

and [Zap's Garupaverse](#)

Sayo spends the day with Rinko.

"Good afternoon, Shirokane-san," Sayo said, sitting down in the student council room.

"Good afternoon...Hikawa-san..."

"It's a nice day today, isn't it? I'm considering a walk after we finish our duties for the day."

"Yes...it certainly is...beautiful outside today..."

Arisa entered the room. "Good afternoon."

"Good afternoon, Ichigaya-san," Sayo said. "Please take a seat; we're about to begin." Arisa sat down. "Now then, our job today is to...strange, I don't seem to remember." Sayo examined the papers in her hand. "Ah...that's right."

"Is there something wrong, Sayo-senpai?"

"No, everything is in order. I don't fully understand this, though."

"Is it confusing?"

Sayo cleared her throat. "'Design a poster that will attract others to join Hanasakigawa. It matters not if you approach the objective through explaining our various clubs, courses, or anything else.' This sounds a little vague..."

"I thought...it was quite clear..." Rinko said. "We just need to...make it seem...fun...right?"

"That sounds like the best approach," Arisa said. "Since there're no restrictions...where should we start?"

"Let's create a rough outline of what we can fit on the poster. With these dimensions, I believe we will have room for three photos accompanied by a short block of text. Does that sound good?" Sayo asked.

"Yes...that sounds perfect..."

"I have no problems with that."

"Good. The directions suggested talking about our clubs and courses. I believe we should put these two as two of our topics."

"And the third?"

"...That might take some time."

"There...must be something...right?"

"There are a lot of topics to choose from. The student council is one. We can talk about the student body. We can talk about the teachers and staff. Our school is kept clean and orderly. However, I'm not exactly sure which of these would attract others to our school, if any..."

"I don't mean to be rude, but those sound like standard guidelines," Arisa pointed out."

"Precisely, Ichigaya-san. I don't see any of these as crucial details, as they should already be a given."

"When...is the deadline?" Rinko asked.

"Three days."

"That's...not a lot of time..."

"Indeed, I would have preferred at minimum a week's time. However, we can't do anything about it, so let's begin." The three of them each created a sketch of what they thought would make a good poster, leaving the third box blank. After an hour, they were all done. "I like...Ichigaya-san's..." Rinko said. "It's very...appealing...and draws you in..."

"Yes, you did a pleasant job, Ichigaya-san. Yours is mesmerizing as well, Shirokane-san. Good work," Sayo said. She frowned. "I believe mine...sounds more analytical than anything."

"That could still be a good thing," Arisa suggested. "Maybe there are some really academic students that want to join, and your poster may be what they want?"

"Perhaps...your word choice...could be more casual...but other than that...it looks nice..."

"Thank you, both of you, but I'm fine with crossing mine out. Now, it's only a matter of choosing between Shirokane-san's and Ichigaya-san's, yes?"

"Well, if we have a general idea of what the poster is going to look like," Arisa said, "shouldn't we try to figure out what the third topic will be?"

Sayo and Rinko sighed. "It...still needs some work."

"I see..."

"Alright, I think this will be enough for today," Sayo said. "We have a majority of our topics confirmed, and we only have two designs to choose from. We could settle for a half-and-half as well, for I think it could give the poster a nice, split look. Additionally, that's all we have to do for the next few days."

"Good work today!" Arisa said. "It's almost time for us to practice. Could I see myself out?"

"Of course."

"Thank you! Goodbye!" Arisa left the room.

"Good work...Hikawa-san..." Rinko said.

Sayo sighed. "It's not over."

"Huh...?"

"I'm frustrated that we couldn't think of a third topic."

"Hikawa-san?"

"If you don't mind..."

"Yes?"

Sayo walked up to Rinko and began whispering in her ear. "Could I...visit your house and discuss the poster with you?"

Rinko turned a pale shade of red. "...Eh?"

An hour later, the two were sitting across Rinko's dining table, discussing the project, if it was possible to consider sitting in silence a discussion. "...Any ideas, Shirokane-san?"

"None...at all...Hikawa-san..."

"This is getting ridiculous," Sayo said, standing up. "Shirokane-san. I apologize for wasting your time. I think it'll be better to call it a day and work on this tomorrow. Again, my sincerest apologies."

"It's okay...I enjoyed the...silence...a little..."

"Well then, I'll be off. Thank you again for having me over." Sayo walked towards the door and was stopped by a buzz from her phone. It was a text from Hina, in all caps: "ONEE-CHAN DON'T COME HOME THE HOUSE IS ON FIRE OR IT'S FLOODING OR SOMETHING ANYWAY WHEREVER YOU ARE STAY THERE DON'T COME HOME"

Sayo blinked and re-read the text three times. "...What?"

"What's wrong...Hikawa-san?"

"Nothing, I don't think..." She sent a reply: "You don't want me to come home?"

"Uh...no, please don't, thank you," Hina replied back. "Actually, where are you right now?"

"I'm visiting Shirokane-san's house. Why?"

"Oh, you're in Rinko-chan's company? It should be fine then. Yeah, don't come home, our house was demolished by a crane or sold to a rich family or something anyway yeah don't come home ok bye." Hina shut off her phone. "Good news, Aya-chan! I've got the house locked down!"

"Ah..." Aya said, having looked over Hina's shoulder and witnessing the entire conversation. "That's great..."

Sayo sighed. "Hina doesn't want me to come home...I'll go ask Marina-san if—"

"You could...stay here for a while...if you'd like..."

"Come again?"

"Only...if you want...I'm okay with...you staying here..."

"Are you sure? I don't want to bother you." Rinko nodded. "Alright, if you insist, I'm fine with spending a few hours here." Sayo set her bag down. "I won't be able to practice my guitar, though..."

"Ah...we could go...to CiRCLE..."

"It's...fine, I can practice later when I'm home...if it's still intact..."

"Huh?"

"Nothing. I'm going to finish my homework. Is this okay with you?"

"Yes...would you like me to...prepare some coffee?"

"Would you, actually? I would appreciate that a lot, thank you."

"Okay...I will be back..." Rinko walked into her kitchen. Sayo sat down and started to work. As Sayo was about to start on her third page, Rinko returned with a cup of coffee. "Here...you go..."

"Thank you." Sayo picked up the cup and drank from it. *It's a little sweeter than what I'm used to...*

"Is there...too much milk...in the coffee?"

"Is that what it is? I'll admit, it's a little sweet, but it's quite pleasant, actually."

"I'm glad..." Rinko walked away. "I'm going to...work in my room...please let me know...if you need...anything else..."

"I will, thank you." 90 minutes later, both parties were finished with their work. Sayo entered Rinko's room. "Shirokane-san, what do you usually do at this time?"

"Since there's no practice today...I would usually play the piano...for an hour...and then...play NFO..."

"I thought you played later at night?"

"Yes...but I sometimes...play multiple times...a day..."

"I see," Sayo said. She stopped and began to think.

"Is there...something wrong?"

"Do you mind if I use your television?"

"Not at all...do what you wish..."

"Thank you." Sayo walked out of Rinko's room and into the living room. She received another text from Hina: "How are you doing?"

"Everything is fine. Is the house still intact?"

"It got relocated to the mainland so yeah it's completely gone maybe it'll be back by the time you come back which has to be tomorrow at the earliest do not come back today okay bye again hope you're having fun." Sayo shook her head and turned on the television. "Is there anything I want to watch?" She turned it off and heard the faint noise of a piano. She walked back to Rinko's room and stood outside the door. When the current piece was finished, she walked into the room. "It sounded nice."

"Thank you..." Rinko paused. "Would you like to try?"

"...I..."

A minute later, Sayo was sitting on the bench with Rinko standing by her.

"Curve your fingers...and remember to relax..."

"This feels weird."

"Of course...if you've never tried...can you play a C Major scale?"

"..."

"These two black keys...are in between C, D, and E...and the three black keys...are between F, G, A, and B...B and C have no black key...nor do E and F..."

"Okay..."

"Start here, with your thumb...cross over and hit F...with your thumb again..."

Sayo played a C Major scale. "Nice work...try D Major...cross onto G..." Sayo played a D Major scale. "Simple...right?"

"At least...the scales are."

"Great...could you try playing...*La Campanella*...?"

"Huh? Uh..."

Rinko laughed. "I'm kidding...let's try *Twinkle Twinkle Little Star*..."

Five minutes later, Sayo was repeating the melody with her right hand over and over. "You're doing good, Hikawa-san...now try the first five measures of *Für Elise*..."

"I don't..."

"I'm not kidding..." Rinko sat down to Sayo's right. "Follow my movements...I will go slowly..."

Forty minutes later, Sayo lifted her hand from the piano. "Sorry, Shirokane-san...I don't think I can continue this, not for now."

Rinko smiled. "That's okay...I wanted to have a little fun...sorry for keeping you..."

"I don't mind. It was an interesting experience, and a little enjoyable as well."

"You did well...it's not as though you couldn't...do anything..." Rinko stood up. "Would you like to...visit a net café? We could...play NFO together..."

"Well, there's not much else I can do, so let's do it."

"Alright...although, are you going to...be in your uniform?"

"As crazy as it might sound, I don't have a set of spare clothes lying in my bag at all times. I could stop at my house and ask Hina..."

"I...have some spare clothes..."

"Are you sure?"

"Yes...wait one moment..." Rinko opened her closet and sifted through her clothes. Sayo looked over her shoulder. *Very similar...* "Here..." Rinko said, handing Sayo a set of clothes that looked exactly like the one Sayo remembered her wearing all the time. "I will leave the room...take your time..."

"These might be a little big on me..."

"Oh...those clothes are...a few years old..." Rinko said, walking out of the room.

Sayo sighed. "Let's give it a go..."

A minute later, Sayo walked out of the room. "How does it look?"

Cute... "It looks nice...Hikawa-san..."

"Thankfully, this outfit does align with what I would normally wear, so that's good," Sayo said.

"Yes..." Rinko said. "Now...let me change as well..."

A minute later, Rinko walked out of the room with an outfit completely alien to Sayo. "Are you ready...to leave?"

"I didn't expect you to own something else..."

Rinko smiled. "I wanted to see...how you looked in...my usual outfit..."

"Well, it's not a bad outfit, so I don't mind. Alright, let's leave."

"Are you sure...you still want to...wear that...?"

"It doesn't matter to me."

"Maybe we...should swap..."

"We're wasting time," Sayo said, walking towards the door."

"Wait a second...Hikawa-san!"

Half an hour later, the two were walking on the sidewalk. Rinko was back in her usual outfit, while Sayo was wearing a Garupa tee [Note: Refer to the latest chapters of Season 1 of the Main Story in the game] Rinko had picked out for her. "Did you plan to invite Udagawa-san?" Sayo asked.

"I didn't..."

"Why not?"

"...Sometimes it's nice...to have variety..."

Another half-hour later, the two were inside the net café. "It feels weird with just the two of us here," Sayo said. "Either it would usually be all of us, or—" Sayo paused.

"Or...?"

"Or just myself," Sayo said, clearing her throat. "Anyway, let's get started."

Two hours later, Sayo set her headphones down. "That was a fun session."

"Agreed...we got many quests done...and got a few rare drops..."

"Right. I'm excited to try this new shield. Apparently, a perfect block will return damage to the enemy."

Rinko smiled. "I'm glad...we got that...I'm close to...buying a new staff...that can halve...my cooldowns..."

"That sounds really strong."

"Yes...I've been farming gold...and materials...for three months...every day..."

"I wish you luck with the rest of the journey."

"Thank you...it should only be...two more weeks..." They both stood up and left the café.

45 minutes later, the two of them walked past Yukina and Lisa. "Good morning, you two!" Lisa said, waving. "Where are you two headed on this fine evening?"

"Out for a nice walk," Sayo said.

"After having left..."

"A café!" Sayo said. "The ice cream was good," she said, stacking broad truth over broad truth.

"Really? That sounds nice! Where is it? Yukina and I were planning to take a break, anyway."

Sayo froze. Rinko laughed and said, "We went to the net café."

Yukina frowned. "That sounds nice, but I assumed that you would be at home, practicing the guitar by now, Sayo."

"Normally...but it's on fire...or flooding...or something..." she said softly, having failed to cover up the truth about the net café.

"What?!" the other three said.

"Nothing...I'm sure the rich family will sell it back to us..."

"Huh?!"

"Maybe the crane owner will pay us enough to buy a new house..."

"Sayo," Lisa said. "Is everything okay?"

Sayo nodded. "Apologies, I'm only spouting nonsense...playing the piano was more difficult than I could've imagined..."

Lisa and Yukina looked at each other, confused. "Get it together," Yukina said.
"You've already made it this far with Rinko, yes? Don't quit now."

"I'm sorry?"

"If you've been saying all these things, you must've spent at least a few hours with her already. Why are you breaking down now?"

"I need to...practice the guitar..."

Yukina sighed. "We'll double our session tomorrow if it matters that much to you. Come on, Lisa." With a final wave from Lisa, the two walked away.

"Are you okay...Hikawa-san...?"

"Yes."

"I haven't bothered you...have I?"

"Not at all." Sayo looked up. The sky was a dim orange. "Thank you for having me in your company, Shirokane-san. I appreciate your hospitality."

"Of course, Hikawa-san...I had a lot of fun today..."

Sayo nodded. "I did as well. It was an interesting day, that's for sure, but it was very enjoyable." She sighed. "Sorry for acting odd back there, I guess I was a bit shocked when I realized how unusual it was for me to be leaving a net café at this hour."

"That's okay..."

"Ready to go back?" Rinko nodded, and they walked back to Rinko's house.

Sayo picked up her bag. "Thank you again, Shirokane-san. I'll make sure to return this shirt tomorrow."

Rinko nodded. "Actually..."

"What is it?"

"It's a nice evening...would you like to...walk together?"

Sayo smiled. "That would be nice."

An hour and a half later, the two of them walked up to Sayo's house. Sayo walked up the steps and knocked on the door. Two minutes later, Hina cracked open the door.

"Onee-chan? I thought I told you not to come home until tomorrow."

"I'm here now, so it doesn't matter. What are you doing in there?"

"Uh...I'm...video-calling someone?"

"All day? And I can't be home while you do that?"

"I thought you were still with Rinko-chan?"

"She's standing right there."

"Just spend the night with her! Goodbye!" Hina slammed the door shut and locked it.

"Hina? Hina!"

Hina slid the latch shut. "There we go!"

Aya walked out. "Hina-chan...why did you do that?"

Hina placed a finger to her lips. "She doesn't need to know."

"Hina!" Sayo knocked on the door, but nothing happened. She sighed and walked back. "Hikawa-san...what happened?"

"Hina really won't let me in until tomorrow..."

"Then...we can go back to my place..."

"I feel like I've bothered you enough today, though..."

"You haven't bothered me...once today...come on..." Rinko grabbed Sayo's arm and started to walk back to her house.

"Shirokane-san—" To her surprise, Rinko began to run. "Wait a second!"

An hour later, the two reached Rinko's house. Miraculously, Rinko had not stopped running. "I have a queen-sized bed..."

"I could sleep on the couch..."

Rinko frowned. "You didn't do anything wrong..."

"What?"

"Sorry, I got carried away...are you sure? It's uncomfortable...I've tried..."

"It would be best."

"If you're worried...I can separate the bed...with a body pillow... [Note: Not the kind with an anime character on it, but you can still use your imagination if you want] if you want..."

"Let's see," Sayo said, giving up. She walked into Rinko's bed. "I guess that'll work."

"Okay," Rinko said, closing the door. "It's unfortunate that...I don't actually...own any body pillows..." She slipped into her bed. "Good night...Hikawa-san..."

She's acting so casual about this. "Shirokane-san—"

"Remember not to...open the door...it's rude to...wake others up..."

"Shirokane-san..." Sayo sighed and went into Rinko's bed. *I guess this is fine...*

The next morning, Rinko shut off her alarm. 06:25. She looked to her side and saw a sticky note on the pillow: *I left at 5:00. Thank you for having me over. -Sayo*

Rinko sat up and smiled. "Yesterday was...a fun day..."

Arisa sat down in the student council room. "Good morning, Rinko-senpai."

"Good morning...Ichigaya-san..."

"Is Sayo-senpai not here?"

"Not yet..."

Sayo walked into the room. "Good morning."

"Good morning, Sayo-senpai."

"Good morning...Hikawa-san..."

Sayo sat down. "Alright, we need to come up with the third topic today." She reached into her bag. "And before I forget, here's your shirt, Shirokane-san. Thank you again for last night."

Rinko grabbed the shirt. "Thank you...you're welcome..."

Arisa watched the interaction in silence. *Hub?!*