# “THANK YOU, THANK YOU”

BY

THOMAS A. BENET

PRESENTED TO THE CHIT CHAT CLUB

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Chit Chat Talk
"Thank You, Thank You"

This is a sad story, but it begins on a festive note. A farewell party is being held for a bright, 23-year-old girl named Iva Toguri, who is about to leave on a trip to Japan to visit an ailing aunt. The trip is both a birthday (Iva was born on the Fourth of July) and graduation (she has just gotten her pre-med degree from UCLA) present. She has been chosen as the family representative because her mother is too ill to make the journey. The date is July 1, 1941.

But first a little background on Iva. She grew up in Southern California like many American teen-agers, going to local high schools, joining the Girl Scouts, competing enthusiastically in team sports, and even having a crush on Jimmy Stewart. Dwight Ryerson, a graduate student, recalled field trips made in a paleontology course they shared at UCLA: "Iva was an extroverted, outgoing personality, and she was full of energy. She was nisei, but in every way, she seemed like a 100 percent Yankee. I never got the feeling that there was anything Japanese about her. and I also got the feeling that she had no interest at all in Japan."

Iva also seems to have been endowed with an attitude toward life that was both positive and stoic. She reported later in life that she never experienced any kind of racial prejudice while growing up, although such is acknowledged as having been both common- and virulent - at the time, particularly in California. It was a quality that would serve her well in the desperate years to come.

Once Iva arrives in Japan, she is more than a little dismayed: she can't speak the language; doesn't particularly like the food, and commits such social gaffes as not

taking off her shoes when entering her aunt's house, or not bowing in front of the Emperor's Palace in Tokyo. Her relatives despaired of her pro-Western views. So, when her father called in November of 1941 and asked if she was ready to come home, Iva shouted into the phone: "Ready?...I'm ready to swim home!" Her father cabled instructions to sail on the following day, December 2, 1941, aboard the Tatsuta Maru, bound from Yokohama to Los Angeles. But because of new requirements imposed by Japan in the wake of the U.S. having frozen its assets, Iva was unable unravel red tape now needed to obtain clearance for departure.

We all know what happened five days later at Pearl Harbor. Iva, the American bobby-soxer, was stranded in Japan, the now unwelcome guest of a family who feared her presence as the embodiment of the enemy. It was also the beginning of a legend, the myth of "Tokyo Rose." On December ll, a submariner recorded in his ship's log: "Where is the United States fleet?" jeered Tokyo Rose in radio broadcast..."I'll tell you where it is boys. It's lying at the bottom of Pearl Harbor."

During the course of the war, some 23 women - Nisei, Filipinas and Japanese natives - of varyingly dulcet tones would be used to broadcast on Radio Tokyo ~~by the Japanese~~, and this early listener's report of "Tokyo Rose" was years before Iva got near a microphone.

There has been no way to trace the actual origin of the name: "Tokyo Rose". Many early broadcasts were made by a woman calling herself "Madame Tojo." But it's easy to see how the name caught on. "Rose", as in "Mexicali Rose", "Yellow Rose of Texas" and "Rosie the Riveter" was a popular appellation. Quotations from this supposedly honey-voiced, all-knowing seductress ran rampant through the U.S. presence in the Pacific. She knew troop and fleet movements before the GIs and swabbies did. She taunted their sweaty jungle isolation with gibes that 4-Fs at home were moving in

on their girl friends.

Meanwhile, Iva Toguri was simply trying to survive. She had moved out of her aunt's house because neighbors objected to the presence of an enemy alien. The Japanese secret police tailed her and pressured her to take Japanese citizenship, which she refused to do. She was ill - suffering from scurvy, beri-beri and malnutrition. Some source of money was desperately needed. A roomer at her boarding-house found her one at the Domei Tsushin Sha, the national news agency . She would monitor English-language broadcasts and type them up.

But there were still days spent without food, and when she discovered an opening for a typist at Radio Tokyo, she grabbed it. It was here that her most fateful encounter occurred. She saw some emaciated prisoners-of-war - Americans and Australians - and her heart went out to them. Over ensuing days, she would smuggle them food gleaned from walks in the countryside, even vitamin pills and quinine scrounged from a doctor friend, and, most important, news of allied victories obtained from her other job.

The critical figure here was Australian Army Major Charles Hughes Cousens, a proud graduate of Sandhurst who had been captured when Singapore fell at the beginning of the war. Cousens had a reputation. He had been an immensely popular radio announcer in Australia and was powerfully influential at a time when radio was listened to as TV is today. Radio was the great communications medium of the early forties and Cousens was the Lowell Thomas or H. V. Kaltenborn of his area. He occupied the spot filled in later years by Walter Cronkhite on TV.

This was quickly recognized by Colonel Tsuneishi, the director of Japanese

propaganda. A tough samurai type who believed prisoners of war were worse than
take charge of Japan's overseas propaganda broadcasts
scum, Tsuneishi implied Cousens would be beheaded if he did not. And
this threat of death obviated, in Cousens's mind, his officer's duty to resist.

Cousens considered Iva ideal for a program he had in mind. It was to be a light mixture of banter and music that would follow, and serve to undercut, a segment of slanted news that preceded it. Calling herself "Orphan Ann" (the Ann stemming from the abbreviation for "Announcer"), Iva would open the program by saying "Thank You" four times. There was a theory widely accepted then, but dubious at best, it seems to me, that if an announcer said those words loudly, he or she could "erase" from the listener's mind what had gone on before. Then she would segue into jokey chatter about her fellow orphans "out there" in the jungle and play popular music selections.

Iva was perfect for Cousens's efforts to undercut what the Japanese wished to be the message of these programs. She was intensely loyal to the allies and knew
how to slip in innuendoes that poisoned the broadcasts' intent. Besides, she had what
Cousens called a "gin-rasp", hacksaw voice - not the soothing tones of a wily enchantress.

Iva was hesitant about her new role, But Major Cousens took her aside: "Now listen," he told her, "this is a straight entertainment program. I have written it and know that I'm doing. All you have to do is look upon yourself as a soldier under my orders. Do exactly as I say and you will do nothing against your own people. I guarantee that."

So, on November 10, 1943, many months after the original "Tokyo Rose" had

supposedly been heard by U.S. Forces, Iva sat in front of a microphone and began to speak as one of the technicians prepared to spin a recording of "Strike up the Band" Amazingly, very few of her broadcasts as "Orphan Ann" on a show that was called "Zero Hour" were actually recorded by U.S. Forces.

But here's the opening script of one, just to give the flavor: After the requisite "Thank You's", Iva comes on: "Hello there, Enemies - how's tricks? This is Ann of Radio Tokyo and we're going to begin the Zero Hour for our Friends - I mean our Enemies - in Australia and the South Pacific. So be on your guard, and mind the children don't hear! All set? O.K., here's the first blow at your morale, the Boston Pops"

Cousens's burlesque approach made the show a popular one, which pleased Tsuneishi and the Japanese Army. So, as author Russell Warren Howe has pointed out, the resourceful Cousens both managed to satisfy his Japanese overlords while signaling derision to his Allied audience. One trick was to have Iva mispronounce words or sound overly Japanese. She recalled he would script her to call her listeners "honorable boneheads" and to pronounce the adjective "honable." play recording & pass pix

Now, in the interests of time, I'm going to fast-forward to the end of the war. The bombs have dropped and American newsmen, many of them wearing pistols, descend on Japan looking for stories and interviews. Prime targets are General Hideki Tojo and the mythic "Tokyo Rose". By this time, Iva has married a supportive co-worker five years younger than she named Felippe D'Aquino. He is the son of a Portuguese-Eurasian father and Japanese mother; he is a pacifist

and shares her support of the allies.

Her first encounter with the American press will be disastrous. Two newsmen - a glamor, wire-service war correspondent named Clark Lee, and Harry Brundidge, a pudgy, expose artist for Cosmopolitan magazine - offer a pre-war acquaintance $100 in cash if he can get them an exclusive interview with Tokyo Rose. He's glad to accept the cash, but says: "there's nobody at Radio Tokyo named Tokyo Rose. That was just a name used by the GIs." Brundidge bristles: "But who was the American girl?"

So they are given Iva and Felippe's address. Brundidge offered her $2000 to be interviewed for his magazine, and Lee $200 for a spot-news article. Iva couldn't believe her good-luck. At long, last, it was over: the poverty, the misery, the deprivation. $2000 was a fortune. That money would get her back to the United States and she could tell the story of how she and the Allied prisoners had sabotaged the Japanese propaganda machine.

"It never entered my mind," said Iva after the interview. "I never dreamed my conduct could be interpreted as wrong." Lee, however, dismissed much of what she told him of aiding prisoners as baloney. and the headline on the next day's Los Angeles Examiner read: "Traitor's Pay - Tokyo Rose/ Got 100 Yen a Month/ $6.60" The lead read: "The one and only 'Tokyo Rose, a Los Angeles-born American, is 'willing to take her medicine."

Brundidge concocted a "first-person confession of treason" article and sent it off to Cosmopolitan, only to be stunned when it was refused. Even worse, his editor's cablegram of rejection was posted in the press center, subjecting him to

the humiliation of his colleagues. And he had contracted to pay Iva $2000 - money he didn't have.

These stories, and others that followed, had their effect in the U.S. The Justice Department wired General MacArthur to arrest Iva and she was placed in a small cell at Sugamo military prison. During the year she was there, Iva became a kind of tourist destination. GIs would point out her cell. A delegation of Congressmen barged in and watched while she was showering. The FBI interviewed her. One agent asked her: "Did anyone hold a pistol to your head?" and Iva said: "No." In his report, he noted: No evidence she was ever under duress."

Finally, after a year in prison, Iva was released. Attorney General Tom Clark, concurring with advice from the Los Angeles U.S. Attorney, issued a memo stating: "it appears that the identification of Toguri as Tokyo Rose is erroneous, or, at least that her activity consisted of nothing more than the announcing of musical selections."

But that wouldn't silence the baying of the hounds in this country. And when Iva applied for a passport to return to the U.S., the influential gossip columnist Walter Winchell accused the Truman administration of being "soft on traitors." A new decision was made, this time to prosecute and San Francisco specifically selected as the place for her trial.

Now we get to what prompted this essay. In 1949, the year of Iva's trial, I was a very junior reporter on The San Francisco Chronicle, little more than an errand boy sent out to cover fires and shootings. But shortly afterward, while assigned to what was known as the "federal beat", I spent some time in the marble hallways of the U.S. Courthouse and got

to know some of the principals. They made a lasting impression.

Perhaps the most controversial and enigmatic was the chief Federal prosecutor, Tom DeWolfe. He got the case after one U.S. Attorney General, and U.S. Attorneys in Los Angeles had declined to prosecute. He, himself, had delivered a scathing assessment to the U.S. Justice Department that the case would fall from "lack of prima facie evidence", and that "she had been selected by the Allied prisoners because she was the only person available, white or Nisei, whom they could trust not to betray their efforts to sabotage Japanese propaganda."

Nevertheless, when his superiors told him to press ahead with a trial, DeWolfe responded with a full-bore effort. To get a wavering grand jury to indict her, DeWolfe said he had to "practically give a Fourth of July speech" He also had to imply that another American, a more clearly involved GI, would be brought to the bar of Justice.

The jury indicted Iva on seven counts of treason. On the major counts, the two witnesses necessary for conviction were Nisei who feared for their own skins. Prior to the the trial, they were coached - drilled, really - by the FBI each day in what they were to say. The result, at trial time, was ludicrous. They made the same petty mistakes as to dates, and in saying Iva stood at the microphone when she made her broadcasts when, actually, she sat. One reporter compared them to schoolboys reciting learn-by-rote lessons.

When I met, and talked to, DeWolfe, he struck me as an intense, brilliant man.

Iva's defense team was led by Wayne Collins, a fiery and experienced immigration lawyer serving free of charge. He had a running feud, however, with

the Japanese-American Citizens League, calling them "jackals" because of what he considered insufficient support of cases he had brought in connection with the relocation camps. The word against him, if anything, was that he objected too much; that he would have been more effective by holding his fire and not challenging every single government document.

The judge, Michael J. Roche, tough, second-generation Irish, had worked his way up the legal ladder, and there are those who thought him biased for the government. Later on, I found him a rather benign, equable presence. Once, in chambers, a fellow member of the so-called press corps informed him we ink-stained wretches should be considered "officers of the court." Judge Roche told him he would take that under consideration, then swiveled his chair and favored me with a smile and broad wink.

The newspapers assigned their top talent to the trial: Pulitzer-prize winner Stan
Paine Knickerbocker for the Oakland Tribune
Delaplane for The Chronicle; Fran O'Gara for the Examiner; Coverage was full and extensive. The one I knew best was a woman, Katherine Pinkham, who filed daily accounts for the Associated Press. When, late in life she married the distinguished Stanford historian, David Harris, they became personal friends, and she would reminisce in relaxed fashion with my wife and I about the case.

The trial lasted 12 weeks, there were 800,000 words of testimony and the prosecution cost the government a then-unprecedented $500,000. Dramatic moments abounded. When Major Cousens took the stand, and described the
coolie
brutal beating by the Japanese of an uncooperative, Iva wept openly for the first time. But the jury sat stony-faced. When a major government witness was

asked to interrupt his coached testimony and recite the pledge of allegiance to the flag, he stumbled and Judge Roche finished it for him.

The government studiously avoided calling Harry Brundidge, knowing his account of a so-called "confession" might torpedo their prosecution.

Iva took the stand and underwent a scathing, whipsaw cross-examination by DeWofle, who, in his closing argument, called her a "female Benedict Arnold." What many felt proved the most damaging testimony came unexpectedly. An ex-crew chief on a crash boat was testifying about hearing "Tokyo Rose" when suddenly he pulled a letter from his back pocket and started to read it, It was one he had written to his wife and it said that two of his shipmates had been killed in an air raid following a broadcast and concluded: "Please store up some liquor...Honey babes, I hope I dream of you tonight as I think of you all day"

That sent the jurors, who had shown no emotion at Cousens's wrenching testimony, fumbling for their handkerchiefs. At the press table, Stan Delaplane said the odds for acquittal broke "like the 1929 stock market."

Iva was escorted daily into the courtroom by a dapper deputy marshal named
who treated her with exceptional kindness
Herbert Cole. He was a gentle, serious man and an obvious emotional bond developed between them. When I discussed the trial with him later, he would refer to her as: "My Tokyo."

At the defense table, Iva sat between her defense team wearing, as biographer, Masayo Duus, pointed out, "an out-of style" suit she had taken to Japan in 1941. Kay Pinkham remembered how impressed she was that Iva wore the same outfit
Kay said

from the beginning to the end of the trial. "It looked as though Iva ironed her suit every day after the court session was over, for there was never a wrinkle the next day."

Finally, came the moment of decision: submission of the case to the jury. Optimism bloomed at the defense table when the dismissed alternate juror flashed Iva an "A-OK" sign as she left the courtroom. A press table poll found these observers 9 to 1 for acquittal. But the issue of duress proved a thorny one and the judge had instructed that obvious duress suffered by others could not necessarily be translated as applying to Iva.

When, after seventy-eight hours of deliberation, the jury, following a "shotgun" instruction from Judge Roche that this had been long, expensive proceeding and that another panel would probably do no better, the word "guilty" echoed in the marble chambers, there was stunned silence. Actually, the jurors had found Iva guilty on just one of the seven counts and acquitted her on all the others. My friend Connie Hitchcock, who had been reporting for INS, told me she was so furious she could barely speak the result over the phone to her office.

It turned out the jurors had started off 11 to 1 for acquittal. "There was one woman," Kay Pinkham told writer Frederick Close, "just absolutely sure. She just didn't listen. She just had it in her mind that this was that awful siren who had plagued our boys and they couldn't move her. Another juror joined forces with her and the panel turned around. The last holdout for acquittal, foreman John Mann, finally capitulated, figuring that conviction on only one count would result in a lenient sentence. He never forgave himself.

Judge Roche sentenced Iva to the maximum possible on the one count - in prison ten years - and fined her $10,000, an amount equivalent to about $100,000 in today's dollars. Iva was taken via train by Deputy Cole and his wife to the Federal Reformatory for Women at Alderson, West Virginia. "There were no handcuffs," Iva said. "Even if they had ordered Cole, he wouldn't have done it." As for Cole, he was heartsick: "It really hurt...It was like leaving one of our own."

The authorities were apprehensive about their new "notorious prisoner." It turned out, needlessly so. When Iva was discharged, one of the wardens, a former WAC who had felt originally that she should give this treasonous woman "a rough time", told her: "I have to take my hat off to you. You proved yourself a real lady. You never complained; you did your share. You have contributed to this institution. You've helped kids, counseled them when they got bad news from home. You went out of your way to help those who were sick and lonely. I've read your letters and seen your devotion to your father. You proved I was wrong. I want you to accept my apologies."

Iva's only demerit came, when working in the prison's dental office, she pulled an agony-ridden inmate's tooth without permission. It was a weekend and no licensed dentists were available.

Also in the prison was Axis Sally, a dedicated espouser of the Nazi cause and rabid anti-Semite. Sally loved bridge and sought out Iva as a partner because she thought Iva was intelligent. Eventually, they were joined by two women convicted as Communists under the Smith Act.These ladies were Jewish, and, as Iva said: "there were some subjects we just didn't discuss."

After prison, Iva returned to Chicago and slipped unobtrusively into family, working at the Toguris' Japanese goods store there. And the tide began to turn. In December of 1976, Ronald Yates, a reporter for the Chicago Tribune, got two of main witnesses against her to admit they had been forced to lie and withhold vital information at her trial. "We had no choice,"one told him. ""U.S. Occupation Army police came and told me...I had to testify against Iva or else. Then after I was flown to San Francisco, we were told what to say and what not to say two hours every morning before the trial started."

At the same time Jack Leggett, a fine writer who now lives in the Bay Area and is a friend, but was then director of the Writers Workshop at the University of Iowa, interviewed Iva at the family store and did a long, sympathetic article for the New York Times Sunday magazine. He had been in the Navy and recalled listening to Tokyo Rose during days of utter boredom, losing a bit of confidence when she reported his ship, the USS Elden, had been sunk. What he found was a woman "of a square, handsome face and a resonant voice that clangs like an iron bell. There is an abruptness in her speech, an all-business tone, but her laughter is sudden, called forth by remembering some preposterous turn of her life, and as American as her frequent "hecks, and the flatness of her "a's".

Iva Toguri D'Aquino was pardoned by President Ford on his last day in office. She died from the effects of a stroke at the age of 90 in 2006. Tom DeWolfe shot himself to death in a Seattle hotel room. He was only 56 and had been in ill health.

What are the lessons to be drawn from this sad story? Certainly, neither the

hounding media nor the justice system come off well. But they also very much
entities that reflected
the temper of the times. And it was the media that eventually shed new
light on Iva's case and smoothed the way to pardon. There are parallels to today
when national concerns prompt fear and prejudice.

Was it the bloodless equity of the law as well as trumped-up testimony that
a fair shake
prevented Iva from getting? Or was the hinge of fate that caught a carefree
box-soxer in its grip too strong for any denial. There's no answer, but what shines
through is the image of a remarkable human being - loyal, devoted to her
country and stoic beyond belief when she was betrayed.

With that, I'll end this talk:"Thank you, thank you, thank you., thank you"

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Credits:

As sources, I've used material and occasionally quoted from the following books:

Tokyo Rose - Orphan of the Pacific by Masayo Duus
The Hunt for Tokyo Rose by Russell Warren Howe
Tokyo Rose - An American Patriot by Frederick P. Close
They Called Her Tokyo Rose by Rex B. Gunn

* I'd also like to thank my friend, June Kong, for expert assistance in combing the Internet for items about Iva, and my grandson, Chris Sawyer, for transferring one of her broadcasts to a CD.