

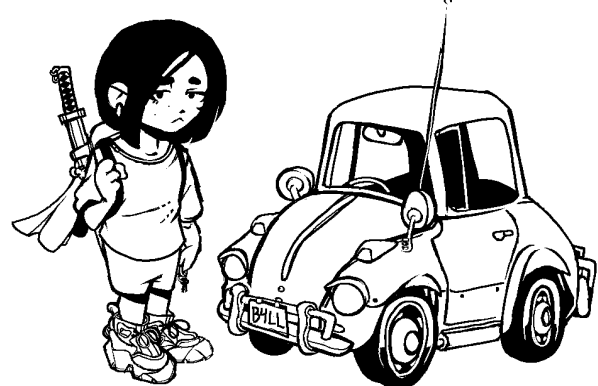
HIGASHIKATA * 東形

MOONBEAMS AND SUNFLOWERS

— DEBUT —



INTRO DUCTION



by **SHOJI HIGASHIKATA**
“POP TART”

These wounds will never heal; that’s an unfortunate fact of life. I will always be that lonely little boy who dreamt of a romantic and blissful suicide. But, it does get better — it *did* get better. I have always embraced suffering, but never made peace with it.

I recently fell in love for the first time. I’ve realized desires I had long suppressed, long forgotten. Human desires — like to be held. To be treated with a kindness we only feel during the ignorance of childhood. I want to love, so I’m going to.

I’m going to try my best to love this life — and hopefully, by the end of it, myself too.

Moonbeams and Sunflowers is a zine to publish my being. Wrathful stories of fresh blood and undelivered love letters. I hope in the future you’ll allow yourself to stand under the moon’s spotlight so I can give you your flowers.

I used to hold the belief that I was nothing without the people I surrounded myself with. But now I realize that I have become everything *because* of you all.

Cheers everyone. I love you. We’ll talk again, that’s my personal promise to you. And remember,

have yourselves a **damn** good one.

* * *

*One day I’ll
gather a group.*

*A witch,
a samurai,
and a cowboy.*

*We’ll travel
the world on
horseback — just
like we said we
would.*

*This zine is
dedicated to my
starry-eyed witch
and cowboy.*

*I still haven’t
woken up from
the dream you’ve
given me.
We’ll have our
adventure some
day.*



“WOLVES”

“You will never see me again.”

The sun caressed the horizon line as the sea surged against the cliffs. The sky bled garnet and blood orange. I sunk into the sand -- I was shaking, but I could stand. You could not. The ocean wind salted my open cuts, those blackened knuckles seared with pain.

“Put your hands up.”

Numbed by the ocean’s frigid touch, the sun enraptured me with its warmth. Cascading down my clothes were droplets of crimson. They fell, staining the white sand.

Ambient gold oats swayed around your slumped body. Through mounds of dark purple, you coughed and with a pitiful and fearful hand.

“I’m sorry.”

“No. Time to make this right.”

Broken was the code of skinship. The price of stolen flesh must be paid for in blood. Together for only a minute more we shed weakness.

We carnivores often fall under the spell of violence. I guess we can’t help ourselves.

* * *



People are skeptical of
“nice” people.

That they’re illusory.
Hiding their desires
behind a facade.
That “nice” people
cannot exist.

I’m not nice.
It’s not something I
am, nor something I
can be.

I don’t want to be nice.

I want to be kind.



My selfish endeavor left me not dead, but well-rested. The morning sun gleamed through the windows of my tomb. Laughter and fresh breakfast -- time to carry on. Guess this is me now.



I am the starry eyed samurai. I cry
for all that is beautiful and fight for
all that is already lost.

I do not fight for good -- and certainly
not for evil. I just fight.

This violence we share is so beautiful.
Souls emboldened by loss. Maybe the
tears we shed will nourish the plants
beneath our feet.

Let go.

My memory does not work properly. Random things will remind me I'm missing something. Ambient noises. The dark. Sunflowers.

I am reminded of speeches of raw, emboldened love -- never their words, but the tears I shed as you spoke.

I am reminded of my mind trying to kill my body -- the glimmer of hope in your eyes would always distract me.

I am reminded of nondescript, hostile places. They're always cold where the only warm spot is always beside you.

I can never isolate the memories. These glimpses of bliss choke me and cause my scars to ache.

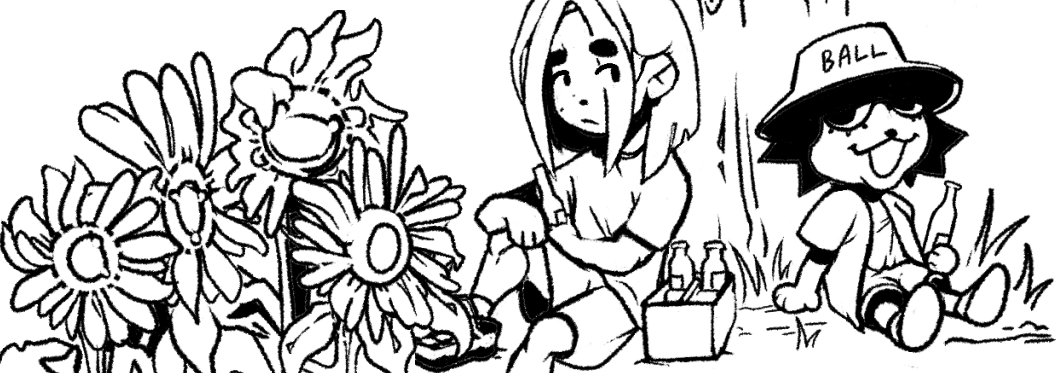
It's bittersweet. I always want more, even if I never know what *more* is. You always seem to have the answer.

Since these memories are not certain, I'll just have to cherish our moments instead.

* * *

MEMORIES WILL
DRIVE YOU CRAZY

"BLISS"



"I love taking BART. Especially at night."

I can't drive. I often disassociate at horrible times, so I personally think it's best for everyone.

I get the utter pleasure of licking my wounds to the sideshow that is public transport.

But when it's quiet, I don't rest like other commuters. I can't.

"GEIGAR COUNTER"

Ding. The doors thrust open as do my eyes. Up from my hands, they peer through filthy, tinted windows. Flickering lights and stale air -- nobody chooses to be here this late at night.

"We can drive you back, it's really not that big a deal."

"Nah. It's fine. I'm practically sober anyways."

Ding. I was coming home from a party. A party hosted by an eccentric host who wasn't eccentric enough to kick out the serial piece of shit. He was tolerated because he "knew someone" or that he was "actually invited."

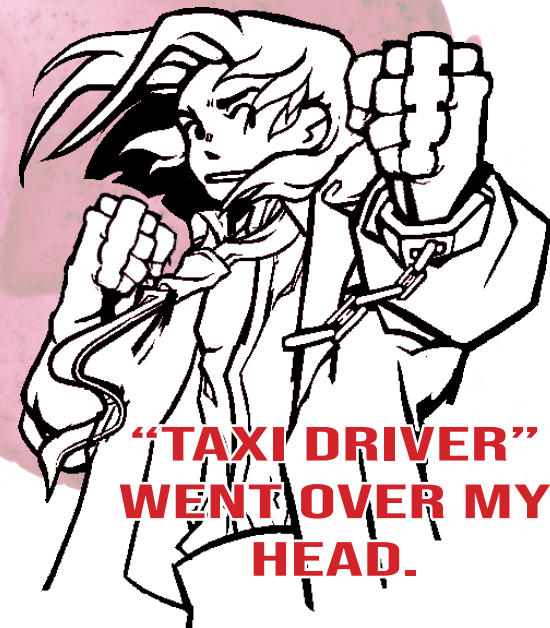
Everyone he "snuggled" up next to would wither; jovial smiles melting with radiation sickness.

"And thanks, I guess, for dealing with him outside."

"Hey, I said my bad. I could've handled it better."

Ding. The sound of footsteps activated my public transport survival sense. Bloodied tissues hung from his nose as he pressed a shitty paper-baggy beer to his busted lips.

The doors closed swiftly behind him. I made sure he saw me.



"REBORN"

"Reborn" is the only fictional work in this zine.

It's from an old tabletop but it seems appropriate to add.



"When training gets tough, I wonder and daydream if I could've ever made myself into something."

The captain paused, tilting his head upwards towards the sky. The moon cascaded its light onto the dock, submerging it in melancholic blue. Fishing rods swayed in the breeze.

"Ha! I'd probably be much happier. Relaxing by the shoreline, sunbathing under the warm, warm sun as I wait for the fish to bite...Then I'd serve the fresh catches under the caress of moonlight."

The two stoics had a mutual understanding. That like usual, this conversation was purely business. A spontaneous relapse in character. The deckhand nodded.

"One day, maybe, if I were to get lucky of course, I'd meet a nice girl. Perhaps we'd share a casual conversation as I cook for her in my dingy little shop. We would share our interests, likes, dislikes, philosophies, thoughts and maybe our feelings...Humor me just this once!"

The captain stood up and extended out his hands. With a fake smile, the deckhand reached out and was swept off his feet. A delusion of devotion and mortal completion morphed into a playful dance between soldiers.

"Oh I can see it now!" the captain laughed. "The street lamps would illuminate our our cobbled dance floor. We'd soar hand in hand as our matching digs would be covered in fresh dew. Before we catch a cold we'd find recluse under a single blanket. I'd be reborn as a new

person!..Or maybe I've always been that person."

The high wore off and the captain chuckled to himself. They released each other's hands, settling back amidst the intoxicating cold.

"Thinking of stuff like that almost makes me tear up! Almost, hahaha...I could never deserve something like that."

"Deserve what?"

He held his breath -- the world stood still, in solidarity.

"...Change."



"The ending is an important part of every story. I should be grateful I get to write my own."

Ultimately, I am a creature of
sight and sound.

These tracks I play reverberate through blistering autumns. I see the world in flakes of rose. Tasting fresh crimson and itching at the echoing rust that's etched into my skin.

I've found myself very comfortable with red.

I ravenously tear at it with wretched fingernails. Devoured by its influence, I dance.
Yet I find myself envious. Its absolute clarity is never enough.

You are not a dancer like I, but a painter. Yet, you dance. Your hands weave hue and illuminate all with a single piece of footwork.

Weightless and lucid, your work cauterizes my melting psyche. Cosmic reveries to



which I am its dreamer. These oils and their canvases seep stardust, entralling the rooms that house them with a celestial grasp. They vandalize the walls of my mind. The sheep I count are never without a starry night sky.

I wish I had your eyes. Two beautiful, ceaseless voids I cannot look away from. Oh to see what you can.

I finally understand the plight of lovecraftian protagonists. Your kindness dissolves the senses that domineer me -- leaving me with nothing but the sensation of touch. My fingers carress a bold and familiar material: velvet. Whether it is red or blue, I do not know. I'd love for it to be purple. I can be comfortable with purple.

I wish I were a painter, like you.



untitled love letter

To me? You're the Sun. Radiant -- a source of warmth. I am the Moon, reflecting your light in a vain attempt to mimic your being.

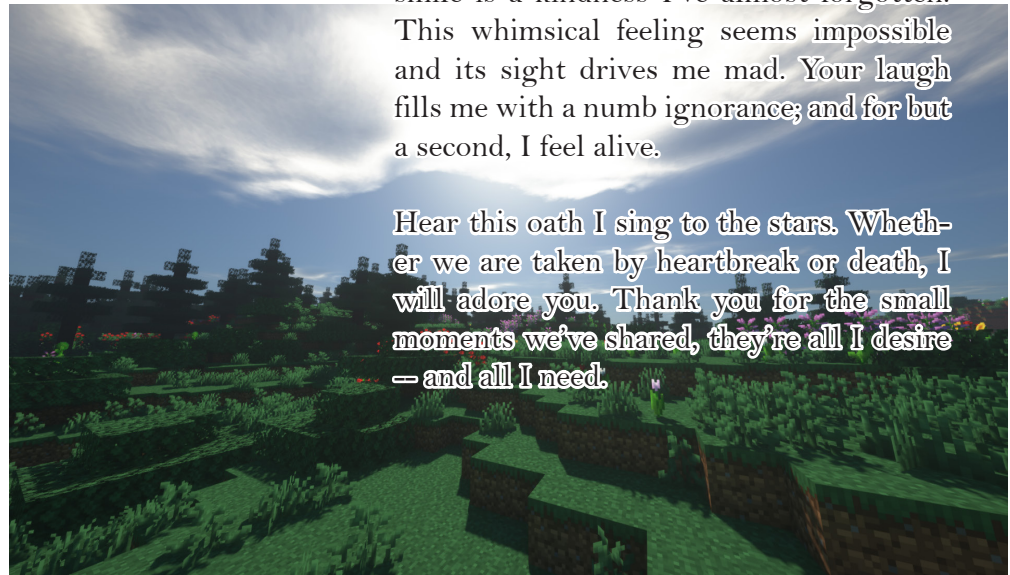
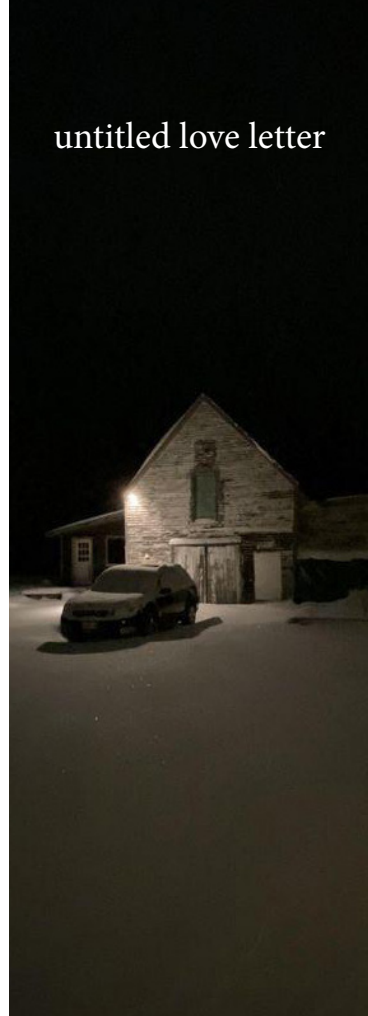
I feel the weigh of all that is when we speak. I want to make you laugh -- and be flooded by a deluge of calming, white wine. These wrinkles in our cheeks are a single cloud in the sea of boundless blues.

Maybe I'm delusional and only in love with the idea of you.

I want to see your flaws and sonder moments of weakness. I want to be hurt by a disagreement -- feel you when I touch my fingers to my delicate scars. See you with messy hair and argue about menial shit. Let's do all the boring things we're supposed to and meld together when its all finally over.

You permeate all my moments of serenity. All my moments of wrought sorrow. Your smile is a kindness I've almost forgotten. This whimsical feeling seems impossible and its sight drives me mad. Your laugh fills me with a numb ignorance; and for but a second, I feel alive.

Hear this oath I sing to the stars. Whether we are taken by heartbreak or death, I will adore you. Thank you for the small moments we've shared, they're all I desire -- and all I need.



Hey everyone. Thanks for bearing with me. I've never been a particularly thoughtful writer so hopefully you've made it out in one piece.

I wanted *Moonbeams and Sunflowers* to be a venue for stories to be told by people like me: Crybabies and samurai.

But I could never present such an idea without cutting out a chunk of myself first.

I hope you'll share your sorrows with me someday -- and we'll make it something beautiful.

But please, do not worry about me. Despite my persona, I will be alive next year and the year after that.

I hope to see you grow into the person you've always wanted to become. And maybe, I can be apart of your journey.

Until then, I love you. We'll talk again.

SHOJI

more content can be found at
SHOJI.NEOCITIES.ORG

