Chapter 3: MORE PRISONERS

Sunday, November 21, 1943
Morning: fried eggs, fried potatoes, coffee
Lunch: rice, pork and beans, tea
Dinner: rice, nimono (lamb with Swiss chard)

Every day, I work as a waiter and am getting a good reputation. Every day, many people from camp come to the administrator’s fence. We can see who comes. There would be comments such as “if that guy came, something is strange” or “the man who was supposed to come didn’t show up, so maybe…” Mystifying like a vortex.

The lieutenant in charge of the stockade ordered us to prepare food for thirty more people. We told him there is not enough food for thirty more. The lieutenant said, “That’s none of my business.”

We are living with barely enough food for ourselves. Now, they ordered us to prepare thirty more servings. Sure enough, twenty-eight boys from Hawaii arrived. These boys have had no food or drink since the night before because they were detained in the tents we used to occupy. We had to work so hard because we had to feed them first.

Now, the inmates total sixty-eight.

Twelve of us were moved to a small room adjacent to the shower.

We asked today's newcomers about what was going on in camp.

One said that the people in camp were collecting five dollars from each block to send a telegram to the Spanish consulate. People were also preparing comfort kits. Another said the food was getting a little better, but then, another said it was getting worse. I don’t know who is correct, but it is still a fact that the food is no good. Usually, every block cooperates with each other.

The Spanish consulate sent a telegram to George Yamatani, which read, “The whole matters regarding the camps have been assigned to the General Consul of Spain at San Francisco. The General Consul will be visiting Tule Lake for investigation. We ask for everyone’s patience, prudence, and cooperation with the Spanish Consul.” (This telegram came on the 16th or 17th to Tule Lake.)

The army refused to acknowledge the Negotiating Committee members elected by the Japanese. They announced that all the decision-making powers be delegated to the block managers.

Monday, November 22, 1943
Breakfast: coffee, potato, 1 1/2 weenie, mush
Lunch: soup with beef, rice, tea
Dinner: stew (or something like it), rice, coffee

Last night, two men from the old stockade came to the new barrack to get mattresses. Hata, the informal “chief detective,” reported that it looks like more and more are coming in. This man is always nervous and constantly collecting information, so we are well informed about things happening outside.

Fifteen Hawaiian boys joined us around 5 o’clock in the afternoon. These boys had not eaten since 4 o’clock this morning.

Altogether there are eighty-three.

I wonder, on what grounds, they are arresting these youths, who don’t seem to know anything.

The WRA leaders have already created a scenario and are detaining individuals who fit their story line, whether or not they have any connection to this situation. They are trying to prove that, somehow, there is certainty that the Japanese are causing trouble. They want to draw a false picture that they are not at fault for creating this problem in the first place. This is completely outrageous, but since they belong to a race that is completely unreasonable, what can we do?

But even so, we shouldn’t keep silent, so we sent three representatives to speak with the FBI. We asked them to correct the situation.

The FBI agent said, “If we had arrested those people (and found them innocent), we would assume responsibility and return them to camp. But since the WRA had arrested them, we do not have jurisdiction. This camp is presently under the control of the army. The WRA names the men to be arrested, and the army picks them up. We can't do anything about it.”

I asked, “But the FBI is directly under the president, isn’t it? So, aren’t you more powerful than the WRA or the army?”

The FBI agent answered, “Yes, but we live in a democracy.”

How strange that he would evoke the word, democracy.

Again, we asked the FBI, “Since the food supply is low and the quality is poor, can’t you do anything about this?”

The FBI agent said, “We have no jurisdiction. The food comes from the WRA, and the camp is under the control of the army. We have no authority, but anyhow, I will speak to them about this.”
More and more people are coming into the stockade. Now, there are sixteen people in our room, and every day, the topic of conversation turns crude and obscene. I suggested that we should stop talking like this, since it is a bad influence on the youths.

There’s no sign that the Spanish consul will be coming. Maybe someone is preventing him from coming. We were pretty sure a particular man was behind such a plot. We discussed this situation and decided to try to send a letter to the Spanish consul general on our own but I think someone prevented the letter from being sent. I think this is a fact…We discussed this within the stockade…When we asked the FBI about this, he replied that *Americans (referring to the Nisei or second generation American-born Japanese Americans. The Spanish consulate acted as a liaison for non-citizen Japanese and had no jurisdiction over American-born Japanese) couldn’t send a telegram to the Spanish consulate… I felt like saying, is this democracy? What democracy? We talked about sending a messenger pigeon for a while.

**Tuesday, November 23, 1943**

Morning: pancakes, coffee, rice  
Lunch: macaroni, rice, tea, cabbage *tsukemono*, Jell-O, apple  
Dinner: tea, rice, mackerel, cabbage

It looks like more people must be coming. A tent with four stoves was set up. I wonder what they are thinking. I just can't figure it out.

The lieutenant said, “Packages arrived from camp, but unless you clean up your room, I won’t give them to you.”

We selected Yoshiyama to speak for us. We’re detained in a 100 shaku x 20 shaku space with sixty-seven people. How can one clean under the bed in such a space? Don’t be childish.

The lieutenant frowned.

From here and there, many care packages arrived. Most contained tobacco and sweets.  
*Osaki from Shimane-ken (prefecture) received some *ohagi* (rice covered in red bean paste) from his mother, but two days had passed since she had made it, so it was already hard, but this was a rarity, so we ate them up quickly. (*Most likely referring to Wayne Osaki.*)

Since we came here, we have eaten a lot of persimmons and grapes (which were purchased by the community from the canteen). The only reason Osaki was arrested was because he owned Japanese records.

**Wednesday, November 24, 1943**  
Morning: coffee, mush, French toast, fried potato  
Lunch: rice, tea, *nimono* (cabbage and meat)  
Dinner: rice, tea, two small squids
There is a hospital nearby. For the first time, we saw nurses. Everyone was overjoyed and waved at them. Such is a young man’s passion. Other Japanese nurses came out, too, because of the noise. The youths cried out excitedly, “From now on, we schedule our exercises in a place where the nurses can see us!”

We requested a hatchet, so we could chop wood. We are allowed to use the hatchet for one hour per day.

Today, fifteen Hawaiian youths arrived at noon. Everyone was surprised. Hawaiians again!

At nighttime, the lieutenant came and ordered us to make a fire for the tent. We tried and tried. Finally, a small flame rose up.

Again, another twelve Hawaiians arrived. We feel sorry for these youths because they have to sleep in this tent, where the frost looks like snow.

Now there are 110 inmates. The increase in the population is surprising.

I read a novel titled “Nono Hana” which was one of the gifts for our room.

I heard about the Pearl Harbor attack from the Hawaiians, who had been witnesses. One Japanese soldier, who had gotten captured, had refused to eat and starved to death. I also heard about the last moments of the USS Arizona from a person, who was 200 feet from that ship as it went down.

1) The FBI confirmed the WRA’s crimes but said there was no proof, so the FBI requested the Japanese to bring in any incriminating papers as evidence.
2) Five Negotiating Committee representatives went underground. The army is using tanks and armored vehicles to search for them, barrack-by-barrack, but they have been unable to capture them.
3) There is no chance the Spanish consul general will be coming to camp.
4) Representative Yamamoto came back drunk. The plan failed. Karato (the stoic group) became vexed and disappointed by the failed strategy by the Amato (the soft group).

I had considered Yamamoto’s duty as that of Kimura Shigenari (*Shigenari was a retainer of the Toyotomi clan, who had fought bravely in battle and headed critical negotiations). It is shameful, as a Japanese, that he returned drunk at a time like this.

We hear so many rumors from the newcomers. We are proactive people of a great nation, Japan; we must discipline ourselves and study moral principles, but from early morning to late night, the men engage in lewd and bawdy conversations. In addition, they gamble from the time we wake up to the time we go to sleep.
Obscenities start the day. Obscenities end the day. Gambling starts the day. Gambling ends the day. To be worthy of a great nation, we must behave properly. I leave the room and breathe in the free air. Returning to the room, I get out my pen.

A box with matches, pants, and a sweater arrives with a letter from Yuriko:

Dear Mr. T. Inouye,
Receiving your letter made us very happy. Sayuri read it, and was reading it to Mitsuko san when I came back from mess (hall). So I guess she was very happy. Masako also understands the letter perfectly. I cannot stand to think that you are not going to enjoy the first white Christmas with us. I will hope and pray that we may be together by then.

Mr. Furuzawa brings in the coal for me every day, and that lady in block 39 came to see me every day, hoping to cheer us up a little I guess. Mr. Hayashi made soba – sushi and invited us to dinner; it certainly was good!

Gee, I wish you were here to enjoy it with us. The food at mess (hall) is getting much better so please do not worry. I am going to school from 1 o'clock to 3:00 PM every day with Miss S. Hayashi. We started from book 5, it is kind of hard but I hope that I catch up because I recall some of the words I learned 6 – 10 years ago. Sayuri and Masako play at home with Mitsuko san while I’m gone. Masako behaves very well while I am gone. Masako got up calling for pa-pa-pa-pa – she said she dreamed that pa-pa came home. She is getting a little impatient. Mr. Miyamoto wrote that he is coming to Tule Lake.

Love, Yuriko

Thursday, November 25, 1943 – Thanksgiving in the stockade
Morning: 2 pieces of bread, coffee
Lunch: spaghetti, rice, tea
Dinner: rice, cabbage mixed with weenie, carrot

Mori Hyakutaro Poem
Foggy day in jail
People here always
Talking bad about somebody
Daytime in Stockade
There is always talk
About the result of the war

War stories chosen
we talk in stockade
– Mori

Early this morning, young Kokawa cried out, “Mama!” in his sleep.
A 20-year-old yelled out, “Shut up. Are you a baby?”

It sounds rough, but it was actually said sympathetically.

Young Kokawa is only 15-years-old and has been in the stockade for three weeks.

Hawaiian seamen (from Topaz (Central Utah)) was brought into the stockade.

Altogether, there are 120 men.

Newcomers were assigned chores. Today is Thanksgiving. Eating turkey is customary but was turkey on the menu? We hoped in vain.

Across the fence is the army mess hall (it’s the same mess hall we ate in during our first three days of imprisonment in the stockade). We saw turkey after turkey being brought into the army mess hall. One soldier even held a turkey up for all of us in the stockade to see. What a cheap stunt pulled by a heartless person.

During lunch, we laughingly imagined the spaghetti as white meat and the weenies as dark meat.

The food they’ve been giving us recently is so sparse that it is barely enough to keep us from starving.

The FBI showed us a response from the Spanish Consulate, which read: “Your telegram said to come but I’ve already gone twice. I cannot visit so many times but will try to make another trip when I am able.”

We were all dumbfounded.

The FBI said Yamatomi lied to the Japanese Americans in camp and to us. However, the FBI noted that should the Japanese Americans attack Yamatomi, the mainstream newspapers would accuse the Japanese Americans of rioting.

I sent a letter to Yuriko:

I am happy to hear everyone is okay. I am fine too. You said you are going to study Japanese, study hard. Please thank Mr. Nakamura for sending me persimmons. Also thank Mr. Sakuma. I heard Mr. Furuzawa carried the coal for you. Thanks to Mr. Furuzawa. Everyone is sending us how much we feel we need nothing more. We receive so much we appreciate and we need nothing more. The mother of one of the young boys in the same room sent ohagi. Young Rogaywa is the youngest of all, and a nice boy so everyone is fond of him. I don’t know when I will return but it’s not too long. Don’t send food because it is prohibited. I wish
the day would come when we could eat “sabazushi” together. Send me “Sai Kontan” (book title).

Friday, November 26, 1943
Morning: coffee, bread, mush
Lunch: cabbage & squid marinated in vinegar, *nimono* (cabbage and weenie), rice, tea
Evening: rice, tea, Jell-O, *nimono* (cabbage, weenie, and Swiss chard)

The frost looks like snow. When I throw the water out, it freezes instantly. The frost stays all day and doesn’t disappear. Icicles form on the ties around the tent. On top of that, we have no coal.

I don’t know why but there are very few soldiers left in the stockade. Since there are no guards, the sick have no escort to the hospital and must stay in bed, moaning. Those, who are sick, are crowded into the middle of the 100’ × 20’ barrack, with beds next to beds, with no space in between except for a small walkway. I heard in the old stockade, forty people were placed. I can’t see clearly (about 150’ distance). I can only imagine how cold it must be there.

Outside of the fence, the soldiers are building another fence. They look so cold. Since they are expanding the area, I can’t tell how many more people are going to come here. We discussed who they might bring in and for what reason.

Every day, we stand outside for roll call. Today, it was cancelled. Perhaps something happened in camp. Rumors are spreading like wildfire.

At 3 o’clock, those in the new stockade were ordered to bring onigiri (rice balls) and coffee immediately to the forty new inmates, who had just been placed into the old stockade, so there was a lot of commotion. We also heard there were two women in the old stockade.

The FBI agent said Yamatani double-crossed the FBI, the Japanese, and the army.

At night, Yoshiyama met with the FBI agent who told him, “There is big trouble in camp right now. Within two to three days, you will find out.”

The FBI had asked him, “What kind of friends are Yamatani and Yamamoto?” Then, the FBI agent had said, “Somebody double-crossed you, people, and at the same time, the FBI.”

What is the big trouble? We thought and discussed it amongst ourselves but everyone had differing opinions. We only prayed for the safety of the 15,000 Japanese in the camp.

Saturday, November 27, 1943
Morning: pancakes, coffee
Lunch: *gomoku meshi* (a rice dish with a mixture of vegetables and meat) with beets, carrots, and onions that were like the *morning stars* (*refers to the notion that there are very few stars in the morning), *mame* (beans), *miso* soup

Evening: rice, tea, Jell-O, mackerel

The frost is just like snow. It sticks to the fans and is very pure, white. So beautiful.

Last night, there was a blackout. Armed guards ran around, saying, “If you get close to the fence, we will shoot you.” The lights, however, were back on soon. They probably would have brought out the armored jeeps like the time we had an electricity failure in the old stockade, so we remained inside. We joked that perhaps, we might be shot if we even peeked out. Everyone laughed.

The sun came out so I took a sunbath.

The lunch order today is for ninety people. Yesterday, it was rumored to be forty. I’m just wondering. It’s time for roll call. Outside, there are nine trucks. The snow is starting to drip off the electrical wires.

Order: Everyone is to stay in their rooms. If we disobey, we were told will be shot. We see ninety Japanese get off the trucks and make a line to the mess hall. No one could get near the kitchen except for one chief cook. I would like to have said that these armed guards were alert but instead were loafing around. The new fence is progressing. I guess they will be housed in this stockade. Currently, they are assigned to the garage.

One more new man for a total of 121.

This room is made for forty-five people, but now, it is housing 121. It is crowded like stacked potatoes. Just imagine.

Today, it is two weeks since my arrest. This newcomer’s story revealed that yesterday, each barrack room was thoroughly checked, one-by-one. They confiscated such things as canes, documents, and wooden swords. The residents of each block were lined up outside, while the search was carried out by the block manager and army. Someone hid a witness in a large suitcase but he was discovered and arrested. Another man dressed like a woman and escaped capture.

Another man was arrested after returning to his barrack for his belongings. He was arrested on the 21st of November. That night, he had gone back to his barrack and found everything in disarray, to the point that he couldn’t even see the floor. Three hundred dollars had also been stolen from a pants pocket. The pair of pants had been placed inside a locked suitcase, but the lock had been broken and the contents taken out. The next-door neighbor said that after this man’s arrest, a soldier spent one hour searching up his room. Since everyone living in that room had been arrested, no one witnessed the search.
After their arrest, some were allowed to return to retrieve their toiletry items, but when they entered their barrack room, they found their rooms in a mess. Everything had been ransacked. The soldiers had acted like children. Because of this, one particular man couldn’t find the things he wanted, but the soldier rushed him, ordering, “Hurry up.” Unable to find what he wanted, he left without them. The army says, “Be a gentlemen,” to their enlisted men, but I hear stories, here and there, about such atrocities. When the first six were arrested, a soldier returned a wallet but no cash or watches were given back. A 19-year-old boy found all of his worldly possession of $45 gone, while he was arrested at work.

The next night, one white soldier threw tear gas into the tent. He yelled, “Kill the Japs,” and created quite a commotion. The soldier pointed his gun at the group and was yelling, “Kill the Japs,” when a lieutenant happened to be passing by with several guards. He stopped the disturbance. When a Japanese youth reported this incident to another lieutenant, the lieutenant responded apathetically, “You’re lucky you weren’t killed.” Of the six newcomers, one was fifteen-years-old. The rest were around twenty. It was not surprising that they felt uneasy and unsettled for the first few days.

**Sunday, November 28, 1943**

Morning: bread, corn flakes, coffee  
Lunch: rice, tea, *nimono* with carrots, cabbage, beef  
Dinner: spaghetti, rice, tea, meat

Present population: 119

Young Kokawa was released along with another man. He was detained from November 4 until November 28. Everyone treated him nicely because of his young age. He often responded, “All right!” and had a cheerful personality. Everyone felt very sorry for him when he cried out, “Mama,” during his sleep. Since he lives next to us in camp, he can inform Yuriko about what was happening in here.

The garage is holding ninety people. I heard that a man named Tanaka from the same block as me was in there, but no one but the chief cook is allowed to approach them. Maybe the officials are afraid we will exchange information. Tanaka told the chief cook, “Mr. Inouye’s family is all right. Please tell him that.”

Yesterday, I had a talk with the young men in the room. I told them that when they chose a wife, they should appreciate her character/spirit more than her appearance. It would be a big blow, mentally and physically, if they were detained, as we are now, and have to worry about their family, as well.

It was difficult to put into words how reassuring it was that I could count on my wife because I know she is strong and that she can take care of the family. It is such a great relief. During peace time, you are not aware of such things, but when you are put in this kind of situation, a man’s willpower will be influenced by whether he can depend on his
wife or not. So the youths must think about this point and not get married in haste, without considering this. (If a man requires a woman to be faithful, the husband must be faithful to his wife also.) I believe I can depend on Yuriko. It is hard to describe how much this reassurance gives me strength. There is a saying that when a man goes through the gate, there are seven enemies. From now on, we can’t tell what is going to happen but my children will be safe because my wife has the ability to take care of them, so long as she is with them.

I asked young Kokawa to tell my wife, “Don’t worry about money and spend it.”

This story is from the coal crew: Bottles of sake, radios, and swords were piled up like a mountain. These were items confiscated from the residents in camp.

I don’t know how long I am going to be in the stockade, so I’m starting to write smaller.

The Chinese guard said, “I drank sake. It’s very tasty. We discovered more than 300 radios capable of communicating with Tokyo.” (Ordinary radios were easily converted into short wave radios.)

One of the soldiers, who brought the ninety people to the garage, said, “Don’t you have any sake here? I drank a lot of sake. It sure was tasty.”

These soldiers must have gotten drunk, and that’s why they were acting unruly. They acted irresponsibly when they conducted the barrack-to-barrack searches. I guess if they found a locked suitcase, they just broke the lock and dumped the contents out.

We reported to Commander Austin that $300 had gone missing after the soldiers had conducted the searches. To this, Lt. Austin declared that, from now on, they would arrest anyone who committed such delinquent acts.

We wondered who the delinquent people (furyobunshi) were. They certainly weren’t us. We laughed about this.

The fence is completed. The stockade is getting roomier. The American (Caucasian) workmen were there until yesterday. They left a lot of trash including newspapers. It’s been three weeks since I’ve read a newspaper. Some were dated before my arrest, and others, up to the present. The ninety people were brought over three times for their meals today. Usually, they come late for dinner, but today, they came in earlier, while we were still eating so a guard chased us out because he did not want us to talk to each other. The schedule keeps changing so it is difficult to stick to it. Roll call is sometimes early, sometimes late. This is just like as if each guard had different gun sizes that it becomes impossible to find the proper bullets.

**Monday, November 29, 1943**

Breakfast: pancake, coffee, weenie
Lunch: rice, tea, mackerel, Jell-O
Dinner: rice, egg scrambles (so-called “tamago toji” but very little portions), beets pickled in vinegar

Eighty-one people were brought in before noon. Total: 200.

Everyone came in smiling as they carried four blankets with them. There was a man from the same block as mine, so I got an update about my family. Tanaka told me that when I had been arrested, the entire block had been surrounded by soldiers. Even the people in the latrine had to stay in there, as guards were posted there. From the room, (to the truck was about 50 feet away), I saw about thirty soldiers. There had also been soldiers lined up in front and in back of the barrack, holding bayonets. But because they had rushed me into the truck, I did not get a chance to see everything around me, but I did remember thinking there were a lot of jeeps, tanks, and machine guns, and I remembered thinking that they all seemed to be aimed in my direction.

The Yudanshakai plans to collect 25 cents from the membership to send me a care package. Since the president (me) had been arrested, the running joke was that no one could be kicked out, even if they got arrested.

Mr. George Arimitsu, who formerly attended the Poston Dojo, sent me Durham tobacco and matches. I don’t have to worry about running out of tobacco for a while. The entire camp collected money for those of us in the stockade. We received two cartons of Chesterfield cigarettes. I also heard from the new arrivals that 180 cigarettes had been sent one week ago but they haven’t arrived. Things are like that in this place.

Since there are more people, it’s getting busier for me to clean and wait on tables. Until today, I served tea or coffee to each individual. Now, I stopped doing that. If someone wants tea, they have to get it themselves.

I read Kakushu Jiji (Colorado Times). It reported that the Japanese broadcast had made an announcement that Japan was deeply concerned about the Tule Lake incident. The article said the Japanese in Tule Lake had refused to harvest the vegetables for military personnel purposes and that the American army had mobilized tanks and machine guns to enforce their policy. They considered this such an inhumane policy! If America didn’t change their policies, Japan was ready to take action (against the Americans in Japan). A newcomer to the stockade shared a similar story, confirming this sentiment.

It seems there is no chance the Spanish consul will be coming soon. The army commander declared that even if the Spanish consul should come, the *Nisei cannot meet with him. *(The Spanish consulate acted as a liaison between America and Japan for Japanese citizens, not American-born Japanese, who were U.S. citizens.)

White Americans refer to us as either Americans or Japanese, depending upon the circumstances and whatever suits their purposes. Have they considered why they had segregated us into this camp from the other camps? I want to ask them this but it would
be foolish and useless. *Uma no mimi ni nenbutsu (*It’s like chanting a Buddhist mantra into a horse’s ear, i.e., it is completely useless to say anything to them).

Some of the Japanese were acting as informants, and this made life difficult for the 15,000 Japanese living in camp. Two of the Japanese passing information requested protection from the army. They were small-minded men with no courage. They asked the commander to safeguard their hide. This benefits no one. Only creates problems. This is so pitiful but true. Even more disheartening was that the high-ranking administrators and army officers listened to these small-minded men and took what they had said seriously as the opinion of the majority of the people in camp.

Mr. Osaki, who got arrested just because he had Japanese records, was finally released. He stayed with us for more than twenty days with no investigation, no hearing. He was a good youth.

The population is now 199.

We decided to elect a barrack chief to represent each barrack and take care of administrative issues. There is no shoyu, (soy sauce), no salt, and no rice. Food supplies are barely enough to feed all of us. Plus, the supplies arrive late and that leaves us very little time to prepare the food. The cooks have to rush around just to serve the meals on time. When we complained about this situation to the army, the sergeant-in-charge told us, “Keep your mouths shut. You get what you get.”

Someone retorted, “Since you treat the Japanese so inhumanely, just wait and see what happens to you after the war. We will make this problem an issue. Remember these words!”

One of the Negotiating Committee (Koshoiin) representatives, who had been underground for more than two weeks, was arrested. We heard of his adventures underground, and it was very funny. (The funny part concerns the army’s inability to catch him.)