

## Living with Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt in the U.S.A.

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In October 1992, I received a letter which told me that Mrs. Bernhardt had passed away in July 1992 and Mr. Bernhardt had passed away in October 1992. According to the letter, I was the sole beneficiary of their will. When I started living with them in April 1980, neither the Bernhards nor I imagined that we would live together for eleven years and that I would take care of them.

It was in July 1971 when I first met Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt. I had started learning how to speak English at the YMCA in Sapporo in 1970. In the summer of 1971, a group of students from all over Japan made a trip to the U.S.A. and I was one of them. We visited Hawaii, Los Angeles, Buffalo, New York City, Estes Park in Colorado, San Francisco, and Vancouver, Canada. In Los Angeles, individual students had a chance to stay with an American family for three days. My American family was Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt. While I was associating with people of the Peace Corps in Hawaii and many university students in Colorado, I realized that education is very important. Four years after my trip to the U.S.A., I decided to study English at a university. But studying English for four years was not enough for me so I asked Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt if I could stay with them a year and they accepted my request.

Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt lived in Palos Verdes Estates which is a suburb of Los Angeles, California. Living in Palos Verdes Estates was a kind of synonym for wealth. Many houses had their own swimming pools and spacious gardens, and some of them even had their own tennis courts. There are many regulations in Palos Verdes. For example, what material must be used for roofs, fences, and exteriors of walls and even their color. You can't leave your car in your driveway, nor leave your garage door open, no hanging laundry outside, no antennas on the roofs. They also regulate the height and size of houses and fences. The utility poles and telephone wires are underground. They use only stop signs instead of traffic lights. If more than two cars arrived at an intersection, the first car to arrive has the right to enter the intersection. Nobody littered and everyone cleaned up after their dogs. As the dogs run freely in their large gardens, they don't have to walk outside.

The Bernhardts' house was located in a quiet, prestigious area on high rocky cliff named Rocky Point. It was a large, well-designed single story house with a spacious garden where we enjoyed listening to the sounds of many birds. Each room was filled with nice quality furniture made in U.S.A. or Sweden. The house was kept at 23°C all year, as when the temperature dropped below 23 °C, the heating system started

automatically. The house was cool enough without a cooling system even during summer. When it was very hot, Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt closed the windows to stop hot air from outside coming into the house. Even when it was summer and the temperature was over 28°C in the daytime, we wore a cardigan or a jacket in the evening when we went out. The lowest temperature in Palos Verdes during winter might be around 10°C. The first winter, I laughed at the people who wore heavy coats, ski jackets, fur coats, or thick sweaters. As time passed and I got used to living there, I myself wore a heavy Icelandic sweater or Icelandic jacket. It is very dry and Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt stored all cookies, sugar, and flour in plastic containers to prevent them from drying up and ants getting at them.

Every weekday, a mail truck delivers letters to each house and the mail carrier put mail into the mailbox without getting off the truck. Not only did the mail carrier deliver mail but he or she also collected mail from the mailbox. Of course we had to put the correct postage on the mail. Every day, the newspaper was thrown from the delivery car and left on the driveway. In rainy weather, it was put into a plastic bag.

In California, daylight saving time is used from spring to fall. The beginning of daylight saving time depends on when Easter Sunday is, and the end of it is always the last Sunday of October. Daylight saving time officially begins and ends at 2:00 A.M. Every year, when daylight saving time started, my brain became unclear and my body became dull and I felt this way for around two months.

The Bernhardts hired their own gardener. Once a week, the gardener came with Hispanic workers, and swept and washed the driveway and parking area, trimmed the hibiscuses, bougainvillea, camellias, the orange-colored lime tree and junipers. The gardener also planted flowers and pulled out weeds. Red camellias bloomed in January and February, and daffodils, pansies, tulips, and irises bloomed in March, April, and May. Orange and red bougainvillea bloomed from April to October. Marigolds, poppies, stocks and bird-of-paradise plants bloomed from November to February. There were always flowers blooming in the garden. We also enjoyed looking at blue jays, hummingbirds, butterflies, and bumblebees which flew busily around. Once in a while, I saw skunks walking in the garden or on the porch after dark. Whenever we saw skunks, we never bothered them, otherwise they would release the very stinky odor that skunks are famous for. Even though there were many flowers in every season, Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt never picked flowers for their rooms. Instead they always bought flowers from the vegetable stands which were run by Japanese-American farmers.

Mr. Bernhardt had been an engineer for Northrop Corporation, which built fighter jets and missiles. He was one of the members who designed the first intercontinental ballistic missile. After he retired, he started his own air conditioning business, which seemed more like a very expensive hobby. When Mr. Bernhardt was working for Northrop Corporation, Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt donated their money to many organizations such as the University of California at Berkeley where they graduated, hospitals, churches, and

P.B.S. (Public Broadcasting Service). Especially, they donated a tremendous amount of money, time, and energy to the American Field Service. Actually, they were the first people who set up the American Field Service in the Westchester area of Los Angeles, which is located around Los Angeles International Airport. In addition, they accepted two boys from the American Field Service as their homestay students for one year each. The first boy was from Germany and the other was from Sweden. Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt proudly told me many times, "We raised two boys." They had to buy many things such as clothes, shoes, and school supplies for the boys and had to help the German boy's family financially.

Mr. Bernhardt was stubborn and a perfectionist and his IQ was as high as 164. He believed that he never made mistakes and his way was the only right and best way. He ate only his favorite brands of food and used only his favorite brands of products such as Dreyer's ice cream, Pepperidge Farm cookies, See's chocolate and peanut brittle, and California wine. He bought filet mignon, chicken breast, ham, salami, Swiss cheese, and German beer from Eschback Meat Products which was run by a German-American. It took around 45 minutes to go there one way. He bought Petrale sole and Alaskan king salmon from Hughes Market or Bristle Farm which had to be at the Peninsula Shopping Center. If I bought these items from different stores or purchased different brands, he would never eat them because he could judge the difference of their quality and taste. According to Mr. Bernhardt, even the same chain stores sell different qualities of products depending on their locations. Fresh corn, strawberries, green beans, beets, peas, and flowers were always from the vegetable stands. Buying fresh vegetables and strawberries from the vegetable stands was more expensive than buying these products from Hughes Market or Bristle Farm but the products from the vegetable stands were extremely delicious. Pies were from Marie Callendar's Restaurant. Shepherd's bread, French bread, and Danish pastry were from Hughes Market bakery. Every time I drove up to the Peninsula Shopping Center or drove back from there, I enjoyed watching wild peacocks and peahens on the streets on the hill. I also enjoyed seeing the beautiful ocean from the street.

On Halloween Day, children dress up in costumes such as a witch, a mouse, a pirate, a ghost, a monster, etc. and ask their neighbors, "Trick or treat?" Then the children receive candy, apples, or cookies. Many families decorate their front door with a jack-o-lantern which is made from a hollowed out and carved pumpkin with a candle placed in it. They also decorate their front door or windows with a paper ghost, or a paper witch. Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt always decorated their front door with a paper skeleton and candy for children had to be Snickers.

When I went to Little Tokyo downtown Los Angeles, I found some bottles of Sapporo beer. As Mr. Bernhardt drank a bottle of German beer every night, I wanted him to taste Sapporo beer. I carried five bottles of beer and walked to the bus stop from Little Tokyo then I had to walk 15 minutes from the bus stop to the Bernhardts'. As soon as Mr.

Bernhardt sipped a mouthful of beer, he said that it tasted bad. Then he poured both the rest of the beer in the glass and the bottle into the kitchen sink in front of me.

Many times Mr. Bernhardt took me to expensive restaurants such as the Admiral Risty, the Elks Lodge and Marie Callendar's. The Elks Lodge was only for members, and members' families and friends. Mr. Bernhardt always ate the same dish at these restaurants. Crumbed and deep fried scallops at the Admiral Risty, white meat fish or scallops at the Elks Lodge, and a piece of fresh strawberry pie, a piece of apricot pie, or a piece of rhubarb pie at Marie Callendar's. He drank only California white wine, German beer, or Dr. Pepper without ice cubes.

One day, I entered a Japanese coffee shop alone in Little Tokyo. After I left the coffee shop, I was heading for the bus stop and heard a lady's voice behind me. She said, "Okyakusama, okyakusama." Her voice became louder and louder. As there was no one around me, I looked back toward her voice. She said, "You didn't pay the bill." I realized that I had to pay the bill myself when I ate out without Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt.

Mr. Bernhardt was not only so fussy about food but he was also fussy about things which he used such as bathroom tissue, tissue paper, toothpaste, cakes of soap, laundry soap, detergent, etc. He used gold-plated Cross ballpoint pens with blue ink and gold-plated Cross pencils. He wore only whitish pale blue underwear and a whitish pale blue bathrobe at home. His washcloths, hand towels, and bath towels were all whitish pale blue which was the same as the exterior of the house and the all the tiles in the bathrooms. All his suits, pants, shirts, and socks were from Silverwood, which handled only good quality and expensive men's clothes. He wore only Scotland 100% wool socks colored navy blue or dark brown. He wore only slip-on pale brown or gray Hush Puppy shoes which were from Silverwood, too.

Mr. Bernhardt was also fussy about my clothes. Sometimes both Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt asked me to show them all my underwear, clothes, and shoes. Mr. Bernhardt chose my clothes when I went to restaurants, church, parties, weddings, and university. He also decided the length of my jeans. Not only did they buy all my clothes and school supplies, they also gave me pocket money, 40 dollars a week. They told me, "As we invited you, we will provide you with anything which you need." Sometimes Mr. Bernhardt said, "I don't want to live with a lady who has a boyish hair style."

Mr. Bernhardt was extremely methodical. He folded his dirty underwear, socks, towels, shirts, and sheets neatly and put them in the laundry hamper. After he used a faucet, he always used a dry towel and wiped both the faucet and around the faucet. He also wiped the water off the walls and the glass door in the shower room with a squeegee and dried them and the two showerheads, and shower faucets with a dry towel. When he threw away an empty tissue box, he cut the box down into its six rectangular side-pieces.

The first time I threw away a cardboard box, I jumped on it and crushed it. Then I put the crushed cardboard into a garbage can and I myself stepped into the garbage can and stamped on the crushed cardboard several times. Mr. Bernhardt rushed out and told me,

“You can't do things the Japanese way. You have to obey the American rules.” He measured the cardboard box and cut it into pieces about 30cm by 30cm. He piled the pieces of cardboard and tied them with a piece of string and then put them into the garbage can. He always told me that we were permitted to throw away five cans of garbage a week and we had to obey the rule. On Thursday, we only had to leave the door open at the garbage area where we keep five garbage cans.

When I put peanuts out on the porch for the blue jays, I dumped the peanuts directly from the plastic bag and the peanuts were piled up like a small hill. Of course, Mr. Bernhardt showed me how to leave the peanuts. We should put peanuts out in a straight line with around 5cm between each one. Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt fed the hummingbirds and Mrs. Bernhardt made syrup without color for hummingbirds.

Mr. Bernhardt still acted like he was a spoiled only child. A couple of days before Christmas, both Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt discussed when they would open their Christmas presents, on Christmas Eve or Christmas morning. The day when they opened the Christmas presents, they divided the presents first into two equal piles. Once Mrs. Bernhardt opened all the presents which were addressed to Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt by herself. He became very sad and said, “Everybody loves opening the presents.” These presents were a lot of cookies and chocolate. The weight of the cookies might be around 2.27 kg and the chocolate might be around 4.4 kg. These sweets were eaten in only two weeks as all of us had sweet teeth. We ate a piece of German Christmas bread, stollen, on Christmas morning and ate roast turkey, dinner salad, cooked vegetables, dressing, cranberry sauce, and cake for Christmas dinner. The dressing was made from Pepperidge Farm dressing mix and we mixed it with chopped celery, brown onions, green onions, parsley, eggs, and chicken broth. The dressing was put inside the turkey and roasted together.

Mr. Bernhardt taught me how to handle tools and how to do things exactly his way: for example, how to use a dish brush, how to wash windows using a squeegee and a chamois, and how to lift a bucketful of water, etc. He even taught me where I should put my feet when I lifted the bucketful of water. Mrs. Bernhardt taught me how to cook and how to sew simple clothes. As I was not interested in housework, I was a very slow learner. Mrs. Bernhardt tired of teaching me how to do cooking and sewing. On the other hand, Mr. Bernhardt was very happy when I learned how to change a car air filter and how to change the car's oil. He said, “I feel thrilled. Kyoko learned how to handle tools quickly.” Whenever I wondered how to do something and spent time for thinking or did trial and error, Mr. Bernhardt always asked me why I hadn't asked him how to do it. He believed that spending time for thinking how to do something was a waste of time. At the Bernhardts' garden, I told him, “A cuckoo is twittering ‘[kākou][kākou]’.” He said, “Listen carefully. The sound is [kuku] not [kākou].” He always told me, “Listen and you will learn something.” Sometimes I told him, “I don't want to learn anymore.”

Once in a while, I learned the hard way that what Mr. Bernhardt told me was correct.

Once, when I lifted a bucketful of water without thinking, I injured my back as one of my vertebrae slipped and I had to go to the doctor's office for treatment for a year.

While I was waiting for Mr. Bernhardt in his car, I put my index finger deep into the cigarette lighter to examine if it was broken or not. At first, I didn't feel anything and I thought that it didn't work so I kept my finger in it for a while. I still didn't feel anything but I saw some white smoke coming from it and then I smelled something burning. My finger was really hurting so I put my finger into the splashing water on the street. As the water wasn't cool enough to soothe my finger, I asked the vendor at a lunch truck to give me a cup of ice. I kept my finger in the cup for a while without telling Mr. Bernhardt why I was doing so.

Mr. Bernhardt had a big party or dinner party four or five times a year. He invited his church members, his neighbor, or Dick's family. Five different dinner sets, Haviland, Lenox, Berkeley, Noritake, and Mikasa were used for the parties. He always had sit down meals where he served the best meal according to the seasons. He chose the menu, instead of letting Mrs. Bernhardt do it. Even when we had around 40 to 50 guests, we asked individual guests what they wanted to drink: coffee, tea, milk, apple juice, Dr. Pepper, or tap water with or without ice cubes. He also asked all their guests how they liked their filet mignon cooked.

Mrs. Bernhardt was not fussy about most things. She loved sweets like cookies, See's chocolate, Cadbury's fruit and nut chocolate, or M&M plain chocolate, and ice cream. Her favorite brand of ice cream was Dreyer's and she especially loved mocha fudge which was mixed with vanilla ice cream, melted caramel, melted chocolate, and whole almonds. Surprisingly, she didn't like hot chocolate because when she was a child, her mother had forced her to drink a cup of hot chocolate every morning. She drank Dr. Pepper and Tree Top apple juice. She seldom drank tea and coffee and the tea had to be Lipton and the coffee had to be Yuban. Mrs. Bernhardt always ate fish at both the Admiral Risty and the Elks Lodge. At the Admiral Risty, she always chose which was not listed on the menu but was written on a small blackboard at the entrance.

"Catch of the day" was the fish which was caught that day and so was very fresh and expensive. She never argued with Mr. Bernhardt. She just listened to and obeyed him. It seemed that Mrs. Bernhardt respected Mr. Bernhardt for his brilliance, for being an excellent engineer, his ability to fix cars, and his skill at driving a car. She even had her hair cut and permed in Mr. Bernhardt's favorite hairstyle. She had an artistic talent and made ceramic products such as cups, dolls, plates, a tray, and a ball-shaped candy bowl with a lid. Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt made a sofa, an armchair, and a rectangularity-shaped stool whose top was covered with cloth. She used to belong to the Margaret Mead Club and she attended the meeting once a month. One of the members of the club had read a special book and she introduced the book at the meeting. When Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt or I caught a cold or had the flue, we ate only Lipton chicken noodle soup and drunk apple juice. According to Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt, we shouldn't eat nutritious food to avoid

giving energy to the cold virus.

Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt belonged to the Congregational Church of the Messiah. It took at least 45 minutes from their house to the church. When both the Bernhardts were healthy, they attended every Sunday morning service, every Wednesday evening Bible study, and monthly special meetings on Saturday evening. As Mr. Bernhardt was one of the board of directors at the church, he also attended the board meetings once a month. Mrs. Bernhardt belonged to a women members' group and she attended its luncheon party once a month.

Once a year, some church members attended a retreat at Saint Andrew's Priory in Valyermo. Saint Andrews is a Benedictine monastery situated in the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains in Antelope Valley of the high desert of southern California. The monks ran a hotel and owned an apple orchard. We were served breakfast, lunch, and dinner by the monks. I expected that we would eat very simple food such as very hard rolls and a glass of water like in the story of *The Saint and Sweet Bread* by Hermann Hesse but we were served normal meals such as toast, several kinds of cereals, scrambled eggs, sausages, fruit, orange juice, coffee, milk, and tea for breakfast, sandwiches for lunch, and chicken, beef, fish, soup, and tossed salad, and dessert for dinner.

Sometimes, when I was introduced to some church members, they would say, "This is Alice" instead of "This is my mother" or "This is my half sister." They called their stepmothers or stepfathers by their first names and 'a half sister' or 'a half brother' showed they had a different parent.

Even though Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt didn't know the people who lived in the house across from them and the house across from the next door, people peeked out from behind the curtains and found out what was going on in their neighborhood. For example, when the house across from the Bernhardts' was freshly painted, Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt said that they were preparing their house for sale. As soon as the painting was finished, I saw a "For Sale" sign in front of the house. After the sign disappeared, a moving van parked in front of the house. The family of the house moved away somewhere without saying "Good-bye." I saw a different moving van later in front of the house. A new family moved in but there was no greeting each other.

Even though Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt communicated with the Bakers, Spats, Woodhouses, and Piques, they were not so close. We heard from Mrs. Pique that Mrs. Spat who lived next door had died of a heart attack three months ago. Sometimes Mrs. Woodhouse asked me to feed her cat, bring in letters, and water her flowers while they went on a trip. I saw many pieces of paper which were stuck on a mirror in a bathroom. I was very curious to know what was written on the paper but I controlled my curiosity. However, in the garage, I couldn't stop myself from reading the notes on the wheel of Mrs. Woodhouse's car. Mr. Woodhouse had put a warning which said, "Watch out when you back up. There is Lola's car behind." Lola is their daughter.

It was fortunate that Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt met Dick and Gloria Jones. They lived in Redondo Beach and it took around 15 minutes from the Bernhardts'. Dick and Gloria invited Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt to Thanksgiving Dinner and Easter Dinner every year. They served roast turkey for Thanksgiving dinner and ham for Easter dinner. Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt respected Dick's high IQ, 174, and his intelligence. Both Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt respected Gloria for doing a good job of raising two lovely boys, Tommy and Bobby. When I met Tommy for the first time, he was two years old and Bobby was born in November 1982. When Bobby started to pronounce one or two words, I asked him, "What is this, Bobby?" pointing to my mouth. When I pronounced [mous], Gloria rushed out from the kitchen and pronounced [mouθ] to Bobby pointing to her mouth. Then she looked back at me and told me, "No, no. No [mous]. [mouθ]." Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt, Dick, Gloria, and I called them Tommy and Bobby but about when Tommy turned ten years old, sometimes Gloria called him Tom. When Tommy turned 12 years old, Mr. Bernhardt started calling him Thomas. Mr. Bernhardt told me, "Don't insult him by calling him Tommy. He isn't a child anymore." When Bobby was around five years old, I asked him, "Bobby, what's your name?" As he didn't answer my question, I asked him again, "Are you Robert?" He looked at me as if I were stupid and replied, "My name is not Robert. I am Bobby. My real name is Bob." When Bobby was around six years old, he learned how to tell the time on a clock. I gave him a small alarm clock and he kept it in his pants pocket. He took it with him wherever he went. Spending time with Tommy and Bobby kept me from going to a mental hospital as I felt very comfortable with them. I had a hard time taking care of Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt and having to study very difficult subjects and these conditions gave me serious stress.

After Mrs. Bernhardt's physical condition became worse due to Parkinson's disease, none of the church members invited the Bernhardts to parties or special meetings at the church. Once in a while, one of the church member took Mrs. Bernhardt to a ladies' gathering at the church. One day, one of the church members called Mr. Bernhardt and told him not to let Mrs. Bernhardt come to the church without him or Kyoko. The church would not be able to take responsibility for Mrs. Bernhardt if she felt sick. I expected that Christians would help each other especially the people who really needed physical and mental help.

Mr. Bernhardt and I argued about economics and politics often. Mr. Bernhardt said, "Japan is not fair. They sell a huge amount of cars in the U.S.A. but they don't buy any cars from the U.S.A." I argued, "We never force Americans to buy Japanese cars. Consumers choose Japanese cars. If American car manufacturers built better cars than Japanese, Americans would buy American cars instead of Japanese cars. The Japanese government can't force the people to buy American products." I also told him, "Japan spent a huge amount of time and money to find out what Americans want to buy but Americans don't examine what Japanese want to buy from the U.S.A." Mr. Bernhardt said, "After World War II, the U.S.A. taught Japan how to make good quality products."



I replied to him, "Now the students have to teach their teachers how to make better quality products." As both Mr. Bernhardt's and my voice became louder, Mrs. Bernhardt said, "Be quiet, children." Mr. Bernhardt and I discussed not only politics and economics but also less serious matters. A TV program explained about elephants' pregnancy period. I told Mr. Bernhardt that a human's pregnancy period is ten months and an elephant's pregnancy period is very long. He told me that a human's pregnancy period is nine months. We discussed about the length of human pregnancy for a while. We asked Gloria and the answer was "Nine months and two weeks." Mr. Bernhardt and I were very unhappy with the answer but we had to accept it because we were childless.

Many times Mr. Bernhardt told me, "What did Japanese soldiers do in Southeast Asia? They killed many citizens there." He said, "In the Philippines, Japanese soldiers killed parents in front of their children and then a Japanese soldier tossed a living baby into the sky and the other soldiers stuck the baby with their bayonets." He told me the same thing often and I felt painful in my mind. As Mr. Bernhardt said it again and again, I told him, "What did Americans do in Vietnam?" After that he didn't talk about Japanese soldiers during World War II to me directly but when he had guests, he told them about the Japanese soldiers. They said in front of me that the U.S.A. had helped Japan tremendously after World War II. They said, "We sent a lot of food to Japan." They also told me that several millions of Japanese citizens were saved by the atomic bombs because the war was ended by dropping them. It was very hard for me to watch news on December 8th. They showed Pearl Harbor where Japanese airplanes had attacked. It was also painful when documentaries showed Japanese attacking Chinese cities and a child was crying in the ruins.

Even though Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt thought that I was a very difficult person to please when buying things, they trusted me deeply. They asked me to take care of their checking account and their wall safe where they kept their important documents. They printed my name on their checks and asked me to use their check when I went shopping, and to pay bills such as water, telephone, gardener, newspaper, which we paid by sending checks to the companies.

In the summer of 1983, Mrs. Bernhardt's mental and physical condition were getting worse. She said, "There is poison in my food. Mr. Bernhardt is trying to kill me." Mrs. Bernhardt used to call her husband "Charlie" or "Mr. Bernhardt". She hallucinated often and said, "There was a large black dog on the bookshelf," and "There were many people in her garden and they were digging in the garden." Mrs. Bernhardt's long-term memory was good and she remembered her childhood very well but her short-term memory was very poor. She couldn't remember what she did ten minutes ago. As soon as she finished eating dinner, she said "I haven't eaten any food yet." I had to take care of her, to do laundry, to clean house, to cook, to go shopping, and to go to university.

I forced Mr. Bernhardt to go to a doctor's office and it took two years to send him to Dr. Kaplan's office. Dr. Kaplan found that Mr. Bernhardt had an aneurysm of the aorta.

An aneurysm is a permanent distention of an artery caused by a weakness in its wall. The aorta is the large major artery through which the heart pumps blood to the rest of the body. He needed surgery immediately; otherwise, his aorta would have burst. After Mr. Bernhardt decided to have a surgery, he collected 1,200cc of his own blood, so it could be used during the operation. After the surgery, he was supposed to stay in the hospital for a week or ten days but he had to stay there for six weeks. After he came home, I had to take care of both Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt. Mr. Bernhardt was supposed to walk inside his home but he hardly ever did. Four weeks after Mr. Bernhardt came home from the hospital, I found him lying unconscious on the bathroom floor. He had blood clots in his lung and his left leg, which he couldn't bend due to a car accident he had when he was young. He stayed in the hospital for four weeks. Even though he could choose meals from the menu at the hospital, he wouldn't get exactly what he wanted to eat. I asked Dr. Kaplan if I could feed Mr. Bernhardt his favorite home-cooked meals. I brought him his favorite dinner every day for four weeks.

The total medical bill for Mr. Bernhardt was around \$350,000. The bill were from the hospital, the surgeon, the assistant doctor, the doctor for anesthesia, Dr. Kaplan, and a special doctor who examined Mr. Bernhardt's condition. As Mr. Bernhardt could use the Northrop insurance, he had to pay only a couple of thousand dollars.

Some neighbors were very curious about who would receive Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt's assets. Every time they had a chance to talk to me, they asked me, "Who will receive the house and the money?" instead of "How are Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt?" Sometimes the neighbors and the church members asked me, "What can I do for you?" Every time I asked them if they could watch Mrs. Bernhardt while I took Mr. Bernhardt to the doctor's office, they got flustered and said, "We are busy." They only asked me without being willing to. Moreover, as Mrs. Bernhardt had a Parkinson's disease, she had to walk outside to prevent her muscles becoming weak. If she stopped walking, her muscles would get weaker and she would have to stay in bed most of the time. Mr. Bernhardt and I forced her to walk along Rocky Point Road which was 1.12 km. Some of our neighbors were upset that we let Mrs. Bernhardt walk outside. On the contrary, Gloria, Dick, and Maria helped me without reward. After Mr. Bernhardt decided to sell his house, Dick and Gloria cleaned up the garage, the office, the gunroom, fixed the lights in the house, and put fire alarms in each room and Maria cleaned rooms. I could trust Dick and Gloria so I asked them to take care of Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt's assets before I came home to Japan.

I sent Mrs. Bernhardt to a nursing home in October 1990 and I sent Mr. Bernhardt to a retirement home in December 1990. The nursing home and the retirement home were run by the same owner and they were next door to each other. Sending them to these facilities gave me pain but there was no choice. When I told Mr. Bernhardt farewell in front of the retirement home, he told me, "Kyoko, you are an angel. You brought Margaret and me happiness." Mrs. Bernhardt asked me, "Please take me to Japan." It was a great relief to me to hear that Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt appreciated my helping them.

Living with Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt in the U.S.A.

I realized that all my hard and painful work for them was worth it.

I received their inheritance and all their personal belongings. I donated some their money to their church and American Field Service. I also gave some money to Tommy and Bobby. Moreover, I gave their furniture, silverware, electric appliances, kitchen utensils, books, clothes, interior decorations, and accessories to people who were kind to Mr. and Mrs. Bernhardt.