

Zuihitsu on Meeting up with my First Husband (in Japan, after 20 years)

When we married, we didn't want kids. Decades later, we're sharing pics.
Your youngest is you with long hair. My son's eyebrows, you call 'proper'.

Not like yours — *nan ni mo nai*.

Things I'd Forgotten about Our Life:

- We rode to a gynaecologist, on your *Honda Forza*, when my tampon stuck
- DIY: after buying an ill-fitting shelf, you shoved a spaghetti jar into the gap

It's like going back twenty years, you laugh, coming towards me in a back-to-front cap.

[総ての過去を未来に繋げ — connect all your past to your future]

I have forgotten things. In the *katsu* family restaurant, you remind me to crush sesame seeds into the sauce. Once the Master of *Sena Haru Ramen-Ya*, now you're a truck driver.

two days later, in the childhood room of Fumiko Hayashi, I will cry

Ways in Which you Say Your Wife Resembles me:

- She has a beautiful heart
- She is learning English
- She loves to drink & sing

*& suddenly, eyes closed, concentrating immensely & apologising for being 'onchi',
you are singing. on the 3rd attempt, I recognise 'I Say a Little Prayer' — from that 90s movie
neither of us remembers the name of...*

[Grinding sesame (*goma suri*) = metaphor for flattery]

*you drive me to my hotel in your Family Car,
place your palm over mine. my hand turns.
unfurls, like a flowering tea*

Fly to me
(after Fumiko Hayashi)

Fly to me, Haru's handmade gyōza
Fly to me, Shirahama sands
Fly to me, Sei Shōnagon's wisdom
Fly to me, Hayashi's pen

[*Sayonara Dake ga Jinsei Da* — 'Life is Only Full of Goodbyes' — song by Itou Kashitarou]

Things About You as a Dad:

- Your boys call you *tō-tō*, a nickname for *Otōsan*
- *Japanese English* on your cap: *Dad Infinity*

You pull up at my hotel. With the brazenness of the seagull that stole my *katsu sando* at Kamakura Bay, you swoop in, kiss me hard: *If you ever need anything...* Wave & drive off.

Mr. Wonderful — the 90s movie — with Gus, Leonora, the bowling alley & the alimony.