



## Hideki's Rambling No.131

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Curry rice is the most popular dish in Japan. Probably people have it at least every ten days. It's a thick curry stew put over rice. It's regarded as a kid's favorite, but it used to be my least favorite. My parents were busy for work as farmers and cooking was my grandmother's task. She was as stingy as my grandfather was and she would stretch curry by thinning it with water. As a result, the curry of our family was like curry-flavored hot water that drowned rice. When I got older, I realized that I'd had the wrong curry rice and the right one existed, and it became my favorite. Today, I cooked curry rice. For dieting, and saving money, I put it over barley instead of rice. Rice is ironically expensive in Japan because the government controls its price. Yuck. But barley didn't fill my stomach so well and left me hungry. So I ate some snacks after finishing it. Am I really dieting...?

## **Hidemi's Rambling No.132**

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March 14 is 'White Day' in Japan, which the confectionery industry invented for sales. Its stupid concept is for men to give women sweets in return for Valentine's Day that is for women to give men chocolates. What really annoys me is not only its foolish name but also the Japanese tendency to differentiate between genders in every field. I shun this relatively new custom, but for some reason, my father sends me something on the day every year. It's not sweet as it sounds, because he never approves of me being a musician and hardly forgets to include a criticizing note about me...

## Hidemi's Rambling No.133

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After the big one in Chile, there were three earthquakes in the past four days in Japan. One of them was not so small and one of them had its seismic center right beneath the area I live in. Two of them made me jump out of bed. An earthquake occurred when I stayed at my grandparents' house one New Year. The New Year's holiday was the only time in a year that wives were allowed to spend the night at their parents' home as a custom of my hometown. My mother used to stay overnight at her parents' home once a year in New Year accordingly, along with my father, my younger sister and me. When the earthquake happened, it was early in the morning and I was sleeping with my sister between my parents and my grandmother on the tatami floor. My grandmother jumped out of her futons and without hesitation, grabbed me to carry me down the hallway. She was dragging me with all her strength rather than carrying me. Because I was eleven years old and already quite big, I could have run faster by myself...

## **Hidemi's Rambling No.134**

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My grandmother on my mother's side was a funny, smart, and lively person. I loved her because she was quite opposite to my grandmother on my father's side, with whom I lived. Every time she visited my house, she brought me a gift. It was almost always a biography of a historically famous figure such as Mozart, Beethoven, Marie Curie and so on. All biographies I had were from her and she provided most of my knowledge about successful people. As a child, I sensed somehow, that she expected me to be one of them in the future, because she had five grandchildren and I was the only one who constantly received biographies from her. In spite of her silent, subtle guidance, I haven't become any important figure. So far, anyway...

## Hidemi's Rambling No.135

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One day, when I visited my grandparents' house, my grandmother on my mother's side asked me to sing a song. I sang the then popular song with dancing in front of my grandparents and my parents. I was about seven or eight years old and it was just casual singing. While everybody was laughing, my grandmother alone seemed very impressed. She seriously said to me, 'You should become a singer when you grow up.' And turning to my mother, she said to her, 'You should make her a singer.' Although my mother shrugged it off as rubbish, there was no joke in her suggestion. She herself loved singing. In her later years, she learned Japanese old traditional singing, which had a unique, slow melody on a Chinese old poem. She often told people around her, including me, that she wanted to be skilled at singing one particular song for celebration so that she could sing it at my wedding. Eventually, I became a singer, but she passed away last September without singing at my wedding because I still stay single...

## Hidemi's Rambling No.136

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Come to think of it, I was determined to finish our new song by the end of last year. It's middle of March, already. Since coming close to the completion, I've encountered problems one after another. Recent ones relate to the overall volume that is too low. I've tried various kinds of solution to boost it, and each work was so tiresome and fruitless. While working on it today, I happened to notice a tiny, mysterious button on the mixer. It's labeled 'Gain' in the fine print. By turning it, the volume got enhanced easily. I've been using this software for music for six years and haven't had the slightest idea of this button until today. If you look for a monumental fool, here I am..

## Hidemi's Rambling No.137

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Japan is at the peak of the pollen season now. Lots of people have a pollen allergy and are wearing a medical mask outside. Without a mask, they sneeze and have running nose constantly. The allergy is caused by pollen of a Japanese cedar. The government planted them heavily after lumbering because they were cheap. It blundered about the pollen. We are surrounded by a massive amount of Japanese cedars and suffering from the allergy consequently. Luckily, I don't have the allergy. I used to feel pity for those with a mask because it seemed inconvenient and didn't look so cool. A few years ago, I heard that people without the allergy could start having one anytime if they don't take precaution. I dreaded to think about having the allergy, and have kept wearing a mask outside in this season as a precaution ever since. It's already no difference to actually having the allergy...



## **Hidemi's Rambling No.138**

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Without my knowledge, my blog has been popping up an unrelated ad for a couple of days. I sincerely apologize for the unpleasant inconvenience to everybody who has been reading my blog. Although I'm not computer-savvy, it appears to be caused by some sort of virus on MySpace's blogs, which is cured now. I came to know the problem thanks to my kind friend who has been a big help in many ways. I was just rambling on about my daily life in a merry mood and little did I know that my blog had bothered the readers...

## Hidemi's Rambling No.139

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Yesterday was my best friend's birthday. We shared a favorite band and got along when we were seniors in high school. Even after she moved out of town for college, we got together at least once a year. Then, I moved to Tokyo for music, and she visited me once a year at my wretched apartment. While my career hit rock bottom for years, she sent me an enormous amount of postcards for encouragement and kept visiting me with lots of expensive gifts. As my career had somehow started picking up a little gradually, our friendship had taken on a different aspect, though. We had less and less in common to talk about because by then, she had become a surgeon and I was a musician. She stopped visiting me, her postcards got fewer and she didn't write back anymore after I moved to the U.S. I reached to her by her e-mail address that she had given me, but soon she changed it. I finally got the message. She didn't want me to be her friend. I couldn't, still can't, figure out how I offended her so badly in the course of those years. We've been out of touch for many years, but every year on her birthday, I can't help thinking of her...

## Hidemi's Rambling No.140

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My lifelong favorite band is a Japanese band called Tulip. When I was in high school, I saw their performance on TV and got fascinated by their music instantly. I became a big fan of them. One day, I made a detour on my way home from school to a shop carrying goods related to popular musicians, and bought stickers of Tulip. That was when my past best friend whom I introduced yesterday came to my mind for the first time. Although we were in the same school since junior high, we had scarcely talked each other. But I had heard that she was also a big fan of Tulip. I thought she might not have one of those and got the stickers for her too. The next day, I handed them to her, and she was greatly touched by it much more than I expected. In return, she lent me all her albums of Tulip so that I could record them and save money. Tulip was the reason why I became a musician, and it also brought me a best friend...