

The Betty Letters

My Dear Grandchild,

Wow! How lucky was I! I nearly got Bo-Bo, my froglike husband, to purchase a new Toyota motor car for me, late last year. If I had purchased that Toyota motor car, today, I might have been penning this letter as an angel (a messenger) from that Heaven in the Big Sky. What happened was that, last November, The Frog agreed with me that I deserved a new motor car for being good to him. (Don't jump to conclusions, not that kind of 'good'.) I agreed not to purchase any more new clothes for a period of 6 months if he opened his purse to the extent of buying the exact motor car of my choice. I went down to Wanchai, the very next day after I obtained tacit approval from The Frog for me to purchase a new motor car, to the showroom of Lexus, which is the top-of-the-line, Toyota motor car. I was ready to sign a provisional sales and purchase agreement for the most-expensive Lexus at nearly \$HK2 million-plus (my calculations) when, to my amazement, the salesman said that he did not know the price of a 2010 vehicle and that he would not know the exact price until February 2010, at the earliest. However, he said that I could place a \$HK100,000 deposit for a 2010 Lexus sedan in order to guarantee that one of the first imports into Hongkong would be mine. Of course, I refused because one should never buy a pig in a poke. After all, such an act is akin to agreeing to marry a man without knowing (a) that he is gentle (b) that he is a good provider (c) that he is virile and (d) that he is not stingy when it comes to agreeing to support a lady's lifestyle with a sufficiency of new, brand-named dresses/skirts/shoes, etc. So, I left the Lexus showroom and ended up, purchasing a new Mercedes S500. God is, definitely, looking out for me because, today, we all know how unsafe are various models of Toyota motor cars. To date, one is told that between 8 million Toyota motor cars and 9 million Toyota motor cars have been recalled, worldwide, for one problem after another, from faulty brakes, to sticking accelerator pedals, to steering problems, to malfunctioning airbags, etc, etc, etc. Every day, it is something new to be added to the long list of troubles of Toyota motor cars. The days are gone, clearly, when one may trust a Japanese-manufactured motor car, sight unseen. I would not even want to consider the purchase a Japanese motor vehicle, today, after learning of the many problems with the motor cars of Toyota, which were, formerly, held out as excellent value for money.

It was not that long ago that one heard of reports about the rejection factor of products, made at factories, managed by Japanese industrialists. Japanese industrialists' tolerance for rejection of manufactured goods was said to be zero for most goods, manufactured in Japan, and 3 percent-plus for all of the other goods, produced in other countries of the world where Japan was not involved. Well, there has to be a rethink about Japan, today. At the factory level, the rejection factor for Japan may well still be placed at zero, but it is clear that the formula in order to arrive at that figure of zero for Japanese-produced goods needs to be recalibrated. It is said that pride comes before a fall. In Japan, today, how many factories, manufacturing consumer goods, can say that they are proud of their finished products? The sun has set on the days when Japan's industrial might was the envy of the rest of the world. With the fall of the Japanese work ethic of days of yore, it appears that pride of workmanship has, also, waned, appreciably. Of course, Japanese workers are not to blame for their lot because, having been trained from childhood, by and large, to follow orders, blindly, most of them have forgotten how to think, impartially and objectively, and can only function when explicitly told what to do, when to do it, and where to do it. In fact, it is a wonder, actually, that

procreation continues in The Land of The Rising Sun: How did the Japanese learn the art of love-making without being instructed?

I suppose you recall that, in a letter, written to you many months ago, I told you of a club in Tokyo, where men are taught the art of telling their wives and girlfriends just 3 difficult sentences: 1. 'I love you'; 2. 'Sorry'; and, 3. 'Thank you'. The rationale for the existence of this club is to try to reprogramme Japanese men to the existence of being honest about their feelings and emotions. Only a few short decades ago, eligible Japanese men had their marriages 'arranged' by middlemen (who might be male or female) because they were hesitant to come forward to a lady that caught their fancy for fear of losing 'face' should their overtures be rejected. The Japanese man, generally, cannot tolerate being rejected. That is their heritage of centuries past, you understand. I recall, recently, talking to one Japanese man who told me how he bullied his former girlfriend into marrying him after his middleman informed him that his would-be life partner considered him as being inappropriate as the father of her children. The Japanese man told me – assuming that he was telling the truth because, today, which Japanese may one trust – said that he went up to his girlfriend and asked, bluntly and angrily: 'Why you not want me as your ubband? I good man. I got good job. I make good ubband for any womans. You marry me or I get velly ungly.' (This is, almost, word-for-word as he told me, and in the motif of his English language) The girl, readily, agreed to marry the man – probably more out of fear of the consequences if she continued to reject the suitor, After all, kendo is still practiced, widely, in Japan and where-ever Japanese communities have proliferated, around the world. Swish! Chop! Clunk! Off With Her Head!

The Japanese do things differently to any other race, My Dear Grandchild, and their motor cars of today are a classic example of the way in which many Japanese produce consumer goods. Today, not less than 8 million, Toyota vehicles are undergoing tests in order to determine just how dangerous they are. It is not a question of how safe they may be, but how dangerous they are for their drivers. Toyota will pay dearly for this horrible example of shoddy workmanship and the clear lack of attention to detail of the vehicles at the design stage.

Wow! I just had a thought-provoking realisation: The Japanese love to eat raw fish – sashimi and sushi – probably because it is quicker and easier to prepare and to eat than cooked foods, There is, also, the added advantage that Japanese do not even have to think while the food is being prepared. I wonder whether or not the average Japanese brain is smaller than that of their European and American counterparts. Thank the Good Lord that there are only about 24 million Japanese in the world. What would the world be like with 1.24 billion Japanese, all eating sashimi and sushi? Food for thought? And, if there were 1.24 billion Japanese, would Toyota be forced to recall 90 million of their faulty vehicles instead of 8 million or so?

Talk to you, next week.

Chief Lady

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