

文子 Rec. 2/8/43

Jan. 18. 1943

Dear Oji-San,

✓ Already half a month of this New Year has passed and I am late, again, in wishing you a better year than the last. How have you been these past few weeks - your health, your work, and your play - have they been as good as could be?

Oji-San, your beautiful vase and wood craft were a very pleasant surprise that cold winter morning when we received the parcel at the post office. Every one at home "ohed + ahed" at the bright polish and variety of rocks in that vase. Nissan tested your pipe the moment we showed it to him, while we marvelled at the grain of the wood. To-day, the vase sits atop of our trunk, when all can see its beauty. Each time we look at it, we think of you and of the hours you must have spent in polishing and cementing those rocks. Thank you very much; we're so glad to have it.

During ~~those~~ days before Christmas, all of us worked hard, trying to finish knitting that beige sweater so that you could have it in time for Xmas, or even New Year's.

But alas, try as we would, our efforts were not enough, for we just couldn't finish it. Finally, a few weeks ago, we knitted our last stitch and sent it to you. We hope you can wear it, for all of us have contributed toward its production. Together with the sweater, we sent some seaweed, candies, and bath-towels which, I think you'll be able to use.

If you have anything else which you would like us to send, please don't hesitate in asking us; for if the canteen here has it, we'll be glad to send it to you.

How were your holidays spent, Oji-San? We, here in camp, had a novel and enjoyable Xmas with dinner in our gayly decorated mess hall. All the blocks had a contest for these decorations, and ours was one of the co-winners — two huge murals of the Wise men & Shepherds covered the front & ~~the~~ back walls; while wreaths made out of wood shavings & dyed a dull green designed our windows, with songs & children's playlets, "shitai" and comic dances, the whole block participated in a jolly time.

Can you imagine pounding rice cake (mochi) in camp? New Year's Eve, the men & boys in the block got together to make 'mochi' for the new year. With professional patting of the dough and cup of encouragement from the sidelines, they really "went to town" In block 40, I hear, the men even had "Sanisen" accompaniment to their pounding. We greeted the first day with hope and faith in the future — a much brighter atmosphere prevailing than that of last year when everything looked so dark.

It was a new experience seeing men making their calls in government clothing and wishing each other the best.

I wished & wished that you could have been with us — at least, even, for a few minutes to have enjoyed the New Year with us. I hope, Oji-San, that your's was

not altogether a sad greeting. Tell us, won't you,  
how you spent the day and how you are getting along?

I'm working at the hospital yet — in fact, I went  
worked from daybreak that first day. It's interesting  
work doing secretarial ward duty and I'm learning to  
appreciate the great value of health & happiness, all  
of us at home are well and taking this cold  
into stride. Today, it's so cold that even  
with a ~~shaw~~ shawl around our heads, our  
faces are frozen into a masklike stiffness.

New Mexico, I hear, is not quite this cold,  
even in winter. Take care of yourself,  
Ozz Ojis San, and pray that we may meet  
soon all my wishes now, are for a quick  
end to this madness and a reunion, once  
again, of our happy family

with lots of love,

Fernando

Best regards from father,  
mother + the "gang".