

Main [WIP]

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モダン怪談ロマンス Modern Kaidan Romance

[\[Main Site\]](#)

[Sagyo Junna](#) has been running from their problem for two years, but she's gradually catching up.

That problem being their ex-girlfriend they resurrected from the dead. It turns out resurrection isn't all it's cracked up to be, more of an eternal torture, existing half dead and half alive. One can see why [Isshiki Ibuki](#) is Not Happy.

Maybe the real problem is that Junna isn't able to exorcise Ibuki... or maybe it's that even if they could, they might not want to. That won't do as Ibuki has been using her deceased family's technique of creating shikigami from animal corpses to wreck havoc on Tokyo in the middle of the night with the mysterious "Itsumademo MIDNIGHT SESSION" variety show. Now that Junna's problem has become everyone ELSE'S problem, they might finally have to find a solution, and maybe even accept help from old friends to do it.

狐の嫁入り Fox Wedding (Spoilers for Modern Kaidan Romance)

(Spoilers for Modern Kaidan Romance)

In the three years since Junna swallowed two kami in a month and finally released their girlfriend to the afterlife, they've become a hot topic in the supernatural community. Yōkai are talking, kami are talking—even humans are talking! And that might be more attention than Junna wants or needs.

As for their personal life, a “good” friend has made an unusual request; Shigoro wants Junna to accompany him to meet Otsu Inari, the fox spirit who is technically his father, to invite her to his upcoming wedding.

幽霊は黄泉を夢見る **Ghosts Dream of Yomi**

(Spoilers for Modern Kaidan Romance and Fox Wedding)

Yuurei ha Yomi wo Yumemiru [Ghosts Dream of Yomi]

“I let her go, and now I can grieve and move on.”

Seven years after finally exorcizing their vengeful ghost girlfriend, Sagyo Junna has grieved properly and moved on.

Yeah, right. Although they initially mourned in a more normal way after the exorcism, once they went back to working as an exorcist, they unwittingly started down a new path—a path they aren’t quite ready to take without admitting to their lingering grief and making a decision to remain human or become something more.

In the meantime, a series of strange supernatural events start to connect: cursed dolls, nightmares, a stall in reincarnations... will this require a detective, an exorcist, a spirit medium, or a fledgling shinigami?

Does Junna even need help, or can they be all four?

輪廻ロマンチックの祭り **Reincarnation Romantacist’s Festival**

(Spoilers for Modern Kaidan Romance, Fox Wedding, and Ghosts Dream of Yomi)

The landscape of the earth and the spirit realm have shifted drastically over the past century. Sagyo Junna has seen a lot in their one hundred twenty-odd years as a kami and things are finally looking somewhat peaceful in Japan. Despite the chaos of a near

apocalypse, they've found one of the missing spirit weapons belonging to Nuan, the mysterious xian who has held Junna's interest since they met years ago. Nuan has returned to Japan, so Junna thinks it's the perfect time to present the spirit weapon and finally attempt to ask the demi-deity on a date.

Cast Directory [WIP]

*Note: Japanese names are read surname first, given name second and don't usually include middle names

**Note 2: honorific information at end of list

Modern Kaidan Romance - Main Cast List

[\[Main Site Cast List\]](#)

茶魚 潤 • SAGYO JUN



Name Meaning: Sagyo = “Tea Fish” Jun = “to be watered by, to benefit from”

Their surname is often mispronounced “Chagyo” or “Chau” due to the character for tea 茶 being most often read as “cha.”

Jun was chosen by their parents as a good match in meaning for Sagyo.

Nickname: 殉難, Junna = “Martyr”

Normally this would be pronounced “Junnan”

It's also very cringey! (Junna started using it in their second year of high school)

Gender: X-gender (AFAB but doesn't care about/ascribe to gender at all)(they will use the women's bath/hot spring without complaint)

Pronouns: they/them, uses the old/literary 我 “waré” or 我輩* “wagahai” in Japanese

DoB: November 11 1998 (Age 23)

Blood Type: A+

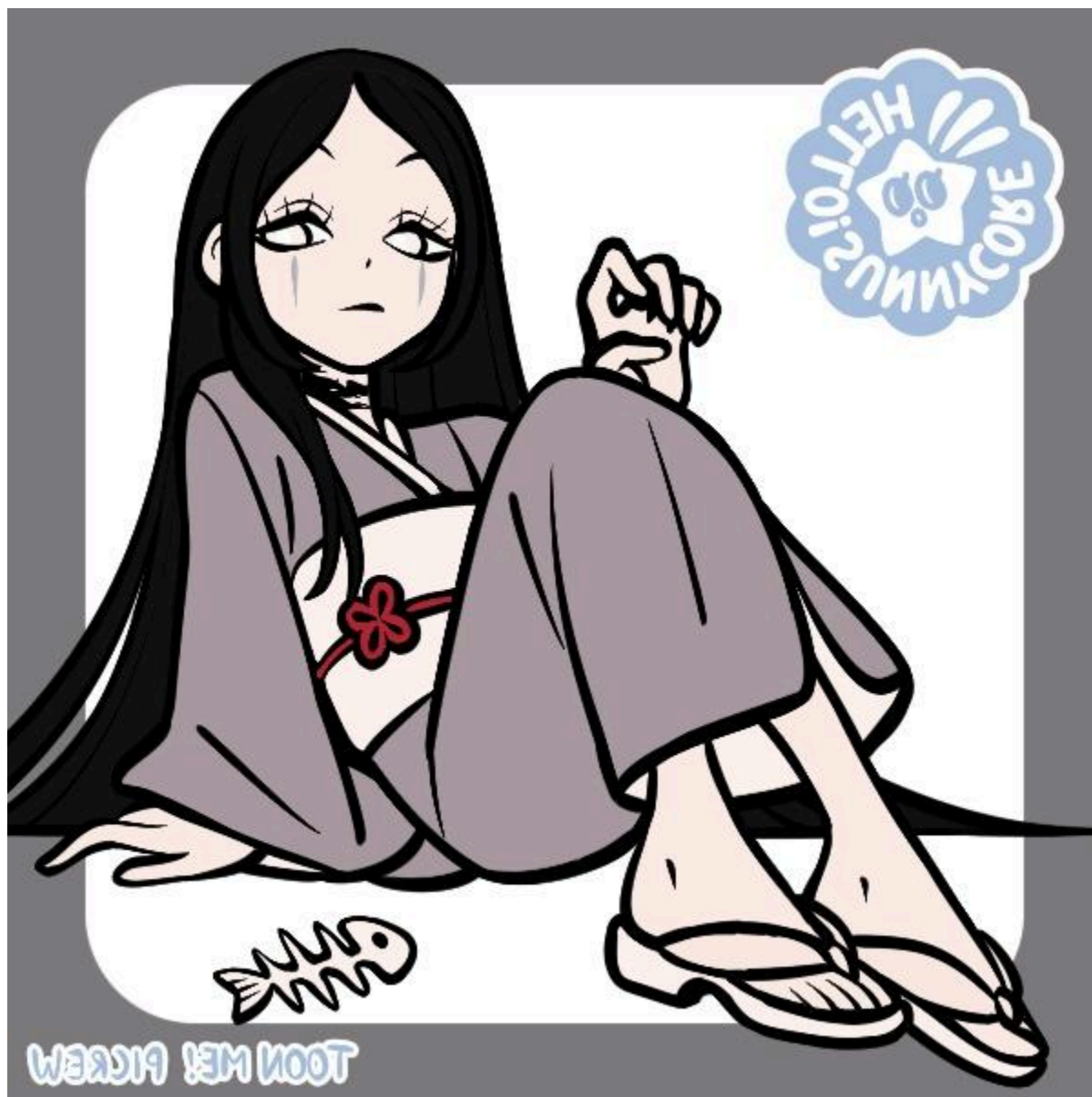
Affiliation: Free Agent (was a student at Doikawa Shrine, has associations with the Hachikuji Family at Benihime Inari Shrine and the main branch of the Isshiki Family of Gifu, as well as the Court of Izanami in Yomi-no-Kuni)

Occupation: Exorcist

Technique: ghost communication, spirit absorption

Fun Fact: 我輩 “wagahai” is used by one of Junna’s favorite authors, Soseki Natsume, in the novel “Wagahai wa Neko” (“I am a Cat”) and by Bowser of the Super Mario Franchise. It’s a little pretentious for Junna to speak this way, but their use of these pronouns might reflect their belief that they “carry” the spirits they absorb.

一色 祈雪・ISSHIKI IBUKI



Name Meaning: Isshiki = “One Color,” Ibuki = “Pray Snow”

Her given name was chosen for the alliteration and use of the character for snow 雪.

Ibuki can also be 檜 (Chamaecyparis pisifera) - A species of evergreen coniferous tree in the cypress family.

Gender: woman

Pronouns: she/her, 私 (generally uses watashi)

DoB: January 3 1998 (died June 30 2020)

Blood Type: A+ (when alive)

Affiliation: Isshiki Family (next Isshiki family head)

Occupation: Exorcist

Technique: animal corpse shikigami

八九寺 文月・HACHIKUJI FUMIZUKI

Name Meaning: “8-9 Temple” “Literary Month” (the old Japanese name for July)

Nana was born in July and originally her parents were thinking of using old months for their children's names

Nickname: Nana なな (7)

Everyone agreed she needed a cuter nickname

Gender: woman

Pronouns: she/her, 私/あたし (watashi/atashi)(transfemme since age 3, she sometimes uses the cuter ‘atashi’)

DoB: July 12 1997 (age 24)

Blood Type: O+

Affiliation: Benihime Inari Shrine

Occupation: Shrine Maiden, Exorcist

Technique: Fox Magic, some Pure Land Buddhist mantras

八九寺 四五六・HACHIKUJI SHIGORO

Name Meaning: “8-9 Temple” “4-5-6”

His parents wanted to continue the number trend since he ended up being born in April.

His given name is sometimes mistaken for a surname.

As the six is usually pronounced “roku,” his name lines up with the -kun honorific well (Shigoro-kun). This might have been a deciding factor in adding the “six.”

Gender: man

Pronouns: he/him, 俺/僕 (ore casually, boku when faking polite)

DoB: April 3 1999

Blood Type: O+

Affiliation: Free Agent (business partners with Takara Takuto)

Occupation: Exorcist

Technique: Ommyōdō, Fox Magic, Pure Land & Shingon Buddhism purification and exorcism techniques, Shūgendō

八九寺 一二三・HACHIKUJI HIFUMI

Name Meaning: “8-9 Temple” “1-2-3”

Her parents were intentionally trying to have a baby in January to finish off the name trend (they planned it after they decided they would like a third child). There are multiple possible pronunciations but they liked “Hifumi” best.

Gender: girl

Pronouns: she/her, sometimes speaks in third person, otherwise uses the basic 私 (watashi)

DoB: January 2010 (Age 12)

Blood Type: O+

Affiliation: Benihime Inari Shrine

Occupation: Junior High School Student

Technique: Ghost Perception

*The Hachikuji name is a reference to the character Hachikuji Mayoi of Nisioisin’s *Bakemonogatari* light novel series.

宝 巧士・TAKARA TAKUTO

Name Meaning: “treasure,” “skilled warrior/gentleman/samurai”

His given name sounds like the English word “tact” with a Japanese accent. It was chosen by his mother, who is fluent in English.

The kanji are usually read differently.

Gender: man

Pronouns: he/him, 俺 (uses ore in most situations—he’s rude)

DoB: December 28 1997 (age 24)

Blood Type: A+

Affiliation: Free Agent (business partners with Hachikuji Shigoro)

Occupation: Exorcist

Technique: Onmyōdō, Shingon Buddhism, Vajrayana Buddhism, Shūgendō

宝 悠仁・TAKARA HARUTO

Name Meaning: “treasure” “calm, far off” and “benevolence/compassion”

His given name sounds like the English word “halt” with a Japanese accent. It was chosen by his mother who is fluent in English.

The kanji are usually read differently.

Gender: man

Pronouns: He/him, 僕 (uses the polite ‘boku’ in most situations)

DoB: December 28 1997 (age 24)

Blood Type: A+

Affiliation: Benihime Inari Shrine (loosely)

Occupation: Mortician/Grief Counselor

Technique: Spirit Summoning (the spirit that remains in the physical body)

宝 丞・TAKARA TASUKU

Name Meaning: “treasure” “help coming”

His given name sounds like the English word “task” with a Japanese accent. His name was chosen by his mother, who is fluent in English.

Gender: man

Pronouns: He/him, 俺 (uses ore generally but reverts to the basic 私 in more formal situations)

DoB: December 28 1997 (age 24)

Blood Type: A+

Affiliation: Benihime Inari Shrine

Occupation: Shrine worker at Benihime Inari Shrine, Exorcist

Technique: Godai (five elements), Fox Magic

鍛冶屋敷 ケイ・KAJIYASHIKI KEI

Name Meaning: “Blacksmith’s Mansion” (it is a rare surname in Japan)

Kei is phonetic, but may have somehow originated from his birth name

Gender: man (trans man, appears in egg form during older flashbacks with Hachikuji-papa)

Pronouns: he/him, 僕 (uses the polite 'boku' in most situations)

DoB: May 9th 1975 (age 47)

Blood Type: O+

Affiliation: Hachikuji family, Benihime Inari Shrine

Occupation: Photographer, camera store clerk

Technique: Ghost Perception

土井川 東子 • DOIKAWA TOUKO

Name Meaning: “Earth Well River” “East Child”

Doikawa is a fairly common Japanese surname and comes from the nature of the deity in Doikawa Shrine.

Her parents chose “Touko” for the sound and with the “east” character representing Tokyo.

Gender: woman

Pronouns: she/her, 私 (exclusively uses watashi)

DoB: October 3rd 1992 (Age 30)

Blood Type: B+

Affiliation: Doikawa Shrine

Occupation: *Kannushi*, the head priest of Doikawa Shrine

Technique: Various Shinto techniques, a little Onmyōdō, Spirit Taming

紅姫 稲荷 • BENIHIME INARI

Name Meaning: “Red Princess” “Inari (fox god associated with harvest and other things)”

She is a fox spirit with a rank of minor kami.

Her family line serves Inari, protecting their own territory/patrons while also acting as messengers and agents for Inari.

Pronouns: She/her, 私 (uses “watakushi” instead of “watashi”)

DoB: Unknown (sometime shortly before the Meiji Era)

Blood Type: n/a

Affiliation: Behihime Inari-jinja (resident kami)

Occupation: resident deity and servant of Inari

Technique: Fox Magic (five tails)

暖 ・ NUĀN

Name Meaning: “warmth” (in temperament and temperature)

This is a *somewhat* more recent name they began using in roughly the past millennium.

Their original name meant “love” but the pronunciation and spelling are unknown (they had that name before the establishment of the Shang Dynasty and a writing system).

Gender: Agender (cultivating immortality tends to make gender meaningless and also androgynizes one’s body)

Pronouns: they/them, 私 (uses watashi in Japanese)

DoB: July 7th unknown year

Blood Type: O-

Affiliation: Free Agent

Occupation: Wandering Alchemist

Technique: Daoist Cultivation, Chinese Alchemy, pre-Shang Dynasty Shamanism

龍崎 ケンゴ ・ RYUUZAKI KENGO

Name Meaning: “Dragon Peninsula” Kengo is a phonetic name

His name was divined by Ibuki.

Lizard Shikigami (created with the remains of a human corpse and several lizard corpses)

Pronouns: he/him, 俺 (always uses ore)

Affiliation: Isumademo MIDNIGHT SESSION

Occupation: Host of Isumademo MIDNIGHT SESSION

七海 美波 • NANAMI MINAMI

Name Meaning: “seven seas” “beautiful wave”

Her name was divined by Ibuki.

Seagull Shikigami (created with the remains of a human corpse and several sea gull corpses)

Pronouns: she/her, あたし (always uses the girly atashi)

Affiliation: Itsumademo MIDNIGHT SESSION

Occupation: Host of Itsumademo MIDNIGHT SESSION, aspiring idol

Honorifics

-san

-kun

-chan

-sama

-sensei

How everyone refers to each other:

Junna →

- Junna refers to Ibuki, Nana, Shigoro, Hifumi, Takuto, Haruto, Tasuku, Kei, Benihime, and Nuãn by given name only
- They refer to Doikawa as “Sensei”

- They refer to Minami by given name and Ryuuzaki by surname, as is common with viewers of Itsumise including the rest of the cast
- Izanami is “Milady”
- Generally they are polite and use proper honorifics with strangers
- Calls parents “Okaasan” and “Otousan”

Ibuki →

- Junna:
- Nana:
- Shigoro
- Hifumi
- Kei
- Doikawa
- Takuto
- Haruto
- Tasuku
- Benihime
- Nuan
- Minami
- Ryuuzaki

Nana →

- Calls Junna “Junna,” trying to be supportive of their nickname
- Ibuki: she will usually say Ibuki-san
- Refers to her siblings by given name, Shigoro and Hifumi

- Also refers to the Takara brothers by their given name because they all have the same surname
- Kei
- Doikawa
- Benihime
- Nuǎn
- Minami & Ryuuzaki

Shigoro →

- Calls Junna “Jun”
- Ibuki:
- Nana is “Neesan” (“big sister”)
- Usually calls Hifumi by her given name, sometimes refers to her as “Hifumi-chan” or “Fumi-chan”
- Used to call Takuto just “Sempai” but now refers to him by given name like he does the other Takara triplets
- Kei
- Doikawa
- He calls Benihime “Benihime-chan,” which is actually pretty rude
- Jokingly refers to Nuǎn as Guānyīn or Kannon, sometimes by full title
- Minami & Ryuuzaki

Hifumi

- Junna is “Jun-san”
- Nana is “Neesan” (big sister), Shigoro is “Niisan” (big brother)
- Kei is “Ojisan (uncle)”

- Doikawa
- Haruto and Tasuku are “Haruto-niisan” and “Tasuku-niisan”
- But Takuto is Takuto-san
- Benihime
- Nuăn
- Minami & Ryuuzaki

Takuto →

- Refers to Junna by surname, no honorific (“Sagyo”)
- Doikawa, Kei, and Ibuki get the same treatment (Doikawa, Kajiyashiki, Isshiki)
- Because he rarely interacts with them, he doesn’t often mention Nana or Hifumi by name and will refer to them as “your sister(s)” (to Shigoro) or “Shigoro’s [older/younger] sister”
- Shigoro, however, he calls by given name
- He calls his younger brothers by their given names
- Benihime is Benihime
- Nuăn is “Kannon” (sarcastic)
- Minami & Ryuuzaki

Haruto

- Junna
- Ibuki:
- Nana:
- Shigoro
- Hifumi
- Kei

- Doikawa
- Takuto
- Tasuku
- Benihime
- Nuan
- Minami
- Ryuuzaki

Tasuku

- Junna:
- Ibuki:
- Nana:
- Shigoro
- Hifumi
- Kei
- Doikawa
- Takuto
- Haruto
- Benihime
- Nuan
- Minami
- Ryuuzaki

Kei

- Junna:
- Ibuki:
- Nana:

- Shigoro
- Hifumi
- Doikawa
- Takuto
- Haruto
- Tasuku
- Benihime
- Nuan
- Minami
- Ryuuzaki

Doikawa

- Junna:
- Ibuki:
- Nana:
- Shigoro
- Hifumi
- Kei
- Takuto
- Haruto
- Tasuku
- Benihime
- Nuan
- Minami
- Ryuuzaki

Benihime

- Junna:
- Ibuki:
- Nana:
- Shigoro
- Hifumi
- Kei
- Doikawa
- Takuto
- Haruto
- Tasuku
- Nuan
- Minami
- Ryuuzaki

Nuan

- Junna:
- Ibuki:
- Nana:
- Shigoro
- Hifumi
- Kei
- Doikawa
- Takuto
- Haruto
- Tasuku
- Benihime
- Minami

- Ryuuzaki

Ryuuzaki & Minami

- Junna:
- Ibuki is always referred to as “our beloved producer”
- Nana:
- Shigoro
- Hifumi
- Kei
- Doikawa
- Takuto
- Haruto
- Tasuku
- Benihime
- Nuan
- Ryuuzaki refers to Minami as “Minami-chan” and Minami refers to Ryuuzaki as “Ryuuzaki-san,” likely because he is older than her (or they are acting as if he is)

World Building/Lore [WIP]

[Glossary on Neocities \(Work in Progress\)](#)
[Article Links \(Google Sheets\)](#) (not organized)

(Did you guys notice these are dropdown menus, that's so cool)(there isn't much in the dropdown menus yet)

Japanese Culture (General)

Mythology/Religion (General)

Yokai

Kitsune

- ❖ Tamamo-no-Mae

Ghosts

Shinto

Kami

[神 Kami](#) = loosely, "god" or "spirit." Izanami, Benihime, and Doikawa-kamisama are all kami. While the word is translated as "god," these entities are not all powerful. Sometimes kami are said to be simply "awe-inspiring things," which is why mountains, ancient trees, rivers, and lakes are often seen as kami.

In Shinto, the basic principles of worship are that kami must be worshipped to be appeased, and should they not be appeased, they will grow angry and bring about disaster.

While often translated as "god" or "spirit," a kami is anything awe-inspiring enough to worship, usually in nature. There are said to be eight million kami in Japan (eight million being a dated way to say "too many to count"). In Modern Kaidan Romance, the line between kami and other entities is easily blurred.

Kami in the heavenly realm, like Amaterasu, are referred to as Heavenly Kami or the Heavenly Court. The number "8 million" was used historically as a way to say that there were an uncountable number of kami.

Watch out! *Shikigami* are familiars for supernatural practitioners (which can encompass anything from Takuto's paper familiars to Minami & Ryuuzaki) while *shinigami* are mid-tier kami that escort souls to the underworld.

Well-known Kami

Izanami
Izanagi
Inari
Amaterasu
Tsukiyomi
Susanoo
7 Lucky Gods

Shinto Shrines

Shrines: house holy objects which contain part of a kami's spirit.

Torii: the red gate (or gates) at the entrance to a shrine.

Washing hands and mouth: when entering a shrine, the custom is to wash your hands and rinse out your mouth in the water fountain/basin at the front.

Miko:

Buddhism

Temples

Branches of Buddhism

Mahayana Buddhism

Popular Buddhist Sects in Japan

Shingon Buddhism

Pure Land Buddhism

Vajrayana Buddhism

Bodhisattvas

Jigoku

King Enma

Sutras

Daoism/Taoism

The Dao

Xian

Onmyōdō

Onmyōji

Abe-no-Seimei

Ashiya Douman

Shuugendo

Occult

Five “elements” - China vs Japan:

Pop Culture

Minor Character Names

Hinasaki (c.9): the surname of the protagonist of *Fatal Frame* PS2 game, Hinasaki Miku (as well as her brother Mafuyu and her daughter Miu).

Sonozaki Akane (c.10): the name of Sonozaki Mion and Shion’s mother in *Higurashi no Naku Koro ni* (*When They Cry* in English), the visual novel by Ryuukishi07.

Hojo-san (C.12): Hojo is the surname of Hojo Ren, one of the protagonists of the Wii U game *Fatal Frame: Maiden of Black Water* (the fifth installment in the series). It is also the surname of Satoko, a character in Ryuukishi07’s *Higurashi no Naku Koro Ni*.

Kunagisa Uzuki (c.13): Kunagisa is the surname of the protagonist’s friend Kugasia Tomo in Nisioisin’s *Zaregoto* light novel series. Uzuki is the old Japanese name for the month of “April.”

Amakura (c.16): the surname of both the protagonist of the PS2 game *Fatal Frame II: Crimson Butterfly*, Amakura Mio, and her twin sister, Amakura Mayu.

Itou Haruka: Itou is the surname of protagonist Itou Hajime from Siriex's online novel *Significant Monsters*. Haruka was his cousin. Her given name comes from Momose Haruka, a character in the video game *Fatal Frame: Maiden of Black Water*.

Sakaki Keiichi: Sasaki is the surname of Hojo Ren's friend in *Fatal Frame: Maiden of Black Water*. He became a ghost after a failed ghost marriage to Kurosawa Ose. Keiichi is the given name of the protagonist of *Higurashi no Naku Koro ni*, Maebara Keiichi.

Locations

Tokyo & the 27 Special Wards

Taito City

Asakusa

Yanaka

Gifu Prefecture

Notes by Chapter

Notes by Chapter: Modern Kaidan Romance

Kaidan: traditional scary stories, often involving ghosts and folklore, that became popular in the Edo Period (calling it “Modern Ghost Story Romance” wouldn’t be far off, but that translation is a little broad)

Chapter One - May Disease

May Disease 五月病 (Gogatsu Byou): the malaise that sets in during the month of May. Because the new school and economic years begin in April in Japan, May is the month where the rush of the new experience begins to wear off and leaves one feeling depressed.

Golden Week: a week of holidays beginning at the end of April and running through the first week of May. If in the proper order, they might allow for a week off from school and work during that period. A common time for travel.

Growing Mushrooms:

TV Off Air: although this is becoming less common, in Japan some television stations cease broadcasting at a certain point in the night and begin broadcasting again in the morning.

Hour of the Ox 牛の時 (Ushi no Toki): the time between 1am and 3am. It is similar to the concept of “the Witching Hour” in the west. There is a specific ritual that if performed during this time, can curse an individual of the caster’s choice. It involves nailing straw dolls to a tree on shrine grounds.

Itsumademo MIDNIGHT SESSION - いつまでも MIDNIGHT SESSION: the “Itsumademo” roughly means “forever” or “indefinitely.” The title is ⅓ in Japanese and ⅔ in English to be quirky. Word salad.

Satou-san: he has one of THE most generic surnames in Japan, in the top ten most popular family names.

7-11 (Japanese convenience stores):

Shikigami 式神: spirits that act as familiars created by someone who practices the occult. They can take many different forms. Minami and Ryuuzaki were created from human and animal corpses (the Isshiki family technique is making shikigami out of animal corpses). Takuto’s shikigami are created from small pieces of paper cut into a snow-angel like shape. Junna’s are the ghosts of koi or goldfish. Nana and Tasuku can summon single-tailed fox spirits as temporary familiars.

Not to be confused with *shinigami*!

Chapter Two - Itsumademo MIDNIGHT SESSION

Shinigami 死神: usually translated as “death gods,” they are somewhat like grim reapers in the west. In Modern Kaidan Romance, they are agents of Izanami and King Enma who escort souls to the afterlife and occasionally act as messengers for their bosses.

Inunaki Village: Junna makes a joke about Inunaki’s surname as the village is a scary urban legend in Japan. There was a real Inunaki Village in the Fukuoka area, which was absorbed into another village with population shifts. The shinigami Inunaki is from that area.

Yomi-no-Kuni 黄泉の国: direct translation of this phrase is “land of the yellow spring.” Yomi is the place (or, one possible place) where the souls of the dead go in Shinto cosmology. The exact location is unknown and specific beliefs about this vary from area to area and sect by sect. Izanami presides over this area.

Izanami-no-Mikoto: one of the two kami that created the islands of Japan, alongside her husband, Izanagi.

Japan’s Creation Myth (and Izanami’s Death):

Sanzu River: “River of Three Crossings,” essentially the Buddhist version of the River Styx. Souls must cross the river to move on to the afterlife.

Taito City (Tokyo’s 27 Special Wards): Tokyo is actually divided into 27 smaller cities, usually referred to in English as “wards,” although the official names are usually “(name) City.” Taito City is on the eastern side of Tokyo.

Asakusa:

Kannon:

Sensoji: a famous temple in Asakusa dedicated to Kannon. A huge tourist spot.

Chapter Three - Late Night Horror Fight Labyrinth

“Itsumise”: for longer terms or titles, shortened forms similar to abbreviations are common. For example, smartphone, phonetically “sumaato fon” became “sumaho.” Itsumademo MIDNIGHT

SESSION takes the first character of each word to make Isumise (“se” is pronounced like “seh”). イツミセ in katakana.

Jiko Bukken: “accident property,” a property where an accident (usually a death) has occurred. If it’s an apartment, rent might be cheaper than normal. The previous resident in Junna’s apartment died, so the rent was low, but Junna exorcized the ghost anyways.

Kannushi: head of a Shinto shrine. This is Doikawa Touko’s title.

Heavy Emotion: the words are homonyms, both sounding like “omoi” but written with different characters. 思い is emotion, 重い is heavy.

Ofuda: talismans, usually paper with characters written on them. Junna and Nana use them often.

Kodoku (Gu): an occult practice where venomous and poisonous creatures are trapped together in a vessel until only one is left alive. This final creature is incredibly powerful, either as an ingredient for poison or curses, or as a spiritual entity. In Japan, it is known as kodoku, which comes from the Chinese ‘gu.’

Water/Stagnant Water: ghosts are said to linger near water.

Kuji and Juji: onmyōdō incantations using 9 words (kuji) or 10 words (juji). Can Also involve mudra (hand seals).

Heart Sutra: one of the most commonly copied and recited sutras in East Asian Buddhism. The short version ends with a mantra that is used to soothe restless spirits of the dead in the story. Originally in Sanskrit, the Japanese version is Shigoro uses is 羯諦羯諦、波羅羯諦、波羅僧羯諦、菩提薩婆訶 ([rōmaji](#): *Gyatei gyatei haragyatei harasōgyatei boji sowaka*). There are several English translations with the [most recent one we could find](#) being “*Arriving, arriving, arriving all the way, arriving all the way together: awakening Joy!*”

In a side story, Shigoro mentions that you need at least a small amount of spiritual power for chanting this to affect the supernatural, but that spiritual power is the only requirement, so while the average person can’t do it, almost any exorcist can regardless of whether they are Buddhist or not.

Salt: it is supposedly able to dispel evil and dangerous supernatural entities (like demons in the west, ghosts in the east).

Chapter Four - Sensei, don't be mad

Onryō: vengeful spirits, ghosts that harbor a powerful grudge. Three classic examples are Okiku, Oiwa, and Otsuyu of folktale fame. Modern examples are Yamamura Sadako (from Nakata Hideo's *Ring* movies) and Saeki Kayako (from Shimizu Takashi's *Ju-on* movies). Ibuki, heavily influenced by the ghosts before her, is an onryō. The Big Three historical onryō are Sugawara no Michizane, Taira no Madakado, and Emperor Sutoku.

Heavenly Kami:

Butsudan: a Buddhist altar. Although not as common as they once were, many Japanese homes have them as a place to pay respects to deceased family members. Junna's altar uses a mirror because the spirits they are making offerings to are inside them.

Chapter Five - Bōsōzoku: Crazy Night Riders

Bōsōzoku: subgenre of biker gangs in Japan.

Hoshino Cafe: chain cafe found in Japan. They have coffee blends named after Hikoboshi the Cowherd and Orihime the Weaving Princess, the (literal) starcrossed lovers of Tanabata (known as Qixi in China).

Drinking age in Japan: age 20, when one is considered legally an adult. Junna has not been in Tokyo since before their 19th birthday and thus has never had drinks with their friends there.

Edokko: an older term for someone born and raised in Edo, the old name of Tokyo. Specific qualities may vary, but as Junna's family has lived in Tokyo for many generations and they were born and raised in one of the special wards that used to be part of the shitamachi area, they could be considered an Edokko.

Shitamachi Area:

Chapter Six - The Bodhisattva of Mercy Touches Down

Title: a reference to the style of Bryan Lee O'Malley's *Scott Pilgrim* graphic novel volumes.

Omikuji:

Unlucky Four: an East Asian superstition because the number four is a homonym for "death." In Japanese, death is "shi" and one of the pronunciations of four is also "shi" (another common one is "yo" or "yon").

Kichi & Kyou:

Namu Amida Butsu: translates to “Homage to Amida Buddha” or “I take refuge in Amida Buddha.” This is used specifically by followers of Pure Land Buddhism like Hachikuji Mamoru, the Hachikuji siblings’ father. Shigoro is using it here to pretend to ask for salvation for Junna’s dying soul.

Pure Land Buddhism:

Bodhisattva: Buddhism term for someone who has reached Enlightenment and decides to stay in the earthly realm in order to guide others. The term in Japanese is ‘bosatsu.’ Amida Butsu, mentioned above, is also a bodhisattva.

Bodhisattva... of Mercy and Compassion: Guānyīn, Kannon, Kanzeon Bosatsu—all of these are names of a specific bodhisattva that appears in Buddhism across India, China, Japan.

Xian:

Chapter Seven - The Bodhisattva of Mercy Tears It Up

Title: a reference to the style of Bryan Lee O’Malley’s *Scott Pilgrim* graphic novel volumes.

Shaanxi Province: a province in the northwestern area of China. The capital is Xi’an, one of the oldest cities in China and the oldest of the four ancient capitals. Nuǎn is from this area.

Shang Dynasty: the first confirmed dynasty in Chinese history (it follows the Xia Dynasty, which does not have as much archaeological evidence of its existence). It lasted from around 1600-1046 BC/BCE, starting roughly 3600 years before present time.

Yayoi Period (periods in Japanese history): one of the earlier major historical periods in Japanese history, lasting from around 300 BCE to 300 AD, preceded by the Jomon Period and followed by the Kofun Period. Rice farming was introduced to Japan at this time. Most historical records of the time were kept by China.

Avalokiteśvara: the Sanskrit name for the bodhisattva Guanyin/Kannon. The supposed Kannon says they have met Avalokiteśvara, so they are definitely not the original bodhisattva, but they did inspire the figure Guanyin when Buddhism began to spread into China.

Chapter Eight - Spirit Medium who is Loved by Ghosts

Reibaishi: written with the kanji 霊媒師 (spirit, mediator, expert), Junna sometimes uses this to refer to themselves when they're taking on exorcism jobs. Can be translated as "spirit medium" or even "necromancer." The ghosts in the cemetery refer to Junna as this because of Junna's ability to converse with them.

Kannonji: a temple in the Yanaka neighborhood dedicated to Kannon.

“Nuǎn”: as this is a single character name, it comes across as a pseudonym. Most modern Chinese names are at least two or three characters. It is written with the character for “warmth,” both for temperature and temperament.

“Junna”: Junna's real given name is “Jun.” The kanji used for their self-given nickname means “martyr” and would probably be recognizable to Nuan without an explanation.

Chapter Nine - Second Drop

Title: a reference to the level titles in Fatal Frame: Maiden of Black Water, which are referred to as “drops.”

Haruto's Job:

Chapter Ten - We're Still The Best Dressed

Title: a line from LE SSERAFIM's song “Eve, Psyche, & the Bluebeard's Wife.”

Haruto's Ability:

Kuchisake Onna: a Japanese urban legend, the “slit-mouthed woman.” She prowls the streets and approaches unsuspecting passerbys to ask “am I pretty?” Answering with “no” will get you killed with the scissors she carries. Answering “yes” will prompt her to take off her mask, revealing her mouth cut from the corners of her lips to her ears and asking “how about now?” Answering “no” will once again get you killed. Answering “yes” will cause her to cut your mouth into a wide smile like hers. You can escape by telling her she is average-looking and running away while she is confused.

Chapter Eleven - Tea Fish in the Hot Bath

Onsen: Japanese hot springs.

Sento: public baths—bathing culture is big in Japan!

Chapter Twelve - The Arts of Refinement

Tansuya: store that sells used kimono. Junna shopped there often in high school.

Hyoshigi & Koto: traditional Japanese instruments. Hyoshigi are wood blocks smacked together that often signal the beginning of a play or sumo match. A koto is a large stringed instrument.

Traditional Arts of Refinement:

- Calligraphy:
- Flower Arrangement:
- Incense Appreciation:
- Tea Ceremony:

Hotel Gajoen Tokyo:

Shakuhachi & Taiko Drum: more traditional Japanese instruments. A shakuhachi is a flute. Taiko is a large drum. There is a Namco game where you can play a simulated version of it called *Taiko Drum Master*.

Taito/Daito, Otodo: it is unconscionable to make anyone write [this kanji](#) in any form.

Hanakotoba: language of flowers, the meaning certain flowers have in Japanese culture; they are not always the same as their western counterparts in floriography..

Junna's Flowers:

- White Lilies: purity/rebirth, funeral flowers
- Orange Lilies: hatred/revenge
- Red Spider Lilies/Lycoris: bloom on the Sanzu River and around Obon, they also have the meaning of "never meeting again" or "lost memory/abandonment"
- Black Lilies: love/curse

Shigoro's Flowers:

- Yellow Lillies: falsehood, cheerfulness
- Akane/Madder: "think of me," fawning
- Apricot blossoms: cowardly love, distrust, doubt
- Heliotropes: devotion, fascination, desire
- Tiger Lilies: wealth

Buddhist Graves:

Tea Ceremony:

Ghosts with feet: human ghosts are often depicted without feet in Japanese culture (which is true in many western cultures as well). Not a hard and fast rule.

Chapter Thirteen - Aquarium Date

Title: all works by Mori must include at least one aquarium date (and one train battle).

Three Great Onryō: Sugawara no Michizane, Emperor Sutoko, and Taira no Masakado, real historical figures who supposedly haunted Japan and caused great disasters until shrines were erected in their honor and they were properly worshipped.

Not to be confused with **Oiwa, Okiku, and Otsuyu:**

Cellular Phone vs Smartphone: cell phones are referred to as “keitai denwa” or “keitai” in Japanese. Smartphones are referred to by the portmanteau “sumaho,” leading Junna to believe Nuan is using an old device. Nuǎn’s phone is actually a newer type of flip phone referred to as “gara-kei,” the “gara” being short for “Galapagos Syndrome,” a term used when talking about popular technology that never made it off the Japanese archipelago.

Tokyo Skytree:

Sumida Aquarium:

Nuǎn has never used stamps for mail: Nuan began their latest hibernation period before stamps were widely in use in China. Without an actual address, it would have been difficult for them to send mail anyways.

Number and Month Naming Puns:

Old names for Japanese months involved:

- January = Mutsuki (Hifumi’s LINE ID)
- April = Uzuki (the name of Takuto’s girlfriend)
- July = Fumizuki (Nana’s actual given name)

Number puns for the Hachikuji siblings’ names:

- Hachikuji 八九寺 - 8-9-Temple
- Nana 七 - 7 (was born in July)
- Shigoro 四五六 - 4-5-6 (was born in April)
- Hifumi 一二三 - 1-2-3 (was born in January)

Fox Magic: *kitsune* (which refers to both foxes as an animal and fox spirits) are supposed to have the ability to shapeshift. While Nana’s ability to summon fox fire and call single-tailed kitsune as familiars are referred to as “fox magic,” the type Shigoro is using here is more typical of kitsune and far more powerful and versatile. As he mentions not being able to accurately adjust his height, he likely hasn’t perfected it.

Ikinari Deadly Love:

Chapter Fourteen - Ikinari Deadly Love

Harajuku:

Yoyogi Park:

Omotesandō:

Tsuchigumo: “earth spiders,” a type of giant spider youkai usually found in the wilderness.

Chapter Fifteen - Manor of Illusions

Title: the technique Manor of Illusions, is a reference to the location “Manor of Sleep” in Tecmo’s *Fatal Frame III: The Tormented* Playstation 2 game.

Chapter Sixteen - COUNTDOWN 9

Nice day fine day:

Ui-no-kami:

**[THE UPDATED STORY HAS REACHED THIS POINT, THE
FOLLOWING CHAPTER NOTES CONTAIN SPOILERS]**

[09/03/2025]

Chapter Seventeen - [Third] Drop

Title: another reference to the levels in Fatal Frame Maiden of Black Water, which are referred to as “drops.”

Chapter Eighteen - Sinking Feeling

Chapter Nineteen - Insomniac GOLDEN TIME

Title:

Chapter Twenty - Omae wa mou

Title: the name of a [song](#) mixed by deadman死人, it is a reference to a quote from Fist of the North Star, “Omae wa mou... shindeiru” or in English “You... are already dead.” Using this song as the title is a reference to the mental illness Junna has been suffering from, [Cotard’s Syndrome](#).

People who suffer this delusion believe they are dead, sometimes also believing they are in hell, that their bodies are rotting, or that they have no soul. It is an uncommon mental illness that seems to be related to depression (or is possibly a symptom of it—Junna is definitely suffering from depression). Junna, having never heard of Cotard’s Syndrome, would not have considered themselves to be suffering from it.

Chapter Twenty-one - Court TV

The Heavenly Court/Takamagahara: “court” referring to a royal court, not a legal one. Sorry for the confusion.

Amaterasu

Tsukuyomi

Susanoo

Inari

Fudoo Myoo

Chapter Twenty-two - Turnabout Heavenly Courtroom

Title: a reference to Capcom’s *Gyakuten Saiban/Turnabout Courtroom* game series, known as *Phoenix Wright* in the west.

Chapter Twenty-three - Starless

Title:

Amatsu-Mikaboshi a.k.a. Kagaseo:

Chapter Twenty-four - Crash the Milky Way

Chapter Twenty-five - Light of Sorrow

Title: the same as the title of a song by Japanese artist Fra-Froa.

Chapter Twenty-six - I won't attain buddhahood

Title: the same as the title of a song by KANKAN.

Fox Birthday

Chapter One - Sempai Doesn't Notice You... Much

Japanese School Year: begins early April and runs to March of the next year. Students begin first grade after their sixth birthday with the cutoff being April 1st. It seems Shigoro's parents may have pushed this because his birthday is April 3rd but he is in the same grade as Junna, who was born before the cutoff date.

Grade levels in Japanese schools: elementary school is first through sixth grade. Junior high school is seventh through ninth grade (referred to as junior high school first, second, and third year). High school is tenth through twelfth grade (referred to as high school first, second, and third year). High school is not mandatory in Japan.

Sempai/Kouhai: "upperclassman" and "underclassman" respectively, though you don't see people actually addressing someone directly as 'kouhai.' Sempai is used more often, by itself or after someone's name. Shigoro refers to Takuto as just 'Sempai' most of the time, but uses 'Takuto-sempai' to get his attention. These honorifics can also be used in a workplace setting.

Notice me, Sempai!: popular media trope where someone pines after an upperclassman who remains unaware of their feelings.

Riding double on a bike: you're not supposed to do that.

Vajrayana Buddhism:

Shingon Buddhism:

Sokushin Jōbutsu: “buddhaood in this very body,” an ideal in Shingon Buddhism that asserts one will obtain enlightenment in their lifetime, rather than after being reincarnated.

Chapter Two - Reluctantly Accepting a Binding Vow

Chapter Three - Job Thieves (as in, YOU'RE the job thieves, if that wasn't clear)

Chapter Four - It's an unlucky number, after all (for *them* this time)

Fox Wedding

Chapter One - Kamijiki Shrine

“**Kamijiki**” 神喰: the kanji loosely translates to “god/kami eater,” caused by a misunderstanding of Junna’s abilities and career.

Shinigami Love Apples: taken directly from the famous manga *Death Note* by Obata Takeshi. The shinigami in that series enjoy eating apples.

Chapter Two - The Difference Between Kami and Youkai

What IS the difference between kami and youkai?

Chapter Three - Am I your best friend?!

Chapter Four - Otsu Inari-papa

Otsu Inari did what now?

Chapter Five - Sensei, Should I?

Chapter Six - Dead Fish Eyes

Chapter Seven - Incantation

Chapter Eight - Tokyo Midnight Underground

Chapter Nine - Tokyo Midnight Overground

Chapter Ten - You're Gonna Carry That Weight

Chapter Eleven - You are invited to the Fox Wedding!

Ghosts Dream of Yomi

Chapter One - Hinamatsuri, the Doll Festival

Aguri:

???

(Not So)FAQ

This is where I keep cool lore information that doesn't have a place to go on-screen but I imagine if MKR was famous people would ask me about.

Character Info

Junna

Is Junna really the only one who can talk to ghosts?

Doikawa supposes Junna's abilities are an atavism—a trait that skips multiple generations in a family. There are recently deceased and living members of Junna's who can see ghosts with about the same level of supernatural capability as Kei. Junna possesses “once in a half millennia” abilities. Historically, anyone with their abilities probably would have been executed, no matter how benign a person.

-What was Junna doing between Ibuki's failed resurrection and their return to Tokyo?

-What the hell, why were they doing that?

Are Junna's parents dead or something?

No, they're alive and they live in Tokyo. Junna's relationship with them is good, but they are not close and only contact each other every few weeks. Junna's parents know about their supernatural powers and they were the ones who decided to find someone to help guide Junna because they had no idea what to do (it ended up being the Doikawa family).

Ibuki

Why is Ibuki so furious about being resurrected?

It was an incredibly painful process and her existence continues to be incredibly painful. The suffering she experiences is indescribable.

Also, Ibuki took her own life intentionally. Junna ignored her wishes.

Could her resurrection have succeeded under any circumstances?

No, it's impossible to reverse death.

What did Ibuki think about Junna's abilities?

Did Ibuki ever meet the rest of Junna's friends?

Yes, she was staying at Doikawa Shrine when she first visited Tokyo. She met Doikawa Touko, the Hachikuji siblings, and Kei.

Nuǎn

How old is Nuǎn really?

The Shang Dynasty was supposedly established around c1600... BCE. Nuǎn was born around the early Shang Dynasty, meaning they are probably somewhere between 3,300 and 3,600 years old. They know their exact date of birth but find the years hard to communicate with others and tend to just state the month and day they were born, which was July 7th by the modern solar calendar.

Is Nuǎn actually a bodhisattva?

In short, technically. Human mortals decide what most of those sorts of terms mean and rarely do they agree. Nuǎn has reached a form of enlightenment and at this point, could cultivate to a level where they leave the mortal realm, but they have chosen not to and remain, which is what a bodhisattva does. They do not consider themselves such because of the connotation that they are "holy."

Is Nuǎn actually a Daoist?

No (don't tell them this).

What does it mean for Nuǎn to be a "xiān"?

What exactly are Nuǎn's spiritual weapons?

They are five weapons created from the souls of Nuǎn's companions who sought to cultivate immortality in their youth. The six of them were lethally wounded in a battle against a monstrous being known as a Black Mountain Dragon. The other five realized Nuǎn was in the best shape of them and sacrificed their own souls and physical forms to become weapons Nuǎn could use to defeat the dragon. Nuǎn was successful, but their friends remained as weapons and nothing more, their souls broken in a state that could neither be revived nor could they pass on to any sort of afterlife.

Over the years, Nuǎn honed the weapons' shapes and abilities, carrying the five with them as they continued to pursue the dream of cultivating immortality and achieving enlightenment.

The weapons act as transitional objects; as long as Nuǎn has them, they can never stop grieving the past.

Where are the spiritual weapons and why are they missing?

During their last hibernation, a rockslide broke open the tomb Nuǎn was sleeping in and carried half their weapons and other possessions away while also burying them under the rubble. By the time Nuǎn climbed out, the spiritual weapons had been taken. They can sense the weapons and have obtained one of them prior to MKR. A second seems to have been smuggled to Japan. Nuǎn feels like they have betrayed their friends by losing those weapons.

Nuǎn hibernates?

Occasionally, they sleep for a long period of time, anywhere from ten to one hundred years. They developed this habit after losing their students and being betrayed by a trusted friend. It's a way for them to deal with their trauma.

Was Nuǎn involved with any historical events or figures?

They try to keep out of conflicts because they know how badly they could tip the scales; most events they were involved in took place in Ancient China. They have met many historical figures briefly, mostly in Asia. For them, the most notable is Queen Himiko of the kingdom of Yamatai, and they spent the longest time with her.

Nuǎn also met Qin Shi Huang (briefly)! Ingesting Mercury IS part of the process of cultivating to immortality, but only after you've reached the first stage, not while you are still mortal. They regret bringing it up.

How does Nuǎn travel?

Long ago, Nuǎn was granted special papers by an emperor that allowed them to travel freely through China and back into it should they leave. Every so often, they update their papers with the government, getting an official signature and written demand to allow Nuǎn to travel as they please as long as they do not cause any trouble. To this day, there is always at least one person in the government who knows about Nuǎn's existence and how to process their paperwork, even though they no longer know the full story.

In the end, Nuǎn is usually able to contact someone with proper clearance, turn some rocks into gold, and be on their way.

If necessary, they can stowaway, hitchhike, walk, swim, or travel just about any other way they like. They have the physical stamina to walk days without rest if they are so inclined, and they have swam large portions of open ocean before.

Where has Nuǎn traveled to?

Every continent at least once and the bottom of the ocean. At least 70% of their time was spent on the Asian continent.

Who is the friend Nuǎn talks about that's a cow... creature?

That would be Niu Feng, who is a mythical creature called a feng (written with different character than her given name). Her base form is a cow liver with two human eyes. When part of her is consumed, she gains the powers of the being that consumed her and she can regenerate indefinitely. She is almost as old as Nuǎn and has cultivated a cow form and a (mostly) human form. The two of them get separated often (the first time, a hungry tiger snatched Feng and mauled Nuǎn half to death), but Nuǎn is always excited when they find Feng again.

(Feng was created by Mori's partner, Siriex)

Nana

So Nana is trans but how did she transition?

Nana traded genders with a “female” fox spirit that is an acquaintance of Benihime's. Fox spirits can change their appearance and gender, but for those who have a strong concept of it, a “human gender” is more stable and rigid and they might prefer it.

Hypothetically, she could do it again if she met another fox spirit who wanted to trade, but Nana and her family have been 1000% sure she was a girl since she was three.

Who's paying Takuto and Shigoro and how much?

There are plenty of shrines and temples and other congregations that contain members who know about and practice supernatural arts, like Doikawa and Benihime Inari Shrine—actually, a lot of them are BIGGER! And most of them are led by an older crowd! And most of THEM are a little too comfortable in their position because Tokyo is a pretty peaceful area! Might as well leave the big exorcisms to the younger crowd.

Takuto and Shigoro also have yakuza connections.

They are making several thousand dollars' worth in yen every episode of Itsumise along with (more) money from their general exorcist jobs. Because of their business acumen, their income is such that they regularly solve arguments by betting 30-50k* yen on who's right and consider it pocket change.

*In [2022](#), specifically the late spring/summer, the exchange rate between USD and yen increased in the US's favor. Rounding it to \$1 = about 130 yen, 30,000-50,000 yen is about \$230-\$385.

What's everyone's living situation?

As of the start of the story, Junna lives alone in a 1DK apartment in Yanaka, Taito City

Nana lives on the property of Benihime Inari Shrine (with Benihime), which is in Asakusa, also in Taito City

Hifumi lives with Kei in a (rather large) 3LDK apartment in Kugayama, Suginami City (just west of Shinjuku)

Haruto and Tasuku have recently moved out from their parents' home and are roommates in an apartment in Koto City

Takuto and Shigoro live in a (ridiculously expensive) apartment in Shibuya (omg... they were roommates)

Doikawa lives on Doikawa Shrine grounds (or rather, has a house right behind the shrine); Nuan stays there during the story

Minami and Ryuuzaki "live" at the Itsumise studio, which is ?????? in the spirit realm

Family Situations

Hachikuji Family

What's up with the number puns?

Originally, the three kids would probably have been Fumizuki, Uzuki, and Mutsuki after the old months, but someone told Hirona "Fumizuki sounds kinda like an old person name" and "it's not

that cute.” Once they started using “Nana” it stuck. Otsu had a say in Shigoro’s name and suggested the number theme. By then it was a pattern. A fourth kid might have been “Rei” (for zero).

What happened to the Hachikuji parents?

Takara Family

What’s up with the English word puns?

Takara Ouka is fluent in English and thought they were cool. Her husband was not going to argue, she was the one carrying around three babies for almost a year! And he thought the names were fine.

Doikawa Family

Are Doikawa’s parents still alive?

Yes, her father has retired from his position as the head priest, though. Also, Doikawa does not have siblings, but she has many first cousins.

Isshiki Family

Setting Info

“Mythology Kitchen Sink” and “All Religions Are Real”

“The Masquerade”

Living World, Spirit World, Underworld

Supernatural Info