

Re: Need help choosing a novel to read

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From: Don Kirkman (*spambuster_at_covad.net*)

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It seems to me I heard somewhere that Gavin Steyn wrote in article
<Y67Fd.13999\$hc7.11308@trnddc08>:

>Since teaching myself Japanese, I've been trying to read some serious
>literature, but there's one big problem--I've got no idea what novels are
>harder than others. So, although I realize this is a subjective thing, I
>was hoping that if I post the list of novels I've read, along with my
>success, someone could point me to others that could build up my reading
>chops a bit, to the point where I could read, say, "Yuki Guni".

>"Yuki Guni" (Kawabata)--almost completely incomprehensible to me.
>"Kinkakuji"(--I thought I was getting it, but when I looked at the
>translation I realized I had missed important stuff--the zen, for instance,
>went right over my head.
>"Bottchan" (Soseki)--Hard to say--I think I mostly understood it, didn't
>think it was funny; does that mean I missed the point?
>Various short stories of Akutagawa--no real difficulty, and I really enjoyed
>these.
>"Hako Otoko" (Kobo Abe) -- no real difficulties, except for one tricky
>section (also enjoyed this)
>"Sasame Yuki" (Tanizaki)--Tricky at first, especially the dialect, but then
>I got into the flow and didn't have major problems.
>A few books by Haruki Murakami--easy.
>A few pop-culture novels (Miyuki Miyabe, that sort of thing)--very easy

>I'm looking for some recommendations that will push my Japanese boundaries a
>bit, in addition to being good (that is, I enjoy Murakami, for example (and
>plan to read more), but reading his novels isn't going to push my Japanese
>up to a higher level).

About the time I last left Japan Shusaku Endo was gaining a reputation;
I read a fair amount of his "The Sea and Poison" (I have to rely on the
kindness of strangers to correct me on that--I can't put my hands on my
copy at the moment), and I think I did a bit of "Silence" for which I
can't recall the Japanese title - "Chinmotsu"? TS&P dealt with tough
subjects, but I can't recall about the language itself.

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Don

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Old age is when you start saying "I wish I knew now what I knew then."