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Her Love Boils Bathwater

By Ryôta Nakano

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"The owner vanished like steam.?"

"No hot baths for a while."

Still good for her.

This morning's temperature

is lower than yesterday

but higher than average around the country...

Eat or watch.

A light jacket should be sufficient.

The climate this week will remain the same.

Eat. You'll be late.

It tastes weird.

Really?

I told you the other day.

Then don't eat.

Which? Eat or don't eat?

Then eat.

No.

Don't go yet.

Don't make me be alone.

My stomach hurts.

My head also hurts.

Stop by at the meat shop before you come home.

Get 4 croquettes for dinner.

Hanky?

It smells like you.

Don't complain.

Now go on.

Azumi!

Wanna ride?

With your own mom? How embarrassing.

Sorry I embarrass you.

Good morning.

Good morning.

Wow. You studied hard.

I didn't do anything.

I feel so lazy. I can't go today.

But he said I have to.

Also integrated studies.

I forgot it at home.

You didn't do it.

I should have brought it anyway.

"Smile"

I guess it makes a difference

if I'd brought it.
That's good. Looks tasty.
Nice shadow.
Time's up. Put your things away.
Leave your drawings on the table.
Nice. It looks real.
Teach us how to draw.
She's good.
- I'll use yellow.
- Green.
Red too.
Is this too much?
- No.
- That's good.
This is way too much.
A darker blue.
Black. Like this?
On my skirt.
Hello. Welcome to Mommy Bread.
Mrs. Sachino, you have a call
from your daughter's school.
I'll do this.
Thank you.
"Nurse's Office"
She insists she did it herself.
Azumi....
There were 11 colors. I counted.
Which one's your favorite?
What's your favorite color?
Light blue.
Mine's red by far.
Red like passion.
Red?
It's so you.
Change. Let's go home.
What is she like at home?
She talks to me a lot.
With her father too?
Um...
Her father...
disappeared a year ago.
I see. I didn't know.
Sorry.
Go to school tomorrow as usual.

Okay, Azumi?
Wanna ride?
Okay.
Mom...
I'm here.
Good morning. For takeout?
I'm eating in.
All right. Anything to drink?
Orange juice, please
Futaba...Futaba!
Manager!
Futaba?!
Mrs. Sachino?
When did you notice the symptoms?
From about 3 months ago...
I sometimes feel dizzy.
And also sometimes...
my sense of taste is off.
You can't taste food?
Other than that, I'm totally fine.
It'll sting a bit.
First of all
let me warn you that
your condition is very serious.
Doctor, don't look so grim.
You have
terminal cancer in stage 4.
From the pancreas
it has already spread to
various parts of your body.
To the lungs, liver
and also the brain.
Mom, it's already past 8.
I didn't realize.
I'm so hungry I could die.
I'm gonna starve to death.
Hello, Mom? Are you listening?
I decided.
I'll go home top speed...
and make delicious curry for you.
I guess I can wait.
So don't rush. Be safe.
Okay.
"Investigation Report"

Judging from the laundry,
he's living with a young woman.
In the next town...
It was so easy for a private
investigator to find him.
It usually takes longer.
Some Pls are better than others.
Ouch.
Leftover stubble.
Thank you.
Sorry about that.
Ouch.
Stay quiet, Mayu.
There's a map inside.
Call me if you have any questions.
Sorry to make you wait.
You have chocolate on your cheeks.
And here?
And on your nose. Looks yummy.
Don't eat it.
No?
Your cheeks look yummy.
There you go.
Her mother?
Died giving birth to her.
She's in heaven.
It's far away so we can't go see her.
Right?
That's right.
I see.
She's watching over you from heaven.
Can she see me from heaven?
Sure, she can.
Have you ever been there?
No but...
I'd like to.
I wanna go too! To see Mommy.
Maim-
Let's go.
If I can assist you again...
I give discounts to repeat customers.
Excuse me.
I have another request.
Sure. Another one?

What is it?

"Kimie Sakamaki"

What does her letter say?

"How is everyone doing?"

"I'm sending you a delicious
spider crab again this year."

"April 25. Kimie Sakamaki"

She sends one every year on the same day.

Write her a thank you letter again.

Why me every year?

It's a family rule.

A rule you and Dad made.

Letters from children make the people
happier than letters from adults.

I'm not a child anymore.

I don't need them yet.

You need nice lingerie for that special moment.

You have a boyfriend?

No.

But maybe in the near future.

You don't have to wear them right away.

Save them until then. Okay?

End of our brassier meeting.

"Katase/Sachino"

Yes, coming.

Ouch!

Ow...

Oh my God! Blood!

You could've used the dull edge.

Sorry!

It's getting better.

Did you lose weight?

You look thinner.

And prettier.

You're an idiot.

"Curry roux (mild)"

You're making it difficult for me to say this.

Say what?

The reason I came here.

To punish me, right?

The opposite.

You see...

I only have a few months to live.

You have to cook the onions

until they're light brown.
I'll do it for you.
They're also too big.
I'm sorry. I don't understand.
Again, please.
Your head hurts?
No?
- Excuse me.
- Your head.
Excuse me.
I think
she lost her wallet and
wants to go to the police.
Wallet, huh? Policeman?
Okay, policeman.
- I'm home.
Whose birthday is it?
It doesn't have to be a birthday
to eat shabu-shabu.
But that's what we always do.
Is someone coming over?
The person you just thought of.
I'm home.
Azumi, this is...
She's nine.
Ayuko.
Be nice.
Don't worry. She's your sister.
Who wants both ponzu and sesame sauce?
Me.
When you eat shabu-shabu
I wonder why you feel like
saying "shabu shabu."
I just said it in my head.
I'm finished.
Azumi, wait. Azumi!
It was 11 years ago.
There was a woman named Sachiko.
She served drinks at this place
I sometimes went to.
Well, I slept with her.
Then last year
I ran into her at a different place.
She told me she had my kid.

I couldn't believe it.
It was just once.
But...You know...
She looked so troubled.
She was trembling a little.
So...
I said okay. I agreed.
She asked me to move in with her.
But she left us within a month.
I'm sorry.
I really feel bad for just
walking out on you and your mom.
It's not that I stopped loving you both but...
I couldn't hear any of your excuses.
We're reopening the bath house
the day after tomorrow.
Promise me one thing.
We all share the work, the four of us.
No work, no food.
Okay. Let's eat.
Let's eat.
Azumi, work. Move your hands.
"Sachino Bath House Reopening"
Ayuko...
Are you really Dad's daughter?
I don't know.
Mom suddenly told me he was my dad.
That man...
That man?
He's...
bad at writing and bad at math.
He can't help it.
He had to drop out of school
when his parents died.
Who cares.
Kazuhiro!
Hey, Aso
Where were you?
Pachinko parlors.
Gambling for a whole year?
Do you realize what you put them through?
Futaba looked for you every day
for half a month.
She became sick and thin.

I couldn't bear to watch her.
Kazuhiro!
We're reopening the bath house tomorrow.
Spread the word.
Thanks.
He has no care in the world.
I'm going-
Try sitting in the counter.
You look good there.
No thank you.
It's your spot.
See you.
Bye.
"Sachino Bath House"
Hello.
Good evening.
Good evening.
I'm glad you're open again.
Thank you for coming.
Here's your change.
- Thanks.
- Enjoy your bath.
I'm glad we're open again.
Yeah.
But...
It was so tough for Mom this past year.
It pisses me off that you don't seem to care.
Are you okay?
The tests show that
the cancer has spread to various organs.
It's too late for surgery
or radiation treatment.
Frankly, anticancer drugs
also won't do any good.
As I told your wife
you should focus on palliative care.
Did she get sick...
because of...
stress and a hard life?
There are various causes.
Not just one.
It's fine after the IV drip.
Let's go to another hospital.
Maybe a bigger hospital in Tokyo

might be able to...
I don't want to...
lose the meaning of my existence
just to prolong my life for a little while.
I...
still have things I have to do.
Let's go home.
OX, the initial line.
The general angle from the initial line
is measured when it's rotated
clockwise or counter-clockwise.
Counter-clockwise is positive...
Hey.
Change back into your uniform.
This isn't PE.
My uniform...
I lost it.
How's Azumi?
Should we buy her a new uniform?
Absolutely not.
Good morning.
Azumi, get up.
Get up. Time for breakfast.
Call the school and tell them I'm sick.
Please...
Get up. You're going to school.
- No uniform...
- Go in Your gym clothes.
No way.
If you don't go today, you'll never go.
Fine. I'll never go again.
- Get ready now.
- No.
No.
Why?
Azumi!
Mom, don't!
- Go to school!
- No!
Mom!
Don't run away.
Face them straight on.
Stand up for yourself or else...
- You don't understand.

- I do.
- You don't.
- I do.
You don't understand, Mom!
I...
don't have the courage.
I'm...
inferior to everyone else.
I'm not like you at all.
We're no different.
You and me.
Azumi went to school in her gym clothes.
She didn't eat breakfast. Take this to her.
- Milk?
- Please go.
- Please.
- Okay.
Miss Azumi Sachino.
As I'm sure you know, we don't have PE next.
Hi. You're home.
Hi.
Did she go?
Yes, she did.
Are you waiting for her?
Yes, I am.
Why?
Why?
Because I'm very worried.
I'm sure you know but
Sachino's uniform is missing
since PE yesterday.
I'm not suspecting any of you.
It may have been stolen by an outsider.
But if you know anything, tell me.
We're no different.
You and me.
About next month's school trip...
Yes, Sachino?
Hey, what are you doing?
Sachino, stop.
Hey.
My uniform...
Please give it back.
Sachino, please...

Put your gym clothes back on.
No.
This class...
isn't PE.
It's milk.
Are you okay?
Stay here until you feel better.
Hi.
Your uniform.
You did it.
I have some of your genes after all.
Only today, right?
That you saw her do it.
How are you feeling?
Fine.
I'm sorry, Ayuko.
I have a good feeling about this man.
When the time comes
I'll tell him about you.
I'll come get you before your next birthday.
One day
we'll live together in a big house.
Love, Mom.
Her things are gone.
I'll go look for her.
I can't find her anywhere.
She went to look for her mom.
When's her birthday?
It's...
May something.
It's today.
Car key. The key!
I'll go with you.
It's better if she's not there, right?
Why?
It'd mean her mom came.
She's here.
As punishment for skipping work
you have to wash the tubs
all by yourself tomorrow.
So let's go home.
Is it all out?
Let's get your panties off.
Right foot.

Now this side.
Now come.
You're heavy.
Get her bags.
All of them.
Ayuko was here.
It's ready.
Let's eat.
Ayuko, eat.
From now on...
I promise...
to work harder.
I'll work much harder.
So...
Please...
Only if it's okay with you...
I'd like to...
stay here.
But...
But Still...
Is it okay?
if I...
still love my mom?
Silly girl.
Of course.
Come on.
Ayuko, eat.
Shabu...Shabu...
Go on.
Shabu...Shabu...
Shabu-shabu for breakfast. How nice.
It's a family rule.
Eat a lot, Ayuko.
If there's anything you want,
anything you want to do
let me know.
I want to go to Egypt.
You promised to show me
the pyramids on our honeymoon.
That was years ago.
You're always like that.
You make empty promises and then you betray me.
How about your promise to renovate this place?
To build a bookshelf in Azumi's room?

A year ago
you promised to be home in
an hour but you never did.
Keep this one last promise for me.
I've never been outside Japan.
What a waste of my life.
But I couldn't possibly...
I'm just joking.
When I'm dead, I'll forgive you for everything.
Please take care of things after I'm gone.
Do you want to go on
an overnight trip tomorrow?
Yes!
Oh, but the bath house...
Dad said he'll handle it.
Then let's go. Let's definitely go.
You too, right?
What's up?
We're going on a trip.
We're gonna go eat spider crab.
Good.
Dinner's ready.
Where do you wanna sit?
Thanks for renting a car.
I'll drive slowly and rest along the way.
I'll tell them everything.
It'll be fine. They'll understand.
How's your left hand?
We're leaving now.
We're off.
We're off.
What should we eat?
Noodles.
Japanese noodles?
Ice cream.
For dessert, okay?
- Who's this?
- I don't know.
Yes?
I love red cars.
If you don't mind...
Will you?
Will I what?
I love riding on red cars. Anywhere is fine.

Sorry.

Go find another red car.

Wait, wait.

This is the only red car here.

We're about to eat.

I'll be your guide.

After 5 hours here, I'm an expert.

Five hours?

What do you think?

Okay?

Okay then.

Really?

Wow. Thanks.

I'm Takumi Mukai. 24 years old.

Nice to meet you.

Hitchhiking from Hokkaido?

You're my 39th ride.

Isn't it scary getting a ride from strangers?

No because I'm a guy.

But I did have one scary experience.

There was

a woman truck driver

who was around 50 years old.

She suddenly drove off the main road
and entered a motel before I knew it.

I didn't know what to do

but I was getting a free ride

and she was insistent

and she wasn't unattractive.

So we went into a room

took off our shoes and socks

but suddenly I got scared...

and ran away barefooted.

Oh!

Then I found these outside.

They don't match.

Same color.

They sort of match.

That is scary.

We're staying in Hakone tonight

and tomorrow we're gonna go eat spider crab.

Then we're going to an aquarium.

Cool.

Do you know spider crab?

Spider crab...That big one?

Yes. The world's biggest shellfish.

They're rare and live in the deep seas and are called living fossils.

I gave you all that information.

It's a good shot.

Where's Takumi?

Smoking.

Question.

What car color do you like?

It depends on the situation.

- Where are you from?

- Hokkaido.

You're lying. You have no accent.

You see through everything.

You're right. Never even been to Hokkaido.

You're on a journey of lies.

Why?

- Shall I get off?

- Your family?

Family?

My current mother is my third mom.

I've never met my real mom.

I have 2 half-brothers.

Dad owns a construction company and is very rich.

I see.

Sounds phony, huh?

Where are you headed on this journey?

I haven't decided.

Once I set a goal, I'll have to start heading there.

So how long is your journey going to continue?

Who knows.

Probably until I get bored.

I have time to waste.

I picked up a real loser.

That's harsh.

It makes me sick sitting here while you waste time.

I am a loser.

Thanks for being honest.

Bathroom!

- Watch your step.

- Okay.
I'll say goodbye now.
Where are you going?
I don't know.
Hey.
You're going to go to the
northernmost region of Japan.
That's your goal starting now.
My goal?
You're from Hokkaido, right?
You should at least go there once.
Then...
after I reach my goal...
may I go visit you?
Sure.
But don't take too long.
Okay.
I envy you two for being born from her.
Be good to your mother.
Are you leaving us?
There's someplace I have to go.
Bye, Takumi.
- Off you go.
- See you.
- Bye, Takumi!
- Bye!
Mom?
You okay?
Just coughing. It'll stop soon.
Shall I rub your back?
I'm okay. Go to bed.
Go...Please.
I smell the ocean.
Azumi, is that...
It's huge.
Mom, Mount Fuji.
It's so big.
This.
Wow.
Like this? So big.
We'll take one.
What?
Okay.
Wow! So big!

Let's eat.
Good?
That was good.
Still not feeling well?
I'm fine. I just have no appetite.
I'll go pay the check so wait outside.
We'll be watching Mount Fuji.
Let's go.
Watch out for the cars.
Ayuko, we'll trade seats later.
Aren't we going?
That woman in the restaurant is Ms. Sakamaki.
You should have told me.
Azumi, listen.
Your dad used to be married to Kimie Sakamaki.
You're kidding.
I'm his second wife.
I was waiting for the right time to tell you.
When were they married?
They were married...
15 years ago.
What are you saying? I'm 16.
No...You're lying.
- You are, right?
- I'm not.
I don't believe it. It's not true.
It is true, Azumi.
Why are you being so mean?
Because I...
didn't give birth to you.
She met your dad
when she was 18 and had you when she was 19.
But...
Kimie...
couldn't hear...
you crying...
couldn't hear your feelings.
For a 19-year-old mother?
it was unbearable
So she left.
15 years ago
on April 25.
Azumi.
You're going to go introduce

yourself to Ms. Sakamaki.
No.
Get out of the car.
No.
You have to go.
No!
Azumi!
- Azumi!
- I don't want to.
Azumi!
Don't run away. You can do it.
I know you can.
I can't...I can't do it.
Yes, you can.
You can do it. Because you're...
my daughter, aren't you?
I'll pick you up later.
How is everyone doing?
..every year on the same day.
Write her a thank you letter again.
Why me every year?
It's a family rule.
A rule you and Dad made.
...make the people happier...
April 25. Kimie Sakamaki
"Are you Azumi?"
"Hello."
"My name is
"Azumi Sachino."
"Why do you know sign language?"
"My mother
"said it'll be useful for me one day
"and made me learn it.
She's pretty, isn't she?
Much younger than me too.
And healthy.
Ayuko.
Will you go get Azumi?
I'm tired.
Mom? Mom!
Mom!
I promise.
Mommy will come back and get you.
I'll be back for you.

Sorry.
Futaba.
Mom is...
You did good.
The breeze feels nice.
Yeah. The birds are singing.
It's so bright.
How are things with Kimie?
We text every day.
She's coming to visit next week.
Okay.
Ayuko, your shoes are worn out.
They're totally fine. Real comfortable.
Recently, I've been having
the same dream every night.
It's about my mother.
She comes and gets me.
Sol realized something.
My mother
is no longer in this world.
She's going to come and get me when I die.
That's why
I won't be alone even when I die.
Ayuko.
Don't cry.
Promise me.
Starting today, you won't let
Mom see you looking sad.
I promise.
Hey.
How was she?
Same as yesterday.
What's that like?
We took a walk again.
Is there anything she wants?
Why don't you go ask her yourself?
Ayuko, work the counter first.
Good evening.
Thank you.
From Kimie.
"I'm arriving at 15:00 on Monday."
"It's been a while so I'm nervous."
It's from Mom.
"Buy new shoes for Ayuko."

"And help your Dad."
Always thinking about others.
Want some water?
No thanks.
You should go now.
Back to the bath house.
Ayuko.
I'm only saying this because he's nagging me.
Dad wants to know if there's anything you want.
And...
This.
Give him this message.
Hi, girls. What did she say?
"To think I'm leaving my family
with your small-scaled dad"
"I'm so worried, I can't die in peace."
Her words.
Azumi, look this way.
Did you do your hair by yourself?
I can do it myself now.
Great. It looks really nice.
Mrs. Sachino!
Mayu!
Long time no see.
I went to the bath house
and was told you were here.
I don't know what to say.
Thanks for coming all the way out here.
A private investigator and his assistant, Mayu.
I picked this out for you. A red flower.
She insisted on the color red for you.
Thank you. I love red.
I came here to
give you my report.
I found your mother.
Miyako Mukoda, age 64.
Maiden name, Asakura.
Same as yours, Mom.
She married a Kokichi Mukoda when she was 32.
She currently lives with him
and their daughter and her family
in Setagaya ward in Tokyo...
I want to see her.
Mom...

Can we go see her right now?
The house on the corner.
I'll go first and explain the situation.
Thank you for doing this.
Okay, here I go.
See you.
Azumi...
Do I look normal?
Wm,
Good.
I'll get the wheelchair.
No.
No.
I don't want her to worry.
Maim-
I talked to your mother but...
She denied having a daughter like you.
What? That's crazy.
Her real daughter is here to see her.
I see.
I understand.
Mom.
I'm sorry.
From a distance...
One glance.
Just one glance.
Mom...
Oh no! Get on my back!
Get in the car! Now!
You're back.
Hurry!
Going again today?
You have train fare?
Yeah.
She's not doing well these days, is she?
No.
I'm going-
Mrs. Sachino, hang in there.
I'm administering the painkiller.
The pain will go away soon.
"Closed on Mondays
Will she be here soon?
I hope she doesn't get lost.
Why would she? She used to live here.

Oh yeah.

Where's Ayuko?

Doing something at a friend's house.

There's something I want you to...

I'll wait outside.

- A favor!

- Later.

I got lost.

Takumi?

It's you.

After 75 more rides,

I'm back from the northernmost region.

A souvenir.

Thank you.

Wow.

From a nice old lady there.

There's enough for a lot of curry.

You're right.

I see.

She's amazing.

Isn't she?

Ayuko.

Yo.

Looks delicious.

Go get Dad.

Dinner!

I said go get him.

Don't worry. He heard me.

You'll love this.

- What is it?

- Bonito.

She hopes you like her cooking.

It's delicious even before I taste it.

She says thanks.

Hurry. Let's eat.

I have a favor to ask you guys.

I want you to help me with something tonight.

I know it's stupid but...

It's the only thing I can think of.

Please. I need your help.

Just tonight.

Please.

I'm begging you.

Dad...

What is it?

"From Azumi

"This is Dad doing his best, lol."

"Look outside. You can take your time."

I'm the Sphinx!

Mom!

Yes.

Futaba!

Takumi?

I finally reached my goal!

I'm going to stay at the bath house
for a while and help out!

That's great.

I'm helping to fill in the gap!

Futaba!

I'll keep supporting them like I am right now.

You can count on me!

So rest assured.

Rest assured and...

I can't anymore...

Dad, hey!

I don't want to die.

I want to live.

So-so.

You're doing fine without me.

No, no.

I've only been here for 2 months.

You have incredible talent.

I can goof off all day.

I'll tell on you.

I'm just kidding.

What are you doing?

Dinner's ready.

Okay.

Hello.

Go eat first.

Okay.

What's for dinner?

The Sachino family curry.

Yum.

It's only so-so.

What happened?

I burned it.

Kimie will be here day after tomorrow.

She's staying for 3 days.
Dad and Takumi get along well.
They went out drinking together last night.
Ayuko goes out to
play with her friends every day
but she comes home at 5
and helps the bath house.
I'm...
The same as always.
I'll be back tomorrow.
Mom.
I promise.
I promise you'll never be alone.
So don't worry.
Thanks.
Thank you.
Everything's okay now.
"Funeral for the late Futaba Sachino
My deepest condolences.
The family would like some privacy?
To say their last farewell to the deceased.
Everyone's wearing black.
Listen, Mayu.
We have funerals like this when people die.
When Mommy died
we also had a funeral and said goodbye to her.
So Mayu...
We'll never see Mrs. Sachino again.
When someone dies
we never see them again.
That's why...
you'll never see Mommy again.
Maim-
For lying to you.
Finally, I was able to tell you the truth.
How nice. A funeral with a view of Mount Fuji.
It's so Mom.
All right. Let's get started.
This is crazy, isn't it?
Yes, it's crazy.
It's not right, is it?
No.
It's not right.
I'm sorry to get you involved

in something like this.

Don't be. It's no problem at all.

She was so special.

Futaba?

Yes.

She made people feel like
they'd do anything for her.

It's probably because
she made people feel like
she's doing much more for them.

I'm sure that's how everybody feels.

So warm, big sister.

Yeah, real warm.

HER LOVE BOILS BATHWATER