

Battan

JP: *Soshite hiroin wa inaku natta* (Futabasha Publishers Ltd.)
ENG: And Then There Were No Heroines



You don't often see stories about older women and young women who aren't related to each other finding friendship and learning about life together in manga, much less comics in general in North America. This comic, about a flamboyant older woman and a shy, heartbroken young woman will be warmly welcomed by readers who are hungry for stories that showcase this type of relationship dynamic that's stylish, heartwarming, surprising, and fun to read.

Battan has an elegant, sensual way of drawing stories that capture the nuances of relationships and people who walk to the beat of their own drum. She's overdue to get a following for her unique art and storytelling style and hopefully the MINT Project will bring her work to the attention of even more people who will fall in love with her manga.

-Debora Aoki

Synopsis

Taeko, a stoic woman around 30 years old, secretly harbors unresolved feelings for a lover she parted with three years ago. One day, she meets a flamboyant elderly woman, Tora, at a bar. Though Tora's loud and overbearing personality is the last thing Taeko wants to deal with, their shared heartbreak over men makes them eerily similar. A heartfelt, intergenerational story of sisterhood, where two women—50 years apart in age—embrace their unspoken love and longing.

Artist Profile



Battan debuted in 2016 with her title *Nijiiro konpurekkusu* (Rainbow Color Complex, KODANSHA). Her other works include *Ane no yujin* (My Older Sister's Friend, LEED), *Kakeochi garu* (*Run Away with Me, Girl*, KODANSHA USA), *Kemutai ane to zurui imoto* (*Secondhand Sisters*, KODANSHA USA), and *Fatale Game* (KODANSHA USA). *Soshite hiroin wa inaku natta* (And Then There Were No Heroines) vols. 1-4 were published on the online comic platform *Web Action*. Battan loves dogs.

@battan8 @battan8


COME ON. THE ENTIRE WORLD?
THE WHOLE WORLD?
BAM
I KNEW BETTER...
HAAAAH
I REALLY AM THE MOST WRETCHED TRAGIC HEROINE IN THE ENTIRE WORLD.
...THAN TO GET TANGLED UP WITH HER. AND YET.
AAH?
TAEKO?
WHAT'S WRONG?
OKAY, LISTEN UP.

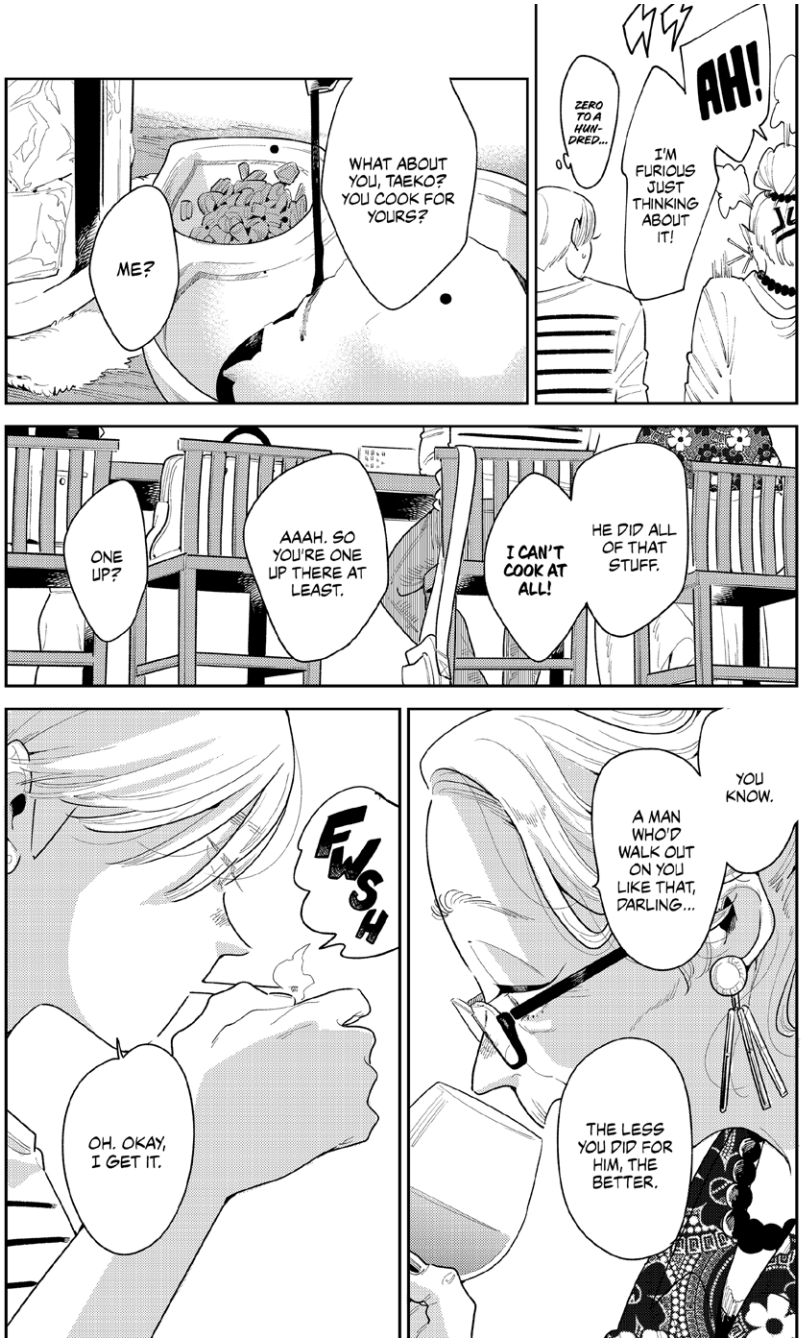

WELL, IT'S A GOOD COLOR!
...WATCHED HER, LIKE, THIS OLD BROAD'S A WHOLE SITUATION.
TORA-AAA.
YOU'VE TOLD ME THAT A MILLION TIMES!
I'VE ALWAYS, ALWAYS JUST...
I'M MORE WOMAN THAN SHE'LL EVER BE, THOUGH.
AND YOU'VE TOLD ME THAT STORY A BILLION TIMES!
BWAH HA HA
HE WENT AND RAN OFF WITH HER.
AND THEN, WELL!
WOULD YOU BELIEVE HE BOUGHT FIVE OF NEARLY THE SAME ONE?
A COLOR I NEVER EVEN USED A SINGLE BOTTLE OF!
SHE NEVER SHUTS UP, NOT FOR A SECOND.
SHE WEARS REDS AND PINKS AND PURPLES.


...IF YOUR MAN RUNNING OUT ON YOU MAKES YOU THE SADDEST PERSON IN THE WORLD...
...THEN I'M THE MOST WRETCHED TRAGIC HEROINE ON THE PLANET, TOO!
...AND YET I STILL WENT AND RAN MY MOUTH OFF.
BECAUSE IT WAS STUPID HOT...
...ON THE FIRST SUMMER DAY OF THE YEAR. AND I WAS GRUMPY.
AH
ER...?
WELL. MM HMM.
OH! NO.
FOR-GET IT.
GIRL!
PAT PAT
COME! SIT YOUR-SELF DOWN HERE!
THIS IS WHY I HATE SUMMER.
BECAUSE THIS KIND OF SHIT ALWAYS HAPPENS.
TELL ME...
THIS IS HOW I MET THE OLD LADY.
...EVERY-THING!!

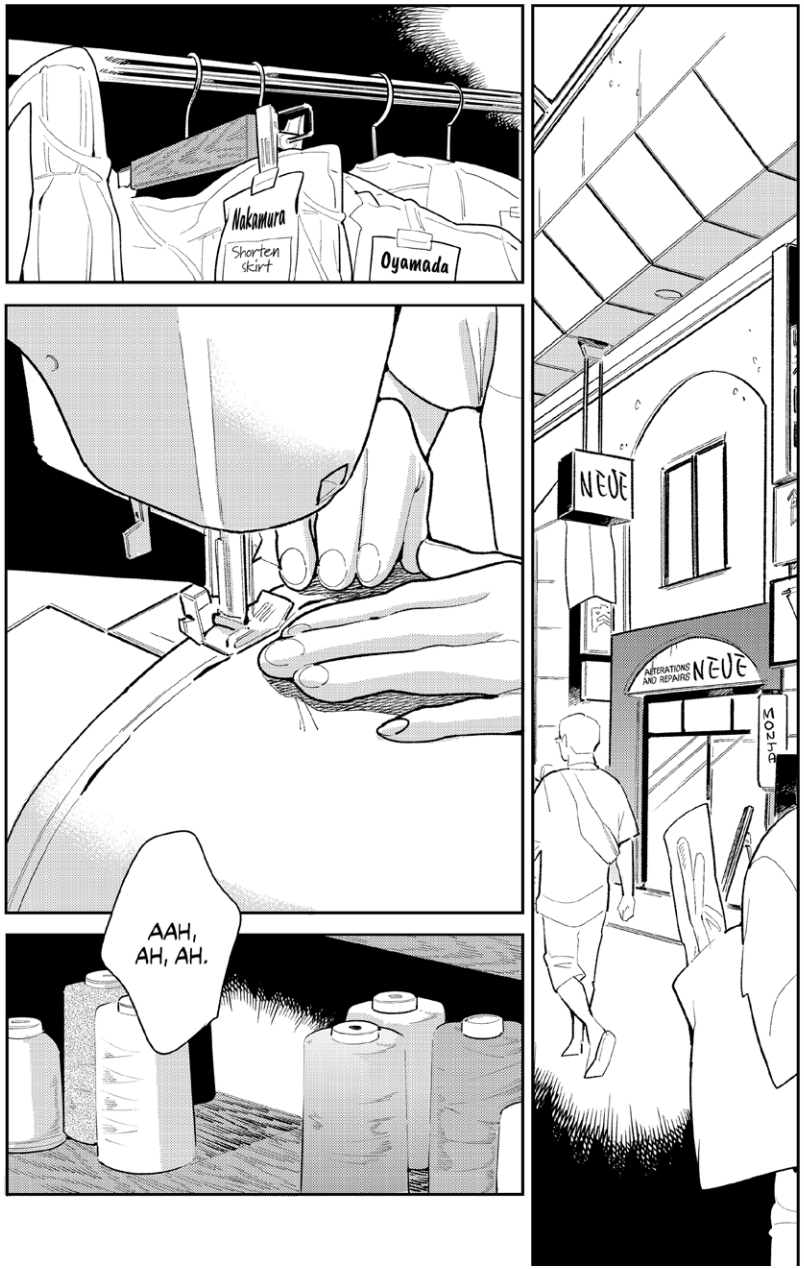

TAEKO! DARLING!
TRY THIS DAIKON. IT'S SO GOOD!
GO ON, TRY IT. HAVE SOME.
I ONLY BIT INTO THIS SIDE.
LOOK!
I KEEP TELLING YOU, I JUST WANT TO EAT MY DINNER IN PEACE.
AND IT'S FUCKING HOT. WHY ARE YOU EATING ODEN?
ANYWAY, IT'S BEEN A DOG'S AGE SINCE I HAD ODEN.
OMFG あふ…
THESE DAYS, IT'S THE DELI OR HERE.
DON'T GIVE ME THAT. YOU STARTED TALKING TO ME.
I DIDN'T MEAN TO. PRETEND I DIDN'T.
WHEN HE WAS AROUND, THOUGH, I'D COOK UP A FEAST LIKE THIS EVERY DAY.
LOOKING BACK, I CAN HARDLY BELIEVE IT MYSELF!

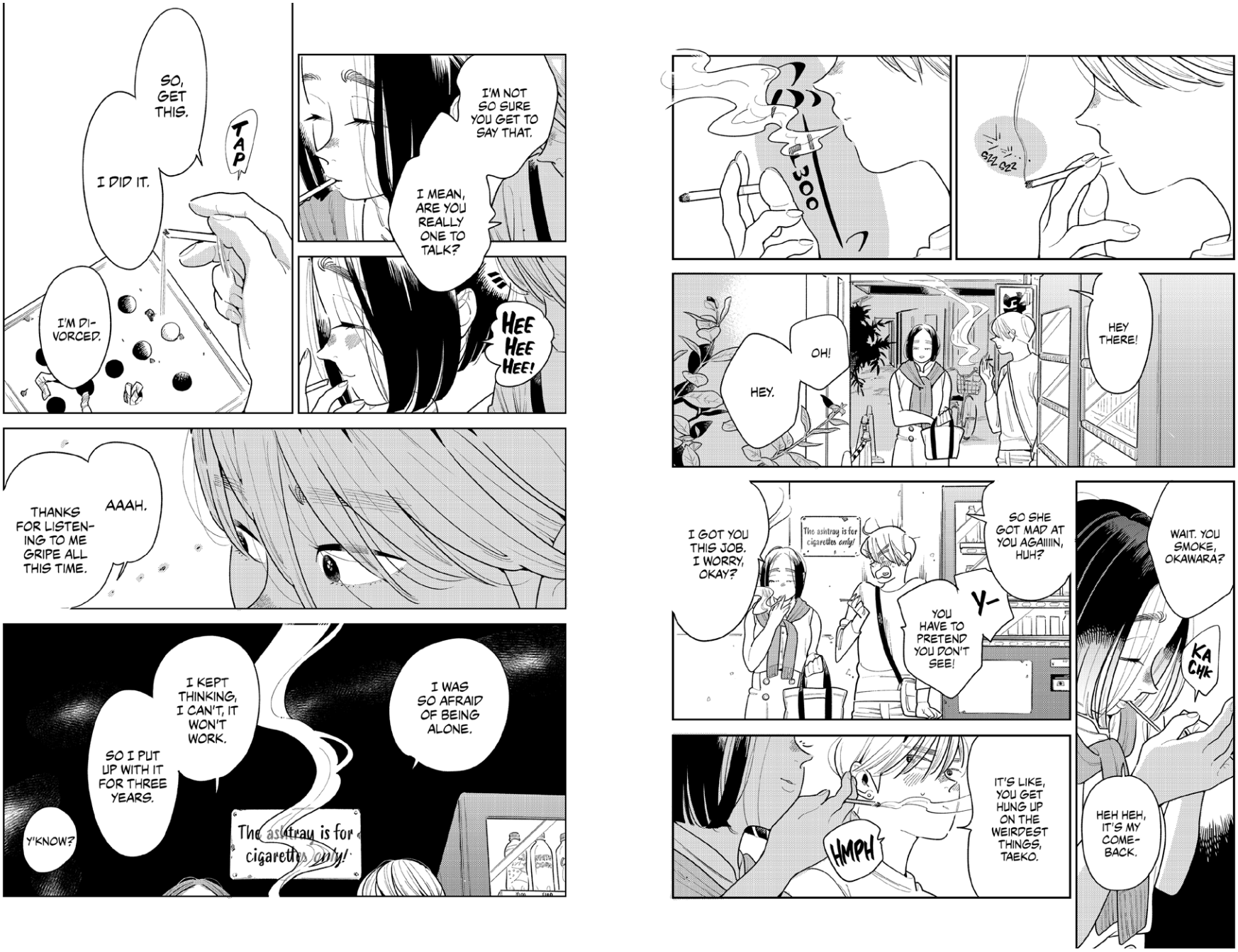



BECAUSE YOU CAN'T BE THE MOST WRETCHED TRAGIC HEROINE IN THE WORLD IF THERE ARE TWO OF YOU.
THE OLD LADY STOPPED SAYING..
..."THE ENTIRE WORLD" AFTER WE MET THAT DAY.
YOU THINK SO TOO, DON'T YOU, SHIN HON?
FOR THE BILLIONTH TIME!
HA AAH
WE...
...REALLY ARE...
...TRAGIC HEROINES, AREN'T WE!


ME?
WHAT ABOUT YOU, TAEKO? YOU COOK FOR YOURS?
ZERO TO A HUNDRED...
I'M FURIOUS JUST THINKING ABOUT IT!
AH!
ONE UP?
AAAH. SO YOU'RE ONE UP THERE AT LEAST.
I CAN'T COOK AT ALL!
HE DID ALL OF THAT STUFF.
FWSH
OH. OKAY, I GET IT.
YOU KNOW.
A MAN WHO'D WALK OUT ON YOU LIKE THAT, DARLING...
THE LESS YOU DID FOR HIM, THE BETTER.

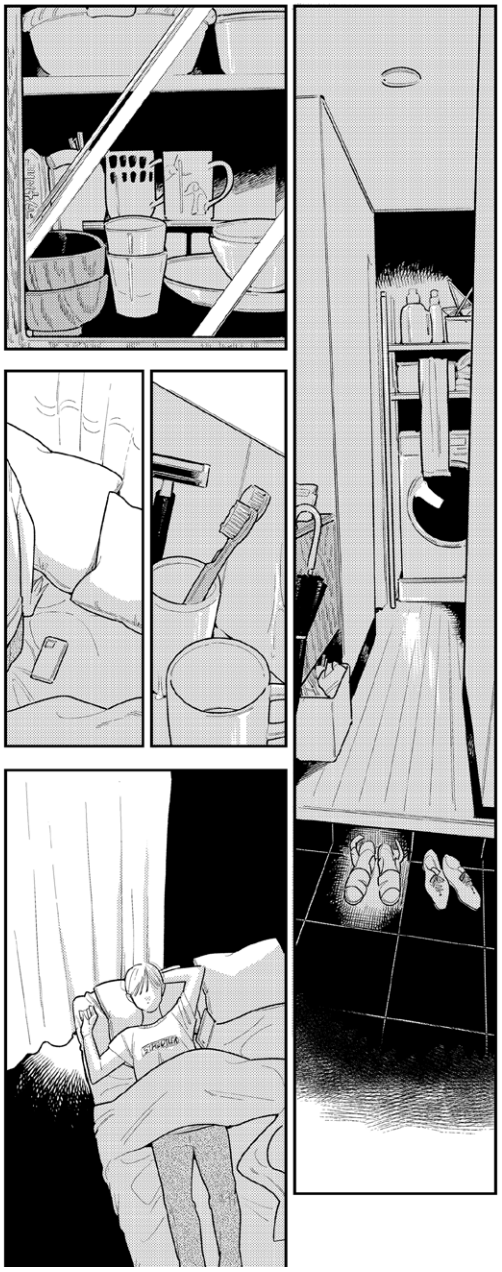

SAGANE!
IT'S A QUICK BACK AND FORTH, LIKE THIS.
WHAT? THE HEAT FREAK YOU OUT?
YOU'LL BURN IT.
I TOLD YOU.
YOU CAN'T BE SO SLOW WITH THE IRON.
RIGHT...
YOU HAVE TO JUST GO FOR IT.
GET IN THERE!

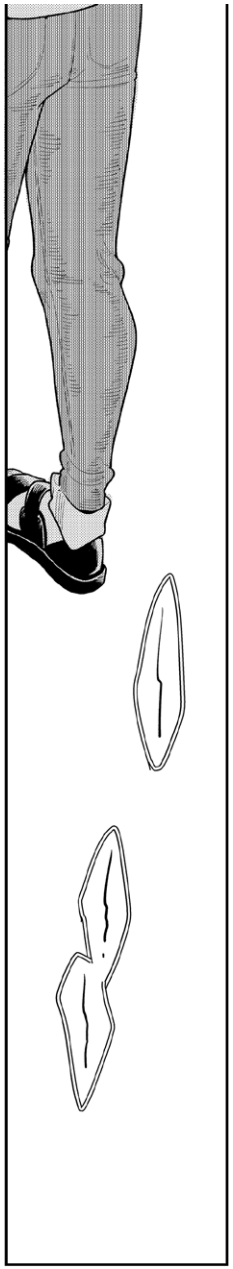

Nakamura
Shorten skirt
Oyamada
AAH, AH, AH.
NEUE
ALTERATIONS AND REPAIRS NEUE
MOJI


SO, GET THIS.
I DID IT.
TAP
I'M DI-VORCED.
I'M NOT SO SURE YOU GET TO SAY THAT.
I MEAN, ARE YOU REALLY ONE TO TALK?
HEE HEE HEE!
AAAH.
THANKS FOR LISTEN-ING TO ME GRIPE ALL THIS TIME.
I KEPT THINKING, I CAN'T, IT WON'T WORK.
SO I PUT UP WITH IT FOR THREE YEARS.
Y'KNOW?
I WAS SO AFRAID OF BEING ALONE.
The ashtray is for cigarettes only!
FUU
SIZZ
HEY THERE!
OH!
HEY.
I GOT YOU THIS JOB. I WORRY, OKAY?
The ashtray is for cigarettes only!
SO SHE GOT MAD AT YOU AGAIIIIN, HUH?
Y-
YOU HAVE TO PRETEND YOU DON'T SEE!
WAIT. YOU SMOKE, OKAWARA?
KA CHK
HEH HEH, IT'S MY COME-BACK.
HMPH
IT'S LIKE, YOU GET HUNG UP ON THE WEIRDEST THINGS, TAEKO.


THAT GAVE ME THE STRENGTH I NEEDED.
...HERE, GOING AROUND LIKE IT WAS NOTHING.
I MEAN, HAYURU RAN OFF ON YOU, BUT YOU'RE STILL...
BUT, LIKE...
AAAH.
NOT ALWAYS THINKING ABOUT YOUR MAN.
I LOVE IT.
BEING ALONE IS...
...AMAZING, HUH?


WHAT?
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO CONGRATULATE ME?
UH-HUUUH.
HMPH
YOUR ASH...
...IS GOING TO—
AH
PLOP
AND THERE IT GOES.



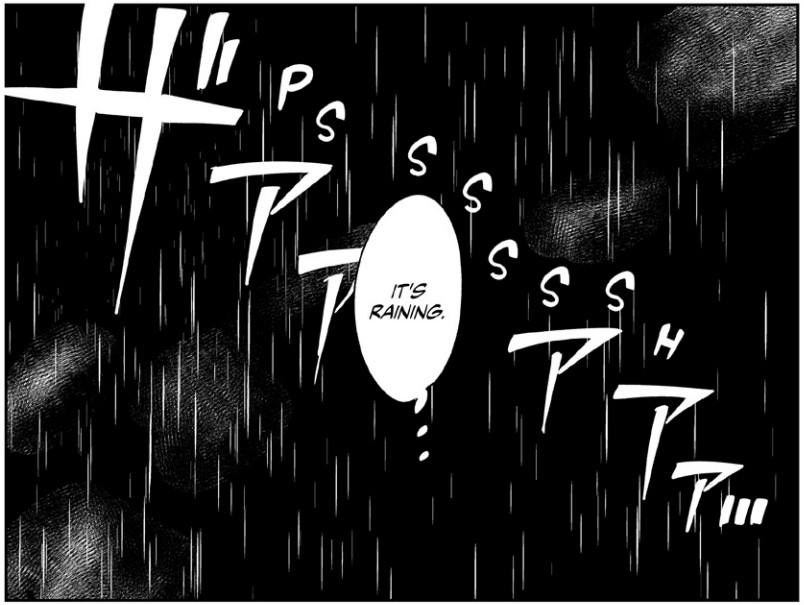



19:53
1 MISSED CALL
UH-HUH.
SEE YOU TOMOR-ROW!
IS THIS THE NUMBER FOR MS. TAEKO SAGANE?
THIS IS XX INSURANCE...
YOU HAVE ONE NEW MESSAGE.


HANG ON A SEC.
YEAH...
IT'S POURING ALL OF A SUDDEN.
YIKES!
たばこ
CIGARETTES
IT'S MINE.
HERE. YOU CAN BORROW THIS.


PLP
PLP

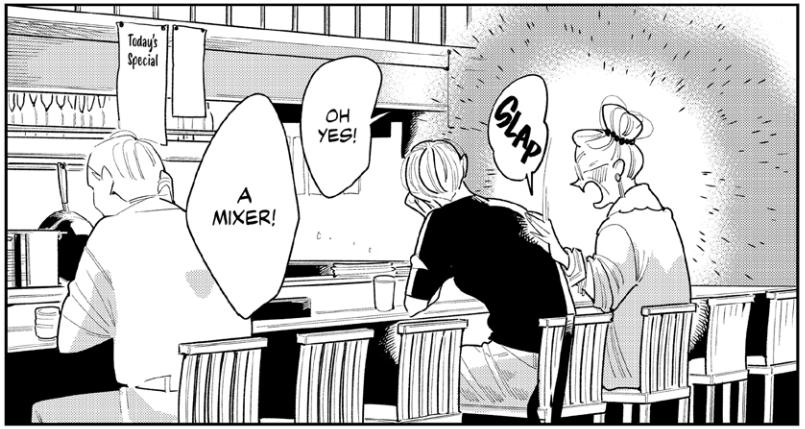

PLP
PLP
PLP
PLP
AAH...

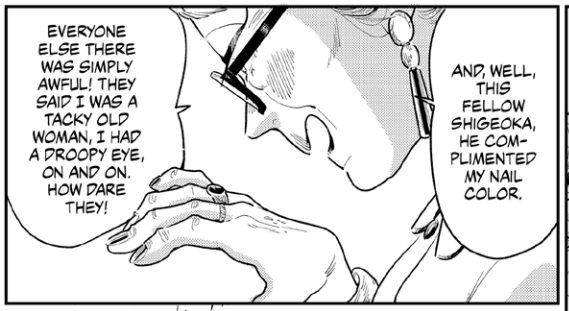

IT'S RAINING.


...YOU.
THANK...
OKAY...
HUH?
OH, I–
IT'S FINE, TAKE IT.
I MEAN, YOU'RE A REGULAR CUSTOMER AND ALL.
POP
SORRY.
WOULD YOU BRING IT BACK, THOUGH?
HOLD UP!
HEY!
OH!
I'D LOVE TO SEE YOU AGAIN.
'KAY...
THE TRUTH IS...
MY FOLKS OWN THIS PLACE.
COME WHEN I'M HERE, 'KAY?

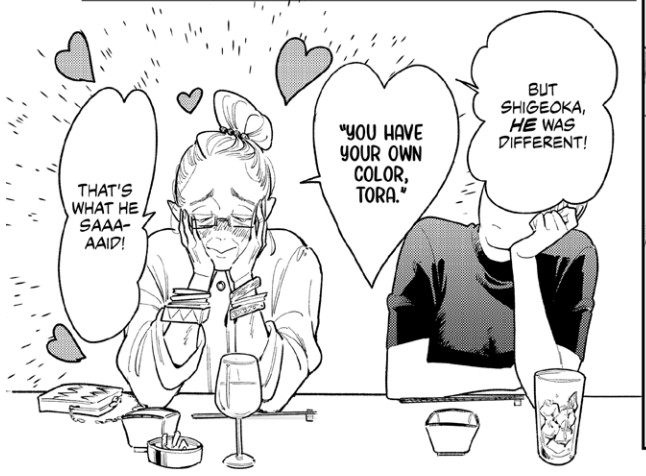

NEKOY
Today's special
SO TODAY, I WENT...
...TO, OH...
WHAT'S IT CALLED AGAIN?

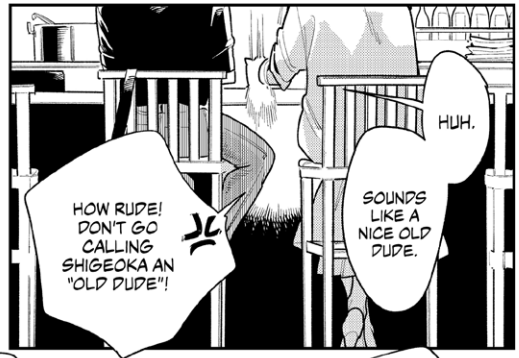

...EVEN NOW THREE YEARS LATER...
...I'M STILL WAITING FOR MY MAN TO COME BACK.
WHAT WOULD OKAWARA SAY IF I TOLD HER THAT?


Today's Special
SLAP
OH YES!
A MIXER!

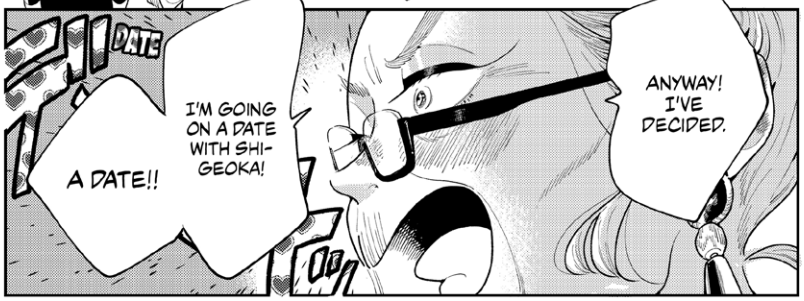

EVERYONE ELSE THERE WAS SIMPLY AWFUL! THEY SAID I WAS A TACKY OLD WOMAN, I HAD A DROOPY EYE, ON AND ON. HOW DARE THEY!
AND, WELL, THIS FELLOW SHIGEOKA, HE COMPLIMENTED MY NAIL COLOR.


WHAT?
DON'T YOU MEAN A SENIORS' CLUB?
NO, I DO NOT! I MEAN A MIXER, A PARTY WHERE YOU GO TO MEET PEOPLE!

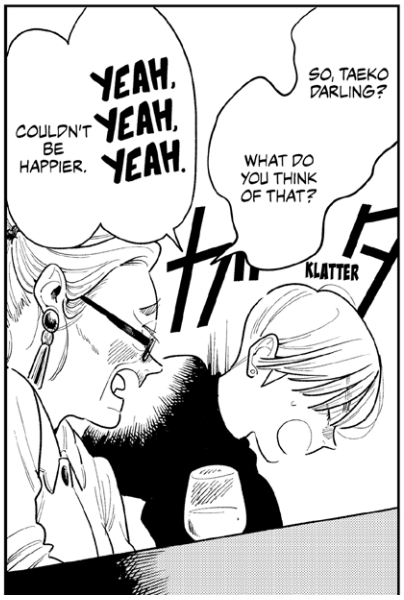

THAT'S WHAT HE SAAA-AAID!
"YOU HAVE YOUR OWN COLOR, TORA."
BUT SHIGEOKA, HE WAS DIFFERENT!


HUH.
SOUNDS LIKE A NICE OLD DUDE.
HOW RUDE! DON'T GO CALLING SHIGEOKA AN "OLD DUDE"!


HAAH...
HE'S ONLY IN HIS SEVENTIES!


DATE
A DATE!!
I'M GOING ON A DATE WITH SHIGEOKA!
ANYWAY! I'VE DECIDED.


LOOK. SEE? NEXT WEEK'S THE FIREWORKS.
WE TALKED AND SAID WE SHOULD GO SEE THEM TOGETHER!
JUST LIKE THAT!
FIREWORKS
SUMMER


SO, TAEKO DARLING?
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THAT?
YEAH, YEAH, YEAH.
COULDN'T BE HAPPIER.
KLATTER


I NEED A FAVOR.
W-W-W-WAY-WAY-WAIT!
SHIN, GIMME THE BILL.
GOOD LUCK WITH THAT.
YOU BET.
CAN YOU COME TO MINE?
AUGH!
ENO-UGH!
tea
tea


I SPENT ALL DAY YESTERDAY AGONIZING OVER WHAT TO WEAR.
I SIMPLY CAN'T MAKE UP MY MIND ALL ON MY OWN.
WELL, IT'S HARD.
CAN'T YOU JUST WEAR WHATEVER YOU WANT?
WHY ARE YOU EVEN ASKING ME?
I HAVEN'T BEEN ON A DATE IN A DECADE OR MORE!
I HAVE TO LOOK AMAZING!
I WANT A YOUNG PERSON'S OPINION.


YOU SEE, WHEN YOU GET TO BE MY AGE, YOUR SKIN ISN'T WHAT IT USED TO BE.
I NEED SOMETHING THAT POPS, THE BRIGHTER THE BETTER.
SURE, WHATEVER.
MM.
OKAY, THIS THEN.
THIS? YOU DO LEAN BORING, HM? YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE YOUNG.
YOU'RE NOT EVEN THIRTY.
I'D LEAVE IF MY DATE SHOWED UP IN THAT.
AH! IT IS SUMMER. MAYBE A HAWAIIAN SHIRT?
FOLDED UP OVER THERE.
ONE OF THOSE COULD BE CUTE.
Burnable garb
19th
HOW 'BOUT THOSE?
SHIGEOKA IS NOT THAT KIND OF PERSON!
!!!

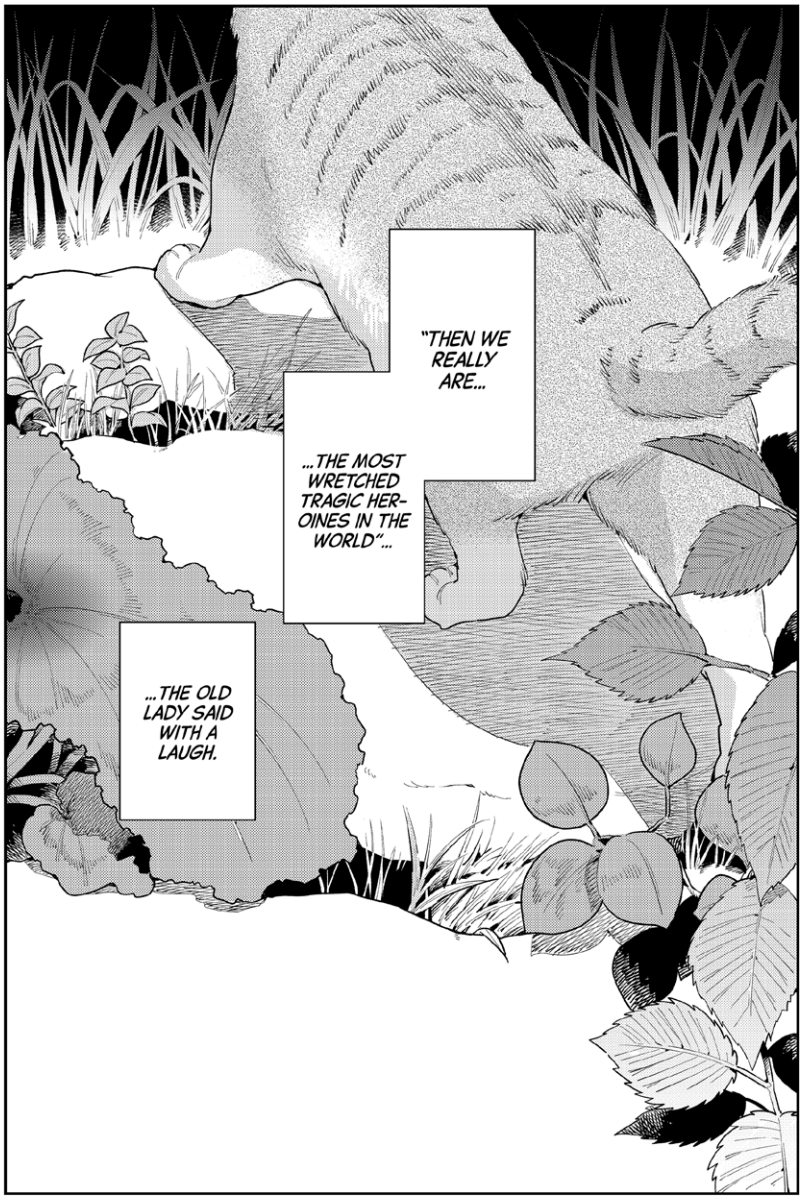

AAAH!
NO, NO, NO, NO!
I REFUSE TO WEAR THOSE THINGS!
HE GAVE THEM TO ME.
THEY'RE ALL GOING IN THE TRASH!
IT'S WEIRD.
SHE KEEPS BAD MOUTHING THIS GUY.
BUT SHE IS ACTUALLY TRYING TO MOVE ON.


MEAN-WHILE, THE UMBRELLA HE LENT ME...
THE BOOKS HE LEFT BEHIND...
THE MATCHING CUPS WITH DOGS ON THEM...
THEY'RE ALL STILL SITTING EXACTLY WHERE THEY WERE.
...
WHY...
...AM I SO COMPLETELY STUCK?
I'M HEAD-ING OUT.
I MEAN, CLOTHES.
NAIL POLISH.
HE GAVE THEM TO HER, TOO.


HE'D COME HOME ONCE IN A BLUE MOON.
AND GIVE ME SOME LITTLE THING OR OTHER TO MAKE ME SMILE.
HE REALLY DID ONLY COME HOME ONCE IN A BLUE MOON.
HE HAD HIS OWN KEY, BUT STILL, HE'D COME CREEPING IN THROUGH THE GARDEN...
...LIKE A STRAY CAT.
...
CAN YOU BELIEVE I SPENT FORTY YEARS WITH THAT MAN?
LIKE A DAMNED FOO—
KSTLE


KRSH
!!


OH, YOUUUU!
ZSH ZSH
MY SWEET LITTLE TORA!
AAAH.
IT'S LIKE...
OOH! YOU SCARED ME, MY LITTLE ANGEL!
MAYBE THE OLD LADY'S THE SAME AS ME.
AND SHE'S REALLY...
...SITTING HERE WAITING FOR HER MISSING MAN...
...TO COME BACK.
YOU KNOW, HE SAID...
...NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS, HE WOULD ABSOLUTELY COME HOME TO ME...
...IN THE END.


"THEN WE REALLY ARE...
...THE MOST WRETCHED TRAGIC HEROINES IN THE WORLD"...
...THE OLD LADY SAID WITH A LAUGH.


GOODNESS!
IS THAT RIGHT?
SO YOURS WAS THE SAME?
MY GUY...
...USED TO SAY STUFF LIKE THAT, TOO.

TITLE DETAILS

Title	*Soshite hiroin wa inaku natta*
English title (provisional)	And Then There Were No Heroines
Author & Artist	Battan
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Volumes	4
Publication platform	*Web Action* (online: https://comic-action.com/)
Translations	French, scheduled for publication

Critical Acclaim

Nominated for Comic Seymour's Digital Comic Awards 2025.
Featured in the category of "Stories of Sisterhood" in the "Shining! 15th *anan* Manga Awards," *anan* Magazine (Magazine House), issue 2428.

Comparable Titles

Tokyo Tarareba Girls (manga by Akiko Higashimura, KODANSHA)
It's Lonely at the Centre of the Earth (graphic novel by Zoe Thorogood, Image Comics)
Even Though We're Adults (manga by Takako Shimura, Seven Seas Entertainment)
Wash Day Diaries (graphic novel by Jamila Rowser and Robyn Smith, Chronicle Books)
Auntie Mame (movie starring Rosalind Russell, 1958)
Roaming (graphic novel by Jillian and Mariko Tamaki, Drawn & Quarterly)
Smoking Behind the Supermarket with You (manga by Jinushi, Square Enix Manga & Books)
She Loves to Cook, and She Loves to Eat (manga by Sakaomi Yuzaki, Yen Press)
Go With the Clouds, North-by-Northwest (manga by Aki Irie, KODANSHA)