

When my mother visited me in Hungnam prison in those cold winter months

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Chambumo Gyeong - Chapter 1. Suffering and Victory during the Japanese Occupation and in Communist North Korea - Section 4. Victory of Love - Survival through sacrificial love



20. You cannot imagine how cold it was in Hungnam! There the winter wind was so strong that it blew pebbles around. When my mother visited me in prison in those cold winter months, she saw me wearing only my thin uniform, just one layer without long johns. When my mother saw me not wearing the clothes that she had prepared for me, her blood boiled. She asked me, "What happened to the long johns and cotton-padded clothes I brought to you?" I told her, "I gave them to people whose situation is more difficult than mine. I am willing to shiver in the cold alongside them and to starve together with them. Is that wrong?"

I was confident in what I was doing. In front of anyone in heaven and on earth, I was confident. My mother admonished me, saying, "How could you do this, without knowing what I went through? I prepared those clothes for you. Who told you to give them to others?" So I said to her, "Mother, if you do not care about others as I care about them, then I am not proud of having you as my mother. I wish you had praised me for what I did, and said that if I needed more clothes you would bring them. If you cannot do that, at least do not admonish me or give me that kind of advice." Then my mother sobbed, shedding large drops of tears. I can never forget that. (242-203, 1993/01/01)