

或る農学生の日誌

Diary of an Agricultural Student

Miyazawa Kenji

Introduction

I present the diary of the three years between when I became a third-year agricultural student and today. I'm pretty lousy when it comes to handwriting and composition. Unless you're just like me and you take my kind of job very seriously, you'll no doubt be bored to tears by all of this. Even now as I reread through this diary I find many places where I completely lack self-confidence and where the words take on a savage, uncivilized feel. Like, there are places where it sounds forced and fabricated like when I used to write back in elementary school. But this is really what I wrote, so what is to be done? Anything at all is possible in our daydreams, but our real jobs in our daily lives are all quite simple. And, while diligently attending to our jobs, our simple jobs—that's when it changes. We think and think on it and 'simple' turns into something smelling of the rustic, the backwater, and the rural.

I'm not preaching here. Still, while I talk together with my father about various jobs and reading up on people putting in the real work, there are likely plenty of people that would regard me with disdain. Those are the people I want to hit. There are those out there that, if they can't look at someone with scorn they look at them with jealousy. I think they're the most cowardly people in the world. Friends who toil as I do—my friends—how about we rid this world of that cowardice?

Tuesday, April 1st, 1925. Sunny.

Today begins our new semester. Even though I'm back to school, though, I still feel disappointed. It's 'cause the freshmen haven't started yet and the third third-year students aren't around, which isn't really true because I'm a third-year student. But those cowardly upperclassmen that wait for you to greet them, swaggering about and giving you sideways glances—they aren't there. Somehow it feels like the low underside of the heavens that I'd been consistently bumping my head against previously has gone away, though I also feel a bit like a young cherry blossom tree that's had been stripped of all supports. That's what I did at today's practice. Last September we planted the cherry blossom trees around the old horse track. Everyone thought that it was still too soon to take them off of their supports. It was just about time for little arms of branches to start appearing on them, but the western wind was still blowing strong and would snap them right at the trunks if they were taken off their supports. Even so, Kikuchi-sensei made us take off the supports anyway. He said it would be shameful for them to blossom with their supports still on. Even though there was a month or more before they would start to bloom! I think he just wanted to do it because it was springtime now and pulling the supports was just something to do.

We gathered up stuff like old rope and the accumulated rubbish from winter and burned it in a nook in the exercise grounds. The students that were there working on another project looked jealous. Once that was done it was time for class. Since our

textbooks had yet to arrive it was looking like tomorrow we were going to have practice, too. That afternoon we fixed up the tennis court and stuff.

Wednesday, April 2nd. Sunny.

Today was the training on soils and geological features for the third-year students. Saito-sensei stood ahead of us, behind the girl's school. We studied the diluvia formations and mudstone exposures from the third geological period, then, while gradually surveying the soil as he went along, headed north towards the small ferry bank. Along the wide exposure of mudstone running along the river we picked up tons of weird, jagged walnut-shaped fossils and hollow minerals that looked like little red people. Heading further along the bank and then crossing over Asahi Bridge, the wide, dry riverbank turned to gravel and everyone gathered different rock specimens using their iron hammers. A dragonfly was standing there, lazing about on the riverbank. The water and whatnot in the distance behind it somehow looked like the wind. Around two-o'clock we parted from the riverbank and went home.

I helped out with the hedges until the evening. Tomorrow is a day off.

April 3rd I'm really tired from digging up old mulberry roots all day.

April 4th, Ueda and Takahashi were absent from school again today. They say Ueda took the entrance exam to get into a normal school but we still don't know if he got in or not. Why would you take two whole years of agricultural school just to transfer over to a

regular school? Takahashi apparently said that he had to work at home and wouldn't be able to come to school anymore. It makes sense. Takahashi's land was hit the hardest by last year's draught and so I'd bet they're going to have it terribly difficult this year. Compared to them we're lucky to have even been able to harvest half—if any—of our crops. I'm thinking that this year I'm definitely going to compensate for last year's drought by focusing on using the proper fertilizers this time around. Our training today was digging up a bed for rice seedlings. Last fall we only had a small peak in which to work the soil and so we ended up with nothing at all. They say that almost all of the textbooks have arrived. They were saying that just the ones like measurement and horticultural studies haven't come yet. I'm headed out to buy them tomorrow before supplies run out, even though it's going to a Sunday. Kudo-san, who went to the agricultural experiment station, got hold of the ethics and language arts texts, so there are only nine copies left.

Sunday, April 5th

I helped out with a roof replacement in the southern district. It was pretty rough. Once you were up on the roof, the school off to the south looks like it's all stretched out long. For some reason I felt all day like somehow I wasn't actually a student at that school. I'll buy the textbooks tomorrow.

Monday, April 6th

Today our school held its entrance exams. It's odd to see the new students so daft and absent-minded despite acting so serious and stern. Now, though, everyone is growing restive. It came to mind that all of them would be second-year students come next year.

And then the year after that they'll be third-year students like me, laughing at the new students. It feels strange to think about that. I asked Ito-kun to pick up my textbooks for me when he goes to the bookstore.

Tuesday, April 7th This morning I received some money from my father and bought my textbooks.

So today starts our formal classes. Measurement is definitely interesting. Studying maps is interesting, too. Takeda-sensei said there isn't a single spot on our maps that represents the actual acreage of the fields and rice paddies around here. Owing that, we haven't the slightest idea about our job itinerary or how we're actually going to go about allocating fertilizer. Having already learned a bit, I'm going to measure my fields one by one at home and file away their dimensions in my notes. Then we can think about fertilizer distribution. I'm going to pay for the recovery from last year's draught with just about the cost of my school fees this year. We dug up beds for rice seedlings for today's training, too.

Wednesday, April 8th, Since there was no class today we practiced our school song. We sing and the first-years imitate us. For some reason, though, I have an overbearing dislike for that song. I feel like I'm going to get a headache whenever we sing it. It's to the point where I'd rather just have training. Because the school asked me to, I ordered two orders of apples and one of grapes.

April 9th (This entry is blank)

May 5th, 1925. Sunny.

The cherry blossoms of the garden by the entrance to the school are in bloom even though the morning wind is still blowing cool. Despite this, I don't particularly like seeing those flowers. Posed in the morning light under the shade of the tree they look like frogs eggs. Then they bring to mind stuff like songs that reek of the olden days and ancient people sluggishly moaning them out. No thanks. Maybe I'd like the flowers better if it weren't for all of that old-timey stuff. Maybe, if nobody ever said anything about how splendid the cherry blossoms were, I'd be the one shouting out in a great big voice about their beauty. When it comes down to it, though, I prefer the fur of a dandelion. Maybe the cherry blossoms would look splendid under the setting sun or something instead.

Today's practice on sowing dry land rice plants was interesting. We each had two ridges to work with apiece. I brought a stake I'd borrowed and used a ruler to measure out the distances between holes in which to plant the seedlings. I was really happy when the seedlings all lined up correctly. If they sprouted today the sprouts would all look just as straight and neat. There are three or four skylark nests in the rice field at our school. I don't even know how many landed during our exercise but never once did we see one take off into the air. The skylarks purposefully land away from their nests and don't fly away where we can see them so that we don't find where the nests are actually located.

May 6th, 1925

Today Takeda-sensei talked to us about the third-year excursion. We'd be leaving at 10PM on the 18th of this month and coming back on the 23rd. We'd circle on down to Muron from Sapporo, visiting several places along the way. As if it were right in front of him, Takeda-sensei talked about things like the scenery we'd encounter out there:

The Tsugaru Channel, Trappists, Hakodate, Star-shaped infrastructures, Hokkaido's Mt. Fuji, white birches, Otaru, Sapporo University, the Sapporo Brewery, museums, Danish people's farms, Tomakomai, the white indigenous Ainu people, Muroran... Oh, my heart just danced with the thought of it all. During 5th period, Kikuchi-sensei handed out some letters for us to bring home and then talked about various other things. We'd be going with both Ikeda-sensei and Takeda-sensei.

They say we can only go if we can get twenty-eight people in total. Apparently it's a prefectural regulation that we need to have at least a third of the class participating. But we have to pay the school 90 yen, and then we'll need 5 more yen on top of that. When they asked who could definitely go only Naito-kun and like four other students raised their hands. They're all city folk. I wonder if I could get the money from home. My dad wasn't home so I only talked to my mom. She just raised her eyes at me with this worried look on her face and didn't say anything. But I bet my dad will give it to me. I'll fill up two whole big notebook pages about it and show him.

May 7th

I gave my dad the letter from the school this morning and tried talking to him about everything our teachers said. When I did, he took the letter and read the entire thing and then, seemingly constrained, stopped me before I'd even told him about half of it. "We'll discuss it," he said. Maybe it's because my grandma and mom's hesitation.

May 8th

It seems like there are more or less enough people going. No one at home will say anything about it, though. This is killing me.

May 9th,

During 3rd period Kikuchi-sensei talked to us again about a few things. All of the students that were sure they were going were all ears, listening eagerly to every word. My head grew hot and began to hurt. Oh, Hokkaido. If I could just hang my duffle bag on my shoulder, wrap myself in a cloak and take a boat with everybody else across the Tsugaru Channel, how happy I would be...

May 10th Still nothing.

Sunday, May 11th Cloudy. This morning I tilled the paddy field with my mom and grandma. In the afternoon I trimmed the Cyprus hedges. Things have gotten weird at home ever since the talk about the field trip came up. I don't care anymore if I can't go. I don't care if I'm not going so I don't care to find out who is going or talk with people during school about the trip or any of that.

What's Hokkaido, anyway? I'll work and earn my own money now and then I'll go wherever I want. Just watch. I'll go to Brazil, even.

May 12th, Today I looked into how many people are going again. We were still short by 4 people. Everyone keeps incessantly blaming guys like me and Saito-kun for not going. They say that since we aren't going the trip is going to get canceled for everybody. Even Takeda-sensei makes these weird faces and tells me I should go. I really can't stand it. We have to know for sure by the day after tomorrow. In the evening my father got home and I resolutely, one more time, explained to him the circumstances at school.

He and my mother just told me that neither of them had ever even visited Ise Shrine. My grandmother had only made it to Ise once and had only gone once to the local Kannon shrine, and she was only going to live for so much longer and still wanted to make the pilgrimage to *Zenkouji*. On top of that, they said, we had to consider what the neighbors would think. We'd just had a terrible drought. What would it look like if I was out and about, strolling along on trips without a care in the world? It was absolutely out of the question.

No matter how much I kept my head down I couldn't help but lose a few tears into the hearth. I stood there for a while and then told them that if that was the case I

didn't mind not going. I told that that there was no school while the others were off on their trip and figured I'd just skip. With this my father was quiet for a while and eventually just said "We'll discuss it later." Then he started asking me about things like various kinds of rice plants and all kinds of things that normally he never cares to hear about. And, believe it or not, I felt better.

May 13th Today I came home from school and found my mother alone in the rice field looking happy and cutting the causeways in between the paddies.

I thought something must be up and asked her. She told me to go hear it from my father. I thought for sure it must be about the class trip.

I stayed there and helped my mom in the field until she left for home.

But my dad isn't home yet.

May 14th, My father came home late last night and told me he'd let me go on the trip. He said it would make my mother happy and that my grandmother had asked him all sorts of things about what it was like up there. She was wondering if Hokkaido was any different from back in the pioneer days when she'd hear stories of things like bears and Ainu, and meals of squash and corn dumplings. I went to school today and told Takeda-sensei. He was absolutely thrilled. We were still short by two people, but he told me he had submitted the official application to the prefectural government saying that we were above quota. I'm definitely going to go and see it all and then come back and tell everybody about absolutely everything in huge detail.

MAY 18 1925,

The train rapidly speeds off into the darkness. The sky over Morioka still looks dazedly, muddily lit. Dark thickets and pine groves pass steadily by our windows. Occasionally you can see the dips in the distant mountains.

More and more, we too are furthering ourselves from Iwate.

Everyone at home is probably already asleep. My grandma kindly lent me a charm to take with me. Farewell, northern mountains, northern rivers, the nighttime Iwate wind. Takeda-sensei is now making his rounds to each student's seat to check up on them.

MAY 19 1926 (This entry is blank and the date is as it appears in the original)

May 19th

*

The train is now running along the coast of Aomori. The sea shines like so many needles all lined up. There's a triangular island with trees growing all over it. This White Sea before us is the Pacific Ocean. America is really out there on the other side. It kind of gives me a weird feeling. Once on the cape we couldn't see the ocean anymore. It's a pine forest. There it is again. Asamushi is next. We can see roofs inset with stones. I bet it's nice to live there...

*

A city in Aomori is about the size of all of Morioka. There were a bunch of people in front of the train station selling things like apples and bananas. The waiting room is huge and packed with people doing things like eating and washing their faces. It's odd to see someone dressed in white like a train conductor selling soba noodles in the waiting area.

*

Leaving a long trail of black smoke stretching towards Aomori, the boat is now passing through the space between the Shimokita and Tsugaru peninsulas heading towards the channel. Everyone is singing the school song. The shadow of the smoke overhead is reflected in the waves like a dark mirror. The view of the Tsugaru peninsula is just like the Hiroshige painting at school. It's the way that all of the valleys between the mountains come all the way to the sea. There are a few beaches along the coast, and along them run highways lined with black pines. In a slightly bigger valley stand as many as twenty or thirty little houses. Along the beach float as many as five or six boats. There goes the white lighthouse that we'd been seeing for quite a while. I'm going to be silent and just look when we pass alongside the boats. It'd be great if I were good at drawing, but I can't draw so I'm going to look nice and hard and remember so that I can tell the people back home all about it. The weather is nice despite the cold wind. I'm not getting seasick at all. No one else is sick either.

*

A group of dolphins is passing alongside the boat. I was the first one to spot them. A little out in the distance I saw these little black things coming out of the waves, arching in the air, and then diving back down into the water. Just when I was wondering what I was looking at, they started appearing even closer. Then they were appearing sporadically here and there. That's when I let everybody know. The way that they carefully tuck in their hands [literal] and cut in and out of the water with just their posture is funny for some reason.

It didn't seem like our teacher knew what we were looking at either, but it was a fat person in western clothing with hair like a fisherman that then said "Ah, dolphins!" The whole boat slanted a little bit with everybody piling on over to this side.

A wind picked up.

The waves came in a bit taller.

We have the sea to both the east and the west. I can already see Hokkaido in the distance. I sort of didn't feel well.

*

Right now the train is leaving Hakodate and heading towards Otaru. Outside the window it's pitch black. It's already 11PM. We just now saw the Hakodate city park but already it completely feels like it was a dream.

Out of every hundred cherry blossom trees we passed there was one electric light. Red and green fire lights, the reflections of light in the shape of the rabbit-ear irises lay down upon the lake from the electric lights, the light off the boats and the spark of the

train running along the tracks...it was all truly beautiful. But I hadn't slept much the night before so I was very tired. Without writing I'll scribe it down in my memory and lock it away. Tomorrow afternoon we're doing the superphosphate factory and going to see some of the star-shaped architecture. They make lime as well as sulfuric acid at the factory.

May 20th

*

Right now we can see Hokkaido's Mt. Fuji out of the right-hand window. It's a volcano. The top is flat. There are little houses made of burnt railroad ties. Veitch's bamboo grows thick. It's a colony.

*

Now we're in Otaru park. We saw the high grade commerce herbarium. The 500 uses for potatoes and the sixty different specimens were interesting.

This park is hilly. There are a ton of white birches. You can get a bird's eye view of Otaru's pure blue bay. There's a battleship in there and so the naval flags are raised. Takeda-sensei said he'd show us the ship if there was time. I was sitting on a bench, taking a break when someone came along selling red, boiled crabs. It seems kind of scary, people eating that kind of stuff all of the time.

*

October 16th, 1925

Once the lecture on ethics finished during our first period today there was still some time left over and so we were told we could ask the school headmaster anything we wanted to fill the rest of the block. Everyone remained silent with their heads down, though. There were plenty of things that both I and everyone else wanted to ask, but if we did the teacher would shoot us sour looks and we just couldn't have that.

Why, if he teaches us to believe that the practice of ethics and morals is so important, would he not refrain from judging so clearly the very questions that he made us ask?

October 25th, 1925

Today we had a soils survey practice. As leader of the second team I carried the drafting board. I couldn't even express my happiness upon the five of us returning to school with all of our tools in hand: hammers, sampling spikes, litmus paper, and bottles of potassium chloride. Tani-sensei looked really happy, too. Everyone in group six performed their own survey, following whatever course each individual felt like following. I made sure to properly investigate beforehand and drew up an estimated map so that our team wouldn't be flustered and lost like the others. But I really don't get it.

The district maps were scaled at 1/100,000, so I really only learned from the general outline. We made the flats to the south of the Sarugaishi river by around ten-thirty. Our biggest question was whether or not the diluvia continued over the andesitic aggregation of the Old King hill. We saw many aggregate rocky outcrops from where we were, near the apex of the hill. Eventually we came to the general estimate that that diluvia formation was under the one-hundred and forty meter line and afterward decided once we'd referenced the condition of the tree development as our teacher had said. I'll take studying geological features over soils any day. It's 'cause as you go along investigating the soils, you mark those locations in different colors according to the quality of the soil and that's all. Geological formations, on the other hand, you have to think about, and the thought that you have to put into it is much more in depth and satisfying.

We ran into the other groups while in the pine grove, miscanthus reeds, and elsewhere. Everybody was trying to get a peep at our map.

And I can't even tell you how many pheasants we saw take off from the miscanthus reeds.

It turns out that, thanks to the drought, the rice plants in the areas that are being divided up as arable land were all overgrown with short red weeds. On top of that, the soil was all cracked.

Even on the land that had been utilized, the rice plants didn't show the slightest offshoots and stood unharvested, seedless and turning red. Those who stood before the task of land consolidation did so for the sake of everyone, but this must have been truly dreadful. We performed a complete survey of the soils there. If we could just get this

place a little water I'd wager that, in the future, we could get it to yield as much as around 3 *koku* (approximately 540 liters.)

Just like we promised, each group met back at the beautiful andesitic agglomerate exposure on the bank of the Sarugaishi River at one o'clock in the afternoon. Our teacher told us he had received some *konashi* (little pears) somewhere and divided it up among the students. From there we all re-drew and corrected our topographical maps. There, our teacher didn't say anything about anyone's map, good or bad. We rested a while. Then we all went along with our teacher north of the river, studying the soils and geological features like the granite and even third-period mudstone. I decided to finish up a clean copy of my map and pass it in by next Monday.

Once I get my corrected map back from the teacher, next Sunday I'll ask Takahashi to make them for my whole neighborhood. There's nothing but diluvia and alluvia land around my neighborhood so it'll be very simple. Nevertheless, the way that we apply our fertilizers and such is completely off. It makes me wonder if people aren't doing it completely opposite of the way they should.

November 10th, 1925.

After practice today, while I was in front of the farmhouse looking at the dried out gladiolus bulbs, I was joined by Takeda-sensei who had just finished the sterilization of the chicken cages and such, sulfur-flower pedals sticking all over his trousers. From there

he looked at them, picked just three of the big ones, and gave them to me. Bashfully I said how these were a new, expensive kind. “I’m only giving them to you,” he said, “so try planting them next spring.” Thereupon our flowers teacher Naitou-sensei came along from the direction of the farm and Takeda-sensei, in a panic, commanded me to put the bulbs in my pocket. I had a weird feeling about it but figured it couldn’t be helped and put them in my pocket. Thereupon Takeda-sensei rushed off into the farm house and started busily arranging the farming equipment and whatnot. I had such a bad feeling about it there was nothing else I could do but wait until Naitou-sensei was gone and then quietly return the bulbs, hurry into the schoolhouse, change out of my practice clothes and return home.

March 2*, 1926 [The number next to the “Twenty” character is left blank.],

We did a salt sampling today. I finished with mine and then did Narado’s, too. When using the relative density just as it appears in the book, there wasn’t even half of the “Turtle Tail” rice remaining. It was like this even in the places that fared the best with last year’s draught. However, only about 30% of the “Rikuu 132” crop floated to the top of the water. [“Turtle Tail” and “Rikuu 132” are two types of engineered rice variations produced through the integrated rice breeding program started by the Japanese government in 1903 in the effort to produce rice that tasted better and was more resistant to things like cold and aluminum-rich soil. “Salt Sampling,” or *Ensuisen*, is one way of selecting appropriate rice seeds. It’s done by testing the salt density at which a rice seedling will float in a body of water. Relative density is the density of an object in

relation to its surrounding reference, in this case water.] Still, because we did the salt sampling there was exactly six *to* (108 liters) so that should do just fine on Honda's land. Anyhow, I did a decent 50-yen job in half a day.

As no one had done a salt sampling before today, and we'd only taken a sampling of about two *koku* this time, we could extrapolate that, like an experiment presentation at the agricultural research station, that even the 10% increase in yield of two *to* (36 liters) here and there will become substantially greater when taken as a whole over a large area. If I could get people to understand that this would be really great for everybody, then we could go ahead and use this same salinity level across the board. Even if its just a profit of 30 yen per household, that's 450 yen to be made across this whole neighborhood. Still, it's a half-day job for five or six people. During the time in which I was doing the salt sampling my father gathered all of the trash from last year's winter and burned it. When I'd managed the unhulled rice my father stuffed it into a beautiful bag made of long, slender straws. I think that's reasonable. There was no boiling water so he soaked them in that embankment. Ice was still floating in the shadow of the bank so it must be around zero degrees Celsius on the dot. Back in December, the water kept filling up the cracks in the ice until it was six-tenths solid. It'll surely be good this year, too. If just for the fact that the terrible drought kept up a second year, a dark fact that stood against all climate statistics, there's no collection of accidents that could cause it to continue on into this year. If just the climate is any indicator, this year I'll definitely be able to work on repairing the damage of the drought that has plagued us until now. And then, from next year onward, we'll ease the stress on the economy back home and bring vibrant happiness to all the people of Nagane.

June 14th, 1926 Today we finally had some water to use between noon and seven so I did some irrigation. At any rate the ground is still so deeply cracked from last year that the water really didn't accumulate. Sitting down in one of the ridges between the rice fields, scooting over and dipping my feet into the warm water, I felt like I'd gone and become a rice plant. I'd come down with a fever and was a bit discolored and, since the water had come, I was drinking it up through my feet. I felt a shock and opened my eyes. The water, it was bubbling at the site of the fissures in the soil, ink-like in the way it slowly, slowly spread out.

With no water, we can't break up the clumped earth in the worn-out fields to transplant the crops. Today makes it exactly twelve days without water. Just how is it that the sky has changed? Even though the people from the weather measurement station said that there was no record of any drought like this lasting two years, could it be that we're headed into our third year? The Ozawa River is only at about four *sun* [apx. 12 centimeters.] It took one trip to the river to get the water for the work I did today.

I was wondering why the river just ceased flowing altogether around 3 o'clock, so I headed up to where the river branches and found Gonju blocking off the flow and redirecting it towards his own land. To me he was appeared like one of those worms that eat away at your cabbage at night. His face was all puffed out, and to make matters worse, he was wearing this workers shawl that he didn't even need that covered up his whole head except for a hole for his swelled face.

His hands and feet were swollen, too, so he really did look totally like one of those thieving worms. "What are you doing?" I asked. "We get out of agricultural school

and from then on out you only do what's right by you?" I was morose. "Whether school is still on or its over, this water flows over by my land. What are you doing stealing it?"

"You've become quite the speaker since entering school, huh?"

I'd already thought of throwing a big rock at him.

But Gonju just kept on redirecting the flow of the water, and I kept on fixing it so it would flow back towards my land. Apparently Gonju figured I was just a child and so, since it was just me, he could go ahead and do as he liked. Look now, because I will strike down every single one of these types of cowards.

August 21st, 1927

After everything my rice plants have all ended up flattened. I have no idea what to do anymore. Yesterday they seemed to be doing just fine, but then there was a terrible thunderstorm at dawn and between then and now almost half of them are completely flattened out. I stealthily worked to the word of the program but still they ended up flattened. Even now it's still coming down out there. My father smiles and tells me that things are going to be alright but I know he's just saying it to make me feel better. In reality it's going to be anything but alright. All that my mother does is worry about me. If it had just been my own rice that had failed, it wouldn't mean anything. If it had just been the fertilizer classes that I taught, it wouldn't mean anything. If it were just that, I could hit the railroad this winter and even work as a peddler and earn back what we'd lost. But after all of the tending and trimming, after all of the thought we put into the fertilizer program, after everything, this village has no hopes of recovery. I have nowhere to turn

where I can talk about this. No use going to the school...The teacher would just smile and say things like "Aah, your rice was flattened? I wonder if the seedlings were weak. They can't make it if they lose too much strength." Diary, oh diary... What would I be doing tonight if I didn't have this diary to write in? The gate is closed off, the outlet is cut off, I can't get out into the fields; I can't *do* anything but sit in here quietly and listen to the pounding, thrashing sound of the rain outside, its threatening voice growing louder and stronger. And just what if this rain clears up by tomorrow? Just what does that leave us with?

Oh, whatever. Things are what they are. Regardless of whether the rain stops by tomorrow, tonight what I *can* do for absolute certain is make a pair of...