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transport had enclosed a certain rude life and vigour. "But these are ghosts," I whispered, "and we are in the tombs."

"Kyotski!" bellowed a voice suddenly, and a shiver of anticipation seemed to run over the silent bunks. A shambling figure, grotesquely draped in a cast-off Japanese greatcoat, stiffened to face the Duty N.C.O. "Why don't you salute? You must salute!" Throaty Japanese, to us still an unknown language, but one doesn't get the meaning wrong in this sort of situation. Humbly the figure stood, humbly uncovered the thin shaved skull for punishment. Taking his time and enjoying it, the *kashkan* swung his scabbarded sword high above his head with both hands. "We must teach you discipline—*daro*."

The sword swung down; the tottering figure collapsed, then stiffened and straightened again. Slowly the blood trickled from the gaping scalp. "Kyotski, you!" The offender must stand rigidly at attention throughout the night. He did salute, of course; but the Duty N.C.O. wanted to make a demonstration—probably for our benefit.

One could pile on the details, but this will suggest the atmosphere. Moji wasn't the worst camp in Japan by any means; the mines up north were worse, and some of the chemical factories. We stayed less than a week in the place; and because we were going to headquarters in Tokyo they didn't dare beat us up. But they drilled us by the hour in the winter blizzard, having found we didn't know the Japanese commands and the inspection-routine ("Tenko is sacred") that was enforced in all camps in Japan. And despite their vigilance, we managed to exchange views with other prisoners in the camp.

"Keep travelling, matey," the hoarse whispers advised us. "This ain't no home-from-home." About 400 RAF and Javanese had been the first draft in this camp; 250 were dead within six months. Then more drafts, or the survivors of drafts that had been bombed and decimated on the way up. The men worked on the docks in Moji, in factories, as linesmen and steeplejacks. The hospital was full of broken ribs and broken spines. Above all, poisoning the air and creating this horrible atmosphere of tension and sudden violence, the guards never left them day or night—surly, war-wounded reservists who had carte blanche to work off all their spleen on defenceless prisoners.

One night, by the single "smoke-stand" in the great hall, a pleasant-faced Scottish doctor gave us a light. A few hours later he was a cot-case in his own hospital, recovery doubtful. This was what we had come to in Japan, where the camps were pleasantly set in pine-woods, and where one went cherry-picking in the summer.

To Tokyo

From Moji we crossed to Shimonoseki by the new tunnel beneath the harbour, and made the long day-and-night trip to the capital by ordinary express. It was the third time I had made this journey—pleasant enough in the days



"The common people of Japan . . . with their baskets and their babies"

before the war, with its charming glimpses of the Inland Sea, its brief views of Hiroshima and Osaka and Kobe and the chief cities of Japan. And that crowded third-class carriage seemed heaven after the Moji nightmare.

Here were the common people of Japan again, as I had known them before: nervous countryfolk with their baskets and their babies, owl-like students, worried-looking old men. They looked at us curiously, but they were not hostile—given the chance, they would have been friendly. As a matter of principle (and to stretch our legs) we offered our seats occasionally to heavily-burdened peasant women, often with one child strapped on their backs and with another in their arms. The women accepted our offers with surprise and gratitude; then the Staff Interpreter made a curious protest. We must not give up our seats to civilians: after all, we were soldiers, and we were travelling with the Japanese Army. The Army sat down; civilians must stand. There was no getting around this; but we felt we had made our first public propaganda point in Japan.

At Shinagawa station, just outside Tokyo, we were met by a certain Corporal Watanabe. This harmless sentence will have a meaning to most POWs from Japan (see *Time*, *Life* and other American papers for an account of "The Bird"; and what he did to the former Olympic miler Lou Zamperini and others). Under this genial conductor we were taken through darkened streets to the Tokyo Headquarters Camp at Omori, where I was to remain for the rest of the war.

The Gilded Pill

Our "special party" got a special reception—in the cells. I was to learn to know that guardhouse cell pretty well later, in common with a select company of American fliers and general malefactors. It wasn't so bad this time, when there were four of us together, though

we got very bored and miserable as the days passed, and quite incredibly dirty (Japanese cell accommodation provides no washing facilities of any kind; and we slept over the toilet). But at last they got around to our interrogation: and then the pattern behind the curious variations in our treatment suddenly emerged.

Oh yes, they knew all about us (did they know all about me, I wondered? I remembered the long dossier I had been shown at the *Kokusai Bunka Shinkoku* in Tokyo in 1938, with everything I had ever written against the Japanese militarists carefully tabulated). We were four writers and broadcasters; we had seen what conditions were like in a common prison-camp—"not *ah*! very pleasant." But of course, it would be quite unnecessary for superior people of our talents to work like coolies and live in bug-ridden barracks. We could go to a "much more beautiful" place, where we would have good food and a measure of personal liberty. If we earned it.

What was required? Oh no, of course we wouldn't be asked to write anything against our own country. But we could study Japanese art and history, we could tell our misguided countrymen what the Japanese really were like. (I thought of the *Lisbon Maru*; I thought of Moji.) And of course, if we felt this war was a bad thing, if we thought a quick peace and a negotiated settlement might help things all round, why, the Japanese Army Press Bureau would be delighted to provide paper and a typewriter. They might even see that our most admirable ideas were given a certain currency.

The "more beautiful" place was, of course, the notorious "Bunka" Camp in Tokyo, where a small group of former members of the Allied forces quite apart from all other prisoners, writing for Japanese journals, producing a regular daily English-language and musical radio programme, making the script for "Tokyo Rose" and so on. I cannot write at any length here about the activities of this

group, for many of them face charges to which they must make their own defence. Among them were two or three open traitors; two were on General MacArthur's first list of war criminals. There were others with outstanding war records, who had been lured or forced into the game and were kept there by every kind of pressure. Some who were taken to "Bunka" refused to collaborate in any way, and suffered the extremes of Japanese coercion before they were transferred to the toughest of working camps. I don't know what kind of decoration they get for that.

I Meet An Old Friend

But one thing I knew: most emphatically, I wanted nothing to do with "Bunka." My own interrogator was a very smooth gentleman in exquisite civilian clothes, whose face behind rimless glasses seemed vaguely familiar. Desperately I searched by memory, while I stalled diplomatically on all questions about the war. Writing would make no difference, I insisted—I, who had once believed that journalism could mould national policies! The war in the Far East would be fought out to a military decision, however long that took. For my own part—liar again—I did not care for Japanese culture; on the contrary, for the sake of my health I would rather be out working with my comrades-in-arms.

The long interviews closed at last; a second interrogator (former *Asahi* correspondent in New York) was frankly hostile, and I think he wanted to put the screws on. But my friend in glasses waved a hand airily (he was the boss) and suddenly began talking about Oxford. Did I remember Yasekawa, who was at New College in my time?

It all came back. This was Ikeda, of Balliol; he held the rank of marquis under the Empire. We had met vaguely at certain Eastern societies I had once frequented. What he remembered of me was that I had been friendly with Chinese and Japanese undergraduates, in that self-regarding academic universe that seldom has the time to be polite to orientals. And this, I am sure, told in my favour: whether he had seen that dossier or not, he pretended little interest in my subsequent doings in China, and the touch of warmth in his cold official manner was a protection against his colleagues. So we parted, talking about rooks in the elms of Magdalen; and I never heard any more about "Bunka" and special accommodation.

That was that. We went back to our cell, and a week later the officer with us became so ill that he had to see a doctor. So we were released from the guardhouse, and transferred to the main strength of the camp.

What I was to learn at Omori was not Japanese culture, but how to steal, swear, sweat, and shiver in company with some of the cheerfulest rogues and bravest Britons who ever descended on the docks and railways of Tokyo; and incidentally, to work harder than I had ever worked in my life before.

(To be concluded)