

## No. 89 EAST 42<sup>nd</sup> STREET

A dark foggy morning in early December. A local commuter train stood waiting at the Scarsdale Station for new passengers to board. The platform wasn't especially crowded—it was early for that—but it took a while to get everyone loaded anyway.

Inside the train Akira Kono, a second-year resident at Cornell Medical Center, was reading a study in an American scientific journal. He had read the study before, and now was reading it again, trying to prepare for work, though what he wanted most right then was to look out the window.

It had become habit to listen while he read every morning, to other passengers as they looked for seats, to the train butcher hawking newspapers, magazines, tobacco. Akira would listen until he couldn't anymore, until he gave in, shut whatever he'd been reading and turned to the window. This morning was no different. After the train stopped and loaded up at two more stations, Akira put the journal away. He let the fog lift. He let the train gather speed. Then he shut out all the conversation around him and noticed in an apartment across from the train pink bed sheets being used instead of curtains. Something American, he thought. He looked down below and watched a young woman chasing after a bus, a corner grocer taking packages from the trunk of his Studebaker Commander. He had seen the man with his new Studebaker before. He'd been in the United States for over a month and a year and he wanted to commit his experiences to memory in case he couldn't stay.