



Summer Pockets Short Story [Sorakado Ao]

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A detailed illustration of the character Sorakado Ao. She has long, flowing light blue hair with a small pink and blue bow on the right side. She has purple eyes and is winking with her right eye. She is wearing a white sailor-style dress with a dark blue collar and a white bow at the waist. She is holding a strand of her hair with her right hand.

# Summer Pockets

サマー ポケット

Amidst the Summer Brilliance

Chapter Sorakado Ao

At The Mercy Of My Dreams

I end up falling asleep wherever I go.

Those are the reparations from touching other people's iridescent shades and viewing their memories.

I have come to understand the fact that people organize their memories while sleeping. That said, it's still nothing more than a light nap. It feels more like I'm drifting between my dreams and reality than anything else. That's why I wake up as soon as I hear somebody nearby.

“...Huh? What are you two doing?”

Opening my eyes, I see Ryouichi and Tenzen standing a few steps away from me, posing oddly. They were desperately trying to keep their balance on one leg.

“Uhhh... A game called Just-In-Case-Ao-Chan-Wakes-

Up?”

“It’s training for smashing while erasing my presence.”

“Neither of you are making any sense...”

“It’s something like red light, green light.”

“It’s a special kind of table tennis training.”

“Like I said... Neither of you are making any sense...”

“They’re trying to see how close they can get to you.”

“Ah, Nomiki. What’s with the water gun?”

“It’s so I can shoot the two of them down if they get too close, of course. It’s only natural that I protect a sleeping girl.” Nomiki said, as she lowered her water gun.

“But Ao, you’re being too defenseless, you know? You should be a little more careful for a girl of your age.”

“Mmm... It’s fine, isn’t it?”

“I’m not sure what your basis for that is.”

“Well, the people of this island have been together since the day they were born. Doesn’t everyone just feel like family?”

I glanced at Ryouichi.

“Huh? No way. You’re way out of my protection range, Ao. Come back when you’re younger.”

“Didn’t you just say something really dangerous just now?”

Nomiki tighten her grip on her water gun with a suspicious expression on her face...

Then, Tenzen said...

“Even though you’ve been lusting towards such seedy-looking breasts? That’s pretty rude.”

“You’re the one who’s being rude! I’m considered pretty sizable for our age!”

“Nomiki, you said you’ve been suffering from stiff shoulders lately?”

“Yeah, my cup size went up to F.”

“Congratulations for being even more sizable, thank you very much!”

I've lost! I've lost to Nomiki! I mean, she must be cheating, right? She's so small, yet she has such big boobs!

"Or rather, there's no way we can do something as dreadful as laying our hands on Ao."

"Yeah, we still cherish our lives."

"Huh? What do you mean?"

Ryouchi and Tenzen both shifted their eyes away, replying in sync.

"Ai is scary."

I'm not really sure, but it seems like both of them have previously been traumatized by Ai. Well, I only know of Ai's gentle side, I guess.

“Yawnn...”

“You’re still sleepy?”

Nomiki exclaimed amazedly, as she watched me yawn.

“Mmm.... I wasn’t exactly sound sleep, I was just dozing on and off, so...”

“Why are your grades so good when all you do is nap in school?”

“I’m sleep learning.”

That wasn’t necessarily a lie. Thanks to the iridescent shades, my knowledge is double... even triple that of other people’s, maybe even more. Generally speaking, I’m pretty knowledgeable about most things.

I looked up at the sky casually... at the sun.

“Ah, it’s already 2. I’ve gotta get to my part time job.”

I can roughly tell what time it is using the sun’s position and the season. That was one of the many different tidbits of knowledge I had acquired from all the iridescent shades I had touched. In fact, I could even predict the weather for the next day from the smell in the air and the moisture on my fingertips.

“Sometimes, Ao seems like she possesses the wisdom of an old granny.”

“That’s quite the interesting comparison, isn’t it? Are you saying that I couldn’t possible have all this wisdom as myself?”

“Hm? Then, how about this: Ao seems just like an old



granny.”

“I’m an energetic high school girl, thank you very much!”

“Thank you very much!”

I put the cash into the basket.

I had grown pretty accustomed to working at the sweets shop. Although, at first, I had been fairly overwhelmed by the sheer number of products sold at there. I mean, normally, you’d never expect to find rifle bullets for sale at a sweets shop, right?

Also, we handle mail ordered stuff. Things that can’t be sent directly to people’s homes... we accepted and held them here.

“Sigh... It feels like I’m forced to find out the secrets of the island’s residents.”

This must be how the sweets shop granny had gotten so influential.

When there are no customers, there's nothing to do. I would organize the shelves even if it was meaningless, but that doesn't kill all that much time.

“Hm?”

I noticed a distant shadow hiding under cover, peeking in my direction.

“Shiroha?”

“Ah.... H-Hello...”

She timidly walked over with a slightly uncomfortable expression on her face.

“Are you here to buy something? Or do you have something on order?”

“U-Um....I figured, it was about time for a new shipment to come in, you see...”

“Ah, you’re talking about Watermelon Bars, right?”

“Yeah.”

“They’re not in yet.”

“Sorry for the intrusion.”

“That was quick! Did you really come here just for that?”

“Well, yeah...”

“I’m pretty free now with no customers around, want to chat?”

“Huh...? Why?”

“Why, I mean... Huh? Why? Do we need a reason?”

“Cause, I mean... we haven’t really spoken recently, so...”

“Then that’s all the more the reason to, isn’t it? Want to have a long-belated girls’ talk?”

“Eh...? But... It’d be best if you didn’t get too involved with me...”

“Ah, I don’t worry about that. I know, the Naruse household has it rough, too.”

On Torishirojima, the Sorakado and Naruse households were a bit special. The Sorakado family oversaw the Ritual of the Mountain, while the Naruse family oversaw the Ritual of the Sea. And of course, by ‘oversaw’, I mean that that was more of a thing of the past.

Originally, the Ritual of the Sea, or “The Flight of the Summer Bird”, had been managed by the Naruse house. The shrine on this island was named Naruse shrine because of that. It was said that a long time ago, a shrine maiden had been able to predict a great calamity that had befallen this island. Thanks to that prediction, many of the islander’s lives were saved. The Naruse house is a direct descendant of this line.

I wasn’t sure how much truth there was to that prediction, but it was definitely true that people were saved by what that shrine maiden said. That was knowledge that I had acquired from the iridescent shades.

The Sorakado family can understand people’s pasts—people’s memories—acting as walking encyclopedias. Touching iridescent shades was forbidden, but I believed that my ancestors must have done so.

The Naruses, who could predict the future. The Sorakados, who knew the past.

We were considered those of unique family lineages. Therefore, rumors of Shiroha having strange powers weren't all that absurd.

That said... No one would really talk about such things so openly nowadays.

“...Well, just for a bit then.”

With a troubled expression on her face, Shiroha took a seat on the store's bench. I sat down next to her.

“ ..... ”

“ ..... ”





Our conversation was dead.

“Umm... What have you been up to lately?”

“Nothing in particular.”

“It’s almost summer vacation, got any plans?”

“Nothing in particular.”

“Then, got anything you want to do?”

“Nothing in particular.”

“You’ve got to help me out here with the conversation!”

“Even if you say that....”

“Sigh... Why are you acting like such a loner? Didn’t we

used to hang out together?”

“Even if you say that....”

“I said help me out here!”

“Even if you say that....”

“Arrgghhhhh! You weren’t like this in the past!”

“...Ehehe.”

“Huh? Was there some kind of punchline just now?”

“You got all fired up.”

“Did I?”

“I mean, in the past, you were always so glued to Ai, Ao.

You gave off this really strong little sister feel.”

“Was I... really like that?”

That was probably my inferiority complex. No matter what I did, I had been unable to beat Ai. I naturally just reduced myself down.

“Has the duty been passed down to you, Ao?”

“You mean the Ritual of the Mountain? Well... I’ve gotten some kind of a sense of duty from it, I guess.”

I had taken over the responsibility of the Ritual of the Mountain from my mother ever since I had entered junior high school. Walking in the mountain at night had been a little scary at first, since I couldn’t help but think back to Ai’s accident whenever I got lost.

Back when I had been first introduced to the mountain, I had found these butterflies that gave off a mysterious glow. My mother had been accompanying me at the time, but I was the only one who could see them. Not knowing a thing, I touched the butterfly.

As luck would have it, that butterfly held knowledge of the Ritual of the Mountain. Perhaps it could have been an ancestor of the Sorakado house. Thanks to that, I had been taught everything about the iridescent shades and the role of the Sorakado household in a single night.

And, together with that, the fact that it might have been possible to awaken Ai.

That was probably the point in time where I had changed.

When I had made the decision to find Ai.

“Ao...?”

I came back to my senses after hearing somebody worriedly call my name.

“Huh? Ah, what’s up?”

“You suddenly went all quiet.”

“Ahaha, sorry, I was just thinking something.”

“...Spirits divine radiance.”

“Huh? What’s that?”

“If you chant that, you will receive god’s blessing. You’ll be alright even when you’re in the mountains at night... I think.” Shiroha said, as she averted her eyes.

Could she be worried about me?

“Hehe, thanks! Umm, spirits di... dic...!? What in the world are you making me say!?”<sup>1</sup>

“Ao... Why have you become so lewd?”

“I’m... I’m not lewd! I’m just at an emotional age!”

The reason why I sometimes seem so horny and delusional is also because of the iridescent shades. Yeah, it’s just that my knowledge has taken a leap forward, especially in the sexuality department. I’m definitely not lewd. There’s no way I’m the one who’s lewd, no way at all.

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1 Yes, it is just as you imagine. DICK.

After my shift was over, I headed over to the island's clinic. That was so I could tell Ai, who was still sound asleep, all about my day today.

“...So, just like that, I think Shiroha is becoming more and more of a loner.”

Using gestures to supplement my story, my character was a stark contrast to Ai's peaceful breathing. It wasn't like she could see my movements, but it helped me convey my emotions and thoughts.

“But, it's not like she's lost her kindness. Ai, when you wake up, I'm sure it would take no time for you to get friendly with her again.”

The people of the island seemed to go out of their way to talk about Ai. I suppose they were trying to be considerate, but they were trying to avoid turning Ai into

some kind of a taboo. It was probably because they believed that she would wake up one day. They kept forcing themselves to talk about her, so they'd eventually be able to converse with her like normal, whenever she finally came back.

“Well then, Ai... It's time for your massage.”

My eyes lit up. Hanging up the “Boys Forbidden” sign on the door, I began my preparations.

It was my job to take care of the slumbering Ai. Generally, I would clean her body with towel soaked in warm water, and massage her muscles so they wouldn't get stiff.

“I'm taking your clothes off, Ai.”

Undoing her patient's gown, I exposed Ai's white skin.



Her complexion was paler than mine since she had been indoors all this time.

“Alright...”

Squeezing water out of the towel, I wiped her body from the head down. Parts that I had lightly scrubbed turned rose red. It was a sign of good blood circulation.

She didn't have any particular reactions, but she did sigh as I applied pressure on her body.

“Mmm... Sigh...”

Sometimes, Ai gave off these sexy sounds, making my heart skip a beat. They made me feel a little... hot.

“Argghhhh, wait! What in the world am I thinking about my twin sister!?”

Trying to clear my mind of worldly desires, I continued wiping Ai's body with my eyes closed. Dressing her back in her patient's gown, I began massaging her muscles to loosen them up.

To prevent her joints from hardening up, I lightly bended her elbows and knees.

“Mmm... Nnn...”

Again, she made an erotic sound. It did make my heart skip a beat, but... it almost made me feel a little relieved, because it meant that she was still alive.

I watched Ai's sleeping face while giving her a massage. Sometimes, I imagine...

“That tickles!” she said, as she suddenly wakes up from the massage.

That's why I had tickled her on purpose before. At times, the spot between her eyebrows would tense up, but that was probably just an involuntary response.

Come to think of it, there seemed to have been a troubling side effect to my massages.

“Hmm... Ai's breasts have grown considerably.”

We were supposed to be twins... but hers were slightly larger than mine. The breast massage method that Mizuori-senpai had taught me was really showing its effectiveness—I had been using it to ensure that Ai's breast were growing properly even while she was asleep. Although, I had been doing it on myself too... What's with this difference? Is this what they mean when they say effects differ from person to person? It was mildly frustrating.

In any case, these are Ai's boobs we're talking about here, so it's not like I can just leave them alone.

"Alright, I'm going to massage your boobs now, okay?"

I extended my hands out toward Ai's breasts.

"First, we stimulate the collarbone lymph and armpit lymph, to make sure the boobs are getting their required nutrition..."

"Hah... Ngh... Ah..."

The lymphs hadn't stagnated or anything, so just some light touching was sufficient. After that...

"Rubbing from the outside in, without too much strength... in circular motions... Lifting the flanks up...."

“Hah... Nnnngh... Hau...”

Her soft flesh, encompassed by that fine, tender skin, created a suction. She seemed to moan more from the boob massage than the regular massage. Her face also seemed slightly more blushed than before... perhaps because of the increased blood flow. I wonder why... the massage had been making me feel quite odd as well.

Ka-chack...

“Huh?”

“Hm?”

Nomiki entered the hospital room.

The sign on the door said that no boys were allowed, so it wasn't really a problem for a girl to come in, but...



Nomiki's face turned bright red as she turned away.

"I did knock on the door a couple times, but... S... Sorry to disturb."

"No, that's not it! This is a healthy massage! It's a massage that's essential for a young girl's growth!"

"I-is that Mizuori-senpai's bust up massage method?"

"Y-Yeah! That! You could tell?"

"Yup, I've been doing it to myself as well."

"Huh...? Nomiki, you've been doing it too?"

"I've been trying to firm them up into a better shape, but the effects are so strong that it's been troubling me."

“Huh... Ahh, I see...”

So the amount of growth really is determined by one's disposition...

While finishing up my visit to see Ai, I couldn't help but feel like I had taken some heavy mental damage.



When I left the hospital, I saw that the sun was beginning to set.

“...Maybe I’ll head over to the Blossom of the Lost for a bit.”

The period that the Ritual of the Mountain is in session is the season when the tree at the Sorakado family’s sacred grounds blossoms. The flowers still had yet to bloom, but it was still essential to check up on the conditions of the flower buds. Guiding iridescent shades to the tree with the hanging lantern was a time limited affair, therefore... I couldn’t let even a single day go to waste.

I walked up the mountain. It was a task I was all too familiar with, having walked up that night path many times before.

“Pon!”

“Ah, Inari. So you were up in the mountains today.”

“Pon, pon.”

“Yeah, it’s almost time for the Ritual of the Mountain, so I figured I’d go check on the Blossom of the Lost.”

“Pooon!”

Inari swiftly turned around while swinging his tail, as if he were telling me to follow him.’

“That’s right, yeah. In that case, lead the way.”

“Pon! ♪”

A slightly unusual fox.

It almost seemed like he could tell what I was saying, but... the first time I met this little guy was also while I had been performing my duties.

It was around 2 years ago. I found him had collapsed in the middle of the path while guiding iridescent shades. When I called out to him, he jumped to his feet in a surprise, restlessly looking around his surroundings. He kept tilting his head at me, like he had been perplexed by my voice.

Since then, he's been inseparable from me.

Perhaps because of some kind of animalistic sixth sense, he can see iridescent shades, which has been great help. From time to time, he even acts human-like, to that point where it sometimes even feels nostalgic. We've been together like that ever since.

“Pon.”

“Hm? What’s wrong?”

Inari, who had been walking out in front of me, suddenly stopped to stare at a bush. Turning in that direction, I saw...

“...An iridescent shade...?”

Although it was only faintly, I could see the weak light of an iridescent shade dancing in the dark. It was the first time I had ever seen such a small butterfly, almost like some kind of a child...

“...! Could it be!?”

Instinctively, I reached out towards the iridescent shade. However, the butterfly slightly distanced itself from me

instead.

“Wait! Ai! You’re Ai right!? Hey! Come here!”

During the Ritual of the Mountain, it’s possible to draw iridescent shades towards oneself using the hanging lantern. At all other times, they act just like any other kind of butterfly. In other words, they’d rather fly away from people than anything else.

“Inari! Follow that iridescent shade!”

“Pon!!”

Inari chased after the iridescent shade as it disappeared into the mountain.

I also gave chase. If that’s Ai’s memory, then I have to capture it! By touching it, I should be able to confirm

who it belongs to...

But, how am I going to capture it after confirming who it is...? Such a small butterfly would simply just slip out of a bug cage.

“I can’t contain an iridescent shade without the lantern...”

Even with the lantern, the butterflies don’t gather around the lantern’s light when we aren’t within the period of the ritual. This butterfly, which could possibly be Ai’s... Why did I have to find you now, of all times?

“Poon, poon!”

Inari was calling for me up ahead.

Let’s not worry about that for now, I thought. It’s good

enough to even know for a fact that Ai's iridescent shade is here. This cements my goal.

I ran up the mountain path, following Inari's calls. The sun had already set, and my surroundings had gone dark. Such conditions only made it easier to see the dimly lit iridescent shade.

"...Pon."

Inari looked in my direction while crouched low to the ground, holding his voice down. His gaze was pointing at a bush.

"...It's here... isn't it?"

I lowered my voice, looking at the same spot that Inari was staring at. Resting on a flower on the side of the mountain path, the iridescent shade slowly flapped its

wings, almost as if it were taking a deep breath.

It really was a tiny butterfly. The weak light it gave off even appeared to flicker intermittently. I had never seen such a frail iridescent shade before. It looked so fleeting that I doubted anyone would ever notice its existence if they weren't looking hard for it.

“...Don't run away, okay?”

Holding my breath, I slowly closed in on the iridescent shade. Being careful not to scare it, I cautiously and gently raised my finger towards the light...

Just a little bit more and I'll make contact...

In that moment, the iridescent shade gave its wings a huge flap.



“Wait! Ai!!”

The butterfly took off, instantly flying diagonally upward.  
If I just move my finger up that way—

My finger grazed the weak light, which seemed to be on  
the verge of disappearing even now.

In the next moment, my vision changed from darkness of  
night to the bright light of a midsummer day.

“Huh... This memory...?”

A viewpoint that seemed fairly low... I was in the eyes of  
a child. Was this... a memory of summer?

A faint, fragmented slideshow of the island’s scenery  
scrolled by. I was meeting someone. Again, and again. At  
first, I felt afraid—the memories assaulted me over and

over, like waves continually washing up against the shore.

However, the feeling gradually settled down.

Who... is this guy?

The backdrop was that of the island, but there was a guy that I had never seen before. Also, who was the guy was looking at? Why are they meeting for the first time over and over again? The memory was so incomplete that it was difficult to connect the dots.

The more I watched it repeat, the more I felt the memories scatter around inside myself.

“Nice to meet you. ...mi.”

As ‘I’ introduced myself, the guy tilted his head in

confusion.

“Nice to meet you... U...?”

“It’s my name.”

“Ahh... I’m ...kahara...iri.”

Unable to take shape, the words seemed to crumble into dust as soon as ‘I’ heard them. But, for some reason, this guy and ‘I’ been meeting in this summer over and over again.

Who... am ‘I’?

“Pon! Pon!”

“Gasp!”

I returned to my senses when I heard Inari's voice.

“Ah... Just whose memories had I been looking at just now...?”

I felt a bit dizzy. Even if it was just a small memory, it had still stirred my consciousness deeply. Nevertheless, thanks to how hazy those memories were, confusing little remnants of it were still swimming around in my head. It was one of those dangerous memory that would make you forget that you were actually viewing a memory, if not careful.

Looking around, the tiny iridescent shade had already vanished from view. That memory... it was almost like being lost in the summer.

“Pon~...”

“Yeah, sorry about making you worry. That wasn’t Ai.”

I gently patted Inari’s head as he looked at me uneasily.

“I wonder where I put that wok...” I muttered quietly to myself.

“Pon?”

“Nah, it’s nothing. I just suddenly felt like making fried rice, that’s all.”

I made my way over to the Blossom of the Lost. The flowers had yet to bloom, but I could see several tiny buds spawning.

I took a deep breath and looked up at the sky. A half-moon was floating above my head. At this rate, the flowers should bloom when the moon is full.

And then... the Ritual of the Mountain will begin.

That's when I'll start gathering iridescent shades with  
the hanging lantern once again.

And that's when, once again... I'll continue my search for  
Ai.

Summer had begun.

It was much easier not having to go out of our way to take the boat to school. Luckily, I hadn't joined any clubs. I'd hate to have wear my uniform and get on the ferry during the holidays.

Despite that... I had to head to school that day. I mean... Well, I suppose it was my fault for forgetting to submit my selection form for our second semester elective, I guess.

I was just trying to take a nap. Handing the form in after summer vacation was over would have been too late. The pacing of people's lifestyles outside the island was too rushed for me. It was suffocating.

Finishing everything in the morning, I returned to the island, finding Inari waiting for me at the harbor.

“I’m back, Inari.”

“Pon! ♪”

“I still have some time before my part time shift. Let’s go take a walk.”

“Pooon! ♪”

The atmosphere of the island really calmed me down.  
The smell of the dirt, the smell of the greenery, the smell of the sea... being surrounded by nature gave me a sense of relief.

“Yawnnn~...”

“Pon~?”

“Ehehe, I’m feeling a little sleepy.”



This sleeping habit of mine will probably stay with me for as long as I keep searching for iridescent shades, huh? That said, I felt like I was getting much more used to organizing my memories than before. In fact, if anything, taking frequent naps had been making me feel more refreshed recently.

“Let’s take a small afternoon nap.”

“Pon!”

“Huh? You’ll keep watch for me?”

“Pon, pon!”

“It’s fine, nothing suspicious ever happens on this island.”

“Pon~!”



“Really? In that case... Yawn... I’m counting on you...”

I sat down under the shade of one of the trees and closed my eyes. Almost immediately, I fell into a slumber. At the same time, my eyes, which are supposedly closed, were presented with multiple flashbacks from many different memories.

The colors from so many memories overlapping turned everything to an almost pitch-black color. Those that were truly unneeded, were unconsciously sunken to the lowest depths.

Perhaps one day, they might just overflow...

However... I must still continue to search for iridescent shades.

Up until I finally find Ai....

“Mmm...”

I... could feel someone's presence.

Is somebody approaching me...?

But... my consciousness isn't surfacing.

My body isn't waking up.

I wonder why...? Is it because I know that they're somebody that I can let get close to me...?

If Inari isn't reacting, then I'm sure it'll be fine, but...

For some reason, this presence... feels familiar...?

This presence... that made some memory that had sunken deep within me tingle.

Who?

“Mmm... Nnngh... Mmmmm~...”

Opening my eyes, I was met with a close-up of some unknown guy's face.

It... isn't a guy from the island?

Huh? What? This... Am I being held?

Who? Who is this guy?

“Uwaaaaaaaaaaaaah!? W-What, what!? W-Who are you?  
Why are you holding me? Are you planning to rape me!?  
Please be gentle to start!!”

“Are you saying you'd be okay with me being rough  
towards the end?”

“Like hell I would!!!! Let go of me already!!!”

I could already sense the beginnings of a fresh new summer upon us.