

# Literary Text: Kitchen by

## Banana Yoshimoto

### Extract

Just then, with the scratch of a key in the door, an **incredibly beautiful** woman came running in, all out of breath. I was **so stunned, I gaped**.

Though she didn't seem young, she was **truly beautiful**. From her outfit and **dramatic makeup**, which really wouldn't do for daytime, I understood that hers was **night work**.

Yuichi introduced me: "This is Mikage Sakurai."

"How do you do," she said in a slightly **husky** voice, still panting, with a smile. "I'm Yuichi's mother. My name is Eriko."

This was his mother? Dumbfounded, I couldn't take my eyes off her. Hair that rustled **like silk** to her shoulders; the **deep sparkle** of her long, narrow eyes; **well-formed lips**, a nose with a high, straight bridge—the whole of her **gave off a marvelous light that seemed to vibrate with life force**. **She didn't look human. I had never seen anyone like her.**

I was staring to the point of rudeness. "How do you do," I replied at last, smiling back at her.

"We're so pleased to have you here," she said to me warmly, and then, turning to Yuichi, "I'm sorry, Yuichi. I just can't get away tonight. I dashed out for a second saying that I was off to the bathroom. But

Semantic field of inhuman physical beauty

Symbolism recurring motifs of light = hope in the face of grief

postmodernism  
gender ambiguity  
yet Eriko conforms

I'll have plenty of time in the morning, I hope Mikage will agree to spend the night." She was in a rush and ran to the door, **red dress** flying.

"I'll drive you," said Yuichi.

"Sorry to put you to so much trouble," I said.

"Not at all. Who ever would have thought the club would be so busy tonight? It's me who should apologize. Well! See you in the morning!"

She ran out in **her high heels**, and Yuichi called back to me, "Wait here! Watch TV or something!" then ran after her, **leaving me alone in a daze**.

I felt certain that if you looked really closely you would see a few **normal signs of age**—crow's feet, less-than-perfect teeth—some part of her that looked **like a real human being**. Still, she was stunning. She made me want to be with her again. There was a **warm light, like her afterimage, softly glowing in my heart**. That must be what they mean by "charm." Like Helen Keller when she understood "water" for the first time, the word burst into reality for me, its living example before my eyes. It's no exaggeration; the **encounter was that overwhelming**.

### Elsewhere:

- She's a man / he could barely contain his amusement
- "Eriko-san" / he pronouns
- In the joy of being in a kitchen I liked so well, my head cleared, and suddenly I remembered she was a man.
- Bury your gays trope
- Beginning of chapter 2 "Eriko died in the late autumn"
- → spotted her "on the street" / "Worked in a gay bar"
- "Shocked to discover this beautiful woman was a man..." (deceptive trans)
- After a long silence he said, "My mother ... or, uh, father, I should say, was killed."
- → Straight into Yuichi/Mikage's emotions - when was the last time I'd seen her?

surgery / focus on the superficial

as a force for Mikage for her to know herself, but never for her to know Eriko

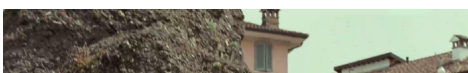
foreshadowing "she's not dead yet" always her fate to die?

- Last memory: I said, teasing, "Eriko, you're looking a little masculine tonight!"
- Eriko's final letter: But I find that I'm body and soul a woman. A mother in name and in fact.
- Trans women are only given legitimacy when they are able to pass - Chika: "Compared with Eriko, Chika was undeniably a man in appearance. But she (so to speak) did look rather beautiful when made up and was tall and slender. The showy dresses she wore suited her, and her manner was very gentle" ... end of the conversation "I watched her broad back disappear"
- Eriko had been the dazzling sun that lit the place.

["You know what things..." complete scene from "Call me by your name"](#)



Stills:



*subtitled to Elio's gaze  
Oliver becomes  
humble and  
pulls away*

*speaking is  
could be  
... to up army + church  
... to up army + church  
... to up army + church*

Taken in one continuous take, beginning with an establishing long shot on a steady cam of the two men from a distance, locating them in town. Intimacy of lighting cigarette is withheld from the viewer. Camera then pans over to the fence with men talking about the monument but viewer is denied a sight of this monument. Then camera is located behind Elio's head, suturing the viewer's gaze to Elio's as Oliver disappears behind him you know what things, so his face is as unreadable and unknowable to us as it is with Elio. Oliver moves further away and finally out of shot before the viewer for the first time sees the war monument before panning down to Elio. Mixture of diegetic and non diegetic sound - the bus and the piano music. Once move Elio and Oliver have an intimate and coded conversation but from a long shot, both wearing sunglasses, and we return to Elio's gaze, looking up at the church. Smoking - aligns Elio with handsome Hollywood stars of the past, also a phallic image. 'shouldn't have said anything, just pretend you never did... It means we can't talk about these kind of things' but now the camera now returns to a medium shot and eye level with both camera's emphasising Oliver's height difference and Elio's naivete.

Marlon Brando/Humphrey Bogart

use of steady cam, neither zooms, tracks or cuts but we move around the scene with the steady cam as though we are an observer to this scene

natural lighting with a warm filter

filmed in a single take - visual continuity

33.

ANCHISE  
(Mixture of Italian and English)  
(I straightened the wheel. It took some doing. I also put air in the tires)

ELIO and OLIVER reach the road, where they pause for a moment. OLIVER pulls up his shirt and pulls down the top of his shorts to expose a big scrape and bruise on his left hip.

OLIVER  
(showing ELIO his wound)  
I fell the other day on the way back and scraped myself pretty badly. Anchise insisted on applying me some sort of witch's brew. He also fixed the bike for me.

ELIO leans over closely to see Oliver's scrape, which is smeared with a black ointment. It looks painful.

They continue on their way.

49

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - DAY

49

They arrive on their bikes at the little town square. OLIVER buys a pack of cigarettes, Gauloises. He lights one up, then offers one to ELIO.

OLIVER  
You want to try one?

ELIO nods and OLIVER cups his hands very near Elio's face and lights his cigarette.

OLIVER (CONT'D)  
Not bad, right?

ELIO  
(drawing on it)  
Not bad at all. I thought you didn't smoke.

OLIVER  
I don't.  
(taking another drag)



speakup is  
could be mg  
hook up - army + church  
unstable noble  
non-culture institutions  
contrast his backpack  
modernity  
changing values  
80s



first time we  
are allowed  
a close up  
get still disorient-  
glasses/smoke  
contrast gross scene  
no glasses  
more close ups  
intimate  
setting

long shots  
+ diegetic  
sound -  
contrast  
reminders  
of the  
outside world

Other related scenes:



(drawing on it)  
Not bad at all. I thought you  
didn't smoke.  
OLIVER  
I don't.  
(taking another drag)  
They walk their bikes towards the little World War I memorial  
in the center of the square which is dedicated to the youth  
of the town who perished in the Battle of Piave.  
They pause a moment to read the plaque.

34.

OLIVER (CONT'D)  
World War II? Did the Allies fight  
near here?  
ELIO  
No. This is World War I. You'd have  
to be at least eighty years old to  
have known any of them.  
OLIVER  
Is there anything you don't know? I  
never heard of the Battle of Piave.  
ELIO looks at OLIVER. He hesitates, then bursts out:  
ELIO  
I know nothing Oliver. Nothing,  
just nothing.  
OLIVER  
(looking at him steadily)  
You know more than anyone around  
here.  
ELIO  
If you only knew how little I know  
about the things that really  
matter.  
OLIVER  
What things that matter?  
ELIO looks him straight in the eye for once, summoning up his  
courage:  
ELIO  
You know what things. By now you of  
all people should know.  
Silence.  
OLIVER  
Why are you telling me all this?  
ELIO  
Because I thought you should know.  
OLIVER  
(he repeats ELIO's words  
slowly, playing for time  
as he considers them)  
Because you thought I should know.

35.

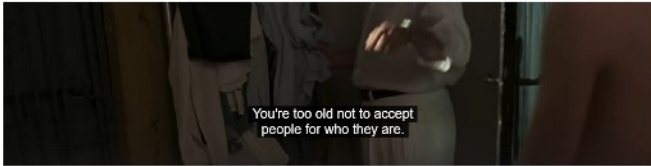
ELIO  
Because I want you to know  
(blurring it out)  
Because there is no one else I can  
say this to but you.  
There is a magnificent view. A tiny bus works its way uphill,  
with some bikers struggling behind it.  
To buy time, OLIVER turns to look at it before replying:  
OLIVER  
Are you saying what I think you're  
saying?  
ELIO  
Yes.

OLIVER looks at ELIO for a long moment, then gestures towards  
the shop front where he takes his manuscript to be typed up.  
OLIVER  
Wait for me here. Don't go away.  
ELIO  
(looking at OLIVER with a  
confiding smile)  
You know I'm not going anywhere.

Two buses stop nearby to unload their passengers - older  
women arriving from adjoining villages to shop.  
ELIO turns to read the names listed on the monument. OLIVER  
returns.

OLIVER





What's wrong with them? You call them sonny and cher behind their backs  
 Is it because they're gay or because they're ridiculous?  
 You know as much about economics you'll be a wise man indeed, and a credit to me



*Constant  
 of  
 internation  
 the outside  
 world  
 visual  
 and  
 auditory*

Two buses stop nearby to unload their passengers - older women arriving from adjoining villages to shop.

ELIO turns to read the names listed on the monument. OLIVER returns.

OLIVER  
 (frowning)  
 They've mixed up my pages and now they have to retype the whole thing. So I have nothing to work on this afternoon. Which sets me back a whole day. Damn!

ELIO looks as if it has been his fault the typist made a mistake.

ELIO  
 I wish I hadn't spoken.

OLIVER  
 I'm going to pretend you never did.

36.

ELIO  
 (unfazed)  
 Does this mean we're on speaking terms - but not really?

OLIVER thinks about this.

OLIVER  
 Look, we can't talk about such things, we really can't.

He slings his bag with its papers around him and the two are off down hill.

ELIO  
 Andiamo, americano!

50 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD/SPRINGS - FONTANILI GAVERINE - DAY 50

Now that ELIO has laid his cards on the table, the scenery and the fine weather buoy his spirits. They ride together on the empty country road that at this time of day is all for them.

Thirsty they stop by a factory. They ask for water to an old lady. Oliver is surprised to see a Mussolini picture hanging on a wall. They laugh.

ELIO  
 (speaking like Mussolini)  
 Popolo italiano!  
 That's Italy!

They're again on their bikes. The countryside shines in all its grandeur.

ELIO turns off into a little path towards some spring water ponds surrounded by willow trees. ELIO leans his bike against one of them, followed by OLIVER.

ELIO (CONT'D)  
 This is my spot. All mine. I come here to read. I can't begin to tell you the number of books I've read here.

Oliver puts his hands in the water.

OLIVER  
 It's freezing cold!