

Recitation A

A Very Able Man

Hirotsugu Otake is a happy, successful man. He graduated from Waseda University, one of Japan's top universities. While he was a student there, he played a lot of sports. After graduating, he worked as a sports journalist. Then, in 1988, he wrote a book about his life. This book became a bestseller in Japan.

Mr. Otake, or "Oto," as his friends call him, has a disability. He was born with a condition called *tetra-amelia*. It is a rare condition, and children with *tetra-amelia* are born without arms or legs.

As a young boy, Oto's parents sent him to a regular school. They didn't want him to go to a special school for children with disabilities. Oto says that it is sometimes hard for people to feel comfortable around someone with disabilities. By going to a regular school, Oto helped his classmates learn about people with disabilities. He showed them that people with disabilities were just like them. Oto talks about this in his book, *No One's Perfect*.

Oto believes that if you want something, you have to work hard for it. He worked very hard at school to get into Waseda University. He also worked hard at sports such as baseball, basketball, and swimming, and he worked hard to get a job.

Oto got married in 2001, and he now has two young sons. In 2007, he decided to change his job. He worked at an elementary school for three years. As a teacher, Oto taught his students that people are the same with or without disabilities.

Did Oto's disability make him different? Actually, yes, it did. It taught him to be strong and to work hard, and that made him able to do many things. Oto shows that anything is possible if you work hard enough.

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