

Mameha's Memoirs

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When The beloved classic book Memoirs of a Geisha came out, the world fell in love with The Japanese Cinderella Story of Sayuri. Not much is known of her mentor, Mameha, so here is my attempt at her past, told through her point of view.

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1 - A Geisha

What is a Geisha? Ahhh, a Question that people of the Western World ask frequently.

She is an Artist,

The very word Geisha means artisan.

She is a dancer

A singer

A master of many instruments

She is a delicate flower floating by on a Cloud of silk, Hidden behind a white mask of porcelain

She is shy and coy

She never speaks her mind

Her past? Not necessary...

All my life, I've seen girl after girl metamorphose from a pretty young Maiko, to a Mysterious, yet beautiful Geisha. The transformation is not an easy task. Any commoner can paint their face, wear a kimono and call themselves a geisha, so the one's that are sincere are very serious about the rough journey. For the real Geisha, Each day is never peaceful

Life, It's never a happy thing

We do not become Geisha to peruse our own Destinies...We do it because we have no choice. The life of a Geisha is like a Roller coaster. Often, all you want to do is get off, but that wont happen until the very day we die. It's a lot more than Glamorous parties and Social lives.

Relationships are nothing to us, no matter how much you do not wish to let go. Oh, how much my heart aches. My friends they adored me, only to later knock me down. I've have had so many people in my life I loved and trusted so deeply, So many memories...I've watched crumble before my very eyes.

But after all, this isn't the memoir of a normal girl, or a Princess, But the memoir of a different kind

More to come soon

2 - The new girl

Chapter Two

There is a certain day that I will never forget...

The Gentle breeze fluttering through my window was ever-so slightly fragranced by the Sakura trees. It was spring, and they were in full bloom. The Clattering noise of Okobo and Zori hitting the cobblestone streets below my bedroom window echoed in my ears as I arose from bed. Indeed, it was time for me to wake up. I made my way down the Hallway and was greeted by Ayako, one of our many maids, who was restocking the kimono room.

As I made my way into the Dining room, I was sure to open the Sliding door properly, then walked in as proper as I could, being sure to bow to mother before I sat down. "Good morning Hiroko-Chan!" She said, lowering her newspaper to have a glance at me.

"Good morning," I replied. "Is Masuyo awake yet?"

"I'm afraid not, she arrived home quite late last night. Around three to be precise"

"Why so late?" I asked. I couldn't resist being to nosy.

"She had many engagements to attend last night."

"Oh..." I replied.

"You should get going; you know it's bad to be late." She said.

"You're right mother, Thank you." I said, getting up and bowing.

I put on my Okobo, grabbed my Shamisen, and went out the door. I was very busy at the Geisha school at that time. My Debut with Masuyo, my older sister, was coming up very soon. Well Masuyo was not my real sister. Well, when a girl is in the Minari stage of her Geisha Training, She must pick an older sister to train her on the side of her daily lessons. Since Masuyo also belonged to the Aomori Okiya, I asked her to be my older sister, and luckily, she accepted.

I arrived at the school and Checked in. I took off my shoes and entered the classroom. I bowed to the teacher and entered upon permission. Luckily, I made it just in time for the first dance. However, I couldn't help but be distracted. A new girl was in out class. Just at that moment, my Friend Natsuko came in, tripping over her kimono and miraculously landed in her spot. "Late again, Suko-Chan?" I

teased. "Hush! I overslept again."

"Good morning Girls!" Teacher exclaimed bowing to us.

"Good morning!" We all sang in unison. I lifted my head up slightly, and I could just see who she was silently criticizing. Who may not be bowing properly, or perhaps someone's hair was starting to be frazzled.

"May I have your attention please? It is my pleasure to introduce to you Nitta Fumichiyo. She is new, and this is the first dance lesson. She will now be in our class." The shy girl turned around to face us. She had very slim sparkling black eyes and Hair long and silky, the color of the night sky. She was about maybe eight or nine, but I could tell she would be quite a beauty as an adult.

"Natsuko" Teacher asked.

"Yes?" She asked politely.

"Please move to the back of the classroom."

Poor Natsuko, Confusion and Anger made up her face. "But, I have always been in the front row!"

"Yes, you have. But not anymore. Now move."

She opened her mouth to speak but nothing came out. She gathered her fans and proceeded to the back of the classroom.

"Maybe that will teach to be on time. And perhaps you will practice a bit more from now on."

Our teacher's words must have struck Natsuko's ears like a Katana, for she looked ill taking her new place. Her former spot was the center of the first row, reserved for the most talented."

"Now, Fumichiyo, would you please Take Natsuko's place."

"Yes." She replied as she walked over and stood in the spot right next to me.

"Fumichiyo, I am giving you the Benefit of the doubt. You must realize that the front row of the classroom is a coveted row; only the most talented dancers can stay here. If you obey the rules and keep up and practice, you can stay here."

"Thank you." She replied.

"But understand that I am not going to take time out of the class's time, or my own time, to teach you the dances. You must learn them on your own. Follow along for now."

"Yes Ma'am" She replied.

“Now then, let’s start!” Teacher began counting and the class simultaneously began to move. I feared for little Fumichiyo. To my surprise, she was able to pick up on the moves very quickly, and her moves were very fluent. No doubt in my mind, she was going to focus on dancing when she got older.

“That little swine! She took my spot! I was Front and center and she took it from me!!!” Natsuko yelled as we stood in the school yard after lessons had ended. “Natsuko, the others are starting to stare...” “Let them!!!” She yelled. “You’re my friend and I love you dearly Suko-Chan, but She did nothing to you. Teacher moved you. I’m sure you can move back to being number one if you practice harder.”

Fumichiyo, who had just finished introducing herself to another girl, caught sight of us, smiled, and made her way toward us.

“Look what you’ve done! Now she’s coming over!” Natsuko yelled angrily at me. “What I’ve done? You were the one raising your voice!” I yelled in defense.

“Hello.” The mousy girl greeted. “You already know my name, but I’m afraid I don’t know your’s...” “It’s nice to meet you. I’m Aomori Hiroko, but you may call me oko if you like.” I replied with a bow. She smiled, and then turned to Fumichiyo. “I’m Sato Natsuko.” “Oh, nice to meet you. I must get going now. Oh, and you can call me Chiyo!”

After she had left, Natsuko was silent. And it was strange whenever Natsuko did not speak, usually that meant she was somewhat annoyed. “See, Suko-Chan, she seems like such a nice girl!”

“Ha! Nice? I don’t think so. Something about her is unsettling. I don’t trust her!”

“Whatever, Well Kaori is here, so I must be going now”

Something was strange about Natsuko. I hated when she acted so. But somehow, when Kaori was around, I always felt somewhat happier. Kaori was my personal Maid that my mother was paying for. I’m not speaking of my mother at the Okiya, I’m speaking of my real mother, who paid off her Debt and is now living on her own. She sent money over once a month to pay for Kaori. I was very fortunate, because most Minari do not have maids, and most of the time, they are treated as maids.

“Good Afternoon miss Hiroko!” She greeted. Hat smile she flashed at me always seemed to cheer me up after a long day of lessons.

“Good afternoon Kaori! What do we have planned today?” I asked eagerly.

“Well Miss, Mother Aomori gave us some money to buy new Kanzashi for you and Masuyo.”

“Again?” I asked. “We just bought some yesterday!”

"I know, but mother wants to get some new spring ones, and she Wants Masuyo to have new ones each day until her Retirement. Mother wants her to look her best and enjoy herself as much as possible until she must say goodbye to being a Geisha and must give up all her wonderful Kanzashi."

"Oh, I see."

We made our way to the Kanzashi store. I loved that store so much. There were beautiful hairclips and hair ornaments every ware. We purchased 6 new Bira Biras, Which are little fluttering Strips of silver. We also bought 7 Kushis, or rounded combs. Three were lacquered oak with painted flowers, two were Cherry wood, and the other two were plain, untreated wood with Blossom punch outs. We had enough leftover for 12 Kanoko Domes, which are flowered hair picks, and for 10 Spring Hana Kanzashi, which are Large Silk flowers with long Dangling rows of Petals that trail off the main flower.

After we bought our newest Kanzashi, we headed back to the Okiya. When I got there, mother And Masuyo were waiting for me at the table. They had a small cup of tea, as usual, waiting for me when I got there.

"Hello! They both called out, eager to hear about my day.

"So, did you learn anything new today?" Masuyo asked me.

"No, we just reviewed, but we got a new girl."

"Really, who is the girl?" Mother asked, setting down her tea.

"I believe her name is Nitta Fumichiyo."

Mother and Masuyo both looked at each other with strange looks on their faces when they heard me say "Nitta".

"She seems nice but, I don't know...She seems very shy."

"Well, that doesn't surprise me at all..." Mother replied "She's a nitta Girl"

"What does that mean?" I asked, confused.

"The mother of the Nitta Okiya is well.....not the nicest person in the world."

"What do you mean?"

"What she means, Hiroko-Chan, Is that she is not the nicest Woman in the world. She treats Her Girls like slaves. She makes them clean and beats them for the dumbest reasons. You have no idea How blessed you and I are to be members of this Okiya, because I can guarantee that other Mothers are no where near as nice."

"She's Right Hiroko-Chan. She is also very cheap with her girls. You see how much Kanzashi you and

Masuyo have? She never buys new ones. I love to buy new things for the both of you. I like to see you look beautiful and happy. I mean, why on earth should I be mean to you if the world outside these Okiya walls are so cruel?"

"That's for sure mother" Masuyo replied.

"Yes, but don't repeat what I'm about to say. Miss. Nitta is so horrible to her girls that two of them escaped back to their homelands just recently. She paid so much for them, and now she is so close to being bankrupt. This girl she has now is probly her last hope before she has to shut down the Nitta Okiya and live on the streets."

"Oh my..." I replied.

"Enough of this dreary conversation. How bout you and I get changed, Hiroko-Chan, and Go for a walk?" Masuyo replied.

"Sure!" I replied. I loved to go for walks with her.

When I got upstairs, Kaori helped me get dressed in one of my favorite kimono, which was Dark blue with white blossoms on it. Even though it was for late winter, she allowed me to wear it. After all, I wouldn't be able to wear a simple Kimono for a Long time, for the next day, I had my first appointment at the Hairdresser and I would have to Start wearing Maiko kimono, which is the most elaborate out there.

I waited in the Entry hall until finally Masuyo stepped down the stairs. She was wearing a pale yellow Kimono with A lavender Hem, and A dark purple obi with a Diamond dragonfly brooch for a clasp. She also had a Sea green opaque Parasol with a white flower design. She slipped on her Zori, and I slipped on my Okobo. A few moments later, we left.

A/n

Hello again. If you haven't noticed, this is being told through Mameha's point of view. It's just like Memoirs of a Geisha, it's told the same way.

For those of you who like to flame: (I wouldn't have to say this is I wasn't traumatized) I am not claiming that this is her story, This is just my Idea of what her life could have been like. I am also aware that I made the mother of her Okiya very nice. Well, I did that because Mameha's is very nice, so maybe she got it from her and her older sister. And I know that usually they were never treated that nicely, but again, I wanted to make her different than other Okiya mothers.

And about my information:

Before someone tells me my information is wrong, seriously, don't go there. I read *Memoirs of a Geisha* about 3 times. And I've read Mineiko Iwazaki's (one of the greatest geisha of all time) Autobiography. And I also read info on Kiharu Nakamura, who is a famous Geisha from the time Mameha would have been from.

I'm sorry If I sound mean, but I'm in a bad mood right now...

PLEASE REVIEW....eee

Memoirs of a Geisha Belongs to Arthur Golden