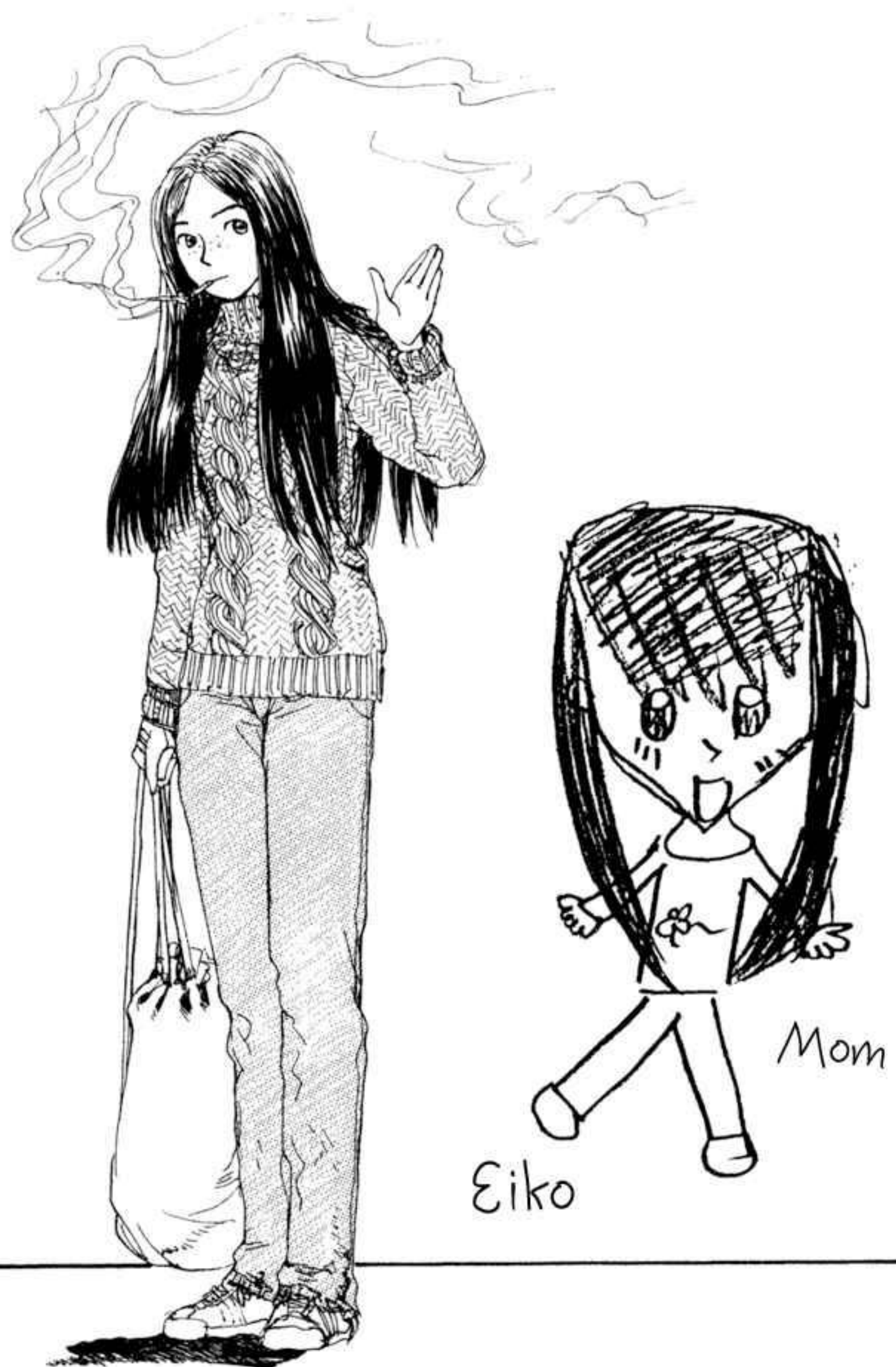


A f t e r w o r d





THE character Emanon was originally a product of my fantasies. It all began over 40 years ago, way back when I was making a solo voyage from Nagoya to Kagoshima on the "Sunflower" car ferry. I'd just gotten a job, and there was really nothing for me to do, other than read science fiction novels and indulge in my fantasies, all day long.

The fantasy was essentially this: "Wouldn't it be amazing if I met an incredibly beautiful girl on a ferry ride, and I spent the whole trip talking to her about random things?" And it wouldn't hurt if there was a mysterious side to her, either. My main physical preferences were all condensed into Emanon: long-haired, freckled, wearing jeans, and smoking a cigarette. Looking back, I think this image must have been influenced by the hippie subculture that existed during the 1970s.

Two terms that fascinated me during this period were "casual" and "once in a life time." The idea of having someone occupy a deep, significant part of your memory, but never being able to see them again... Once I began thinking about this, I became absorbed in a kind of sorrow and hopelessness that I couldn't find the words to express.

With these ideas in mind, this girl of my dreams continued to live on within me. And at some point, she had gained the attribute of having a 3-billion-year-old memory; the memory of evolution. The novel came seven or eight years after I first fantasized about her, and the name "Emanon" was something I stumbled across as I was writing.

THE character Emanon is my all-time favorite sci-fi heroine. The keyword for me is "wandering girl." I think it's a very fitting description. I came across Emanon around the same age as the main character of the story, when I was in college. There was a small bookstore on the way back home to my lodging which, oddly enough, contained a very substantial collection of sci-fi novels, and **Memories of Emanon** seems to be linked to my memories of that bookstore. Whenever I read *Emanon*, I'm reminded of small details, like the shape of the stains on the plywood walls, and the light footsteps that sound when someone walks over to the shelf containing the publications from Hayakawa Novels.

Obviously, these images aren't present in the work itself, but part of my desire to turn Emanon into a manga stemmed from wanting to include the bookstore somewhere along the course of the story. Not that I actually ended up including it. Which reminds me, I think it was around ten years ago that I saw an Emanon-esque lady on the limited express train of the Chuo Main Line. The real (?) one was wearing jeans and a red sweater, but I didn't end up drawing that either...

I remember talks of turning *Emanon* into a manga first came up after I'd done the illustrations for the *SF Japan* version and the Dual Novels version. Proposals for creating manga versions of novels had all been completely shot down in the past, but for whatever reason, the chief editor of *SF Japan* showed a particular interest in this project, and immediately made the trip to Kumamoto to seek Mr. Kajio's permission.

Shinji Kajio

Kenji Tsuruta

The short story **Memories of Emanon** was published, and I thought Emanon's tale had reached its conclusion. But a few months later, I received an unexpected offer from my editor. Emanon had been well-received. He wanted another short story with Emanon as the main character. I had never intended on making Emanon into a series, so this took me completely by surprise.

The series ended with the publication of **Emanon's Wanderings**, but was re-awakened in the first issue of *SF Japan*. Their chief editor introduced me to Mr. Kenji Tsuruta, and I was shocked when I saw his illustration of Emanon.

It was the perfect fit.

Thereafter, Mr. Tsuruta's illustration has occupied my mind every single time I've written about Emanon. He may be a slow worker, but Mr. Tsuruta more than makes up for it with the finished product, and he has my total confidence and support.

This version of **Memories of Emanon** is the very best result that has come forth from our collaboration. I had always hoped to have the opportunity to see Mr. Tsuruta's *Emanon* in volume form, and now my wish has finally come true.

So miracles do exist in this world after all.

We also decided on the format, where two stories would be included in the volume, starting with **Memories of Emanon**, drawn exactly as it was in the original story, followed by **xxx of Emanon**, which would be a new, original take on the series. And so, the project gradually began to take shape... With a special emphasis on "gradually." I was attending to other half-finished projects like "this," "that," and "you-know-what" at the time, which meant plans for *Emanon* were still very vague. A project for next year, or maybe the one after that... Which could mean never, in the publishing industry. Afterwards, I was able to finish "this," but not "that" and "you-know-what," putting *Emanon* on hold... Waiting, neglected... For over four years.

In essence, if the chief editor hadn't forced me to begin working on short installments for the *Monthly Comic Ryu* magazine, **Memories of Emanon** would have never been started, let alone completed. Thank you chief editor, you're a miracle worker. And I apologize for taking this long, Mr. Kajio.

Emanon's Memories was originally published in *SF Japan*. It's basically a pilot version that I drew in 2002. The characters are different, so I debated whether I should include it or not, but I've chosen to re-republish it at the chief editor's request. I still find Emanon to be elusive as ever, no matter how many times I draw her. But looking back at these drawings for the first time in ages, I think I may have found the perfect Emanon on the 7th page! (...?)



