



VOL. 6

CRCS

# EDITORIAL

CROP consists of ideas springing out of a treasure box named the power of creation. University is blessed with good chances to express, BUT are you really satisfied with that??

If you aren't, CROP is the best thing for you. Amazing stories, poems, and other writings are waiting inside!



**Welcome to the CROP world!! where  
Editors help every student to be a writer.**

**All of you students: YOU must have your own world inside of you and  
Letting your ideas come out from your mind can  
Lead you to be more open, creative, and attractive.**

**Can't read? Can't write? Can't create? The  
Answer is  
NO!!!!**

**Be the Shakespeare of MGU!!!  
Express yourself!!!**

**CROP can offer you a good opportunity to share your work with other people and to  
Read many writings other students create.  
Especially those who love literature should not miss it, just try!  
Author is YOU, so don't care about little things, just try!  
Think deeply. Think delightfully. Think seriously. Think playfully.  
Original thinking is important to create writings.  
Readers will enjoy exploring your world.  
Sending your work to CROP can be the first step to be a writer!!!**

*FROM THE EDITORS*

## CREATIVE IS AS CREATIVE DOES

Creativity is an action on the world. It is not passive, shy, reticent, or confused. It is bold, assertive, aware and kind. Someone once said that the mark of weak or false creativity is the lack of contact. The best creativity has lots of contact, with deep connections and close intimacy. The creative works in this sixth edition of CROP have contact, and lots of it.

The works in CROP you have in hand make contact with emotions, insights, situations and opinions about the world. That's what creativity is: a way of making contact. It's the thing that often feels most lacking in this day and age of distance, where we text message instead of touch, finger a touchpad instead of hold hands, and glance at stickers and emoticons instead of looking directly into people's eyes.

With all the technology in between people, we are becoming strangers to ourselves, pulled away by our cellphones, computers and the information overload of the digital age. A lot of the time, we don't even know who we are, or why we do what we do, much less why other people do what they do. We lack closeness and end up lost.

Creativity helps us find ourselves and find ways to get close to what's important. It helps us find a place from which we can understand things, feel things and learn how to enjoy both the good and bad parts of life. To create a poem, an essay, or a story in this day and age is to make contact and find a mental space that is not manufactured by social institutions, technology, the media or corporate consumer culture.

Inside these creative spaces, inside the writing, we can make fresh contact with ourselves and with other people in unique ways. Creativity is truly intimate, open and free. You can't say that about many experiences in life anymore.

What is so special about the creative writing you will find inside this year's CROP is that feeling of restoring important intimacies and freedoms. You will also find young writers with the confidence to take on challenges. These works have the feeling of young writers just being people, and moving towards the best side of being human.

The writers explore what is most important in life—love, friendship, understanding and growth. They also struggle with what holds us back—confusion, pride, disappointment and worry. And marvelously, these writers find forms for their feelings, words for their thoughts, expressions for their inner worlds that make the outer world a more understandable, interesting and creative place.

Thanks, writers! And readers, enjoy!

MICHAEL PRONKO  
CROP ADVISOR

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# LOVE IS CHOCOLATE

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*Misa Hayashi*

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# CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CUSTOMER IN A CAFÉ

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*Junna Matsunaga*

One day, when I was working as a waitress in a café, Mother Leaf. I learned unforgettable lessons from three different types of customers of the day. There was a person who ordered immediately, a person who took a long time to order, and a person who always ordered the same drink. They expanded my world that was changed by the way they order their drinks. Through these experiences, I learned you can classify a person easily. Hopefully it will help us to make difference for the future.

A type of the person who ordered immediately was positive and decisive. They seemed to be satisfied with their decisions that they made. These people do just keep moving forward. On the day I was working, a business man came. He immediately ordered as he looked through the menu. And whenever foods came, I saw that he was enjoying eating. But as soon as he finished with his dishes, he left the café. I thought he was busy. Probably it was the way that he had been treated himself. He didn't have enough time to think so that he kept walking anyway.

The more interesting personality I learned was a deep thinker and careful. People who take a long time to order have those personalities. They can look at themselves objectively. They have a strong preference for drinks that they really like. I encountered a woman who really liked to talk with people. When I brought the menu, she started to ask me some questions about our menu. I said I will come back when she is ready to order. After a while, I went to take her order but she was not ready yet. Then I realized that she was a waverer that was considering both benefits and disadvantages. The customer made up her mind and started to eat. This type of person stay a long time at their table, I thought at the moment.

The most important lesson that I learned is people who order the same drinks all the time are honest and serious. They walk their own way even if others say something about it. There was a regular customer, a woman who

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CUSTOMER IN A CAFÉ

always came on every Sunday evening and sat in the same table as usual. Then she had the same drink. These people seem to know themselves more than other people and never give up things they like.

There is the way to see people with their order. One who orders immediately is optimistic. Second, the person who takes time to order is a worrywart. Finally, the person who always has the same thing has their own intentions.

Through those customers that I met, I could notice how to serve them and people could be classified with their order. Today, there are many restaurants and cafés all over the world. Also there are people who work there like me, and people who go there as customers. To keep those customers happy, servers have to listen carefully to what they need. There is a phrase to keep thinking about customers. “No matter how rude you think customers are, the customer is always right”.

# I HAVE A DREAM

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*Fumie Yamazaki*

Yes, we have a dream what want to make come true. Ideal, dreams... These things are essential for life. People say “self-realization” is the most important thing in our life, so live for your dreams and ideals of life. However, I want to say, perhaps there is another way to enjoy life and it must be good one to love, cherish your own life. That is why I chosen this art.

Honestly, I am a person who is not interested in art, especially this kind of painting. Nevertheless, this work is still in my mind and gives me a chance to think about life. I think everyone has a history. Of course I have my history. Hard time, deep sorrow, unspeakable joy...many things that nobody can avoid experiencing, except me, were still breathing in me. And I know they made me who I am day by day. In my history, Choices or actions that I did for these things were not always correct and perfect. Sometimes I hurt someone, sometimes what I did made things more difficult, and sometimes I learned “justice” always get a victory.

Considering about them, my “history” was filled with imperfect, lacking things. It is totally far from ideal, dreams that I want for my life. Is that bad? Does it take the meaning of life away? I guess most people are depressed about it and lose the worth of living. But I want to say, we can find love, feeling of fondness and kindness in the imperfectly, lacking parts of life. As you can’t hear the songs of birds when you hear the rock music with an i-pod, if you are depressed with your life because of being far from your ideal, and you are under control of the dark huge feeling, you can’t feel thankful for tiny things.

Our life is strewn with many such little love and happiness though!

So I think you must not live “in” the ideal or dreams, but you must live “with” them. When you can do that, I am sure that you are going to realize your life, and yourself are very precious, only one. Well, so let’s see this art. These guys are not beautiful, perfect at all. Honestly, their appearance is a little ugly, rough, there is not any attraction.



## I HAVE A DREAM

Human being can't be perfect with any efforts. However, this is life. This is human being. Every species are living in you. I know sometimes living life is cruel, too hard. But you know you can remember a little love, happiness, beautiful moments, that you were there. What a wonderful and beautiful creature, human being! It is privilege for only human being. Exactly you are chosen to live your life today, and tomorrow. Believe that every experiences, feelings, thinking, and times will be sure to make you.

However, human being tend to be disappointed with their imperfectness, judge others and look down on them. Though nobody is perfect, why can't most people realize the truth?

Well, it is nearly impossible to let everyone know this, but I do not want to be a person who is too proud to respect the life of others. I wouldn't be who I am without my experiences, so I want to be proud of the amazing thing. Honestly, I am really surprised that I can think about life so much from the art, especially "painting." I have thought about it from music before though. Music, painting, poetry... any kind of art is a language that people can't express their feeling only with words, normal grammar. We can tell a lie with words, in conversation, but people can't tell a lie in the art. Because art is the mirror of the heart. That is why "art" touch people's heart and lives in them. Anybody wants something steady, true. So I guess they catch the glimpse of that in each one of the art works.

Finally I realized a role of painting! Art is a voice of voiceless! So when we look, listen, smell carefully the work, if you realize that the art flatters the senses, "the voice" of the art will be yours. It is very interesting that the voice is different for each one. Therefore art has attracted people for a long, long time. An amazing work has done, and it will attract people forever. I want to meet more paintings, music, art. It is the first time to think like that for me! Art is beyond the languages, countries!

# COLORFUL IN THE BLACK

---

*Ayaka Handa*

You are the happiest heartbeat for me  
I like your silky long hair sparkles in the sunlight  
I like your little earrings swing with your skip  
I like your favorite white skirt flutters in the wind  
I like your brilliant pink shoes lightly stamped  
Faster than I think, my heart thinks about you  
If I can touch your hand, I am sure I will like you  
Do you like me?

The colorless under the name of black  
It lets in all brilliance and colors  
For you live in the colorful world,  
I am also one of the parts to beautifully color you  
It is a little scrap of special  
It is an irreplaceable necessity  
The reverse of black is not white  
Everything makes a pair, everything is different  
That is you and I

Our distance is a moment as faraway light-years  
With dazzling brightness, with consuming heat,  
I am imprinted sizzling here  
The usual place I go before I know it  
The familiar figure I imagine without remembering  
You and I are the same shape fit like a jigsaw puzzle  
My cold body to act your every move  
Though I am here with heat in my heart,  
Why do I not have warm temperature like you?

## COLORFUL IN THE BLACK

Always I search the light to meet you  
One straight ray guides me to you  
An amber round splendor wraps us, I get bigger than you  
I have a feeling that I can protect you as of right now  
With only moonlight, I cannot see you  
When city lights went on, you become blurred vaguely  
Darkness brings stars, I am taken away to a distance  
Because of more beautiful things, I disappear from your world  
There is not any sign of me

Sometimes it presses against each other  
Sometimes it becomes one  
Sometimes it swallows up  
Gradually, suddenly, steadily  
You are a reason why I am here  
There is my heart where you are at  
Because you become excited, I dance with you  
Because you stop with your head down, I am sewn on there  
Always I am just your pantomimer  
My feeling just goes into hiding

You walk in front of me just like a waymark  
You walk behind me just like a playing tag  
You walk next to me just like a best friend  
Because you are on my day, everything is beautiful  
I savor the happiness of same tiny steps  
Same sky, same air, same place

## COLORFUL IN THE BLACK

Under the new-washed sun, we jump across puddles  
Raindrops dance glistening like seraphic wings  
I feel I can fly off from darkness with angel  
You mean the world to me  
You never knew that  
The footprints behind you  
There is nothing I left  
There is nothing of two of us  
Certainly we walk this way, we looked at the same scenery  
The rest is only your path without me, my emptiness  
I am quite alike you  
But you are not  
It does not change how many times the sun rounds

Look up at the only dazzling world  
Morning sunlight makes me reborn  
I want to pass the indigo night with you  
Only once in a day, please remember me  
Only once in a day, I forget you  
Today the sky is a cloudless blue  
I will run to you in the sun as always  
You have only to smile bathed in sunshine  
Faster than you think, I stay by your side  
I hope you like me

# STUDENTS

*Erika Ayabe*

Wake up in the morning as early as possible if you can. Run to the station as soon as possible. Be sure to send a message on line to ask your friend to answer instead of you. Get a piece of paper which shows “Train’s Delay.” Sleep if you got a hangover. Keep reaction papers on your own. You can be absent for three times. You can attend the same lectures again next year. Wear the cute or cool clothes, which are very popular. Say “Way!” when you are happy. Ask “Why do you have?” then answer “Cause I want some more.” Say, “I see.” Be sure not to forget that your life is only “One chance.” Respect Steve Jobs and use his products, because it has many apps. This is how to make money; this is how to get rid of stress, make an account of Twitter and use it everywhere, anytime, but be sure not to tweet with the pictures that you did some bad things in your part time job’s place; this is how to quite your part time job which you really hate; this is how to make friends; this is how to celebrate friends’ birthdays; this is how to organize the drinking party; this is how to spend a time after the last train leaving; this is how to spend all night with your friends: go to karaoke or drinking in the house of one of your friends, who lives alone; this is how to get the scholarship; this is how to be the top of your university; this is how to get “S”; this is how to get “A”; this is how to get “B”; this is how to get “C”; this is how to prevent getting “D”, “F” or “E”; don’t get “N” in order not to make your GPA lower, and this is how to find the class which you can get your credit more easy; this is how to prevent from “take the same lecture next year again”, and this is how to prevent from remaining in the same class for another year. Make your university days “real-satisfactory” but “non-real-satisfactory.” Make a lover, have a part time job, join a club activity, go to the balling or karaoke, never sleeping and after that, go to the lecture. You are not high school or junior high school student, you know; don’t think too much about only studying very hard--you might do whatever you want or the thing which you will not be able to do after you

## STUDENTS

graduate from university; but don't be nervous that you don't have enough rich things compared with people around you. Eat ramen after you get drunk. Find the ramen shop which you think is the best as many as you can. Go to Starbucks coffee, order the famous sweets or the newest menus which are so called "period limited" and take some pictures with your "Instagram," and then tweet. Set up your Facebook account and share these pictures which you took with your friends. I know you guys really like to show off that you are really happy person and your private experiences are satisfaction enough and you have many many friends; you are not alone anymore, that will pay some attention for others. Attend the class with your friends and have a seat with them not in front of the black board but near the door. Make a friend in your lectures which have a midterm report in order to share the information of it. Make a friend in your third language class in order not to drop out. Make a friend if you want to attend the lectures which you didn't register the courses or other university secretly. Make a friend if you want to belong to the club. Make a friend outside your university; but why do I have to make a friend and contact with a bunch of them everywhere? you mean to say that after all you are really going to be the kind of student who doesn't feel life sucks?

# YOU HAVE A HAMBURGER

---

*Ayumi Terasawa*

You have a hamburger. It  
looks very delicious, but you don't  
know anything about what you will eat.  
Do you know the fact that one hamburger  
is consisted of 500 beef cattle. It means  
you will eat the minced beef  
consisted of 500 cattle. How is the risk of  
Mad cow disease? And you don't know  
about the place the lettuce produced.  
Is that really healthy lettuce?

more than  
20 kinds of additives  
are mixed in to the wheat.  
Of course, wheat will be genetically  
modified. Why is the hamburger  
so cheap? Now the hamburger  
has released the very good smell.  
You can eat it right now.  
You can make your child eat it.  
On the other hand, you can stop  
for a while and can think.

There is a hamburger in the face of you....

# MY BIRTHDAY WITH MY GIRLFRIEND

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*Ayumi Terasawa*

**S**he looks different from usual today.

**U**sually she doesn't speak so much.

**R**estaurant where we are in is very gorgeous.

**P**eaceful atmosphere is created by music, dishes, and lighting.

**R**estaurant's waiter whispers in her ear.

**I** ask her if she is all right.

**S**uddenly, everything goes black, and she says.

**E**verything is for you!



# WHAT SHE WRITES

*Ayumi Terasawa*

A girl sits at a desk grasping a pen tightly. There was a writing paper which didn't have any words in front of her. She gave out a big sigh and looked at the outside of the window. There was a small park in front of her house and she could look down on the park from her room in second floor. Many children and their parents were playing and talking in the park. She wrote some word down the paper and read it.

"Many children and their parents are playing and talking in the park. I'm so jealous..."

Cicadas were singing outside and trees of the park looked thick in vivid green. Looking at the children sweating, she thought that season was in August. Then, someone knocked at the door of her room.

She replied, and her mother entered.

"How is it going?"

"So-so."

She answered and crushed the sheet of the paper up into a ball.

"It's unusual for you to be in the house on a holiday."

"You know I don't have enough time."

Her mother shrugged her shoulder and left the room. Silence visited again. She wrote some word down the paper and read it.

"The mother shrugs her shoulder and leaves the room. Same as usual..."

She really realized that she could only write what she actually looked or thought from the bottom of her heart. Always and anytime, her brain was creating quite a lot words and the words passed. She put the writing materials and manuscript paper in the bag. She also packed some sweets and made up her face. She left her room, and ran downstairs.

"That's what I thought."

She heard her mother's voice but did not care. She opened the door and the outer air was sultry. She thought that everything was much realer than

## WHAT SHE WRITES

that of her narrow room and said,

“What is necessary is just to write the things I feel truly.”

The children looked very pleasant outside. She decided that she would never become the adult who easily said and wrote what they didn't see, feel, or thought in her summer at the age of sixteen.

# WHY CROWS BECOME BLACK? HERB FOR HER

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YURIE ITO

Once upon a time, a gray crow was flying with muddy grasses in his mouth. He was feeling a sense of mission. He remembered his happy life with one person. After several minutes, he perched on a windowsill and pecked on the window several times. Then, a girl who looked pale sat up in her bed slowly, and opened the window.

“Thank you.”

She rang the bell, and a maid came into her room. The maid took plants from the crow’s mouth, and went downstairs.

It was ten years ago that the girl found the crow in the garden of her house. At that time, it had a snow white body. She fell in love with the color at first sight, so she wanted to keep it. She put crumbs of bread on the windowsill to call it. Because the crow was very hungry, it entered her room soon. Although she liked its hue, it flew violently in her room for the first week.

She was a little afraid of it, yet she really wanted a friend. That’s because she felt lonely. She was an only child and her parents lived in another country because of their jobs. She lived alone with her maid. So, she opened her mind to the crow, and she tried making friends with it.

Day by day, he understood her kindness and became her playmate. She always smiled, and stroked his feathers. When she had dinner, he ate special feed cooked by a maid. When she went to bed, he lay on her side and he never slept before she fell asleep. When she was sad, he always stayed near her. When morning came, he woke her up by poking her right shoulder tenderly.

One day, when he tried to tell that it’s time to get up, he noticed that she sweated profusely. Because he has never seen such her condition, he rang the bell repeatedly.

## WHY CROWS BECOME BLACK? HERB FOR HER

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“What’s the matter with you?” opening the door, a maid said. She touched the girl’s forehead. In fact, she ran a high fever.

“To get it down, certain herb is the best medicine... However, it grows very far from here, so to lie quietly is necessary now,” the maid said putting a wet towel on her head.

After several days, her temperature was still high. The crow couldn’t stand seeing the poor girl, so he decided to fetch the herb from the deep forest. When he tried to go out, the girl said in a low voice,

“No...no, don’t go. Just stay with me!”

She didn’t want to look at his dirty body because of mud.

“I also like my sweet color, but I can wash my body,” in his mind he thought and flew away. It took thirty minutes to get to the forest. He flew through woods and he found a swamp. In it, there were the ingredients of the medicine. He dipped into the dirty water courageously. He pulled herbs from the water strongly and shook his body.

When she woke up, she found his color still white, so she felt relieved. However, on the table, there was the medicine made by the maid.

“...What happened?”

The crow looked at it and her alternatively as if he wanted to tell her his work. There were tears on her cheeks. Then, the maid came and she gave that to her slowly.

After that, he fetched them from the interior every day. As days passed, she got better. At the same time, as time passed, the crow’s color got dark. Even if he washed his body, the part of mud never removed. When the girl completely recovered, the crow’s color became jet-black.

...Like this, a crow had a white body at first. However, he has a black one now. This color suggests his kindness and love for her...

# THINGS LEFT BEHIND IN THIS SEASON

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YURIE ITO

I **W**ear a fluffy coat.

My legs are **i**n a long pair of boots.

My neck is surround**ed** by a wool muffler.

My head is also covered with**h** a knitted cap.

Well, it's time**e** to go out!

Oh, I for**r**got my gloves, so I reach into nice and warm pockets...

# THE FAULT IN FALLEN FALL LEAF

---

*Riho Shoji*

When I smell the scent of autumn season, it can't help reminding me of my twelve-year-old memory in 1998. I pick up one fallen leaf and mutter, "Sorry", hoping that this feeling reaches him. Then, the strong wind blows it off.

"Why don't you compete in flowing leaf?" Kenichi suddenly raised his voice because he couldn't stand the tedium in the autumn evening. I immediately glanced at Yuta and tried to judge his feeling. He seemed to be for the idea so that I replied to him my agreement. Akari who was not fond of competing also unwillingly accepted it. We moved to the grove where there was a stream and started to look for fallen leaves that attracted us.

"Hey! My beautiful leaf must be the winner regarding looks!"

The leaf Akari proudly chose was a lovely flawless maple, but it was very typical and indifferent to me. The one I found was colored red and had one black point on the upper right because it looked like the mole under my right eye. Kenichi selected a very firm green leaf that looked perfectly strong. When Yuta came to us with his leaf, I felt we seemed to hit it off because it was different color, yellow, but had one black point too. I just hoped the sound of the falling water could hide my heartbeat. After we went upstream, each of us took our own positions.

"Yuta, I will defeat you this time. Prepare yourself!"

Kenichi had never won in any other contests and indicated his opposition to Yuta.

"Are you ready, guys? On your mark. Get set. Go!"

The flowing leaf contest finally started with Yuta's call. As soon as everyone let go of the leaves, they flowed rapidly. I just ran after my partner. When it approached the midstream, nobody was around me.

As far as I knew, Yuta and Akari were ahead of me and Kenichi was the last. Then, I heard Kenichi's shout and guessed his leaf was in trouble. As

## THE FAULT IN FALLEN FALL LEAF

my leaf accelerated suddenly, I could catch up with Akari. Our leaves reached downstream simultaneously and we found Yuta was already here. After a while, Kenichi appeared with his broken leaf. We picked up our own leaves and showed them to each other to prevent cheating.

At the moment, I could hardly believe my eyes. Yuta's leaf was yellow, to be sure, but didn't have the black mark. No one noticed it except for me. I really didn't know what should I do, but what I feared most was being disliked by him. So, I couldn't tell the truth to everyone. Yuta raised his eyebrows to show he won. Kenichi couldn't defeat him again and seemed to get irritated at his attitude.

The following day, Kenichi still had a grudge and proposed a second flowing leaf contest. At this time, I turned my face away from Yuta's leaf because I never wanted to witness his cheating. Although I really didn't feel like doing the contest, it finally began. In the race, my leaf didn't flow smoothly and I was the loser. When I finished last, Akari who came in third intermediate between Yuta and Kenichi.

"Yuta, I know you cheated." Kenichi was in great agitation.

"What are you talking about?" Yuta seemed to pretend to be innocent.

I felt really let down about what he did again and couldn't stand his lie anymore.

"That's enough! I know you lie!" The words I spoke out surprised and stopped him from denying it.

"Erena, are you kidding?"

"No. Admit your fault and tell what you did honestly, please."

Then, he was thoroughly disappointed with me and went away without saying anything.

Kenichi stared at me doubtfully and asked, "Why are you on my side?"

## THE FAULT IN FALLEN FALL LEAF

Actually, I don't know if he cheated or not, but I just wanted to defeat him by whatever it takes."

"Huh? But I know Yuta cheated yesterday. After the contest, his leaf didn't have one black mark which there was before."

Then, Akari interrupted us.

"Ahh, I never noticed the black mark, but I saw he painted something on his leaf before the race."

My face turned as white as a sheet. Yuta never cheated. The black point just faded away into the stream. My misunderstanding led to what I was afraid of. Why didn't I trust his words? Why did I hurt the person who I had admired? That was my fault.

One day, Yuta suddenly moved and we never met again. What I regret still now after twenty years have passed since then is I couldn't apologize to him because I was too ashamed to face him in those days.

The important thing is we should tell our feeling as soon as we want to do because nobody knows when unexpected events will happen.



# FOR ME

*Junya Takahashi*

It has been raining, which takes away  
My passions since yesterday. The end of easiness starts  
To peek from flowers, I saw, on the wet way.  
The emptiness is sneering in my heart,  
I turned my eyes away at them anytime. The rain  
Still goes on to wash my feelings from life.  
“It is full of something boring or vain.”  
Someone trying to stab my defects with the knee knife  
Whispers. Who’s he? He’s yesterday.  
I lost him yesterday. But today, I have to go  
To get my own back on him someday.  
In the sky, if it stops, I can’t see the rainbow  
However, I struggle as a non-achiever  
To make my future clear.

# THE TRICK OF THE SWEET HOME

---

*Haruka Nambu*

Every time the word is uttered by that chairman, my heart is tossed by excitement.

Today is the day.

I have been waiting for this moment for years.

Finally, I am in the final of this tournament.

It was like a dream, but I definitely deserved a title of the champion. Maybe I was standing out because I was the only girl who was from America at this traditional Japanese event. However, the strange eye that the audience gave me was not so much offensive as a pleasure. The reason why, they must think that the American girl was great enough to be a finalist.

This room was filled with a scent of a tatami and Japanese customary music.

All the entries were wearing gorgeous kimono, of course, me too, and it made me felt like I was truly Japanese.

Nevertheless, sometimes I was thinking about my home in America a little. The reason why I was there was owing to my family. However, I should not care about my home because I was here to be a champion and was almost Japanese at that time.

This story went back to ten years ago. When I was six years old, my parents traveled to Japan and bought me a karuta. It was like a trump card but written in Japanese. So, I could not understand what it was meant to be. However, I found it really interesting because every kanji had a specific meaning. Since then, I have been into karuta very much.

After that, I became a kind of Japanese geek. Most of my friends were studying French or Spanish as a second language, however my confidence was built by studying Japanese. In other words, it was my symbol to take part in this karuta tournament in Japan.

## THE TRICK OF THE SWEET HOME

Finally, my name was called,

“The finalist, Karlie from the U.S.A.”

Then, the moment I went up to the special stage, which was made only for the final, every memories about karuta were remembered.

The first time I met karuta.

The first day I came to Japan.

The first day I won against a Japanese in a karuta contest.

As I was thinking about it, my enemy, Hanako appeared in front of me. She looked like much older than I. The figure of dressed the kimono and the beautiful black hair was absolutely stunning.

According to her profile, she had been a champion in this tournament for years. Nevertheless, I never felt I would lose because I was the only one who came from overseas. In other words, no other people made a greater effort than I.

The chairman gave birth to the first word.

Unfortunately, it was not a familiar one to me.

“Ashita no yorugohan wa sanma da.”

However, I got the first one.

My concentration was exquisite at that time. The content of karuta was no more problem anymore to me.

Then, I got the second one, too.

Hanako seemed to be confused. Her face was like a snowman in summer. What a miserable woman it was. It made me more confident.

I could feel like people who were there were all on my side.

After that, even though Hanako could take some cards, I was still predominant.

Suddenly, the scariest thing happened to me.

Someone in the audience started eating chicken!!

## THE TRICK OF THE SWEET HOME

The amazing scent of it filled the room.

For a split second, my concentration was likely to be diverted.

To make matters worse, the chicken was my favorite one.

It reminded me of the days in America, the happy time having dinner at cozy home. However, I realized that I should not be taken care of this trashy thing.

Then, I could focus on taking cards.

Afterwards, the remaining card became only two.

I was keeping telling myself, “My dream is almost there, just focus on the two cards.”

What I could hear was only the sound of flowing the north window outside. Finally, the first word of the card was read. The chairman read out loud it finally. “Natsu no....”

I extended my arm so quickly to the card and I got it. I was really sure that the position of the champion was mine.

However, surprisingly, Hanako also had a card.

I could not understand what happened. Also, this happening stunned all the audience who were there.

On the contrary, Hanako raised her fist forcefully. In front of me. Every scene I saw was like a slow-motion replay.

Gingerly, I tried to glance over the card I had.

The card I had was not the card written with the word “Natsu”, which had a picture of summer.

Surprisingly, I had a card depicting a walnut.

Gradually, I understood what happened.

I misheard the word.

The moment I heard the word “Natsu”, I totally thought that it was about the nuts, walnuts. The sound of my tumbling down from my position of

## THE TRICK OF THE SWEET HOME

champion could be heard clearly.

Nevertheless, time was still passing.

At last, the tournament had simply flown by.

At night, I called my family in America after the tournament. I talked all about it to them. During the time, warm water trickled down my cheeks and I realized that I was missing my home so bad. The beautiful memories with them were an irreplaceable treasure to me.

No matter how I desired I to be a true Japanese and to be a karuta champion, I could not beat my longing for my America without awareness.

At last, I realized, I will never become a Japanese. I am just a typically AMERICAN GIRL, who is attracted by chicken and nuts. Yes. I belong to my sweet home, America.

However, I decided to aim to be a champion again because this was a dream that my lovely family presented to me.

# THE ONE THING YOU SHOULD KNOW TO GET SOMEONE WHO IS ONLY ONE

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AYAKA YOSHIDA

You would have drawn a picture of people's faces. Maybe you have presented your pictures of your parents or friends to them when you were children. Also many people doodle in their notebooks or papers if they feel bored. Actually, you can find people's characters from doing it.

There are three types of people in the world. There are those who start drawing someone's face from outline, those who start drawing from facial parts and those who start drawing from hair. Although the distinctions between the way of drawing someone's face may seem trivial, understanding these three types of people in society will help us to better understand which person you should marry or go around with together.

People who are drawing from outline first are the best partner to marry. Actually most people do it like this. They think people's charm is their heart. They place great importance on the inside of them. So they will estimate your personality well. They might love you truly and also you can love them without any anxiousness. Although they are ideal people, they are dangerous persons in the world.

People who are drawing from facial parts are unreliable. They evaluate someone from their appearance. For them, it isn't so important which character they have. They love good appearances and they seem to like to dress up themselves too much. A cartoonist, Fukumoto Nobuyuki is this type. He draws from eyebrows and surprisingly, he completes his picture by turning around the paper.

But who you should be careful of the most are those who start drawing from hair. Those people love themselves and they think they are the center of the world. It's not so important for them how the other people think about them so you may be twisted around their little finger and feel tired at last. This kind of person is the worst to marry or to get in a relationship with. For

## THE ONE THING YOU SHOULD KNOW TO GET SOMEONE WHO IS ONLY ONE

example, when you come to live with someone, you should be considerate of each other and do housework in cooperation. But this type of person can't live like this.

Until now, we saw three types of people when drawing the face of someone. They are those who begin to draw from outline who look at someone's character or inside and those who draw facial parts at first who tend to judge someone by their appearances and lastly, there are those who draw hair first who can't think about other people and love themselves.

If you want to get a boy or girl friend or the partner of your life, you should check their types by letting them draw a person's face and choose someone who draws from outline. If you choose such a person as your partner, you might make good relation with him or her. But if you choose the others, you might be tired of their point of view. As written in this essay, it is important to know which type of person draws pictures like how. Understand them and get true happiness.

# NOBLESSE OBLIGE

MASAHIKO ENDO

A Harvest Festival just comes around the corner!

*A sweet smell sent a sort of seeds to the West coast of America. After Christopher Columbus discovered the new continent, many preachers visited there for propagation of the Christian faith. Some of them came through El Camino Real (The King's Highway) from Mexico and taught inhabitants how to make wine in 1769. The Evangelists did not only bring seeds of Christianity but also Grape plants to California.*

There is a rural village with the name “Eden.” It is located in a region of Mediterranean climate. Since the village is characterized by warm to hot, dry summers and mild to cool, wet winters, it is matched to viticulture. People enjoy making a wine in the comfortable climate, however business climate is really depressed in Eden now.

The whole village is talking about nothing else

The local residents have to decide a new leader for activation of the area. And the result will be announced in the Harvest Festival, because the renewal is the custom of the village. To line up candidates, villagers look for a man who has personal attractiveness or interestingness. They believe the man is going to be a bringer of good luck in order to rebuild. Then they find three men, Jesse, Kyle and David. One of them is going to be the leader.

A fine day afternoon, the three men gather in a public square

“We have to revive this village as soon as possible. Guys. Do you have any idea?” Jesse says.



## NOBLESSE OBLIGE

“Let me think... mm... How about this?” Kyle answers.

“You know that Jesus Christ came back to life in three days. The leader should be a man who can bring our village back to life again within three days!”

Jesse wonders, “What do you mean?”

Kyle replies, “We have three days to the festival. Each of us would try to change the world. And then let people vote for us.”

David opens his mouth, “Good idea! Now, our vineyard is just a garden, but we should develop it as a kingdom!”

So, the three men start to persuade people to vote them.

Three more days to the festival

First Day

The first man with an imposing build was considering the matter in a grand terrace. The biggest house in Eden was covered with brown wall. The luxury and famous place shows his affluence. Jesse comes from a prestigious family in this part of the country. He thinks “I am a big firm’s son and heir. Everybody would elect me. I know. But a good name is rather to be chosen.

So I can contribute much money to the prosperity of the village.”

Jesse spends half of his fortune on each household. It makes people happy and he is satisfied with the charity.

Two more days to the festival

Second Day

The second man can use magic, it was called “charm.” Kyle is tall and handsome, and has a long hair and blue eyes like the Pacific Ocean.

## NOBLESSE OBLIGE

People extol the beauty of him. Also he can make an eloquent speech with confidence. He gets the hearts and minds of the audience. “Folks! You already know a person who deserves to be the leader! We are placed in a very tight situation! Who can get through the crisis? I will manage to get it!” Many are encouraged by his speech, and he is convinced of his victory.

One more day to the festival...  
After all, David wins the election.  
What in the world happened!?  
To tell it like it is, let's step forward

### Third Day

The last man was born in a pastor's family. He has grown up happily with his parents who love him very much. They have taught him always be kind to others. David is a wise man who knows that not even a rich man or hero with all his wealth had clothes as great as one of true righteousness. If someone had a problem, the young man would help him or her to cheer up. That is why; He did nothing special for the election but behaved always kind to others as usual.

And he comes back home, just prays for safety, peace and prosperity...

As grape blossom is out, Eden grows and flourishes at its best

David's behavior sets him apart from the others, and sets him on the appropriate position in Eden. People bless him very much for the friendship. The relationship will be able to keep connection among them, like grape branches.

Jesse asks David, “You've got us beat. How did you do it?”

## NOBLESSE OBLIGE

David responds, “My parents and ancestors taught me ‘Whoever wants to be first must place himself last of all and be the servant of all.’”

Although David piles up a fortune and attains fame, he still has a feeling characterized by the desire to show kindness to others. Nobility extends beyond mere capacity and requires a person with status to fulfill a duty, in other words, Noblesse Oblige.

# CARPE DIEM REQUIEM

NAO GOTO

“Hey, Lilly. Are you still up?” I ask.

“Yeah.” Says Lilly.

OK. A minimum response. I can’t believe this was the first conversation in a week between siblings. A couple years ago, this wasn’t like this.

“We’re going to Boston for grandma’s funeral from early in the morning tomorrow, right?”

“Yes. And Josh, don’t bother me! Will you leave me alone? I am studying and going to college next year definitely not to be like you!”

“OK. Good night, sis.”

Like father, like daughter. Not son, not me. I admit my dad and sister both don’t like me. It’s okay unless it ruins tomorrow’s event. It’s gonna be the very first event for the three of us get together in a few years.

Actually, I left home and dropped out of high school when I was sixteen. ‘Cause I didn’t think it would make sense. I just wanted be free and join a punk rock band. And then, dad was real mad at me. He always wants me to live straight. But I never wanted a boring nine-to-five suit-and-tie life like him. I had enjoyed “my life” for two years.

However, things started not going well. Last year, my band broke up and my mom died. So it means I got no place to go and came back home because dad couldn’t earn Lilly’s tuition for college by himself. I got a minimum wage job instead of guitars. I gave up my dream. And I am living a life that I never wanted. It’s okay. I gave up.

Anyway, tomorrow is early. A funeral for an old lady I have met like only three times. In my bed, I am wondering what grandma was like. I really don’t know. Dad’s never told me about his mother. Will I ever get to know it?

“Josh,” I hear a tiny little voice. Who’s calling me? I guess it’s female voice, but I’m sure it isn’t Lilly. So, who is this?

## CARPE DIEM REQUIEM

“Hello there?” I said. Or am I talking to myself? Funny. Nobody else but me is in my room now. But then, “Hi! Josh! Oh you got tall, boy! Last time I saw you, you were like four feet.”

No, no, no. I can’t believe my eyes. It’s grandma. How can this be possible? She is dead and her body must be in a coffin case and miles away from here right now. But she’s here.

Oh well, I don’t understand.

“Umm... Hey, gran. Uhh... How are you doing?”

“Dead. Of course, dead. Recently deceased.”

Yes. Yes, you are. Have I got the sixth sense? Do I see dead people?

“Tomorrow, you are coming to mourn me, right? Before you come, there are some things I’d like you to know.” Says grandma.

“Yes. Yes, but, what are you talking about?”

“And tonight, a ghost will come visit you. Make sure to take all the advice she’ll give you.”

“Oh, OK. Then, what can I... Hey, where are you, gran?”

She’s already vanished. What is that? I get it. This is just a dream. Just a dream. Then, how come I am tapped on the shoulder right now? I have a bad feeling about this. I guess I should not turn back.

“Hey, Josh. Look at me.”

All I see is an old-fashioned punk rock costumed girl. Bleached blonde hair and nets on arms and legs, she’s not so bad.

“Hi, how ya doin’? No, I mean, who are you? What are you doing? It’s my room.”

Oh, she has green eyes. And so do my family and I.

“Sorry. I’m Celine. Celine O’Connor. And I am a so-called ghost.”

“Nice to meet you, Celine. I’m Josh. Josh O’Connor. Coincidentally, you share your name with my grandma.”

## CARPE DIEM REQUIEM

I don't think I wanna hear the next word she'd say.

"No, it's not coincidence. Well, I am your grandmother."

Alright, I knew it. Should I act like Luke Skywalker when he realizes that Vader is his father? No. Now I gotta ask, "What happened to your appearance, gran? It's too young and old-school and British punk rock!"

"Anyway, I'll let you see the past you have long forgotten and you've never seen before."

"What do you mean?"

"Hold on, Josh!"

"On to what?"

Then everything goes spinning around and black and white. It looks like junior high hallway.

"Look, a bully is coming for you." Says Celine.

It's Bill. I truly hated this bully jock boy. And little and young me.

"Celine, are you telling me to see myself beaten by a bully?"

"No, just look what will happen."

"Yo, loser kid. How ya doin?" said Bill.

"Hi, Bill. What can I help you with?"

I was just imagining myself balling up my fist and hitting him in the face. This would be a little pay back.

"Mr. Josh O'Connor, will you please go buy me a lunch?"

I eventually balled up my fist and said,

"SHUT UP!"

"Huh? Who do you think you are, loser?"

He got mad as a bull. But then I punched him in the face just before his fist reached my face. And he fell back down.

We're still in the hall.

"See that, Josh? This was your first resistance to the power. Don't forget

## CARPE DIEM REQUIEM

this attitude, forever.”

“After this incident, I began to become like a punk rock boy. Since then your son, I mean my dad started to be strict to me, though.”

“Now I will show you what you never knew.” Says Celine, raising her eyebrow.

“About what?”

“About me. And hold on! We’re heading to England in the 70’s!”

“Hey, wait! What?”

Then spinning and black and white again.

“So, this is where I was born and grew up.” Proudly says Celine.

“Well, England. I never thought a ghost could bring me here for the first time.”

“Oh, there! Look at me!” She points.

There is a girl with a guitar on her back who looks completely same as Celine. I can’t believe this was really who my grandmother used to be.

“So let me tell you a story,” Her backstory begins.

“I’d finished two of the new songs to show in the next gig in Manchester. A new founded record label – think it was Factory Records- would host this gig. They would have vote, and the one voted most could be the very first band signing with them. If The Kidnaps win the contract, we can release records and have tour in all the Britain.”

“Factory Records? That’s Joy Division’s label?” I ask.

“Yes, it was. And then, what I liked it about in this punk rock music scene was that everybody would be evaluated by their music, not where they are from. For this last years, I’d been feeling much better than last year. What I had been treated till last year made me write songs though. Bullied because of red hair and pots. Never been a cool kid in high school. And lost jobs three times in a year. Because they cut down black and Irish first. I didn’t even

## CARPE DIEM REQUIEM

wanna remember, but I was a loser. Just like you, Josh.”

“You resisted and became a punk rocker. How cool! What more about this?”

“Practiced songs for the show. I was afraid if the guitarist Stacy, the drummer Jake, and the bassist Mary would like new songs but it worked. All we gotta do was let it all out in the gig.”

“How was that show, you did well?”

“It’s gonna be a funny part. In the day of that gig, I was really confident when we headed to Manchester but I got nervous when we were dressing up in the club. I wished that a double decker bus would crash into us. My hands were shaking and I felt like I was throwing up. Hearing other bands made me frightened. “Hey, Celine, can you fasten up my back zip?” said Jake. “Would they think I’m crazy cuz I dress like a lady that doesn’t even exist. Blonde hair wig, black eyes like a Chinese creature, whitest foundation, and reddest lips. So gross! Who would dress like this? Even women!”

“Don’t worry Jake.” I said and laughed. “This is our concept. See, Stace, Mary and I dressed suits, ties and even fake moustache like guys.”

He unconsciously comforted me.

“Fake moustache!? I didn’t know that... I only see your backs when I play drums.”

“We wish we could grow one!” Said Stacy jokingly. “So let’s go guys and a lady. No, I never wished. Anyway, I got ready to rock it out.”

“And so? You won the vote?”

“Before the result, I’d like you to hear our song.”

“Yes, I will. I’m curious.”

“So we got up to the stage. Jake hit the counts and I hit a chord on strings. And I sang,

“I ain’t gonna die



## CARPE DIEM REQUIEM

or I ain't gonna live  
doing what I don't want to  
Never gonna hear a word you say  
till I die  
Just let me live my life  
my own life  
Don't wanna bring a regret to my grave"

So, this is it. And we won the vote and released single record of this song, maybe 500 copies. Now, only geeky record collectors have the record."

"Hey, Celine, you're fading."

"Oh, time has come. Will you sing that song for me? I wanna hear you singing my song in the coffin."

"Absolutely, yes."

"Josh! Live your life! Seize the day, boy!"

And she vanishes.

Then, I find myself in my bed at 6A.M. Now I know what to do. What to do today and what to do with my life. I don't wanna live a life full of regret. I gotta live my life.

# I HEAR JAPAN SINGING

KEITA YAGI

I hear Japan singing, the varied carols I hear,  
The baseball player in a high school singing his as he plays the game on  
the ground,  
The Japanese fencing player singing as he practices swinging,  
The head of the cheering group singing as he raises his voice,  
The girl at tea ceremony singing hers as she enjoys making a cup of tea.  
The flower of Japanese womanhood singing hers as she attracts stupid  
men.  
The cheerleader singing hers as she cheers sports minded boys.  
Each singing what belongs to him or her and to none else,  
The day what belongs to the day at night party of young fellows, robust,  
friendly,  
Singing with open mouths their strong melodious songs.

# THERE IS A TIGER IN THE FOREST

KEITA YAGI

It is a nice hotel there, when I go down the long path in the dense forest. I hold a sweet hope in my mind. “I miss you, my kitty.” Uneasy, but a little expecting feeling springing from my mind governs all senses in the body. After I checked in the hotel, I drink a cup of strong coffee in the hotel room. The smell is enough to make me indulge in my precious memory 10 years ago.

When I was an elementary school student, I traveled to Kyushu with my classmates for a nature school program. In those days, I used to be a tomboy. I always escaped from classes, got into mischief, accepted classmates’ challenges, and easily knocked them down with a technique I learned in a wrestling class. In the end, however, I was always scolded by Mr. Sato. One day, I met him when I ran in the school. “It is twelve times to order you not to run in the corridor. By the way, I want you to take part in the nature class because you are very fine. Through this class, you may be able to make friends.” In those days, I didn’t have friends, so I joined the class.

It was a three-day program. There were a lot of beautiful flowers in the forest. I collected them and started to make a flower ring. When I was involved in the work, I heard the weak voice of an animal. I found there was a wounded cat. “How pitiful this kitty is!” I took it to the hotel. When I cured this cat, something warm was springing from my mind. I couldn’t understand what the emotion was, but I only knew I wanted the small, cute and pitiful kitty. I asked Mr. Sato if I could take the cat home. He said with a smile on his face, “You can’t, but can keep the important thing you have acquired through curing the cat. That is the mind to cherish other animals.”

I screamed, “I want to be near the cat!” In the end, he didn’t permit me to take the cat to my house.

It has been 10 years since I met the kitty. “Is the cat living now?” I asked myself. So I decided to search for the cat in the forest. However, I couldn’t find any trace of the cat there. Then I give up looking for it. However, I know she has given me the most important thing. That is cherishing other living things. I will never forget this memory.

# MY LIFE ON A DAY

KEITA YAGI

SUN

I Wake up.  
Hello. Wash my face.  
Eat breakfast as fast as I can.  
Change my clothes. Go bath. Brush teeth  
Preparation. Leave home. Go to station.  
Get train. Get off train. Get train. Get off train.  
Get Train. Get off train. Leave station. Walk to school.  
Go to classroom. Take class. Leave classroom. Take a rest.  
Go to classroom. Take class. Leave classroom. Take a rest. Have  
a lunch. Take a rest. Go to classroom. Take class. Leave classroom.  
Take a rest. Go to classroom. Take class. Leave classroom. Take  
a rest. Go to classroom. Take class. Leave classroom. Leave  
school. Walk to station. Get train. Get off train. Get train. Get  
off train. Get Train. Get off train. Leave station. Go home  
Change my clothes. Prepare for tomorrow. Have  
Dinner. Go to bathroom. Brush teeth.  
Wash face. Talk to my family.  
Watch TV. Good night.  
Walk to bed

MOON

# SHORT POEM SELECTION

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MISA HAYASHI

I ,Acrostic Poetry –dark poetry–

## Vampire

AT NIGHTS, GETTING OUT OF A TOMB,  
IN DEEP DEAD DARKNESS, I STROLL.  
WHAT FOR? TO FIND PEOPLE WHO  
ARE HEALTHY. AND I HAVE ONLY TO  
PIERCE THEIR SKIN WITH MY CUSPID.

## A Clockwork

Oh, God! Forgive me!  
Rape, violence and Beethoven was  
All of my life before...  
Now, I'm no longer what I was. I've already  
Got well! Please  
End up this treatment!

## Sweet Whisper

Do it right now! Don't hesitate!  
Enjoy it! Nobody is watching you.  
Very cheerful feeling you'll get.  
It is the time you reach for that money...  
Luckily, you became a good snatcher!

## SHORT POEM SELECTION

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MISA HAYASHI

II ,Six Words Poetry –confusing poetry –

“I wrote poetry.”

This is NOT poetry I wrote.

Six Words Poetry

This Poetry Needs  
Three More Words.

Change One Letter

To lie, to sleep  
–No more.

# LITTLE MEMORIES

KANARI ONO

Thanks to Joe Brainard for helping me remember

I remember when I got a cute white bear doll, but I dropped it on the puddle. The white bear became brown normal bear.

I remember my first friend in the kindergarten. She always grabbed my hand, and pulled me around the ground.

I remember a dream I'm run after by a horse in the forest. This appears when I get flu.

I remember when I moved to the present house.

I remember I thought we can go back past with "Dokodemo door".

I remember when I fell down the stairs from second floor to first floor, but I had no injury.

I remember when my little sister came home.

I remember when my grandmother fell down from playground equipment to follow me, and she went to hospital by ambulance. My family didn't say anything.

I remember when I went to Hawaii with my family.

I remember when my house's roof changed from red to green.

## LITTLE MEMORIES

I remember many times I went on an adventure by bicycle with my friend, Rina.

I remember when I thought dinosaurs are in present world, and I was afraid so much.

I remember when I nearly drowned in the sea. I heard my father's shout.

I remember when I started to play tennis.

I remember when I tried to cook the chocolate cake. The microwave had an explosion, and chocolate became like charcoal. The neighborhood said, "I smell something burning."

I remember when I cooked curry rice for mother's day. My mother almost cried.

I remember the girl who beat my head with a wood block.

I remember when I thought English is too hard for me, but I got a 90 score on the exam in junior high school.

I remember when I entered Meijigakuin university, and met great friends.



# FROM THE MONOCHROME WORLD

YASUYUKI MIZUURA

One Year Ago

“Hello. This is Orient Electronics. May I help you?”

“Hello. I would like to order your product, “Dream Creator.”

“Certainly. I will send DC to you so could I take your personal information?”

“Sure. My name is .....

I’ve just written the story for tonight by the software and inputted that into my laptop. I set the head gear on my head and turned on the switch. As soon as I did that, my consciousness and feeling went away and fallen to a very pleasant world. This is my daily routine, which makes my life wonderful. Every day at 21:00, I check the door lock, close the gray curtain and input the story that I write in the rest of the work in my small company. Finally I say, “Farewell to the world of monochrome.”

One day I am a boss of the criminals like professor Moriarty in Sherlock Holmes, one day I am a pastor whom everyone respects like Arthur Dimmesdale in the Scarlet Letter, and tonight I am a rich and successful guy like Gatsby. The sky is clear blue with no cloud and the swallows are flying singing. Colorful sunshine comes into my mansion through the red blue yellow green stained glass. The chandelier makes bright colorful light. I’m holding the party and invited Bill Gates, Audrey Hepburn, Scarlett O’Hara and other great people. The richest guy in the world is trying to take my mood! I’m talking with the most beautiful woman I know! The most whimsical lady is crazy about me! Is it a dream? Yes, unfortunately this is the dream I made but I never mind because it is fantastic.

One year ago, since I’ve bought the DC, my monochrome life had been completely shifted. Before, I was just a man. I woke up everyday at 6:00 in the 1LDK room and washed my face with cold water. I boiled the water and put it into the instant noodle. I went out with suit and a heavy business bag,

## FROM THE MONOCHROME WORLD

and organized unimportant materials all my working time. At 17:00 I left the company and went back to the place where no one was waiting. On the weekends, I watched the rental DVDs from afternoon to the night. There was no color in my life. Waking up in the white morning, going to the white company and the sky on my head was always gray. Everyone said that the sky was blue but I couldn't remember what color blue was.

I lost my color when I was 20. My mother died and after that, my father married with another woman. I had a girlfriend for four years who I would marry after we graduated from university but she got pregnant at that year. The baby was not mine. I shut her out from my life. I knew that I had AIDS. I guessed that I got it from my pre-girlfriend's other boyfriend through her. It is said, "Misfortunes never come singly" right?

Guess what I'd done after that? I shut out everything and stopped thinking by any means. I quit my university, found the job and lost all of my color. I've never looked up at the sky for three years. Who can deny my choice?

Two years later, I happened to learn about DC from the TV commercial at midnight. I cannot remember how I ordered it by telephone or Internet, but anyway I got it. I regained my color in my dream. My life had been changed. I created my colorful world by the software to the dream while I was staying in the monochrome world. Since someday, the world of the real and the world of the dream was shifted.

Can you guess my feeling? It's excellent!

I'm sitting down on the king's seat and looking down at the guests of the party.

"Hey Emma. Tell me your next film." I said to Emma Watson.

She turned and looked up at me. She told me coming to me. The clock alarm is going off. It is the time to wake up and go to the company but I never mind. I decided to live in this world forever until I will die in the real world.

## FROM THE MONOCHROME WORLD

“Yeah. It will be a wonderful film. I hope you will like .....”

At that time, she suddenly stopped everything, and she won't tell me and walked away again. Shit! It must be a system error. I will call Orient Electronics and make them fix it quickly and apologize to me to break my wonderful time. How long did it take to create this world!

“It's not an error but what you wanted.” In the silence, one voice echoed.

I looked around, and I realized that not only Emma but also every one of my guests were stopping. No. Not everyone. A guy is coming to me through the crowded party room. He is wearing a black suit and carrying a walking stick. There is a little whisker under his nose and bowler hat on his head.

“Life is a tragedy when seen close-up but a comedy in long-shot.” He said solemnly. He is coming close to me.

“You did that?” I said loudly. Our voices are echoing.

“Did what?”

“Stop everyone and destroy my dream.”

“No, you did it because you wanted to.”

“I didn't. Who are you? I don't know about you. I didn't create you.”

“Yes. You know me and you created me by yourself.”

“I cannot understand what you are saying by any means. Tell me your name.”

“You didn't name me but, umm, just call me Harlie Hapline.”

There is only one meter between me and Harlie. He is smiling as if he knows everything. He asked me if I want to die. And I answered that I don't care. There's no place worth to live in the real world. I have no regret for the world.

When he heard my response, he smiled softly and tapped his stick. At that time, the world I created started collapsing silently. One minute later, only I and Harlie were in the six-meter square black room. There are only a strange antique clock and a big window. Twenty-four circled numbers were

## FROM THE MONOCHROME WORLD

on the dial of the clock and around the dial, there are 80 circled numbers. The antique clock is showing 0:00. I looked around quickly like a rat which was trapped.

Harlie was looking at me smiling.

“What did you do? Give me back my world!” I said with a red face.

“I can do so if you really want, but give me a little time because I have something to show you. After that, I promise you that I will give you back what you want.”

I know he won't change his opinion. I don't know how to regain my world. OK, I will follow him. So I said.

“Show me what.”

When I said so, he smiled and said “Thank you! Come on! Touch my stick!”

When I touched his stick, the black view of the window shifted. There is a view of the room is the hospital. There are three people. A nurse is watching the thermometer and smiling. At the corner of the room there is a pipe bed and a smiling woman holding her crying baby. Then someone ran into the room with big footsteps. He opened the door softly with a shortness of breath. He started crying and the nurse went out. The window is opened and the soft wind swung the curtain softly. The colorful flowers on the table near by the bed were smiling. The soft sunshine in the spring is covering them.

“What do you think about them?” Harlie asked me suddenly.

“They must be a happy family. They are full of love.” I answered honestly.

I know that this is really miserable but I cannot stop getting jealous for the happy baby. I wanted the love of someone. Why did Harlie make me see that scene? When I looked at him, he was smiling at me. OK, I understood. He is kidding me. He is enjoying seeing me miserable.

“It is 01:30.”

When he said that, the scene of the window shifted. There is a boy in the

## FROM THE MONOCHROME WORLD

kindergarten room wearing cute outfit and yellow hat with a lot of other kids. He is playing building blocks with several of his friends. The strong sunshine of the summer comes into the room but they don't care. At that time a young woman teacher started playing piano. When they heard the sound, they ran around the piano and started singing with cheerful voices like swallows.

"Twinkle, twinkle, little star, how I wonder what you are! Up above the..."

I know this song. When was the last time I sang this? I cannot remember but I feel some soft pain in my chest. I don't know why but it is not uncomfortable. I want to watch the boy more.

However, Harclie said, "It is 04:30."

The next scene seems like in junior high school. The boy looks like 14 or 15 years old. He is wearing football gear, and on his right hand, there is a captain mark. Under the red and yellow leaves tree, he is drinking a sports drink and chatting with the other members. I know everyone likes and trusts him. He is smiling softly.

"It is 06:00," Harclie said. The color of our room shifted black to navy.

The guy is in the small park alone in the cold wind under the clouded dark sky. It is possible to snow. There is no one in the park except for the guy. There are only slide, sandpit and one bench. He is sitting on the bench and tearing several photos with his family in the hospital, friends in the kindergarten, members of the football team, girlfriend. After he tore all of the photos, he took out one paper bag from his pocket on the court and threw it away to the sandpit. I know what is in that paper bag. It is the medicine for AIDS.

"It is 07:15," Harclie said softly.

The guy is sleeping on the bed in the 1LDK room. I know what he is dreaming. I realized the six meters square room I and Harclie are in is colored by orange like the morning sun. It is a time to start the day.

"What do you think? Why he won't wake up?" Harclie asked curiously.

## FROM THE MONOCHROME WORLD

“Because he realized that there is no hope in his future,” I answered silently.

“Why does he give up so early? It is just 07:15. The day named life has just started. He might not have not only good dreams but also awful nightmare, but no one can predict what will happen to him on the afternoon and the night. The seasons come around. There is no winter that won’t end and no spring that won’t come forever, right? It cannot be too late to give up after you spend until 21:00 and see the all seasons again, right?” he said smiling, and went on.

“Do you want to know who the guy is?”

“No, I don’t need. I know.”

“Do you want to see the window view once more?”

“No, I don’t need to. I will create. First of all, I had better go to the paint shop.”

“Do you have any question for me?”

“Yes. Who are you?”

“I am Harclie Haplinc, a hope, a wish and a will which you and the people who are around you made to you.”

“Can I meet you again someday?”

“I will always be in you and everyone else. By the way there is a door. If you pull it, you will go back to the world you created, if you push it, you must fight with the reality. It’s up to you.” When he said so, a white door appeared at the place of the antique clock.

“Thank you.”

“Remember, you’ll never find a rainbow if you’re looking down.”

After he said so like a joke, he faded out like a mist.

I do close my eyes softly. I do grip the doorknob and open it. I do take one step into the world I must to go to.

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