



HITAGI NECK

NISEMONOGATARI ANIME COMPLETE GUIDEBOOK

27 September 2012

MIJIKANAMONOGATARI

11 September 2024

TRANSLATION: HAREMLESS

Apparently Senjougahara Hitagi had been waiting eagerly for this day to come. As to what “this day” means, it would be the day when I introduced her as my girlfriend to my two sisters, Araragi Karen and Araragi Tsukihi.

“Why were you so excited about today anyway...? Are you actually a big fan of the Fire Sisters?”

Now that I think about it, Senjougahara did know about my sisters before she met me. Of course, at the time, I was just terrified that someone I didn’t know knew everything about my family.

“You could say that, Koyokoyo.”

Said Senjougahara.

Apparently “Koyokoyo” was referring to me.

I was absolutely opposed to that nickname. Actually, it was more than just being opposed to it, I hated it, but she stubbornly refused to stop calling me it.

Well, if I just told myself that her stubbornness is just another part of her rehabilitation, if I just forced myself to think of it that way, I could just barely put up with it.

Or maybe it was her way of getting back at me for when I call her “Gahara-san” once in a while.

If that’s the case, I guess it’s a pretty cute way of getting back at me—I hope that I’m not just rambling on about our lovey-dovey couple moments.

“When I hear the rumors about them it reminds me of Kanbaru and myself back in middle school.”

“Hmm, the Valhalla Duo.”

“But it’s not just that, I’m really happy that you’re introducing me to your family, Koyokoyo. I feel like I’m finally being accepted as your girlfriend.”

“Accepted as your girlfriend’...”

Did she really say that?

She’s gotten a lot gentler than I expected, even after her rehabilitation.

I wouldn’t say that I really want the old snappy Senjougahara back, but this really makes it feel like time flies.

“Weren’t you happy when I introduced you to my father, Koyokoyo?”

“Yeah, I was.”

I answered so quickly it might have sounded suspicious.

Senjougahara’s father.

Mr. Senjougahara.

How would I describe my meeting with that man who was aging quite well—memorable? A bit traumatic? It really had been unendurable, which was probably why I answered so quickly.

Although now, when I think that Senjougahara trusted me enough to introduce me to her father even before her rehabilitation, it does make me quite happy.

I’d be lying if I said it didn’t.

But I’d also be lying if I said it was all just happy times...

“That’s why I’m so happy that I’ll get to meet Karen-san and Tsukihi-san. Although I still felt like it was pretty out of the blue when you called me up right after I got home from Bon.”¹⁰

“Well, there are some pretty complicated reasons behind that, mysterious reasons you could say, in any case I didn’t really have any other choice, so...”

I really didn’t have any other choice.

If you want to read more about that, you can refer to the other short stories in the booklet, but it was a bit hard to explain to Senjougahara.

“To be honest, my sisters forced me to.”

“Forced you...”

“You better watch out, Senjougahara. They seem sort of opposed to you. I never introduced you to them before because I was afraid that you’d try to hurt them. Well I’m not worried about that anymore, but now I’m worried the opposite might happen.”

“...”

“Just for today, Senjougahara. I authorize you to arm yourself with your stationery.”

Senjougahara shook her head.

“Stationery is for studying, not for hurting people.”

“... Well, you’re right but.”

“I’ll never write ‘stationery’ as ‘stationary’ like a ‘stationary turret’ again.”¹¹

“I’ve never seen you do that before...”

And that’s actually a really good pun.

Why didn’t I think of that?

“You know, Araragi-kun,”

Senjougahara paused, then said:

“I’ve always wanted a little sister.”

¹⁰ *Bon* (盆) is a festival that starts on August 15 where people honor their ancestors’ spirits.

¹¹ The original pun is Hitagi replacing the character 房 (*bou*) in the word 房具 (*bunbogu*, “stationery”) with 防 (*bou*, “defense”).

“... I can't give you one, you know?”

“I don't mean in real life, it was just a wish for me. Maybe that's why I always liked the juniors like Kanbaru so much. But with my parents ending up the way they did, that's not possible. But I still think about it, maybe if I had a little sister my family wouldn't have been torn apart.”

“...”

“Maybe if that were true, I could've introduced you to my mother. Well, just introducing you isn't really the point...”

“I get what you're saying.”

Actually, maybe I don't.

Just because she's my girlfriend, because we're boyfriend and girlfriend, doesn't mean that we can understand all of each other's feelings. But I know for sure that Senjougahara must have always wanted to have that sort of normal conversation.

To be normal.

To Senjougahara, who had to go through her youth never being allowed to be normal, maybe just spending our days like this is enough to make her happy. But that doesn't mean she'll be able to take back the things she's lost.

Exactly because they're things that she's lost.

She'll always keep thinking of them.

“I know that just a little while ago, I never would've thought that introducing people to my family or being introduced to someone else's family would make me so happy. I'm sure I would've thought that even if I had a boyfriend, I'd want that to be just a private relationship between the two of us.”

“I know...”

Honestly, I would consider myself one of those people.

But now I guess I'm laid back enough to just go along with what Senjougahara wants. The Araragi Koyomi who used to say “I don't need friends, they'd lower my intensity as a human” is gone.

And I'm sure who I am now.

One day he'll be gone too.

“I just wanted to ask you, Koyokoyo. Both of your sisters have boyfriends, right?”

“That’s the first time I’ve heard of it.”

“Come on, there’s no way you wouldn’t know... Besides you’re the one who told me after all. You haven’t met them before?”

“Yeah, I always run right away.”

“Why do you sound so proud when you say that? You should just agree to meet them, and next time it’ll be you meeting your sisters’ boyfriends.”

“Well, if I get the chance...”

I pray that I never do.

Honestly I hope that they break up before I ever have to meet them. I know I’m being close-minded, but that’s just how an older brother feels about his little sisters’ boyfriends.

Well, if I think of it that way.

No matter how hostile Karen and Tsukihi are to meeting Senjougahara, they’re way more mature than me.

“Oh, seems like we’re here.”

“It’ll be my first time going inside.”

After a fifteen-minute walk from where we agreed to meet.

Senjougahara and I had arrived at the Araragi house.

Let the Summit begin.

I steeled myself for the worst.



KAREN ARM-LEG

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Araragi Karen is quite tall. In the sense that she is simply tall, without needing any sort of explanation or sidenote added such as “for a girl”, or “for someone in ninth grade” or even “compared to her brother”. She was just tall. And even scarier than the most terrifying ghost stories is the fact that even now she’s still growing. Setting aside these feelings of terror and fear, these emotional problems, and investigating the “condition” of her height, logically thinking it follows that both her legs and arms are quite long as well.

Like the two youkai, Tenaga and Ashinaga.¹²

I was a bit traumatized when I saw a program about old legends in Japan as a kid. And Araragi Karen could be called a physical embodiment of the two youkai in one. You could say it boils down to her having long arms

¹² A pair of monsters in Japanese folklore. Ashinaga (足長, “long legs”) has really long legs and short arms, while Tenaga (手長, “long arms”) has long arms and short legs. Tenaga often sits on Ashinaga’s shoulders.

and legs, but now she was swinging those rather long arms and legs around wildly.

“Uwaa!”

She shouted and cried out.

Spread out on the floor like she was making a snow angel.

She swung her limbs around to their fullest extent and writhed on the floor. “Writhed” might have been a more eloquent way of putting it, but in fact it sounded more like “bang” or “crush” or “snap snap snap”, sounds of various things being broken. With every flailing of her arms and every kick of her legs, something else would break.

It was like the coming of a great god of destruction.

I assure you that I’m not exaggerating at all, but if it still feels like this is all an exaggeration, I would dare to put it this way even if it isn’t quite true. Simply speaking.

Araragi Karen.

My little sister was having a temper tantrum now.

And a huge one at that.

“S-Stop it already, Karen-chan! Karen-chan, calm down!”

But my words would never reach her.

Actually, they probably did, but they had the opposite of the intended effect of calming her down, and she in fact began shouting and worked herself into a greater rage as if to block out my voice.

“You’re lying to meeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee! You have to be lying to meeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee!”

Bang.

Crush.

Snap snap snap.

This was all taking place in the living room of the Araragi house, in other words one of the most important facilities of a house. However, Karen paid no attention to that and went on breaking things, and more things, and more things.

Those long arms and legs like a youkai’s weren’t to be taken lightly.

I could still look on the bright side and say that at least this hadn't happened a bit earlier, or else the living room would have faced the added destruction of her ponytail as well.

"C-Calm down Karen-chan. Come on, stop crying, stop shouting, stop throwing things around. You're already in your last year of middle school, next year you'll be in high school. You're acting like a kid crying over some dropped ice crea—guha!"

I was thrown back by Karen's fist, more accurately her backhand, as I tried my best to stop her from struggling.

That punch might have been fatal if I didn't have the increased healing factor from my vampirism. I was pretty lucky that I had just let Shinobu suck some of my blood too.

Man, being immortal really is convenient.

I won't even die from my little sister's tantrums.

"Waaa"

"Waaaaaaa? Have you ever heard anyone cry like that outside a manga?"

"It's a lie!"

She hadn't exactly calmed down, but since the start of her tantrum it was the first time anything resembling speech had come out of Karen's mouth.

"It's a lie! There's no way you have a girlfriend, nii-chan! I don't believe it! I'm never believing it! You'd never get a girlfriend!"

"..."

"You're my nii-chan! You don't need a girlfriend! You were just going to live alone for the rest of your life!"

Wait a second.

What do you mean alone for the rest of my life?

"Waaaaaaa! You betrayed me! You were my nii-chan and only mine! It was just the two of us, brother and sister!"

Karen quickly brushed off Tsukihi's very existence.

I'd like you to understand that's how agitated she was right now.

And I think you understand the situation now.

Near the end of summer holiday.

I turned to Karen and, like I told Tsukihi, told her:

“You know, there’s actually this girl I’ve been dating since a little while ago.”

And before I could say “I’ll introduce her to you when we get a chance” Karen crushed (!?) the dumbbell she had been training with up until a moment ago with a bored look on her face, opened her eyes as wide as they would go and immediately flipped over the sofa she was sitting on as if to crush it to bits.

And with those two arms and legs.

She unleashed her two arms and legs that were long like the Amazon river and started throwing a tantrum.

“Break up with her! Break up with her! Break up with her right now!”

“You sure ask for a lot...”

“Call her right now and break up with her! I’ll call her if you can’t! I’ll tell her you can’t go out with her anymore because you love your little sister so much!”

“Damn she’s scary...”

I’d never seen this kind of little sister character before.

Araragi Karen used to be the classic example of the “real life little sisters aren’t that cute” character. And that had now reached its peak.

What kind of crazy fantasy has a little sister who would make her brother break up with his girlfriend?

“Waaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa! How could you get a girlfriend, nii-chan! And you kept it a secret from me!”

“This reaction was way more than I expected...”

I guess for all how much she’s trained her body, she completely neglected to train her mind... So she kept on destroying the floor of the Araragi household.

I was ready to get punched, but I never expected her to cry and throw a tantrum...

“Tell me what I’m doing wrong!”

Karen sat up suddenly and glared at me. Her face was covered in tears.

“If it was something to do with sex why didn’t you just do it with me!”

“What the hell, that’s scary! What she says and what she thinks!”

“I can’t believe you already had a girlfriend when you were brushing my teeth like that!”

“I know how people bring that up a lot, but if you really think about it, it was perfectly wholesome, just a brother helping his little sister brush her teeth!”

“Let me see her! Let me see your girlfriend!”

Karen said, choking back her tears.

While still wildly flailing her limbs around.

“I’m going to brush her teeth! I’m going to brush them till they’re sparkling clean! I’m going to make sure she knows that I’m the only one allowed to have her teeth brushed by you!”

“…”

Whatever.

You are actually the only person whose teeth I’ve brushed—in any case.

That was how I became the mediator between Senjougahara and Karen. I don’t care what happens afterwards, whether they bring a building down or cause a landslide, although considering they are the Fire Sisters, it’s more like whether they burn a building down or start a forest fire.

Karen’s tantrums continued on after that.

And all there was to do was patiently wait for them to end.



TSUKIHI ETERNAL

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It seems like I had forgotten about what kind of personality Araragi Tsukihi had. Even if I had, let's see, gotten careless after winning (?) against Kagenui-san and Yotsugi-chan in our battle, as everyone who's listened to the anime's audio commentaries must know,

“At the end of the summer holiday, I want to introduce my girlfriend to you.”

is something I should never have said no matter what to my little sister, considering her personality. Especially knowing there's no way she'd wait until the end of the summer holiday if I told her anyway.

“How long.”

Tsukihi said.

She had me kneeling on the floor of her room as she asked me. More importantly, she had her arms crossed in a terrifying pose, looking over me.

“How long were you planning to wait to tell me that.”

“Well, how long...”

She was terrifying.

As to what exactly was so terrifying, my little sister was already holding an awl in one hand. You better hurry up and put that back in the toolbox or they'll start selling it in a set with your figurine.

Of course, that awl may as well have been a toy after fighting against Kagenui-san. The problem wasn't the awl, but the fact that my little sister was holding it and standing over me with her arms crossed itself was terrifying.

And the fact that Tsukihi was poking her own arm with the sharp end of the awl also was a bit scary. She was just scraping against the skin so there was no blood, but I could feel the pressure radiating from her just by looking at her "Can you tell that I'm annoyed now?" sort of pose.

"You had a girlfriend? The hell were you thinking taking my first kiss when you had a girlfriend?"

"You should watch your language, Tsukihi-chan. You're a girl, so you should be a bit gentler with your words or people will look at you funny."

"O brother of mine, how durst you have been to place your lips against mine and take my first kiss, when there is already another woman who waits for you."

"..."

Durst you have been? That doesn't quite sound right.

I wanted to tell her that, but I would probably end up with an awl stuck in my eyeball if I did. No choice, I decided to ignore it.

"I'm not sure that really counts as 'gentle'..."

"You takie my fiwst kish?"

"Fiwst kish."

Hearing her trying to sound cute made me even more afraid of the awl... Wow, awls sure are something.

It seems like they can just take any sort of character and completely overwrite it... Of course awls should only be used the way they were supposed to.

"Let me think, are you supposed to use them to chip off ice to put in your whiskey?"

"That's an icepick. Don't mix them up."

“They look almost the same though...”

Don't mix them up with a gimlet either.

“About the same as somen and cold noodles.”

“How long.”

Tsukihi must have realized I was intentionally saying something she could easily comment on to try and change the flow of the conversation, so she forced it back.

“How long were you planning to wait to tell me that.”

“W-Well, you see, I was planning to tell you by the end of summer holiday... I mean, tomorrow! I was going to tell you tomorrow. Come on, Tsukihi-chan, you just had to ask about it. You ruined the surprise party I was planning.”

“You were going to have a surprise party to tell us you had a girlfriend... Do you think you're some celebrity? Onii-chan.”

Ha, Tsukihi-chan mocked me.

That wasn't cute.

“I bet you just told me because it happened to slip out or you just felt like it and by tomorrow you won't even remember you promised to tell me.”

“I-Isn't that a bit prejudiced... Have I ever broken a promise with you?”

“I don't think you've ever kept one of your promises. Or kept your little sister safe.”

“I have kept you safe before!”

I just did today!

I did everything I could today to protect you, I even died a few times... But it would be hard to tell her that here and now.

“Have you? When was it? When was it? What time, what minute, what second, whatchamacallit, how many times did the Earth spin?”

“Guh...”

It's so frustrating!

Why can't I even win an argument against her!

“When did you even start dating? And when did you start keeping that a secret from me? Didn’t we decide we wouldn’t keep any secrets between us anymore?”

“I’m pretty sure we aren’t two kids who made that promise while supporting each other as the only people we have left to depend on after our parents died...”

After putting that out there, I said:

“Since Mother’s Day.”

“Mother’s Day? Hahahahahahaha!”

Tsukihi burst into laughter.

Because it’s Mother’s Day, so “hahahahahahaha”.¹³

That wasn’t even funny, and that laugh made me shudder.

“I see, I see. So after you had that fight with Karen-chan you ran out of the house, and while the whole Araragi family couldn’t even look each other in the eye, you were out there picking up some chick?”

“Picking up a chick?...”

Couldn’t you have put it in a nicer way?

Actually, why are you saying “the whole Araragi family”?

I’m part of the family too, you know.

“What? That’s what you were doing isn’t it? On Mother’s Day of all days, on that day of celebration that only comes around once a year, when we were supposed to be showing our mom our gratitude, you were flirting with some girl weren’t you? You chose some young girl over your family.”

“I can’t believe what a bad kid you turned out to be...”

“Some young girl”? Well, she is young.

She’s in the same grade as me, so she’d be eighteen.

“I bet Karen-chan’s going to be so disappointed when she hears this. She was so happy because she thought you’d actually grown up a little after you apologized to her, but it turns out you were so careless because you were happy you got yourself a girlfriend.”

¹³ The Japanese word for “mother” (母) is pronounced *haha*.

“How would you know I didn’t care? Don’t just decide that for me!”

“It was a celebration but you turned it into a carelebration instead.”¹⁴

“Damn it...”

She thinks she can just say whatever pops into her head because she’s holding an awl.

“So, since then you’ve been keeping us in the dark about it the whole time? During breakfast and dinner, you never told me that you had a girlfriend. You were just thinking about how much better the food tasted knowing that I was completely in the dark about your girlfriend and secretly laughing at me in your head weren’t you.”

“Do you really think that there’s an older brother out there who would do that?”

“You! You nonexistent big brother! How could you keep a secret from me! I knew it, you haven’t been wrestling with us when we fight because you’re saving yourself for your girlfriend!”

“It’s not like I wrestle with her anyway... And besides, even if I was just careless because I was happy, it’s because I met a fifth-grade girl, not because I got a girlfriend.”

“How long!”

Was the gist of the conversation as Tsukihi kept asking me about my girlfriend all the way until the morning.

¹⁴ Tsukihi previously called Koyomi “careless” (おざなり, *ozanari*). Here, she says オザーナリー (*ozaanarii*) to make it sound like アニバーサリー (*anibaasarii*, “anniversary”).



SHINOBU HOUSE

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It was only on the night after the meeting held in the living room of the Araragi house—between the couple Araragi Koyomi and Senjougahara Hitagi, and the Fire Sisters Araragi Karen and Araragi Tsukihi—later to be known as “Gahara Summit” had ended, that Oshino Shinobu appeared, seeming rather displeased.

Shinobu, who despite being nocturnal by no means would always appear at night, did in fact appear as if it were the most normal thing.

Almost as if waiting for the exact moment when I decided to fall onto my bed with a sense of relief after more or less successfully making it through the actually extremely difficult meeting.

“Aaaah...”

The tired-sounding voice came out of her mouth as she crawled out from the shadows.

What’s with that voice?

It’s like she wants me to pay attention to her.

“I could barely watch that. Pretending to be friends, pretending to be family. I hate that stuff the most.”

“Uuugh.”

Oh boy.

I’ve got another young lady with a “charming” personality on my hands now.

I never would have guessed that there’d be a bonus level after completing that serious discussion of ours.

“You can pretend it was so much trouble for you, but I saw you with that grin on your face trying to get the conversation going between your girlfriend and your sisters. Aaah, I can’t stand it, I simply can’t.”

Shinobu said, criticizing me not directly, but indirectly, disguising her rant as her talking to herself by shrugging and stretching out both of her arms in an overexaggerated motion.

Mumbling on and on, complaining on and on.

“To see the warrior who drove me so close to the edge grow so soft. Why don’t you just get your own soap opera already. You don’t belong in any youkai stories anymore. Go on spouting that tepid crap to those girls all you like.”

“You sure say some feisty things...”

And even during spring break I didn’t even do that much to her. Now she’s starting to make stuff up just to get at me.

“Aaah, I don’t even know anymoore. I guess in the end your family and your girlfriend or whatever is more important to you after aaaall.”

Shinobu continued without even glancing my way. It almost seemed like she was just talking to herself, but loud enough that I would definitely be able to hear her. Like she was trying to implicitly ask “Can you even call yourself a vampire doing all this?”

“What was that again? I remember you saying something. That’s right, I remember you saying some really cool line. Man, that made my heart beat sooo fast. I can’t imagine someone who’d say they cared about their girlfriend or their family saying something that would get my heart beating sooo fast.”

“W-What are you talking about?”

“If you die tomorrow, I’m fine with my life ending tomorrow too’ or something, or were you just trying to sweet-talk me.”

Since she had answered my question, it seemed like she wasn’t just talking to herself after all. But still Shinobu refused to look my way.

“But from what I heard at that meeting you just had, it won’t matter whether I die. You’ll just go on living your normal life. I’m sure. 100%.”

“Well, actually Shinobu-san. That’s not true really...”

“Then die right here right now. I’m already dying from a disease right now so hurry up and die. You can’t? You can’t, can you. There you go, liar.”

“...”

Just like the eight-year-old she looked like.

But actually, this is kinda cute in its own way.

“Just listen to me, Shinobu. That’s not how it is. I know that maybe I was hard to watch today, but I wasn’t trying to ignore you.”

For some reason I started to try and cheer up Shinobu. I was forced to. Why did it end up like this?

“I thought it was obvious, your bond with me is the most precious thing in the world to me—”

“Ha, that’s what all men say when they’re cheating. Well fine! You must be the modern version of the main character in *Life of an Amorous Man*.”¹⁵

“There’s no way you’ve heard of that book before. I bet you’re just guessing based on the name.”

Actually.

Even if you don’t know about the book, the title already tells you enough anyway.

¹⁵ A novel written in 1682 detailing the numerous sexual exploits of a man named Yonosuke in several short stories.

I actually found it pretty interesting that the blond young girl Shinobu-chan would know about the famous works of Ihara Saikaku.¹⁶ I wonder where all her knowledge even comes from.

Normally Shinobu just spends her time inside my shadow, and apparently it's a pretty large space so she spends her time reading or playing games... I'm starting to wonder what kinds of books Shinobu reads.

"How about this, my master. If I, your girlfriend, your giant sister and your minuscule sister were all hanging from the side of a cliff and you could only save one of us, who would you save?"

"..."

She's so goddamn annoying!

This little brat's so goddamn annoying!

I felt myself straining under the weight of how annoying she was and said,

"I don't think I could make that choice. Everyone's life is equal so there's no way I could choose between them!"

trying to act cool while dodging the question by giving her lip service.

"Stop trying to act cool while dodging the question by giving me lip service."

Said Shinobu, evidently unsatisfied with my answer.

I don't even know what to say after she just saw completely through my plan and threw it right back at my face...

"Answer me. Who would you pick? I might have to leave your shadow depending on your answer."

"Can you even leave it...?"

"Of course I can. I just so happened to stumble into your shadow and started living there anyway. You could say I'm like Odysseus in Circe's mansion."¹⁷

¹⁶ Famous Japanese poet from the 17th century. He created the "floating world" genre of Japanese prose.

¹⁷ The original line compares it to a *mayoiga* (迷家), a house which was said to bring good fortune to travelers who visited it. Circe is a sorceress who

“I guess that explains why you have all those books...”

In reality, those were just books she took from my bookshelf. But if there really were a bookshelf you could just keep taking from and there would always be more books, that would really be heaven to any bookworm. Anyway...

Hmm.

What should I do about this?

In any case, I should just tell her “Shinobu, obviously I’d save you even if I had to leave Senjouhara and Karen-chan and Tsukihi-chan behind, even if I had to use them as a shield, obviously I’d save you!” and get myself out of this question for now... But really.

When I’m already talking to someone with this kind of mindset, I’d really just be giving her lip service, or trying to act cool, or dodging the question... and then she’d see right through me—I mean throw a bunch of false accusations at me and say “Ha! You’re trying to sweet-talk me again!”

So, where does this leave me.

Well, there is only one model answer.

“I would reach out to...”

I said.

I said with a dashing look.

“Hanekawa. Hanekawa Tsubasa. If I really was in that kind of situation, I’d reach out to Hanekawa—and ask for her help.”

“...”

Shinobu looked at me with an astounded look on her face for a little while, then afterwards,

“Ka ka.”

She began to laugh.

She finally laughed.

provides for all of Odysseus’ worldly desires during a year he spends feasting and drinking before he resumes his journey back home after the Trojan War.

“Well, if you mention her I guess I have to agree. It really is convenient for you to just pull out her name.”

But really that was just another way of getting myself out of the question, and in terms of who I save or don't save, even if I get someone else's help, in the end people can only save themselves, and people can never save other people. Maybe I wouldn't be able to save any of the four, or five, of them, but at least for the time being I managed to stop Shinobu from leaving—and from then on just like before,

Shinobu would keep living in my shadow.