

Part 4
The third stage of my life as business consultant
(6-Story 7)
ATA 1993 Annual Convention 2000 attendants

I was given a wonderful opportunity to attend the 1993 ATA Management Conference & Exhibition held in Marriot Orland World Resort & Convention Center, Orland. The attendant fee of \$300 was exempted by the kindness of Mr. Sheaffer, though, of course, the hotel fee was paid by me.

The interesting thing about my flying to Orland was that at the Miami airport, I had three hours of connecting flight time. In the waiting room, I opened a map of the American continent to make the trip plan after the convention is over. The 18-day would be spent ever since I came to the States with my attendance to the conference, which means the 15-day trip await me. The needed is the trip plan for the 15-day. I began to make its trip plan. I am always Cecela Sela, you know, but thanks to the three hours of connecting flight time, I could make the plan. I made it from Florida back again to Washington DC, to Virginia, to Tennessee, to Texas, to Arizona, to California, back to Japan.

In later days, this “travel whichever way the wind carries me” plan turned to be perfect when I met many people in the convention.

The four-day seminar was full of the menu, with 2000 of attendance by truckers and their wives including personnel of the exhibitors. I was excited to have great opportunities to attend various seminars and to meet and talk with them for abundant information to gather. In reality, I had a wonderful accomplishment.

The first day was a welcome party for the beginners. The person with the red ribbon was the first attendant. People, peeping at my red ribbon with my name, greeted with shaking hands saying, “Hello, Yu~u~ki”.

My first greeting to those people was “I came from Japan to investigate the owner-operator system” Most of them responded with one voice of “My company has a contract with many owner-operators” Some of them said they started the business as an independent trucker and gradually began to hire more and more drivers including the contract drivers. Start the trucking business as an owner-operator and gradually make it bigger is the same style the Japanese do.

The convention center and the hotel where the conference and exhibition was held is huge where sometimes the movie makers use for the location. After the day’s convention was over, I moved to the restaurant floor for dinner alone. A big restaurant named “MIKADO”, emperor, caught my eyes to

drive me into.

As soon as I sat on the table, two three and four persons came to my table, as if they surround me, and began to talk. Those people were to be of good help to me in the rest of my trip in the American continent.

One of them was the senior vice president of a big company. When the talk came to the topic of the owner operators, he showed his regret that his labor union does not allow the company to hire or have contracts with the owner operators. There were some more people who became the key person for my successful journey later days. They will come to appear from time to time.

After the supper, I moved to a counter bar alone for another drink. My real target was to try to have a chance to talk with the beautiful and sexually charming lady, working in the counter as a register and a server. I began to talk when I think I do not interfere with her work. Not to try to win her, but simply for my English conversation skill up.

She instantly showed interest in me. As I always say to the person I meet for the first time, I told her that I came from Japan. She said "No kidding, you are American, aren't you?" "What makes you say so?" "Your face and your English makes me think so. I have never met a Japanese speak English as good as you." I became a little proud of myself, being able not to hesitate to speak it in my trip in America. I gave her a little tip for my thanks to her making me happy and confident. She said "Oh, no, that much!" "You deserve it. You made me something good for tomorrow with my English conversation practice." I made a donation for my thanks to her for the good of all I was given that night.