

Happy Holidays

Can neck surgery cause a woman to talk more? No, guys, this isn't a trick question. *(Bill needs to talk to his editor.)*

I've decided to write about other things ... not because I was told to ... I want to I love the Holidays ... family get-togethers and visits with friends. A week ago, I decided to surprise my old friends, Dennis and Carl, for lunch. They asked how I got free ... FREE? ... I'm the boss ... I make my own decisions ... I'm king of the castle ... they were still laughing later when I called Misuzu to ask what I should order for lunch. *(Oh, poor Husband ... he can't hear too well ... he can't see things in front of him ... and now he thinks he is a king and lives in a castle!)*



Often, I am asked to explain how I can be a Husband Hero and yet, be enrolled in the Husband Improvement Program (**HIP**). Some things just can't be explained but, after almost 13 years, I do expect to graduate from the **HIP** this month ... *(That would be a Christmas Miracle!)* Misuzu calls me "Kame-san" ... that's formal Japanese ... loosely translated as "Most Precious and Honorable Husband Hero" ... *(A less loose and more accurate translation is: turtle ... as in s-l-o-w)*

Shige, 24 ... well, enough about Shige ... let's talk about his girlfriend Melanie ... she is wonderful ... funny, happy, bright ... she is from Berlin, Germany and works at a University of Florida lab near Marineland. That is where she met Shige ... but enough about Shige ... Melanie is taking piano lessons from Misuzu ... every Wednesday she joins us for dinner and then has her lesson. We really enjoy her visits. Unfortunately, Melanie cannot join us for Christmas as she is going home ... I guess Shige is going with her but enough about Shige *(Enough!)* We are very proud of Shige ... this fall he started a doctorate program in bio-something at the University of Florida. Melanie already has her Ph.D. in biology ... *(Bill needs a Time Out!)* Shige has a graduate assistantship working in a lab ... he has never been to Germany ... I think he is excited about his trip with ... that German girl.

Nari, 22, will graduate from the University of Central Florida this semester ... we are so proud of him. All the educational software I bought for his Xbox 360 really paid off ... I told Misuzu last year that the software *(Games!)* would help him graduate in August ... *(hmmm ... that's four months ago!)* After graduation, Nari will come home ... not abandoning his poor parents at Christmas like his brother *(Who bought Shige's airline ticket to Germany?)* Misuzu will give Nari her old Camry so he'll be able to continue his education ... buying more educational software at his local Xbox store.

Misuzu is an alien ... I've said this for years. Evidence? I saw an X-ray of Misuzu's neck which showed a titanium plate held in place by 6 screws. Around the same time, Misuzu had neck surgery ... but I'm absolutely certain the X-ray was taken before the surgery. *(Husband Hero is almost always wrong!)* On a follow-up visit, I told the doctor Misuzu was talking a lot more since her operation *(He really did!)* ... the doctor nodded and said it was probably a loose screw. *(Think he meant in my neck or in Bill's head?)* Misuzu's recovery went very well and included physical therapy, an exercise program and massage therapy. Husband Hero did a great job taking care of her *(He did!)* Misuzu is back to her normal activities ... playing bridge, exercising, watching the Japanese TV channel, using her iPad2 and taking care of her Kame-san.

Bill, 67, spends endless hours on his computer playing with video and photo editing software and websites. He plays bridge and basketball *(You're right! He is too old to be playing basketball ... he twists this, hurts that, something always sore ... but will Husband listen to Wife and quit playing basketball? No, Husband can't hear! Maybe basketball stuck in his ear.)* Bill enjoys watching the Embry Riddle basketball team ... they are fast, smart and hard working ... and getting better each day ... the coaches are great ... GO EAGLES!

Love,
Bill, Misuzu, Shige and Nari

いよいよ今年も残り少なくなってきましたが、いかがお過ごしでしょうか？

こちらは、6年前に脳梗塞を起こして、施設暮らしだった父がこの夏に永眠いたしましたので、年頭のご挨拶は失礼させていただきます。

脳梗塞発症以来、いつもニコニコとすっかり可愛い坊や然となった父は、施設の方々からも本当に可愛がっていただいて、幸せな晩年を過ごすことができました。日本からの連絡が来て、もしかしたら間に合わないかも、という状態で7月に帰国しましたが、それまで全く反応がなかったという父が、すぐに目を開けて、私の問いかけに答えようとして、2週間ほどの間、毎日なにかしら意思表示をしてくれました。残念ながら、最後まで父のそばにいないことができませんでしたが、お互いに満足できる最後のときを一緒に過ごすことができました。今年も父のことも含め、私たちにもいろいろあった年となりました。

長男 賢茂（まさしげ） 24才。昨年から働いていたUniversity of Florida付属の研究所（St. Augustineここから1時間弱）で、ドイツ人のとっても可愛いガール・フレンド、メラニーを見つけました。彼女はすでにバイオロジーの博士号を持っているので、この秋からシゲも博士号を取るべく、University of Florida (Gainesville) に戻りました。Gainesvilleの研究所でアシスタントをしながら、週末はここではなく、St. Augustineのメラニーの元に戻っているようです。そのかわり、メラニーが週1で私のピアノのレッスンを受けてここにきて、ビルと3人で夕飯もいっしょにしています。ドイツから彼女の妹とボーイ・フレンドが9月に、ご両親が11月始めにここに来て、この年末はシゲとメラニーがドイツに行きます。

次男 賢成（まさなり）

22才。本来ならこの春に卒業すべきところ、ちょっと遠回りして、この12月ようやくUniversity of Central Floridaを卒業することになりました。さんざんビルに心配をかけたナリですが、ビルの強力なバック・アップを受けてなんとかここまで漕ぎ着けました。とはいえ、仕事があるわけではないので、まずは4年半の間に体に溜め込んだ脂肪を落とし、健康な体を作るために、医者とジム通いとなりそうです。今まではOrlando住まいで車を持てなかったナリですが、私のカムリが2年越しでようやく手に入ることになりました。

ビル

この年末に67才になるビル。ナリの心配から私の世話まで、本当によくやってくれます。私の手術後は、食事の世話からシャワーまで、朝から晩までつきっきりで面倒をみてくれました。今は私も落ち着いているので、バスケットボールを楽しみ、バスケットボールのチームEaglesの応援し、ブリッジをし、家にいるときはウェブ・サイトの管理からビデオの編集までコンピューターの前に張り付いています。ただ、最近、物忘れがもともと多いのが、さらに多くなったのが難といえるかも。

みすず

53才。この年で、すでに体の中から老化が！昨年から続いていた痛みが、ついに手術ということに。今までビルからエイリアンと呼ばれていたのが、本物のエイリアンになりました。レントゲンでは首の3つの頸椎にかかる金属と6本のスクリューがはっきりと写っています。幸いに、内科、神経科、神経外科にペイン・ドクターとお医者さんには恵まれて、現在はエクササイズとマッサージ・セラピーは欠かせないものの、痛み止めや睡眠薬といったたぐいの薬は必要なくなりました。近場の運転も問題なく、つい先日はOrlandoまで自分で運転していきました。ただ残念なことに、この状態は完治することはない、これ以上悪くならないように現状維持をするのが目標です。

以上、近況報告でした。

ビル、みすず、シゲ、ナリ