Omohide Poro Poro (1991)
(Memories with Teardrops):
"Only Yesterday"

Translated by "The Poro x2 Project":

Poro part 1 translated by Hana Kawashima and Brad Lucido.
Poro part 2 translated by Yohei Honda and Bryan Wilkinson.

Revisions, first draft editing, and annotations by Bryan Wilkinson.

Yohei Honda was consultant for some revisions and annotations, providing much additional translation from the books named in the bibliography on request.

Second draft editing by Enrique Conty, David Goldsmith, and Bryan Wilkinson.

Translation of "Ai wa Hana, Kimi wa Sono Tane" (Love is a flower, you are the seed) (The Rose) by Theresa Martin.

Translation of "Koke Kokko no Uta" (Cock-a-doodle Song) by Lee Collins and David Goldsmith.

This script is public domain and may be used in fan-made subtitlings provided that the above translation credits are given and the subtitle is not made for profit (we also wouldn't mind being sent a copy... :). Parties interested in using this script should contact the translators at the following address:

Poro x2 Project
c/o Bryan Wilkinson
10379 Lansdale Ave.
Cupertino, CA 90514

or send email to the Miyazaki Discussion Group at:
nausicaa@brownvm.brown.edu

Due to the strong cultural elements in this film, this translation will be presented using Japanese names of some things that are representative of Japanese culture, and use the Japanese system of honorifics, explained below in brief. Some subtitlers may wish to present a more "Western" version, so alternatives are given after these cases which can be used as a substitute. These will be enclosed in [] brackets.

Other places in the film translation include brief translations or explanations of some terms or things that can be easily included in a subtitling following the "cultural" version. These will be enclosed in <> brackets.

Annotations are also included, giving much excessive detail on the background of some elements of the film--these may be used in part or entirety in small print below the subtitles if desired for viewers to check at their leisure with their freeze-frames if necessary--these longer annotations are enclosed in {} brackets and may be used with asterisks--*--attached to the relevant dialogue.

Some redundant descriptions may appear such as setting information. This and regular parenthetical statements will use parentheses ().

Lastly, the inhabitants of the Yamagata Prefecture speak in a unique regional dialect which is quite strong. A small effort was made here to give these characters a vague-in-origin accent.

As mentioned above, the Japanese honorific system will be maintained in translation, in a simplified form. Here is a brief explanation:

-san: honorific for someone of status equal to yourself
-sama: honorific for someone of status higher to yourself
-chan: honorific for someone of status lower to yourself, and term of endearment for family and friends—very informal
-sensei: honorific for professors, doctors, teachers
-kun: similar to chan, but mostly applied to males

Some relatives, though, have been identified by their direct Western counterpart's nomenclature (i.e. "Mother", "Mom", etc. rather than "Okaa-san", "Kaa-chan", etc.).

Some pronounciations look confusing in English "romaji", so most are phoneticized instead, for ease of reading in subtitled form. There is no objection from the translators, though, if this is changed by a particular subtitler, and such changes are assumed valid alternatives.

Bibliography (for annotations, script, etc):

Omohide Poro Poro (the original manga)
by Hotaru Okamoto
and Yuko Tone

The Art of Only Yesterday

Omohide Poro Poro Roman Album

(All the above are published by Tokuma Shoten.)

Omohide Poro Poro: Only Yesterday
[<Memories with Teardrops>]

(opening credits)

(part one—translation by Kawashima/Lucido)

(1982: Office Building)

EXECUTIVE
You had said you would take a ten-day vacation—

So I just assumed you would be travelling abroad. But you are headed for Yamagata[1], Okajima-san [Miss Okajima]?

TAEKO[2]
Yes.

EXECUTIVE
Did you break up with someone...?

TAEKO
I yearn for the countryside.

(1966: School grounds[3])

CHILDREN
`Bye!
See you later!
Let's go to Hama's house.
Nyah, nyah!
What do you mean, "Nyah" ?!
Let's go, let's go!

TSUNEKO
So...did your grades go up?

AIKO
Uh-uh. But it's all right.

TOKO
How come?

AIKO
As soon as I get home, we're going to Grandma's house. So I won't be in trouble until much later.

TAEKO
Wow, that's nice.

Toko-chan [Toko], are you going to the country, too?

TOKO
Yeah, to Nagano. Are you, Taeko-chan [Taeko]?

TAEKO
I'm not sure.

TSUNEKO
Well, guess what—my father bought a cabin!

TAEKO/TOKO/AIKO (in unison)
Wow, that's great!

(1966: Okajima Residence)

MOTHER (OFF)
As I expected, your math grade's not good.

TAEKO
Yeah, but I got a "B" in science[4]. Oh, Mom? Are we going somewhere for vacation?

MOTHER
Nowhere special.

TAEKO
Hey, Mom, take me someplace.

[1] Yamagata: a rural prefecture about 180 miles north of Tokyo

[2] Taeko, the main character of this film, is played by Miki Imai, who interestingly enough was well known in 1982, when much of this film occurs. She debuted acting in television dramas, but became famous for acting in makeup commercials and such, and later would become a popular actress and singer, whose career is still doing well today.

[3] Music note: the BGM for this scene, "Mime, Mime", is derived from an Israeli folk dance.

[4] A "4" in the Japanese numerical system of 1-5. She got a "2" in math, which equates to a "D", her worst score on the card.

MOTHER
I'll take you to a movie. "Tsuru No Ongaeshi" [<The Crane's Return>][5] is playing, isn't it?

TAEKO
That's not what I meant—someplace in the country.

MOTHER
The country?

TAEKO
Right, like "Grandma's house in the country".

MOTHER
Your Grandmother lives here, doesn't she?

TAEKO
Then Grandpa!

MOTHER
Didn't he pass away? We don't know any places in the country. Please don't ask for something we can't possibly do.

(1982: Eidan Marunouchisen subway[6])

NARRATOR (1982 Taeko, Voice Over for all narration)
I was born and raised in Tokyo, and my parents were as well. I always envied my friends who had a country hometown to return to.

(1966: Okajima residence)

NANAKO
It's impossible to take a trip now, because everywhere will be crowded.

TAEKO
But I want to go somewhere.

GRANDMOTHER
How about Ohnohya?

MOTHER
Huh?

GRANDMOTHER
We've been regular visitors, so if we chose to go to Ohnohya, we might be able to reserve a room.

TAEKO
Where, where is it?

NANAKO
Oh, sure—Ohnohya is good, because Taeko hasn't been there before.

MOTHER
Say, that's right...

TAEKO
Hey, is it in the mountains? By the sea?

YAEKO
It's the Atami hot springs.

TAEKO
Huh—"Atami"?

NANAKO
Right. You can reach it by bullet train.

YAEKO
Oh, sure, that place would be good.

TAEKO
Atami...

NANAKO (OFF)
It's really fun—there are all kinds of baths.

YAEKO
Um, yeah, there's a giant Roman Bath.

NANAKO
That's right, and many smaller ones like the Swan Bath and the Pansy Bath[7] .

YAEKO
Right, right! The Pansy Bath!

TAEKO
Pansy Bath?

YAEKO
Yeah, it's a really fantastic bath!

NANAKO
Taeko, you just love baths, don't you?

MOTHER (OFF)

Okay, well Father is working and can't go, so why don't you four go together?

YAEKO/NANAKO (unison)
Huh?

YAEKO
US...

NANAKO
...go TOO?

(1966: Park)

RADIO (reel-to-reel tape recorder)
EXERCISES[8] :
1,2,3,4,5,6...lean to the side...

SIXTH GRADER
Taeko-chan [Taeko], it's incredible—you've come to every single radio exercise.

TAEKO
Well, everyone else has gone to the countryside, after all.

SIXTH GRADER (OFF)
Taeko-chan [Taeko], aren't you going anywhere?

TAEKO
I'm going!

SIXTH GRADER
Where?

TAEKO
Atami!

SIXTH GRADER
Atami? What are you going to Atami for?

TAEKO
To go bathing!

SIXTH GRADER
Ohhh?
Well, it's good timing. I'll be going, too—my relative's place, next Monday. So maybe no one will come to exercises for a while.

(1982: Taeko's one-room apartment)

NANAKO (OFF/TELEphone)
Hello, Okajima residence.

TAEKO
Ah, Nanako `ne-san [Nanako]? It's me, Taeko. I'm leaving today, and was wondering if Mitsuo `ni-san [Mitsuo][9] had anything for me to tell his family at the farm.

NANAKO (TELE)
Hmm...doesn't seem like he had anything special to say...oh yeah, would you buy some cookies or something for Naoko-chan [Naoko]? Say it's from Mitsuo Oji-chan [Uncle Mitsuo] and me, and I'll pay you back later.

TAEKO
That's fine...I'll say hello for you. How's Mother?

NANAKO (TELE)
She went out today. She was angry, though—after all, you did turn down her Ohmiai [<arranged marriage (traditional)>] meeting, didn't you? Considering that you're 27, you're not going to get any better choices for a husband.

TAEKO
That's all Mother ever talks about.

NANAKO (TELE)
But you should think about it, you know. You're not so young anymore.

TAEKO
Is that so?

NANAKO (TELE)
Yes, it is—you can't be a cute little girl forever.

[5] "Tsuru no Ongaeshi" is a 1966 theatrical puppet-animation film. It is not mentioned in the original Omoide Poro Poro manga, so it is probably mentioned here as a tribute by Director Isao Takahata. Going to see it by itself really is NOT a big deal, as the film was only 17 minutes long! It did, however, on a positive note, feature with the legendary Osamu Tezuka's first theatrical release of Jungle Taitei (Jungle Emperor/Kimba the White Lion) and two other shorts. The film itself is of a classic Japanese folk tale about a kind peasant who frees a crane from a trap, and is repaid in a supernatural fashion for his kindness—but later his curiosity gets the better of him, and by breaking a promise, his reward turns forfeit.

[6] One of the oldest, if not the oldest, subways in Japan, and one of the more famous, because of its distinctive red- with white stripes paint scheme. It connects Ikebukuro to Ogikubo, and Taeko's stop is at Ohtemachi.

[7] "Pansy": "Sanshiyokusumire", a fancier floral name in Japanese meaning "three-colored violet".

[8] Calisthenics required for P.E. during vacation time

[9] This particular use of "`ni-san" uses a different character when written, meaning "brother-in-law": in this case Mitsuo is the husband of Nanako of 1982. This usage will also appear later for Mitsuo's brother Kazuo, and his wife, Kiyoko

TAEKO
Yeah, harvesting rice! And this year, I'm going to pick benibana [<safflower>][10] .

NANAKO (TELE)
Benibana [Safflower]?

TAEKO
That's right! Because of your husband's family in the country, I can have a hometown. I might as well make the most of it!

Taeko's cassette tapes include Billy Joel: Flowers in the Attic, Dan Siegel, Southern All Stars (Tiny Bubbles), Yuming II (Yumi Matsutouya, who sang the theme music for Kiki's Delivery Service), Darryl Hall and John Oates, and Pointer Sisters.

NANAKO (TELE)
Oh, cut that out.
You don't get a vacation like this often, so instead of staying at such an old place, why not go to a nice rental cottage and have a "delicious life"[11] ?

NANAKO (TELE, with 1966 insert)
You might be able to meet a nice guy.

TAEKO
Stop, stop! You're trying to trick me again, like you did with the Pansy Bath at Ohnohya!

NANAKO
Ohnohya..? Oh...ah, that time, huh?
You just talked about that a while ago, too.
What a burden your past must be if you're still holding a grudge like that!

(1966: bullet train)

NARRATOR
At that time, my sisters wouldn't have been caught dead going to a place like Atami.

(1966: Ohnohya—Atami)

TAEKO
Oh...
Grandma...?

GRANDMOTHER
Hmm...?

TAEKO
Done yet?
C'mon, let's go to the bath.

GRANDMOTHER
Didn't we just go?

TAEKO
But that was only to the Swan Bath.

NARRATOR
I was incredibly bored.
So starting with the Grimm Bath, and then to the Mermaid Bath, the Lemon Bath, and the Pansy Bath, I went from one to the next on my own.

TAEKO
It's enormous!

NARRATOR
By the time I had reached the Roman Bath, I was starting to feel dizzy...

TAEKO
Wow...!

NARRATOR
...And I finally passed out.

(1966: Park)

NARRATOR
Thus my much-anticipated one-night trip came to an abrupt end, and was followed by a long, long Summer vacation that was still waiting for me.

RADIO EXERCISES:
...Jumping jacks—open, close, open, close.
Next, arm and leg exercises. 1,2,3...

(1982: Market on way to station, at Izumiya[12])

NARRATOR
When I met with my sisters last time, I slipped and mentioned the disastrous bath trip, so we laughed, "Oh yeah, and then there was that time...", and the conversation turned to other memories of those days.

The music that can be heard in the background here is "Raideen" by Yellow Magic Orchestra from their hit "Technopolice" single (notice both are anime show titles...). With their innovative uses of synthesizer music integrated with computer programs, they were one of the key groups in establishing the "Technopop" genre of music. Keyboardist Ryuichi Sakamoto went on to fame for winning an Academy Award for creating the soundtrack of "The Last Emperor", and more significantly to anime fans, he created the soundtrack of Gainax's first film and highest budget anime film ever, "Oneamisu no Tsubasa" ("Wings of Honneamise"), released in 1987.

(1966: Okajima Residence)

YAEKO (OFF)
You've eaten this before?

NANAKO (OFF)
Nope, my first time.

TAEKO
Remember, I'm the one who asked for it[13] .

YAEKO
We know.

NANAKO
Where did you buy it, Dad?

FATHER
The Senbiki shop in Ginza[14] .

MOTHER
It was expensive, then?

YAEKO
So, how do we eat this?

NANAKO
We slice it into rings.

YAEKO
How?

NANAKO
...I don't know.

MOTHER
Father, didn't you ask the people at the shop?

FATHER
Uh-uh.

MOTHER
Let's eat it next Sunday.

TAEKO
Huh—we're not going to eat it today?

MOTHER
But we don't know how to eat it, do we?

YAEKO
I'm gonna eat a banana.

TAEKO
Me too!

GRANDMOTHER
Warmer countries have rather unusual fruit, don't they?

(1966: later on)

NANAKO
I'm home!
I found out how to serve pineapple.

TAEKO, YAEKO (unison)
What, really?

TAEKO
I..I'll get that.

FATHER
Carefully, now.

MOTHER
Wouldn't a fish knife be better?

TAEKO
Nice smell, nice smell!

Nice fragrance, nice fragrance!

FATHER

[10] The benibana is not a native flower of Japan, but is in fact the safflower of Egypt, and was introduced to Japan in early 600 A.D. More will be explained about this flower at length later in the film.

[11] "delicious life" (oishii seikatsu) is a catch-line from a commercial for the department store "Seibu". It was written by the famous copy writer Shigesato Itoi, who wrote the copy for ads for many commercials including for all of Miyazaki's films as well as this film, and was the voice of the father in My Neighbor Totoro. This commercial's copy was inspired by a Fellini film, and the commercial starred Woody Allen. This commercial popularized the use of "oishii" (delicious) as a slang word used to describe things besides food.

[12] Izumiya is a chain that sells western cookies and cakes and other goodies

[13] In the manga, Taeko's best friend, Toko, got one at her birthday party from a Japanese-American friend, which sparked Taeko's interest in the fruit.

[14] Popular for carrying more exotic foreign produce. Imported produce like pineapples, bananas, etc. were rare at the time and costly luxury items.

Oh, I see.

NANAKO
Hey—plates, plates!

YAEKO
..Oh, right!

FATHER
Itadakimasu [We shall try it now].

FAMILY
Itadakimasu [Let's try it].

TAEKO
It's tough.

FATHER
Not such a big deal.

NANAKO
Not very sweet at all.

YAEKO
It's completely different from when it's canned.

GRANDMOTHER
If you live a long time, you get to have many experiences.

YAEKO
Taeko can have mine.

NANAKO
Mine too.

TAEKO
...Delicious...

MOTHER
You don't have to force yourself to eat it.

FATHER
You'll get a stomachache.

YAEKO
Oh well, that was boring.

NANAKO
Bananas are far more tasty, aren't they?

YAEKO
True, true.

NANAKO
As I expected, the banana is the king of fruit, I guess.

YAEKO
I'm gonna have a banana.

The TV music is "Tokyo Blues", a hit two years earlier.

TAEKO
As I thought, the king of fruit is...
the king of fruit is...

(1982: the market, and Uenoeki Station[15])

NARRATOR
...the banana!

The year I passed out at the Roman Bath and ate pineapple for the first time, was the same year that the "group sound" became a fad, starting with the Beatles' visit to Japan. Soon after that, the electric guitar boom would come.

the music playing is "Memories of Nagisa" (Omohide no Nagisa), by The Wild Ones, one of the debuting "group sound" groups alluded to here.

My sister Nanako 'ne-san [Nanako] was a freshman at an art college, and was always the first to try out all the new fads.

NANAKO
Yeah, "Michelle," isn't it? Another cool Beatles song, huh?

NARRATOR
She tried the mini-skirt when it first came out, and like everyone else, she hid her behind with a bag whenever going upstairs.

[15] Uenoeki Station is the largest station and transportation hub of Japan, the station for a number of express trains to all reaches of Japan, including the Akebono 3 Line, Taeko's next train. She used the subway mentioned earlier to get there. The Akebono 3 line is an overnight express that stops in Yamagata, and includes sleeping compartments. Her time of departure is 10:24 P.M., and time of arrival in Yamagata is 3:51 A.M.

My other sister, Yaeko 'ne-san [Yaeko], the smart eleventh grader, was completely in love with someone in the Takarazuka theater[16] .

TAEKO
Yaeko 'ne-chan [Yaeko]...

YAEKO
D....didn't I tell you to always knock first??!!

NARRATOR
The memories that my sisters mainly talked about were the stars and fashions that they were into. 1966 was a memorable teenage year for my sisters. But back then, I was only in the 5th grade.
I became a fan of Julie of The Tigers[17] ...
...but they didn't debut until later. There was no way for me to have big dreams in the days when I was just simply going back and forth between school and home.

TAEKO
...and it's been on the wall for a long time.

MOTHER
That's nice.

TAEKO
And I was told to keep the essay I wrote on the book, because they might send it to a contest.
If that happens, I'll be very happy...

MOTHER (OFF)
You didn't eat your school lunch again.

TAEKO
...huh?

MOTHER
Why do you put it between bread?

[16] a form of theater performed entirely by a female cast, including the male roles, which has been popular for some time now (Osamu Tezuka, for example, cites being influenced by his trips to the Takarazuka when he was a child), sort of a counterpart to the all-male Kabuki performances. Takarazuka focuses on Western dramas. The "someone" Yaeko was in love with was the male-impersonator "Gon-chan", whom the Okajima family dog is apparently named after.

[17] The Tigers was another "group sound" group that would debut the next year in 1967. Lead singer Kenji "Julie" Sawada was a pop singer (idol) who was popular with high and junior high school girls and would later continue a popular solo career.

TAEKO
Because I hate namasu <daikon radish and carrots marinated in vinegar>.

MOTHER
Well, if you do this, we can't use the bread or the namasu.
How wasteful.
The kid who can eat all of her food is more respected than the one who can write an essay.

(1966: classroom—Fifth grade, room 5)

The classroom music being played, and used for a humorous effect, is The Hungarian Rhapsody #5 by Brahms. This may or may not be a subtle tribute from director Takahata to Warner Brothers cartoons, particularly Friz Freleng, which used the same technique of synchronizing humorous animation with classical pieces, including this score. It also serves, in a way, as a foreshadowing tie to the real Hungarian music that plays a role in the later 1982 parts of this film.

SUU'
Wow, how can you drink that tasteless stuff?

TAEKO
The milk's all right. It's the daikon radish and onion I can't stand.

SUU'
Since I'm leaving carrots today, I have to drink the milk. I wonder who decided you could only leave one thing?

TAEKO
Want me to drink it?

SUU'
W..would you?

TAEKO
And next time, you could eat my daikon or onion in return?

SUU'
Uh-huh, uh-huh, uh-huh.

"Thank you!"

LUNCH CREW (pony-tail girl)
Aah, carrots!?

SUU'
You can leave one thing, you know...

TAEKO
I was right, the second bowl is worse...

(1966: class meeting)

BOBBED-HAIR GIRL
There are people who keep running if they are told to start over again by the hall monitors. I think to keep running is really bad.

"SPARE ME"
"Start over again?" Spare me.

RIE
You can't run in the halls.

PUT-UP HAIR GIRL, HER FRIEND
That's right, that's right.

TOKO
It's dangerous—you might hurt somebody.

SUU'
No way—if I hit a girl like you, Toko, I would be the one hurt.

TOKO
Oh, PLEASE...

SUU'
I'm hit!

TSUNEKO'S NEIGHBOR
Once you ran, what can you do about it?

AIKO'S NEIGHBOR
Here, here.

PUT-UP HAIR GIRL AND FRIEND
Be quiet.

Who asked you, anyway?

TAEKO'S NEIGHBOR
Why not abolish the system of starting over?

HIS NEIGHBOR (GIRL)
You can't, it's part of the rules.

MALE CLASS PRESIDENT
If you have an opinion, please raise your hand.

TSUNEKO
I do.

MALE CLASS PRESIDENT
Tani-san [Miss Tani].

TSUNEKO
I think the hall monitor should run after the runner, catch them, and make them go back and start over.

BOYS
I do!
I do!
I do!

MALE CLASS PRESIDENT
Suzuki-san [Mr. Suzuki]

SUU'
And then the hall monitor has to go back and start over, too.

BOYS
Right, right!

BOBBED-HAIR GIRL'S NEIGHBORS (BOYS)
That's more like it![18]

RIE'S NEIGHBOR (BOY)
That's right.

MALE CLASS PRESIDENT
Yes, Tani Tsuneko-san [Miss Tsuneko Tani].

TSUNEKO
I don't think that the hall monitors need to start over because...their job is just like a police patrol car catching a speeder.

MALE CLASS PRESIDENT
Any opposing arguments?

TONOMURA
Like a patrol car...?

TAEKO'S NEIGHBOR'S NEIGHBOR (GIRL)
...Then running is no good.

MALE CLASS PRESIDENT
The decision rests on allowing the hall monitor to run.

Anything else to discuss?

TSUNEKO
Yes.

MALE CLASS PRESIDENT
Tani-san [Miss Tani].

[18] Actually, "Iijanaaaaai!" (Isn't it good?), a gag-line used by the comedian duo "Haruno Tic-Tac"

RIE'S NEIGHBOR (BOY)
Her again?!

SUU'
The show-off!

TAEKO
Quit chattering.

TSUNEKO
Lately I've been seeing people leaving food at lunch. I just read a magazine article about the war in Vietnam. In foreign countries like those there are many poor people. We are happily more fortunate.

TSUNEKO'S NEIGHBOR
Yeah, "we're happy."[19]

TSUNEKO
(A-hem!)
We must be thankful for the food we have. Right now we may leave one thing per meal, but I feel that is too lenient.

RIE'S NEIGHBOR (BOY)
Geez, Tsuneko...aren't you the goody two-shoes?

TSUNEKO'S NEIGHBOR (BOY)
Bleah!

AIKO'S NEIGHBOR (BOY)
Why can't we leave even one thing?

SUU'
And then everyone could leave the milk.

TAEKO
Why not ask somebody to eat what you don't like?

TAEKO'S NEIGHBOR'S NEIGHBOR.
That's obvious.

BRAIDED HAIR GIRL'S NEIGHBOR (BOY)
Some people leave extra by hiding it between their bread.

BRAIDED HAIR GIRL
Ohh, cheaters!

BOY (OFF)
School lunch stinks.

[19] Reference to the hit song "Kimi to Itsumademo" ("Be Forever with You"), by the still popular Yuzo Kayama. It comes from a part of the song that is spoken, not sung.

MALE CLASS PRESIDENT
Raise your hand!

FEMALE CLASS PRESIDENT (KOBAYASHI[20])
Raise your hand!

CLASS PRESIDENTS
If you have an opinion, raise your hand, please!

"SPARE ME"
"Oh...you got me!"[21]

The music which can be heard in the background here is "Damatte Ore ni Tsuite Koi" ("Shaddup and Stick with Me") by the group Hana Hajime & the Krazy Kats. This was the main title song of the movie "Horafuki Taikoki," and the famous starring actor, Hitoshi Ueki, was a member of this group.

(1982: Train station)

NARRATOR
After I said goodbye to my sisters and went to bed, one by one, my memories of fifth grade came back.

Memories about our dog, Gon...about sports day...about the scary feeling we got from reading Kazuo Umezu's comics...and even about yearning for an electric pencil sharpener.[22]

(1982: Train hallway)

Even such trivial things came back vividly, occupying my mind as if I were watching a movie, and overwhelmed the real me.

(1966: Fifth grade, room 5)

[20] See the last portion of the movie, dealing with "Abe"

[21] gag-line from the comedian trio "Tempuku Trio" ("Sinking Trio")

[22] All of these memories are stories from the original manga not adapted in this film. Kazuo Umezu was a popular creator of horror comics. The story in particular that scared her was "Mama ga Kowai" ("Mama is Scary") ran in Shojo Friend magazine in 1965 (actually when she was in the fourth grade, though she wrote an essay about it as a fifth grader), and was about a girl whose mother is really a snake-woman: Taeko wound up extremely suspicious of her OWN mother for a while after that...

GIRL “A” FROM ROOM 4
Is there an “Okajima-san” [a “Miss Okajima”] here? There’s the one.

The strange way the girls are walking is in imitation of a commercial for “Renown” women’s apparel, one of the few color commercials of its time. The American women in the commercial walked in this unique manner (long, confident strides, in step), which was very surprising to the Japanese viewers.

Hirota-kun [Hirota] says that “I like Okajima-san [Okajima] of room 5.” ...Shall we go?

I’m gonna tell Hiro that you know, now!

GIRL “B” (ROOM 4)
Hurry up!

TOKO
So it IS true?

(1966: Sukebeyokocho: “Naughty Alley”)

TSUNEKO
Where, where?

TOKO
Over there.

GRAFFITI
“Taeko Okajima, 5th grade, Room 5 + Shuji Hirota, 5th grade, Room 4”

To the right of this is a drawing of Tetsujin 28go, the first anime giant robot, and quite popular at that time (and known in the U.S. as “Gigantor”).

TSUNEKO.
Oh, she’s right!

AIKO
Whoa...

TOKO
See?

TSUNEKO
What kind of guy is Hirota-kun [Hirota]?

AIKO
I don’t know.

TOKO
Me neither.

TSUNEKO
Taeko-chan [Taeko], are you sure you don’t know him?

TAEKO
I..I..I don’t know him. Not at all.

(1966: Fifth grade, classroom 4)

TSUNEKO
Which one here is named Hirota-kun [Hirota]?

BOY
Oh, its some room 5 kids.

GIRL A
Hiro, you’re being called.

HIROTA
Yes, that’s me!

TSUNEKO
D...don’t write strange things at “Naughty Alley”...

HIROTA
Huh?

TSUNEKO
...Okajima-san [“Miss Okajima”] said to tell you.

HIROTA
I...I didn’t write anything.

GIRL A
Ah, but Hiro, didn’t you say you liked “Okajima-san [Miss Okajima] from room 5?”

GIRL B
He did, he did!

GIRL C
So we wrote it for you.

HIROTA
Whaa...?!

GIRLS ABC (singing, in unison)
“I love you, but...”

GIRL C
Cha cha cha cha!

GIRLS ABC (cont’d)
“...we’re apart,”

GIRL C
Cha cha cha cha!

GIRLS ABC (cont’d)
“just like the stars...”

GIRL C
Cha cha cha cha!

GIRLS ABC (cont’d)
“...that we see far away.[23] ”

TSUNEKO
Goodbye.

(1966: school hallway)

TSUNEKO
Taeko-chan [Taeko]!
We just got back from meeting Hirota-kun [Hirota].

TAEKO
Whaa...?

TSUNEKO
I certainly didn’t forget to tell him you didn’t want him writing strange things!

AIKO
Tsuneko-chan [Tsuneko]!

TSUNEKO
Oops, not supposed to do that.

BRAIDED HAIR GIRL
Good for you, Taeko-chan [Taeko-chan].

(1966: Room 5)

BRAIDED HAIR GIRL
Here, here. Look there—that’s Hirota-kun [Hirota].

SUU’
What, Hirota from room 4 likes Okajima? Hirota’s incredible—he’s an ace.

TOKO
Oh, a pitcher?

SUU’
The only one who can hit that guy’s pitches is Tonomura.

[23] “Hoshi no Flamenco” (“Flamenco of Stars”), another hit at the time by Teruhiko Saigo, this will appear again in the film in instrumental form.

TSUNEKO
Whoa, you don’t say?

SUU’
We’ll be playing against the team from his class in the fifth grade school tournament.

The music here is the instrumental version of “Hoshi no Flamenco,” quoted by the girls earlier.

(1966: Fifth grade tournament)

CLASS 4
Go for it, go for it, Hirota!
Go for it, go for it, Hirota!

UMPIRE
“Play ball!”

CLASS 5
Hit it, hit it, Tonomura!
Hit it, hit it, Tonomura!

GIRL A
Go for it, Hiro...!
...Okajima-san’s [“Miss Okajima’s”] watching you!

TSUNEKO
Tonomura-kun (Tonomura), good luck!

UMPIRE
“STRIKE!”

CLASS 4 STUDENT (OFF)
Attaboy, Hiro!

CLASS 4 STUDENT 2 (OFF)
Strike ‘em out, Strike him!

TSUNEKO
Taeko-chan [Taeko], I’ll never forgive you if you encourage their side.

TAEKO
I...I wouldn’t even think of such a thing!

TSUNEKO, leading CLASS 5
Hit it, hit it, Tonomura!
Hit it, hit it, Tonomura!
Hit it, hit...

UMPIRE
“OUT!”

CLASS 4
All right, all right, Hirota!
All right, all right, Hirota!

One leg hitter![24]

UMPIRE
"Strike!"
"Strike!"
"Strike! Batter out!"

TAEKO
Amazing...

CLASS 4
All right, all right, Hirota!
All right, all right, Hirota!
All right, all right, Hirota!

NARRATOR
Even though I knew nothing about baseball, at least I could tell he was incredible.

CLASS 4
All right, all right, Hirota!
All right, all right, Hirota!

AIKO
What's the matter, Taeko-chan [Taeko]?

NARRATOR
Because of the cold and my nervousness, I had to run to the bathroom five times.

CATCHER
Over here!

UMPIRE
"Safe!"
"Game Set."
5 to 3. Class 4 wins.

TEAM MEMBERS
Thank you for the game.

GIRL B
Terrific, Hiro!

GIRL C
Way to go!

GIRL A
You were great!

TSUNEKO
It's Suu's fault.

[24] The famous one-leg hitting (also known as "Flamingo hitting") popularized by Japanese baseball legend Ou Sadahara, a Chinese player for the Yomiuri Giants, also known as "One-chan" because his Chinese name is the same as the character for the number "one", and his uniform number, is of course, the same.

SUU'
Why?

TEAM MEMBER
You don't know anything.

SUU' (OFF)
Even Tonomura couldn't hit the ball, so how could we win?

TEAM MEMBER (OFF)
Right.

TSUNEKO (OFF)
It's because Suu' had an error. That's how we gave them three extra points.

SUU'
That's not true.

BOY 1, CLASS 4
Hey, the coach is going to buy us all ice cream!

BOY 2, CLASS 4
Really?

BOY 3, CLASS 4
Great!

GIRL A
Hey, Hiro, why don't you go talk to Okajima-san [Okajima] from room 5?

GIRL B
Yeah, yeah!

TAEKO
I...I'm...ggg, going home!

AIKO
What's the matter, Taeko-chan [Taeko]?

GIRL A
Hey, she's going home...

(1966: crossroads)

HIROTA
Uh..umm!
Nah! ...Naughty! n..n..nah-Naughty Al..luh...
...luh...al..al...

Ruh...Rainy days!

TAEKO
Huh?

HIROTA
...Cloudy days, or sunny days...which do you like?

TAEKO
...kuh..Cloudy days...

HIROTA
Oh, we're alike!

The music here is an instrumental adapted from the theme of the theatrical version of "Ohanahan", the mega-hit NHK drama series (with a maximum viewership of 54%, and an overall average of 46%) from that time. The fact that the end of the music and the end of the sequence sync perfectly was not intentional, but nonetheless a lucky accident.

The starry eyes Taeko has in this one scene are appropriately in the style of popular girls' manga of this time frame.

(1982: Taeko's Apartment)

TAEKO
Rainy days...cloudy days, or sunny days...which do you like? Oh...we're alike.

The magazine next to Taeko on her bed is "an an", a fashion magazine for women published by Heibon Shuppan since 1970, though since then the company's name has changed to Magazine House. This magazine is a rival of the even more popular Non-No, published by Shueisha since 1971. Both magazines are still popular today.

(1982: On the train)

NARRATOR
I didn't intend to bring my fifth grade self with me...but once she was revived, she wasn't going to leave easily.

But why the fifth grade...?

(1966: Auditorium)

TEACHER (OFF)
The boys in the fourth period class will play baseball, and the girls will meet in the gymnasium.

SCHOOL NURSE (OFF, but camera FADES/TILTS ON)
Today there is something important to talk about. After you graduate from elementary school, you will go to junior high school, then high school, then grow up and have a baby. In order to have a baby, a woman's body starts preparing for it.

(1966: Room 5)

TAEKO
You knew?

TOKO
Uh-huh.

TAEKO
Really?

TOKO
My mom told me when I was in fourth grade since I have been developing faster.

TAEKO
"Developing?"

TOKO
Right...I've heard that if you're taller or more overweight than average, your period might come sooner. So, in other words, Enomoto-san [Enomoto], Onobu, and Rie-chan [Rie] all probably already started theirs.

TAEKO
Oh...?

TSUNEKO
Hey, hey...
Will you buy THAT?

TOKO
I'll buy it.

TSUNEKO
I thought so.

TOKO
Taeko-chan [Taeko], will you buy it too?

TAEKO
Uh....uh-huh....

TOKO
Buying it's a good idea. Hey, remember like the school nurse said, you're going to need it eventually, after all.

TSUNEKO'S NEIGHBOR (BOY)
Hey, did you know the girls are buying underpants[25] from the infirmary?

BOYS
Huh?

AIKO'S NEIGHBOR (BOY)
Didn't you know, Suu?

SUU
Nope.

BOY ACROSS FROM AIKO
How come?
How come you're buying underpants?

GIRL BEHIND AIKO
W...well it's...um,

AIKO
That is...

AIKO'S NEIGHBOR (BOY)
Why do they sell underpants at school?

SUU
Are they swimming shorts?

The music here is an instrumental of "Konichiwa Aka-chan" ("Hello Baby"), yet another hit song from an NHK television show, "Yume de Aimashou" ("See you in a Dream"). Also, for reference toward the next scene, the boy walking past with his tray and a knowing grin is the infamous Nakayama.

(1966: Girl's Restroom)

TSUNEKO (OFF)
Say what—!?

TSUNEKO
You went and told Nakayama-kun [Nakayama]?

GIRL WITH PUT-UP HAIR
What did you have to go do that for?

GIRL WITH PLAIN HAIR RIBBON
You're not supposed to tell any boys!

TSUNEKO
That's for sure, girls are supposed to keep it to themselves.

PUT-UP HAIR
Rie-chan [Rie], you like Nakayama-kun [Nakayama], so that must be why, well...

TSUNEKO
He must've asked you to tell him.

RIE
Um...uh-huh.

TAEKO
What's the matter?

TSUNEKO
Well, Rie-chan [Rie] here went and told Nakayama-kun [Nakayama] all about periods.

TAEKO
No way...!

TSUNEKO
That Nakayama-kun [Nakayama], he'll tell everyone about it.

RIE
I told him to keep it a secret.

PUT-UP HAIR
You can't trust him on that.

TSUNEKO, HAIR RIBBON
Right? Right.

HAIR RIBBON
Omigosh.

PUT-UP HAIR
The boys are so dirty-minded.

TSUNEKO
They sure won't only look up skirts, now.

(1966: Hallway)

GIRLS
Hey!

SLIDING BOY
Safe!

GIRLS
Eek..!

TOKO, TAEKO, GIRL WITH PIGTAILS
Pervert!

TSUNEKO
Jerk!

NARRATOR
This skirt-peeping[26] had caught on earlier, and not surprisingly, the knowledge of menstruation only complicated the problem.

SUU
Safe! Ah, but your period isn't!

SWEEPING GIRL
Eek! Why you...! Wait up!

SUU
Sorry! Sorry!

SWEEPING BOY
PERIODical cleaning.

PIGTAILED GIRL
Jerk!

SWEEPING BOY
Hey, that hurt.

SWEEPING GIRL
Wait...!

SUU
Sorry! Sorry!

STRIPED SHIRT BOY
You've got a period.

SHORT-HAIRED GIRL
Do not!

PUT-UP HAIR
This is all Rie-chan's [Rie's] fault.

SUU
Ouch!

Need it be said that this music is "Turkey in the Straw"..?

(1966: Hallway)

RIE
I'm sorry.

TAEKO
What for?

RIE
That I slipped and told Nakayama-kun [Nakayama].

TAEKO
Well, no big deal.

RIE
But the school nurse said it was important, didn't she?

TAEKO
That's true, but...

RIE
I...I was a fourth grader, when mine came.

TAEKO
Huh....really?

RIE
So that's why sometimes I skip P.E. class.

TAEKO
You skip P.E. when you have your period?

RIE
Right, my mother told me I should.

Nakayama-kun (Nakayama) said that it must be a big bother for girls after I told him.

TAEKO
You told him about skipping P.E. class?!

RIE
Uh-huh, though I told him to keep his promise and not tell any other boys.

TAEKO
If you told him that...
When any girl skips P.E. class, everyone will think she's having her period, won't they?!

RIE
Huh, you think so?

TAEKO
Darn right!

BOY IN HALL TALKING TO ANOTHER
...really? I'll have to tell the guys. Hey...!

(1966: Okajima residence)

EXCUSE NOTE
Please excuse Taeko from P.E. class because of the flu.

[25] the "underpants" in question, as the viewer might guess, are specially lined with a napkin and are reusable. According to the manga, Taeko almost was lent a pair by Yaeko, until she asked too many embarrassing questions about it, and wound up having to get her own after all.

[26] Lifting skirts and looking up them when going past girls was a new fad among young boys in the mid-sixties—in response, many girls wore their gym shorts under their skirts (including in the manga).

TAEKO
(cough) I'm not going to skip P.E.

MOTHER
Forget it—that summer flu will only get much worse if you don't skip it.

TAEKO
Well, then I'm staying home.

MOTHER
You don't have a fever, so you're going.

TAEKO
Then I'll go to P.E., too.

MOTHER
Fine, go ahead.
But then if you get worse, it's on your head.

TAEKO
(cough) I'm going now.

MOTHER
I wonder when she started liking P.E. so much...

(1966: Room 5)

PONYTAILED GIRL
Taeko-chan (Taeko), your face is real red.

AIKO
Oh, it really is.

TSUNEKO
What's the matter?

TAEKO
Its a cold.

AIKO
Do you have a fever?

TSUNEKO
You ought to skip P.E.

PONYTAIL
She's right.

TSUNEKO
I'll go tell the teacher.

TAEKO
That's okay!

TSUNEKO
But...

TAEKO
I have a note to excuse me from P.E.

TSUNEKO
What, well, that's okay then.
Right?

(1966: stairway)

RUNNING KID
Gangway!

(1966: Room 5)

RIE
I'm also skipping it today, so we're together.

(1966: School grounds)

RIE
That looks nice...
I wish I could be playing dodge-ball.

TAEKO
Rie-chan [Rie], do you...that is, are you...having your period?

RIE
Mmm-hmmm.

TAEKO
I'm not, I've got a cold.

RIE
I know that, Taeko-chan [Taeko], you're just sick.

TAEKO
Right, just sick, that's what I am.

RIE
A period isn't being sick, of course.

I'm sure I could play dodge-ball.

DODGE-BALL BOY
Oh, period contagion!

RIE
Huh?

DODGE-BALL BOY
Back off, back off!

That was close—any further and we could have been contaminated!

TAEKO
("Contaminated?!")

OTHER KID
Hey, over here!

RIE
Periods are contagious?
How stupid!

TAEKO
It...It's not funny!

RIE
Taeko-chan [Taeko]...?

(1966: Hallway)

The bin they are carrying is labeled "Dust Bin".

BOY
Hey, a pair with periods!

TAEKO
It's not true!

RIE
What a pervert, huh?

(1966: Incinerator)

TAEKO
Rie-chan [Rie], how can you stand this?

RIE
But it isn't really a bad thing, or so my mom tells me.

TAEKO
Well, I suppose so, but...

(1982: Overnight express)

NARRATOR
A larva has to become a pupa in order to become a butterfly.

I didn't want to become a pupa....

I wonder, maybe the reason I am remembering those days is because my period of becoming a pupa has come once again.

I know something is different now compared to several years ago when I got my job. I am changing again.

In work and play, we were always more lively than the boys. We thought we had already flown away from home...but now I look back and think maybe we were just too busy flapping our wings and forgot who we were.

I wonder if the reason my fifth grade self is following me is that she is trying to tell me to look back and figure out who I am.

Whatever the case, I decided to take a short nap until I arrived in Yamagata.

(1982: Yamagata train station)

TOSHIO[27]
'Scuse me—has the "Akebono #3" train already left?

STATION EMPLOYEE
You missed boarding it?

TOSHIO
Er...no...
Oh!
You're...Taeko Okajima-san [Miss Taeko Okajima], right?

TAEKO
Well...yes...

TOSHIO
Whew, that's good!
The car's this way.

TAEKO
Um, er, excuse me, but just who ARE you?

TOSHIO
Oh, don'tcha remember?
Well, can't say I blame you, there's small chance you would. I'm Toshio. Um...Kazuo's second cousin.

TAEKO
Oh...ah, really...?
Oh dear.

[27] Toshio's voice actor is Toshiro Yanagiba, who debuted with the song-and-dance group "Iseihubi Sepia" ("iseihubi" is an idiom meaning "great change brought through innovation"), popular during the time this part of the film is set, and has since acted in many dramas, comedies, and films.

What's so funny?

TAEKO
Oh, um, nothing. I'm sorry, it's just I thought you were trying to steal my bag.

TOSHIO
Huh, that's cruel—remember, I certainly made it clear I knew your name, didn't I?

TAEKO
I spoke too soon. Thanks for coming out of your way to pick me up. I'm sorry about this.

TOSHIO
No trouble.

TAEKO
What happened to Kazuo 'ni-san [my brother-in-law Kazuo]?

TOSHIO
He suddenly called last night and asked me to pick you up instead.

TAEKO
It's been raining?

TOSHIO
Yep, but it's stopped for today.

I should've borrowed my pa's car[28] ...but, well, I happen to like this one.

It's a little cramped, but hop in.

Oh, mind if I keep it on?

The big sign on the left states "Benibana no Yamagataji" ("The Yamagata Road of Benibana"). This part of Yamagata's self-promotion. While benibana was popular in the Edo period, it was overshadowed by imported foreign chemical dyes in the Meiji period. The recent trend towards all-natural products, however, has brought about a revival of the use of benibana, and Yamagata has cashed in on this with several new benibana products including benibana noodles, benibana tea, benibana candy, and even benibana paper.

TAEKO
Um, sure.

[28] The teensy Subaru R-2 subcompact, an economical "road and leisure" car first manufactured by Fujijuko in 1970 in the shadow of the more famous R-360. It sports a 2 cylinder engine, and reportedly is able to do 115 kph at top speed. In researching the car, the movie staff took a full binder of reference photos and 8 mm videos.

What unusual music...

TOSHIO
Its a group of five Hungarians called "Muzsikas"[29] .

TAEKO
Oh, Hungarian?

TOSHIO
Yep.

TAEKO
Do you know much about it?

TOSHIO
A little. It's music for peasants. I like it 'cause I'm one, too.

TAEKO
Wow, that's cool.

TOSHIO
Isn't it?

You recall the time, when we all had a sake party at the main farmhouse[30] after the rice harvest, that one time...?

TAEKO
Umm, oh...

TOSHIO
Yep. And that time, a buncha guys crashed the party? Don't you recall that...?

Well, to be quite frank, since they got wind of a young Tokyo gal being there, they decided to go check her out. I was one of those fellas.

TAEKO
Ah, ah...

TOSHIO
That fool!

You came out here to pick benibana [safflower]? Are you into dyes or something?

[29] "Muzsikas" is a folk music group from Budapest featuring Ma'rta Sebestye'n. Three of their songs are used in this film: "Teremte's" ("Creation"), "Hajnali No'ta" ("Dawn's Song"), and "Fuvom Aze'nekem" ("My Song"). (These translations were in Japanese, and so may not be precise in English)

[30] Honke—the primary farmhouse, in a housing system determined by importance of position in the family by order of birth

TAEKO
No, just curious. You see, benibana [safflowers] are unusual...but maybe not so much for people here.

TOSHIO
Nah. What's famous is just the name of the cosmetics made from it, but it ain't so common anymore. Like my farm doesn't make it these days, for one example.

TAEKO
But I heard it prospered during the Edo era.

TOSHIO
True, 'cause there was a politician who gained influence through its sales. It would've been a big deal for the wealthier people, but it was only a product as far as we peasants were concerned.

Ummm...
"In the end,
Someone else's skin would be touched by
The vermillion flower."
Do you know this one?

TAEKO
Right, its a haiku by Basho[31] , right? I had looked it up before I came here.

TOSHIO
Do tell? Well, honestly, I looked it up myself yesterday.

TAEKO
Really...

TOSHIO
That same book also said that the women who gathered the flowers never were able to wear the lipstick made from them.

TAEKO
Is there going to be a festival here?

TOSHIO
Yep, the riverbank'll be full of people.

TAEKO
Agriculture's still in trouble, isn't it, with fields being reduced to make way for markets, and such.

TOSHIO
Sure, already there's a lot of trouble, and if it goes on, Japanese agriculture'll be ruined. Just some day, suddenly "poof," and its gone.

[31] Matsuo Basho

But y'know, even with all this trouble or not, if you're trying your best, it still doesn't come easy. The work in the big city must be the same, right?

TAEKO
Sure...but the people who think work is everything are becoming fewer in number.

TOSHIO
How 'bout you, Taeko-san [Taeko]?

TAEKO
Huh? Me?
I don't think I'm obsessed...with work, but I don't hate it, either.

TOSHIO
As for me, well, I think I can do my best in agriculture, 'cause its so interesting to raise living things.

TAEKO
You...raise livestock?

TOSHIO
Huh?
No, that's not what I meant. I do have cows and chickens, but I don't mean livestock. Hey, look there...rice, as well as apples and cherries, they're all living things.

TAEKO (OFF)
Ohh.

TOSHIO
Yep. If I take care of them the best I can, I feel like they respond to me by trying to grow up their best.

I guess I'm sounding a bit like some hotshot farmer, huh?

TAEKO
Not at all...I feel I understand.

TOSHIO
To be frank, I was working at a company until recently. I'm really just a beginning farmer, so...

TAEKO
Oh...is that so?

TOSHIO

see? I quit the company because someone doing "organic farming" called me and asked me to try it, too. Everyone said I was a fool, but so far, I have no regrets.

TAEKO
"Organic farming?"

TOSHIO
"Farming that requires guts...farming that gives you guts."
That's a little joke. An "organic farm" uses as much compost as possible and as few agricultural chemicals and chemical fertilizers as possible.

TAEKO
Ohh, I've heard about this, it's non-chemical or uses few chemicals.

TOSHIO
But that's not right, it sounds so negative. It's really an ideal agriculture that takes advantage of the life force of living things. And people are only beneficial to it. That's what makes the whole idea so cool.

TAEKO
Huh.

TOSHIO
But this "helping" part is extremely hard.

The music here is the famous pan pipe music of Gheorghe Zamfir, of Rumania. His music became internationally renowned in the early eighties, and two of his songs serve throughout the film as the theme for both Toshio and the countryside—"Frunzulita` Lemn Adus" ("Fluttering Green Leaves"), and "Ci^ntec de Nunta`" ("Song of Marriage").

Well, I've been told to take you directly to the fields...

TAEKO
Right, I'm ready to help out.

TOSHIO
Oh? You're not going to sleep?

TAEKO
You see, I heard that benibana [safflowers] should be picked in the early morning, when the dew makes the thorns soft.

TOSHIO
Well, that's true, but...

TAEKO
I'm a night owl, so I thought the best way to switch my life to being a morning person is to come by a night train.

TOSHIO
Huh, you really get into it, huh?

TAEKO
There it is!

Good morning!

KIYOKO
Taeko-san [Taeko], welcome back!

TAEKO
Once again, I'm in your debt.
Obaa-chan [Auntie], its good to see you doing well.

BANCHA
Welcome, welcome.

KAZUO
Aren't you tired?

TAEKO
No, not at all.

KIYOKO
I made your bed for you just in case...

TAEKO
I'm fine, look—I'm full of energy!

KIYOKO
Wow, you really are ready—you're wearing a farming uniform.

TAEKO
Though this is all I'm prepared for.

BANCHA
Young farmers' wives seldom wear them these days. But Taeko-san [Taeko], you're more into it.

KIYOKO
Ain't that a fact.

TOSHIO
Taeko-san [Taeko]!

TAEKO
Quit that!

NARRATOR
And thus began my second experience with country life.

The music here is of the Bulgarian Voice (choir), and is called "Malka Moma Dvori Mete", "Dilmano Dilbero". It is also unique in that the music either follows 7-beat or 9- beat time.

How can such a vivid crimson color be born from this flower? Kiyoko 'ne-san [my sister-in-law, Kiyoko] once told me a sad story that goes with it. Long ago, there were no such things as rubber gloves. When the young girls picked the flowers with their bare hands, they were pricked by the thorns and bled. The blood turned the color deeper crimson.

I felt as if I heard the hostile feeling the girls, who never got to put the red color on their lips, must have had against the women in Kyoto that wore it.

In order to get a handful of rouge, 60 heads of flowers are necessary. That shining, iridescent color had the same value as gold back then, I've heard.

After washing them with water and stamping on them, kneading them by hand, and letting them sit in the air and water, they become oxidized, and begin to get closer to red in color.

The machine the benibana is put through here is a "Misokiriki", usually used for Miso.

In addition to that, if you let it sit two or three more days, the flower will ferment, becoming sticky, and turn into a deep red.

Next, you stamp it with a mortar, squeeze it, and shape it into balls.

And if you dry it in an oven, you finally are done with the flower patty, from which the main ingredient of rouge is made.

A long time ago they didn't waste the remaining water which we got from compressing it earlier. Now this by-product usually goes unsaved. The crimson color, which is still in the leftover water, could be used for making a dye, which cloth can be stained in. This is the "benibana-dye" [safflower-dye].

(END OF PART ONE OF TRANSLATION.)

(part two—translation by Honda/Wilkinson)

TAEKO/NAOKO (unison)
Be dyed! Be dyed!
It's benibana-dye [safflower-dye]!
Nice colors dye well—
Nice colors make my heart brave.

NARRATOR
It's said that the village women, who were denied the rouge or bright kimonos, used to add color to their simple lives by using the benibana-dye [safflower-dye].

The remaining yellow color dissolves in water, and the cotton or hemp is dyed with a beautiful light rouge color.

TAEKO
Oh, pretty!

NARRATOR
Although a little time and labor has been cut these days, by using machines for example, every day they repeat the work of harvesting the flowers.

The flower-patties get moldy easily, so precise timing when harvesting the flowers is necessary, for they never wait.

If you turn around after you've finally finished picking the flowers, you'll see that other new flowers have emerged in the meantime.

The rainy season comes without mercy, and sometimes work can continue until midnight.

Day after day passed in the blink of an eye and as I comfortably became tired, I wondered about the women flower harvesters and their conditions.

If I had a chance to help with such things during my childhood, I surely would have been able to write more lively compositions than my book reports.

(1982: the main farmhouse)

NAOKO
Hey, mom, lemme have 5000 yen <around $30 in 1982>.

KIYOKO
5000 yen? We don't have that kind of extra money.

NAOKO

shoes, didn'tcha?

KIYOKO
Are sport shoes so expensive?

NAOKO
Yep.

KIYOKO
I don't buy that.

NAOKO
`Cause they're PUMAs[32] .

KIYOKO
PUMA?

NAOKO
Yep, Pu...ma!

KIYOKO
I don't know anything about Pumas, but I DO know you can find ones for cheaper.

Like how about the same kind you have now?

NAOKO
No one's wearing boring shoes like them anymore.

Everybody's getting Puma sports shoes.

KIYOKO
Who's everybody?

NAOKO
Kako-chan an' Megu-chan, an' also Ya-chan n' Non-chan. [Kako an' Meg, an' also Ya n' Non.]

KIYOKO
See, only four people, right?

NAOKO (OFF)
I know others—everyone's buying them.

KIYOKO
Nope, you can't ask for that anyway when you're not helping with the chores enough.

YAEKO (OFF)
Hey, you got another dress for "Barbie-san"[33] ["Barbie"], didn't you—though you promised to ask for presents only on your birthday and Christmas—and you must have at least known it wasn't your birthday, right?!

(1966: Okajima residence)

YAEKO
I can't believe Dad's so soft on Taeko!

FATHER
Did you promise that, "Ta-bo"[34] ?

NARRATOR
Unexpectedly, my fifth-grade self emerged yet again.

TAEKO
But...you bought Yaeko 'ne-chan [Yaeko] a long-sleeved kimono, didn't you? Even though it wasn't even an Adult Celebration day.

YAEKO
That was for my tea ceremony.

NANAKO
Well, we see you get a lot of little things all the time, while we get something big only once in a while...right?

YAEKO
Right!

MOTHER
Would you stop that...picking only the food you like?!

TAEKO
Daddy, you like onions, don't you.

FATHER
Uh-huh.

YAEKO
Well, as for the long-sleeved kimono, eventually that dress will be yours anyway, so don't complain.

TAEKO
"Hand-me-downs"...oh gee.

NANAKO
Well, some girls don't even get "hand-me-downs".

YAEKO
True, true.

TAEKO
Then give me that enamel bag <purse> of yours soon.

MOTHER
Oh, didn't you give it to her yet?

NANAKO
What a baby! The sooner you give it to Taeko, the better.

TAEKO
I don't want it.

MOTHER/NANAKO/YAEKO
Huh?

TAEKO
That handbag, I don't want it...

YAEKO
Oh, really? That's fine, then I won't give it to you.

MOTHER
I won't be buying a new one.

TAEKO
Fine by me!

YAEKO
Whew, that's good. That bag was a favorite of mine, anyway.

TAEKO
I totally hate that one!

FATHER
Hey, I'm ready[35] . Could you take care of this?

YAEKO
See—and the food gets thrown away anyway.

NANAKO
Wasteful, isn't she?

TAEKO
No, don't throw it away!
Hey, Mother...!

MOTHER
You picked these out didn't you?
If you're going to complain now, then you should have eaten all the food on your plate.

GRANDMOTHER
All of my kids are so selfish.

(1966: later)

TAEKO
Hey, Daddy, could you buy an enamel bag for me?

Yaeko 'ne-chan [Yaeko] won't give me hers.

The music here is the "Trout" quintet by Schubert.

[32] Popular Adidas sports shoes of the early eighties. This marks the time of when the fad of trendy sports shoes was just starting.

[33] "Barbie-chan" was originally sold in Japan by the big toy manufacturer Takara, licensed from Mattel. The dolls did not sell well at first because of the western-styled face— prompting a change to a Japanese-styled face. This change resulted in immediate popularity, along with a similar Takara -designed doll called "Licca-chan", also Japanese-stylized (resembling a girls' comics style), and more younger in appearance and proportions, for possible easier identification with girls. Both were the biggest selling products Takara ever sold. However, later, the rights transferred to toy manufacturer giant Bandai, and currently "Barbie-chan" is marketed directly by Mattel.

The equivalent toy for boys at the time was, of course, "G.I. Joe", owned by Hassenfield Bros. (now Hasbro), was and still is marketed in Japan by Takara, and would inspire new successful lines of toys such as "Transforming Cyborg #1" and "Microman". "Microman" was in turn marketed in America as "Micronauts" by the now-defunct Mego Corp., and set the precedent in both countries for 3-inch figures including the current "G.I. Joe" line. Takara's later "Microman" robot toys would later, along with the company's "Diaclone" line would wind up becoming the basis of Hasbro's "Transformers" line that would end up replacing "Microman" in Japan as Takara recognized the marketing package with greater potential. The confusion of complex international cross- marketing hasn't even spared the toy industry.}

[34] Period slang, a nickname—"bo" is short for "bohzu", which means "wild boy". "Bo" was common as a boy's nickname and later as slang for boys in general. Taeko is apparently still young and "boyish" enough in her father's eyes to be given a gender-bending nickname like this one. It's meant affectionately, yet may be subtly suggesting something about this otherwise all-female family's patriarch figure...

[35] This is typical behavior for a father in a Japanese family like this. Rather than eat with the family, he first winds down with a newspaper and cup of sake, and then only when he is ready does he expect to be served. He seems to lead a life mostly separate from the family. These days, it is common for them to even miss the family dinner altogether due to being out drinking with co-workers, a mandatory ritual of the workplace.

You did say you didn't want one.

TAEKO
But...

FATHER
You said you didn't want us to get you one, so you don't need one.

(1966: again later)

MOTHER
Hurry up and get ready.

TAEKO
Mmm...

YAEKO
I think these shoes will do instead...

TAEKO
Mom, why does Yaeko `ne-chan have to come, too?

Daddy, Mom, and me—you said it would just be us three, didn't you?

YAEKO
I'm going because I'm through studying. Are you saying I can't come too?

MOTHER
We're having Chinese food. The more of us, the merrier—right?

TAEKO
But Grandma said she's not coming.

MOTHER
Your Grandmother doesn't like fatty foods, you know that.

YAEKO
If you don't want us all to come, why don't you stay with her?!

The broadcast being heard in the background is the popular Amateur Singing Competition. Originally first broadcast on the radio in 1946, it was joined in 1952 by an NHK TV simulcast. The song that will be sung later is "Konnichiwa Aka-chan" ("Hello, Baby"), heard earlier in instrumental form in this film (the scene in which the boys are in the dark about the girls purchasing underwear at the school infirmary).

(1966: later)

MOTHER
Hey, we're leaving, Taeko.

TAEKO (OFF)
Mmm...

YAEKO
Hurry up, slowpoke!

TAEKO
I don't have a handbag.

MOTHER
Yae-chan [Yae], would you let her have that enamel bag?

YAEKO
Here.

TAEKO
That hurt...

MOTHER
Well, let's go.

TAEKO
I'm not going.

YAEKO
Oh, really...? Well, shall we go then, Mother?

MOTHER
Well, then you can stay with Grandma.

FATHER
What, "Ta-bo" isn't coming with us?

TAEKO
I'm not going!

FATHER
Oh well, let's go then.

TAEKO
I'm coming, too...!

FATHER
Barefoot..?![36]

[36] In Japanese culture, going outside with no shoes on is equivalent to being just in your underwear. Taeko's father comes from a traditional conservative pre-war generation, which of course values its traditions strongly, and his reaction came automatically. This situation is probably a perfect reflection of the same event in his life as a boy. And the manga, by the way, takes more of an edge off of this when we see that he winds up not sleeping that night because of regretting how he automatically reacted.)

MOTHER
Father!
Father, please stop!

YAEKO
A button came off...

(1982: Main farmhouse's tomato patch)

TAEKO
Going out was postponed, of course. My cheek was swollen and smarted for a long time, even though I tried cooling it with a towel.

It was difficult falling asleep that night, thinking things like, "why do these things always happen only to me? I must be an adopted child. Yes, that must be why."

And so I sobbed in my futon bed.

NAOKO
Was that the first time you were slapped by your dad?

TAEKO
Uh-huh. The first and last time. Only once.

NAOKO
Hmmm....in my case though, sometimes, but not TOO often, it happens a lot.

TAEKO
"Sometimes" might be better than once, I think. If its only the one time, then you'll wonder why that time in particular.

NAOKO
But I can't believe Taeko 'ne-chan [Taeko] was so selfish as a kid.

TAEKO
Oh, I was selfish.
So onion wasn't the only thing I didn't like.

NAOKO
Oh—what's with me, I feel over-privileged now.

TAEKO
Oh—what a fix, what a fix!

How can I ask your mother to forgive me if I made you feel over-privileged by telling you such a story? I couldn't!

NAOKO
I'm going to give up the Puma shoes.

TAEKO
Way to go! Then...you might expect a handsome allowance from me.

NAOKO
I getcha.

The finger-touch an obvious, popular reference to the hit 1982 box-office record breaker, E.T., just out in America at that time—the film, while advertised, would not be released until December 4th, yet already it was gaining a following.

NAOKO
Hey....!

TOSHIO
What's up?

NAOKO
100 yen each! <About 60 cents in 1982.>

TOSHIO
Taeko-san [Taeko]—
Tomorrow, why don't we drive to Zaoh, for a break?

TAEKO
Zaoh?

TOSHIO
Uh-huh. 'Cause I heard you went up to Yamadera[37] last year.

Oh, I already got the family to okay it before I came.

TAEKO
Sheesh.

(1982: Zaoh)

NARRATOR
Zaoh was fantastic. But Zaoh is Zaoh, after all, and the site is now just another holiday resort.

The music in the background here is by the famous New Age composer Kitaro, from his popular soundtrack to the NHK "Silk Road" documentary series.

[37] Yamadera means "Mountain Temple". The place's namesake is the temple Taeko visited, which is where master poet Basho (referred to earlier) wrote his most famous haiku.

TOSHIO
Taeko-san [Taeko], I'm curious why you're not married yet.

TAEKO
Huh...um, is it so strange to be unmarried?

TOSHIO
Well, nah, I wasn't saying that, but...

TAEKO
The number of women who hold jobs has increased these days, you know that, and even most of my friends aren't married yet.

TOSHIO
Hmm...is that right?

TAEKO
Uh-huh, sure it is.

TOSHIO
Ain't it?

TAEKO
Sure enough.

TOSHIO
I see.

TAEKO
Right, it's common.

TOSHIO
Hmm...

TAEKO
Oh, Toshio-san [Toshio]?

TOSHIO
Hm?

TAEKO
When you were in elementary school, was it easy for you to understand dividing fractions?

TOSHIO
Huh...?

TAEKO
You have to switch the numerator with the denominator first, and then multiply it together. Could you do it like you were taught?

TOSHIO
Hmm, I don't really remember, but I wasn't very weak in arithmetic.

TAEKO
Oh, I see...

TOSHIO
Yep.

TAEKO
That's good. You probably don't remember because you could do them with little trouble, I suspect.

TOSHIO
Uh-huh. But why do you ask?

TAEKO
It seems like people who could divide fractions easily would have little trouble with their life after that, too.

TOSHIO
Huh?

TAEKO
There was a modest girl named "Rie-chan" [Rie]. Though she wasn't really good at arithmetic, she switched the numerator and denominator as told and then got 100%! Since then, she grew up doing what she was told, and had no troubles.

Now she's a mother, with two kids.

TOSHIO
Hmmm.

TAEKO
I wasn't very good, actually. Though I am weak-minded, I get picky about things.

(1966: Okajima residence)

TAEKO
Uh...um, you know...be-before this test, you know? We had art class...and, you know...we did "blow pictures."

MOTHER
"Blow pictures?"

TAEKO
R...right. You drop paint on drawing paper, blow like this: "phooooo", and you make patterns that way.

MOTHER
And so?

TAEKO
You keep blowing "phoooo", you know, "phoooo."

MOTHER
So?

TAEKO
My head...started hurting, from going "phoooo" so many times, and...

MOTHER
And that's what is responsible for this score?

TAEKO
Th...that's right.

MOTHER
Uh—huh... So did you get a copy of the right answers for the problems you missed?

TAEKO
Huh?

MOTHER
The right answers, did you get them?

TAEKO
Um...uh-huh.

MOTHER
Ask Yaeko 'ne-chan [your sister Yaeko] about them, okay?

TAEKO
Yaeko 'ne-chan [Yaeko]?

MOTHER
Of course. Nanako 'ne-chan [Nanako] is fine, too.

TAEKO
O..oh...
I'll try Nanako 'ne-chan [Nanako], then.

(1966: later)

TAEKO
Nanako 'ne-chan [Nanako] isn't back yet, so is it okay if I
wait until after dinner?

I guess I'll ask Yaeko 'ne-chan [Yaeko], then...

YAEKO
....Mommm!
Mom! Mom! What the heck is THIS?

Ho...how could this happen?!

MOTHER
Please explain it to her. It seems she can't make head or tail of it.

YAEKO
B-b-b-but, but this many...how could she..?!

MOTHER
So work with her and find out.

YAEKO
Does Taeko have something wrong with her head?

MOTHER
I'm asking you to explain it to her, okay?

YAEKO
But it's impossible, if you do the problem normally, to get this kind of score!

MOTHER
So then Taeko isn't normal, is she?!

Taeko....why don't you go over it with Yae-chan [Yae]? You had a headache from "blow pictures", right...right, Taeko?

YAEKO
SIT.
Recite the drills from the beginning.

TAEKO
Recite the drills...? I'm in the fifth grade now, I know them.

YAEKO
If you know the drills, then why did you make those mistakes?

TAEKO
Because it's dividing fractions, you know that.

YAEKO
All you need to do is switch the numerator with the denominator, and multiply the fractions. Didn't they teach you this in school?

TAEKO
Um..uh-huh.

YAEKO
So, then why all the mistakes?!

MOTHER

Yae-chan, could you try it step-by-step?

TAEKO
...how does "dividing a fraction BY a fraction" work, anyway?

YAEKO
Huh?

TAEKO
Okay, dividing two-thirds of an apple by one fourth—that could mean you divide two thirds of an apple among four people.[38]

How many parts of the apple does a person get, right?

YAEKO
Huh....? Um...uh-huh.

TAEKO
So then, one, two, three, four, five, and six—so one sixth of an apple for a single person.

YAEKO
...wrong, wrong, wrong, wrong. That's MULTIPLYING fractions.

TAEKO
Huh...? How come? Does a number become smaller when you multiply it?!

YAEKO
Two thirds of an apple divided by a quarter means, uh...it's totally off-track!

You can't understand this because you're fussing about apples. You'll have no trouble if you'd just simply memorize that you leave multiplication as is and switch in division.

(1966: later)

TAEKO
Isn't her sister a member of Takarazuka?

GRANDMOTHER
"S.K.D."[39]

YAEKO
Taeko got a "D" {a "2"} in math class.

NANAKO
Huh, a "D"?!

YAEKO
Right, it's finally gone down to a "D".

NANAKO
Hmmmm.

MOTHER
If her score were 50 or 60%, I could simply reprimand her.

YAEKO
That's true...

NANAKO
Do you think Taeko ought to have an I.Q. test?

MOTHER
But when she entered school, she was diagnosed as "normal."

YAEKO
Maybe she's turned stupid.

NANAKO
When Taeko was a baby, she fell downstairs from the second floor, remember?

YAEKO
Right, right, in her walker. I thought she'd killed herself that time.

MOTHER
She only got a bump, though.

NANAKO
Well, that's what is affecting her now.

YAEKO
Right, that's got to be it.

MOTHER (OFF)
Not at all—she's just incredibly weak at arithmetic.

NANAKO (OFF)
She must be talking in class.

YAEKO (OFF)
Dividing fractions is quite easy if you pay attention, of course. Even a complete idiot can do it.

NANAKO
I'm worried about her future. She is going to be in the sixth grade, after all.

TAEKO
But...I'm right, aren't I?

YAEKO
Does she even study at all at home?

MOTHER
You're right, aren't you?

TAEKO
How can I imagine dividing two-thirds of an apple by a quarter? I can't do it at all.

YAEKO
Certainly—you should lecture her more strongly, Mom.

TAEKO
But it's got to be right—dividing two thirds of an apple means you...

NANAKO
Arithmetic in elementary school is very basic. She's been goofing off, so...

It could be pointed out here that in the original manga, Taeko went on to get a 5% score on her next test, to her worst fears. However, on the way home, she spitefully tears it up and throws it in the gutter, bidding it a happy farewell...in the manga, Taeko would have difficulty with other kinds of math problems as well in other stories.

(1982: Zaoh—Okama)

Okama is the crater lake that is a main attraction in the Zaoh mountain range. 1570 meters above sea level, it is also known as the "5-color pool" as the small lake's color changes as the sun moves across the sky.

TAEKO
Even now, it's still tough when I think about it, you know. Dividing fractions.

TOSHIO
Hmm...

It's true. We farmers should've been more picky, too. We've always gone with the larger flow, and just followed the big cities—we've lost our identities.

So we need to re-think what we consider "real wealth" and become more fussy about traditional farming again!

TAEKO
...you caught me off-guard. I guess you meant "organic farming" by that, right?

TOSHIO
Uh-huh.

Actually, it's what my "Sempai" [older colleague] told me, but it's the way I feel, too.

I think it's great you're keeping your memory of being picky about dividing fractions as an important one.

TAEKO
Oh, no, I didn't mean it to sound like that. Besides, now some people tell me I have an enviable job, but my job is not the kind I could be absorbed in anyway, so...

I can't help but admire you being so absorbed in your own job, Toshio-san [Toshio]—farming, that is.

TOSHIO
So, you mean it's ironic, right?

TAEKO
Huh? No way! No, such people are difficult to find now, in fact.

TOSHIO
Now farming's totally declining, as you know. I wish that I could be completely absorbed by my job, and not worry about outside problems. But this isn't the case, and I can't help but think about all these things.

I suppose we farmers can't survive without encouragement and support that comes from working with our fellows, for instance...

(1982: Zaoh—ski lift)

TOSHIO
Taeko-san [Taeko], you go skiing, don't you?

TAEKO
Oh, a couple of times, with my co-workers.

[38] Yes, there is a fatal flaw in this analogy of dividing fractions: you are dividing the two thirds not among 4 people, but among ONE FOURTH of a person! If this were explained properly to Taeko, she might have done well after all—in fact she seems to have quite a clear head for logical problems and applications, and cares beyond the rote of drills. (Thanks to mathematician Bill Wilkinson for explaining how to adjust the same analogy to properly fit the problem!—ed.)

[39] They are listening to "Sayonara wa Dance no Ato ni" ("Say Farewell After the Dance"), a hit song from the prior year, which was sung by Chieko Baisho from the Takarazuka theater. Her sister was a member of S.K.D., another group of performers. The main lyric heard in this song is "Please don't say anything," because this song was chosen to echo Taeko's feelings.

TOSHIO
Well, then why don't we go skiing this Winter, then. I'll help you learn.

TAEKO
Are you a good skier, Toshio-san [Toshio]?

TOSHIO
Nah, not so great, but I work here each Winter as an instructor, so...

TAEKO
Oh, an instructor? Then you must be a good skier.

TOSHIO
Actually a whole bunch of my friends are such instructors!

(1982: Mountain road from Zaoh)

TAEKO
Oh, now this is the country I was expecting. It's the real thing. Not like Zaoh.

TOSHIO
Well....

The "country".....

TAEKO
Oh, I'm sorry. I keep saying the "country".

TOSHIO
No, it's an important point, y'know.

TAEKO
Oh?

TOSHIO
Uh-huh. You see, when people from big cities see the forests, the woods, or the flowing water, they quickly accept such things as natural. However, except in the highest reaches of the mountains, all the sites that are called the "country" are actually made by people.

TAEKO
People?

TOSHIO
Yes, farmers.

TAEKO
That forest too?

TOSHIO
Yep.

TAEKO
That wood, too?

TOSHIO
Yep.

TAEKO
This stream, too?

TOSHIO
Yep.

It's not only rice paddies or fields. Every place has its own history—say, from someone's great grandfather who had been planting or cultivating, or had been gathering kindling or mushrooms, since long ago.

TAEKO
Oh, I see.

TOSHIO
While people've been either fighting with nature or gaining its benefits, some good had come from what they did; the way the countryside has come to look now, all of this.

TAEKO
Hasn't the appearance itself come without people's help?

TOSHIO
Well...
Farmers couldn't live without getting continuous benefits from nature, could they?

And that's why the farmers, for a long, long time, have also been doing many things for nature themselves.

One might say this is the interdependence between nature and people.

Maybe this is what "the country" is.

TAEKO
I see. I think that's why it's nostalgic. I've been thinking for a long time about why I feel like this is my home, even though I wasn't born or raised here.

Oh, so that was it.

(1982: Toshio's farm)

TAEKO
Ah, my back is starting to hurt.

Organic farming...it's not so cool after all!

TOSHIO
What's cool is the concept. I told you before, helping living things is quite difficult.

TAEKO
But it's no different from a hundred years ago, is it?

TOSHIO
And that's why even organically grown rice is often processed with herbicides instead of by hand-weeding like back then. There's just not enough labor.

TOSHIO'S MOTHER
You sure have been working hard, Taeko-san [Taeko]. Why don't we break for tea?

TAEKO
Whew, you're a life-saver! I was just thinking of taking a break.

NARRATOR
Toshio-san [Toshio] helped me experience many things step by step.

I was taking pride in pretending I had already known everything about the country.

(1982: A sunset...)

TAEKO
How nice!

"Oh, the crows are returning home. First one..."

Oh my, at last I could say that in a real village!

It was my dialogue in a school play when I was in the fifth grade.

My role was "village child #1" in "Kobutori Jii-san".[40]

TOSHIO
Oh, is that it? I get it—I only got parts as an extra, too.

TAEKO
How about you, Naoko-chan [Naoko]?

NAOKO
Umm, well, I usually only got important parts because there were only a few people involved.

TOSHIO
I guess that when our generation was born, the amount of immigration to the city for jobs had boomed. In other words, the population drifted from the country to the city and the amount of younger people has dwindled here.

TAEKO
I see. So then you must have had many interesting experiences, haven't you?

NAOKO
Not really. I prefer sports meets. I may not look it, but I'm a fast runner.

TAEKO
That's good. In my case, I was always in the middle, like I was "village child #1" in the school play, for example.

But the dialogue I said was something I will never forget, not for the rest of my life. Because of that dialogue, I could have become a star.

NAOKO
A star?

TAEKO
Yes.

[40] Kobutori Jii-san is a folk story common worldwide in many variations. This one is about two old men who had lumps on the sides of their faces. One man, a kind person, accidentally encountered "Oni" (man-eating devil-ogres) engaged in a dance. To save his life, he dances with them, impressing them with his grace. In return, they remove the lump and let him leave. The other man, a bad one, heard this story, and tried the same, but his disruption and vulgar dancing angered the oni, who added the first man's lump to the second one's face, doubling his problem. Versions of this story abound elsewhere, including an Irish Celtic tale of two hunchbacks and singing fairy folk.

TOSHIO
A star, how...?

NAOKO
Because of “village child #1”?

TAEKO
Yes.

TOSHIO
Not because of “Ojii-san” or “Oni”?

TAEKO
Right. Due to my great enthusiasm.

TOSHIO
Were you so pretty?

TAEKO
No, not like that.

I practiced excessively in front of a mirror in my house.

TOSHIO
But you were “village child #1,” so...

TAEKO
Right. The dialogue was so short I couldn’t be satisfied with it even after practicing it a hundred times. You can imagine that because the whole thing was “Oh, the crows are returning home. First one!”...

NAOKO
I know! You added extra lines!

TAEKO
You got it!

(1966: school)

TAEKO
Oh, look at that! The crows are returning home.

First one...

BOY 1
...second one...

TSUNEKO
...third one...

BOY 2
...fourth one.

TAEKO
Farewell, crows! Take care!

ALL FOUR (unison)
Yay...!

TOSHIO (OFF/VO)
Then your teacher praised you?

TAEKO (OFF/VO)
The exact opposite.

TEACHER
Okay, you all did very well.

But let’s stick with what’s in the script.

(1966: a little later)

TEACHER/ONI ACTORS (instrument sounds)
Torerere, torere, tohyarara, tohyra...
...suto-suto-sutoton, stuton-ton.

NAOKO (OFF/VO)
In spite of you working hard to come up with those extra lines...

TAEKO (OFF/VO)
In fact, they weren’t so good, so I gave them up easily... but that didn’t mean I had lost my will. I realized that I could still express myself with actions in the parts with no dialogue.

(1966: Play night)

ANNOUNCEMENT
Next is “KOBUTORI JII-SAN” by the fifth grade class.

ALL 4 (unison)
Yaaaay!

CROWS (OFF)
Caw caw caw!

TAEKO
Oh, the crows are returning home.

TAEKO
First one...

BOY 1
...second one...

TSUNEKO
...third one...

BOY 2
...fourth one.

ALL 4 (unison)
Yaaaaay!

(1982: the sunset)

TAEKO
That was it. But it was worth making the effort, and my acting actually got a good reputation anyway, believe it or not.

My mom was asked if I belonged to a child actor ’s troupe, teachers from other classes praised me, things like that.

However, something even far more fantastic happened...

(1966: Okajima Residence)

STUDENT
Excuse me..?

MOTHER (OFF)
Yes?

DON GABACHO (TV—OFF)
...oodles of dynamite exploded with a “KER-POW!!” right in front of me, don’tcha know?

TAEKO (with cast on TV, unison)
Don’tcha know?

This program is Hyokkori Hyohtan Island (Popped-up Gourd Island), a televised puppet show very similar to a cross between “Beany and Cecil”, “Mr. Rodgers Neighborhood”, and the “Muppets” set on a floating island. It ran an impressive 1224 episodes over a span of five years, between 1964 and 1969. It attracted many viewers with its modern-day storyline and songs, as well as with its fresh wide cast of characters. The character “Don Gabacho” seen here is the self-proclaimed President (only recognized by himself as such) of the island. He also loves chickens, and it is part of his daily schedule to behave like one. He also makes the sound of the endangered Toki crane. He is played by Arihiro Fujimura.

Taeko is eating “Meiji Marble Chocolate”, at that time including a free “Tetsuwan Atom” (“Astro Boy”) decal inside its package.

MOTHER (OFF)
What? You mean Taeko?

DON GABACHO (TV—OFF)
The three of us—myself, President Kid, and Granny Dokonjo—were digging for potatoes, and what a surprise, the pototoes were actually dynamite!

MOTHER (OFF)
Well...but....

STUDENT (OFF)
In fact, a child actress is necessary for the play we will perform at our school festival...and....as a student- community collaborative production[41] ....I mean...

Whatever the cost, we want Okajima Taeko-chan [Miss Taeko Okajima] to perform...

MOTHER
I...see...

TAEKO
A child actress!

STUDENT (OFF)
In her case, we will practice early like in the daytime on Saturdays, so...

MOTHER (OFF)
Well....But.....

STUDENT
Ah...I will escort her back home every time, so..

DON GABACHO (OFF, TV), SINGING

{Koke Kokko no Uta (“Cock-a-doodle Song”)}

“Ko-ke kokko ko-ke kokko ko-ke-ko-ke-ko-ke-ko-ke ko-ke kokko” <Rooster sounds>, I crow in a loud voice, Announcing the hour, my day begins.

“Au-an-an-aah,” how invigorating—my day will be!

Then I—”splish, splash”—wash my face,
Then—”rub-a-dub”—with a dry towel,
Then I “gobble, gobble” breakfast down—

[41] If this sounds a little contrived, that’s because it probably is—he sounds like he’s trying to make his student production sound a lot more important than it really is, and is probably desperate.

This is the beginning of my day...!

"Au-an-an-aah," how invigorating—my day will be!

Ko-ke-ko-ke-ko-ke-ko-ke, ko-ke kokko!
(Repeats this line several times, ending with the line Taeko
joins in on.)

TAEKO
Am I going to perform in a grown-up's play!?

Not with amateurs like those guys.

I can perform with grown-ups!

...A star!

Taeko appears on covers of Margaret weekly girl's comic magazine (published by Shueisha as the self-proclaimed "Queen of Girls' Weekly Magazines") with celebrities Yuzo Kayama and Yoko Naito (taken from a REAL Margaret cover), Margaret Mode, another magazine with the Hyokkori Hyohtan Island puppet cast, inside a celebrity magazine, and a cover feature with "A look at Taeko-chan's room".

TAEKO & GABACHO (singing in unison)
Ko-ke-ko-ke-ko-ke-ko-ke, ko-ke-kekko!

Music changes to ending credit music.

TAEKO
M..Mom...!

So, so...?

MOTHER
That gentleman from NICHIDAI <Nippon University> said he wants you to perform for their play.

You really shined at the school play.

TAEKO
And...and...?

MOTHER
He was quite insistent, and begged for my approval.[42]

(1966: at dinner)

NANAKO
Wow, it's great, isn't it?

YAEKO
I guess everyone has at least one strong point.

MOTHER
Wait, she's also good at compositions.

GRANDMOTHER
Taeko may have a talent in those areas rather than for arithmetic.

TAEKO
That's right, that's right!

NANAKO
In my case, I played an old man for "Shitakirisuzume" {another similar folk story}, but nobody paid that kind of attention.

TAEKO
I see, I see...

YAEKO
So will you...?

NANAKO
Maybe it could be a chance for you to become a professional child actress.

TAEKO
Ah...

YAEKO
Why don't you join Takarazuka?

NANAKO
Sure, you might be able to join it if you begin preparing now.

FATHER
Acting is no good.

FAMILY
Huh...?

FATHER
Show business is no good.

NANAKO
Come on, now, "show business" is going a bit too far...

MOTHER
That's true, isn't it?

FATHER
No way. Now, serve.

MOTHER
...Right.

(1966: after dinner)

NANAKO
Father is real stubborn, isn't he?

TAEKO
Hey, why did you have to say "professional child actress"?

NANAKO
Can I take my bath first?

MOTHER
Sure, that's okay.

TAEKO
You said "Takarazuka" and "show business", so Father...

Hey, why did you have to say all that?
Nanako 'ne-chan [Nanako], jeez!

NANAKO
Lay off, would you?

(1966: the next day)

TORAHIGE (TV—singing)
{"Poor Boy", re-enacted by Ichiro Nagai[43] }

"Po—or boy," "po—or boy,"
Poor me, Torahige.

"Po—or boy," "po—or boy,"
So far away from me home.

Oh I...,
When sailin' the seven seas,
Wuz workin' real hard too.

And now...
Hyokkori Hyohtan Island's where I've come.

Hey, look—must I work on 'n on?

Or if not, will I be shippin' off somewhere again? Hmm?

Waaaah—ahhh-aaah—ah.

"Po—or boy," "po—or boy,"
Poor me, Torahige.

"Po—or boy," "po—or boy,"
Far away from me home.

"Pooo—oooor boyyyyyy—y!"

STUDENT (OFF)
We're not asking for much of your time, so...

MOTHER
Um...well, but...

STUDENT
Please grant this small favor.

MOTHER
...she's embarrassed, herself...she's shy, so...

I'm terribly sorry you've had to come here so often.

(1966: shopping)

TAEKO
Um...Aoki-san [Aoki] from room 1 was chosen instead of me, after all.

MOTHER
Mm-hmm.

TAEKO
Aoki-san [Aoki] is bragging to everyone about it, now.

MOTHER
Uh-huh.

TAEKO
Like today, her mother came to our school. She changed to formal clothes, and her mom took her to Nichidai.

Her dress had frills that fluttered allll over the place!

MOTHER
Taeko.

[42] More literally: "I was bowed to by his head many times and he begged for my approval." In other words, she was flattered.

[43] "Torahige" is another Hyokkori Hyohtan Island character, originally voiced by the late Kazuo Kumakura, and re-enacted by the talented Ichiro Nagai (a voice in many Hayao Miyazaki works, particularly Captain Dyce in Future Boy Conan, and best known by anime fans as being the voice of Cherry in Urusei Yatsura). Formerly a pirate, he makes the minor change to being Treasurer/Secretary of Finance of the island as delegated by Don Gabacho. In the meantime he also runs a department store. Both characters often collaborate on elaborate schemes and scams to make money which always inevitably backfire on them.

TAEKO
Huh?

MOTHER
You can't tell anyone at school that the young gentleman came to us first.

TAEKO
What...?

MOTHER
If Aoki-san [Aoki] heard that, she would feel bad.

Understood?

Do you UNDERSTAND?

TAEKO
Uh-huh...

TV (OFF) (Hyokkori Hyohtan [Popped-up Gourd] Island Theme Song)

Waves splash, splash, splash, splash as they are parted. Splash, splash, splash!

Clouds zip, zip, zip, zip, as they speed past. Zip, zip, zip!

Where is Hyohtan Island going?
Where is it headed, as it brings us along?

Where the sea meets the horizon of the earth,

TAEKO and TV (unison, singing)
Something must be waiting.

You may have hard times,
You may have sad experiences,
But we will never be discouraged:
We don't want to cry, so let's laugh—
Go ahead!
Hyokkori Hyohtan Island, Hyokkori Hyohtan Island, Hyokkori Hyohtan Island...

(1982: the sunset)

NAOKO
I feel sorry for you, Taeko-chan [Taeko].

TAEKO
I joined the drama club as soon as I entered high school. I guess I couldn't be expected to forget that experience.

NAOKO
And?

TAEKO
It was really fun. I actually got to perform as an actress, too.

TAEKO
But I wasn't fit for acting. So, it's not really true that I missed the chance to become a star, unfortunately.

NAOKO
But...

TOSHIO
Dads—either in Tokyo or the country—used to be very similar, I believe... When I was in high school, I wanted to go to Tokyo at any cost, and, well...

I had sent a letter to Mitsuo-san [Mitsuo] for advice about my course of action, in fact.

TAEKO
Oh, really...?

TOSHIO
Even after I gave up, when I saw my former classmates, who hadn't been as good at school as me, coming back from Tokyo and putting on airs, I was really quite humiliated.

Oh, I've changed since then. Now I have a little bit of respect for Dad, at least. As my senior in farming.

Anyway, I can really understand Taeko-chan's [Taeko's] feelings.

TAEKO
Oh, no—I wasn't serious about that.

TOSHIO
No—it's the same thing. I can understand.

"But, we will never be discouraged."

"We don't want to cry, so let's laugh," right? It's interesting—I also used to watch "Hyokkori Hyohtan Island".

TAEKO
Oh, really?!

TOSHIO
Yeah...Machine-Gun Dandy—he was cool, wasn't he?

TAEKO
Wow, he was my idol!

Machine-Gun Dandy, on the police blacklist, came to Hyokkori Hyohtan Island seeking refuge, and wound up becoming an unlikely hero there. A chain smoker, he preferred "King Yomogi" brand cigars, if he could afford them, and if not, then "Saisei" ("Revive") brand cigars. He was Taeko's #1 favorite famous guy in 1966, followed by anime characters "Super Jetter," "Meteor Boy Pappy," and "Eightman" as #2, #3, and #4, respectively, and Akira Mita as #5, while her classmates were more interested in popular singers, including the new foreign ones like the Beatles or the Monkees (who went over quite well in Japan). Yes, Taeko might be considered part of one of the earliest generations of "otaku"...

TOSHIO
I can imagine. Oh, it reminds me that we used to have so many encouraging songs back in those days—don't you think so? Ummm, there was the another one in "Hyokkori Hyohtan Island"....Oh!

TOSHIO
"If today is not good,
There will be tomorrow."

"If tomorrow is not good,
There will be the next day."

BOTH (unison)
"If the next day is not good,
There will be the day after that."

"There will be tomorrow,
No matter how much time passes.
Don, Don Gabacho, Don Gabacho."

NAOKO
Weird song...!

NARRATOR
Toshio-san [Toshio] has been keeping the memory of the song in his mind as a positive song, even though it was really a song about procrastination which meant, "If today is not good, why not put it off until tomorrow?" From this, I could get a nice picture of his way of thinking.

(1982: the farmhouse)

BANCHA
I'm afraid you're headed back tomorrow.

TAEKO
Yes.

I really must thank you for having me for so long. Please take care of yourself too, Obaa-chan [Auntie].

BANCHA
Thank you so much.

Taeko-san [Taeko], do you like it here?

TAEKO
Yeah, a great deal. I feel completely at home, here.

BANCHA
Really...I've only lived here since I was born and the wedding of Mitsuo to your sister was the only opportunity for me to go to Tokyo...but do you really like it here more than Tokyo?

TAEKO
Sure, why not?

Tokyo is messy...only buildings and cars everywhere you can see...

It doesn't seem like a place for people to live at anymore. For me, being from Tokyo, this is like a whole different world here.

BANCHA
Honestly...? You really like this place so much?

TAEKO
Sure, because of the rich nature here...
And also the very kind people here...

BANCHA
Then, Taeko-san [Taeko], would you mind if I asked you to become...Toshio's wife?

TAEKO
Huh?

BANCHA
Mitsuo's living in Tokyo, you love this place, so naturally you could live here in his place. What do you think?

KIYOKO
Ban-chan [Ban]!

KAZUO
Mom! You shouldn't blurt things out like that...

Can't you tell Taeko-san [Taeko] is upset?

BANCHA
Please think about it, Taeko-san [Taeko].

KAZUO
Sorry, never mind her, she's just kidding. Right, you're just kidding, aren't you, Ban-chan [Ban].

BANCHA
No, I'm very serious. And I know both of you would like what I asked her, wouldn't y'all?

KAZUO
Listen here...it doesn't matter at all if we want her to change or...

KIYOKO
Of course we'd like to do that. But y'know, Taeko-san [Taeko] is clearly a Tokyo woman, so...

KAZUO
And that's it.

KIYOKO
But y'know, Taeko-san [Taeko] likes it here, an' works hard in the fields, so it's fine with us. In fact, of course it'd be great if she became Toshio-san's [Toshio's] wife.

KAZUO
What, you too—what're you saying? Don't you think this is rude to Taeko-san [Taeko]? Think: Taeko-san's [Taeko's] got a job already in Tokyo, and Toshio is younger than her, to boot.

KIYOKO
Oh, but she could find a job in Yamagata, too, couldn't she?

Taeko-san [Taeko], please don't get angry, just hear me out. All young wives of farmers have other jobs on the side, these days, so...

KAZUO
Why did you have to bring all this up? Besides, Taeko-san's [Taeko's] only visited here twice to enjoy her vacation. You're only embarrassing her by saying this kind of thing out of the blue.

KIYOKO
So you're against us, then.

KAZUO
That's beside the point. I'm trying to say you should face this kind of thing realistically. We haven't even asked Toshio about his feelings, anyway, so I wonder how Ban-chan [Ban] can come off and say...

BANCHA
I can tell right away just by looking at Toshio.

KIYOKO
Right. Instead of assuming its impossible from the start, like you, why don't we ask how Taeko-san [Taeko] feels...

Taeko-san [Taeko]!

KAZUO
Leave her alone. See what I've been saying? You should know better and build up to that kind of question more slowly.

BANCHA
I don't think I was wrong.

(1982: the road to the main farmhouse)

NARRATOR
Becoming a farmer's wife. I never imagined that before...

Yet the fact its possible for me to live in such a manner was enough to give a strange impression.

"If you don't mind..." Just like in some movie I'd seen before. How wonderful it would be if I could speak with such an open heart. But I couldn't.

My vague belief that I love the country, and my playing at work in the fields made me have a guilty conscience all at once. I was ashamed of myself, always saying "what a nice place" without knowing hard winters or the reality of farming.

I wasn't prepared for anything. And everyone knew this from the start.

I felt too awkward to stay.

ABE (OFF)
I'm not gonna shake hands with you.

TSUNEKO (OFF)
Hey, hey, the shirt Abe-kun's wearing today—

PIGTAILED GIRL (OFF)
What, what?

TSUNEKO (OFF)
It's the exact same one Tanaka-kun [Tanaka] wore when he was in the fourth grade.

BOB-HAIRED GIRL (OFF)
Wha....?

TSUNEKO (OFF)
Keep it secret.

PIGTAILS (OFF)
You know what? When its Abe-kun's [Abe's] turn to feed the ducks, he takes the bread crumbs home for food.

BOBBED HAIR (OFF)
Say what?
Have you seen Abe-kun's [Abe's] palms? Incredible!

PIGTAILS (OFF)
I'm sure glad my seat's not near him.

BOBBED HAIR (OFF)
I feel sorry for you, Taeko-chan [Taeko].

TSUNEKO (OFF)
Why don't you ask the teacher to have your seat changed?

PIGTAILS (OFF)
Right, Right. Boys ought to sit with boys... right, Taeko- chan [Taeko]?

TAEKO
I...I don't mind. It's rude to Abe-kun [Abe] to act like that.

BOBBED HAIR
You really don't mind?!

PIGTAILS
Say what? Aren't you the goody-goody?

TSUNEKO
You better keep this conversation a secret, all right?

ABE
You want to get beat up?

TAEKO
Abe-kun! [Abe!]

TOSHIO
What're you doing out here?

TAEKO
Nothing. I needed to walk around a little.

TOSHIO
You're all soaked. But c'mon, hop in.

It's a present, I just... It's pickled vegetables my mom made.

TAEKO
Um, don't go back to the farmhouse.

TOSHIO
Huh? How come?

TAEKO
Please. Anywhere but there.

TOSHIO
Is something the matter?

TAEKO
I had a friend, a boy named "Abe-kun" ["Abe"].

He transferred to my school. He got the seat next to me.

Abe-kun [Abe] once said, "I'm not gonna shake hands with you."

Abe-kun was, you see...

I guess his family was quite poor, so he didn't even have a P.E. uniform. He was filthy, and wiped his nose noisily on his sleeve or picked it.

And if you tried to keep from looking shocked by him, he threatened you by saying "You want to get beat up?" I hated it and could hardly bear it, so I was looking forward to the Summer vacation—we wouldn't be able to change our seats until then.

When we danced the "Oklahoma Mixer" {yes, the American square dance}, I hated to hold his hand, and I also hated how he forced me to lend him my notebook when he didn't bring his homework.

The girls gossiped about Abe-kun [Abe], whispering things like anti-contagion hexes <"engacho", like against "cooties">.

However, at least I didn't join that group. Because I felt it was the worst thing to hate someone by talking about them behind their back. However...

Before the summer vacation, it was time for Abe-kun [Abe] to move to another school again, and our teacher decided that all his classmates should shake his hand, one by one, to say good-bye.

The feeling that no one really wanted to do this spread out immediately.

Some lines of dirt were visible on Abe-kun's [Abe's] palm. He walked around shaking everyone's hand, but it was obvious that Abe-kun [Abe] was being teased a lot.

He was supposed to shake hands with me at the end. But when I reached out, Abe-kun [Abe] said, "I'm not gonna shake hands with you."

"I'm not gonna shake hands with you..."

The one who was thinking the most... that Abe-kun [Abe] was dirty, was me.

Abe-kun [Abe] must have known this, in fact. So that's why he didn't let me shake his hand...

TOSHIO
May I ask what happened at the farmhouse?

TAEKO
I have been such a person since I was a child, and I still am.

TOSHIO
Ah-ha.

You seem strange today. It's not like the Taeko-san [Taeko] that I know.

Anyway, its not my business what you've been saying at the farmhouse.

TAEKO
Um,
Don't misunderstand—its not related to the farmhouse at all.

I'm sorry. I remembered my time in elementary school, and immediately was ashamed of myself.

TOSHIO
This "Abe-kun" ["Abe"] guy was a fool if it's true. It could have been that he liked you and didn't want to leave, so he didn't shake your hand, couldn't it?

TAEKO
Huh? No way! The one Abe-kun [Abe] liked was Kobayashi-san [Kobayashi], the girl class president {see the homeroom debate part of this film}. He was always bullying me.

He'd put his hands in his pockets and say things like, "Grown-ups are people who can spit or tear leaves off bushes if they feel like it, tsk!" when I met him.

And then he'd saunter off.

TOSHIO
See, I thought so—I can understand Abe-kun's [Abe's] feelings. I also have made a girl whom I liked cry by teasing her on purpose.

TAEKO
It wasn't like that! He shook hands with all the other classmates. I was the only one he didn't shake hands with.

TOSHIO
Well, that's the trouble with you girls. You just don't understand the way boys feel at all.

TAEKO
...jeez, don't act so presumptuous.

TOSHIO
Well, can't I say the truth?

Abe-kun [Abe] wasn't so strong, was he? He couldn't bully boys around. And as a transfer student, he didn't have any friends.

Taeko-san [Taeko], you sat next to him, so it was much easier for him to bully you. He was dependent on you, Taeko-san [Taeko], as someone he could tease.

Essentially, he must not have wanted to shake hands with everyone, right? But with you, Taeko-san [Taeko], he could express himself honestly, like, "I'm not gonna shake hands with you."

(1966: Street marketplace)

ABE'S FATHER
Don't act so foul!

Taeko is carrying a 1966 February 20th issue of Margaret magazine, featuring singer Kazuo Funaki on the cover.

TAEKO (OFF)
I...

(1982: Toshio's car)

TAEKO
I felt guilty about Abe-kun [Abe], and tried behaving like him.

But it was too late, in spite of my actions.

Because I can't amend the fact I hurt him by avoiding him.

TOSHIO
Oh, its stopped raining.

TAEKO
Hey, you're right.

TOSHIO
The moon's come out.

Quite often you can see tanuki <raccoon dog> or martens <ten> if you drive around here.

TAEKO
Wow...

TOSHIO
Should we head back, now?

TAEKO
Oh! This is terrible, they must be all worried about me.

TOSHIO
Whoops. I wonder if there'll be wild rumors flying around now?

TAEKO
I'm sorry. I needed your help to recover, Toshio-san [Toshio].

TOSHIO
I wonder what really did happen at the farmhouse, anyway...

TAEKO
Oh, uh, please, don't ask a single thing about it when we get back, okay?

TOSHIO
Then...shall I play some folk music?

The music is "Stornelli" a traditional Italian folk song performed by "Italie Eternelle." The accompanying image is thus of a hayride in Tuscany.

NARRATION
For the first time, I was trying to think about what my feelings about Toshio-san [Toshio] were, and Toshio-san's [Toshio's] feelings about me.

Even if it was accidental, what a surprise it was that my closed-off heart was fixed by Toshio-san [Toshio].

It was a kind of mystery to me how I could rely on Toshio-san [Toshio] so much.

I felt as if Toshio-san [Toshio] was older than me. The one whom I wanted to shake hands with...was Toshio-san [Toshio].

Merely "shake hands"...?

What could this feeling be...? Feeling Toshio-san [Toshio] near me, I was absorbed by this question.

(1982: Takase train station)

Takase Station, in the Yamagata Prefecture, is one of the stations along Sendai's (of the Miyagi Prefecture) Takase Line. It is 10 minutes from the Yamagata station Taeko arrived at.

BANCHA
Have you forgotten anything?

TAEKO
No, it's all right.

TOSHIO
Okay, I'll be waiting for you this Winter.

TAEKO
Sure, I'll study a bit more on farming until then.

TOSHIO
Huh? Wasn't it supposed to be skiing? In any case, you can't learn more about skiing without doing it.

BANCHA
Consider what I said, okay, Taeko-san [Taeko]?

TOSHIO
Huh? What, Ban-chan [Ban]?

NAOKO
What's this?

BANCHA
Oh, nothing.

It's Taeko-san's [Taeko's] and my secret.

TOSHIO
Well, you seemed different yesterday, so...

TAEKO
I'm sorry. I'll be okay next time. I won't bring my fifth-grade self along anymore.

OLD MAN
Wait up!

His cassette player is playing an old popular song, "Suki ni Natta Hito" (One Whom I Loved) which made its singer, Harumi Miyako, quite famous long before this 1982 setting (a little temporal confusion..?) She also will be singing the brand new ending credit song, a translation of "The Rose", of this film!

TAEKO
Take care, Naoko-chan [Naoko].

NAOKO
Goodbye...!

This song is also sung by the 1991 Harumi Miyako, and is a Japanese-language version of "The Rose" called "Ai wa Hana, Kimi wa Sono Tane" (Love is a Flower, You are the Seed). "The Rose" is the title song of the movie by the same title, performed by Bette Midler, who starred in the role of Janis Joplin in this pseudo-biography of her life.

Washing away tenderness,
love, it's a river.
Cutting the soul to pieces,
love, it's a knife.
An incessant thirst,
love is, they say, but
love is a flower, the flower of life;
you are the seed.

Afraid of being discouraged,
your heart never dances.
Afraid of waking up,
your dream never takes chances.
Hating to be taken away
your heart won't give.
Afraid of dying,
you cannot live.

Long night, all alone,
long road, all alone.
Love doesn't come
when you think it will;
please remember, though
it's buried under the snow in winter,
in spring, with the sun's love,
the seed blossoms into a flower.

The station Taeko transfers at is at Yamadera (see the part of this film before she went to Zaoh).

(ending credits)

The End