

JTown

Written by

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Initial Draft

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 True 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: Late twenties, historian, pottery expert

Hiroki Kuwabatake: Staff member, Japanese Consulate

Ieyasu Ito: Japanese businessman and then priest, thirties and then seventies

Noriko: Over one hundred years old

## Supporting Characters:

Staffer: Staff member at the JTown elder care home  
 Clerk: Staff member at San Francisco Hall of Records  
 William: Nineties 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  
 Ah: Japanese business staff member  
 Ee: Japanese business staff member  
 Oo: Japanese business staff member  
 Maikeru Nezumi: Japanese business staff member  
 Donarudo Ahiru: Japanese business staff member  
 Oroka Inu: 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  
 Young Samuel: Thirties or so and then fifties or so  
 Samuel: Eighties or so  
 Younger William: Twenties or so, still active priest.  
 Adult William: Forties or so, still active priest.  
 William junior: Mebbe twelve or so, very much adolescent.  
 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 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 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: San Francisco Hall of Records  
 Scene 5: Charlie's office  
 Scene 6: William's living room  
 Scene 7: Yonmitsugo conference hall  
 Scene 8: Yonmitsugo conference hall  
 Scene 9: Yonmitsugo conference hall  
 Scene 10: Yonmitsugo conference hall  
 Scene 11: Yonmitsugo storage room  
 Scene 12: Charlie's office  
 Scene 13: Charlie's office  
 Scene 14: JTown elder care home meeting room  
 Scene 15: Japanese Consulate  
 Scene 16: Japanese Consulate  
 Scene 17: Masonic Avenue Conference Center  
 Scene 18: Masonic Avenue Conference Center  
 Scene 19: Western Gate Bar

Scene 20: Western Gate Bar entranceway  
Scene 21: Geary and Masonic

## 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.*

Hullo, how are you? STAFFER

Not bad. ALICE

What can I do for you? STAFFER

*A pause.*

How is Noriko doing? ALICE

*Another pause.*

She . . . STAFFER

Yes. That. ALICE

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

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

Yes. STAFFER

She . . . ALICE

STAFFER

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

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 ISCENE 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.*

*Alice is seated 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 young 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 is leaning back in his chair.*

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 ISCENE 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 are sitting in chairs in front of Noriko. Charlie has his notebook open and Noriko is looking at a picture that he is holding. 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 ISCENE 4

*Setting: San Francisco Hall Of Records*

*AT Rise: A Clerk is behind a counter*

*Alice walks up to the counter.*

CLERK

How's it going?

ALICE

It isn't.

*A pause.*

ALICE

Let me check my logic---Someone died several years ago. I'm trying to find his death certificate so that I can get more information about his circumstances when he died.

CLERK

You said World War Two?

ALICE

The story is that he died sometime during World War Two.

CLERK

That could be anywhere. It was a war. He'll only be listed in here if he did die in San Francisco.

*Alice looks at her notes.*

ALICE

And we don't even have certainty on his name  
(to the clerk)

He was a Japanese monk, Japanese American, and we have a name on a receipt, but there might be a different name on a driver's license or something.

CLERK

And for that we're going to need the name on something like a driver's license.

ACT ISCENE 5

*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, staring at the ceiling. Alice is sitting in a chair.*

CHARLIE

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

ALICE

With Japanese ancestry, he probably went to one of the internment 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: The Temple as an adult age William is processing along through and from the the Temple, goes around Alice and Charlie, and then back into the Temple. And he has a much smaller version of him, William junior, in blue jeans and shirt who is following along behind him.*

CHARLIE

With the focus on the religious practice, that focus is what makes someone a monk---a married monk with several kids is totally normal---as the ongoing personal religious practice goes on . . . And, from there, Noriko got a receipt---that's what a staff person does, that's what a Temple priest does---and there has 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 ISCENE 6

*Setting: William's living room*

*At Rise: A much older 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 the younger William 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, that was sometime in the early nineteen nineties.

ACT ISCENE 7

*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 ISCENE 8

*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 ISCENE 9

*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 ISCENE 10

*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 Abbott turns to Alice.*

ABBOT

How about we show you The Bottles.

ACT ISCENE 11

*Setting: Yonmitsugo storage room*

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

*Backdrop: Assorted stufh 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 JTown that very specifically had been given to him by that company, by Garasu-Kai, just before he left JTown.

*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 Jtown, living there for quite a few years, and then it was only in the late sixties when he left JTown.

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 JTown 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 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 if anyone asked him about any oddities.

ALICE

Like what?

FREDERICK

Well, there is the JTown 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)

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  
 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 JTown, they would march under the big archway on the east end of JTown.

*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 JTown. 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 JTown and through JTown, 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 JTown, 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 end of the war, because the Temple closed down. That's why that priest moved elsewhere.

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 be 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 JTown, 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 JTown.

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. . .*

FREDERICK

That was a really big building that later got converted into a dance and concert hall and the hall is---or was---on Geary.

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 an interment camp was mentioned, it was just The Camp---and remember, for years, no one ever talked about the internment camps.

ALICE

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

FREDERICK

Yes.

ALICE

Which used to be the internment camp

FREDERICK AND ALICE

(in chorus)

administration barracks.

FREDERICK

On Geary. 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 be 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 JTown, 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 JTown, 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 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  
(MORE)

FREDERICK (cont'd)

tell of the Japanese businessmen who would all come from Japan, coming east to America, to JTown. They would all come up the hill to a bar that was in JTown, 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 JTown bar called The Western Gate is at the top of the hill, going west on Geary from the middle of JTown.

*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 being told here, and we here 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 that, according to the story, there is an internment camp administration barracks in the middle of JTown, 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 JTown. 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 JTown, 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 ISCENE 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. 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 the center 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 ISCENE 13

*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 . . . while 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 ISCENE 14

*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 ISCENE 15

*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 JTown, 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 JTown. 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 ISCENE 16

*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 ISCENE 17

*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?

Well, I know Ninjutsu. CHARLIE

Oh, really! HIROKI

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

*Hiroki and Diplomat laugh.*

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. DIPLOMAT

Oh good. That will help. CHARLIE

ACT ISCENE 18

*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 Ah, Ee, and Oo.*

AH

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.

EE

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.

O0

What is the name of the company?

ALICE

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

*Ah, Ee, and Oo stare off thataway.*

AH

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

EE

That is a Japanese company name.

O0

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

AH

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

ACT ISCENE 19

*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 Donarudo Ahiru, Oroka Inu, and Ieyasu Ito. He 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, OROKA

(in chorus)

Oooohhhhh!

*Donarudo, Oroka, and Ieyasu, and Charlie, race each other in pulling out business cards. Charlie loses the race slightly, but he's pulling out three. They all exchange 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.*

MAIKERU

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

*Donoradu and Charlie hand off cards and each bow.*

MAIKERU

And this is Oroka Inu, who is also a project manager at Gsrasu-Kai, also here in San Francisco.

*Oroka and Charlie hand off cards and each bow. Everyone inspects the business cards for a moment.*

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 Oroka are looking from the cards to Charlie.*

DONARUDO

You know a good deal of California history and culture.

*He then pointedly looks at Ieyasu.*

OROKA

You also study Asian glassware.

*He 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.*

OROKA

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.

OROKA

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 Oroka look around, then point off to the exit.*

DONARUDO

That way.

ACT ISCENE 20

*Setting: Western Gate Bar  
entranceway*

*At Rise: A hallway.*

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

OROKA

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 ISCENE 21

*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 Donarudo and Oroka look around.*

OROKA

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.*

OROKA

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

*Donarudo and Oroka 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 Oroka are impressed.*

OROKA

And what proverb is that?

CHARLIE

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

*Donarudo and Oroka laugh.*

DONARUDO

Oh, that's good!

OROKA

A perfect example of mixing everything together!

*The three of them head off down the  
hill.*

ACT IISCENE 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 IISCENE 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.*

Hullo, Hiroki. CHARLIE

Charlie! HIROKI

*They shake hands*

How was your trip? HIROKI

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

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

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? CHARLIE

Well, you were . . . . HIROKI

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

Yes! And . . . . HIROKI

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, Alice In Wonderland, and Through the Looking Glass?

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, that 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, my.

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. Odd would be if they were not carrying business cards.

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 I 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, Oroka, 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, 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 has been there for about three years.

ALICE

Three years?

*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  
(MORE)

CHARLIE (cont'd)

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 years ago?

CHARLIE

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

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; which 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.

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.

*Backdrop: Adult Noriko is now  
standing behind Alice, watching the  
briefing, but not being noticed by  
the trio.*

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 happened.

HIROKI

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, there is a different San Francisco.

ALICE

How do you get a different San Francisco?

*Backdrop: An aerial view of San Francisco.*

CHARLIE

Welllll, 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 have always known of.

*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 (MORE)

CHARLIE (cont'd)

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 to Masonic, more or less from Pacific to Hayes. 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 JTowns? 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: Young 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 six thousand, seven thousand additional 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 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 becomes a 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, the huge Japanese oriented area that already exists in San Francisco is a natural magnet.

*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  
(MORE)

CHARLIE (cont'd)  
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: 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 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

In nineteen fifty seven, 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 formal opening.*

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, 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, 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 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?

CHARLIE

Nineteen seventy four, just like having a really detailed and dedicated 'seventies theme party. Except for one set of hosts who actually were staging a theme party, people showed up who actually are 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 quite out of work and immediately 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 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 going over international corporate details, issues in Rollerball. Did I mention the decade starting in twenty ten? We talked over assorted corporate manipulations, 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 haven't been gone for 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 Hiroki 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  
(MORE)

CHARLIE (cont'd)  
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 IISCENE 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 JTown.

*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 would fit for a different JTown.

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, Oroka, 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, Oroka, 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, Oroka Inu, and Ieyasu Ito.

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

OPERATOR

(from phone)

Oroka Inu transferred to the New York office, retired, and now lives in Tokyo.

*Backdrop: Ieyasu by himself, in the picture of Donarudo, Oroka, 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 IISCENE 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  
twenty minutes.

ACT IISCENE 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 a pocket. 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 our 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 IISCENE 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.*

## ALICE

And this is where the Kabuki Theater is.

## IEYASU

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

CHARLIE

And a theatre in JTown.

*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 collectors 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

Until 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 I 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 JTown. So with the theme focus, we rented out space in an event center outside of our JTown, 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 fifty.

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 get down to the Temple. Do you remember the mystery urn? Yes, that 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 thatway 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 our 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. How this works, we have no idea. We haven't heard of anyone having any idea how the constellation process works. A number of people

(MORE)

IEYASU (cont'd)

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 of these gets considered 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 finds 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 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 was 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. The Temple for somewhere to work, and what we already have down there, 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---with claims made by very odd people, the costume isn't important.

IEYASU

Just like anyone and anyplace else, what one will do will be what is 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 IISCENE 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 is 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. 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 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, 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 is 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 on 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 several greats 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 IISCENE 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.*