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Foreign Rights Catalog

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Contents

Fiction	2
Health/Fitness	36
Humor/Poem	39
Coloring Books	41
Picture Books	42

Happiness in the Form of a Cat

Rui Kodemari



151 x 105 mm

262 pages

Softcover

ISBN 978-4591126967

Rights sold: Korea and
Vietnam

Set against the constantly changing seasons of the American countryside, this story tells of the powerful bond that forms between a married couple and their beloved cat. It is based on author Rui Kodemari's own experiences with her cat, no longer of this world.

Ayano, born and raised in Japan, and Michio, of Japanese descent but born and raised in the United States, are introduced to each other as potential marital partners in Tokyo. They instantly hit it off, decide to get married without delay, and Ayano moves to America. It is a second marriage for both of them, following unions that left each of them scarred. Agreeing that they would like to have a cat as part of their new life together, they go to the local animal shelter, and when a Norwegian Forest kitten leaps out of the cage onto Michio's shoulder, they decide to take it home.

The kitten quickly becomes the center of their life and a symbol of their happiness. Even the scratches it leaves on the furniture as it bounds about the house are endearing to them. Stories about the cat are interwoven with the ebb and flow of the couple's love for each other, telling of how it responds to the appearance of wildlife outside the windows, what it did when left home alone while the couple went on a trip, and so forth. The young kitten grows into adulthood and ages far more quickly than its human guardians; the two look on with growing concern as the end appears nigh, and then their beloved companion is gone. As close as Michio and Ayano have been as husband and wife, they respond differently to their loss—each grieving and healing in his or her own way—and this serves to bring subtle wrinkles in their relationship into relief.

About the Author

Rui Kodemari (1956–) was born in Okayama Prefecture. In 2005 she received the Shimase Award for Love Stories for *Hoshii no wa, anata dake* (You're the Only One I Want). Since then she has produced numerous romances, which have gained her a steady following. Her fiction works include *Sora to umi no deau basho* (Where Sky and Ocean Meet), *Mochizuki seikaten* (Greengrocer Mochizuki), *Neko no katachi o shita kōfuku* (Happiness in the Form of a Cat), *Kyūshi issō* (Nine Lives Make One Life), *Utsukushii shinzō* (Beautiful Heart), and many others. In 2014's *Appuru songu* (The Apple Song), she takes on a weightier storyline while still retaining the delicate charm of her established style. She has also published essay collections, including *Aishi no neko Purin* (My Beloved Cat, Purin) and *Uddosutokku no mori no hibi* (Days amid the Trees of Woodstock). She currently lives in Woodstock, New York.

Where Sky and Ocean Meet

Rui Kodemari



151 x 105 mm
256 pages
Softcover
ISBN 978-4591102978
Rights sold: Korea and
Vietnam

Konoha Kakehashi, 32, is a freelance illustrator. One day she receives a request from the publisher of a forthcoming children’s story by Yūi Igarashi, alias “Arashi,” to provide illustrations for the volume. According to the young editor, Arashi is currently on an extended trip overseas, but he has personally directed that Konoha be commissioned to illustrate the story.

Konoha and Arashi had in fact lived together until five years before, and not a day has gone by since without her thinking of him. The two had met when they were both 13, at a residential facility for children from troubled families. Konoha had become unable to go to school as a result of bullying; Arashi had been removed from his parents’ care and turned over to relatives. They are drawn to each other and exchange their first kiss. Arashi’s dream is to become a writer; when he leaves the facility he promises Konoha he will come to her aid if she ever finds herself in difficulty.

They run into each other again in their 20s, when Konoha is a budding illustrator and Arashi is trying to establish himself as a writer. They fall in love and soon move in together. Completing a manuscript he has poured heart and soul into, Arashi sends it off to a publisher with high hopes, only to receive a stinging rejection note in return. After seeing the note, he disappears for a time; when he finally comes home, he and Konoha have a falling out, in part due to his womanizing, and she ultimately leaves him. Five years have gone by since.

Arashi’s manuscript begins arriving in sections from overseas, and Konoha draws the requested illustrations. Through the events of the story, she comes to know the loneliness Arashi is experiencing and his awkwardness in expressing his love. Once the final section has arrived and the story is complete, communications from Arashi cease. With only his last post card as a clue, she goes to Ireland to look for him, and the two are finally reunited on a hill where they can look out over the sea to the distant horizon—where sky and ocean meet.

It is the story of a man who lives under an unbearable burden of loneliness, the woman who wants desperately to save him from it, and their love for each other that reaches across time and distance.

About the Author

Rui Kodemari (1956–) was born in Okayama Prefecture. In 2005 she received the Shimase Award for Love Stories for *Hoshii no wa, anata dake* (You’re the Only One I Want). Since then she has produced numerous romances, which have gained her a steady following. Her fiction works include *Sora to umi no deau basho* (Where Sky and Ocean Meet), *Mochizuki seikaten* (Greengrocer Mochizuki), *Neko no katachi o shita kōfuku* (Happiness in the Form of a Cat), *Kyūshi isshō* (Nine Lives Make One Life), *Utsukushii shinzō* (Beautiful Heart), and many others. In 2014’s *Appuru songu* (The Apple Song), she takes on a weightier storyline while still retaining the delicate charm of her established style. She has also published essay collections, including *Aishi no neko Purin* (My Beloved Cat, Purin) and *Uddosutokku no mori no hibi* (Days amid the Trees of Woodstock). She currently lives in Woodstock, New York.

The Apple Song

Rui Kodemari



194 x 136 mm

374 pages

Hardcover

ISBN 978-4591140031

Rights sold:

As an infant, Marie Torikai is rescued from beneath the rubble following an air raid on the city of Okayama near the end of World War II. She is cared for by relatives until the age of ten because her mother had failed to recover her strength after childbirth, but then her mother comes to claim Marie back and they move to Seattle to live with her second husband. When her mother dies six years later, however, Marie is left an orphan at age 16. She moves to New York, where she works as a hotel maid while setting her sights on becoming an artist. Impressed by pictures a friend shows her, she joins the upstate apple harvest to earn some extra money and buy a camera of her own. A young Japanese cameraman traveling in the United States teaches her the basics of photography, and she begins submitting photos to publishers, dreaming of the day when she will be able to make a living with her camera.

Then comes a fateful meeting with Renji Iwai, a Japanese war photographer who has been documenting the War in Vietnam. They fall in love, and Marie sets her camera aside as she focuses on starting a family. But she happens to be back in Japan in February 1972 when the Asama Sansō (“Mountain Lodge”) hostage crisis takes place, and the incident prompts her to pick up her camera again. As she is covering that news she suffers a miscarriage, and at nearly the same time, Renji is killed in Vietnam. She decides to carry on his work as a photojournalist, and begins traveling to hot spots around the globe, documenting outbreaks of student unrest, plane crashes, civil wars, and the like. All the while she asks: Why do people fight? Is there anything that can save the world from all this conflict? The final event she photographs is the terrorist attack on the Twin Towers in New York City on September 11, 2001. Torikai throws down her camera to help rescue children from a daycare center inside one of the buildings and ultimately fails to return, adding her name to the list of the missing.

The story is told in part by Marie herself, and in part by Miwako, a childcare worker whom Marie rescues from the World Trade Center. Miwako visits Marie’s relatives and acquaintances to learn about her life. The two points of view merge into a moving tale of a woman living in turbulent times who pursued her chosen mission with great passion and pride.

About the Author

Rui Kodemari (1956–) received the Shimase Award for Love Stories for *You’re the Only One I Want* in 2005. Since then she has produced numerous romances, which have gained her a steady following. Her fiction works include *Where Sea and Sky Meet*, *Greengrocer Mochizuki*, *Happiness in the Form of a Cat*, and many others. In 2014’s *The Apple Song*, she takes on a weightier storyline while still retaining the delicate charm of her established style. She has also published essay collections, including *My Beloved Cat*, *Purin*. She currently lives in Woodstock, New York.

Harmonium

Kōji Fukada



195 x 135 mm

156 pages

Hardcover

ISBN 978-4591151457

Rights sold:

In his literary debut, director Kōji Fukada has personally novelized the film that took the Jury Prize in the *Un Certain Regard* section of the 2016 Cannes Film Festival.

The story is set at a small suburban metalworking shop owned and operated by Toshio Suzuoka and his wife Akie. The couple have a ten-year-old daughter, Hotaru. They live a quiet and humdrum life with little to talk about. One day an old acquaintance of Toshio named Yasaka shows up at the door. He has recently been released from prison after serving a sentence for murder. Without discussing it with Akie, Toshio not only hires Yasaka but offers him their spare room to live in. Akie cannot hide her displeasure at first, but Yasaka goes with her to her Christian church, happily accompanies Hotaru to her organ lessons, and otherwise conducts himself both amiably and courteously, and she gradually warms up to him. Toshio sees Yasaka acting more and more like a member of the family and becoming closer to his wife, but looks the other way. The fact that Yasaka alone had gone to prison for an incident in which they were both involved weighs on his conscience. Then one day Yasaka disappears after assaulting Hotaru sexually and leaving her in a vegetative state.

Eight years go by. Toshio's efforts to find Yasaka's whereabouts through private investigators continue to be in vain. A youth named Kōji hires on as a new employee in the Suzuokas' shop. The boy never knew his father, and his mother's death has left him an orphan, but he has an easy nature that quickly wins his employers' confidence. Then a remark he happens to make one day shocks them to the core: the father he never met was none other than Yasaka. Toshio finally tells Akie about his involvement in the murder for which Yasaka went to prison. In his inability to overcome his feelings of guilt, he had consigned his daughter to her tragic fate. Toshio and Akie find themselves battling the demons of their past as they set out with Kōji in search of Yasaka in this deeply provocative tale that traces how sins of the past slowly but surely begin to erode the foundations of a seemingly stable and tranquil family.

About the Author

Kōji Fukada (1980–) is a Japanese filmmaker who was born in Tokyo. He is a graduate of the Faculty of Literature at Taishō University as well as of The Film School of Tokyo. In 2006 he released the film *Zakuro yashiki* (*La Grenadière*), which went on to win the Golden Sun for First Films (*Soleil d'or du premier film*) at the 2008 Festival Kinotayo, the largest contemporary Japanese film festival held in France. His film *Kantai* (*Hospitalité*) was named Best Film in the Japanese Eyes category at the 2010 Tokyo International Film Festival. In 2013, his *Hotori no Sakuko* (*Au revoir l'été=Goodbye Summer*) took double honors at the Festival of the Three Continents in Nantes, France, winning both the Golden Montgolfière and the Young Audience Award; and it also won the Jury Prize for Best Director at the Black Nights Film Festival in Tallinn, Estonia. *Fuchi ni tatsu* (*Harmonium*) received the Jury Prize in the *Un Certain Regard* section of the 2016 Cannes Film Festival; Fukada's novelization of the film, published the same year, marked his literary debut.

In the Back Yard of the Minato Hotel

Haruna Terachi



194 x 135 mm
238 pages
Hardcover
ISBN 978-4591149102
Rights sold: China

This volume contains two heartwarming linked stories, one mid-length and one short, about the eponymous Minato Hotel.

In *Saku no wa hana dake de wa nai* (Not Just Flowers Bloom), Shinnosuke Kiyama, a 25-year-old white-collar worker, lives with his grandfather Kakujirō. Kakujirō is a member of a “mutual support group” of men and women who were originally classmates in middle school and have met regularly ever since. One day Kakujirō tells Shinnosuke that the first-anniversary memorial for group member Yōko is approaching, and he wants to hold the ceremony in the back yard of the Minato Hotel that she used to run. It is a lodging house that was built in the 1920s, and besides being outfitted with antique furnishings, its six guest rooms are soundproofed. The hotel has a back yard where flowers are constantly in bloom year-round, but the key to the back door has been missing since Yōko’s death. In the meantime, a note expressing Yōko’s wish that her funeral be held in that back yard has come into Kakujirō’s possession, and although it’s too late to honor that particular wish, he offers Shinnosuke a sum of money to find the key so that her first anniversary observance can be held there.

When Shinnosuke goes to the Minato Hotel to conduct his search, Yōko’s 37-year-old adopted son Atsuhiko, now managing the hotel, offers to pay him to find a missing cat, as well as to stand in at the hotel’s reception desk. During Yōko’s time, what was once a perfectly ordinary lodging place had somehow been transformed into a kind of retreat facility for people whose troubles steal their appetites and keep them awake at night. Shinnosuke has never been much of a people person, but his contacts with the distinctively drawn characters at the hotel—eccentric owner Atsuhiko; long-term residents Kiriko and her daughter, who have come there to escape a violent husband/father; a colleague of Shinnosuke from his regular job, who has been cut off by her adulterous lover—begin to change him, warming him to the value of a life lived in service to others. After weathering a visit by Kiriko’s husband when he discovers her whereabouts, Shinnosuke finally finds the key to the back yard, and the first-anniversary memorial takes place there as Kakujirō had hoped. The all-important clue to the key’s hiding place is one that expresses Yōko’s deep love for Atsuhiko.

The accompanying story, *Te no naka ni aru* (In Hand), rolls back the time frame to when Yōko’s beloved husband died. It recounts how, after shuttering the hotel for a time, she decided to reopen it as a place where those who are struggling with difficult circumstances in their lives can come to rest both body and soul.

Set in an offbeat hotel that opens its arms to people carrying a variety of burdens, the two stories gently and lovingly illumine the simple joys of people connecting with one another.

About the Author

Haruna Terachi (1977–) was born in Saga Prefecture and now lives in Osaka. She began writing on the side while holding down a job in addition to her homemaking responsibilities. Her publishing debut came after winning the Poplar Fiction Prize for New Writers in 2014 for *Bioreta* (Violeta). Lavish praise from such established writers as Yuka Murayama quickly put Terachi in the limelight as a hot new talent. Between part-time work and caring for a four-year-old, she continues to write at her own pace. She has declared that she’s “not interested in big shots or heroes,” and intends to keep on writing about ordinary people.

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Violeta

Haruna Terachi



194 x 135 mm
223 pages
Hardcover
ISBN 978-4591145616
Rights sold: China

Tae Tanaka is 27. She quits her job to marry Shin'ichi, the man she has been seeing for four years, only to have him call off the wedding and break up with her. She is sobbing in despair at the side of the road when a no-nonsense, take-charge woman named Sumire Kitamura, “as commanding as a doberman,” practically picks her up by the scruff of the neck to drag her home and take her under her wing. Tae begins working at Violeta, a store run by Sumire and named after the Spanish word for her name. It is a somewhat offbeat shop selling a variety of handicrafts made by Sumire, including beautifully decorated jewelry boxes that are referred to as “coffins.” Customers place mementos and memories in these boxes—a worn-out fountain pen, some cigarette butts, a broken watch, a doll handmade by Mom, a cherished memory of a dead spouse, and so forth—and bury them in the store’s yard. But for some reason, Sumire refuses to allow Tae to place her engagement ring in one of these coffins. Tae admires Sumire for her independence and dauntlessness, but she also can’t help feeling a certain unbridged gap between them.

Tae decides to stick it out at Violeta until she finds a better employment opportunity. In an effort to get past the heartache of her break-up, she begins seeing Kentarō Chitose, the owner of a button shop that is one of Violeta’s suppliers. Now in his forties, Chitose is a kind, big-hearted man who treats Tae well. It comes as a shock to her when Sumire’s grown son Rentarō comes home for a visit and tells Tae that Chitose is his father, but Chitose is able to ease her misgivings and the relationship continues with the apparent blessing of Sumire and Rentarō.

Although she lacks confidence and has a tendency toward self-abnegation, Tae gradually gains a new sense of herself through the interactions she has with the many unusual people she meets at Violeta. And as she gets to know Chitose better, she learns that he was abused by his mother as a child, and also that Sumire is racked with guilt over how she married and divorced Chitose in short order just to have a child. In time she realizes that the workplace and the companion she chose “for the time being” have become treasured, essential parts of her life. Instead of waiting around for something new to be given to her, she determines to “be here now,” doing whatever she can for the people who have become so important to her.

Both stirring and funny, this story of a woman learning to stand on her own two feet will work its way into readers’ hearts.

About the Author

Haruna Terachi (1977–) was born in Saga Prefecture and now lives in Osaka. She began writing on the side while holding down a job in addition to her homemaking responsibilities. Her publishing debut came after winning the Poplar Fiction Prize for New Writers in 2014 for *Bioreta* (*Violeta*). Lavish praise from such established writers as Yuka Murayama quickly put Terachi in the limelight as a hot new talent. Between part-time work and caring for a four-year-old, she continues to write at her own pace. She has declared that she’s “not interested in big shots or heroes,” and intends to keep on writing about ordinary people.

Like a Momentary Ray between the Clouds

Mami Sunada



195 x 135 mm

228 pages

Hardcover

ISBN 978-4591147979

Rights sold:

This is a collection of five stories linked by the death of a young boy in a traffic accident.

In *Summer: Chieko's Story*, the eponymous Chieko, 28, is working as a temp at a publishing house when she meets married editor Kenji, 39, and they begin an illicit affair. A woman friend and colleague repeatedly urges her to end the relationship, but Chieko is unable to give up her feelings for Kenji. Then one day, suddenly, she can no longer reach Kenji. Several months go by, and the relationship resumes as if nothing had happened. Kenji tells her he has been out of touch because his wife “hit a little boy with her car, and the boy ended up dying.” They continue seeing each other until one day Kenji shows up at her apartment uncharacteristically wearing a suit, which he explains by saying it’s the first anniversary of the boy’s death: he and his wife have been to visit the boy’s family and pay their respects. They had gone expecting to be vilified by the single mother, who had raised the boy all by herself since getting divorced, but there had not been a single harsh word from the woman. “On the way back, I threw up at the side of the road,” he adds, smiling faintly as tears brim in his eyes. Something in his manner fills Chieko with desire, and they make mad, passionate love. Realizing afterward that Kenji had not used protection, Chieko goes to the emergency room to get a prescription for the morning-after pill. When the severe side effects of taking the emergency contraception wear off, Chieko breaks up with Kenji as if she has been exorcised of a possessive spirit.

In *Autumn: Yoshino's Story*, the point of view shifts to the dead boy’s mother, and in the stories that follow the perspectives shift again—to Kenji; to Kenji’s wife, Misato; and to Kōichi, a random witness to the accident. Each narrative gently probes the psychology of the point-of-view character as it follows him/her through the days—the adulterous couple each in their turn, the woman who killed a young boy in a traffic accident, the mother who lost her child, and the witness who experienced an epiphany “like a momentary ray between the clouds.” When people come face-to-face with the death of another, they often become more aware of their own sins, and wonder how they can atone. It is a work that lingers in the reader’s mind long after the last page is turned.

About the Author

Mami Sunada (1978–) was born in Tokyo and is a documentary filmmaker. She received numerous awards, including the 2011 Directors Guild of Japan New Directors Award, for her directorial debut, *Endingu nōto* (Ending Note: Death of a Japanese Salesman), in which she follows her terminally ill father from the time he learns he has cancer in early 2009 until his death at the end of the year. She made her literary debut in 2011 as well, with *Oto no nai hanabi* (Silent Fireworks), which can be read as a companion to the film.

i

Kanako Nishi



195 x 135 mm

303 pages

Hardcover

ISBN 978-4591153093

Rights sold: Korea

The *i* of the title represents both the imaginary unit in math ($i^2 = -1$) and the English first-person pronoun I. It is also a homophone for *ai*, the Japanese word for “love,” as well as for Ai, the name of the main character. When her high school math teacher declares during a lesson on imaginary numbers that “*i* does not exist in this world,” Ai Soda Wild feels as if her own existence has been denied. The line lodges deep in her consciousness and continues to haunt her for some time to come.

Ai was adopted from Syria by her American father and Japanese mother. Her early childhood years were spent in the upscale New York neighborhood where her parents lived, but the family moved to Tokyo when she was in middle school. She has fretted about the fact that she is adopted from a very young age. Why had she been the one her loving parents chose? Who among the untold numbers of other unfortunate children had she displaced? The comfortable circumstances in which she lives bring her pangs of guilt, and news reports from around the world about civil wars, terrorism, and natural disasters make her feel as if she alone has been wrongly spared. As a bystander, she feels she has even lost the right to mourn the many tragedies she hears of. Ultimately, she begins keeping track of the death tolls from those various calamities in a notebook. Countering these tendencies toward self-abnegation is the realization that the voice in her head repeating “*i* [Ai] does not exist in this world” disappears when she is with her best friend Mina, a girl she met after starting high school.

When Japan’s northeastern Pacific coast suffers an earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear plant meltdown, the introverted Ai begins to come out of her shell. Rebelling against her parents, who are in America at the time, she decides to remain in Japan. At a demonstration to protest nuclear power she meets a photographer named Yū, and they subsequently get married. Lacking a sense of her own roots, Ai wants to establish a family tree for herself by having a child. But after going through infertility treatments, she miscarries. At that very juncture Mina reveals that she is thinking of getting an abortion, and the two young women have a falling out. Ai feels at a loss, but nudged by Yū’s remark that “You can still love someone even if you can’t understand their point of view,” she decides to visit Mina in Los Angeles. The two long-time friends talk through the night—about the ravages of war in Syria, about the state of the world, about the future—unburdening their hearts to each other. Ai realizes that even when she’s not directly involved in tragic events around the globe, it’s important to be able to imagine how they affect those who are. In the water at the beach the next day, she raises her voice in self-affirmation: “Ai *does* exist in this world.”

In the present day, with information pouring in constantly from every corner of the globe, the world’s tragedies thrust themselves upon us day in and day out. It is difficult for anyone to escape a frustrating sense of powerlessness in the face of it all. This story follows the trajectory of a young woman whose unusual background makes her especially sensitive to these conditions as she comes of age and finds herself.

About the Author

Kanako Nishi (1977–) was born in Tehran, Iran, where her family had relocated for her father’s job. She subsequently lived in Japan for several years before moving with her family to Cairo, Egypt, where she spent four of her elementary school years. After college, Nishi wrote for an information magazine as a freelancer. At 25 she began writing fiction, and made her literary debut in 2004 with the short story collection *Aoi* (Blue). In 2006 she won the Oda Sakunosuke Prize for her novel *Tsūtenkaku* (Tower to Heaven), and in 2012 she received the Kawai Hayao Literary Prize for the novel *Fukuwarai* (Funny Face). Her monumental 2014 novel *Saraba!*, in which the action roves across all of the places where she has lived, from Iran to Egypt and Osaka to Tokyo, garnered her the prestigious Naoki Prize. Nishi’s forthright portrayals of the alienation experienced by characters with strong personalities have gained her a wide following, especially among young readers. She is also known as an avid fan of professional wrestling.

Indigo Rain: The Collectors

Risako Asano



195 x 135 mm
311 pages
Hardcover
ISBN 978-4591151112
Rights sold:

Tōka Hiryū's father, a collector of and dealer in antiques, was murdered five years ago during business talks at his vacation home in Karuizawa. The beautiful and talented Tōka once traveled the globe as an internationally known jewelry designer, but ever since the unwanted attention that came her way following her father's death, she has shunned the limelight and now lives quietly in her Azabu, Tokyo home with private secretary Ichirō Tatsuki. Her father's murder remains unsolved. Believing one or more members of the antiques dealer community were involved, Tōka continues to look for leads that might bring the perpetrators to justice.

When she visits Kyoto to attend a memorial service for a mentor, she is asked to appraise a porcelain bowl by Kakiemon that the proprietress of an exclusive restaurant brings to her. She recognizes it as being from her father's collection. Thinking it may serve as a lead for solving her father's murder, she asks for its return. The proprietress says circumstances prevent her from returning it immediately, but she promises to do so when the time is right. Several days later, Kyoto police call to say that the proprietress was left with serious injuries following an attack, and ask Tōka to come to the station to answer some questions. The police show her a Kakiemon bowl the proprietress had in her possession. It is a very well made imitation. Tōka naturally wonders what might have happened to the original bowl. Then she receives word from Ichirō in Tokyo that a package has been delivered, and when she tells him to open it, it contains the original bowl that had belonged to her father.

The proprietress and her husband belonged to a major forgery operation in which he is one of the craftsmen, but had been wanting to sever ties with the group. The group had learned of their intention and attacked her in order to keep her from talking, but by then the original bowl was already on its way to Tōka, who zeroes in on the truth. The incident has confirmed for her that the forgery group is connected with her father's murder, and she resolves to dig deeper into the shadows that still surround it. Although she has made progress, the mystery remains unsolved at the end of this volume, leaving readers eager for the planned sequel.

Including such well-known paintings as Sir John Everett Millais's *Ophelia* and Shōen Uemura's Nihonga-style *Hanagatami* (A Flower Basket), author Risako Asano weaves references to real-life artworks into the narrative, displaying her broad knowledge of antique art and curios. Through the gripping tale of a beautiful heroine pursuing the mystery of her father's death, the story brings to life people caught up in the "indigo-hued shadows" of the antiques world, a place where every object is endowed with a certain sheen of beauty and only a few cognoscenti can tell the difference between an original and a fake.

About the Author

Risako Asano was born in Tokyo. She made her literary debut in 2009 with the period novel *Rokudō Sabaki no Ryū: Yami no shiokinin burai hikae* (The Dragon of the Six-Realms Posse: A Record of the Shadow Punishers). She apprenticed herself to mystery writer Kō Kitamori and subsequently became his personal as well as business partner, completing his unfinished *Renjō Nachi firudo fairu IV: Yamatai* (Yamatai: The Renjō Nachi Field Files, Vol. 4) after his death in 2010; she also compiled a volume of his unpublished short stories as *Renjō Nachi firudo fairu V: Amagi-goe* (Crossing Amagi: The Renjō Nachi Field Files, Vol. 5). Her own titles include the period novels *Hanakagari: Osagashimono ukeoi-ya* (Flower Torches: Lost Property Recoverer), and *Nehan no tsuki: Onna onmitsu yamisabaki* (Moon over Nirvana: The Shadow Justice Agent).

The Restaurant of Love Regained

Ito Ogawa



194 x 135 mm

234 pages

Hardcover

ISBN 978-4591100639

Rights sold: China, France,
Italy, Korea, Spain, Taiwan,
the UK and Vietnam

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. The shock of being abandoned by her mate and losing everything she owns causes Rinko to lose her voice on top of it all. Although she had left the town where she grew up ten years before in a fit of disgust at her mother, who ran a bar next to their house and was rumored to be carrying on with multiple lovers, Rinko now decides she has no choice but to return to her family home. Still running the same bar, her mother now also keeps a pet pig, and seems to have quite the busy life.

Rinko receives the okay from her mother 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 no set menu but rather meeting with each party beforehand to assemble a customized meal just for them. 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.

Rinko's ingeniously thought out and lovingly prepared meals gain a reputation for bringing about small miracles, but they also make her the brunt of jealousy. Overcoming this and other trials, she carries on with her tiny restaurant. Then one day her mother reveals that she has been diagnosed with terminal cancer and has only a short time left to live. In the days that follow Rinko learns of the deep love her mother has for her.

To live is to eat. This heartwarming tale deftly explores the relationship between food and the human heart. It has sold 820,000 copies so far and been made into a film in Japan.

About the Author

Ito Ogawa (1973–) won Premio Bancarella della Cucina in Italy and Prix Eugénie Brazier in France for *the Restaurant of Love Regained*, which became a runaway bestseller in Japan and has been translated into a number of languages. It was also made into a film. Her other works include *Chatter and Jabber*, *Family Tree*, *The Tortoise and Crane Maternity Clinic*, and *Ribbon*.

Ribbon

Ito Ogawa



194 x 135 mm

318 pages

Hardcover

ISBN 978-4591134245

Rights sold: China, France,
Korea and Italy

Grade-schooler Hibari and her grandmother Sumire are the best of friends. When they find a bird's egg nearby, they take it home and keep it warm until it hatches. It turns out to be a cockatiel. They name it Ribbon, and take good care of it, but then one day Ribbon escapes from her cage and flies away.

Ribbon meets a variety of people, including a woman who is unable to move past her grief a year after giving birth to a stillborn son, a gay man who works at a bird shelter, and an elderly artist who's been told she has only a short time left to live. All those who meet and befriend the orange-cheeked Ribbon renew their zeal for living.

Twenty-some years pass from the day Ribbon fled her cage, and a great deal happens to Hibari's family in the interim. They move to a new house, where the grandmother dies. Hibari graduates from college and strikes out on her own as a working woman, but when a secret love affair she has ends badly, she gives up her full-time position to eke out an existence at lesser jobs.

As time goes by after her grandmother's passing, she decides to visit the area where they lived when she was a child. She finds the neighborhood completely changed, with a highrise luxury apartment building standing where their home used to be. Then she sees a bird perched in a large tree. "Ribbon," she calls to it, and the bird alights on her shoulder. "Hibari." Faintly, she hears Ribbon speak her name, recalling her grandmother's voice. She realizes Ribbon and her grandmother's spirit are trying to cheer her up. Having rekindled a zest for life in Hibari, Ribbon flies off again into the heavens.

Waiting for Fair Winds

Yuki Ibuki



194 x 135 mm

351 pages

Hardcover

ISBN 978-4591110218

Rights sold: China, Indonesia
and Korea

Bank employee Tetsuji Suga, 39, is on a doctor-recommended leave of absence after falling into depression from overwork. There has also been growing friction at home with his higher-earning wife. When he discovers that she has been having an affair, he decides to spend the summer at the home where his late mother had lived, on the coast far from Tokyo. Once there he gets to know a cheerful, plain-spoken woman his own age named Kimiko. She is a longtime resident of this coastal town, but now spends most of the year away, supporting herself with her skills as a hairdresser as she travels from place to place. She returns only at this time of year, each summer.

Tetsuji asks Kimiko to help him sort through his mother's belongings. When he offers payment, she asks instead that he play music for her from his mother's extensive collection of classical CDs and LPs, giving him lists of titles, composers, and performers she wishes to hear. We learn that Kimiko lost both her son and her husband in quick succession, and the lists she brings are in fact those of her son's favorite music. Before drowning seven years before at the age of 12, the boy had commuted long distances to piano lessons in another city, with his sights set on becoming a classical piano player. Having never known anything about classical music herself, Kimiko says she wants to better understand the music her son so loved. It is in fact to remember her son that she returns to this town each summer around the anniversary of his death.

The two wounded souls find themselves gradually growing closer. Around the time they both realize they might be falling in love, Tetsuji's wife Rika suddenly shows up. It happens to be on the day after a typhoon, which had forced Kimiko to spend the night, so she finds them together. After showering them with vitriol, she returns to Tokyo. Tetsuji realizes there's no longer any chance of patching things up with Rika, and wants more than ever to be with Kimiko. At his invitation, she travels with him to Tokyo to see an opera, but the morning after the performance, she disappears. She has chosen to remove herself from Tetsuji's life because a photo of his family she had seen at the house on the coast persuaded her that their budding relationship can be nothing more than a passing summer interlude. Back at home in Tokyo, Tetsuji discusses the circumstances with his daughter and decides to file for a divorce from Rika.

When Tetsuji goes back to the coastal town the following summer, he learns that Kimiko has set a new course for her life. He tells her of his feelings for her as well as of his divorce, and asks her to come to the long-distance bus stop before the last Tokyo-bound bus of the day leaves. When she fails to show up, he watches the bus pull away and continues to wait. But soon the toll-road service plaza where the bus stop is located closes down for the night, and he must leave. As he trudges through the darkness, he sees a figure coming from the other direction. It is Kimiko . . .

Mourning Recipe

Yuki Ibuki



193 x 135 mm

263 pages

Hardcover

ISBN 978-4591115350

Rights sold: China, Korea and
Taiwan

Adapted into both a television miniseries and a feature film, 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.

Retiree Ryohei Atsuta lives on the outskirts of Nagoya with his wife Otomi. Having always relied on Otomi to take care of all their domestic needs, he is helpless around the house without her. One morning when he leaves to go fishing, he got angry at Otomi and didn't take the lunch she has prepared for him. He returns to find Otomi dead of a heart attack, and his lunch still sitting on the table where she had placed it that morning. He spends the days after her funeral as if only half alive, assailed by regrets and sapped of the will or energy to do anything.

Ryohei's 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. She also calls in a Japanese-Brazilian friend named Haru to help with any heavier lifting that's needed, bringing them to a household of four.

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. When the day comes, relatives arriving for the observances initially object to the unconventional preparations that have been made, but soon they, too, are caught up in the spirit of things as they recall times spent with Otomi and reflect on who she was and the life she led. The party becomes a congenial, happy, and moving celebration of her life.

About the Author

Yuki Ibuki (1969–) joined a publishing house after graduation and worked as a magazine editor before turning independent as a freelance writer. In 2008 she received the Poplar Publishing Prize for Fiction, Special Award, for *Waiting for Fair Winds*. Her second novel, *Mourning Recipe*, became a bestseller and was turned into both a miniseries for television and a feature film. Her most recent novel, *Midnight Bus*, has been nominated for both the Yamamoto Shugoro Prize and the Naoki Prize.

Cooking Lessons for Love

Megumi Fujino



194 x 136 mm

286 pages

Hardcover

ISBN 978-4591137703

Rights sold: China and Taiwan

On a quiet lane in Kyoto stands an old-fashioned townhouse where, each Saturday afternoon, Aiko Koishihara, once the grand matron of a well-known merchant house, conducts a traditional Kyoto cuisine cooking class “for men only.” The four linked stories in this volume tell how four students of different ages, occupations, and backgrounds are able to make a fresh start in their lives as a result of their participation in the aging instructor’s class and the recipes they master under her tutelage. The title story centers on budding architect Tomohisa, who enrolled in the class because the woman he is secretly in love with, Towako, once remarked that she thought men who can cook are hot. Unfortunately, he still can’t bring himself to confess his love to her. Vincent, a French patissier also enrolled in the class, asks him to be the architect for the new café he’s planning to open, but Tomohisa’s boss is opposed, and Tomohisa agonizes over what to do. Thanks to some advice from Aiko, he finds a way to persuade his boss, and is also finally able to open his heart to Towako.

Vincent is the central figure in the second story, *Deaimon* (Delights of the Season). Planning to quit his current job and go independent, he has begun remodeling an old Japanese house to be his new café, but then he runs into some flak from his landlord Yoshikawa. Through some things that are said during the cooking class, he realizes that Yoshikawa’s desire to nullify the rental agreement comes from his fear that the changes being made to the house will efface cherished memories of his aunt, who used to live there. Vincent invites Yoshikawa to the house and lays out a spread of sweets for him that will remind him of his beloved aunt’s cooking. In the third story, *Futari no daidokoro* (A Kitchen for Two), the main character is a 20-year-old college student named Miki who comes to the class dressed in drag. He lives with his sister Juria, who has become a deep-seated man-hater as a result of their father’s alcoholism, and it is in fact as part of her therapy that he dresses the way he does. They both suffered during their childhood from a neglectful mother as well, so Miki has never actually experienced “home cooking,” and has generally been content with surviving on a diet of junk food. But through his experiences in the cooking class, he realizes that while they will never have warm memories of their own mother’s cooking as other people do, he and his sister can create their own favorite family dishes. A metal engraver named Saeki is the protagonist of the final story, *Nichijō sahan* (Daily Meals). He has always left domestic matters entirely to his wife, but as soon as their two grown sons have moved out of the house, she presses him to enroll in a cooking class. He fears she might be contemplating divorce, but at Aiko’s suggestion, he decides to cook a meal for her with some of the new recipes he has learned—to thank her for all she does for him. As he is preparing to do this, however, she collapses: she had in fact been seriously ill for some time, and had pressed him to take cooking lessons so that he’d be able to fend for himself after she was gone, as well as to give him some new social contacts that would keep him from becoming isolated and lonely. More grateful than ever for his wife’s deep love, he vows to do everything he can to support her in her battle with illness.

Four savory and heartwarming tales unfold against the backdrop of lessons in Kyoto cuisine. Included in an appendix at the back of the book are seven of the recipes that play a role in the stories.

About the Author

Megumi Fujino (1978–) was born in Osaka and graduated from Osaka University of Arts. She writes for both children and adults, and across a broad range of genres. She made her literary debut in 2004 after her manuscript for *Nekomata yōkai den* (*The Ghost of Nekomata, Cat of Two Tails*) won the Junior Adventure Fiction Prize the previous year. Her other titles include *Haru-san* (*Haru*), a heartwarming tale of a single father and his daughter that became a bestseller; *Boku no uso* (*My Lie*); *Watashi no koibito* (*My Sweetheart*); and the *Kaitō Fantomu & Dākunesu* (*Master Thieves Phantom & Darkness*) series.

Finding Me

Hatsue Nakawaki



194 x 135 mm

257 pages

Hardcover

ISBN 978-4591135365

Rights sold: Taiwan

A woman who had a difficult childhood finds a place for herself as a nurse, nearly loses herself in the effort to protect that hard-won ground, and then through key encounters and experiences is able to recover herself once again.

Yayoi was found abandoned shortly after being born, and grew up in an orphanage. It was at the orphanage that she was given her name. Since it is the old name for March in Japan, everybody assumes that's her birth month. But in fact it only means the month in which she was abandoned.

After leaving the orphanage, Yayoi becomes a licensed practical nurse—a certification she is able to earn while on the job. The doctors at the hospital where she works are arrogant and overbearing, with little respect for the nurses or sympathy for their patients. But Yayoi expresses no objections because she has finally found a sense of belonging.

Yayoi had been taken up for adoption when she was small, but her fear of being abandoned again had led her to repeatedly test her new parents' love for her by doing bad things, and in the end they had returned her to the orphanage. One consequence was that she missed a solid block of school right at the time multiplication was being taught, so she never learned her times tables. She also took away from the experience an understanding that she must always be a "good girl" if she doesn't want to lose what she has, so she now instinctively "goes along to get along," no matter how outrageously others may behave.

The hospital gets a highly capable new head nurse. She immediately recognizes the unhealthy dynamics and starts a campaign to improve them, expressing her opinions without reserve even to the doctors.

One day, a patient dies from complications following surgery. The head nurse realizes that the surgeon is at fault and tells Yayoi, who also assisted in the surgery. But when the time comes to explain the outcome to the patient's family members, Yayoi does as the surgeon asks and helps to make sure the head nurse is not present.

Around the same time, an elderly man Yayoi encountered on her way to work one day is admitted to the hospital. He had been out taking a walk when he heard shouting and the wails of a child coming from an apartment house he passed. Worried that the child was being abused, he had stopped Yayoi to ask if she was from the neighborhood and might know something about it. As he is being cared for by Yayoi in the hospital, the old man realizes that she is unable to do multiplication. One day when she is at his bedside, he quietly hands her a times table and says, "It couldn't have been easy, becoming a nurse when you never even learned to do multiplication."

Yayoi is assisting in surgery again when the doctor makes another mistake. This time the patient survives, thanks to the head nurse's quick thinking, but the fact that she took action without the doctor's permission becomes an issue, and she is forced to leave the hospital.

When it is the old man's turn for surgery, the doctor fails to order a transfusion even after it becomes clear that the patient is losing too much blood, so Yayoi takes action on her own, praying that it will save the old man's life. March might have been the month in which she was abandoned, she tells herself, but it was also the month when someone rescued her, and the only reason she is standing there now is because that person had prayed for her to make it then, just as she is praying for this old man now. The work was short-listed for the 2014 Yamamoto Shugoro Prize.

You're a Good Kid

Hatsue Nakawaki



194 x 135 mm

319 pages

Hardcover

ISBN 978-4591129388

Rights sold: China, Korea and
Taiwan

This is a collection of five stories set in the same suburban town, with key elements transpiring on the same rainy afternoon.

The House where Santa Doesn't Come centers on Okano, a novice grade-school teacher, and a boy in his class who is being abused at home. Facing his first classroom as a teacher, Okano has difficulty maintaining control of all the different personalities among his charges and finds that his lessons don't go as planned. But even as his sense of inadequacy mounts, he realizes that one of his students is a victim of abuse. He learns that the boy has been told by his stepfather not to come home until after 5:00, and that he's not getting proper meals at home; there are also signs that he is being beaten. But the boy is convinced it's all because he's a bad boy; that's also why Santa doesn't come to his house, he says. Though he feels scarcely up to the task, Okano does everything he can to refute the boy's interpretation of what is happening to him, and to get him to stop blaming himself.

Pretty Girl is the story of a young mother who beats her daughter due to the lingering trauma of the abuse she suffered at her own mother's hand as a little girl. In Liar, a friend's father speculates about the state of mind of a boy who is being abused by his stepmother. Hello Goodbye portrays interactions between an elderly neighbor woman and a young mother struggling with the challenges of raising an autistic son. In Taking Granny Up the Mountain, a woman who was abused by her mother while growing up reflects on their long-ago history together in advance of her mother being admitted to a memory care facility.

In one way or another, all of the stories take up the troubling subject of child abuse, but in each case the author also leaves readers with a ray of hope.

About the Author

Hatsue Nakawaki (1974–) made her literary debut while still in high school, when she won the 1991 Botchan Literary Award for her story *Like a Fish*. Her collection of stories *You're a Good Kid* won the 2012 Tsubota Joji Literature Award, took first place in the 2012 Shizuoka Bookstore Grand Prize, and came in fourth in the 2013 Booksellers Award balloting. Set in the same suburban town as *You're a Good Kid*, her most recent novel *Finding Me* has been short-listed for the Yamamoto Shugoro Prize. Alongside her writing, she took up narrating traditional folk tales, and wrote stories based on them as well, including *Snow Maiden* and *Chinkororin*.

Untitled

Chisa Asukai



194 x 137 mm

333 pages

Hardcover

ISBN 978-4591135488

Rights sold:

Author Chisa Asukai highlights both the universality and the fragility of family bonds in this portrayal of a woman who looks at things only from her own rigid perspective. Toko, 31, is scrupulous and strict in her ways. She unfailingly follows the rules she has set for herself, and she judges all that goes on around her by those same rules. But then, a series of events causes her personal value system to crumble . . .

Father is on the board of a major corporation, Mother is always cheerful and full of energy, daughter Toko has a stable office job, and son Kenta works for a television production company. At a glance they appear to be the ideal happy family. But each member of the family has his or her own secrets, and as those secrets begin to emerge, the erstwhile harmony of the family unravels with surprising ease.

It all begins with the shocking appearance and behavior of Kenta's fiancée Masami when he first introduces her to the family. From the time they were children, Toko has never had a very high opinion of her younger brother, who had slovenly habits and was always causing trouble for the family. Now Masami's rudeness lowers her opinion of him further—in addition to turning her instantly against her future sister-in-law.

As it happens, Toko has long been carrying on an affair with a married man, and she is satisfied with the current state of their relationship. Though well aware that society considers the relationship immoral, she's convinced that it is sustainable so long as she makes sure not to cause trouble for her lover's family.

At about this same time, it comes out that her father has secretly resigned from his executive position and is now working as the caretaker of an apartment building; also that a handsome young dancer has turned her mother's head, and she has been giving him money. Toko regards her parents' behavior as a shameful betrayal, and lights into them when the whole family is present, but is severely shaken when their response is to hurl their own criticisms at her. With her pride in tatters, she turns to her lover for support, but he bluntly spurns her, and she realizes all too painfully that they had never been soul mates, only garden-variety illicit lovers. The person to whom Toko turns next is the last person in the world she'd have thought—Masami.

About the Author

Chisa Asukai (1979–) made her literary debut when she won the Shosetsu Subaru New Writers' Award in 2005 for *When Haru Dies*. In 2011 her pocket paperback original *Tiny Tiny Happy* topped 100,000 in sales and catapulted her into best-sellerdom. Her stories often focus on seemingly insignificant, mundane occurrences in the lives of ordinary people, and she shows a knack for bringing out the subtle yet telling movements of the heart that are so easily overlooked.

The Winged Girl

Maha Harada



194 x 135 mm
286 pages
Hardcover
ISBN 978-4591137277
Rights sold:

Early on January 17, 1995, a devastating earthquake shook the Osaka-Kobe region of Japan and left 6,434 people dead, three missing, and 43,792 injured. In this story, first-grader Nike saw her parents burned to death right before her eyes in one of the countless fires that broke out as a result of the quake. She is taken in together with her older brother Ikki and younger sister Sanku by Koreaki Samotora, a doctor of psychosomatic medicine whose nickname is Dr. Zero. Nike herself has become permanently disabled by an injury to her right leg suffered in the quake, and she has difficulty making friends among her new classmates. But through her interactions with Dr. Zero and others from the neighborhood, she decides she wants to become a doctor who helps heal wounded hearts and mind.

Dr. Zero lost his wife in the quake when he was unable to rescue her from beneath the rubble that fell on her. His only son, Yuya, holds this against him, and the two have become estranged; a heart surgeon, Yuya soon takes a new job at a hospital in Tokyo and cuts off communications with his father altogether.

When Nike is in the sixth grade and gets her first crush on a boy, she discovers something strange: when she experiences strong feelings toward another person, sharp pangs of pain traverse her back. She has the same pangs when she is feeling especially sorry for her beloved little sister, and one day, to her astonishment, wings suddenly sprout on her back. But the wings quickly turn to sand and disappear.

When Nike is in the eighth grade, Dr. Zero's chronic heart condition catches up with him, and he requires immediate surgery. His son Yuya is considered the best man for the job. Together with Dr. Zero's assistant, Nike and her siblings head to Tokyo to ask Yuya to conduct the operation. Yuya is torn, but ultimately refuses—still unable to forgive his father.

That night at the hotel, having all but given up hope, Nike thinks back to the earthquake. Her mind fills with memories of how she'd been helpless to do anything but wail in anguish as she watched her beloved parents die. She can't bear the thought of once again losing someone she loves. The powerful emotions triggered by these memories cause wings to sprout on her back a second time. Flapping them, she flies back to Yuya. Moved by her repeated entreaties as well as by the miracle that has sprung from the intensity of her desire to save someone she loves, Yuya sets aside his ill feelings and agrees to wield the scalpel. The surgery is a success.

As if keeping pace with the reconstruction of the city around them, three children who lost their parents in the earthquake and an elderly doctor rejected by his son gradually bond as a new family. Underlying their heart-warming story is a message from the author that people all carry within them the strength to pick themselves back up no matter how hopeless their situation may appear.

The name of the story's young protagonist comes from the Winged Victory of Samothrace sculpture of the Greek goddess Nike, on display at the Louvre in Paris. Through the character's association with the goddess of victory and her powerful wings, the author expresses a prayer for both peaceful repose and vigorous regeneration.

About the Author

Maha Harada (1962–) worked in-house at a number of art museums before becoming a freelance curator. She made her literary debut in 2005 when her first novel *Waiting for Good News* won the Japan Love Story Award; the work sold over 370,000 copies and was adapted to the big screen. She has continued to produce entertainment fiction in the years since, and in 2012 won the Yamamoto Shugoro Prize for *Painting of Paradise*.

Geranium Garden

Masumi Oshima



194 x 137 mm

280 pages

Hardcover

ISBN 978-4591130759

Rights sold: Taiwan

One New Year's Day when narrator Ruru is in her mid-twenties, her 80-year-old grandmother Toyose learns that Ruru has gotten a story published in a literary journal, and urges her to write about the major family secret she has related to Ruru in bits and pieces over the years. Toyose collapses that same day, and passes away two days later.

The secret has to do with Toyose's twin sister Kaei. The twins were born into a prominent family in Nihonbashi, Tokyo, near the end of the Meiji period (1868–1912). Toyose thrives and grows normally, but the family worries that Kaei's development appears to be delayed. As time goes on, however, they realize that she is in fact reaching all of the standard milestones, only at a far slower pace. When Toyose has matured into a young woman of marriageable age, Kaei is still a little girl. Because Kaei is obviously abnormal compared to her twin sister, the family moves to a newly built estate in the suburbs where she can be kept out of sight, and she is subsequently sent to seek treatment in England accompanied by her attending physician.

Fourteen years later, in 1944, Kaei returns to Japan from Manchuria, where she had gone after England. Toyose is by this time middle-aged, past her child-rearing years, but Kaei is a beautiful young woman in her prime. For a time she lives as if under confinement in the suburban residence the family had built to keep her out of sight, but a short while after the end of World War II, she moves out to live on her own.

Ruru's mother (Toyose's daughter) dislikes Kaei, who still comes to visit the family home from time to time. Then Kaei's visits stop. Ruru's mother does not tell her daughter about Kaei's secret, but she repeatedly finds occasion to note that it's best for people to age and die normally. When Kaei comes to Toyose's funeral, the woman who should be just as old as Toyose appears to be no older than the last time Ruru saw her. Ruru's narrative then comes to an end with a scene in which she is talking with Kaei in the family's backyard, where the geraniums are in bloom.

Several decades go by. Ruru's parents as well as Ruru herself are long dead, and even Ruru's son and daughter are getting on in years, but Kaei lives on. She picks up the story where Ruru's narrative had left off, revealing secrets that Ruru herself had no way of knowing, such as the fact that she had had an affair with one of the men Ruru was seeing. Her tale brings into relief the loneliness she feels as her life crawls on at its much slower pace, watching people born long after herself living full lifespans and preceding her in death one after another.

About the Author

Masumi Oshima (1962–) won the Bungakukai Prize for New Writers for *Spring Magician*. Her other titles include *Rainbow-Colored Sun Shower*, *Three Sisters*, *Battle Mates in Romance*, *Bitter Sugar*, *Pietà*, and many others. *Bitter Sugar* became a television series on NHK, and *Pietà*, a story set in 18th-century Venice and portraying the lives of girls at the Ospedale della Pietà, where Vivaldi taught music, became a publishing sensation and was voted third in the 2012 Booksellers Award balloting.

Double Whorls

Yukiya Shoji & Natsu Miyashita



194 x 135 mm

278 pages

Hardcover

ISBN 978-4591130698

Rights sold: Indonesia

Two popular writers share authorship of this much talked about work, writing alternately from the perspectives of brother and sister. Yukiya Shoji writes from the perspective of Yūichi, an eleventh-grader who plays in a band, and Natsu Miyashita writes from the perspective of Yūichi's little sister Madoka, a fourth-grader who loves judo. The narrative centers on a certain family secret, the circumstances of which gradually come to light.

Brother and sister both have two whorls in their hair. Their mother does as well, and she has always told them that it's a mark of good fortune. One day when Madoka is at home alone, a phone call comes in from a woman she doesn't know. Later, her mother says she doesn't know the woman either, but there seems to be something a little strange in her manner.

Yūichi then discovers that the woman has attended a live performance of his band, Double Spin Round, and that his father knows her. As time goes on, a music producer expresses an interest in signing the band, but as soon as Yūichi says the producer's name is Ishigō, his mother is dead set against it.

Eventually Yūichi learns that his mother had once set her sights on becoming a professional singer, and the woman on the phone was her manager at the time. His mother had also gotten to know Ishigō during that period. Meanwhile, Madoka is increasingly distressed by the change that has come over their mother ever since the producer approached her brother's band.

Their mother finally gives her blessing for Yūichi's band to sign with Ishigō's office, and also reveals the secret she has been keeping from them until now. Yūichi and Madoka become aware of how their parents have been protecting them, and gain a new appreciation for family.

Miyashita delicately probes the psychology of ten-year-old Madoka, who is at that sensitive age when a little girl begins to turn outward and become more aware of the world around her, as master storyteller Shoji keeps the plot moving along. The authors' two distinct styles meld perfectly to produce a warm-hearted tale of family.

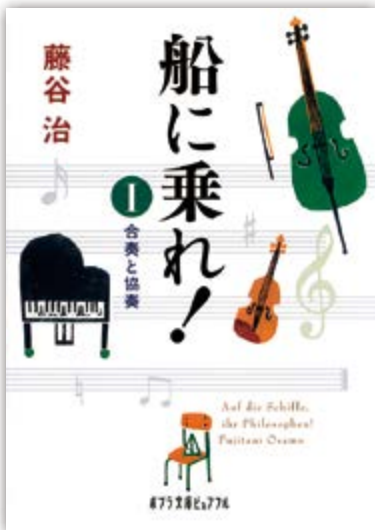
About the Author

Yukiya Shoji made his debut as a writer by winning the 2002 Mephisto Award for *Singing an Old Song about Looking Up at the Sky*. Among his many works published since then are the "Tokyo Bandwagon" series, *Cow House*, and *the Holy Man of Hanasaki Street*. He works at the entertainment end of the literary spectrum, in genres ranging from family novels to mysteries.

Natsu Miyashita made her literary debut after receiving an honorable mention from the Bungakukai Prize for New Writers jury in 2004 for her story *Quiet Rain*. Her first full-length novel, *School No. 4*, garnered a great deal of attention in 2007, and *Someone's Missing* was voted seventh in the 2012 Booksellers Award balloting. One of the most talked-about authors of our time, she deftly captures everyday scenes of earnest, ordinary people going about their lives in prose that is imbued with freshness and warmth.

Aboard Ship!

Osamu Fujitani



Told from the viewpoint of Satoru as an adult, this is a coming-of-age story about a teenager who decides to choose another path rather than try to become a professional musician, as well as the story of a middle-aged man who is finally able to face a past about which he has some regrets. The author vividly conveys the beauty and brightness of youth, as well as the pain and regret that many of us feel when reflecting on our teen years.

Readers will enjoy this moving tale as well as the discussions of philosophy and classical music it contains. The title is taken from the words of the philosopher Nietzsche. The series has three volumes.

148 x 105 mm
 308 pages
 Softcover
 ISBN 978-4591123997
 Rights sold: Korea and Taiwan



About the Author

Osamu Fujitani (1963–) made his book publishing debut in 2003 with the novel *Andante Mozzarella Cheese. A Woman Named Q Ogata*, which appeared in a magazine, was a candidate for the Shincho Prize for New Writers in 2002. Subsequent works have also been listed for various prestigious literary prizes, among them the three-volume series “Aboard Ship!,” a candidate for the Booksellers Award in 2010. Fujitani also operated the Ficciones bookstore in Tokyo, but closed it in 2014 to devote his time to writing.

The Nocturnal Bakery 1: A Recipe for Midnight

Noriko Oonuma



151 x 105 mm

319 pages

Softcover

ISBN 978-4591124796

Rights sold: China, Korea and Taiwan

In a quiet corner of the city is Boulangerie Kurebayashi, a bakery that opens its doors only at night. It's run by the always-smiling owner, Yosuke Kurebayashi, and his foul-mouthed but good-looking young apprentice, Hiroki. Back in middle school Hiroki was racing down the path of delinquency until, at the age of 14, he met Miwako, 12 years his senior. Miwako helped Hiroki with his studies and set him straight; he became quite devoted to her, believing they had been brought together by fate. But six months ago, just as she was preparing to open a bakery, Miwako, now married to Yosuke, was killed in a traffic accident. Yosuke decided to quit his job with the United Nations PKO so he could bring his wife's plans to fruition.

One day, a teenage girl named Nozomi shows up claiming to be Miwako's half-sister, and asks to be put up. She was raised by her grandparents until the age of six because her mother couldn't be bothered with her, and even after her mother took Nozomi back, she would periodically leave her with friends and disappear. Nozomi compares her mother to a cuckoo.

The aromas wafting from the bakery draw a motley group of nocturnal characters to the shop—among them Orie, a single mother with sticky fingers, and Kodama, her grade-school-age boy; a gay cross-dresser who goes by the name of Sophia; and Madarame the scriptwriter, who has multiple telescopes set up in his eighth-floor apartment so he can peep into neighboring buildings. Each has his or her own set of problems, and effectively nowhere else to go. Then Orie disappears, and the people who gather at the bakery pitch in to look for her. In the course of the search, details emerge about their diverse pasts and the hidden burdens they all carry in their hearts.

This sweet and sour story, which is made into a TV drama, is very popular in Japan, selling over 1.2 million copies. The series has four volumes so far.



About the Author

Noriko Oonuma (1975–) worked as a scriptwriter before entering the fiction arena by winning the 2005 Botchan Literary Award with *Ring Out the Old Year and Ring In the New*. She is one of Japan's up-and-coming writers.

Mathman to the Rescue!

Shogo Mukai



188 x 129 mm

327 pages

Softcover

ISBN 978-4591134948

Rights sold: China, Korea and Taiwan



This math-themed YA novel by an author who participated in the Japanese Math Olympics while in high school leaves every reader thinking, “If only I’d read this book sooner, I’d have learned to like math a whole lot more.”

Haruka is a middle-school girl who loves sports and hates math. The story begins when an unusual new boy named Sora joins her class as a transfer student. Sora declares that his dream is to “save the world with math,” and one day he opens shop as “Mathman,” saying he will use math to solve whatever problems his classmates bring to him—personal challenges, relationship issues, etc.—no payment necessary. Events conspire to make Haruka his assistant in the operation.

Mathman is asked how to resolve territorial disputes between the boys and girls on the playground during recess, how to light a fire under slacker members of the baseball team so they’ll show more spirit, how to afford a new mitt on a limited allowance, and so forth. In each case he applies mathematical formulas to arrive at a solution. As she sees how magnificently Sora solves their classmates’ problems, even the math-hating Haruka begins to see the joy of numbers.

One day the duo is presented with a far more difficult problem. An anonymous middle-schooler asks for advice on a matter of love. Of all human emotions, love is the most mysterious, and Haruka is convinced that there’s no way a mathematical formula can be applied. But one particular formula comes to light that is able to crack even the great enigma of love and bring about a successful resolution.

It is inspirational to discover that math can be such a romantic pursuit. The book is sure to charm math nerds and mathophobes alike, but it is especially to be recommended for the latter group.

About the Author

Shogo Mukai participated in the Japanese Math Olympics while in high school. He is particularly fascinated by number sequences. As a member of the kendo club while at the University of Tokyo, he advanced to the nationwide tournament of the University Kendo Federation. His publishing debut came with *Mathman to the Rescue!* in 2013 after his manuscript for the novel won the 2012 Poplar Fiction Prize for New Writers. Appealing to a broad cross-section of readers ranging from middle- and high-school age to adults, the book has enjoyed remarkably strong sales for a first novel, going through six printings in its first year of publication. Mukai’s second novel was *Kendo Team, Ready!* centering on a small, outmatched high-school kendo team.

The World of Five Dragons Series

Yukako Kabei



Yugi, a 15-year-old girl, was left alone at a shrine when she was five years old. Her master raised her there, and Yugi, a lively girl, is now practicing martial and medical arts under his guidance. Yugi respects her master, who treats patients, performs exorcisms and conducts ceremonies in the community.

Hekiyo, Yugi's friend, is a beautiful girl working at a brothel who has the ability to read the "atmosphere," which allows her to know what's happening in the world. One day, Yugi meets Ruin, a little boy, and she gradually learns how powerful he is. But she can't tell if he is her friend or, perhaps, her enemy. Irurakku, a handsome Western pastor, runs into Yugi when he is chasing after Ruin. Yugi becomes attracted to Irurakku, even though she doesn't really understand her feelings.

Set in late-19th-Century China, this fantasy series fascinates readers with its exciting stories and unique characters. Three volumes have been published so far.

148 x 105 mm
 345 pages
 Softcover
 ISBN 978-4591132159
 Rights sold: Taiwan



About the Author

Since publishing her first novel in 2003, Yukako Kabei continues to write fiction. She is one of Japan's up-and-coming authors.

Parade of Monsters

Emel Komatsu



148 x 105 mm
318 pages
Softcover
ISBN 978-459119723
Rights sold: Taiwan

Ghostly lore in Japan includes a host of weird and diverse supernatural creatures known collectively as yokai. One night as the sundry ghouls and goblins are making their procession, a yokai named Koharu drops out of line and begins falling. He lands in the yard of a secondhand goods dealer named Kizo; the two meet, and Koharu decides to stay. Kizo is a youthful 20, but besides being gruff and unfriendly, he has a countenance that could scare even a ghost. Koharu, on the other hand, has the appearance of a sweet little boy even though he professes to be a truly fearsome yokai. The two become caught up in all manner of supernatural disturbances during the Meiji era, and invariably play a role in resolving each one.

Abandoned by his mother as a child, Kizo had retreated into himself and become a misanthrope, but now he is forced to interact with others—including his half-sister Miyuki, the handsome but irresponsible Hikoji, and a large cast of yokai—and little by little he begins to open his heart.

Ultimately each of us is alone in this world, but author Emel Komatsu's gentle yet forceful message is that this reality itself is what drives us to seek companions with whom to share our journey and offer mutual support. Komatsu's maiden work, the book became an immediate hit and was turned into a series with six volumes appearing to date and combined sales surpassing 200,000.



About the Author

Emel Komatsu (1984–) was born in Tokyo. Her maternal grandfather being from Turkey, she was given a name that means “strong, kind, and beautiful” in Turkish. She graduated from Kokugakuin University with a degree in history, and first broke into publishing with the story collection *Ikki yako* (Parade of Monsters), which won the Jive Fiction Grand Prize in 2008 to high praise from the selection committee. The fourth volume in the series, *Ikki yako: Karezu no hozuki* (Parade of Monsters: The Lantern Plant That Never Withers) was voted #2 on the 2012 Kono jidai shosetsu ga sugoi! (This Period Novel Is Amazing!) list. Besides the *Ikki yako* series, now up to six volumes, her works include *Uwan* (Uwan) and *Yakusoku: Rangaku-juku Genyudo seishun-ki* (Promises: Students of the Genyudo Dutch-Learning School). An up-and-coming author, Komatsu is noted for her fertile imagination and warmly drawn characters.

Divination for All Your Needs: Welcome to the Yin-Yang Shop

Shōko Amano



148 x 105 mm

296 pages

Softcover

ISBN 978-4591122372

Rights sold: Taiwan

This first volume in author Shōko Amano’s popular *Onmyō-ya* (The Yin-Yang Shop) series for young adults contains four linked stories in the main narrative line, and two spinoff episodes.

In the basement of a building on a bustling shopping street in Ōji, a district in Tokyo’s Kita Ward, is an establishment called “The Yin-Yang Shop,” where a young and handsome diviner who goes by the name of Abe no Shōmei (just one character different from the name of the famous Heian-era [894–1185] diviner Abe no Seimei) offers his services. One day a ninth-grade boy and his mother come in the door. The mother explains that they have experienced a series of misfortunes of late and requests a reading. Dressed in full *onmyōji* (yin-yang master) attire, Shōmei conducts a water-basin divination ceremony followed by a purification rite and asks for an exorbitant payment—to which the boy responds that he is a fraud. While Shōmei feigns innocence, the boy declares that he could smell the special solution that Shōmei had surreptitiously added to the basin to make its surface foam up as if in ill omen. He goes on to uncover his ears and tail and identify himself as the abandoned child of a shape-shifting fox—which is why he has a far more powerful sense of smell and hearing than do normal people.

Shōmei is unfazed, and having learned the boy’s true identity, ropes him into being his *shikigami*—a kind of spirit conjured by yin-yang masters as part of the ceremonies they perform. The title is in name only, however, and the boy, Shunta Sawazaki, has in effect been coerced into serving as Shōmei’s all-purpose gofer.

Shōmei is actually a former “host”—which is to say, he worked at a nightclub that provides male drinking companions for its female clientele. Although his good looks made him extremely popular with the ladies in that role, he’s actually rather ill-natured, sharp tongued, and decidedly lazy. Shunta, for his part, is innocent and artless, having been doted on to excess by his adoptive parents, the Sawazakis. Because he is of a nocturnal constitution due to his fox background, he is always falling asleep in class and does poorly in school. With Shōmei treating Shunta like a personal slave, the two go about solving a wide variety of troubles brought to them by people from the local area.

The worldly-wise Shōmei’s methods are unique. He settles an intractable marital quarrel by attributing everything to a curse, for example, or he uses the charms he wielded as a host to soothe the feelings of female clients. He may sometimes appear to be a fraud, but he is always practical, and soon wins acceptance from the other merchants on his shopping street.

The series has reached eight volumes to date, with aggregate sales of over a million copies. In the course of the many episodes, Shunta advances to the tenth grade and gains new maturity, readers learn about the secret of his birth as well as his love interests, and his mother and Shōmei carry on an extended feud. The stories are comedies, but summon the occasional tear as well. The series was adapted to television in 2013.

About the Author

Shōko Amano was born in Nagasaki Prefecture and graduated from Tokyo University of Foreign Studies with a degree in German. She subsequently attended a novel-writing course, and made her publishing debut in 2005 with *Keishichō Yūrei-gakari* (Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department Ghost Division). Her other titles include *Shōjo manga-ka ga neko o kau riyū* (Why Girls’ Manga Artists Keep Pet Cats), *Shinshi no tame no esute nyūmon* (Introduction to Beauty Salons for Men), the *Tama no nekomata sōdanjo* (Tama the Split-Tailed Cat’s Advisory Service) series, and the *Onmyō-ya* (The Yin-Yang Shop) series.

The Spirits from the Storehouse Next Door

Yu Ito



148 x 105 mm

254 pages

Softcover

ISBN 978-4591134917

Rights sold:

In a story reminiscent of Mary Norton’s *The Borrowers*, author Yu Ito ushers readers into a parallel world that exists right next to our everyday lives.

Fifth-grader Honoka lives with her parents and big brother Yūichi in a rundown condominium where the residents are at odds over whether to rebuild or make do with repairs. Yūichi has started hanging out with a rough crowd since advancing to middle school, a constant source of stress for their mother. It distresses Honoka, as well, to see discord within her family. One of her few comforts is looking out the window at the garden next door as it changes from season to season. The neighbor’s house is occupied by an elderly woman who lives alone, and there is an old, earthen-walled storehouse in its yard that has a certain mysterious aura about it. Honoka and Yūichi used to play inside it and in the old lady’s yard when they were little.

One day there is an arson incident in the neighborhood, and soon after, a number of very strange things—a doll with a fearsome face, a tiny person who looks like a frog, a bird resembling a wrapping cloth that follows Yūichi around, and a little man with a smoking pipe stuck in his sash—begin appearing. Honoka and Yūichi conjecture that these events are somehow related to the storehouse.

As a matter of fact, the storehouse has indeed become home to a variety of tsukumogami—treasured objects that have taken on spirits and become animated in the course of being used by people over many long years. The frog person is the tsukumogami of a carved netsuke in the shape of a frog that Honoka had been fond of as a small child. The bird is the tsukumogami of the wrapping cloth Yūichi had used as a cape when he was a little boy. The scary-faced doll is the tsukumogami of Shōki, a guardian statue. The man with the pipe is the tsukumogami of exactly just such a pipe. Because of the arson incident and talk of the condominium building being torn down, the spirits have emerged from the storehouse in order to protect their home.

The spirits come to visit Honoka and her brother, whom they remember fondly from the days the siblings played in the storehouse. As they interact with the free-spirited tsukumogami, the two both gain new confidence in themselves. Yūichi drops out of the gang he’s been running with and tries to get his best friend to drop out, too. When he and the friend get into a fight over it, the wrapping cloth and the pipe come to his aid, but end up getting hurt. As animated objects, tsukumogami lose their ability to move about freely when they are injured. Meanwhile, tsukumogami efforts to stop the hardline rebuilding proponents bear fruit, and talk of destroying the condos comes to an end.

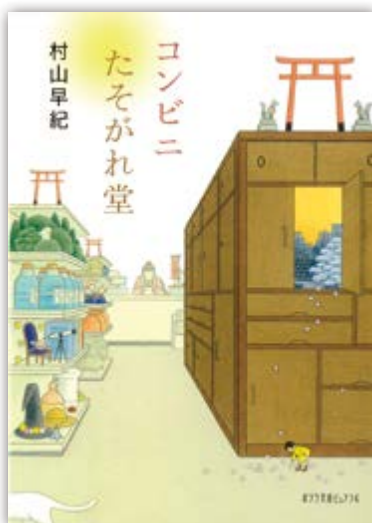
When things have finally settled down, Honoka, Yūichi, and the woman next door return the tsukumogami to the storehouse. “Perhaps someday a tsukumogami that’s good at repairing his mates will appear,” says the old woman as the story comes to a close, giving Honoka and her brother hope that the injured tsukumogami will one day be made whole again.

About the Author

Yu Ito (1959–) won the Fantasy Award for Children’s Literature for her debut work, *A Bridge to the Other World*, in 1997. After garnering critical acclaim for these two richly detailed fantasies set in the medieval Heian period, she cemented her reputation as a powerful and versatile writer with her third book, *Something about Yuhki*, concerning children in today’s world; the book received the 2004 JAWC Award. Ito also won the 2013 Shogakukan Children’s Publication Culture Award for *Sasuke the Guardian Dog Goes Missing*.

The Twilight Mart

Saki Murayama



148 x 105 mm

182 pages

Softcover

ISBN 978-4591114162

Rights sold: Korea, Taiwan
and Vietnam

This is the first volume in a tremendously popular series of linked stories that has grown to five volumes and counting. The tales are set in the fictional community of Kazahaya and center on a mysterious convenience store, known as the Twilight Mart, on the edge of town. Surrounded by legend, it is said to be reachable only by those who are searching for something out of some deep-seated need.

Each story tells about a different customer who visits the store. The clerk is a silver-haired, golden-eyed young man of mysterious mien, who in spite of his eccentric appearance is capable of feeling strong empathy for his customers. They are a diverse lot: a schoolboy, a schoolgirl, a thirtyish female radio announcer, a cat in human form, and so forth. All are individuals leading ordinary, unassuming lives, the outlines of which slowly come into focus as they reveal their innermost desires and prayers.

Although a premise reminiscent of children's stories may seem removed from adult interests, the advancing narratives evoke fond memories and reawaken emotions from simpler times that have been stored away deep in readers' hearts. The audience for the series has grown both in size and breadth with each new volume, with even older male readers remarking on how moved they were by the deep insights offered on loneliness and death. For readers overwhelmed by the myriad stresses of contemporary life, these "fairy tales for adults" reaffirm the essential goodness of people and shake the imagination out of its torpor.

In addition to the title story, in which a fifth-grade boy visits the store, the volume includes Anzu (Apricot), in which the eponymous cat, approaching death, takes on the form of a little girl to visit its master and say goodbye; Te o tsunaido (Hand in Hand), in which a little girl looking for the doll her mother threw out in anger learns about her mother's own childhood, and mother and daughter are finally able to connect; Sakura no koe (Sakurako's Voice), in which the eponymous radio announcer discovers how important her voice is to listeners from the past and future as well as the present and decides not to quit her job; and Aru terebi no monogatari (The Story of a Television), in which a family's beloved television set, now old and breaking down, musters its last bit of strength to show the little girl wonderful images. In the course of these tales, the Twilight Mart convenience store emerges as a place where those who have lost something treasured and irreplaceable can receive and send invisible messages; it is also a place where they can leave behind their indescribable sense of loss and heartache. Readers will find in these stories not only healing for the heart but the courage to accept the past and begin moving forward again.

About the Author

Saki Murayama (1963–) was born in Nagasaki Prefecture. She received the Mainichi Children's Story New Writer Prize in 1991 and the Muku Hatojū Children's Literature Prize in 1994 for *Chiisai Eri-chan* (Little Eri). Her popular titles include *Sabaku no utahime* (Desert Songstress), *Ruryūru* (Reliure), *Sono hon no monogatari* (Story of the Book), the *Shēra-hime no bōken* (The Adventures of Scheherazade) series, the *Konbini Tasogare-dō* (The Twilight Mart) series, the *Kafe Kamome-tei* (The Seagull Café) series, the *Kaiba-tei* (The Seahorse Mansion) series, and the *Kaze no oka no Rurū* (The Little Witch of Windswept Hill) series, as well as other stories set in the fictional town of Kazahaya.

The End of the World

Masamoto Nasu



151 x 105 mm

271 pages

Softcover

ISBN 978-4591143056

Rights sold:

Ten short stories peer into the abyss that is the human heart, leaving an indelible impression on the reader.

In the title piece, war in the Middle East sparks a global nuclear conflagration. A boy in Japan is left an orphan when both of his parents die in the bomb shelter where they took refuge. He later hears the voice of a young girl calling for help over the wireless, and decides to leave the protection of the shelter and brave the radioactive environment outside to find her. In a car, the song *The End of the World* begins playing on the radio. It is a song his father often used to sing. He continues on his way, convinced he will be able to find the girl.

In *Yakusoku* (*The Promise*), a kindergarten class has a reunion six years after their graduation. As the children are catching up with each other, their conversation turns to one who is missing, a boy who has died. Now, who exactly was it who had always been bullying the boy? A disquieting chill fills the air. Unbeknownst to any of them, the deceased boy's ghost is watching the proceedings from off to one side.

In *Garasu no raion* (*The Glass Lion*), Tsuneo, a new boy in town who came from the city, suggests to the narrator and his friend Tatsu that they each choose a special treasure and bury them in a box on an island in the river. They make a treasure map so they can remember where the box is buried. When a typhoon comes, they become worried about how the box weathered the storm, so they go to dig it up and see, but the box is gone. Tsuneo says it must have been washed away. In time, Tsuneo moves away again, and they fall out of touch. Thirty years later the narrator runs into Tsuneo by chance. When he visits him at his house, he finds the glass lion he himself had put in the treasure box. "Oh, that's right," Tsuneo says fondly. "This was your parting gift to me when I moved away, wasn't it?" The narrator says nothing.

About the Author

Masamoto Nasu (1942–) was three years old and at his home three kilometers from the hypocenter when the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. His family survived, and he remained in Hiroshima until the end of high school. After making his writerly debut with *Kubi-nashi jizō no takara* (*The Treasure of the Headless Jizō*), he earned renown for his children's-book series *Zukkoke sannin-gumi* (*The Hilarious Trio*), a collection of 50 volumes written over the course of 26 years which sold over 20 million copies and has been spun off into TV and manga serials. The series has won the Iwaya Sazanami Literary Award and the Noma Prize for Children's Literature. *Sagishi-tachi no sora* (*Sky of the Swindlers*) won the Robō-no-Ishi Literary Award, and the *Oedo no Hyakutarō* (*Hyakutarō of Edo*) series received the JAWC Award. Nasu has also coauthored prizewinning picture books with illustrator Shigeo Nishimura, including *Bokura no chizu ryokō* (*Our Map Adventure*) and *E de yomu Hiroshima no genbaku* (tr. *Hiroshima: A Tragedy Never to Be Repeated*). In 2007 Nasu became president of the Japanese Association of Writers for Children, Japan's premier professional association of juvenile-literature authors.

Diner

Yumeaki Hirayama



194 x 137 mm

474 pages

Hardcover

ISBN 978-4591112014

Rights sold: China and Taiwan

Bored with her clerical job, Kanako Oba, a 30-year-old divorcée, responds to an online ad: “Driver. Pay 300,000 yen. Entails some risk.” Hired by a couple to be the driver of the getaway car in a cash heist, she soon finds herself entangled in a nightmarish world. She gets nabbed by a second gang of men and is about to be buried alive in a hole she herself has dug when an unidentified benefactor pays for her deliverance. She is taken to a diner named Canteen, a members-only eatery for hit men. Bombero, the proprietor, is a former hit man turned master chef, and Kanako is to work as his only waitress under the condition that if she disobeys him in the slightest she will be killed on the spot. Famous for its signature hamburgers in particular and its delectable gourmet menu in general, the shop is patronized by a parade of idiosyncratic assassins, among them Kid, who dresses up as a child and specializes in killing children; and Skin, whose face is crisscrossed by the tracks of his many wounds, said to have cumulatively required more than a thousand stitches. Bombero and his Canteen are under the protection of the Mafia, but then a suspicion arises that there may be a traitor or undercover agent in their midst in connection with a former mob boss’s death . . . The work is at once deep and gloriously fun—the sort of novel you might expect film director Quentin Tarantino to immediately option.

About the Author

Yumeaki Hirayama (1961–) states that the grotesque descriptions of his stock in trade derive from having witnessed repeated suicide jumpers and traffic accidents as an adolescent. He went on to college after high school, but preferred to spend his time making homemade horror movies, and eventually dropped out. As a writer, he got his start reviewing Z-grade movies for a weekly magazine, and in 1993 became a regular contributor to a series of “true horror” volumes. His debut as a novelist came in 1996 with the psycho-thriller *Sinker—shizumu mono* (Sinker). In 2006 he won the Mystery Writers of Japan Award for Short Stories with *Dokuhaku suru yunibasaru yoko merukatoru* (The Universal Transverse Mercator Speaks), and his collection of the same title took first place in the 2007 Konomys rankings. He won the Japan Adventure Fiction Association Prize in 2009, and the Haruhiko Oyabu Award in 2011, for his noir novel *Diner*, set in a restaurant where professional hit men gather. Among his other works is the 2011 story collection *An Outsider’s Death* (original English title).

Medical Examiner Series: Up in Flames

Ruriko Yuzuhara



151 x 105 mm
383 pages
Softcover
ISBN 978-4591126264
Rights sold: Taiwan

A house burns down in a quiet Setagaya, Tokyo neighborhood. The body found in the charred ruins is identified as that of a young IT entrepreneur recently in the limelight. Detective Kentaro Uesugi (35, male) and his assistant Go Masaki (early 20s, male) investigate. Young medical examiner Karin Kisaragi (early 20s, female) reports no indications of foul play, and witnesses note no suspicious persons coming or going, so the incident is initially investigated as an accidental fire. But Uesugi's instincts as a cop tell him otherwise, and he follows up by questioning the victim's mother, who is an actress; a brother, who is president of a national appliance store chain; and the brother's wife. The sister-in-law soon emerges as a suspect. Convinced that Kisaragi must have missed something in her postmortem, Uesugi shows the complete case file to a more experienced medical examiner and asks for a second opinion. This time the conclusion is death by strangulation: the fire had been set after the fact, in an attempt to cover up the murder. As the investigators follow the trail of clues, past cases with similar signatures come to light in Hakodate and Akita. Piecing together the serial killer/arsonist's psyche and background, they slowly but surely unravel the perfect crime. Two additional installments in the *Medical Examiner Series* have appeared to date: *Ha no kenshin* (The Devotion of the Blade) and *Mukuro no kairo* (Gallery of Corpses)

Consulting editor:

Masahiko Ueno (1929–) is a medical doctor and a leading expert in forensic medicine. He served as director of the Tokyo Medical Examiner's Office from 1984 to 1989. Since retiring from office, he has been active as an author, lecturer, and TV personality. His published works include *Shitai wa kataru* (Tales the Bodies Tell) and *Kansatsu-i no namida* (A Medical Examiner's Tears).

About the Author

Ruriko Yuzuhara (1955–) was born in Shizuoka Prefecture. After withdrawing from the Literature Department of Bunka Gakuin, she worked at a publishing house and as a freelance writer before turning to fiction. *Kansatsu-i shirizu: Hono'no kakusaku* (Medical Examiner Series: Up in Flames) was her maiden work.

All in for the Boy Detectives Club

Osamu Fujitani



186 x 136 mm

251 pages

Hardcover

ISBN 978-4591142486

Rights sold:

Edogawa Ranpo, whose adopted pen name closely mimics the pronunciation of Edgar Allan Poe in Japanese, is generally regarded as the father of modern Japanese mystery fiction. This book is the second volume in Poplar Publishing Company's homage to the author on the 120th anniversary of his birth. Among Ranpo's most popular works was the *Shōnen tanteidan* (Boy Detectives Club) series in which detective Kogorō Akechi is assisted in his sleuthing by a group of boys (and, in spite of the name, an occasional girl). In another of the author's popular series, Akechi is repeatedly pitted against an art and jewel thief and master of disguise known as *Kaijin nijūmensō*, or "The Fiend of Twenty Faces."

In this story that reproduces the style and flavor of Ranpo's writing (while also incorporating such 21st-century elements as cell phones), sixth-grader Genki Yoshida is the son of a Tokyo jeweler. His father hasn't been himself lately and seems depressed. One day when his father is out, a man in a mysterious-looking gray cloak visits the shop. He identifies himself as Kakui and tells Genki and his mother that his father is making a necklace out of jewels that carry a curse. Several days later, Kakui invites the Yoshida family to attend a violinist's audition. While they are listening to the beautiful Rumi Sakagawa play, the necklace Genki's father has brought along is lifted. Genki's father remains calm, and a group of children appear out of nowhere to surround Kakui and his cohorts and prevent them from getting away. Anticipating trouble, Genki had contacted members of the Boy Detectives Club beforehand, and had also arranged for Japan's greatest detective, Kogorō Akechi, to disguise himself as his father. Akechi exposes Kakui to be none other than the dastardly Fiend of Twenty Faces, who has gone in league with Rumi to steal the necklace. The would-be thieves manage to flee, but they have not given up on the necklace yet. On a day blanketed in deep fog, they kidnap Genki—except this kidnapping, too, has been anticipated, and the person nabbed is actually Akechi's young assistant Kobayashi disguised as Genki. Genki and the boy detectives worry about what might have happened to him, but then they find a message from Kobayashi hidden in a newspaper article. Leads in the article take them to a public bathhouse, which turns out to be Twenty Faces' hideout. Meanwhile, Akechi pays a visit to Mr. and Mrs. Yoshida, but is acting a little strange. Then a second Akechi arrives, as do the rescued Kobayashi and the boy detectives. Which Akechi is real and which is fake? The secret code word of the Boy Detectives Club becomes the key to uncovering the truth, and Twenty Faces is apprehended, bringing the incident to a close.

About the Author

Osamu Fujitani (1963–) was born in Tokyo and graduated from the College of Art at Nihon University. After working for a company he made his book publishing debut in 2003 with the novel *Andante Mozzarella Cheese* (Japanese title). *Ogata Q, to iu onna* (*A Woman Named Q Ogata*), which appeared in a magazine, was a candidate for the Shinchō Prize for New Writers in 2002. Subsequent works have also been listed for various prestigious literary prizes, among them the three-volume series *Fune ni nore!* (*Aboard Ship!*), a candidate for the Booksellers Award in 2010. Fujitani also operated the Ficciones bookstore in Tokyo, but closed it in 2014 to devote his time to writing.

The Dis-Ease Called Mother

Takashi Okada



188 x 129 mm

295 pages

Softcover

ISBN 978-4591131466

Rights sold: China, Korea and Taiwan

A psychiatrist draws on examples from his many years of experience working with mothers and their children to discuss some of the destructive dynamics that can enter the mother-child relationship, along with advice on how to ultimately free oneself from them.

There seem to be a growing number of people troubled in some way by their relationship with their mother. Some contend with emotionally unstable or moody mothers, over-protective mothers, or mothers who neglect their children to pursue relationships with men other than their children's father. Still others find that they can't detach from their mothers no matter how dysfunctional the relationship. Even in cases where mother and child seem well adjusted to each other, the mother may be emotionally manipulating the child; or the child may simply be "playing good," or may be tormented beneath the surface by endless negative thoughts from the fear of Mother's disapproval. The relationship a child has with his or her mother is in many ways the foundation on which all other human relationships are built; if unhealthy, it can hamper one's ability to form healthy interpersonal bonds, or lead to depression, eating disorders, and other emotional difficulties.

Author Takashi Okada analyzes a variety of such cases that are commonly seen today, drawn from his own experience as a psychotherapist. He discusses the relationships a number of famous people had with their mothers, from John Lennon to Herman Hesse to Arthur Schopenhauer. Of Lennon, who was kept in constant turmoil by an undisciplined mother and raised by his aunt, he writes, "... Lennon's music and his psyche cannot be understood apart from the sadness and uncertainty he experienced, or the anger he felt at her lack of stability. Without those experiences, the world would most likely never have had his music."

Delving sharply into the influence mothers have on their children, the work became an immediate hit when it first appeared, with readers ranging from their teens to their seventies offering comments like, "It changed my life," "It gave me new confidence," and "It brought me such relief, I bawled my head off."



The Dis-Ease Called Father

About the Author

Takashi Okada (1960–) earned his M.D. at the Kyoto University Graduate School of Medicine. A psychiatrist and author, he worked for many years at the Medical Detention Center for Juveniles in Kyoto before opening his own practice, Okada Clinic. He also currently holds a visiting professorship at Yamagata University. He is a leading authority on personality disorders and developmental disabilities, and, as a front-line clinician, works with patients to overcome mental and emotional challenges. His publications include *Personality Disorders*, *Children of Sadness*, *Intracerebral Pollution*, and *Asperger Syndrome*.

Please Don't Forget the Children

Masami Sasaki



216 x 155 mm

143 pages

Hardcover

ISBN 978-4591133859

Rights sold:

Do what gives the child joy. And make that your own joy. This alone will immeasurably improve the parent-child relationship . . . This book is a collection of “messages” about the joys and rewards of child rearing, written by a renowned child psychiatrist for parents and others who play a role in early childhood learning.

Unlike earlier eras when children were raised by extended families and even entire communities, child rearing today has become narrowly compartmentalized, and this places many new stresses on parents. Mothers are beset with uncertainties about how to interact with their children, whether their children’s social skills are developing appropriately, and so forth—sometimes to the point that there’s no longer any room for their own feelings. “The essence of child rearing is in always meeting the child face to face,” says the author as he gently discusses how to nurture the child’s natural abilities. It is a book that lets parents feel once again the joys and rewards of watching their children grow.

About the Author

Masami Sasaki (1935–), a child psychiatrist, has held positions at the Child Psychiatry Division of the University of British Columbia Faculty of Medicine, the Pediatrics Department of Tokyo Women’s Medical University, and the Children’s Rehabilitation and Guidance Center, and currently holds a special professorship at Kawasaki University of Medical Welfare. His publications include *Eyes on the Child, Will You Be Grateful for the Life You Lived?*, and numerous other books related to child rearing and the rehabilitation of children with developmental disabilities.

Today's Stretches

Editorial Supervision by **James Shuichi Nakano**

Illus. by **Taiki Enomoto**



256 x 186 mm

31 pages

Hardcover + Calender

ISBN 978-4591126202

Rights sold: Italy and Taiwan

If you get little exercise, experience frequent back and shoulder pain, or have thought about starting jogging but aren't sure you're up to it, basic conditioning to strengthen and tone your muscles is a smart place to start. Author James Shuichi Nakano, a personal trainer for nearly two decades, maintains that the first step is as simple as proper stretching, and presents a simple 11-week program based on his experience helping countless people with basic strengthening and sports injury prevention in this two-volume set.

Just three minutes a day of stretching can lengthen and loosen your muscles, relieve fatigue, correct imbalances, and promote better posture. The benefits are not instantaneous, however, as it generally takes eight weeks or more of daily stretches to achieve the desired results. It is with this in mind that Nakano developed the 77-stretch program presented here. It begins with two weeks of "Starter Stretches," continues with eight weeks of "Basic Stretches" that cover all muscle groups in the body, and ends with a final week of more difficult "Challenge Stretches."

The shorter first volume offers a discussion of the underlying principles, while the second introduces the 77 specific exercises, one to a page. By doing just one stretch a day, the reader will complete the program in 11 weeks. Thereafter, they can sustain the feeling of well-being that comes with improved flexibility by continuing with the stretches that they have found to be most helpful to them.



About the Author

James Shuichi Nakano (1971–) was a personal trainer who offers his services at sports clubs throughout the Tokyo area. His private clients range from top athletes (pro tennis player Kimiko Date-Krumm, table tennis player Ai Fukuhara, and others) to professional models, whom he advises on both mental and physical fitness. His books include *Ten Habits that Will Create a Younger You*, *Today's Stretches*, and *Today's Exercises*. He frequently serves as supervisory editor for magazine articles on exercise, and maintains a busy lecture schedule as well.

Today's Exercises

Editorial Supervision by **James Shuichi Nakano**
 Illus. by **Taiki Enomoto**



257 x 185 mm
 31 pages
 Hardcover + Calender
 ISBN 978-4591129111
 Rights sold:

This two-volume set offers a program of daily exercises that can easily be fit into the busiest of schedules. The shorter first volume discusses the principles one must follow for building a well-conditioned and youthful body, and maintaining it over time. The second introduces 55 specific exercises, one to a page, divided by level of difficulty into “Starters,” “Variations,” and “Challenges.”

The program has been structured for maximum efficiency based on findings that it takes at least eight weeks to build new muscle to a level where you can really feel the difference. The two-month training plan prescribes one week for the “Starters,” six weeks for the “Variations,” and one week for the “Challenges.” Once you have completed the initial eight weeks of conditioning, you can maintain the benefits over the long term by selecting the particular exercises you most need and doing them for just five minutes per day.



Cellular Exercises to Awaken Your Body

Hiroyuki Kobayashi and Nobuhiro Suetake



210 x 149 mm

103 pages

Softcover

ISBN 978-4591134955

Rights sold:

The human body is made up of as many as 60 trillion cells, and our physical and mental health depends on nutrient-rich blood reaching all of them. One of the most important keys to good circulation is a well-conditioned autonomic nervous system. Based on medical evidence and developed by a specialist in sports medicine, the exercises in this book are designed for effective, efficient enhancement of the autonomic nervous system's many functions.

Requiring easy-to-perform movements free of undue stress, the exercises can be done anywhere, anytime, and are equally appropriate for small children as they are for adults, the elderly, and highly conditioned athletes. No special equipment is required. By promoting good circulation throughout the body, the exercises help to reduce or relieve such symptoms as constipation, headaches, lethargy, fatigue, and cold extremities. And because they induce a calm sense of presence, they help athletes perform at the top of their game when incorporated into workouts and warm-ups. Many of Japan's best athletes have already adopted the exercises into their routines and confirmed their efficacy.

Ample photographs help readers understand exactly how each movement is to be performed.



About the Author

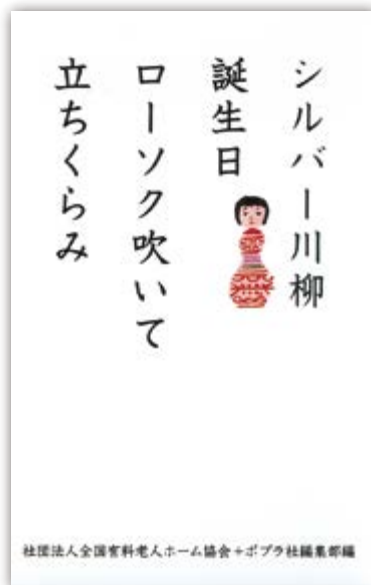
Hiroyuki Kobayashi (1960–) is a professor at Juntendō University Medical School and holds Japan Sports Association certification as a sports doctor. In the course of over 20 years of research spanning such fields as surgery, transplant surgery, immunology, the internal organs, the nervous system, and water and sports drinks, he zeroed in on the importance of achieving and maintaining a proper balance between the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems. As one of Japan's leading experts on the autonomic nervous system, he has advised numerous top athletes and celebrities on how to improve their conditioning and performance. Among his many publications is the 2011 bestseller *Naze "kore" wa kenkō ni ii no ka (Why "This" Is Good for Your Health)*.

Nobuhiro Suetake (1962–), MD, was educated at the Juntendō University Graduate School of Medicine, and holds certification as a specialist from the Japan Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery (JSAPS). He is director of the Sakae Clinic, where his practice centers on anti-aging diagnosis and treatment. He also conducts research in sports medicine as an adjunct faculty member of the Juntendō University School of Medicine. Certified as a professional boxing trainer by the Japan Boxing Commission, he has served as trainer to Olympic athletes, professional baseball players, professional golfers, combat athletes, and major performing artists as well.

Senior Senryu 1:

My Birthday Party / Blowing Out the Candles and / Nearly Blacking Out

Edited by The Japan Association of Retirement Housing



188 x 119 mm

126 pages

Softcover

ISBN 978-4591130728

Rights sold:

This book compiles 88 of the best senryu poems selected from among more than 10,000 submitted by golden-agers to an annual contest sponsored by the Japan Association of Retirement Housing. Each poem is accompanied by a warm-hearted illustration sure to bring smiles to readers' faces.

The senryu form is limited to the same 17 syllables as haiku, in lines of five, seven, and five. But whereas haiku require a seasonal word known as kigo, senryu do not, and instead of looking to nature, they usually poke fun at or satirize human behavior and society. These poems by veterans of all that life has to offer speak of memory loss, trips to the doctor, crotchety spouses, and other challenges of aging as if the best way to deal with them is to laugh them off. Yet even as the poems prompt laughs, they also inspire sympathy.

Pedometer count / Half the steps are from searching / For something I've lost

I'm in love, I thought / But the palpitations were / Just arrhythmia

Two additional volumes of Senior Senryu have appeared as of June 2014: Senior Senryu 2: Please to Open Wide / Once It Was for Sweet Sweet Love / Now It's for My Nurse, and Senior Senryu 3: In Our Next Lives, Too / Let's Vow to Be Together / I Say to My Dog.



About the Author

The Japan Association of Retirement Housing was established in 1982 for the protection and support of those living in retirement facilities, as well as to promote the healthy development of the industry. The association engages in a broad range of activities as the sole such body recognized in the Welfare Law for the Aged. Since 2001 it has sponsored an annual senryu poetry contest for seniors, with more than 120,000 submissions received to date.

Women's Senryu Circle 1:

How Are You Doing? / Spectacularly Fine, Thanks / At Least Till You Asked

Edited by **City Living**



188 x 119 mm

126 pages

Softcover

ISBN 978-4591132067

Rights sold:

This book compiles 88 of the best senryu—poems that, like haiku, make use of syllable counts but in their content address human nature rather than mother nature—submitted to an annual contest sponsored by Cityliving, a free weekly paper targeted primarily at women who work in office jobs. In the span of 17 well-chosen syllables, the poets spill their true feelings about the entire gamut of challenges they face as women working within the Japanese corporate structure, from interpersonal frictions in the workplace to romance and marriage, concerns about the future, and more. Each verse is accompanied by a humorous illustration, and contains telling elements that draw readers' sympathy even as they elicit laughter.

The senryu form is confined to the same 17 syllables as haiku, in lines of five, seven, and five. But whereas haiku require a seasonal reference known as kigo, senryu do not, and instead of looking to nature, they usually poke fun at or satirize the human condition and society:

This body of mine / Feeling not quite up to par— / Until five p.m.

Past the big four-oh / Time to drop the husband hunt / For a grave-plot hunt.

Who is this geezer? / My first thought before learning / We are the same age.

A second volume has also appeared, under the title *Women's Senryu Circle 2: The Mess Never Clears / Neither on Top of My Desk / Nor within My Life*.



About the Author

City Living is a weekly free paper published by Sankei Living Shimbun Inc. and targeted at women office workers. Besides an online presence, 660,000 paper copies are distributed weekly in eight separate regional editions (Sapporo, Sendai, Tokyo, Yokohama, Nagoya, Kyoto, Osaka-Kobe, and Fukuoka). The paper first appeared in 1984, and since 1997 has sponsored an annual senryu poetry contest, to which some 75,000 verses have been submitted in 17 years.

Kabuki Coloring Book: Yoshitsune and the Thousand Cherry Tree

Text by **Osamu Hashimoto** Illus. by **Yoshio Okada**



245 x 290 mm

40 pages

Softcover

ISBN 978-4591150894

Rights sold:

The world of Japan's kabuki theater comes to hands young and old in a coloring book based on *Yoshitsune senbonzakura* (Yoshitsune and the Thousand Cherry Trees), a picture book featuring climactic scenes from a kabuki play about the legendary late-12th century general Minamoto Yoshitsune that is included in a five-volume *Kabuki emaki* (Kabuki Picture Scroll) series by the same authors. The play is among the two or three most popular works in the kabuki repertoire—on a par with *Kanadehon chūshingura* (Chūshingura), which tells the famous story of the 47 loyal *ronin* (masterless samurai) who avenged the death of their master.

The book opens with a detailed plot summary of the Yoshitsune story by author Osamu Hashimoto, and beautifully colored sample pictures by illustrator Yoshio Okada. Twelve dramatic scenes from the play are then presented in line-drawing form for readers to color: Yoshitsune receiving the coveted Hatsune drum, his mistress Lady Shizuka dancing, his loyal retainer Benkei battling agents of the Shogunate who are pursuing Yoshitsune, and so forth. Readers have the choice of using the sample illustrations as models, or following their own instincts in selecting colors as they immerse themselves in the elegant world of kabuki. The coloring pages are perforated for easy removal from the book so they can be placed on display.

About the Author

Osamu Hashimoto (1948–) graduated from the University of Tokyo and worked as an illustrator before becoming a writer. He first made it into print after receiving an honorable mention in the 1977 Shōsetsu Gendai Prize for New Writers competition for *Momojiri musume* (Restless Rena), a story of bumpy adolescence narrated by a high-school girl, which subsequently became a series. Since then he has published not only fiction but literary criticism and essays as well as modern Japanese translations of classics such as *The Tale of Genji*, turning out numerous bestsellers. His critical acumen, breadth of knowledge, and versatile command of the written word have earned him the appellation “genius” among many of his writer colleagues. Hashimoto received the Kobayashi Hideo Prize in 2002 for *Mishima Yukio to wa nanimono datta no ka* (Who Was Yukio Mishima?), a work of criticism. His first fiction prize came in 2005, when he won the Shibata Renzaburō Award for his short-story collection *Chō no yukue* (Where Butterflies Go); in 2008 he was awarded the Mainichi Publishing Culture Award for his modern Japanese translation of *The Tale of Heike*. His more recent works include the novels *Junrei* (Pilgrimage, 2009), *Hashi* (Bridge, 2010), *Ria ke no hitobito* (The House of Lear, 2010), and *Saiwai wa furu hoshi no gotoku* (Happiness Is Like Falling Stars, 2012).

Yoshio Okada (1937–) was born in Hyōgo Prefecture. With a distinctive style characterized by delicate lines and dazzling color, he has provided illustrations and cover art for a broad range of literary works, including contemporary fiction based on *The Tale of Genji* and other classics, and numerous titles in which he has collaborated with Seiko Tanabe and other authors to create modern-day versions of the *e-zōshi* graphic novels that were popular during the Edo period (1603–1867). He is often called a modern ukiyo-e master for his use of bright colors, flamboyant compositions, and sensual lines that evoke a world all his own. In recent years he has collaborated with kabuki expert Osamu Hashimoto, producing original kabuki-themed artwork and promoting the development of this traditional art form.

Bibi Goes to Africa

Text by **Ichiro Tagawa**

Illus. by **Mitsuo Nakamura**



148 x 210 mm
78 pages
Softcover
ISBN 978-4591146125
Rights sold:

This is a sequel to *Bibi*, a picture book for adults set in author Ichirō Tagawa’s hometown in Yamaguchi Prefecture and telling of a stray cat named Bibi and a middle-aged man who have a meeting of the hearts, only to become separated in the end. In this second installment, Bibi makes a journey to Africa.

Remembering how her friend used to talk about Africa, Bibi finds a ship in Yokohama harbor headed for the distant continent and stows away on board. When she arrives, she heads westward to explore. She sees firsthand what the desert is like, how the people live, what their schools and markets and clinics are like, and how much effort they must put into obtaining water. She learns about slums on the outskirts of big cities where poor people live, about refugee camps for people who have had to flee civil strife, about child soldiers sent into battle by guerrillas, about forced child labor in diamond mines, and other unhappy realities that are part of life for the people who dwell there. A cat she meets named Salaam offers to be her guide, and along the way the two cats compare notes on the life and culture of their native lands.

Tagawa has for years accompanied actress, writer, and UNICEF goodwill ambassador Tetsuko Kuroyanagi to Africa, producing television documentaries of the trips. His experiences from visiting nearly 20 different countries on the continent are reflected vividly in this book, making it not only a travelogue but a prayer for the children and for peace. “Cats don’t go around fighting and killing each other. People have a thing or two to learn from us,” says Salaam at one point, and his words continue to resonate long after the last page.

About the Author

Ichirō Tagawa (1939–) was born in Yamaguchi Prefecture and graduated from Hiroshima University. He joined TV Asahi directly out of college and produced programming for the company straight through to retirement age. He began covering actress, writer, and UNICEF goodwill ambassador Tetsuko Kuroyanagi’s trips to Africa in 1984, and has continued to accompany her as a freelance producer even after his retirement. At home in Yamaguchi he runs a blueberry farm and is active in his local community. In 2013 he launched the Tabuse Whole Park Project, a grand experiment aimed at turning his entire hometown of Tabuse into a park. His publications includes *Shiruku-rōdo maboroshi no ōkoku: Rōran kara no tegami* (The Lost Kingdom on the Silk Road: Letter from Lou-lan; 1988), *Bibi* (2009), and *Bibi no Afurika ryokō* (Bibi Goes to Africa; 2015).

Mitsuo Nakamura (1953–) was born in Tokyo, and works as an illustrator and essayist. Reflecting his fondness for remote regions of the world, much of his work both as artist and essayist is on nature and travel themes. His travels have taken him from the Himalayas to the European Alps, Patagonia, and more. Among his many publications are *Nonbiri-yama ni hi wa noboru* (Sunrise on Carefree Mountain; 1998), *Yamatabi no ehon* (A Picture Book of Mountain Travel; 2002), and *Oedo chōteizan sanpo* (A Tour of Tokyo’s Ultra-Low Mountains; 2007). Books he has illustrated include *Bibi* (2009) and *Bibi no Afurika ryokō* (Bibi Goes to Africa; 2015).

Kuma-Kuma Chan's Travels

Kazue Takahashi



172 x 133 mm
52 pages
Hardcover
ISBN 978-4591152966
Rights sold: Canada, China
and The United States

This is the third installment in the *Kuma-Kuma Chan* series, which has won a wide following in Japan, especially among women, and is now spreading its fan base elsewhere in Asia, Europe, and the United States through translations. The main character in the series is Kuma-Kuma, a cute and cuddly bear (*kuma* means “bear” in Japanese) who lives by himself in the mountains and likes to go on trips from time to time. The stories are narrated by his penpal, a city boy who doesn’t always understand the things Kuma-Kuma relates in his letters.

Kuma-Kuma flies off to a south sea isle to lie in the sun and drift into a lazy snooze . . . (turn page) . . . in his imagination. He climbs to the summit of a mountain to view the sunrise while drinking a fresh-brewed cup of coffee . . . (turn page) . . . in the story that he is writing. He flies up into the sky like a bird and looks down on the earth below . . . (turn page) . . . in anticipation of which, he makes a point of getting to know birds better now. He travels back to before he was born to find out what kind of animal he was in a previous life . . . in his dreams. Instead of physically setting out for one place or another, he travels freely all over the world inside his head. But there are also days when he finds it impossible to travel even in this way, in which case he climbs up onto the roof and lies gazing up at the ever-changing clouds and passing birds all day long.

Kuma-Kuma writes down his travel accounts and sends them to his narrator friend, but he scrawls them out in such a hurry that the boy has trouble reading the writing. The boy is left to imagine for himself where Kuma-Kuma is traveling and what transpires there. The story ends as he looks forward to the day when he will get to see Kuma-Kuma again—somewhere on his travels.



About the Author

Kazue Takahashi (1971–) made her debut as a picture-book author with *Kuma-Kuma Chan The Little Bear* in 2001, and also works as an illustrator for other authors. Her picture books include *Nyāko the Cat*, *The Squirrel Telephone System*, *Little Bear Sees In the New Year*, and *Rainy Day Bear*. Titles she has illustrated include *Tell Me a Story* (text by Kyoko Hara) and *Somebody's Canvas Bag* (story by Miyako Moriyama). www.kumanekonikki.jugem.jp

That Day When the Great East Japan Earthquake hit Tohoku

Kuninori Takahashi



264 x 218 mm
65 pages
Hardcover
ISBN 978-4591125281
Rights sold: China

When the Great East Japan Earthquake hit the Tohoku region on March 11, 2011, the author, who is originally from the region, was working in Libya. He immediately went back to his hometown and decided to take photos of local people, not the scene. Many people stood in front of his camera and said that they should try their best because there are people who suffer more.

Every time the author heard these words, he was amazed, and at the same time, he wondered why they could say that despite the fact that many of them lost their own families. He came to realize that people cheer themselves up by saying that, and they also keep their dignity by caring about others. The book consists of photos and words of local people who lived through the hardships.



About the Author

Kuninori Takahashi, born in 1966, worked for the Boston Herald and Chicago Tribune. As a photographer, he currently works in Mumbai, India.

Bicycles, Creak Creak

Text by **Yoshihiko Funazaki**

Illus. by **Keiko Ajito**



226 x 225 mm
32 pages
Hardcover
ISBN 978-4591126165
Rights sold:

“I look up, so that I can see you always. Though I cannot see or hear or touch you, I know you are there, at my side, while I am here.” The story in this picture book is narrated by a girl who lost someone very special. The monochrome illustrations gently and deeply touch readers’ hearts. The Great East Japan Earthquake of 2011 has left more than 2,000 children orphaned or without parental care. This book focuses on the inner experience of the child, the feeling that loved ones who passed away are always there with us, and our will to live for the future.



About the Author

Yoshihiko Funazaki (1945–) was born in Tokyo. A novelist, poet, and illustrator, he teaches at Shirayuri College, and is known for playful works that blend fantasy with botany. His books for young readers include *Koko ni iru* (I’m Here), *Ame to dōbutsuen* (Rainy Zoo), and *Gekkō no Kopan* (Copan in the Moonlight). He has also written the stories for such picture books as *Ano ko ga mieru* (I See That Kid; illustrated by Keiko Ajito), *Aishiteiru* (I Love You; illustrated by Tarō Okamoto), and *Mamono no okurimono* (The Demon’s Gift; illustrated by Akira Uno).

Keiko Ajito was born in Hakodate, Hokkaido and graduated from Tama Art University in Tokyo. Known for her gentle, dreamy portrayals of young girls, she has illustrated such picture books as *Ano ko ga mieru* (I See that Kid; text by Yoshihiko Funazaki), *Hanamame no nieru made* (Till the Flower Beans Boil; text by Naoko Awa), which won the 1994 Akaitori Illustration Award, and *Yume no hata* (At the Far End of a Dream; text by Naoko Awa).

Kabuki Picture Book Series

Text by **Osamu Hashimoto**

Illus. by **Yoshio Okada**



Proper Upbringing of a Young Lady at Mount Imose

This is a popular story of Kabuki, a theatrical art that started in the 17th Century in Japan. It's a fantasy and love story based on a well-known historical incident, "Reformation of Taika" in the 7th Century during which everyone joined hands to defeat the vicious head of a powerful family. The story is told with simple wording and beautiful illustrations. It's a perfect introductory book of Kabuki, which children, as well as adults, can enjoy.

252 x 256 mm

54 pages

Hardcover

ISBN 978-4591129265

Rights sold:



The Spirit of Sugawara



The Battles of Coxinga

About the Author

Osamu Hashimoto, born in 1948, is a well-known writer in Japan. He writes fiction and critical essays, as well as translates Japanese classics into modern Japanese.

Yoshio Okada, a popular illustrator, is known for his use of color and delicate illustrations.



'17 POPLAR
Foreign Rights Catalog

Design: Mihoko Takahashi

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