

Ch. 4 - The Enemy

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(Dr. Sadao helps the American Soldier to escape):

Yet when he opened the door of the guest room in the morning there was the young man. He was very gay and had already washed and was now on his feet. He had asked for a razor yesterday and had shaved himself and today there was a faint colour in his cheeks.

Gay: happy

Washed: bathed

there was a faint colour in his cheeks: his pale yellow coloured cheeks were turning pinkish in colour which indicated that he was recovering.

In the morning, Sadao went into the guest room and saw the man was there. He was happy and had taken his bath and had started moving around. He had borrowed a razor from Sadao the previous day and had shaved his beard. The colour of his cheeks was slightly pinkish which indicated that he was recovering and regaining good health.

“I am well,” he said joyously.

The man announced happily that he was well.

Sadao drew his kimono round his weary body. He could not, he decided suddenly, go through another night. It was not that he cared for this young man’s life. No, simply it was not worth the strain.

Weary: tired

Strain: stress

Sadao wrapped his traditional Japanese gown around his tired body. He was tired because the curiosity had kept him awake for two consecutive nights. He decided that he could not pass one more night in such a way. He was not bothered about the man’s life but he could not bear the stress and anxiety any longer.

“You are well,” Sadao agreed. He lowered his voice. “You are so well that I think if I put my boat on the shore tonight, with food and extra clothing in it, you might be able to row to that little island not far from the coast. It is so near the coast that it has not been worth fortifying. Nobody lives on it because in storm it is submerged. But this is not the season of storm. You could live there until you saw a Korean fishing boat pass by. They pass quite near the island because the water is many fathoms deep there.”

Fortifying: putting security at a place

Submerged: here, sink into the sea

Fathom: a unit of measuring the depth of the sea.

Sadao said to the man that he was well now. He lowered his voice and said that he was strong enough to sail a boat. Sadao planned that if he arranged a boat, stock it with food and extra clothing, the man would be able to row it to the nearby island. As the island was so close to the coast, it had not been guarded. It was not inhabited as it sunk into the sea during the storms. As it was not the season of storms at that time, the man could live on the island until he spotted a Korean fishing boat pass by. The Korean fishing boats passed near the island as the sea was very deep there.

The young man stared at him, slowly comprehending. “Do I have to?” he asked.

“I think so,” Sadao said gently. “You understand — it is not hidden that you are here.”

The young man nodded in perfect comprehension. “Okay,” he said simply.

Comprehending: understanding

Nodded: lower and raise one's head slightly and briefly, especially in greeting, assent, or understanding, or to give someone a signal.

The young man stared Sadao as he understood his words. He asked that was it necessary for him to do so. Sadao pleaded that he must understand that the fact that the man was living at his house was known to everyone. The young man agreed with him and said “okay”. He moved his head to indicate his acceptance.

Sadao did not see him again until evening. As soon as it was dark he had dragged the stout boat down to the shore and in it he put food and bottled water that he had bought secretly during the day, as well as two quilts he had bought at a pawnshop. The boat he tied to a post in the water, for the tide was high. There was no moon and he worked without a flashlight.



Dragged: pulled

Stout: fat, big

Pawnshop: a store that lends money in exchange for a valuable thing that they can sell if the person leaving it does not pay an agreed amount of money by an agreed time

Post: pole

Flashlight: torch

Sadao left and did not meet the young man until evening. During the day, he made arrangements for him. As it became dark, Sadao pulled out a big boat to the shore. He placed food and bottled water in it that he had bought secretly during the day. He kept two quilts in it. He had purchased them from the pawnshop. As there was a high tide in the sea, he tied the boat to a pole. It was a dark, moonless night and Sadao worked without a torch. He did not want to be spotted by anyone.

When he came to the house he entered as though he were just back from his work, and so Hana knew nothing. "Yumi was here today," she said as she served his supper. Though she was so modern, still she did not eat with him. "Yumi cried over the baby," she went on with a sigh. "She misses him so."

Supper: an evening meal, typically a light or informal one.

Modern: relating to the present or recent times as opposed to the remote past.

When Sadao came home, he pretended as though he had returned from work so that Hana did not guess anything. Hana served him the evening meal and said that Yumi had visited them that day as she missed the baby a lot. Although Yumi was modern, she did not eat with Sadao.

"The servants will come back as soon as the foreigner is gone," Sadao said.

Sadao said that as soon as the American man left, the servants would return.

He went into the guest room that night before he went to bed himself and checked carefully the American's temperature, the state of the wound, and his heart and pulse. The pulse was irregular but that was perhaps because of excitement. The young man's pale lips were pressed together and his eyes burned. Only the scars on his neck were red.

Pulse: heartbeat

That night before going to bed, Sadao visited the man. He checked his body temperature, the wound, his heart and heartbeat. The heartbeat was unsteady due to excitement as he was about to leave their home. The man's lips were pressed together and his eyes were red in colour which seemed to be burning with fire. The scars on his neck were still red as they had not healed yet.

“I realise you are saving my life again,” he told Sadao. “Not at all,” Sadao said. “It is only inconvenient to have you here any longer.”

The young man said to Sadao that he was saving his life once again. Sadao said that it was not like that. He was sending him because he could not keep him any longer.

He had hesitated a good deal about giving the man a flashlight. But he had decided to give it to him after all. It was a small one, his own, which he used at night when he was called.

Hesitated: paused in indecision before saying or doing something.

Sadao was reluctant in giving him a torch as he felt that if the man used it unwisely, he could be spotted and land into trouble. Finally, he gave him his own torch, the one that he used when he had to attend to patients at night.

“If your food runs out before you catch a boat,” he said, “signal me two flashes at the same instant the sun drops over the horizon. Do not signal in darkness, for it will be seen. If you are all right but still there, signal me once. You will find fresh fish easy to catch but you must eat them raw. A fire would be seen.”

“Okay,” the young man breathed.

Runs out: finishes

Sun drops: the Sun sets

Horizon: the line at which the earth's surface and the sky appear to meet, skyline

Raw: uncooked

Sadao instructed the man. He said that if his stock of food finished before he found a Korean fishing boat, he could signal him with two flashes of the torch at dusk time. He asked him to be careful not to signal when it was dark because light was more visible in the dark as compared to dusk. He added that the man could find fish in the sea near the island but he had to eat it raw. He was not supposed to cook it because fire would be spotted by the guards and put him in danger. The man drew a breath on hearing the instructions and said “okay.”

He was dressed now in the Japanese clothes which Sadao had given him, and at the last moment Sadao wrapped a black cloth about his blond head.

“Now,” Sadao said.

The man wore the traditional Japanese dress that Sadao gave him to wear. Finally, Sadao wrapped a black cloth around his head to hide his golden coloured hair.

The young American, without a word, shook Sadao’s hand warmly, and then walked quite well across the floor and down the step into the darkness of the garden. Once — twice... Sadao saw

his light flash to find his way. But that would not be suspected. He waited until from the shore there was one more flash. Then he closed the partition. That night he slept.

Suspected: doubted

The American man shook hands with Sadao as he walked away towards the boat. He used the torch twice to find his way, but the guards would not doubt that. Sadao waited till he saw the torch light once more as the man boarded the boat. Sadao closed the door of the partition and slept well that night as he had finally got rid of the man.
