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Dear Friends,

It's always fun when students share about their part-time jobs. Knowing what kind of work they do and where they spend a good chunk of their time is usually good insight into their lives. Typically, I also love when students invite me to go if it's a coffee shop or restaurant. I'm not available every time but try to if at all possible.

Well, Hinata from Aogaukin University invited me to go with her to the super fancy Japanese restaurant where she works. Initially, I gave what I thought was an indirect "no" in Japan, saying that it looked too expensive. But on the day of, as we headed from her campus, I realized she was taking me there anyway. And now that it's just a funny story, I'm glad she did!

During our extravagant dinner, I got to hear about Hinata's adventures in "job-hunting." It always seems that students beginning the transition to working full-time need someone to listen. The process for applying to companies in Japan is particularly strenuous, and it really strikes a cord in the students' identity. Hinata too is feeling a great deal of pressure, and that led to conversation about where we get our worth from and about our values in general. I also found out for the first time that her grandmother is a Christian!



Hinata is going into her final year in university and shared a lot about the uncertainty with her future.



Some of the fanciest sashimi (raw fish) I've ever eaten, from Hinata's restaurant.

In the end, I think it made Hinata feel closer with me since I visited her work place. Over the past year and a half, we've met up about every three months. But toward the end of dinner, she asked if I could meet up again in February. Although I still feel like she tricked me into that dinner, it's well worth it now that we can meet up again relatively soon. Next time, it will be on my turf, baking cookies for Valentine's Day. Please pray for the opportunity to continue showing Hinata that her value is not solely in her future job, but that she is very loved by the God that created her.

Lastly, one thing that I found slightly unusual was that not a single one of Hinata's co-workers asked why I came to Japan. Almost always people want to know what brought me here, and it's a perfect segue into sharing at the very least a trace of why I'm a Christian. Although I met at least 10 of the cooks and waiters at the restaurant, not a single person asked. However, that brought me to think about how many people Hinata could influence with the gospel if she believed. Please pray for her salvation!

In Christ,

Christina

Please join me in praying for~

- ❖ Hinata and others who are more open to the gospel as they consider their futures
- ❖ Shion and others who are faithfully sharing the gospel with their friends and classmates
- ❖ Our national student conference (Feb. 25<sup>th</sup>~28<sup>th</sup>) to be a time of rich growth and fellowship