

THE LAND OF MILK AND HONEY

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KAGAWA ARCHIVES & RESOURCE CENTER



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Chapter One

THE GARDEN PATCH

*T*HE crows were cawing drearily in the nearby grove, and in the vegetable garden the locusts were flying in clouds from ridge to ridge. The unripe egg-plants were shrivelled from the scorching heat, for the continued drought had ruined all the crops. Although it was only September, yet in Tosuke's home, which sheltered a family of eleven, already there was not a thing to eat. In the small terraced plots of mountain land which were all the family owned, the upland rice had sent up a few spears, each stalk like a bald head boasting only a few, spare hairs but even these had withered before the kernels developed. The giant radish fields had been planted over six times, but not once had the seeds sprouted. The lowland rice was producing only twenty per cent. normal yield, and that was not enough to pay for the bare rent of the land.

For over a week, Tosuke's little sisters, instead of