

Only in Japan:

Reflecting on Contradictions in the Land of the Rising Sun

ONLY IN JAPAN CAN RICE SLIP INTO LICE
AND WARRIORS IN SUITS WAGE CORPORATE BATTLES BY DAY
THEN COLLAPSE LIKE ORIGAMI CRANES IN RABBIT-HUTCHES AT NIGHT.

ONLY HERE WILL DEVIL'S TONGUE
(THAT QUIVERING KONJAC RELISHED BY 888 GODS)
BE SLURPED WITH SUCH GUSTO
OR SOY SAUCE FLOW LIKE INK FROM ANCIENT BRUSHES,
SUCKED UP IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE.

ONLY IN THIS ARCHIPELAGO OF RIDDLES
DO YOUTH DRENCH THEMSELVES IN HARAJUKU COLORS,
PROCLAIMING TO BE NAÏVELY WET WHILE
VENDING MACHINES DISPENSE BEER LABELED DRY.

YES, ONLY IN THIS LAND OF A THOUSAND ENIGMAS
WHERE TRADITION BOWS TO NEON GLITTER,
THE RISING SUN ILLUMINATES MANIFOLD PARADOXES:
EACH PERFECTLY JAPANESE.

Bhāraté: Is Japan really this fragmented?

Daiki: (*scratching his forehead*) Such questions have no "objective" answer.
To many people, Japan does appear as an increasingly fragmented society.

An-Yi: If you look closely enough, I suspect every society is fragmented.

Chariya: (*nodding*) Don't worry. There are enough distractions around to
to make sure most people do not look too closely. I would say
the general tendency is to look quickly, then ignore.

- T Newfields

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