geary and Masonic.

CHARLIE
And Geary and Masonic, here, is,

IEYASU AND CHARLIE
(in chorus)
The Western Gate.

CHARLIE
And so somehow, even with the party being in our time, twenty ten, with the seventies theme for the party, we also got Gee Kay staff who were attending from nineteen seventy four.

IEYASU
And that was the party where you met the rest of us --- and we were there because that party was hosted by the consulate that we have here. And of course we were delighted to meet someone who is a historian and always kept making certain to check every historical detail.

CHARLIE
Yes, because that was the only way I could be certain of which history I was looking at. And, of course, checking history was part of the job.

IEYASU
Yes. And as part of that you would suggest a theoretical JTown that was only six blocks in size, not two hundred forty.

CHARLIE
Yes.

IEYASU
And . . . . . And how did you get back there?

CHARLIE
Do you remember the Rollerball party?

IEYASU
Yes! That was the last event you did with us before . . .

Charlie, Alice, and Hiroki pay very close attention.

CHARLIE
Before . . .

IEYASU
Well, yes, that is one of the odd parts that we finally got back to once we started studying the urn. You see, until we started studying the urn, none of us really thought about it, but all we remembered was that you had left town at some point. Somehow the paperwork just never got handled correctly, but you had moved on to some different job.

CHARLIE
Yes. That's what happened with Alice and Hiroki. I got back, and somehow they knew I had been out of town on some trip, even though nothing had been discussed. So at this point, I've been back for a couple of days, and yes, for you it's been thirty years.

IEYASU
Yes, yes, for twenty years or so, everyone just knew that Chari went out of town, went on vacation after the party,
(MORE)

IEYASU (cont'd)
then everyone just knew that you had moved on to a different job, but all of that was just . . . what everyone Just Knew. About ten years ago we ran across an interesting research tool, and about seven years ago we stumbled into looking for Chari.

ALICE
What happened seven years ago?

IEYASU
For that, we will get some more people.

Ieyasu pulls out a cell phone and dials, listens for a moment.

IEYASU
It's Ito. A very interesting constellation opportunity has just come up. If people are interested and available at zero notice, meet me in my apartment right now and we'll got down to the Temple. Do you remember the mystery urn? Yes, <u>that</u> urn. The answer to everything just arrived. Yes, I thought that would be your reaction. I'll leave the door unlocked, come on in.

Ieyasu hangs up, stands up.

IEYASU
We're about to be joined by a few of the other priests, and also some others living here in the building. All of us have been studying that research tool, and I'll tell you about that once I get the door open.

Ieyasu disappears off towards the door for a moment, comes back, sits, looks at the others.

IEYASU
You're here for the urn, yes?

CHARLIE
Yes.

ALICE
Yes.

IEYASU
Very well . . . I don't know for certain, but with what we've been able to tell, I think we might know the way for you to go back with the urn.

HIROKI
Just like that?

IEYASU
I . . . think . . . --- or at least we can see how this goes . . . While the others are getting here, yes, we got to the urn seven years ago.

Ito stares off thatwaway for a moment.

IEYASU
After Chari left, by the end of the century we really needed to expand out. We'd had new growth, new projects, new development, so by that point, we needed not just new building space, but basically an entire new building complex.

Backdrop: The rebuilding of the GK building in the 'nineties.

IEYASU
And so my final project for Gee Kay was to get everyone moved out of the nineteen fifty seven building and replace that with the several buildings that we are now in. Once everything was up and running, then I retired.

Backdrop: Ieyasu with other Temple priests in front of the new Temple rebuild.

IEYASU
By that point I had already been involved with the Temple, and once I retired from Gee Kay, I joined the Temple staff.

Backdrop: Ieyasu staring at assorted paperwork, then looking at a row of urns.

IEYASU
As a part of continuing with the Temple, I worked with the Temple history, and rather a collection of Temple artifacts. Included in that collection is a set of about fifteen different urns, where most came to the Temple under perfectly normal circumstances. They are former Gee Kay staff, they are Japanese Americans who came to America and were the last of the family, they are local community members where the nearest relatives are far away. For all of these the Temple is honored to be the last resting place for all of these people.

Ichi comes in from the entranceway and bows a greeting.

IEYASU
(to Ichi)
Thank you for coming. These three are the very sudden clients for this evening, and they even have an answer to the mystery urn.

Ichi looks pleased, and also has very clearly spotted Charlie.

IEYASU
Yes, guess what: This is Chari Hawthorne, he's come back, and exactly as the constellation predicted, he is the same age now as he was thirty years ago. And now I've found out what has happened with the urn, Chari is indeed involved, and we can see about clearing everything up.

Ichi looks very pleased and impressed, as there is a knock in the distance. Ieyasu waves towards the door.

IEYASU
Bring everyone else in and brief them. I'll finish briefing the three here.

Ieyasu turns back to the table as Ichi heads for the door.

Backdrop: Ieyasu and others looking at the urn and different sets of paperwork, clearly puzzled.

IEYASU
So we had fourteen urns with known histories, but for the fifteenth, we had almost no information. We had the urn itself. With the urn, there a couple of very old receipts. One stated that the urn had arrived at at the Temple at the beginning of World War Two. The other stated that the original recipient --- Samuel --- was leaving the urn in the care of the Temple. All we knew of Samuel was that he had apparently died . . . somewhere . . or mebbe he moved away? . . and that had happened by sometime in the early 'sixties, and that was basically all the information we had.

Backdrop: Ieyasu and others sitting in a scattered circle of chairs, watching two people facing each other in the middle of the chairs.

IEYASU
About ten years ago, the Temple staff and a few others of us ran across a very interesting variety of research tool
(MORE)

IEYASU (cont'd)
called systemic constellations. With all of the parallels between here and your JTown, I suspect that there are a number of people around your area who know the same. We found the process to be quite fascinating, and very informative. Finally, about seven years ago, we did an entire series of constellations to try and figure out what was going on with the mystery urn.

Alice is intrigued.

ALICE
How?

Backdrop: Bert Hellinger.

IEYASU
Systemic constellation is the name given to the overall process by a gentleman named Bert Hellinger. For a number of years he was a missionary among the Zulu, and what he observed was a practice of not just keeping in touch with people, but being aware of assorted interconnected relationships. Also, time would not be an issue, the past could be read and assessed as well. In what he witnessed, even if someone is dead, there are still echoes of a sort. Even though some issue is a concept rather than an actual person, again, there are still echoes, of a sort.

Backdrop: Bert Hellinger working with a number of people, all standing in a loose circle.

At the same time, one or two people also come into the living room from the hallway, cluster together, watching the four at the table.

IEYASU
After being a missionary he became a psychotherapist, where he used what he knew to develop systemic constellations as a research tool, practice, method, something. From there, once he started the research, others have been expanding out on what he started, with ongoing work continuing today.

Backdrop: Ieyasu and a number of people, all standing in the same sort of loose circle.

IEYASU
For a very short description of what is done, our favorite is, basically, there you are minding your own business, and along comes a flood of someone else's data. Another description we like is empathy on steroids. And, while we have a lot of experience with what happens in a
(MORE)

IEYASU (cont'd)
constellation, how this process works, we have no idea. We haven't heard of anyone having any idea how the constellation process works. A number of people have made all sorts of vague, metaphoric wild assed guesses, but that's it.

Backdrop: Ieyasu and a number of people, continuing to do constellation work.

At the same time, more people have been arriving from the hallway.

IEYASU
Just the same, for what occurs, well, we keep seeing the process reliably occurring over and over. And of what one does, one doesn't have to be or speak Zulu, if the background of a question is Japanese, anyone can do that constellation.

Backdrop: Ieyasu and a number of different people, continuing to do constellation work.

IEYASU
Anyone with any history or background can work with any lineage or culture. Even someone with no experience working with constellations can do constellation work. The constellation process doesn't care. My observation is that systemic constellations are simply something that humans just do, training is not particularly needed, experience serves as the best training, just start paying attention. Once we found out about constellations and noted what we could do with and for the Temple community, we started doing our own practice and study as a way of looking at relationships and how things tie together.

Backdrop: Ieyasu and others, one or more scribbling notes.

By this point sixteen people have joined them, men and women, several ages, where one couple definitely shows the mix; the husband is six foot five or so, his wife is about five feet tall.

IEYASU
How a constellation works, in extremely simple terms, is that there will be some sort of question or puzzling situation. In the question, in the situation, there will be a number of people who are involved, there will be a number of concepts, all related to the question in some way.

Backdrop: Ieyasu and others, with various folded over slips of paper being shaken around in a bowl.

IEYASU
Each one of these people, concepts, whatnot, gets considered as being a role to get looked at, and the interconnection of all the assorted roles is what forms the constellation. There are a number of ways to do constellations, where we use a method of notes and blind assignment.

Backdrop: Ieyasu and others seated in a circle, with the bowl being carried around the circle.

IEYASU
The constellation is done in a circle of people. One person will act as the facilitator. A number of people will act as representatives, can be chosen, can volunteer at random. Each role goes to a representative, where each representative gets handed a paper, but does not read it, and has no idea what role is being represented.

Backdrop: Ieyasu and others seated in a circle, with some standing, inside the circle of chairs.

IEYASU
And then each individual . . . waits. After a moment, representatives will start to notice . . new information, where as I said, there you are, minding your own business, and along comes a flood of someone else's data --- and no, we really have no more idea than that. Most of us are priests who used to run a glassmaking company. We have no understanding of extremely obscure interpersonal physiology.

Backdrop: Ieyasu in the middle of the circle, standing near someone and looking at a piece of paper.

IEYASU
After another while, the facilitator will ask each representative what the representative is encountering, which can be emotional reactions, physical sensations, an impression of needing to move to a different spot in the circle, there are a number of occurrences that can turn up. And then we see how the puzzle pieces fit together.

And, very simply, seven years ago we took that process and put the situation of the mystery urn through it to see what puzzle pieces we could put together there.

Backdrop: Ieyasu in a Garasu-Kai office with others, and pictures of the urn and Charlie.

IEYASU
After rather awhile, and with a lot of staring at those puzzles, we did figure out some information, even if the information didn't quite make sense.

The newcomers all definitely nod along.

IEYASU
The urn definitely needs to be somewhere else, but that somewhere else is here. Even while there is no family who can come to collect the urn, family members do exist and must come here in person. Very particularly, when the family member receives the urn, there will be some very massive and immense occurrence . . of some sort.

Someone from Gee Kay is involved. First, that someone appeared to be me, but then more detailed information finally pointed to Charlie. Charlie had not been heard of in years, but then it turned out that Charlie was in the same location as the family, and that also Charlie was here, but not here. Finally, even though Charlie was last seen thirty years ago, Charlie has not changed at all in thirty years.

Frankly, if we had not also been doing lots and lots of other constellations, we would have considered this information to be total gibberish. Because of our experience, we took lots of notes, and for lack of any other idea, we have waited. . . . . And then finally tonight, my phone rang, and Charlie was on the other end . . . .

There is a bit of applause from the newcomers, and then giggles.
Ieyasu turns, waves at the table.

IEYASU
Ladies and gentlemen, allow me to introduce Alice Dorothy Suzuki, who is here to recover the urn of her several greats grandfather, on behalf of her family.

The newcomers all bow, Alice blinks and does a variety of seated bow.

IEYASU
With her is Hiroki Kuwabatake, who is a representative of the consulate of Japan, but, is not from the consulate we know of.

The newcomers all bow, Hiroki pops out of his chair, does a quick bow, and then sits again.

IEYASU
All three of these people have come from somewhere else that is also exactly right here --- just as the constellations kept telling us.

And finally, this is Chari Hawthorne, the one and only. He is indeed exactly as he was thirty years ago because for him and somewhere else that is also exactly right here, everything from thirty years ago is also only two nights ago.

The newcomers all bow, Charlie does a seated bow, and then also waves. When in America . . . . .

IEYASU
Now that Charlie has turned up again, and with Alice and Hiroki being a part, I quite suspect that the bit about the urn being a really major trigger may be a solution for quite a number of puzzles.

And that's why I also think that the Temple priests also tie in, given the long missing Samuel.

CHARLIE
I'll take your word for it for the constellation details. On another hand, with what I've experienced, if we're going to do something with the urn, we probably better do it in the Temple and definitely at ground level --- In our JTown, elsewhere, we don't have a forty story building complex.

Everyone snickers.

HIROKI
Are any particular preparations needed?

Ito waves towards the newcomers.

IEYASU
Nothing elaborate. We'll use the Temple for somewhere to work, and use what we already have down there, with the three of you, and the rest of us here.

ICHI
Yes, when formally being The Priest, for detailed rituals and grand formal ceremonies, I and other priests do have the formal robes and all the assorted ritual items.

Ito nods along.

ICHI
Ultimately, though, just like everything else, the core issue is what does the person do? A title isn't important, particular clothing isn't important --- noting claims made by very odd people, the costume isn't important.

IEYASU
Just like anyone and anyplace else, what one does is what is most important . . .

CHARLIE
Are there any particular security issues?

IEYASU
Oh, we do have quite tight security in the glassware lab complex, but going into the Temple will be fine. In the Temple, we have different concerns.

ACT II

SCENE 7

Setting: Temple meeting room

At Rise: The meeting room is a large, mostly empty room. There is a table off to one side, and a stack of chairs of some sort.

Ito and the others turn on the lights. Ni has a question.

NI
For this, do you think the usual chairs?

IEYASU
Usual chairs, yes, and let's get the table to go in the center for this.

Ito looks about as people go for the chairs and table.

In a moment, there is a semicircle of chairs with a table a one end of the chairs. A bowl is on a chair at the other end of the semicircle.

--Staging note: A constellation circle is a circle. In this instance the table is in the middle of the circle. Ieyasu and the others will sit at some set of chairs in the circle, with all extending from that. However, there is the issue of theatrical staging and audience sightlines.

Ito has a clipboard with paper and a couple of pens. He waves Alice towards a seat by the bowl.

IEYASU
Alice, go ahead and sit by the bowl, I will take the chair with the bowl. Charlie and Hiroki, sit on either side of us.

As everyone starts sitting down in the chairs, Ito nods to Ichi and Ni.

IEYASU
Would you bring us the urn?

Ichi and Ni head out of the room as everyone finishes sitting down. Ito puts the clipboard and bowl on the table, and then sits down. After a moment, the two return, one carrying the urn, one carrying a large envelope.

ALICE
Oh.

Alice pulls out the picture of the urn and Noriko's receipt as the priest with the urn puts it on the large table. Ito holds out a hand for the picture, and when Alice gives it to him, shows it to the others. Several nod.

IEYASU
And, Alice also has her family's copy of the original receipt that was signed by Noriko and Samuel.

More nodding from the others. Definitely, items are getting checked off. Ni pulls a sheet of paper out of the envelope,

NI
Here is the Temple copy of the original receipt.

The receipt goes on the table. Ni looks at Alice particularly.

NI
And, there is something else that has been here with the receipt.

Backdrop: A picture of an elderly man in a kimono, with a very small girl in a western dress beside him.

He pulls out a picture frame, walks over to Alice, and offers it. Alice is in shock.

ALICE
(finally)
That <u>is</u> Noriko . . . And at that age, that picture could only have been taken in Japan.

IEYASU
There is a note on the back of the picture that says the picture is of Noriko and her great grandfather. Put it by the urn.

Ni goes to the table and places the picture next to the urn, facing Alice and Ito. Ito turns to Hiroki.

IEYASU
Yes, I expect you will definitely be of help in this.

HIROKI
Thank you. Let me know whatever I need to do.

IEYASU
I think we have everything we need for this. I expect that once we get started everything will connect together, with everything relating to everything else. Very likely this will not be a usual constellation.

ICHI
Will not be.

IEYASU
Definitely, I think, will not be a usual constellation. We will start with the very usual systemic constellation, and will continue on from there, and we will see what what we get to as part of that process.

The regulars nod. The trio watch. Ito goes to the table, tears some paper into strips and starts writing.

IEYASU
Usually none of the names being represented are known to anyone but the client and the facilitator, but this is not the usual exercise. We'll still do blind assignment though, and see what occurs.

And then reading out loud as he does so, Ito writes names on different pieces of paper. When done, each paper is folded over and dropped into the bowl

IEYASU
Several greats grandfather, whose ashes are in the urn. Noriko. Noriko's mother. Noriko's father. Samuel. Small JTown with Noriko. Large JTown here. America. Japan.

HIROKI
America and Japan?

IEYASU
A systemic constellation is made of all relevant connections and associations, where in many instances an original country and culture do have a very major influence on many individuals.

Ieyasu picks up the bowl and stirs the papers about as he carries the bowl to Alice.

IEYASU
Therefore in instances when the connections can get to the overall national, cultural, social level, they are also included --- It's not some current government that is connected, it is all the people, all the land, all the history.

He hands the the bowl to Alice and sits down.

IEYASU
Take this around the circle, and if you get . . . inspired . . . to go in some direction, follow the inspiration. You won't look at the names, that's why the papers are folded over. Charlie and Hiroki will observe. You can offer the bowl, you can give an individual a paper, whatever seems best. When you run out of names, come back and sit down. What will happen from there is that those who get the papers will do whatever they are inspired to do. Everyone else will remain seated and observe. And we will see what happens, and react accordingly.

Alice stands up with the bowl and works her way around the circle, shifting back and forth. People select individual papers, stand up, and slip the papers into a pocket. At one point Alice stops and looks at Ito.

ALICE
There's nothing touching me, but, I'm . . . being pulled in various directions.

IEYASU
Excellent.

Many in the circle nod along.

IEYASU
We have already begun.

Two of the people selected are the husband and wife. Soon, Alice runs out of papers and brings the bowl back to Ito. She sits down as Ito stashes the bowl under his chair. There is a long pause, and then people start shifting about. Ieyasu comments to the trio.

IEYASU
At this point, Alice has given the papers to the people standing. In doing so, each person with a paper is now a representative with a role.

There are more pauses as people assess where they are, looking about on occasions, more shifts occur.

IEYASU
We will see who winds up as whom, where constellations don't care --- a man can be representing a woman and vice versa. And of course concepts, such as America and Japan, don't have any particular gender, and of course they can be represented by anyone.

After some time, Cee-Samuel is standing by the table, facing Alice alone. On the other side of the table is Cee-Noriko who is also facing Alice, where Cee-Mother and Cee-Father have lined up just behind Cee-Noriko. Off behind the parents, and slightly back a bit is Cee-Grandfather who is rather particularly next to the table. The husband, Cee-Large-JTown and wife, Cee-Small-JTown are standing facing each other, lined up half way between Alice and the table, with all the others basically in the general space between the two JTowns. The last two, Cee-America and Cee-Japan, are behind the table, facing towards Alice, but keep shifting on occasion.

CEE-AMERICA
Um . . . My location seems to be correct, but I'm not tall enough.

CEE-JAPAN
I have the same thought.

IEYASU
Get your chairs, put them where they seem appropriate, and go ahead and stand on them.

The two get their chairs, place them behind the table, stand on them and then very clearly get settled in. One of the ones by the table opens a mouth, closes it.

IEYASU
(to representative)
How are you doing?

CEE-GRANDFATHER
This one very much wants to say something to Alice, but I'm not quite clear what.

Ito nods, then gets up and starts working around the group, collecting the papers, reading them off, and placing them on the large table, behind the urn.

IEYASU
Small JTown. Large JTown. Samuel. Many greats grandfather. Noriko's Mother. Noriko's Father. Noriko. America. Japan.
(to the trio)
When we get someone doing a role of an entire country, the point of view that representative gets is huge. Rather usually, the best view, of that scale, is up an a chair. And, in turn, time travels forward. The older generations go in the back, the younger generations go to the front. the same generation ranks by age while standing side by side.

At that point, many greats grandfather heaves a big sigh, turns back and forth for a moment.

IEYASU
(to Cee-Grandfather)
Go ahead.

Cee-Grandfather starts talking to Alice.

CEE-GRANDFATHER
This one is very happy to see you. I . . I've been away from the family for a very, very long time, and completely
(MORE)

CEE-GRANDFATHER (cont'd)
understand what people did with the urn and why. Now that you have come for me, it is indeed time for you to finally take me home.

With that, Alice starts blinking, tears start appearing.

CEE-SAMUEL
I couldn't find Noriko, I didn't know where she was. But now that you are here, now you can take the urn back to Noriko.

He turns to Cee-Noriko,

CEE-SAMUEL
Thank you for the honor of the urn. I am very happy that the urn can finally be returned to you.

CEE-NORIKO
(to Cee-Samuel)
Thank you for the assistance that you have given my family for so many years.

Cee-Noriko turns to Alice

CEE-NORIKO
I was quite understandably not able to find the urn again. Now that you will be able to bring Sofu back home, that will be absolutely wonderful.

CEE-FATHER
(to Alice)
Yes, we needed Sofu to be safe, so of course the correct procedure was to have Noriko hand him off for safekeeping.

CEE-MOTHER
(to Alice)
Now that he's been found again, it's time to bring him home.

Alice has tears running down her face. Cee-Large-JTown turns to Cee-Grandfather.

CEE-LARGE-JTOWN
It has been an honor to have kept you safe for all these years, but now you need to go to the other JTown, where Noriko is.

Cee-Small-JTown replies to Cee-Large-JTown.

CEE-SMALL-JTOWN
Noriko has been very well while she has been living here, and her great grandfather will be extremely welcome once he comes back.

Everyone turns to look behind the table. Cee-Japan turns to Cee-America

CEE-JAPAN
Grandfather, Noriko's parents, and Noriko came from here, and I am very happy that they have done very well in America.

CEE-AMERICA
They have been and are very welcome here, and I am very happy to also be the home for Noriko's children and Alice.

Samuel turns back towards Ito.

CEE-SAMUEL
(to Ito)
The paperwork needs to be done. The definite last step here is to formally release several greats grandfather from the care of the Temple, and return him to Alice.

Samuel points to the urn

CEE-SAMUEL
Once the papers are signed, the urn becomes the final matter.

Cee-Grandfather points to the urn.

CEE-GRANDFATHER
Yes. The answer is to be provided through the urn.

Ito gets up.

IEYASU
Alice and Hiroki, would you join me at the table?

They go to the table. Ieyasu turns to Alice.

IEYASU
May I have the original receipt?

Backdrop: The two receipts are side by side

The two receipts are put side by side, and Ito picks up a pen.

Commenting as he does so, Ito amends the two receipts.

IEYASU
On this date, several greats grandfather's urn, that had begun its travels in Japan and had come to America, is now finally returned to his family, and is released by the Temple. As a witness of this, as a representative of Japan, being in America, Hiroki, would you sign both receipts?

Hiroki takes the pen and signs both receipts. The representatives of Japan and America climb back down from the chairs and all the representatives go back to their chairs and sit. Finally, Ito hands the pen to Alice. Alice bows to Ito.

ALICE
I am extremely thankful to the Temple for all the years of keeping Sofu safe. And I am very happy to now finally retrieve him and return him to his family.

Ito bows in response. Alice signs one receipt, and then the other receipt, and then straightens up. Several people look startled as the constellation papers shift about and swirl off the table. Ito turns back to Charlie.

IEYASU
Yes, that was a breeze, in an enclosed room --- The building does have excellent air circulation, but it doesn't act like that. At this point we have very much just now gone beyond just a systemic constellation.

Charlie looks at everyone, stands up, and pulls his cell phone out of his pocket. He taps a few buttons and looks at Ito, waiting. The cell phone clicks a couple of times, and then starts ringing. After a few rings, there is a beep, and as Charlie walks over to Ito, Alice's voice announces

ALICE
(phone)
Thank you for your call, and I am very happy to hear from you, but I am not available at the moment. Please let me
(MORE)

ALICE (cont'd)
know your name and number, and I will be happy to return your call.

Alice nods.

CHARLIE
That's Alice's work number, off in the other JTown.

Charlie hands the phone to Ito,

IEYASU
Hello, Alice, Ieyasu Ito here. You have done very well and several greats grandfather is coming home.

Alice is sobbing as Ito finishes the call, hands the phone back to Charlie,

IEYASU
It is time.

Charlie looks at Ito. Ito hands Alice the picture and the family for the urn, and with tears still streaming down her face, she puts them into her shoulderbag.

IEYASU
Hiroki, get a good grip on the urn.

Hiroki does so.

IEYASU
Charlie, do the same.

Charlie also reaches for the urn, places his hands in a way that leaves one pair of spots to grab.

CHARLIE
It's been good seeing you again Ito-Sama. Goodbye.

IEYASU
It's been delightful seeing you again as well, Chari. Goodbye.

The remaining constellation participants stand up from their chairs, and everyone bows their goodbyes. Alice reaches for the urn, and grasps it firmly, and the room starts to light up, and light

up, and light up some more, and everything goes white.

ACT II

SCENE 8

Setting: Kimbell park and then Alice's living room

At Rise: Charlie and Hiroki are standing on either side of Alice in San Francisco's Kimbell park in the afternoon sun.

Alice has her arms wrapped around the urn and is bawling her eyes out.

Backdrop: Geary above Laguna. JTown and the pagoda can be seen down the hill along Geary.

A pair of of tables built as pillars or so arrive downstage. Charlie and Hiroki stay where they are as Alice walks to one of the tables with the urn, places the urn on the table. She then pulls the picture out of her shoulderbag and places it next to the urn.

Alice then goes to the second table, reaches into it. Alice lifts up a second urn, one that is cherry blossom pink and clearly much newer, and she places it on the second table. She then pulls a second picture out of her shoulderbag, and places that second picture next to the second urn.

Most of the stage goes dark, with the two urns extremely highlighted.

Backdrop, very brightly lit up or bright enough to be a source of light:

A photo of an elderly man in a kimono, with a very small girl in a western dress beside him.

Next to the photo is another photo: Noriko at mebbe eighty years old or

so, dressed in a cherry blossom pink western dress, with a very small girl beside her, dressed in a cherry blossom pink kimono.