

## **Days 2: Imprisoned and Interned**

### *Unbroken*

“Every man in camp was thin, many **emaciated**, but Louie and Phil were thinner than anyone else. The **rations** weren’t nearly enough and Louie was **plagued** by **dysentery**. He couldn’t get warm and he was **racked** by a cough. He **teetered** through the exercise sessions, trying to keep his legs from **buckling**. At night, he folded his paper blankets to create loft, but it barely helped; the unheated, **drafty** rooms were only a few degrees warmer than the frigid outside air.”

“The guards were fascinated to learn that the sick, **emaciated** man in the first **barracks** had been an Olympic runner. They quickly found a Japanese runner and brought him in for a match race against the American. **Hauled** out and forced to run, Louie was **trounced**, and the guards made a **tittering mockery** out of him. Louie was angry and shaken, and his growing weakness scared him. **POWs** were dying by the thousands in camps all over Japan and its captured territories, and winter was coming.”

1. Identify two specific quotes from the text by highlighting them that display the horrible treatment of Louie and other POWs. Rewrite these selections in your own words.
2. Louie and Phil are described as emaciated, weak, and ill. How does the author use language to offer the brutal details of Louie and Phil's treatment during their time as POWs in Japan?
3. Louie is described as an Olympian. What were the Japanese hoping to accomplish by bringing in their runner to face Louie?
4. What larger ideas about the treatment of POWs are illuminated in this situation?

## *Manzanar*

“The American Friends Service helped us find a small house in Boyle Heights, another minority ghetto, in downtown Los Angeles, now inhabited briefly by a few hundred Terminal Island refugees. Executive Order 9066 had been signed by President Roosevelt, giving the War Department authority to define military areas in the western states and to **exclude** from them anyone who might threaten the war effort. There was a lot of talk about internment, or moving inland, or something like that in store for all Japanese Americans...They had seen how quickly Papa was removed, and they knew now that he would not be back for quite a while.

“Then Papa stepped out, wearing a fedora hat and a wilted white shirt. This was September 1942. He had been gone nine months. He had aged ten years. He looked over sixty, gaunt, **wilted** as his shirt, underweight, leaning on that cane and favoring his right leg...He kept that cane for years and it served him well. I see it now as a sad homemade version of the samurai sword his great-great grandfather carried in the land around Hiroshima, at a time when such warriors weren't much needed anymore, when their swords were both their **virtue** and their **burden**. It helps me understand how Papa's life could end at a place like Manzanar. He didn't die there, but things finished for him there, whereas for me, it was like a birthplace. The camp was where our life lines **intersected**.”

“Papa never said more than three or four sentences about his nine months at Fort Lincoln. Few men who spent time there will talk about it more than that. Not because of the physical **hardship**: he had been through worse times on fishing trips down the coast of Mexico. It was the charge of disloyalty. For a man raised in Japan, there was no greater **disgrace**. And it was the **humiliation**. It brought him face to face with his own vulnerability, his own **powerlessness**. He had no rights, no home, no control over his own life. This kind of emasculatation was suffered, in one form or another, by all the men **interned** at Manzanar.”

1. Re-read the final paragraph of the text selection. Paraphrase this selection in no more than three sentences.
2. How is the establishment of this "ghetto" connected to the displacement of Japanese refugees from Terminal Island?
3. How is this use of the word "ghetto" different from our contemporary understanding of the word?
4. The author draws a connection between the author's father and his samurai ancestor. What is a virtue? What is a burden? As a prisoner in an internment camp

during WWII, how could his Japanese ancestry be both his "burden" and his "virtue?"

5. Re-read the following passage aloud: "It helps me understand how Papa's life could end at a place like Manzanar. He didn't die there, but things finished for him there, whereas for me, it was like a birthplace. The camp was where our life lines intersected."

Why would her father's life "end" at Manzanar? If the camp "ended" her father's life, how could Manzanar be seen as a "birthplace" for the author?

6. How could their separate experiences at Manzanar bring their lives closer?

7. The author uses words like "vulnerability" and "emasculatation." How might these words further illuminate the experience of Japanese men as they lived through internment at Manzanar?

8. How does the author use specific language to identify the depth of the emotional impacts of internment?