

Recoverability-driven coarticulation: Acoustic evidence from Japanese high vowel devoicing

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Supplementary material

Stimuli

Devoicing environment

low predictability

<u>k</u> kai	‘chance’	<u>ʃ</u> ika	‘deer’
<u>k</u> kaku	‘plan’	<u>ʃ</u> ikaku	‘qualifications’
<u>k</u> ika _N	‘interval’	<u>ʃ</u> ikata	‘method’
<u>k</u> ika _N	‘danger’	<u>ʃ</u> ika _N	‘funds’
<u>k</u> iko:	‘climate’	<u>ʃ</u> iko:	‘thought’
<u>k</u> itaeru	‘to train’	<u>ʃ</u> itagi	‘underwear’
<u>k</u> ita _ʃ o: _{SEN}	‘North Korea’	<u>ʃ</u> ita _ʃ i:	‘close’
<u>k</u> itai ₁	‘expectation’	<u>ʃ</u> ite:	‘designation’
<u>k</u> itai ₂	‘fuselage’	<u>ʃ</u> ite _{N1}	‘point of view’
<u>k</u> ite:	‘regulation’	<u>ʃ</u> ite _{N2}	‘branch store’
<u>k</u> ukaku	‘section’	<u>ʃ</u> ukudai	‘homework’
<u>k</u> ukan	‘area’	<u>ʃ</u> uku _ʃ uku	‘blessing’
<u>k</u> uke:	‘rectangle’	<u>ʃ</u> ukugaku	‘renowned scholar’
<u>k</u> ukeru	‘to blindstitch’	<u>ʃ</u> ukuhaku	‘lodging’
<u>k</u> uki	‘stalk’	<u>ʃ</u> ukuhaku _{NIN}	‘lodger’
<u>k</u> u _ʃ o:	‘crisis’	<u>ʃ</u> ukumei	‘fate’
<u>k</u> utabaru	‘to drop dead’	<u>ʃ</u> ukusai	‘festivals’
<u>k</u> utakuta	‘exhausted’	<u>ʃ</u> utai	‘subject’
<u>k</u> ute _N	‘period’	<u>ʃ</u> utaisei	‘independence’
<u>k</u> uto:	‘hard fight’	<u>ʃ</u> utoken	‘captial area’

high predictability

<u>ʃ</u> ikai	‘basement’	<u>ç</u> ikaku	‘comparison’
<u>ʃ</u> ika _N	‘molester’	<u>ç</u> ikari	‘light’
<u>ʃ</u> ikatetsu	‘subway’	<u>ç</u> ikitsudzuki	‘continuously’
<u>ʃ</u> ikoku	‘tardiness’	<u>ç</u> iko:ki	‘airplane’
<u>ʃ</u> ik _ʃ u:	‘earth’	<u>ç</u> ikui	‘low’
<u>ʃ</u> itai	‘belt (of land)’	<u>ç</u> itasura	‘intently’
<u>ʃ</u> ite:	‘depths of the earth’	<u>ç</u> ite:	‘denial’

<u>f</u> iteki	‘intellectual’	<u>ç</u> itokoto	‘brief comment’
<u>f</u> iteN	‘point on a map’	<u>ç</u> itomebore	‘love at first sight’
<u>f</u> itoku	‘intellect’	<u>ç</u> itorigoto	‘monologue’
<u>s</u> uka	‘nonsense’	<u>ϕ</u> ukamaru	‘to deepen’
<u>s</u> ukeru	‘to show through’	<u>ϕ</u> ukano:	‘impossible’
<u>s</u> uketto	‘helper’	<u>ϕ</u> ukigen	‘ill humor’
<u>s</u> uki	‘liking’	<u>ϕ</u> uko:	‘unhappiness’
<u>s</u> ukoji	‘small quantity’	<u>ϕ</u> ukufu:	‘revenge’
<u>s</u> ukui	‘rescue’	<u>ϕ</u> ukuso:	‘attire’
<u>s</u> ukunai	‘few’	<u>ϕ</u> utari	‘burden’
<u>s</u> ukunakutomo	‘at least’	<u>ϕ</u> utari	‘two people’
<u>s</u> uteki	‘period’	<u>ϕ</u> utoi	‘fat’
<u>s</u> uteru	‘hard fight’	<u>ϕ</u> uto:	‘injustice’

Voicing environment

low predictability

<u>k</u> iban	‘foundation’	<u>ç</u> ibai	‘a play’
<u>k</u> ibaraji	‘recreation’	<u>ç</u> ibaraku	‘a while’
<u>k</u> ibiji:	‘strict’	<u>ç</u> ibo:	‘fat’
<u>k</u> idate	‘disposition’	<u>ç</u> ibui	‘austere’
<u>k</u> igae	‘change of clothes’	<u>ç</u> idai	‘depending on’
<u>k</u> igawari	‘changing of one’s mind’	<u>ç</u> ido:ja	‘leader’
<u>k</u> igen	‘mood’	<u>ç</u> igai	‘suburbs’
<u>k</u> igo:	‘symbol’	<u>ç</u> igaisen	‘ultraviolet rays’
<u>k</u> igu:	‘coincidence’	<u>ç</u> igeki	‘stimulation’
<u>k</u> ig ^j o:ka	‘entrepreneur’	<u>ç</u> ig ^j o:fiki	‘opening ceremony’
<u>k</u> ubaru	‘to distribute’	<u>ç</u> ubetsu	‘classification’
<u>k</u> ubi	‘firing (from a job)’	<u>ç</u> ubiritsu	‘fielding average’
<u>k</u> ubisuçji	‘nape of the neck’	<u>ç</u> ubitai	‘garrison’
<u>k</u> ubun	‘division’	<u>ç</u> udai	‘theme’
<u>k</u> udamono	‘fruit’	<u>ç</u> udaika	‘theme song’
<u>k</u> udaranai	‘good-for-nothing’	<u>ç</u> udo:	‘leadership’
<u>k</u> udari	‘downward moving’	<u>ç</u> uge:	‘handicraft’
<u>k</u> udoku	‘to seduce’	<u>ç</u> ugotenji	‘guardian angel’
<u>k</u> udo:r ^j oku	‘driving power’	<u>ç</u> ug ^j o:	‘training’
<u>k</u> ugi	‘nail’	<u>ç</u> ug ^j o:ja	‘practitioner’

high predictability

<u>f</u> ibakeN	‘Chiba prefecture’	<u>ç</u> ibaiçin	‘item not for sale’
<u>f</u> ibikko	‘rug rat’	<u>ç</u> iban	‘off duty’

<u>f</u> ibiru	‘to wet oneself’	<u>ç</u> ibi	‘crack’
<u>f</u> idai	‘land rent’	<u>ç</u> ibiki	‘reverberation’
<u>f</u> idarake	‘bloody’	<u>ç</u> idari	‘left’
<u>f</u> idome	‘styptic’	<u>ç</u> idoi	‘terrible’
<u>f</u> idori	‘plover’	<u>ç</u> idokatta	‘terrible (past)’
<u>f</u> igai	‘difference’	<u>ç</u> ige	‘facial hair’
<u>f</u> igiru ₁	‘to tear to shreds’	<u>ç</u> igekiteki	‘tragic’
<u>f</u> igiru ₂	‘to vow’	<u>ç</u> igoro	‘habitually’
<u>s</u> ubaraji:	‘wonderful’	<u>φ</u> ubai	‘boycott’
<u>s</u> ubajai	‘fast’	<u>φ</u> ubokai	‘parents’ association’
<u>s</u> uberu	‘to slip’	<u>φ</u> ub ^o :do:	‘inequality’
<u>s</u> udare	‘bamboo mat’	<u>φ</u> uda	‘tag’
<u>s</u> ude	‘bare hand’	<u>φ</u> ude	‘writing brush’
<u>s</u> udeni	‘already’*	<u>φ</u> udeki	‘bungle’
<u>s</u> ugasugaji:	‘refreshing’	<u>φ</u> ugaku	‘uneducated’
<u>s</u> ugatae	‘portrait’	<u>φ</u> ugen	‘additional remarks’
<u>s</u> ugoi	‘amazing’	<u>φ</u> ugo:kaku	‘disqualification’
<u>s</u> ugoude	‘go-getter’	<u>φ</u> ugo:ri	‘unreasonable’

Carrier sentences

Story about Danny, a friend from high school

ダニーは親戚の家に宿泊している女の子に一目惚れしちゃった。その時、俺も隣にいたからわかる。いとこのメイから彼女はスペイン人で今は手芸を習っていると聞いて彼女と親しくなるためにスペイン語を習い始めた。手芸は男らしくないからやらないそうだ。練習のためだと思うけど最近独り言が増えたような気がする。「それ、どういう意味だ?」とたまに聞くと「その村は区間列車でしか行けない」、「君の腕はこの茎より細い」、「首相は刺客にやられた」など絶対日常で使わなそうなことばかりだ。それだけじゃなく「念のため付言するが、患者の血止めは素早くしたほうがいい」、「彼は血だるまになって救いを求めている」、「あとはskirtの裾をくけるだけです」のようなことも。つい最近「さっきのすだれの方が良かったと思う」というのを練習していた。スペイン語に「すだれ」なんてあるんだろうか?どっかの非売品の本を盗んだんじゃ?そんなんじゃ口説きどころかただ笑われるだけだと言ってやったが、どんな本でもないよりはマシだと言いつ返された。確かにそれは言えているけど「すだれ」と「刺客」なんかじゃ・・・

Danny fell in love at first sight with a girl lodging at his cousin’s house. I know because I was there. His cousin May told him that she was from Spain and currently studying handicrafts, so he started learning Spanish. Not handicrafts though, because apparently they’re not manly. It must be to practice, but I feel like he talks to himself more now. Whenever I ask him what he’s saying, it would be things that you would never use in daily conversations like “You can only get to that village via a local train,” or “Your arm is thinner

*Included in experiment despite accent on initial syllable. Removed from analysis.

than this stalk,” or “The prime minister got got by an assassin.” He would practice other useless things like “Just an additional note, it is best to stop the patient’s bleeding as quickly as possible,” or “The bloodied man wanted relief,” or “All that’s left now is to blindstitch the skirt’s hem.” Just the other day, he was practicing how to say, “I think the bamboo mat from earlier was better.” Does Spanish even have a word for “bamboo mat”? He must have stolen a book that is not actually for sale. I told him that with lines like that he’d be lucky if he didn’t get laughed at, let alone seduce her, but his response was that any book is better than no book. I mean, I guess he’s right, but “bamboo mat” and “assassin”...?

でも学校が凄く嫌いで授業をサボったり、堂々と遅刻したり、全然宿題をやらなかつたりするのが日頃の行いだったあのダニーが、ちょっと知的にまで見えてきていることは感心している。どこがそんなに素敵で好きになったのかを聞いたら、「彼女の綺麗な首筋をみて、これは宿命だと思った」とわけのわからない答えに見事にすかを食わされた。首筋って・・・変態だ。これはひどいと思いつつも誰かに夢中になれるのは素晴らしいことだと思った。

I must say though, Danny hated school and made a habit of ditching school, being unashamedly tardy, and not doing any of his homework, so I’m impressed that he even seems intellectual. I asked him what is so wonderful about her that he’s fallen in love, and he said, “I knew it was fate when I saw the nape of her neck.” What nonsense... He’s not right in the head. While I did think this is awful, I did find it kind of amazing that a person could be so engrossed with another.

ダニーに初めて会ったのは高3の時だった。急に転校してきて全く手入れしてなさそうな濃い髭もいつも不機嫌そうに渋い顔をしていることもなんだか不出来で危険そうなやつにみえて正直気に入らなかった。面白いことに仲良くなったきっかけは「アラモの守備隊の守護天使」という超マイナーで質の低いメキシコのアニメの主題歌を彼が知っていたからだった。アニメのことになる意外と気があってそれからよく二人で漫画屋に行くようになった。二人とも市外に住んでいたからたまに気晴らしとして市内の大きい店にも行った。

I met Danny for the first time when we were seniors in high school. He had suddenly transferred to my school, had unkempt facial hair, and always had this sulky look like he’s in a bad mood, so I didn’t like him at first. Funnily enough, the reason we became friends was because he knew the theme song to this super unknown, low-budget Mexican cartoon called “The guardian angels of the garrison of Alamo”. We actually had similar tastes when it came to cartoons, so we started going to the comic shop together. We both lived in the suburbs, so we sometimes also went to a shop in the city for a change of scenery.

そういう風に時々深い話もできるようになってから高3で急に転校してきた理由を聞いた。ダニーは中学まで背が低かった上はかなり太っていたせいによく「チビデブ」や「ちびっ子」と呼ばれ、結構いじめられていたそうだった。けど、高1の前の夏に成長期が来て、ボクシングで体を鍛えて脂肪量も落とし、自分をいじめた奴らへの復讐を誓ったらしい。それから毎日のように喧嘩ばかりして、高2の時は自分に一番ひどかったテッドってやつを授業中にボコボコにしたこともあると言った。ダニーが前の学校でクラスメートを少なくとも10人は血だらけにしたという噂が学校で広まった理由がなんとなくわかったような気がした。それである父母会でテッドの親はダニーの退学を要求したそうだった。最初喧嘩を売ったのもテッドだったし、ダニーは復讐で不良な奴らだけを狙っていたから学校がむしろ安全になっていたわけで、ダニーを守ろうとする親たちもいたそうだった。けど、暴力を振るったのは事実だから退学になる前に転校を選んだわけだと。「もうガキじゃあるまいし、大人の戦いは頭と筆でやるもんだと思うぜ。だから喧嘩はもうやめた。お前の助っ人としては別だけとどな！」とダニーは言った。「いらねえよ、アホ」と突っ込んだが内心嬉しかった。

So that’s how we got close, and I asked him one day why he transferred schools during senior year. Danny was apparently short and fat through middle school and got bullied and called names like “short stack” and

“ankle-biter”. But then his growth spurt came over the summer before high school, and he started boxing training and lost weight, swearing to himself in the meantime that he’ll get his revenge on the kids that bullied him. Danny got into fights almost everyday and during his junior year, he beat this kid named Ted who was the worst to him to a pulp during class. Hearing that, I understood why people were saying he bloodied up at least ten guys in his last school. During a parents’ meeting, Ted’s parents demanded that Danny get expelled, but apparently because Ted had started the fight and because the school had actually become safer because Danny was only beating up the bullies, some parents tried to protect Danny. In the end though, the fact remained that Danny used violence, so he decided to transfer to another school before he was officially expelled. “I’m not a kid anymore, you know? And a grown up fights with his mind and the pen. So no more fighting for me, man. Well, I’ll make an exception if you get into a fight and need help!” I replied, “I don’t need your help, dumbass,” but I must say I was happy to hear him say that.

それから高校は無事に卒業して今俺は首都圏の大学生。元々勉強と仲が悪かったダニーは俳優になって、まだ有名とは言えないけど芝居は、特に悲劇的なキャラクターの芝居は、結構評価されている。初主演に選ばれたと聞いて、来週の祝祭日に例の宿泊人の女の子を誘ってみれば？」とサジェストした。そしたらその場でいとこのメイに電話して電話を替わってもらってはスペイン語のようなことを喋り始めた。受話器から笑い声が聞こえたような気がする。後から聞いた話じゃ、ダニーはスペイン語で「こんな不学で無知な私がお尋ねして宜しいかわかりませんが、来週の木曜日に私の芝居をご覧になって頂けますでしょうか」と言っただけらしい。そして彼女は「いいわ。そこまで言われると行くしかないじゃない」と流暢な英語で答えたらいい。使えない本だと思っていたのに効果満点だったようだ。

Since then, we both graduated high school, and now I go to a college in the city. Danny was never one for studying, so he became an actor, and although he’s not famous yet, he’s made a name for himself as a good tragic actor. After hearing that he’s landed his first main role in a play, I suggested that he ask that girl out for the next holiday. And on the spot, he called up his cousin May, asked for the girl, and started saying something in what sounded like Spanish. I feel like I heard laughing from the phone. When I asked him after, Danny apparently said in Spanish, “It may be presumptuous of an uneducated and ignorant man like me to ask, but may I have the honor of you coming to watch my performance?” to which she replied in fluent English, “Sure. How can I say no to that.” I thought that book was garbage, but it worked like a charm.

Journal entries of a college student in New York

September 20, 20xx.

今日はニューヨークに行くため生まれて初めて飛行機に乗った。座っていただけなのになんだか疲れてくたくただ。映画のグラビティで見たように綺麗な地球が見えるかと思ったら飛行機はそこまで高く飛ばないらしい。あんまりスピード感がなくて一瞬眠ったけど、いきなり機体が揺れたせいでちょっとちびってしまった。廊下側の席を指定したおかげで誰にもばれずにトイレに行って下着を着替えることができた。

I rode a plane for the first time in my life to go to New York. I was just sitting, but I’m so tired. I thought that maybe I’d be able to get a beautiful view of earth like in the movie “Gravity”, but I guess planes don’t fly that high. I got zero sense of speed, so I fell asleep for a moment, but then the plane experienced some turbulence, and I wet myself a bit. Thankfully I had chosen an aisle seat, so I was able to go to the bathroom and change my underwear without anyone noticing.

それはともかく、明日は始業式がある。僕は小さい頃からお母さんに「いい成績は知徳の証 拠よ」と言われてきたもので高校までは勉強ばかりに熱心だった。その結果、「教科書くん」

というあだ名がつけられた。もちろん成績は良かったおかげでニューヨークの大学に来られたわけだけと教科書くんなんてもう嫌だ。僕は格好良くなる。大学は厳しい服装の規定もないしおしゃれな服を着て僕はニューヨークシティーにいる資格のある人だと見せてやる。今年こそ変身の企画を成功させる最高の機会だ。僕の青春の清々しい風が吹く年にしてやる！

Anyway, there's an opening ceremony tomorrow. Since I was little, Mom always said, "Good grades is proof of one's intellect," so all I did was study all through high school. But as a result, I got the nickname "Mr. Textbook". I mean, I was able to come to a school in New York because I had good grades, but I just hate that nickname. I'm gonna become cool. Colleges have no strict dress code, so I'm gonna wear fancy clothes and show everyone that I'm cool enough to be in New York City. This year is the best chance to put my transformation plan into motion. Behold the refreshing winds of my youth!

September 21, 20xx.

この街は空が見えないほど高い矩形の建物ばかりでちょっと息苦しい。キャンパスも高い建物ばかりでキャンパスツアー中、ちょっとでも空が見たくて上ばかり見て歩いていたら道に落ちていた一つの釘に滑っちゃった。一番後ろにいたから誰にも気づかれなかったけどやっぱり恥ずかしかった。

I feel a little suffocated by all the rectangular buildings that are tall enough to block out the sky in this city. The buildings on campus were also all tall, and I just wanted to see the sky so bad that I walked around looking up at the sky all through the campus tour until I slipped and fell on a nail that was rolling around on the ground. I was in the way back, so no one saw me, but it was still a bit embarrassing.

October 3, 20xx.

ニューヨークに来てもう2週間。来てからずっと雨だ。暖かくて1月と2月の間にしか雨が降らないカリフォルニアの気候とは大違いだ。天気も天気で学校もまだ始まったばかりなのに課題の量も半端なくてちょっとしたstressを感じている。ここでの生活に慣れるまでどれくらいの期間が必要なんだろう。

It's been two weeks already since coming to New York. It's been raining since day one. The climate here is definitely different from California, where it's warm and only rains between January and February. The weather's bad, but the amount of assignments for classes are also insane, and I'm feeling a bit stressed out. I wonder how long it will be before I get used to living here.

October 7, 20xx.

先週、世界史のクラスでドイツがそれまでなかった駆動力のジェットエンジンを第2次世界大戦の時ほぼ完成させていたという話が本当に面白くて、その続きを期待していたのに、今日はゲストスピーカーが来た。彼女は東亜専門で政治学界の有名な宿学らしく、今日の主題は北朝鮮の社会を主導する主体思想、そしてそれに基づいた経済の仕組みだった。国の主体性の基盤とは何か」みたいな難しそうな話をしていたけど、まずKoreaが二つだってことすら知らなかった僕には全然面白くなかった。来週を待つしかないか。

Last week in my world history class, we learned about how Germany had almost completed during the second world war a jet engine with power unparalleled by anything else at the time. I was looking forward to hearing more about it today, but we had a guest speaker. She was apparently a renowned political scientist specializing in East Asia, and the topic today was the *Juche* ideology that drives the society of North Korea, and the structure of its economy built on that ideology. She talked about complicated things like what the foundation of a nation's independence is, but I didn't even know that there were Koreans, so I didn't find the topic very interesting. I guess I'll have to wait for lecture next week.

October 19, 20xx.

今日は姿絵のクラスです。すごい美人の子を見た。僕の左に座っていたんだけどstyleも良くて描いている絵をちらっと見たら結構うまかった。隣の子と色々喋っていて声も綺麗で優しそうだった。なんの話をしているかちょっと盗み聞きしたら意外と野球の話をしていて、ヤンキーズとメッツの守備率のことで盛り上がっていた。彼女と何回か目もあったんだけどなんか恥ずかしくてsmileもできず、挨拶の一言も言えなかった。今まで一回しか見てないってことはクラスのスケジュールがほぼ被らないってことかな？

I saw a really pretty girl in my portrait drawing class today. She was sitting to my left, and she had good style and was pretty good at drawing too. She was talking about stuff with another girl next to her, and she seemed like a nice person. I wondered what they were talking about, so I eavesdropped a bit, and to my surprise, they were talking about baseball. They got all worked up about the fielding average of the Yankees and the Mets. Our eyes met a few times, but I was so embarrassed that I couldn't even say hello, let alone smile. I wonder why I've only seen her once until now. Maybe our class schedules don't overlap?

October 24, 20xx.

今朝はdowntownで学生オーケストラのオーディションがあって珍しく下りの地下鉄に乗ったら変なおばさんに痴漢に勘違いされた。私のお尻触ただろう、この畜生め！」と怒鳴られた。チェロを持っていたんだけど僕の前に立っていたから、お尻に触れたのかな？って、チェロと手の違いくらいわかるだろう、普通。幸いなこととなり立っていた非番の警察の人のおかげでなんのこともなく済んだけどやっぱり機嫌をうまく直せなくてオーディションは落ちてしまった。帰りにタイムワナービルの地階にあるホールフーズによって青果物のセクションに行ったら、エプロンをかけてフルーツを種別に区分している姿絵のclassの子に会った。彼女に触れているあの果物たちは僕より祝福を受けているんだなと思っていたら彼女と目が合っちゃった。

For the first time in a while, I got on a downtown train this morning to audition for a student orchestra, and this woman mistook me for a molester. She screamed, "You touched my ass didn't you, you son of a bitch!" I had my cello with me, so maybe the cello case touched her butt? But then can't people normally tell the difference between a cello and a hand? Fortunately though, there was an off-duty cop on the train, so nothing happened after that, but I was still in a foul mood and ended up failing the audition. I stopped by the Whole Foods on the basement floor of the Time Warner building on my way home, and when I went to the fruit section, I saw the girl from my portrait drawing class, in an apron, sorting fruit. I was thinking that the fruit she's sorting are more fortunate than I am, when our eyes met.

「あ、同じクラスの！ここで会うなんて奇遇だね！」と声をかけてくれた。
"Oh, you're in my class, right? How weird running into each other here!" she said to me.

ちょうど彼女も上がるところで僕も今日は他に予定がなかったから一緒にcafeに行くことになった。彼女の名前はローラ。日本人とスウェデン人のハーフで日本の千葉県というところで生まれたいらしい。僕は全然知らないけど、日本のコメディは漫才というジャンルがあって今は「千鳥」というデュオにはまっているらしい。ローラはもう四年生で地理学を専攻しているそう。いろんな地帯の特徴を覚えるのも好きだし、将来の夢はパナマの地峡に行くこと、そして地底探検を試みることにしよう。色々話してカフェを出ると、外はもう暗かった。晩御飯まで食べちゃうと次会った時に話すことがなくなっちゃいそうで今日はそこで別れることにした。携帯番号も交換した。最悪の朝だったけど、最高の一日だった。

She was just about to get off, and I didn't have anything planned either, so we ended up going to a cafe together. Her name is Lola. She's half Japanese and half Swedish, and she was apparently born in an area in Japan called the Chiba prefecture. She's apparently really into a Japanese comic duo called 'plover', though I know nothing about Japanese comedy. Lola's already in her fourth year, majoring in geography. She said

she likes to memorize characteristics of different land regions and that she hopes to one day visit the Isthmus of Panama and also go on underground explorations. We talked about all sorts of things, and it was already dark out by the time we came out of the cafe. I was afraid I would run out of things to talk about if we had dinner together too, so we decided to call it a day. We exchanged cell phone numbers. It was the worst morning, but the best day.

Story about Karen, a businesswoman

カレンは成功した起業家かとして、新経済の指導者として、一時期注目されていた。だが競争者が広めた噂による不買運動のせいで苦境に陥った。数年間、自分で資金の負担を全部背負いながら社員を一人もクビにせずに会社を復活させようと引き続き苦闘した。しかし気変わりの激しい消費者たちの不信はすでに深まっていてその響きを翻すことはカレンほどの有名な凄腕にも不可能だった。彼女は仕方なく全国の支店を一つ一つ閉鎖し始め、去年最後の閉店の札をかけた。ゼロから素手で立ち上げた会社を不当に捨てざるを得なかった痛みのせいか、思いやりも気立てもよかったカレンは家に引きこもってしまった。

Karen once gained prominence as a successful entrepreneur and leader of the new economy. But she fell into hard times due to boycotts that resulted from rumors spread by competitors. She continued to fight hard to revive her company without firing a single employee by shouldering all of the company funds herself. However, the distrust of flippant consumers had already deepened to a point even a go-getter like Karen could not possibly turn back. She had no choice but to close down her branches one by one, until her company shut down for good last year. Perhaps it was the pain of having to discard a company she had started from nothing through no fault of her own, but the once considerate and good-mannered Karen resigned herself from the outside world.

それからしばらくして友人のしつこい誘いに負けて元夫のスティーブンのコンサートに行くことになった。大きなスタジアムのステージの上でスポットライトの光を浴びながら大勢のファンの前で演奏している彼の姿に刺激を受けた。オーディションで何度も不合格になって正式なデビューまで15年もかかったスティーブンは今年で37歳。付き合っていた頃は音楽へのひたすらな思いで大学にも行かず毎日市街でライブのチラシを配る彼を尊敬していたが、結婚後も続く失敗で彼が段々不幸に見えてきたのだった。カレンはどんなに辛い状況にも折れないスティーブンのポジティブな思考がむしろ不合理に見え、腹立たしかった。そういう彼と自分を比較しながら少し優越感に浸っていたことも否定できない。

After some time, Karen went to see her ex-husband Steven's concert at the incessant urging of her friends. It was stimulating to see him standing under the spotlight on the stage of a large stadium in front of numerous fans. Steven, who took more than 15 years to debut after failing numerous auditions, is 37 years old this year. Steven had decided not to go to college and instead went out to the streets everyday to hand out fliers for his show; when they were dating, Karen respected his unwavering passion for music, but seeing him fail over and over made him seem like a victim of misfortune. Despite hardships, Steven never gave up his positive mindset, which seemed so unreasonable and annoyed her. She couldn't deny that she did feel a sense of superiority whenever she compared herself to him.

それである日、皿洗いのことで始まった小さな言い合いが大げんかになってしまい、少しずつひびが入っていった二人の関係は完全に割れてしまった。離婚の手続きが終わった日スティーブンはこう言った。「人の幸せは本人の視点次第だと思っている。こんな不平等な世の中じゃ誰だって失敗に会う。人生は修行の場だというし、嬉しい時も悲しい時も全部含めて修行だ。そう考えないと絶望に襲われてそのままくたばっちゃうだろう」と。二世を契ったはずの二人の愛はその言葉を最後に終わった。失敗の繰り返しで金もなく友達まで少なくなった情

けない自分を慰めるくだらない綺麗事にすぎないと思った彼の言葉が今になってはカレンの心を打った。「人生の修行者として何回もの失敗は当然。私のstoryはまだまだ終わっていない」とカレンは顔を上げ、念を押した。

One day a small argument that had begun over doing the dishes turned into a huge fight and shattered their already fragile relationship. On the day they finalized their divorce papers, Steven said, “I think your happiness depends on your perspective on things. Life is unfair and everyone fails at some point. They say life is really a training session for something else, and that’s true when things are good or bad. I mean, if you don’t think that way, you’re just gonna get swallowed up by despair...” With those words, their supposed eternal love ended. At the time, the words had seemed like meaningless self-hypnosis of a failure who didn’t have any money or friends left, but now, the words moved Karen. Karen looked up and said to herself, “It’s only natural that a trainee of life would fail. My story isn’t over yet.”

Miscellaneous sentences

ビニール袋の中からおにぎりのようなものが透けて見えた。

The rice ball could be seen through the plastic bag.

デザイン的にここは半角の句点のほうがいいと思うよ。

Design-wise, I think a half-width period would be better here.

紙が千切られていて書いてある記号が全く読めない。

I can’t read the symbols written on the paper at all because the paper is torn to shreds.

この地点からは立ち入り禁止の区画です。

The area from here on out is off-limits.

ここは鹿が多いため他より地代が高いのです。

The land is expensive here because there are a lot of deer.

真夏の紫外線には気をつけましょう。

Let’s be careful of midsummer’s ultraviolet rays.