



FUTURE TENSE, IMPERFECT BOOK EXCERPT

I wait for the train on my way to work. I glance at the Japanese newspapers on sale. I cannot read the headline. It is in what the Japanese call Kanji, which means Chinese letters. But the date is just after the terrorist attack of 9.11. I can guess the topic. I have studied this diamond-dense text of the Japanese language and can recognize the visual elements of the word. I retain the image long enough to write it on the blackboard an hour later. I have no idea about pronunciation, because there is no phonetic component. "What does it mean?" I ask the class of 18 year old cadets who live in the dorms at the military academy.

"Collapse," a student explains, consulting his electronic dictionary for the English word. Coincidentally, to me the kanji looks like twin towers.

Sandra Katzman

An adjunct professor of English at Osaka University, she is a master of communication (Stanford 1993). An international correspondent for McGraw/Hill energy industry newspaper and formerly for Reuters News, Katzman also contributes to academic publications as a reporter and researcher.

TESTIMONIAL : **GUY V. BECKWITH**, Assistant Professor of History, Auburn University

"Communicates a sense of confusion and disorientation broken by moments of insight. The reader gets the sense of the depth of a culture, and the feeling that its discovery is something to be treasured in spite of, and sometimes because of, the difficulties.

"It is funny, ironic, and warm. The writing style is spare, clean, and poetic. I got caught up in the world described without being tempted to think I understand it."

TESTIMONIAL : **PAUL SAFFO**, technology forecaster, Institute of the Future

"An important book because it helps mono-linguals (i.e. Americans) understand what it means to speak more than one language. It is not merely a matter of communications but of seeing and interacting with the world in profoundly different ways. People who speak multiple languages know this deeply; people who speak only one language have no clue. **Americans if they read this book will deepen their understanding of the citizens of the rest of the world.**

"I imagine such a book in secondary schools and college, and as an orientation for people moving abroad. Though the focus is on Japan, the story is about something much, much larger."