

Lost Identity

Is there a hope?

Von SusyCute

Kapitel 3: Lost memories

They stood in front of the big tree, where everything had begun. Orlando kept Sidi on the leash, but Ai let her dog run free. Goldy was sitting in front of her, looking watchfully at her mistress. The young woman bent down and talked with her dog:

"Goldy, we went here together, I suppose. But where did we come from? Where do we live? Where is our home? Show me, where our home is, Goldy."

The Golden Retriever looked at her, then slowly stood up and went in direction of the centre of the town. She stopped, turned around and waited for Ai to follow. The young woman smiled to Orlando and they followed the Golden Retriever. Sidi watched Goldy and was curious, but he went next to Orlando without trying to run.

They went along some streets and some people wondered about the dog, running in front without being kept at a leash. After some time Goldy went into a smaller street and finally stopped in front of a big house, which had a lot of flats and wasn't very far away from Orlando's house.

"Oh my", Ai said. "Where should I know which one mine is?"

"Look at the nameplates", Orlando suggested. "Maybe you can remember your name..."

Ai nodded, stepped to the door and looked at the names. At this moment an elderly woman left the house, held out the door and greeted her. Ai greeted back, although she had no idea who the woman was. Probably a neighbour.

The young woman stepped into the house, together with her dog. After Orlando and Sidi had followed them, she closed the door. Being at a loss she stood in the hallway, until Goldy climbed the stairs, turned around and barked.

"I am coming", Ai said and followed her dog, who showed them the way.

When they were at the second floor, Goldy stopped in front of a door and sat down, looking at Ai. The young woman slowly went to her dog, touched her and looked at the nameplate.

"Aiko Hirota", she read aloud, and Orlando said:

"Well, >Ai< was a good guess."

The young woman nodded, and lifted the shoe screaper. Beyond it was a key. She smiled, took the key and placed the shoe screaper back at the right place again. Then she opened the door with a beating heart. It was a big flat, and Goldy ran inside and disappeared into one room. Ai looked around and then remembered Orlando and his dog. They were well-behaved and were still waiting outside.

"Oh, come in, please, you don't have to wait outside!" she told them, and the young

man smiled and entered the flat, being followed by his dog.

Ai went into the living room and offered them a seat. Orlando sat down at the couch, and asked:

"Do you mind Sidi, sitting at the couch? If not, I will tell him not to..."

"Oh, that's okay, no problem.", she interrupted him, looking around.

She went into the kitchen and saw Goldy, who was drinking water out of a bowl, standing at the ground.

"I would gladly offer you something to drink", she said, looking into the fridge, "but I guess that's not a good idea, I've been too long away and don't think that the food is still good..."

"Don't go to any trouble", Orlando answered. "We're okay."

He patted Sidi, who was sitting next to him at the couch, as he was used to.

Ai just nodded, and changed the water of the bowl, her dog was drinking of. Then she went to the other rooms in order to remember something. At the bathroom she found a silver chain with another Japanese sign hanging at it.

"Look", she said to Orlando, coming into the living room again. "That's the Kanji-sign of >ko<, which means >luck<." "So you have both syllables of your name as a pendant, that's cool!" Orlando said, looking at both signs.

"Yes, it's funny", Ai said. "But... I still don't remember everything..."

Thoughtfully she went to the corridor, and Orlando followed her. He wanted to help her, but didn't know, how. He only knew, that they were very near. He looked at the pinboard and said:

"Maybe you have to look at some photos, read some letters or something?"

Ai, being very sad, shook her head.

"No... that doesn't help, I tried it..."

Orlando looked at her and just wanted to say something, when the young woman shouted:

"Wait!"

She looked at the little table, standing in front of a big mirror and the only thing, lying there, was a bunch of keys. Ai took the keys, looked at it, and her eyes started shining.

"The keys were the missing part!" she said. "I... Yes, I can remember everything!!!"

She was so happy, that she flung her arms around Orlando's neck and hugged him and he returned it. After a while she let him go and told him:

"The keys! I remember going for a short walk with Goldy at the evening, but I forgot to take the keys with me. Of course I had the second key lying under the shoe screaper, but that was only the key to my flat, I also needed the other keys in order to get into the house. So when I realized, that I forgot my keys at home, I already was some miles outside. Well, I let Goldy run free, because normally she is listening to every word I am saying, and that's why I was holding her leash in my hand. But I needed the keys, so I called her back, but she suddenly ran away. She had never done so, I guess she was afraid of the sudden lightening and thunder. The weather got really bad and dark! Shortly after the first lightening it started raining, and I could see Goldy running towards the big tree, you know, and I ran after my dog into this huge tree. But it was very dark in there, and I lost the orientation, so my head bumped into the trunk of the tree. That was the last thing I realized. And when I woke up, I saw your face..."

She smiled and was so happy remembering everything again. She continued, looking at Sidi:

"And Goldy must have ran away very far, so that she couldn't find me anymore. And

because of the rain she couldn't smell me, either. I guess she found the way back home, but there was nobody to open the door, and I wasn't there, either. So she hung around in order to find me somewhere, what a faithful dog!"

At this moment Goldy came back from the kitchen and looked at her. Ai knelt down and hugged her dog.

"You are such a great dog! Who knows if I'd ever had found my home without your help!"

The Golden Retriever licked off her face and Sidi whimpered. He wanted to get attention, too. So Orlando hugged him, too and said:

"Yeah Sidi, without your help we would have never found this wonderful woman below the tree, right?"

The Labrador-cross barked and Ai and the young man laughed. Then she said, looking at Orlando:

"Well, to complete the picture of me: My name is Aiko Hirota, I am 21 years old and I went to London about one year ago. I was born in Japan, and grew up there, too. My family is still living there. When I was old enough, I wanted to practise my English, so I decided to go to England for some time. By the way, my dad was born in England, that's why I was taught English language very early. He told me great stories from the time he was in London, and I got really curious. Well, when I was finally here I loved it! The people, the landscape, the buildings... I got work as an interpreter for Japanese, but that's part-time, so I have a lot of free time. When they need me, they call me... oh well..."

She looked at her phone, and there were a lot of messages. Orlando looked at the books, standing at a cupboard while Ai was listening to some of the phone messages. He looked up when he heard her speaking another language and watched her. She had called somebody and when she'd finished, he wanted to know:

"Was that Japanese?"

"Yes, I called my family, they are fine."

She smiled, and the actor said:

"Sounds good."

Ai nodded and said:

"Yes, but it's very different from the English language."

"I can imagine", Orlando said. "But how do you translate words from other languages into Japanese? The writing is very different, too, as far as I know..."

Ai laughed and said:

"Good question! But, you know 11 percent of all Japanese words were adopted from other languages, and the majority from the English language. So you have an advantage when you are able to speak English. The share of foreign words in Japanese is higher than in every other language of the world. Of course we can also write names of persons or geographical names that are not Japanese. For that we use >Katakana>, one of the writing types we have in Japan. But the names have to be changed into words that equivalent the Japanese phonetics. So let's take for example your first name, Orlando."

He had listened very interested and looked at her. She took biro and a piece of paper and wrote his name down:

ORLANDO.

"That's the English form. To translate your name into Japanese you have to know, that in Japan we don't have the letter >l<. So we write >r< instead of >l<. Then we have two times >r< in your name, and we can leave one out."

She wrote it at the paper and explained further:

"Well, now you have to consider the Japanese syllables. There are just 6 letters which can stand alone, and that are: a, e, i, o, u and n. The other letters are syllables, for example ra, ri, ru, re, ro, ma, me and so on. A grammatical rule is, that you have to add the letter >u< to every consonant, standing alone, besides >t< and >d<, there you have to add an >o<. So in your name >o<, >a< and >n< can stand alone, and the syllable >do< also exists in Japanese. And >r< cannot stand alone, so it has to be changed into >ru<. So in Japanese your name is Oruando."

She wrote it below the other forms of his name.

"And now I can write it with the Japanese Katakana-signs."

She wrote some signs at the piece of paper and gave it to Orlando. He looked at it and smiled.

ORLANDO

ORRANDO

ORUANDO

□

"Hey, that's cool! Can I keep that?"

Ai laughed and said:

"Of course, I did it just for you..."

Then she added, looking at the phone:

"Well, I have to make another call..."

The young man looked at her, smiled and said:

"I don't mind, just do it."

Ai nodded and dialed the number.

"Hello? Here is Aiko Hirota... yes, I know... I am sorry... Pardon? ... Well... I was with a friend...", she smiled to Orlando and he smiled back, then she turned around, looked out of the window and continued:

"... and I forgot the time, you know... well... yes... okay, that's fine... okay, thank you... bye!"

She sat down at a chair in front of the couch the young man was sitting at.

"Well...", she didn't know what to say.

Orlando looked at her and smiled. Finally Ai said:

"I'd like to thank you for everything you did for me..."

"You're welcome", Orlando replied, looking at her.

"It was a great time and very interesting", he said.

"It really was..", she agreed, and the young man changed the topic when saying:

"Well, what shall I do with all your stuff in my house?"

Ai had to laugh and answered:

"Oh well, I don't know... I won't need it anymore, I suppose..."

Orlando laughed, too, and then took a glance at his watch.

"Oh, it's late..."

He watched Sidi, who stood at the front door and barked.

"I've gotta go..."

Ai nodded and took her keys.

"I'll bring you downstairs."

She waited for her dog, who followed her and then closed the door. They were silent when going downstairs. Ai opened the door, and when Orlando was outside, he put the dog at the leash and then looked back at the door, where the young woman was standing, her Golden Retriever sitting next to her. The Labrador-cross barked and watched them.

"See you!", both said at once and had to laugh.

Then Orlando left, taking some looks back.

Ai watched him until he went around the corner and wasn't to be seen anymore.

The clouds left, and everything got a golden colour when the sun was shining again.

It was a great day.

THE END.