

My brother, my sister,
and i



The quite an engaging story, the book describes an event in the author's life. Yoko, then 13, her 17-year old sister, and 21-year old brother became refugees to post World War II Japan. Hoping for the better life, they escape from North Korea only to find extreme hardship in the new land.

The novel does not feature the series of quick actions but is able to transfer real-to-life feelings and emotions of the sibling trio. In quite a charming way it tells how these three young people settled down in their first desolate home, owners of which were nice and kind people. Especially the meaningful were their interactions. However, the terrible fire in the warehouse kills their landlords and puts one of the siblings in a hospital. In addition, their problems are multiplied by a terrible blame of the setting the fire and killing the kind couple. Homeless and hungry they fasten together, spending most time in the hospital room by the bed of their sibling.

Yoko, once the product of the middle classfamily, experienced homelessness, hunger, terrible treatment by her classmates, and at times impossible despair. Her mother has died, her father was a POW, and seeing as her two older siblings had to clean toilets to get scraps for her to survive was beyond desperation, but full of humility.

This novel teaches us how important the family ties are, those that despite of, at times, very difficult circumstances in life, help us survive and make better of ourselves. This novel also teaches us, that despite the adversities, there are people who are willing to help, like an odd Burakumin couple they met under the bridge. This novel is about how people, especially young

people, can preserve their dignity despite impossibly difficult circumstance that at time life presents.

I impression of what I read was not about the adventure this trio experienced but about the yielding motif, “ White righteous men should suffer?”

References:

Watkins, Y. K. 1996. My brother, my sister, and I. (add publisher)