

## Conversation of Johnny Carson Tonight Show (Oct 15, 1982)

### Talkers

**JC** Johnny Carson

**TK** Tetsuko Kuroyanagi

**FT** Floyd R Turbo

**JR** Joan Rivers

<11 minutes 25 seconds>

**JC** My next guest I have not met.

She (TK) is a Japan's best loved television personality.

She (TK) is the host of three different shows that draw at least 35 million viewers.

And this is her first appearance on American television.

Would you welcome please, Tetsuko Kuroyanazi.

**TK** She (JR) speaks to me in Japanese.

**JC** Really?

**TK** She (JR) said, "Konbanwa".

Wonderful, thank you very much.

And, I'm very happy.

This is first time I appear,,,

**JC** Thank you.

**TK** ,, on famous American television show.

And, glad to see you.

**JC** "Konnichiwa".

**TK** I'm so happy.

**JC** If it hadn't been for "Shogun", I would have been completely lost.

**TK** Could I have something that you had it?

**JC** Would you like that little foot?

We have a little foot stool.

Put out for you.

How's that?

**TK** Automatic!

**JC** Automatic.

It's a pleasure to meet you.

**TK** Very nice.

But, unfortunately, someone pronounced my name.

You (JC) did very well.

And, the very beginning (FT), you did very well.

But, when you (JR) taught him (JC) was wrong.

**FT** Oh.

**JC** I'm so glad you said that.

"Tetsuko Kuroyanazi"

**TK** "Yanagi"

**JC** I was right the first time then.

**FT** Yeah.

**TK** Yes, the first time.

He (FT) did the first time beautifully.

**JC** You corrected me and I was right the first time.

As is often the case.

**FT** Well, have a nice weekend.

**TK** Kuroyanagi means black willow, black willow tree.

**JC** Yes, you're very lovely.

**TK** Oh, thank you.

**JC** You are referred to Japan as the Barbara Walters of Japan.  
I understand.  
That is quite a compliment.

**TK** That's you mean compliment.

**JC** Well.  
In some circles, that would be considered a compliment.  
She is a very popular broadcaster here in America.

**TK** Yes.

**JC** And I know you are extremely popular in Japan.  
You do three different,,,

**TK** Yes.

**JC** ,,, television shows.

**TK** I know it is very unusual here.

**JC** Yes, it is.

**TK** I have my own daily talk show Monday to Friday.  
And I have Thursday evening, "The best ten" which is called this is the 10 top singers that week. I do MC one hour.  
And, also I do with the symphony orchestra in Friday evening 7:30.

**JC** So, you have three completely different shows.

**TK** And, three different type of viewers.

**JC** I see.

**TK** Some, of course, viewers are mixed, but.

**JC** On Monday night, you run "The best of Tetsuko" at all, or a repeat.  
That's kind of a local joke here and doesn't translate too well.  
This does not leave you much time.

**TK** No, I do very well.  
My manager is very well organized.  
So, I work four days a week.  
How many days you work?

**JC** It's just almost, almost every day.

**TK** Oh, but.

**JC** Almost every day.  
No, I work Tuesday through Friday.

**TK** What do you do Monday?

**JC** Monday, I, I don't work on Monday.

**TK** Oh, why?

**JC** Well, I, I, you've never met Bombastic Bushkin.  
Ah, he is my manager.

**TK** Oh,

**JC** And see, we've been doing the show for 20 years.

**TK** I know, congratulations.

**JC** Thank you very much.

**TK** I've heard about it.

**JC** Yeah, and after 20 years, the five days a week got a little too much.  
So, we go back.

How long is your show?

**TK** Ah, 45 minutes.

**JC** 45 minutes.  
And you do that every single day?

**TK** Yes. But, I tape.

**JC** Yes.  
What kind of viewers?  
Now you say you have different viewers for each show.  
The symphonia, the symphonic show.

**TK** The viewers?

**JC** Yes.

**TK** My Talk show daily it's afternoon.  
I do 1:15 to 2:00.  
So, housewives and the doctors who working at home and the merchants.

**JC** Merchants.

**TK** And the taxi drivers or who is working in a bar because they wake up at midday.  
So these people.  
And my "The best ten", this pop show is young people.

**JC** Alright.

**TK** That you mentioned 35 million people watch every Thursday evening.  
It's a very young generation to maybe 100 years old.  
And, my symphony is people who like a classic music.

**JC** That's incredible.  
Do you interview when you have American personalities in Japan?  
Do they come on the show?

**TK** Yes. When if they have a good timing with me.

**JC** Alright.

**TK** So, very recently I asked Ms. Brooke Shields,,,

**JC** Brooke Shields.

**TK** and Mr. Yul Brynner,,,

**JC** Yul Brynner?

**TK** Yul Brynner and the pianist Alexis Weissenberg or Ali MacGraw, and Ahhn,,,

**JC** Ali MacGraw. Right?

**TK** Wrong?

**JC** Are those the most popular personalities in Japan?

**TK** Yes. And also Olivia Haseey.  
Olivia Haseey came with her Japanese husband.

**JC** Ha. Would they know who I. I was in Japan?

**TK** No. No. No.  
If I know,,,

**JC** Eastern diplomacy that is always good.  
Of course, you wouldn't know because my shows are not seen at all.

**TK** But, you are very,,, People told me that you're very famous here.

**JC** Yeah.

**TK** So, I'm so happy to be here.

**JC** Alright. Do you have a commercials on your show you have to stop every so often and sell products?

**TK** Yes. My talk show and my this pop show. But the other one, Symphony, is NHK which is like a BBC.  
No commercials.

**JC** Well, we have to stop here for a moment.

**TK** Oh.

**JC** And then, we'll be back.  
Alright?

**TK** I'll be back?

**JC** Yeah.  
Yeah, we'll be back.

**JC** I was complimenting you on your English.  
You learned that you say at British high school in,,,

**TK** Yes, in Tokyo.  
But, I didn't study.  
But, I just listening what teacher teaching me.

**JC** You do very, very well.

**TK** Thank you very much.  
And I lived in New York one year.

**JC** In New York?  
That's before you had your television shows or this is,,,

**TK** During.  
I decided to have a one year vacation.

**JC** Yeah

**TK** And I lived there and I studied little and I watched people.

**JC** Many Americans television shows are seen in Japan, are they not?  
Television shows from this country. Are they not seen in Japan?  
Some of our shows, not this show.  
Like "Dallas" or some of the,,,

**TK** "Columbo"

**JC** That's seen and they have to,,,

**TK** "Many", "many",,,  
I'm sorry. If I say "many" "many". And if we, we don't see yours, it is.

**JC** No, that's all right. That's all right.

**TK** I'm sorry about the "many".

**JC** No, I understand.  
Our show is very difficult to translate.

**TK** Exactly. That's why. Yes.

**JC** Extremely difficult.  
Sometimes, even difficult here,,,

**TK** When we both talking, I think it's very difficult to translate in Japanese.

**JC** Now, John was just saying she (JR) leaned over him (FT) and says "You (FT) know, she (TK) 's not married"

**JR** She (TK) 's so pretty.  
We have to fix her (TK) up.

**JC** No. You see why do women always assume somebody is not married that they should be married.

**TK** I know what people call for matchmaker.

**JC** Matchmaker.

**JR** Yeah, that's what I am.

**TK** Oh, you are doing?

**JR** I would love to put people together.

**JC** Do they?

**TK** Do you find somebody then?

**JR** Somebody great for you because you're so pretty.

**TK** Oh, thank you very much.

**JC** Do they have matchmakers in Japan?

**TK** Oh, yes. What we call "Go-between".  
They carry pictures and show.

**JC** Yeah.

**TK** Yes.

**JR** That's interesting.

**TK** Like that.

**JC** Now, this little book you have, it's an illustrated book called "**Totto-chan**". Is that right?  
And, it's called "**A Little Girl at the Window**".  
This has to do with your,,, your childhood.

**TK** Yes.  
Only six years to nine years old.  
I graduated a very, very unique primary school.  
And, the principal was beautiful.  
He trust children.  
And he kept telling me, "You know you're really a good girl."

**JC** Alright.

**TK** Because I expelled from another school when I was 6 years old.

**JC** Why were you expelled?

**TK** It's long story. So, I want you to read it.  
But I was interested in many things.  
So the first day I went to school, I opened the desk hundred times.  
Because my desk at my home, my desk opened this way but school opened this way.  
So I was very happy 100 times.  
The teacher was very upset and "Don't open without purpose, without,,,"

**JC** Reason.

**TK** ,,," reason"  
So I put everything inside.  
And when I need, for example, write aid and pencil and notebook and everything, let them in so that every time.  
So, she was very upset.  
But next day I satisfied.  
So I was at the window and I was looking outside.  
And, especially, I love street musicians.  
So, I talked to them and when they coming, then the street was just beside our window.  
So when the street musician coming, I said to other students (Pupils), "Come", "Come", "They are", "They are there"  
So they, everybody, come to the window and they shout.  
(But we call "Chindonya-san", street musicians), "Chindonya-san"  
Then I asked them to play. So they played so music (one-place). All this time, teacher has to wait like that.  
So, Every day, Many things.  
So, she said to my mother, "Please take your child. We cannot".  
That's Why.  
Then, I went to this next school.  
Then, this is the one.  
And, this principal (the second one principal) kept telling me "You really a good girl". All the time he kept telling me.  
So, I thought "I really," I thought "I'm a very good girl".  
So, I said "Yes, I am very good"  
But later when I grown up, grew up,

The I remembered he said, "You really a good girl (originally a good girl)". Something like that.

**JC** Alright.

**TK** It means I looked not good but he found something, something good in me.

**JC** Right.

**TK** But I thought "I'm a good girl". So it helped.  
Otherwise, I'll be too much, very much. You know,,,

**JC** Drop out.

**TK** Drop out.

**JC** Yeah.

**TK** So,,,

**JC** That's what the story is about, you wrote about in.

**TK** You know my classroom.  
It is so difficult to speak in English.  
I'm sorry.

**JR** Oh, you are wonderful.

**JC** You do. You're doing beautifully.

**TK** I am very popular for quick talker in Japan.

**JC** Why don't you do it in Japanese?  
There's a large Japanese population here in California.

**TK** Ah Huh. But you don't understand.

**JC** I might be able to get the,,,

**TK** Oh.

**JC** ,, , the attitude, the feeling.

**TK** Ah. Then,

私の学校の校長先生が、私のことを、あの一、とつても「君はほんとはいい子だよ」って、おっしゃってくださったのが  
私の生涯とつても良かったことで、

**JC** Oh, Yes. Yes.

**TK** ございました。

**JC** Of course.  
So simple.  
We'll be right back.

**JC** A great having on our show.

**TK** Thank you very much.

**JC** We hope you enjoy stay here.  
And, If I have get over Japan, could I be a guest on your show?

**TK** Of course, of course.  
Let me know before.

**JC** I sure will.

**TK** Oh, then. Of course, of course.

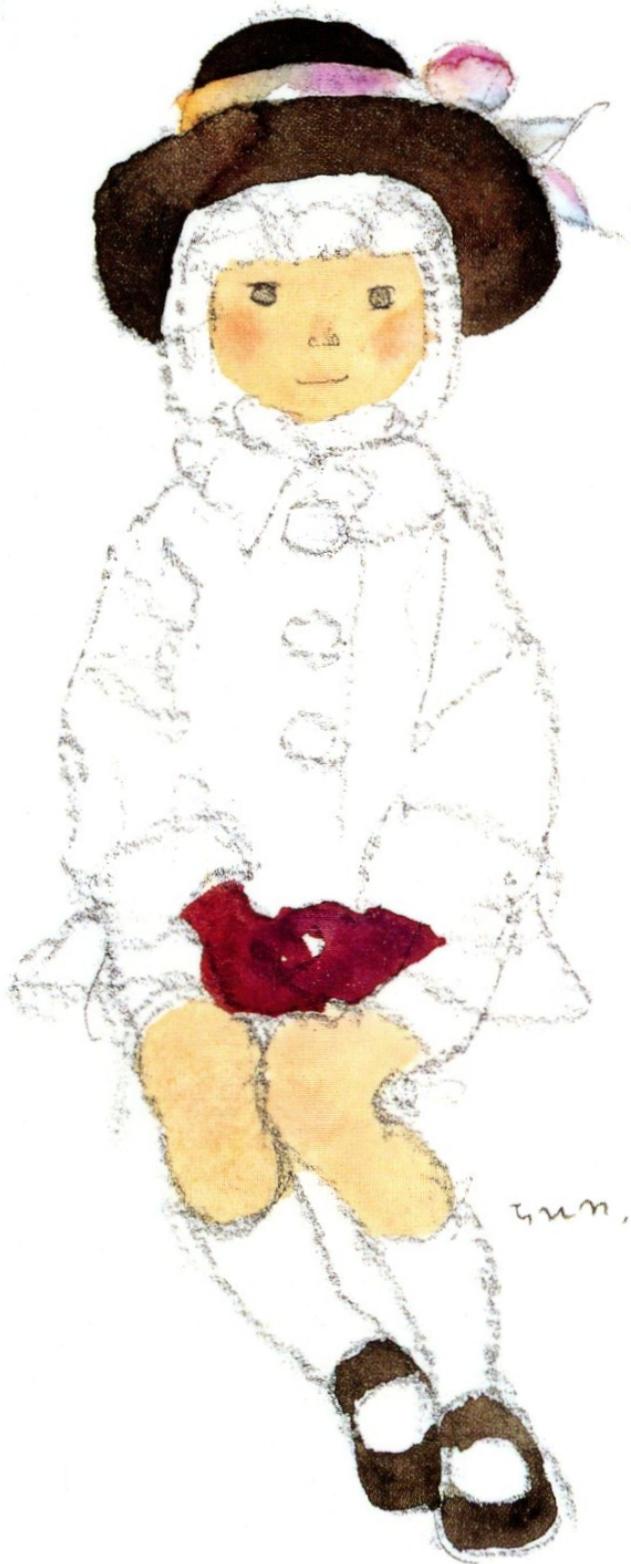
**JC** I give you Friday morning.

**TK** Yes, wonderful.

**JC** Thank you for being here.  
Just lovely.



# Totto-chan



The  
Little Girl  
at the  
Window

Tetsuko  
Kuroyanagi

Translated by  
Dorothy Britton

**A long-standing bestseller by Japan's  
most popular TV personality, also well  
known for her work as a UNICEF  
Goodwill Ambassador.**

“*Totto-chan* is a quiet indictment  
of sterile education.”

—*New York Times*

“Sensitively written, delicately illustrated, poetically  
translated, *Totto-chan* is, like a haiku, filled with  
aesthetic and philosophical depth.”

—*Library Journal*

“*Totto-chan* has reminded millions of Japanese  
what children think education should be.”

—*International Herald Tribune*

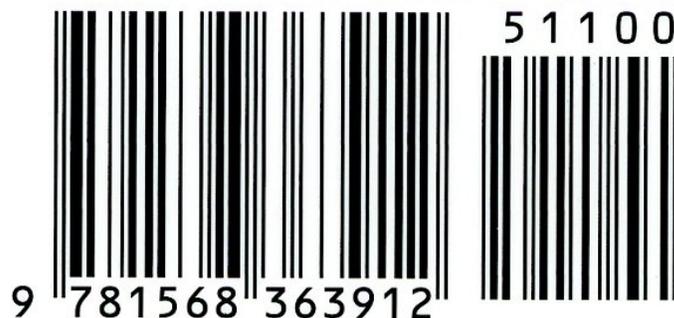
“*Totto-chan* can be expected to attract  
American educators, parents, and perhaps some  
children who appreciate the international view  
beyond their own first-floor windows.”

—*Christian Science Monitor*

**US\$11.00 / \$15.00 CAN**

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## **Book Review of New York Times (November 21, 1982)**

"Totto-chan The Little Girl at the Window"

By Tetsuko Kuroyanagi Translated by Dorothy Britton 195 pp New York: Kodansha International \$9.95

TETSUKO KUROYANAGI was the kind of child who liked to talk to swallows and street musicians, who asked questions nonstop and had trouble sitting still long enough to hear the answers. Her curiosity got her into trouble at an early age - at 6 she was expelled from elementary school for opening and closing her desk top too often and staring out the window.

The young schoolgirl could have grown up with the stigma of expulsion, an outcast from an educational system that in Japan is the path to status and power. But instead her mother took her to a different kind of school, where the principal listened to her chatter with grave interest and assured her that she was "really a good girl." And young Totto-chan - as Tetsuko was called - grew up to be Japan's best-loved television star, the host of three shows with an audience of millions.

"Totto-chan: The Little Girl at the Window" is the story of Miss Kuroyanagi's unconventional education in Tokyo during World War II and the values it taught her. She attended classes in old railroad cars, went on nature walks, traveled to temple fairs and hot springs and studied subjects in whatever order she pleased. At the center of the school was its founder and principal, Sosaku Kobayashi, whose love and respect for children clearly shaped the lives and outlooks of all who attended his Tomoe School. The school was especially unusual given the repression in wartime Japan. The children learned English at a time when it was labeled the devil's tongue and were spared exposure to the virulent nationalism that was required subject matter in most Japanese schools.

Told in a series of anecdotes that are often poignant but never cloying, Miss Kuroyanagi's account of her school days was a Japanese best seller, breaking all previous publishing records by selling more than 5 million copies to date. Her tales of school as a joyous series of adventures contrasted sharply with the rigid, test-oriented education that most Japanese experience. Japanese readers were enraptured and more than a little wistful, and the book sparked a widespread debate within Japan over the Japanese educational system. Although Japanese is an extremely difficult language to read and write, Japan has a 99 percent literacy rate, and her students regularly score higher than their Western counterparts in math and science testing. For this record of achievement, Japanese trade long hours of studying under relentless pressure to succeed at standardized nationwide tests, but some -Miss Kuroyanagi among them - ask whether the system blunts imagination and ignores the special child.

As testimony that a flexible alternative school also spurs academic achievement, Miss Kuroyanagi lists the accomplishments of Tomoe's graduates, who include an eminent physicist and East Asia's foremost authority on rare orchids. But as the book makes clear, Tomoe School offered its students far more than academic success. Many of the chapters deal with universal themes that should interest the American reader: how children learn consideration for others, how they react to death, how they treat those who are different from them. It seemed natural for the young Totto-chan to help a handicapped classmate to climb a tree for the first time and to protect him from other children's teasing.

Although the book may hold particular interest for Japanese because it implicitly questions their educational system, the stories do not require any special knowledge of Japan. Indeed, they could be tales of any child growing up. Dorothy Britton, who translated the memoir from the Japanese, has taken pains to explain Japanese customs without disrupting the rhythm and pace of the narrative.

Tomoe school was destroyed by American B-29 bombers in the 1945 air raids that leveled most of Tokyo, but no hint of bitterness clouds Miss Kuroyanagi's book. She tells of the principal standing among the burning ruins and asking cheerfully what kind of school to build next.

The book's title comes from a Japanese expression describing people who have failed - in Japanese terms. Businessmen judged incompetent by a company are assigned seats by the window, away from the center of activity. This book is Miss Kuroyanagi's expression of thanks that she was not relegated to a seat by the window but instead allowed to grow up to be self-confident and successful - even if she did flout convention in the process.

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# TIME

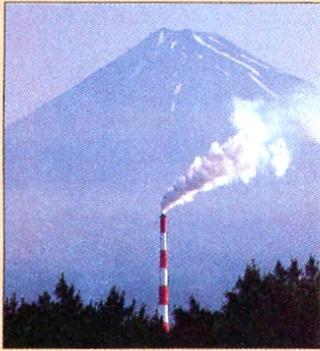
# JAPAN

# A Nation in Search of Itself



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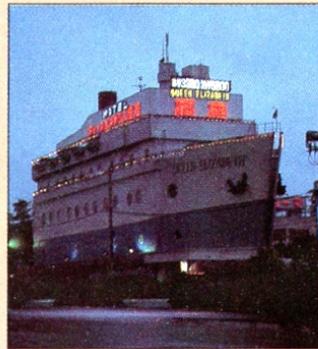
**18**  
**The Country:** Enormously successful, Japan now confronts the problems of an advanced industrial society. At home, social change is sweeping aside traditions; abroad, the Japanese generate suspicion and ill-feeling. The present is booming and boisterous, but the future lies in shadow.



**49**  
**Design:** Not just beauty, but the beauty of calm understatement; not just perfection but the perfection emphasized by a slight flaw. These traits give Japanese design its *shibusu*, a mix of flair and simplicity, visible in what one designer calls "the just so of the swerve of a pagoda or the sword of a samurai."



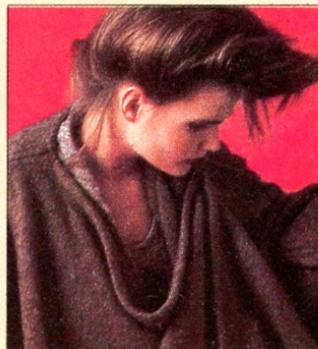
**38**  
**Economy & Business:** The key to the country's commercial success abroad is not government policy but fierce competition at home. Demanding consumers insist on exceptional quality, low prices and innovative features. If firms can outpace local rivals, foreign competitors are often pushovers.



**71**  
**Behavior:** Is Japan a sexually liberated society? Yes and no. Unlike the West, this Eastern nation has little sense of sexual sin; sex tends to be regarded as a simple human activity, like eating. But as the West has grown permissive, Japan has imposed restrictions. The result: a good deal of frustration.



**44**  
**Culture:** It is a society of constraint, a system of forms, etiquette and images that makes the ever present sense of congestion tolerable. Artist and artisan seek to enlarge finite space: a dish of sushi, a bonsai tree or a rock garden is an exquisite miniature intended to expand in the mind's eye.



**72**  
**Living:** Three of the world's best designers have started an international fashion revolution in Japan. Issey Miyake, Rei Kawakubo and Yohji Yamamoto are invigorating traditional ideas of form and fabric by altering shapes, shifting lines and using classical styles in compellingly unconventional ways.

**57**  
**Computers**  
 Coming up: machines that can give medical advice, translate languages, even understand the spoken word.

**66**  
**Education**  
 Demanding and ruthlessly competitive, the schools stress science, mathematics and rote learning.

**78**  
**Video**  
 A TV network holds huge audiences with quality shows. ► Among them: a star who broke tradition.

**63**  
**Medicine**  
 Despite impressive gains, the nation has not yet reached its goal: possessing a modernized health system.

**68**  
**Sexes**  
 The middle-class and urbanized Japanese woman is trying to reconcile tradition with present-day realities.

**80**  
**Travel**  
 Speeding by bullet into the heart of the country, where people live quietly in the company of roadside gods.

**64**  
**Law**  
 A land without lawyers uses law like a ceremonial sword, sparingly. ► But the police box monitors everything.

**74**  
**Art**  
 Trained as a calligrapher, Toko Shinoda turned her hand to abstract painting. The result: a striking mix.

**85**  
**Books**  
 Serious literature and adult comic books vie for the attention of the world's most voracious readership.

- 4 Milestones**
- 6 Letters**
- 8 Nation**
- 14 World**
- 37 History**
- 56 Science**
- 60 Religion**
- 67 Psychology**
- 75 Language**
- 76 Press**
- 77 Music**
- 82 Cinema**
- 88 People**

**Cover:** Photo by Ulf Skogsbergh; kimono by Nigel Holmes, Parsons-Meares Ltd. and Let There Be Neon.

# Little Girl at the TV Window

Japan's No. 1 attraction is a nonstop mover and talker

Six minutes until air time, and still no sign of the star. Standing on the portico of Tokyo's TV Asahi station, her manager, her producer and her director nervously scan the driveway. Five minutes. Four minutes. Nothing. At three minutes to the hour, a blood-red Mercedes screeches through the gate, careering into a reserved parking place. Out pops a 5-ft. 3-in., 99-lb. woman who, with her porcelain complexion, delicate features and glistening black hair, might pass for a Kabuki doll. As she scampers along on 2-in. wooden platform shoes, her mouth is already moving faster than her feet.

The entourage steers her (still talking) toward the studio. Sprinting through a door into a living room-like set, she drops daintily onto a white sofa. A quick glance into a hand mirror. Perfection. As the television camera's red light blinks on, she smiles serenely into the lens as if she had spent the entire morning becalmed in the tranquility of a tea ceremony.

Tetsuko Kuroyanagi never stops moving or talking. She is the star of three hit shows on three separate networks; before the day is over she will discuss rape with a young feminist author on one show, play a piano duet of *Lady of Spain* on another and rehearse a review of the week's Top Ten songs for a third. Every weekday afternoon about 10 million viewers see her on the 45-minute *Tetsuko's Room*, Japan's first and most successful daily talk show; each Thursday night 30 million fans tune in to the 60-minute *The Best Ten*, a sort of *Your Hit Parade*; while on Fridays 11 million watch her play host to several 100-piece classical orchestras on the 30-minute *Music Plaza* show.

Tetsuko is more than just the most recognizable face in all of Japan. She is a phenomenon, a conspicuous exception to the tradition of servile and "wifely" women on Japanese television. Until Tetsuko, women on the air were invariably *hai hai* girls, pretty poppets who decorated the chair next to the male host and giggled on cue. But her debut as a talk-show host eleven years ago changed all that. Her quick tongue, candor, spontaneity and irrepressible curiosity were revolutionary and made her a significant role model for ambitious women all across Japan. Says Eiichi Adachi, television critic of Tokyo's daily *Hochi*: "Tetsuko has had more impact on her audience than any other top woman show-business personality." Today, at 49, unabashedly unmarried and proudly independent in a country where both conditions are frowned upon,



Tetsuko flashes one of the most famous smiles in Japan

Tetsuko thrives as a tradition breaker.

That is the theme of Tetsuko's charming 1981 memoir, *Totto-Chan, the Little Girl at the Window*, which has sold an extraordinary 6 million copies, making it the bestselling book in Japanese history. The daughter of a father who was a concert violinist and a mother who trained as an opera singer, Tetsuko was thrown out of her rigid grammar school at the age of six because she liked to stand at an open window and chatter with the swallows and street musicians. She subsequently attended an experimental school in Tokyo that allowed her to blossom in her own way. Her book, a tribute to that school's liberal and humane sensibility, has stirred parents around the country to calls for educational reform.

After graduation from secondary school, Tetsuko hoped to become a color-



Conversing on the comfortable set of *Tetsuko's Room*

A conspicuous exception to "wifely" women on TV.

tura, but her parents wanted her to marry. In 1954, postponing the prospect of marriage, she answered an ad in a newspaper seeking actors for television. One of 13 chosen from among 6,000 applicants, she soon became a popular actress with NHK, the public broadcasting company. "Fame came easily for me," she says. "Because NHK covered all of Japan, my face was seen everywhere."

In 1971, tired of playing a mini-skirted hostess on a variety show and a frowzy provincial maid on a soap opera, Tetsuko spent a year in New York City studying acting and perfecting her English. When she received a call from TV Asahi, one of Tokyo's commercial networks, offering her the role of principal host on a lunchtime imitation of America's *Today* show, she promptly accepted. No woman had ever been the principal M.C. of a show. Tetsuko warned the producer that she was far from the prototype of a wife, but he replied, "Housewives are tired of seeing themselves on TV. Through your eyes, your sensibilities, they can see something different."

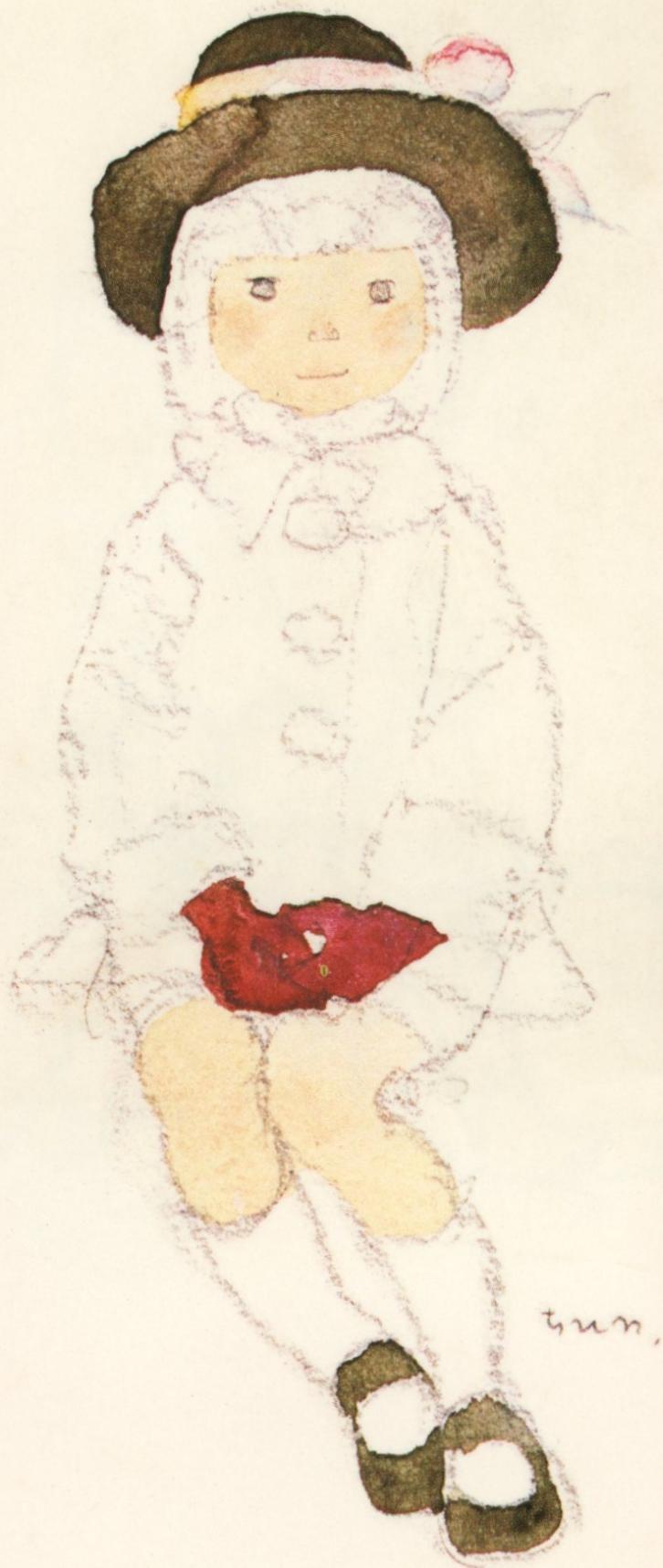
What they saw in 1972, for the first time on television, was a woman who acted natural. The program was an immediate hit, and three years later Tetsuko was offered her own show, *Tetsuko's Room*. Her timing had been perfect. "My own evolution and Japan's suited each other," she says. "Housewives wanted out of their conservative shells. What they wanted on TV was my individuality."

Tetsuko has been dubbed the Japanese Barbara Walters, but the comparison is misleading. Unlike Walters, Tetsuko shies away from politicians, explaining, "Politicians talk right around the questions." Her guests include authors, actors, sports stars and foreign celebrities, and her paramount concern is making them feel comfortable. "I don't go at it harshly or directly," she says. She coaxes rather than harangues. Although she prepares for her interviews with notes written on origami-like folded paper, her questions are extemporaneous and her manner casually disarming. A recent guest, Author Keiko Ochiai, notes, "In contrast to some feminists, myself included, Tetsuko has a way of talking softly through the TV."

Tetsuko has not stopped challenging her viewers or herself. On the anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima, she paused during the frothy pop-tune format of *The Best Ten* and delivered a haunting commentary at the site of the destruction. Unorthodox? Yes, and a reminder once again that the woman on the screen is still that curious and headstrong girl at the window.

—By Richard Stengel.  
Reported by Sandra Burton/Tokyo

黒柳徹子



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