

NISEI VUE

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Toshio Mori's first book wins wide acclaim and interest

Photos by
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YOUNG WRITER in his small study where he is working on three more novels.

NISEI WRITER WOWS CRITICS

SON of an immigrant and part owner of a small nursery in the country town of San Leandro, Calif., 38-year-old Toshio Mori this spring became one of the most widely discussed young writers in the country today. An obscure writer a year ago, the Nisei is hailed by William Saroyan as "probably the most important new writer in this country at the moment."

Toshio Mori's first published book, "Yokohama, Japan" (Caxton Press), has won raves which all young writers crave but rarely receive. Laudatory reviews of the new book have appeared in newspapers and magazines throughout the nation, even in the impenetrable review column of the New York Herald Tribune. Typical of the reviews is the tribute paid by Saroyan:

"He has already what other writers try for years to get and sometimes never do. I mean The Eye...And with the Eye he has The Heart. He has understanding, sympathy, generosity and kindness."

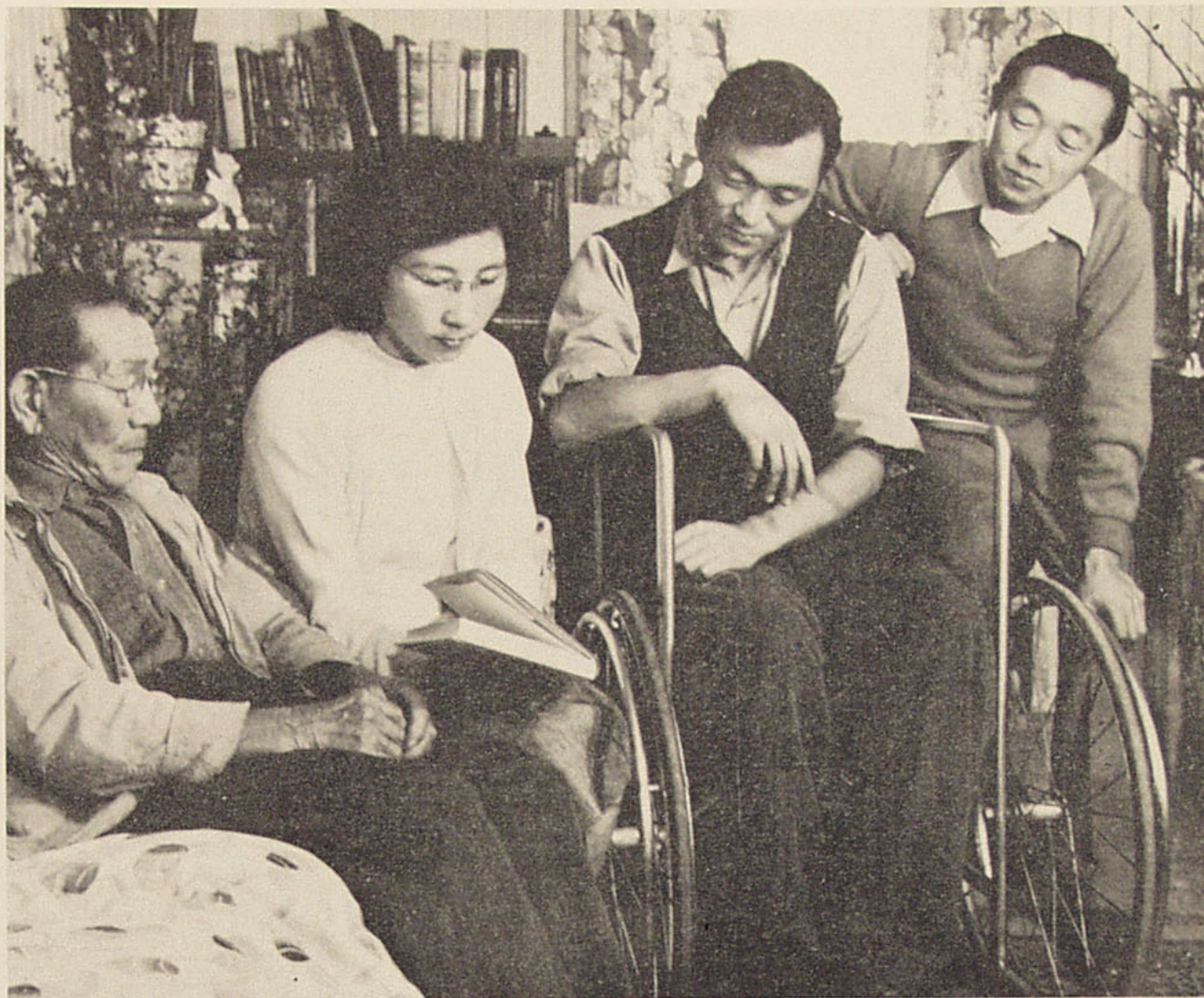
Born and schooled in California, Toshio Mori loved to browse in public libraries and second hand book stores. During his earlier years he read more than he wrote. His first story was published in 1938 by Coast Magazine. It attracted the attention of Saroyan whose encouragement was one of the greatest factors of Toshio's development and an inspiration for his later efforts which appeared more and more frequently in national publications. One of these was selected for reprint in the "Best American Short Stories."

"Yokohama, Japan," which is a collection of short stories woven around the Issei and Nisei, actually was ready for publication in 1942 but was postponed due to the war.

Mori is still writing, of course, but only after the day's work is done. With his brother Kazuo, a 442nd veteran, confined to the wheelchair as a result of a war injury which has paralyzed him from the waist down, and his old father and wife, Hisayo, to support, Toshio Mori's daylight hours are fully spent in running the family nursery.

Burning the midnight oil, the young writer is now working on the first draft of three more novels. Out of these may emerge the "Great Japanese American Saga" so long anticipated.

PROUD FAMILY looks through Toshio's first published book held by his wife Hisayo. Kazuo, his brother, is chair-ridden as result of a severe war injury. He is studying to become a cartoonist and commercial artist. Father, whose counterparts appear in Toshio's book, came to this country half a century ago.



TANNED by long hours in the sun, Toshio Mori runs a tiller machine through a garden on his small nursery in San Leandro, Calif. During evacuation years, the nursery was operated by a Caucasian friend. The grateful Mori's returned to it after three years at Topaz camp.