



POPLAR
PUBLISHING



Foreign Rights Catalog 2025

About Us

Poplar Publishing Co., Ltd. was founded in 1947. Starting as a children's books publisher, we published many best-selling series, including *Butt Detective* series, *Zorori* series and *Tyrannosaurus* series, which have sold millions of copies worldwide.

Poplar expanded its range of books by publishing books for adults, including fiction, non-fiction, essays and business books. We have several award-winning books such as *The Lonely Castle in the Mirror* and *What You Are Looking for Is in the Library*. Moreover, many novels such as *Snail's Restaurant*, *The Lion's Snack*, *Sweet Bean* and *Midnight Bakery* series have been adapted into films and TV dramas.

Poplar publishes around 400 titles annually and has licensed titles to more than 40 languages. We are always looking for new partners and further cooperation around the globe.

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The Little Tokyo Flower Shop

Author : **Yukihisa Yamamoto**



Publication: March 2023
315 pages

Rights sold:

Arabic, Croatian, Danish, Dutch, English, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Polish, Portuguese (Brazil and Portugal), Romanian, Russian, Serbian, Spanish, Thai, Turkish, Ukrainian

Agent:

Vicki Satlow Agency
(World, excluding Asia)

➡ **English synopsis and sample translation available**

Keywords:

language of flowers,
healing, a new beginning,
resilience

A heartfelt story set in a flower shop, which sold over 100,000 copies in Japan.

At 24, Kikuko Kimina is emotionally and physically drained from the demands of her job. One day she meets a woman named Rita Tojima, a warm and energetic florist, at a restaurant at night. In a drunken impulse, Kikuko agrees to start working at her flower shop.

There, Kikuko meets a group of unique coworkers who welcome her into their world of blooms and miracles. As Kikuko learns the language of flowers, she begins to understand the unspoken emotions of the customers who visit the shop or call for flower delivery—some seeking joy, others carrying quiet sorrow.

Each bouquet holds a story, a wish, a moment of healing. From the graceful *Magnolia grandiflora*, symbolizing dignity, to the hopeful *Sunflower*, and the bittersweet farewell of the *Chrysanthemum*, every chapter unveils a tale woven with the delicate meanings of flowers.

Through these encounters, Kikuko slowly starts to heal, rediscovering her own dreams and the small joys that make life beautiful.

Who would have thought that the everyday work of a flower shop could be so captivating? Lovable and unique characters, fascinating tidbits about flowers, classical literature, poetry, the language of flowers, friendship and romance —this novel is like a perfectly arranged bouquet, blending all these elements with exquisite balance.

——**Natsu Miyashita**, author of *The Forest of Wool and Steel*

★ **The second volume is planned for release.**

Yukihisa Yamamoto: Born in 1966, Tokyo. He made his debut in 2003 when he received Shosetsu Subaru New Writers' Award for *Warau manekineko* (*A Beckoning Cat Laughs*). In 2018, his novel *Tencho ga Ippai* (*Lots of Store Managers*) won the Station Bookstore Award.



My Beautiful Garden

Author : **Yuu Nagira**



Publication: November 2021
311 pages

Rights sold:

Italian, Korean, Thai,
Traditional Chinese and
Vietnamese

➡ **English synopsis
and sample translation
available**

Keywords:

sense of loss, complexity,
self-respect, connection

A moving story of those who visit “the Shrine of Dissolution,” seeking to let go and begin anew.

Sold over 240,000 copies in Japan.

Nestled far back on the garden rooftop of an apartment building is a small shrine called the *Shrine of Dissolution*. It enshrines a God who will help visitors cut their relationships, painful past or emotions that weigh heavy on the heart. People who hear this come to the shrine with their problems and conduct a ritual of writing them down on a white piece of paper and slipping them into the dissolution box.

Mone, a girl in elementary school, lives in this apartment building with her stepfather, Tori, who is the chief priest of this shrine. Tori took her in after she was orphaned when her mother, his ex-wife, died with her husband in an accident when she was five. Although some consider their lifestyle unusual, Mone and Tori's days are filled with happiness.

Their neighbor Rō comes over each morning, and they eat breakfast together, who is suffering from the loss of his gay lover in a recent breakup. Momoko, a woman in her late thirties, also lives with her mother in the same apartment building. She is busy working in administration at a medical office, at the same time feeling pressure from her mother to get married with someone. Deep inside, Momoko is unable to forget her boyfriend from high school, who died in a traffic accident, and the time they spent together.

This is the story of people revolving around the rooftop shrine who slowly begin to let go of their burden, loneliness and grief through tender interactions with others. From the author who continues to depict the complexity of life and human relationship, the story gently encourages us to accept, express, and love ourselves to be freed from social convention and make your own step forward.

Yuu Nagira: Born in Kyoto City in 1973. She won the Japan Booksellers' Award for *Rurou no Tsuki* (*The Wandering Moon*) and *Nanji, hoshi no gotoku* (*You, Like a Star*), and the Kinokuniya Booksellers' Award for *Horobi no Mae no Shanguri-La* (*Shangri-La Before the Destruction*).



Hotaruishi Magical Land

Author : **Haruna Terachi**



Publication: February 2021
283 pages

➡English synopsis
and sample translation
available

Keywords:

The power of connection,
professional approach to
work, rebuilding one's life

A heartwarming workplace novel, depicting a nostalgic amusement park and the small miracles born from human connections.

Won the Osaka Booksellers' Award.

Hotaruishi Magical Land is a beloved, long-standing amusement park located in the fictional city of Hotaruishi in northern Osaka. There is a merry-go-round that is rumoured to grant wishes. While the president, Ichiko Kunimura, and many employees work happily there, each harbors their own struggles.

Sae Hagiwara, who works at the information desk, quietly wonders if this amusement park is truly where she belongs, all the while diligently handling her meticulous daily tasks. When an elderly man arrives, having lost his grandson, Sae kindly assists him, even as her colleague shies away from the situation. Unbeknownst to her, the elderly man's grandson is a young man secretly tasked with reporting on the amusement park's operations to the hospitalized president.

Sou Murase, an attraction staff member, has dreamed of working with his beloved merry-go-round since joining the company, but his wish has yet to come true. Yaeko Shinozuka, a cleaning staff member, happens to see her son—born from her marriage with her ex-husband—at the amusement park and is overcome with guilt. Katsuyori Yamada, who has devoted his career to tending to flowers and plants, is taken aback when a young colleague seeks his advice on an unexpected matter as his retirement approaches.

Set during a week when the president is hospitalized, this story follows imperfect yet wholehearted characters as they unexpectedly connect with others and come to realize someone will surely recognize your efforts and what is truly meaningful in life. Perfect for fans of Shion Miura's *The Great Passage*.

Hotaruishi Magical Land, with its nostalgic charm, is inspired by Hirakata Park, Japan's oldest amusement park in Osaka Prefecture.

Haruna Terachi: Based in Osaka Prefecture. She won the 9th Kawai Hayao Prize for Stories for *Mizu o Nuu* (*Sewing Water*), and was nominated for the Japan Booksellers' Award for *Kawa no Hotori ni Tatsu Mono wa* (*Those Who Stand by the River*).



Bistro of Delights

Author : **Tomo Fuyumori**



Publication: March 2023
287 pages

Keywords:

rediscovering hope, a
traveling restaurant, arts

A heartwarming tale of a bistro that appears in places where art thrives.

The story unfolds at “Bistro Tsukushi,” a traveling restaurant composed of a kitchen truck and a circus tent illuminated with dazzling lights. This ephemeral bistro appears only for a limited time in places where art thrives— such as an open-air theater where piano melodies drift through the air, a market lined with paintings, or a beach where films are screened.

Two brothers—a gentle chef who looks like a polar bear and a waiter who looks like a black cat—serve exquisite dishes made from local ingredients as they journey across the country in search of their mentor, “Okina.” The guests they encounter are people burdened with worries and weariness. Through the bistro’s cuisine, atmosphere, and the brothers’ warm hospitality, these visitors gradually begin to heal and rediscover hope.

Told in a series of interconnected short stories, each chapter introduces a new character and reveals more about the brothers’ past and the true identity of Okina. A heartwarming tale that gently nourishes both the reader’s body and soul.



Publication: July 2020
300 pages

Rights Sold:

Italian

➡ English synopsis
and sample
translation available

The Matchmaking Sandwich

Filling up a deflated heart with joy, a story about warm bonds.

Bakery Koten, located on a local shopping street, is run by a second-generation couple and is seen by its regulars as a place to naturally go to rest their weary hearts. The third-generation heir to the bakery, with no confidence in dealing with customers or baking, gradually begins to bake his ideal bread while interacting with customers and fellow shop owners along the street, growing into a more dependable heir.

Their customers, such as a young woman who worries about marriage and a university student struggling with job-hunting, slowly begin to make progress in life through conversations with the people they meet at the bakery and the power of the bread baked there.

Tomo Fuyumori: Finalist of the Poplar Delicious Literature Prize. Made her debut with *The Matchmaking Sandwich*.



Mourning Recipe

Author : **Yuki Ibuki**



Publication: February 2010
263 pages

Rights sold:
Korean and Thai

➡ **English synopsis
and sample
translation available**

Keywords:

connection, the death of a spouse, infertility, a new beginning for the family, celebration of life

A heartfelt story following a family grieving the loss of a loved one, and their emotional journey toward healing with a collection of “Recipes for Life.”

A bestselling novel with over 260,000 copies sold in Japan, which was adapted into both a TV drama and a film.

One morning when retiree Ryohei Atsuta left to go fishing, he got angry at his wife Otomi and didn't take the lunch she had prepared for him. He returns to find Otomi dead of a heart attack, and his lunch still sitting on the table. Ryohei spends the days after her funeral as if only half alive, assailed by regrets and sapped of the will or energy to do anything.

Their daughter Yuriko lives with her husband in Tokyo. In spite of seeking medical help for infertility, they remain childless. In the days following Otomi's funeral, Yuriko learns that her husband has long been carrying on an affair with another woman, and that the woman has now become pregnant. When her husband says he's unwilling to choose between the two women, she returns to her father's house leaving signed divorce papers behind.

That same day, an eccentric-looking 19-year-old woman with bright yellow hair named Imoto appears at the house saying Otomi had asked her to help Ryohei and Yuriko out in the event something happened to her. She tells the two about a collection of “Recipes for Life” that Otomi has left behind, and says she will stay to help out around the house until the 49th day after Otomi's death—that being the day when Buddhist tradition holds that the soul of the deceased attains full release.

Otomi's recipes for Yuriko include recipes for meals and beauty tips; for Ryohei, instructions for simple housecleaning tasks and health tips. Also in her writings is a request that they hold a rousing party on the 49th day, instead of the traditional memorial service. At first, Ryohei and Yuriko balk at this suggestion, but they ultimately decide to honor Otomi's wishes. In the course of preparing for the party, they both have occasion to reflect on their past and gradually come to terms with the present. This story offers fresh and warm-hearted portrayals of connections between people even as it addresses such difficult themes as the death of a spouse, infertility, and infidelity.

Yuki Ibuki: Born in 1969, she has been nominated for the Naoki Award three times, including for her novel *the Midnight Coach*, which was also adapted into a film. Her novel *Inu ga Ita Kisetsu (A Season with the Dog)* placed third in the 2021 Japan Booksellers' Award and was nominated for the Yamamoto Shūgorō Award.



Days at the Wakeatte Inn

Author : Satoshi Yagisawa



Publication: spring 2026
299 pages

Rights sold:

Catalan, English, French,
Indonesian, Vietnamese,
Spanish, German

Keywords:

guesthouse, comforting
meals, healing, plants

Agent:

Emily Books Agency
(World, excluding East
Asia)

From the author of the international bestseller *Days at the Morisaki Bookshop* comes a heartwarming tale of reflection and renewal, set in a quiet guesthouse at the foot of a mountain.

At the foot of a quiet mountain stands a small inn called Guesthouse Wakeatte—a name that hints at hidden stories. According to the taxi driver who brings guests there, the owners have their own reasons for running the place.

Visitors arrive with uncertainty, but soon find themselves drawn into the warm, unhurried rhythm of the guesthouse. Through the gentle hospitality of the owners, the comforting meals they prepare, and the heartfelt conversations they share, guests begin to reflect on their own hectic lives. One by one, they rediscover the strength to take a step forward.

The guesthouse is run by a couple with their own complicated pasts: the wife, who once fled from a painful marriage, and the husband, a former botanist who now writes columns while helping run the inn. Though they carry emotional baggage, their sincerity and charm create a healing space for all who visit.

Each chapter introduces a new guest and a new story, gradually revealing the quiet magic of the guesthouse and its owners. The husband's reflections on the relationship between plants and people offer a deeper message: the importance of living in the present while accepting the things we cannot change.

In Japanese, the phrase “wakeatte” carries a dual meaning. On one hand, it implies that someone or something has a hidden reason or backstory—often suggesting a complicated past. On the other hand, it can also evoke the idea of sharing something with others, such as feelings, experiences, or even burdens.

This layered meaning adds depth to the title, suggesting both that the guesthouse owners and visitors have personal stories, and that they come together to share warmth, understanding, and healing. This is a heartwarming tale about rest, renewal, and the quiet strength found in everyday life.

Satoshi Yagiaswa: Born in 1977, he made his debut with *Days at the Morisaki Bookshop*, a novel that was later adapted into a film. With its sequel, *More Days at the Morisaki Bookshop*, the series is currently being translated into over 30 languages worldwide, and the English edition was nominated for the 2024 British Book Awards in the Debut Fiction category. His other works include *the Days at the Torunka Café* series. He enjoys playing the guitar and loves coffee and cats.



How to Write a Love Letter

Author : **Tomihiko Morimi**



Publication: March 2003
336 pages

Agent:

Bureau des Copyrights
Français (World,
excluding Asia)

➡ **English synopsis
and sample
translation available**



A humorous and heartwarming epistolary novel from a bestselling author.

Over 265,000 copies sold in Japan.

Ichiro Morita is a graduate student too timid to venture into the rough seas of life, instead scrambling around at the water's edge, too anxious to dive in. One day, under orders from his professor, he's sent from his university in Kyoto to a coastal research lab on the Noto Peninsula. There, he throws himself into a self-imposed "letter-writing training journey," dashing off letters to friends and family back in Kyoto, a boy he tutors, and even the author Tomihiko Morimi himself.

In these letters, he offers romantic advice, picks fights, and delivers lectures—but somehow, he can't quite bring himself to write to the one person he truly longs to reach.

Packed with Morimi's signature wit and charm, this epistolary novel brims with the awkward yet sincere passion of a hapless young man. The graduate student protagonist's clumsy, comical attempts to master the art of the love letter will make readers laugh—and leave them unexpectedly moved.

Morita's sarcasm and floundering had me chuckling. And by the end, I felt completely refreshed!

—**Misaki Takamatsu, author of *Skip and Loafer***

Tomihiko Morimi: Born in 1979. While still a student at Kyoto University, Morimi made his debut with *Tower of the Sun*, which won the Japan Fantasy Novel Award in 2003. In 2007, *The Night Is Short, Walk on Girl* won the Yamamoto Shugoro Award, was shortlisted for the Naoki Award, and placed second in the Japan Booksellers' Award. Other titles include *Penguin Highway* (winner of the Japan Science Fiction Award, 2010), *The Tatami Time Machine Blues* and more.



Nobody Said We're Perfect

Author : Akira Otani



Publication: January 2018
351 pages

Keywords:

relationships between
women, love, sex

A collection of short stories featuring sisterhood by the author of *The Night of Baba Yaga*, which won the CWA Dagger in Translation.

This is a collection of twenty-three short stories, each centering on relationships between women—romantic, platonic, complicated, and everything in between.

“Old Lady with a Parasol”

A thrilling tale of revenge in a grand mansion, showcasing the ultimate form of sisterhood.

“Same Sex, Different Day”

A bittersweet and comical breakup story exploring the intricacies of sex between two women.

“Fluttering Hearts and My Lungs”

At nineteen, working at the world’s most miserable snack bar, a girl finds herself.

“Anna at 11 pm in Tokyo”

Anna, who just came to Japan and doesn’t speak Japanese, meets a moody yet captivating young woman at night in a big city.

And many more. This collection of short stories delicately portrays the many forms of connection between women, which defy easy labels and are deeply meaningful. This is a book that leaves you seeing the world through new eyes.

Akira Otani: Born in Tokyo in 1981. Beginning her career writing for video games, she made her literary debut with the short story collection *Nobody Said We're Perfect*. She won four literary awards, including the CWA Dagger in Translation for *The Night of Baba Yaga*. An out lesbian, she is the author of the essay collection *Since You're So Curious About My Body*.



Healing Meals at Shippo the Cat's Diner

Author : Yuta Takahashi



Publication: October 2024
247 pages

Rights sold:

Italian, Russian

Agents:

English. Agency Japan/
New River Literary Ltd.
(World, excluding Asia)

➡English sample
translation available

Keywords:

connection, memorable
meals, healing

A long-tailed cat and delicious food prepared in earthenware pots will heal your wounded body and soul.

The uplifting new novel from the author of *Meals to Remember at the Chibineko Kitchen*.

Tsumugi, a 22-year-old woman, is an unsuccessful singer-songwriter who lives in a town with a view of the ocean. She posts her music on YouTube, but hasn't gotten good results. She recently lost all her work and now she's at a loss. When Tsumugi thinks about her mother, she realizes she can't go back home. Tsumugi's father loved her singing and supported her career ambitions, but he passed away after falling ill.

When she changes her mind and decides to keep singing for her parents and to encourage her listeners, Tsumugi visits a shrine to pray for her success. At that time, she happens upon the Shippo Diner behind the shrine.

The Shippo Diner sits in a small traditional house. Inside are rows of handmade ceramic ware. There is an adorable long-tailed cat named Shippo and the gruff owner, Riku Nakado. Mr. Nakado's exquisite green onion potage, a warm dish he made in an earthenware pot, reminds Tsumugi of the taste of her mother's cooking back home. He even knows about her videos on YouTube, which comes as a surprise to Tsumugi. Mr. Nakado then arranges for Tsumugi to work part-time at the Shippo Diner.

The cat draws customers with various worries to the Shippo Diner: a pregnant woman whose husband has little time left to live; an elderly woman who feels alone after losing her job as the principal of the daycare where she had worked for many years; and a high school boy who has a crush on a classmate in the hospital. Each one of them regains their strength and motivation by revisiting precious memories through food. This is a heart-warming story of miracles spun through the characters' lives intersecting.

★The second volume is planned for release.

Yuta Takahashi: Born in 1972. His work includes *Meals to Remember at the Chibineko Kitchen* series, which is being translated into twenty five languages.



Almost Everything will Go Well if You Have a Cat

Author : Syou Ishida, Yukihihisa Yamamoto, Hiroshi Ogiwara, Haruki Shimizu, Nagi Shimeno, Nanami Wakatake



Publication: January 2025
266 pages

Rights sold:
traditional Chinese

Agents:
English Agency Japan/
New River Literary Ltd.
(World, excluding Asia)

➡ **English synopsis
available**

A heartwarming anthology filled with cats, brought to you by six authors who truly love felines—perfect for every cat lover!

“Blended Cat Family”

by Syou Ishida, author of *We’ll Prescribe You a Cat*

At thirty-five years old, Nao participated in a matchmaking sitting. The man who showed up was a passionate cat lover. They decided to go on a date together, but his love for cats was more than she was expecting.

“The History Behind the Gogo Safety Footwear Company: The Scruffs of the Family Cats” by Yukihihisa Yamamoto, author of *The Little Tokyo Flower Shop*

Ohdate is asked to write up his company’s history to commemorate its fiftieth anniversary. When he reads through a report, he realizes it is a history of the company’s four generations of cats which helped the CEO and employees on several occasions.

“Puss Don’t Wear Boots”

by Hiroshi Ogiwara, the Naoki Prize winning author

It was his uncle who took Kosuke in when his parents died. And Kosuke inherited a cat Wabisuke from his uncle when he died. This became the catalyst for his collaboration with the video content creator Marino, and they began posting videos about Wabisuke on social media.

“One Plus One” by Haruki Shimizu, author of *Beyond the Goodbye*, which adapted into a TV drama

Narumi, who struggled with social interaction and insomnia, met a black cat at a laundromat. When she told the cat what happened at work, the cat came near Narumi and rubbed its face against her hand. She decided then and there to bring the cat home with her.

“Cat Whiskers”

by Nagi Shimeno, author of *Café Dodo*, a bestselling series in Japan

Bending to her daughter’s will, Kuzura welcomes an elderly rescue cat Shimako, the same age as herself. One day, Kazura finds one of Shimako’s whiskers on the floor and wonders if, like the whisker, time and memory also fall away unnoticed.



Round and Round Amusement Park

Author : Michiko Aoyama Photography : Tatsuya Tanaka



Publication: March 2025
224 pages

Rights sold:

Korean, Portuguese
(Brazil), Thai and
traditional Chinese

Agents:

English Agency Japan/
New River Literary Ltd.
(World, excluding Asia)

➡English synopsis
and sample
translation available

Keywords:

imagination, joy of life,
connection

A heartfelt novel set in an amusement park, inviting readers to reconnect with their inner joy.

In a particular city, there is an amusement park called *Round and Round*. It's an extraordinary and exciting place, a special location where all types of people, young and old, come to visit.

A college student who asks a girl out on a date and tries to confess his feelings.
A young woman working for a design firm who struggles to be more valued.
An elderly woman with her husband who recalls their long marital life and future.
A salesman who is stuck at work in search for new product ideas.
A father who watches a hero show with his family and thinks about justice.
A high school girl who makes promise with her teammates about their road ahead.
And there is a mysterious clown who is circling the park and watching people...

Visitors can forget the stresses of their busy lives and enjoy the attractions to their heart's content on the merry-go-round that goes round and round, the spinning rides, the roller coaster, and the Ferris wheel, and face their woes with renewed vigor. This is a collection of interconnected, super-happy short stories that will rekindle readers' spirit of fun and fill their lives with joy.

Michiko Aoyama: Born in 1970. Made her debut in 2017 with *A Cup of Cocoa on Thursday*. *What You Are Looking For Is In The Library* won the second place in the Japan Booksellers' Award. It is being translated into more than thirty languages. It is the only work by a Japanese writer to make Time Magazine's 100 Must-Read Books of 2023. She has written many novels including *Tsuki no Tatsu Hayashi de* (*In A Moonlit Forest*), *Hot Chocolate on Thursday*, and *The Healing Hippo of Hinode Park*.

Tatsuya Tanaka: Born in 1981. As a photographer he uses daily goods and tiny diorama dolls to create miniature renderings of art called 'Mitate' (seeing objects as something other than their initial form). He has done the cover art for many of Michiko Aoyama's novels, including *Hot Chocolate on Thursday* and *Ningyo ga Nigeta* (*The Mermaid Got Away*). His Instagram follower count has reached four million as of February 2025.



What You Are Looking For Is In The Library

Author : Michiko Aoyama



Publication: November 2020
304 pages

An inspirational novel, loved in over 30 countries around the world.

Won the second place in the Japan Booksellers' Award.

A small library in an ordinary town is visited by five different people, who are each facing their own problems with work and life. The librarian, who although not particularly sociable is a good listener, gives these five visitors a helping hand with some unexpected book selections and some cute additions.

This is a heartwarming tale that helps you realize “what I have really been looking for” and find zest for what tomorrow may bring.



Publication: November 2022
263 pages

In a Moonlit Forest

A moving story, which was nominated for the Japan Booksellers' Award, praising community and the interconnectedness of life.

A former nurse, who quit her job at the hospital she had worked at for many years; an artist who can't sell anything, but doesn't want to give up on her dreams; a motorbike mechanic who is anguished by his changing relationship with his daughter and wife; a high school student who wants to move away from her parents and become independent as soon as she can; and a jewelry maker who worries about maintaining balance with her family life as her career progresses.

What links all of these people is that in the midst of their various daily routines all of them have listened to the podcast Endless Tales, by an elusive figure called Taketori Okina.

The five stories of the main characters, each living their own life, are woven together in a surprising and touching denouement. This is a story for everyone who lives each new day to the full, with every day seeming similar but in actual fact being completely different.

Rights sold:

German, English, French, Indonesian, Korean, Polish, Thai and traditional Chinese

➡English synopsis
and sample
translation available



Kotori and Limousine

Author : Ito Ogawa



Publication: October 2024
313 pages

Rights sold:
traditional Chinese

Agents:
English Agency Japan/
New River Literary Ltd.,
Bureau des Copyrights
Français (World,
excluding Asia)

➡ **English synopsis
and sample
translation available**

Keywords:
Love, rebirth, joy of life,
delicious lunch boxes

From the internationally acclaimed author of *Tsubaki Stationery Store* comes a moving story of a young woman with a painful past, gradually finding new meaning in life.

One of the small pleasures of the main character of this story, Kotori, is savoring the delicious smells that waft over from an illuminated lunchbox shop on her way home from work.

Kotori finds it difficult to interact with other people and although she finds the shop alluring and inviting, for a long time she couldn't bring herself to open the door. About ten years ago, an 18-year-old Kotori, who has no family, no means to making a living, and nowhere even to live, is asked by a man called Kojima, who claims to be her father, to take care of him after he became ill.

As Kojima's health declines due to illness and he experiences greater difficulty in communicating, Kotori finds herself feeling more of a connection with him, but when she comes back from work one day she finds he has passed away as if falling asleep. It was on that return journey home that Kotori first opened the door to the lunchbox shop. This is a touching story of a young woman who has given up trusting others and given up even on life, gradually regaining her heart.

Ito Ogawa: Born in 1973. Made her debut in 2008 with *Snail's Restaurant*. Many of her subsequent books have been translated and published overseas. *Snail's Restaurant* was made into a movie in 2010. The book won the Bancarella Prize in Italy in 2011 and the Eugénie Brazier Prize in France in 2013. NHK made a TV series out of *Tsurukame Maternity Hospital* in 2012, *Tsubaki Stationery Store* in 2017 and *The Lion's Snack* in 2020. *Tsubaki Stationery Store*, *Kirakira Republic* and *The Lion's Snack* were all nominated for the Bookseller's Awards.



Snail's Restaurant

Author : Ito Ogawa



Publication: January 2008
234 pages

Rights sold:

French, German, Italian, Korean, Portuguese (Portugal), Russian, simplified Chinese, Thai and traditional Chinese

Debut novel sold over 920,000 copies in Japan.

Living in the city and working at a restaurant, Rinko's big dream is to open an eating establishment of her own with her live-in boyfriend, but one day she returns home from work to discover that he has moved out, taking with him all their furniture and joint savings.

Rinko starts to remodel an outbuilding into a small restaurant, which she names "The Snail." Her plan is to serve just a single table a day, offering a customized meal for customers. For an elderly customer who has lived bleakly in mourning for many years after the death of the man she loved, Rinko plans a series of courses to enliven the senses and rekindle the joy of living. For a young couple on their first date, she prepares a soothing, warm soup that will go down easy no matter how nervous and tense they may be. This is a debut novel that drew attention for its vivid and delicate descriptions, and its powerful storytelling.



Publication: October 2019
255 pages

Rights sold:

Finnish, French, Italian, Korean, Portuguese (Brazil), Romanian, simplified Chinese, Thai and traditional Chinese

The Lion's Snack

A powerful story of life and death that has sold over 520,000 copies in Japan.

Won the second place in the Japan Bookseller's Award.

What do you want to have as your final snack in this life? Although still a young woman, Shizuku learns that she hasn't long to live. She decides to spend her last days on an island in Japan's Inland Sea. There, in the peaceful landscape, she starts thinking about what she really wanted to do with her life.

Every Sunday at the hospice there is a snack time, when the residents get to request their favorite snack. Shizuku has trouble making up her mind... With its warm depiction of the fate that awaits us all, this story will reawaken your awareness of how precious every passing moment is.

➡English synopsis
and sample
translation available



“Hanasaki Shopping Street” Series

Author : Yukiya Shoji



Publication: November 2011
318 pages

Rights sold:

Korean and traditional
Chinese

→English synopsis
and sample
translation available

Keywords:

small town mystery,
nostalgic shopping street,
community bonds

A cozy mystery where a retired legendary thief quietly solves small-town cases in a shopping district.

A much-loved series that's sold 280,000 copies in Japan.

Hanasaki Street, where the story unfolds, is a traditional local shopping district. It is in slow decline, if not yet a lifeless wilderness of shuttered shops. Aya, the protagonist, is a teacher who works at the small English school she took over from her parents.

But her retired father has a secret: An Englishman with Japanese citizenship, in his youth he was a notorious, even legendary thief, stealing principally works of art. When trouble occurs in the neighborhood, he calls upon his old skills to sort things out, something which makes Aya very nervous.

This heartwarming story with a dash of bittersweetness is an absolute delight. This is the first volume of the popular series.

Yukiya Shoji: Born in Hokkaido in 1961. Made his debut by winning the Mephisto Prize for *Singing an old Song while Looking up at the Sky*. His *Tokyo Bandwagon* series has sold over 1 million copies.

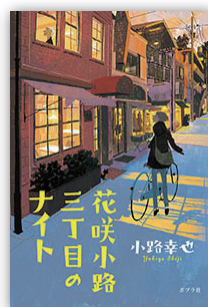
Further volumes in the series



*The Detective of
Hanasaki Street
District 1*



*Kanoko of
Hanasaki Street
District 2*



*Café Night in
Hanasaki Street
District 3*



*Subaru-chan in the
North End of
Hanasaki Street
District 3*



*The Hairdresser in
Hanasaki Street
District 1*



*The Portrait Studio
in Hanasaki Street
District 2*



In a Storyline Where She Lives

Author : Eiichi Nakata



Publication: June 2024
626 pages

Rights sold:
Simplified Chinese

➡ **Sample translation available**

Keywords:
reincarnation, love, the power of storytelling, meaning of life, anime

From a bestselling author comes a thrilling story of reincarnation, where the protagonist finds himself in the world of an anime and fights to change the fate of the heroine.

A 28-year-old office worker, who died in a traffic accident on his way home, finds himself reincarnated in the world of his favorite anime *kimiuru*. The body he has reincarnated into was that of a young boy Akuto, the villain of the story.

Akuto spent twelve years in this body without knowing about his previous life, until he fell and hit his head, which made him remember his old life, as well as obtaining the skills he cultivated from that time. He subsequently decides to act against his assigned role of villain. He also decides to change the heroine Haru Hayama's destiny that will see her die from an illness. He was an ardent fan of the anime, and knowing the scenario thoroughly, he thinks that he should be able to change the fate of the heroine.

However, even when Akuto changes the course of events, the heroine still falls ill according to the scenario. Can he find the survival route left by "God (scenario writer)" and see the storyline in which the heroin is alive? This is a moving story that will inevitably bring tears to the readers' eyes.

Live your other self in another world.
If you realize what is important there,
you may be able to change your real self a little.
——**Mamoru Hosoda, Animation Director**

Eiichi Nakata: Debuted in 2009 with the bestselling novel *Momose, Kocchi wo muite* (*My Pretend Girlfriend*). His novel *Kuchibiru ni uta wo* (*Have a Song on Your Lips*) won the Shogakan Children's Publication Culture Award. Many of his novels, including *Have a Song on Your Lips*, were made into a film.



The Deviation of N

Author : **Shiho Natsuki**



Publication: January 2025
278 pages

Rights sold:

Korean

Agents:

Japan Uni Agency
(World, excluding Asia)

➡English synopsis
and sample
translation available

Keywords:

deception, identity, off
the path

A heart-pounding psycho thriller, nominated for the prestigious Naoki Award.

The three tales follow ordinary neighbors who, propelled by obsession, desire, and malice, deviate from the everyday. Through detailed depictions of the protagonists' thought processes, sophisticated humor, and a lingering sense of horror, these works bring out the true essence of human nature.

The young Atsushi Kanemoto works part-time at a pet shop specializing in reptiles. When a man who looks like an average office worker enters the shop, something feels off. Atsushi has heard through the grapevine that there is a customer who doesn't own any reptiles but instead grows cannabis. One day, Atsushi asks the store manager to let him keep a bearded dragon that no one wants to buy, but the price is far beyond his reach. Frustrated, he bursts out into the nighttime city and chances upon the peculiar customer. Atsushi tries to coerce the man into handing over the money he needs. (From "*The Incongruous Customer*")

High school math teacher Tomoko Nishi is still reeling from verbal abuse hurled at her by girls in her class when, on a crowded train ride home, she finds herself next to a young woman engrossed in her phone and refusing to budge. Enraged by this behavior, Tomoko decides to follow the woman off the train. When Tomoko finally makes it to the woman's old apartment and learns where she lives, she is filled with a sense of accomplishment and superiority. But just as she turns to leave, she notices the woman staring down at her from the second floor—Tomoko is suddenly overcome by a fear she has never felt before. (From "*Show Off*")

A young woman named Akitsu approaches a fortune teller Iris Bando, seeking an apprenticeship. Despite appearing smart and competent, Akitsu's words and behavior are peculiar, and she makes one blunder after another. Nonetheless, Akitsu insists that she has always had a strong intuition and has moments when she is able to read a person's past and future. Her interest piqued, Iris decides to take Akitsu on as her trainee. When one day Akitsu accuses Iris of wanting to ruin her, Iris admits she is guilty as charged. She tries to end their relationship of master and apprentice, but Akitsu refuses to back down. (From "*Fortune Teller B*")

Deviation is the beginning of every story. It is also proof that we are human. This young author has two treasures: originality and writing ability.

——Natsuo Kirino, author of *OUT* and *Swallows*

Shiho Natsuki: Born in 1989. Her debut novel titled *Niki Sensei (Our teacher named Niki)* has become a bestseller with over 160,000 copies sold in Japan.



A Questionnaire on the Mouth

Author : Sesuji



Publication: September 2024
63 pages

Rights sold:

Indonesian, Korean, Thai,
Vietnamese

→English sample translation available

Keywords:

short horror story, “the Mouth” as the source of misfortune

A chilling bestseller with over 220,000 copies sold in Japan, depicting a group of university students who visit a notorious haunted spot.

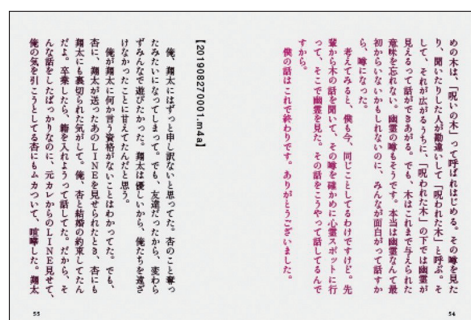
Ranked No.4 in the 2025 edition of This Horror is Amazing!

Deep in the mountains, a small, secluded cemetery has long been known as a haunted spot. And there is an ancient tree that predates the cemetery itself—referred to as the cursed tree. Locals whisper that the spirits of the buried emerge from beneath it. One summer night, a group of university students visits the site for a thrill, treating it as a casual test of courage. But what awaits them is a horrifying experience they will never forget.

This is a chilling and unconventional short novel, which blends ghostly rumors, a long-haired woman, the deafening buzz of cicadas, and tangled romantic tensions. Told through multiple perspectives, the story weaves psychological darkness and distorted relationships into a tightly packed narrative.

Published in a format smaller than a smartphone, the book features a unique design: as the story unfolds, the text color gradually shifts to the color of blood. Follow the unsettling experience all the way to the final page, where a mysterious “questionnaire” awaits.

Sesuji: His debut novel *Kinki Chihō no Aru Basho ni Tsuite (A Certain Place in the Kinki Region)* was ranked the first place in the 2024 edition of *This Horror is Amazing!*. His second novel *Kegareta Seichi Junrei ni Tsuite (A Pilgrimage to Tainted Sacred Sites)* also became a bestseller. Known for his expertise in mockumentary-style horror, he skillfully blurs the line between reality and fiction, creating unsettling narratives that feel disturbingly real.





That Was a Book

Author : Shinsuke Yoshitake and Naoki Matayoshi



Publication: August 2025
232 pages
with colored illustrations

Rights sold:

traditional Chinese,
Korean, simplified
Chinese

Agents:

English Agency Japan/
New River Literary Ltd.
(World, excluding Asia)

➡English sample
translation available

Keywords:

creativity, imagination,
humor with twist

A bestselling book, which sold over 130,000 copies in Japan, on the art of creation, packed with every shade of human emotion.

The latest work by the bestselling authors of *That BOOK*....

Once upon a time, the two men lived in the abandoned house on the edge of a village. They could restore a book to its original form with just a single page, a single line, a title, or even a small clue. Villagers began to ask these men to restore their books.

A collection of 27 short stories is woven by the two men, each inspired by clues such as ‘The title of the book was Poor Gorilla.’ or ‘The final sentence of the book was: For these reasons, I am a dinosaur.’ What kind of books could be restored at the end? A perfect book for all story lovers.



Shinsuke Yoshitake: Born in 1973. He made his debut as a picture-book author in 2013 with *It Might Be an Apple*. He has since authored many other works with a diverse range and won numerous awards, including the MOE Picture Book Store Awards, the New York Times Best Illustrated Children’s Book Award and a special mention at the Bologna Ragazzi Award. Many of his works have been translated into other languages. Father of two children.

Naoki Matayoshi: Born in 1980. Author and comedian, performing as a member of Japanese comedy duo *Peace* from Yoshimoto Kogyo entertainment company. In 2015, his debut novel *Spark* won the Akutagawa Award and became a bestseller with over three million copies sold. It has been adapted into a Netflix original series. His other titles include *Theater*, *Humans*, *A Hundred Views of Tokyo*, *Second Assistant to the Librarian* and *Moon and Prose*.



That Book...

Author : Shinsuke Yoshitake and Naoki Matayoshi



Publication: July 2022
192 pages
With colored illustrations

Rights sold:

Dutch, English (World),
Indonesian, Italian,
Korean, simplified
Chinese, Spanish (World),
Thai, traditional Chinese
and Vietnamese

Agents:

English Agency Japan/
New River Literary Ltd.
(World, excluding Asia)

→English synopsis
and sample
translation available

Keywords:

books about books,
humor with twist,
imagination



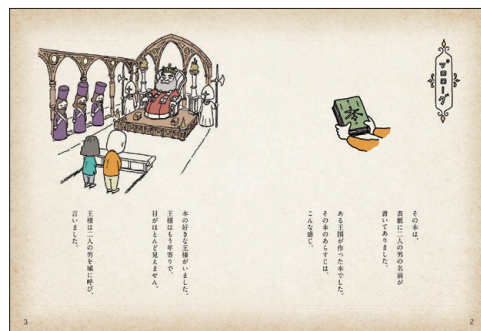
PV (Japanese)

A witty story for all book lovers, which sold over 300,000 copies in Japan.

There once was a book-loving king who was very old and nearly blind. One day, he called two men to his castle and said, "I love books. I've read many in my day. In fact, I think I've read most of them. But my eyes are so bad now, I can't read. Still, I love books, so I want to hear stories about them. I command the two of you to travel the world searching for anyone who knows of unusual books. When you find them, ask them about those books. Then come back here and tell me their stories."

The two men set out on their journey and collected many stories for the king. When they returned, they began to tell him their stories each night.

You'll smile, you'll cry, and you'll roar with laughter at the final twist. A collaboration between popular picture-book author Shinsuke Yoshitake and Akutagawa-winning author Naoki Matayoshi, this is a hilarious, moving journey of books.





Daddy's Toddling First Steps: Daily Bewilderment

Author : Shinsuke Yoshitake



Publication: January 2025
128 pages

Rights sold:

Korean, simplified
Chinese, Vietnamese,
traditional Chinese

➡English synopsis
and sample
translation available

Beloved children's book author Shinsuke Yoshitake shares the funny and frustrating truths of fatherhood in his first illustrated parenting essay.

Aren't mothers always irritated? Aren't fathers always left out?

Picture book author Shinsuke Yoshitake figured it out when he became a dad. While struggling with the daily challenges of raising a child, Shinsuke experiences uncertainty, discovers insights, and finds joy.

His illustrated essays on his initiation into fatherhood will have experienced parents laughing and nodding knowingly. It would make the perfect gift for a new dad!

Shinsuke Yoshitake: Born in 1973. He made his debut as a picture-book author in 2013 with *It Might Be an Apple*. He has since authored many other works with a diverse range and won numerous awards, including the MOE Picture Book Store Awards, the New York Times Best Illustrated Children's Book Award and a special mention at the Bologna Ragazzi Award. Many of his works have been translated into other languages. Father of two children.



Honest Impressions

Practice for Fatherhood



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Foreign Rights Catalog 2025

Design: Mihoko Takahashi (POPLAR Publishing)
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