Translations

そんな言い訳がなりたつわけではない
There’s no way that that excuse will stand up.
こういうわけで今回は辞退させていただきたいと思います。
And so for this reason, I’d like to decline this time.

この言葉のわけ
The meaning of this word
わけの分かった人間
Someone reasonable
わけの分からないことばかり言っている
He’s always talking nonsense
彼が失敗したわけ
The reason for his failure

13
‘お酒は全然だめですか。」「いいえ、そんなことはありません。たくさんはだめですが。」
‘Can’t you drink at all?’ ‘No, it’s not that. It’s just that I can’t drink a lot.’
‘おじいさんは寝たっきりですか」「そんなことはありません。外出は無理ですが。」
‘Is your grandfather bedridden?’ ‘No, it’s not that. It’s just he can’t go out.’

Lesson 8 Internship

Reception Good morning.
Tom Could I see Mr Kawano of the Personnel Department, please?
Reception Mr Kawano of the Personnel Department? Certainly. Excuse me, but...
Tom My name is Tom Harris from the University of Cambridge.
Reception Please take a seat and wait over there. [On the telephone] Someone called Tom Harris from the University of Cambridge for you...Yes, I understand.
Tom Mr Harris? Personnel is on the fifth floor, so please go straight up. The lift is to your left.
Kawano Thank you.
Tom Ah! Mr Tom Harris is it? I’ve been expecting you. My name is Kawano, in charge of student interns.
Kawano Tom Harris. Pleased to meet you.
Tom And the same here. Did you find the bachelor’s lodgings all right?
Kawano Yes, thank you. It was easy to find with the map you sent to Cambridge.
Kawano Excellent. No problem with the room or the food?
Tom: No. Everything's fine, thank you. The lady in charge was very kind and explained everything to me.

Kawano: Right then, let's get down to work straight away. You will be an intern in our company for ten months, so we would like you to see two or three sections. For the last two months we may well send you to a branch office out of Tōkyō.

Tom: Yes, I understand.

Kawano: From your CV that we were sent, I notice that you have an interest in Japanese literature; how much do you know about the kind of business we are involved in?

Tom: Before I left, I met Mr Haruno in the London office and was shown around the company for a full day, but apart from that I do not know much.

Kawano: I see. It would be nice if you became interested in business while you're here with us.

Tom: With your help.

Kawano: Now this is a small detail, but in this company when you refer to a fellow employee or when you try to get someone's attention, it is normal not to use their name but to call them by rank.

Tom: Oh, I see.

Kawano: Particularly when the person is senior to you. For instance, you would not normally say 'Mr Haruno'; you would say 'Shitenchō' or 'Kachō' instead. Of course 'Haruno Shitenchō' is also possible.

Tom: I'm sorry, I didn't know.

Kawano: That's all right! You'll soon get used to it. And this habit is disappearing in some places. There are some companies where everyone is now being called '...san', so I wouldn't get too nervous about it.

Tom: I see. But I will take care.

Kawano: Your programme calls for three months study in the business department starting from tomorrow. Let's go and introduce you to the section chief, Shimizu. Shimizu graduated after me from the same university, so he's a good friend. I've asked him to look after you.

Tom: Thank you.

Kawano: And then, let's go to the general affairs office and arrange for you to get your season ticket.

Tom: Excuse me. What section was that you said? It's the first time I've heard that word and it's a bit difficult to catch.

Kawano: Shomuka. The Shomuka. How shall I put it? Well, it's the section that deals with the general business to do with running the company. Do you have any other questions?

Tom: No, thank you. There's so much that I don't understand at the moment, I'm not sure where to begin.

Kawano: No need to be that nervous. But if you do have a problem, don't just leave it; you must come and talk it over with me. Depending on the situation, you can talk
directly to the head of the section, but if it’s something awkward, feel free to come and see me. It doesn’t matter how trivial. It’s part of my job to look after interns.

Tom
I see.

Kawano
There are those who, perhaps because they don’t want to put me to any trouble, try and solve things on their own; but there have been times when I wished they had come to discuss things with me earlier.

Tom

Kawano
Er. Let me see. Ah yes! Whenever you move to a new section, you’re bound to be asked to introduce yourself to everyone, so if you prepare something for tomorrow, it doesn’t matter how short, you won’t be flustered.

Tom
A self introduction? What kind of thing should I say?

Kawano
Start with your name. Then just add where you have been studying, how much Japanese you have learned up to now, what your main subject is, why you have come to Japan, and then what your hobbies are.

Tom
I see. And then I suppose I should open a bank account.

Kawano
Yes. Let’s finish all that this morning.

2
相談にのっていただこうと思って伺ったのですが、よろしいでしょうか。
I came hoping you might do me the favour of giving me some advice; is it convenient now?
これは木下君の専門の分野だから、彼にやってもらうと思うんだけど、どうかな。
This is Kinoshita’s speciality, so I thought we’d get him to do it. What do you think?

ここは田舎で何もありませんが、海の近くなのでせいぜい新鮮なお魚を食べていたこうと思って用意しました。
We’re in the country and don’t have much to offer you, but we are near the sea so I thought I’d prepare some fresh fish to eat at the very least.
あそこのおばあちゃんは退屈していらっしゃらしいから、近いうちに遊びにきていたこうと思っているところです。
That old woman seems bored, so I was just thinking of having her over soon.

3
彼は大きなミスをしたから、場合によっては首を切られることになるかもしれない。
He made a dreadful mistake, so depending on how things go, he might be sacked.
私が行かれない場合には妹が代わりに出席するということになるかもしれない。
It may well be that if I can’t go, my younger sister will go in my stead.
4
Whether I buy or don’t buy depends on quality and price.

According to what I heard, he threw his resignation letter at the boss and charged out.

According to today’s newspaper, it seems that taxes are going up again.

According to the NHK news a minute ago, it seems they have had a coup d’état in Colombia.

It appears that it will take some considerable time before we can remove the lack of mutual trust that has been occasioned by the recent fighting.

The reputation of this candidate differs greatly, depending on whom you talk to.

Depending on how you look at it, you could interpret it differently, couldn’t you?

It all depends on how you look at it. Perhaps it’s such a bad a thing that the problem has emerged at this stage rather than later on.

5
When it comes to the corrupt behaviour of politicians, those who are involved in some way or other all keep their mouths tightly shut, so it’s very difficult to collect material on the subject.

It seems there are various theories about the origins of the Japanese language.

There are a lot of books published about the Pacific War.

Those who have queries about this matter, please do not hesitate to say so.
6

The use of language towards superiors is often a subject of discussion, but are there not also some rules for talking to those below you as well?

Surely it’s not only in Japan that human relations are dealt with in terms of superior and inferior.

7

Well I would have thought there were plenty of better ways of spending your time rather than just loafing around: like reading books or going for walks.

If you’re in a hurry, why don’t you do something like call or send a fax?

8

I heard you were being transferred to Bangkok. Someone who was above me in my seminar at the university has gone there as a special correspondent. Shall I write you a letter of introduction?

Two of my friends who were in the University Boat Club after me have been taken on by the company, so we’re wondering whether or not to start a Company Boat Club.