



Hidemi's Rambling No.191

Jacques Villeneuve is my most favorite racing driver alive. I saw him racing for the first time on my first ever visit to a circuit in Suzuka, Japan. Before the Formula One race, there was a Formula Three race as a pre-race event. Jacques was racing in it. I hadn't known him until then, but when I saw his driving, I predicted that he would be a Formula One driver someday. After that, he went on racing in North America, and won Indy 500. Four years after I first saw his race, he came to Formula One just as I had predicted. Because he realized my prediction, I became a big fan of his and cheered him ardently every race. He eventually became the world champion. Seven years ago today, I met him in person. I was in Montreal and happened to drop by a restaurant for lunch while running an errand. He was there. What are the odds that you bump into someone whom you have wished to meet so badly for a long time? It was a pure miracle to me. I knew he wouldn't like to be bothered his private time but I couldn't help approaching him. He listened to me kindly, patiently, smiling, while I was spouting about how much I admired him. We shook hands. I usually wear nice clothes to eat out but on that particular day, I didn't expect to go into a restaurant. As the happiest moment of my life, of all the clothes, I met him in a \$5 jacket, a \$7 skirt and with a necklace I had picked up on the street...

Hidemi's Rambling No.192

As a daily routine, I check my horoscope every morning on TV. Mine warned a fight. I checked my partner's and to my surprise, it foresaw a fight, too. We had never had this similar horoscope before. It seemed impossible to avoid a fight as it was and I fell back on another horoscope on my cell phone to offset the ones on TV. I was speechless when I saw it also say that there would be a fight. Now, a fight was inevitable very likely between my partner and me. Feeling gloom, I was ready for it. But I still hoped I could manage to avert a fight somehow and spent the whole day studying his mood carefully and flattering him. As the day wore on, I was extremely tired from the effort not to offend him, which I wasn't used to. In desperation, I even tried to initiate a fight because I wanted to do away with it. He showed no interest and a fight didn't happen. It was such a nerve-wracking day. I might as well have a fight as endure a stressful day avoiding one...

Hidemi's Rambling No.193

The nearest supermarket to my apartment puts half-off stickers to the prepared foods that are left unsold at 7:30 p.m. And sometimes, they put 75% off stickers to the ones that are still unsold after the half off at 8:30 p.m. But it all depends on the unsold amount and the 75% off sale is rarely fulfilled. When it is, though, the supermarket turns into heaven to me. It's a risky challenge worth a bet. I decided to go for it today and convinced myself that the main purpose was not to get the 75% off foods but to take a walk. This is my fail-safe mindset to protect myself from a bitter disappointment in case nothing is left at the store. I went there, and lost the bet. Their shelf for prepared foods was completely emptied. I kept saying to myself that I came here to take a walk, not to shop. But I had to buy some other mildly discounted items to console myself. I couldn't shake off the frustration in any way. My fail-safe plan didn't work for my greed...

Hideki's Rambling No.194

It's the weekend for GP of Canada. One time, when I was in Montreal, I got the information for a pit stop competition as one of the race week events. It was a free event in which the team crew competed for the fastest time of their pit work. I went to the circuit but nobody was there except for a few staff members who were preparing for the GP. At a couple of the gates, the staff stopped me saying that there was no event today. But because I was adamant about the pit stop competition, they let me through with suspicious looks. At the last entrance gate to the circuit, though, I was decisively denied to go through. I repeated about the event and they called the security staff. They discussed the matter together by talking over their walkie-talkies. They couldn't confirm the event and told me to leave. It was a long walk from the subway station and I didn't want to make this an unnecessary trip. Enclosed by the circuit, there stands a casino. I played there not to waste my trip. I lost a lot of money instead. The next day, I found out that the pit stop competition was held at a closed section of the street downtown Montreal. In Japan, the similar event is usually held at a circuit during the GP week and I was certain it was the case in Canada, too. I felt so embarrassed about my blindly assured manner to the circuit staff, based on a false assumption. Above all, what a costly event it turned to, thinking of the money I lost at the casino...

Hidemi's Rambling No.195

My mother turns to a fortuneteller when it comes to a big decision. Every big decision that has fundamentally influenced her life was made by a fortuneteller, including her marriage. When my parents named their children, they of course had a fortuneteller choose ones. So, I was named by a total stranger. My parents had their each pick for my name when they visited the fortuneteller and they also had a few other names as spares just in case. The fortuneteller picked 'Hidemi' out of the spares, which was neither of their picks. Most Japanese names are written in Chinese characters. Each of the characters has its inherent meaning. My name is composed of two characters. The character for 'hide' means 'excellent' and the one for 'mi' means 'beautiful'. In Japan, we are often asked the corresponding characters to the name when we give out our names. I always explain 'Hidemi as in excellent and beautiful.' And the person who hears it almost always gives me a wry smile. I know how they feel...

Hidemi's Rambling No.196

My parents married by an arranged marriage. Marriage used to be a knot between two families, not individuals in Japan. A mutual acquaintance introduced my parents to both families with their photographs. Although my parents didn't like each other, the tie as the family seemed favorable to their parents. My mother agreed with the marriage very unwillingly after the fortuneteller said that she would handle money by the hundred million if she married my father. As for my father, he reluctantly obeyed his parents' decision because he had never said 'no' to his father in his life. A month after the wedding, my mother decided to leave my father because she couldn't stand to live with his parents any longer. She went back to her parents' home but her father didn't allow her to come back. She had no place to go and gave in to her dismal marriage. And I was born. I wasn't the result of a happy marriage, but I embodied my mother's resignation...

Hideki's Rambling No.197

I don't have a child and probably won't have one all my life. But in my dreams, I've cuddled my baby for several times. It's a boy and always the same baby, and I firmly believe I have a child in a different dimension. One day, in my dream, or in that dimension, I saw him in his twenties. It was the future. He lived in a secluded village and was devoted to an unfamiliar future sport. He didn't notice me as I was watching him from somewhere far. I was so happy to see my baby have grown up and see him not working at an office as a businessman. An elderly man passed by me and I asked him about the sport my son was practicing intently. My question was if the sport was some kind of official, recognized, or popular, which was somehow a possible way to make money. He told me that this sport was completely unknown to the public and there was no event or competition, thus it never brought money whatsoever, not a cent. I burst into tears for joy. Not only he didn't become an office worker for a steady income, but also he chose the profession that was totally unrelated to money or fame. He wasn't interested in them. His only interest was the sport. I couldn't stop crying for joy, thinking how ideally he had grown up and what a perfect son he was to me. I felt thoroughly proud of him and grateful for him to become as he was. Since I saw that dream, I've felt more confident of myself, because I've raised an honorable child in the other dimension...

Hidemi's Rambling No.198

I don't get along with people generally and it had been so back in kindergarten already. I hated everything there. Other kids seemed too stupid and childish to me. The activities in the class were relentlessly silly. The teachers treated us like a bunch of fools. But seeing other kids do, I always thought they were actually a bunch of fools. I wished they grew up and got smarter fast. Soon after I got in the kindergarten, going there every day became a torture to me. Sleeplessness on weekdays was my norm. I got fed up with the whole stupidities there and stopped talking with anybody. Some kids even believed that I was mute. They played outside at recess but I had never joined them. I spent the recess alone in the classroom, rounding the clay into balls and rolling it into strings. I didn't make them to form something by them. Balls and strings were the finished products. When I used up the whole chunk of my clay, I reversed the balls and strings to a wad and started making them all over again. I spent two years just doing that everyday while I was disgusted by other kids playing, jumping, and screaming outside childishly...

Hidemi's Rambling No.199

I spent two years in kindergarten playing alone. The first year was quite peaceful because no one, including my teacher, cared that I didn't play nor talk with anybody. But in the second year, the peace was broken by the teacher who took charge of my class. She did care and worried about my withdrawn attitude. One day, she suggested me to play with her outside at recess. She held my hand and took me outside. The biggest attraction was a trampoline at the playground. Kids would wait in line for their turn at recess. My teacher joined the line with me, saying to other kids 'Let's play with Hidemi! Make friends with her!' They looked at me dubiously but reluctantly agreed because it was their teacher who told them to do. While I was waiting in line, I got more and more unbearable to be among others, standing so close to them. I observed the trampoline too, and it seemed impossible for me to reach the center of it by avoiding fall through gaps between the round frame and the mat. I began to search the way to escape from this deadlock but my hand was tightly held by my teacher's. As my turn became imminent, I felt desperate. Then, the teacher said to me 'Your turn is next. Now that you have this many friends, you can play without me, can't you?' and saying to other kids 'Be nice to Hidemi!' she returned inside. All at once, I ran away from the kids and the trampoline. I ran to the far edge of the playground and stood there. Kids were playing as if nothing had happened. I secured the enough distance from others and felt safe. Ironically, nothing has changed since then, as I'm still distant from the society...

Hideki's Rambling No.200

When I was little, my mother constantly said bad things about others. She believed that, even when someone was kind to her, there must have been some plot behind the nice gesture. To sum up what she talked about every day, there are only evil people in this world. In kindergarten, mothers would fix a lunchbox for their kids and the kids would have it with their classmates and their teacher. At one lunchtime, when I was opening a lid of my lunchbox, I inadvertently dropped it to the floor without having a single bite and it overturned there. I lost my lunch. While other kids laughed at me, my teacher, who had been trying so hard to make me play with other kids, cleaned up the mess for me and took me to a small candy store outside the kindergarten. She told me to pick any bread I liked. I picked one timidly, feeling afraid what kind of trap this would be, as I didn't have any money. She suggested one more. I couldn't figure out what was going on and shook my head. She picked one more piece of bread by herself, took out money from her own wallet, and gave all the bread to me. I was stunned. She bought me lunch. It was the first time that someone unrelated to me was so kind to me. Since then, I had started talking to her. Even after I finished kindergarten, I had kept exchanging letters with her and I still send her a Christmas card every year. She was the first person who destroyed my mother's theory of the evil world and taught me that there were some good people in this world...