

who may even have some grandchildren crawling about the house, are taking a nap in the daytime. The children who see them in this state are overcome by a forlorn feeling, and for other people it is all very depressing.<sup>66</sup>

To take a hot bath when one has just woken is not only depressing; it actually puts one in a bad humour.

Persistent rain on the last day of the year.<sup>67</sup>

One has been observing a period of fast, but neglects it for just one day – most depressing.<sup>68</sup>

A white under-robe in the Eighth Month.<sup>69</sup>

A wet-nurse who has run out of milk.

#### 14. *Hateful Things*

One is in a hurry to leave, but one's visitor keeps chattering away. If it is someone of no importance, one can get rid of him by saying, 'You must tell me all about it next time'; but, should it be the sort of visitor whose presence commands one's best behaviour, the situation is hateful indeed.

One finds that a hair has got caught in the stone on which one is rubbing one's inkstick, or again that gravel is lodged in the inkstick, making a nasty, grating sound.

Someone has suddenly fallen ill and one summons the exorcist. Since he is not at home, one has to send messengers to look for him. After one has had a long fretful wait, the exorcist finally arrives, and with a sigh of relief one asks him to start his incantations. But perhaps he has been exorcizing too many evil spirits recently; for hardly has he installed himself and begun praying when his voice becomes drowsy. Oh, how hateful!

A man who has nothing in particular to recommend him discusses all sorts of subjects at random as though he knew everything.

An elderly person warms the palms of his hands over a brazier and stretches out the wrinkles. No young man would dream of behaving in such a fashion; old people can really be quite shame-

less. I have seen some dreary old creatures actually resting their feet on the brazier and rubbing them against the edge while they speak. These are the kind of people who in visiting someone's house first use their fans to wipe away the dust from the mat and, when they finally sit on it, cannot stay still but are forever spreading out the front of their hunting costume<sup>70</sup> or even tucking it up under their knees. One might suppose that such behaviour was restricted to people of humble station; but I have observed it in quite well-bred people, including a Senior Secretary of the Fifth Rank in the Ministry of Ceremonial and a former Governor of Suruga.

I hate the sight of men in their cups who shout, poke their fingers in their mouths, stroke their beards, and pass on the wine to their neighbours with great cries of 'Have some more! Drink up!' They tremble, shake their heads, twist their faces, and gesticulate like children who are singing, 'We're off to see the Governor.' I have seen really well-bred people behave like this and I find it most distasteful.

To envy others and to complain about one's own lot; to speak badly about people; to be inquisitive about the most trivial matters and to resent and abuse people for not telling one, or, if one does manage to worm out some facts, to inform everyone in the most detailed fashion as if one had known all from the beginning – oh, how hateful!

One is just about to be told some interesting piece of news when a baby starts crying.

A flight of crows circle about with loud caws.

An admirer has come on a clandestine visit, but a dog catches sight of him and starts barking. One feels like killing the beast.

One has been foolish enough to invite a man to spend the night in an unsuitable place – and then he starts snoring.

A gentleman has visited one secretly. Though he is wearing a tall, lacquered hat,<sup>71</sup> he nevertheless wants no one to see him. He is so flurried, in fact, that upon leaving he bangs into something with his hat. Most hateful! It is annoying too when he lifts up the Iyo blind<sup>72</sup> that hangs at the entrance of the room,



then lets it fall with a great rattle. If it is a head-blind, things are still worse, for being more solid it makes a terrible noise when it is dropped. There is no excuse for such carelessness. Even a head-blind does not make any noise if one lifts it up gently on entering and leaving the room; the same applies to sliding-doors. If one's movements are rough, even a paper door will bend and resonate when opened; but, if one lifts the door a little while pushing it, there need be no sound.

One has gone to bed and is about to doze off when a mosquito appears, announcing himself in a reedy voice. One can actually feel the wind made by his wings and, slight though it is, one finds it hateful in the extreme.

A carriage passes with a nasty, creaking noise. Annoying to think that the passengers may not even be aware of this! If I am travelling in someone's carriage and I hear it creaking, I dislike not only the noise but also the owner of the carriage.

One is in the middle of a story when someone butts in and tries to show that he is the only clever person in the room. Such a person is hateful, and so, indeed, is anyone, child or adult, who tries to push himself forward.

One is telling a story about old times when someone breaks in with a little detail that he happens to know, implying that one's own version is inaccurate – disgusting behaviour!

Very hateful is a mouse that scurries all over the place. Some children have called at one's house. One makes a great fuss of them and gives them toys to play with. The children become accustomed to this treatment and start to come regularly, forcing their way into one's inner rooms and scattering one's furnishings and possessions. Hateful!

A certain gentleman whom one does not want to see visits one at home or in the Palace, and one pretends to be asleep. But a maid comes to tell one and shakes one awake, with a look on her face that says, 'What a sleepyhead!' Very hateful.

A newcomer pushes ahead of the other members in a group; with a knowing look, this person starts laying down the law and forcing advice upon everyone – most hateful.

A man with whom one is having an affair keeps singing the praises of some woman he used to know. Even if it is a thing of the past, this can be very annoying. How much more so if he is still seeing the woman! (Yet sometimes I find that it is not as unpleasant as all that.)

A person who recites a spell himself after sneezing.<sup>73</sup> In fact I detest anyone who sneezes, except the master of the house.

Fleas, too, are very hateful. When they dance about under someone's clothes, they really seem to be lifting them up.

The sound of dogs when they bark for a long time in chorus is ominous and hateful.

I cannot stand people who leave without closing the panel behind them.

How I detest the husbands of nurse-maids! It is not so bad if the child in the maid's charge is a girl, because then the man will keep his distance. But, if it is a boy, he will behave as though he were the father. Never letting the boy out of his sight, he insists on managing everything. He regards the other attendants in the house as less than human, and, if anyone tries to scold the child, he slanders him to the master. Despite this disgraceful behaviour, no one dare accuse the husband; so he strides about the house with a proud, self-important look, giving all the orders.

I hate people whose letters show that they lack respect for worldly civilities, whether by discourtesy in the phrasing or by extreme politeness to someone who does not deserve it. This sort of thing is, of course, most odious if the letter is for oneself, but it is bad enough even if it is addressed to someone else,

As a matter of fact, most people are too casual, not only in their letters but in their direct conversation. Sometimes I am quite disgusted at noting how little decorum people observe when talking to each other. It is particularly unpleasant to hear some foolish man or woman omit the proper marks of respect when addressing a person of quality; and, when servants fail to use honorific forms of speech in referring to their masters, it is very bad indeed. No less odious, however, are those masters who, in addressing their servants, use such phrases as 'When you were



good enough to do such-and-such' or 'As you so kindly remarked'. No doubt there are some masters who, in describing their own actions to a servant, say, 'I presumed to do so-and-so'!<sup>74</sup>

Sometimes a person who is utterly devoid of charm will try to create a good impression by using very elegant language; yet he only succeeds in being ridiculous. No doubt he believes this refined language to be just what the occasion demands, but, when it goes so far that everyone bursts out laughing, surely something must be wrong.

It is most improper to address high-ranking courtiers, Imperial Advisers, and the like simply by using their names without any titles or marks of respect; but such mistakes are fortunately rare.

If one refers to the maid who is in attendance on some lady-in-waiting as 'Madam' or 'that lady', she will be surprised, delighted, and lavish in her praise.

When speaking to young noblemen and courtiers of high rank, one should always (unless Their Majesties are present) refer to them by their official posts. Incidentally, I have been very shocked to hear important people use the word 'I' while conversing in Their Majesties' presence.<sup>75</sup> Such a breach of etiquette is really distressing, and I fail to see why people cannot avoid it.

A man who has nothing in particular to recommend him but who speaks in an affected tone and poses as being elegant.

An inkstone with such a hard, smooth surface that the stick glides over it without leaving any deposit of ink.

Ladies-in-waiting who want to know everything that is going on.

Sometimes one greatly dislikes a person for no particular reason - and then that person goes and does something hateful.

A gentleman who travels alone in his carriage to see a procession or some other spectacle. What sort of a man is he? Even though he may not be a person of the greatest quality, surely he should have taken along a few of the many young men who are

anxious to see the sights. But no, there he sits by himself (one can see his silhouette through the blinds), with a proud look on his face, keeping all his impressions to himself.

A lover who is leaving at dawn announces that he has to find his fan and his paper.<sup>76</sup> 'I know I put them somewhere last night,' he says. Since it is pitch dark, he gropes about the room, bumping into the furniture and muttering, 'Strange! Where on earth can they be?' Finally he discovers the objects. He thrusts the paper into the breast of his robe with a great rustling sound; then he snaps open his fan and busily fans away with it. Only now is he ready to take his leave. What charmless behaviour! 'Hateful' is an understatement.

Equally disagreeable is the man who, when leaving in the middle of the night, takes care to fasten the cord of his head-dress. This is quite unnecessary; he could perfectly well put it gently on his head without tying the cord. And why must he spend time adjusting his cloak or hunting costume? Does he really think someone may see him at this time of night and criticize him for not being impeccably dressed?

A good lover will behave as elegantly at dawn as at any other time. He drags himself out of bed with a look of dismay on his face. The lady urges him on: 'Come, my friend, it's getting light. You don't want anyone to find you here.' He gives a deep sigh, as if to say that the night has not been nearly long enough and that it is agony to leave. Once up, he does not instantly pull on his trousers. Instead he comes close to the lady and whispers whatever was left unsaid during the night. Even when he is dressed, he still lingers, vaguely pretending to be fastening his sash.

Presently he raises the lattice, and the two lovers stand together by the side door while he tells her how he dreads the coming day, which will keep them apart; then he slips away. The lady watches him go, and this moment of parting will remain among her most charming memories.

Indeed, one's attachment to a man depends largely on the elegance of his leave-taking. When he jumps out of bed, scurries about the room, tightly fastens his trouser-sash, rolls up the



sleeves of his Court cloak, over-robe, or hunting costume, stuffs his belongings into the breast of his robe and then briskly secures the outer sash – one really begins to hate him.

### 15. *The Palace of the First Ward*

The Palace of the First Ward is also known as the Palace of Today; and, when His Majesty is staying there, it is called Seiryō Palace. The Empress's residence is to the north and connected to it by galleries on the left and right. Sometimes His Majesty proceeds along these galleries to visit the Empress, but usually it is the Empress who visits him. In front of the Empress's building is a charming little garden, planted with shrubs and flowers, and surrounded by a bamboo fence.

On the tenth day of the Second Month, with the sun shining down from a clear, peaceful sky, His Majesty was playing the flute under the eaves near the western part of the gallery. He was attended by that excellent flautist, Takatō, the Senior Assistant Governor-General. They played the Takasago<sup>77</sup> tune in unison several times, and Takatō explained various points about the flute to His Majesty. To describe the scene as 'most splendid' would be hopelessly inadequate. I was sitting behind the bamboo blinds with some other women, and, as I observed everything, I felt that I had never in my life been unhappy.

Next the Emperor started to play the song of Suketada. Now, this Suketada<sup>78</sup> was a Secretary in the Bureau of Carpentry who had been appointed Chamberlain; but, since he was extremely uncouth, the high-ranking ladies and gentlemen at Court had nicknamed him 'rough crocodile' and written a song about him:

Who can stand next to this fine fellow?  
Truly is he of Owari stock!<sup>79</sup>

(His mother was, in fact, the daughter of a certain Kanetoki from Owari Province.) Hearing the Emperor play this tune, Takatō sat down next to him and said, 'Would Your Majesty be

pleased to blow a little more loudly? Suketada cannot possibly hear, and even if he did he wouldn't understand.'

'How so?' replied the Emperor. 'I am sure he would recognize the tune.' For a while he continued to play softly, then walked down the gallery in the direction of the Empress's building. 'He certainly cannot hear me from here,' explained His Majesty. 'Now I can really let myself go!' So saying, he blew out the tune heartily, and it was most delightful.

### 16. *Things That Make One's Heart Beat Faster*

Sparrows feeding their young. To pass a place where babies are playing. To sleep in a room where some fine incense has been burnt. To notice that one's elegant Chinese mirror has become a little cloudy. To see a gentleman stop his carriage before one's gate and instruct his attendants to announce his arrival. To wash one's hair, make one's toilet, and put on scented robes; even if not a soul sees one, these preparations still produce an inner pleasure.

It is night and one is expecting a visitor. Suddenly one is startled by the sound of rain-drops, which the wind blows against the shutters.

### 17. *Things That Arouse a Fond Memory of the Past*

Dried hollyhock.<sup>80</sup> The objects used during the Display of Dolls.<sup>81</sup> To find a piece of deep violet<sup>82</sup> or grape-coloured material that has been pressed between the pages of a notebook.

It is a rainy day and one is feeling bored. To pass the time, one starts looking through some old papers. And then one comes across the letters of a man one used to love.

Last year's paper fan.<sup>83</sup> A night with a clear moon.<sup>84</sup>



#### 42. Herbs and Shrubs

Sweet rush and water oats.

Hollyhock is a most delightful flower. To think that ever since the age of the Gods people have been decorating their hair with it at Festival time!<sup>166</sup> The plant itself is also charming.

I like the water-plantain\* and, when I hear its name, I am amused to think that it must have a swollen head.

The water-bur and the beach-parsley, the moss and the bear-ivy. I also enjoy the grass when its blades peep bright and green through the snow. Wood-sorrel makes an uncommonly pretty design on figured silk and other material.

Shrubs that grow in precarious places like the mountain's edge make me uneasy, and I find them moving. Stonecrop<sup>167</sup> is especially pitiful; for it grows on crumbling walls and other places that are even more unstable than the mountain's edge. Annoying to think that on a securely plastered wall it probably would not grow at all!

The *kotonashi*† shrub. Either it has no worries, or whatever worries it did have are now gone – both explanations of its name are pleasant.<sup>168</sup>

The *shinobugusa*‡ sounds most pathetic, but it is amazing how vigorously this plant grows on the very edge of roofs and walls.<sup>169</sup>

I am also interested in sage-brush and reed-mace, and I particularly like the leaves of the nut-grass. Bulrush, duckweed, green vine, and the scattered *chigaya* reeds. The so-called horse-tail – I love imagining the sound that the wind makes when it blows through these rushes. Shepherd's purse. A lawn of grass.

Floating lotus leaves are very pretty when they are spread out, large and small, drifting along the calm, limpid water of a pond! If one picks up a leaf and presses it against some object it is the most delightful thing in the world.

\* 'High face'.

† 'Nothing wrong'.

‡ 'Grass that endures'.

Goose-grass, snake's beard, and mountain sedge; club moss, crinum, and the common reed.

When the wind blows the arrowroot leaves, one can see that their backs are extremely white and pretty.

#### 43. Poetic Subjects

The capital city. Arrowroot. Water-bur. Colts. Hail. Bamboo grass. The round-leaved violet. Club moss. Water oats. Flat river-boats. The mandarin duck. The scattered *chigaya* reed. Lawns. The green vine. The pear tree. The jujube tree. The althea.

#### 44. Things That Cannot Be Compared

Summer and winter. Night and day. Rain and sunshine. Youth and age. A person's laughter and his anger. Black and white. Love and hatred. The little indigo plant and the great philodendron. Rain and mist.

When one has stopped loving somebody, one feels that he has become someone else, even though he is still the same person.

In a garden full of evergreens the crows are all asleep. Then, towards the middle of the night, the crows in one of the trees suddenly wake up in a great flurry and start flapping about. Their unrest spreads to the other trees, and soon all the birds have been startled from their sleep and are cawing in alarm. How different from the same crows in daytime!

#### 45. To Meet One's Lover

To meet one's lover summer is indeed the right season. True, the nights are very short, and dawn creeps up before one has had a wink of sleep. Since all the lattices have been left open, one can lie and look out at the garden in the cool morning air.



Her movements were much the same as the other nun's, but there was nothing unpleasant about her. Just as she was leaving the veranda, weeping for joy, Hitachi no Suke happened to arrive and caught a glimpse of her. Thereafter Hitachi did not visit us again for a long time, and we soon forgot about her.

From the tenth day of the Twelfth Month it snowed very heavily. I and the other ladies-in-waiting gathered large quantities of snow and heaped it in lids; then we decided to build a real snow mountain<sup>216</sup> in the garden. Having summoned the servants, we told them it was on Her Majesty's orders, and so they all got to work. Men from the Office of Grounds, who had come to do some sweeping, also joined in, and soon the mountain was rising high above the ground. Next came some officials from the Office of the Empress's Household, who made suggestions and helped build an especially beautiful mountain. There were also a few Assistant Officials from the Emperor's Private Office and some more men from the Office of Grounds, so that soon we had about twenty people working away. In addition messages were sent to the servants off duty, saying that a special stipend would be given to anyone who helped on that day, but that those who did not appear for work could expect nothing. This brought the men rushing out, except for those who lived far away and could not be informed.

When the mountain was finished, officials from the Office of the Empress's Household were summoned and given rolls of silk tied up in sets of two. They threw the rolls on to the veranda, and each of the workmen came and took a set. Having bowed low, they thrust the silk into their robes before withdrawing. Some of the Court gentlemen changed from their formal over-rob into hunting costume and remained in attendance at the Empress's Office.

'Well,' said Her Majesty, 'how long is that mountain likely to last?'

Everyone guessed that it would be ten days or a little more.

'And what do you think?' the Empress asked me.

'It will last till the fifteenth of the First Month,' I declared.

Even Her Majesty found this hard to believe, and the other women insisted that it would melt before the end of the year. I realized I had chosen too distant a date; the mountain would last until the first of the year at the outside, which was the latest day I should have given. Yet there was no taking back what I had said: though I knew the mountain was unlikely to survive till the fifteenth, I stuck to my original prediction.

Towards the twentieth it began raining. There was no sign that the snow was about to melt, but the mountain did shrink a little. 'Oh, Goddess of Mercy of Shirayama,'<sup>217</sup> I prayed frenziedly, 'do not let our mountain melt away!'

On the day we built the mountain Tadataka, the Secretary in the Ministry of Ceremonial, arrived with a message from the Emperor. We gave him a cushion and joined him for a talk. 'Today they're making snow mountains everywhere,' he told us. 'The Emperor has ordered his men to build one in the garden in front of his Palace, and they're also building them in the Eastern Palace and in the Koki and Kyōgoku Palaces.'<sup>218</sup> Hearing this, I wrote a poem and asked the woman standing beside me to recite it:

That mountain in our garden,  
Which we had thought so rare!  
Everywhere its snowy likeness . . .  
And we can boast of nothing new.

Tadataka was impressed. 'I would not want to spoil the brilliant effect of your poem by making a poor reply,' he said, bowing repeatedly. 'The next time I find myself outside the blinds of some fashionable Court lady I shall repeat your lines.' And with that he took his leave.

I had heard that Tadataka was very fond of poetry, and his behaviour surprised me. When I told the Empress about it, she said, 'He obviously preferred not to reply at all unless he could produce something really good.'

Towards the end of the year the snow mountain seemed to have



irises;<sup>301</sup> they wore tiny sedge hats and their clothes were tucked up high on their legs. It was just like a screen painting.

#### 74. *Things That Lose by Being Painted*

Pinks, cherry blossoms, yellow roses. Men or women who are praised in romances as being beautiful.

#### 75. *Things That Gain by Being Painted*

Pines. Autumn fields. Mountain villages and paths. Cranes and deer. A very cold winter scene; an unspeakably hot summer scene.

#### 76. *During the Long Rains in the Fifth Month*

During the long rains in the Fifth Month, there is something very moving about a place with a pond. Between the dense irises, water-oats, and other plants one can see the green of the water; and the entire garden seems to be the same green colour. One stays there all day long, gazing in contemplation at the clouded sky – oh, how moving it is!

I am always moved and delighted by places that have ponds – not only in the winter (when I love waking up to find that the water has frozen over) but at every time of the year. The ponds I like best are not those in which everything is carefully laid out; I much prefer one that has been left to itself so that it is wild and covered with weeds. At night in the green spaces of water one can see nothing but the pale glow of the moonlight. At any time and in any place I find moonlight very moving.

#### 77. *In the First Month When I Go to a Temple*

In the First Month when I go to a temple for a retreat I like the weather to be extremely cold; there should be snow on the ground, and everything should be frozen. If it looks like rain, however, I feel most dissatisfied.

Once I went on a pilgrimage to Hase Temple. While our rooms were being prepared, our carriage was pulled up to the foot of the log steps that lead to the temple. Young priests, wearing only their sashes and under-robcs, and with those things called high clogs on their feet,<sup>302</sup> were hurrying up and down the steps without the slightest precaution, reciting verses from the Sacred Storehouse<sup>303</sup> or such scraps from the sutras as came into their heads. It was very appropriate to the place, and I found it charming. Later, when we started to climb the steps, we were terrified and kept close to the side, clinging to the banisters. I was amused to see that the priests walked as freely as on an ordinary wooden floor.

Presently a priest told us that our rooms were ready and asked us to go to them directly; he brought us some overshoes and helped us out of our carriage. Among the pilgrims who had already arrived I saw some who were wearing their clothes inside out,<sup>304</sup> while others were dressed in formal style with trains on their skirts and Chinese jackets. The sight of so many people shuffling along the corridors in lacquered leather shoes and short clogs was delightful and reminded me of the Palace.

Several acolytes and some young men who had the run of the temple grounds and buildings followed us, saying, 'There's a drop now,' 'Here the corridor goes up,' and so on. Close behind us came another group (I have no idea who they were), and they tried to push their way ahead of us. 'Wait a moment,' our guides said. 'These are ladies of quality. You people must keep your distance.' Some bowed and fell back; but others paid no attention at all and hurried ahead, each determined to be the first before the Buddha.