



Mitsufumi  
Asagure 's

Experimental

Comic Novel

Laugh

Theater.

Episode 1 Something is there.

# Main Characters

## Apartment Kaede

201 Cleopatra..... . lives alone.	202 Beethoven.... .. lives alone.	203 Plato..... lives alone.
101 Shizuo Kato ..... Manager. Lives alone.	102 Vacant room	103 Santaro Tanaka ..... lives alone.

Episode 1 Something is there.

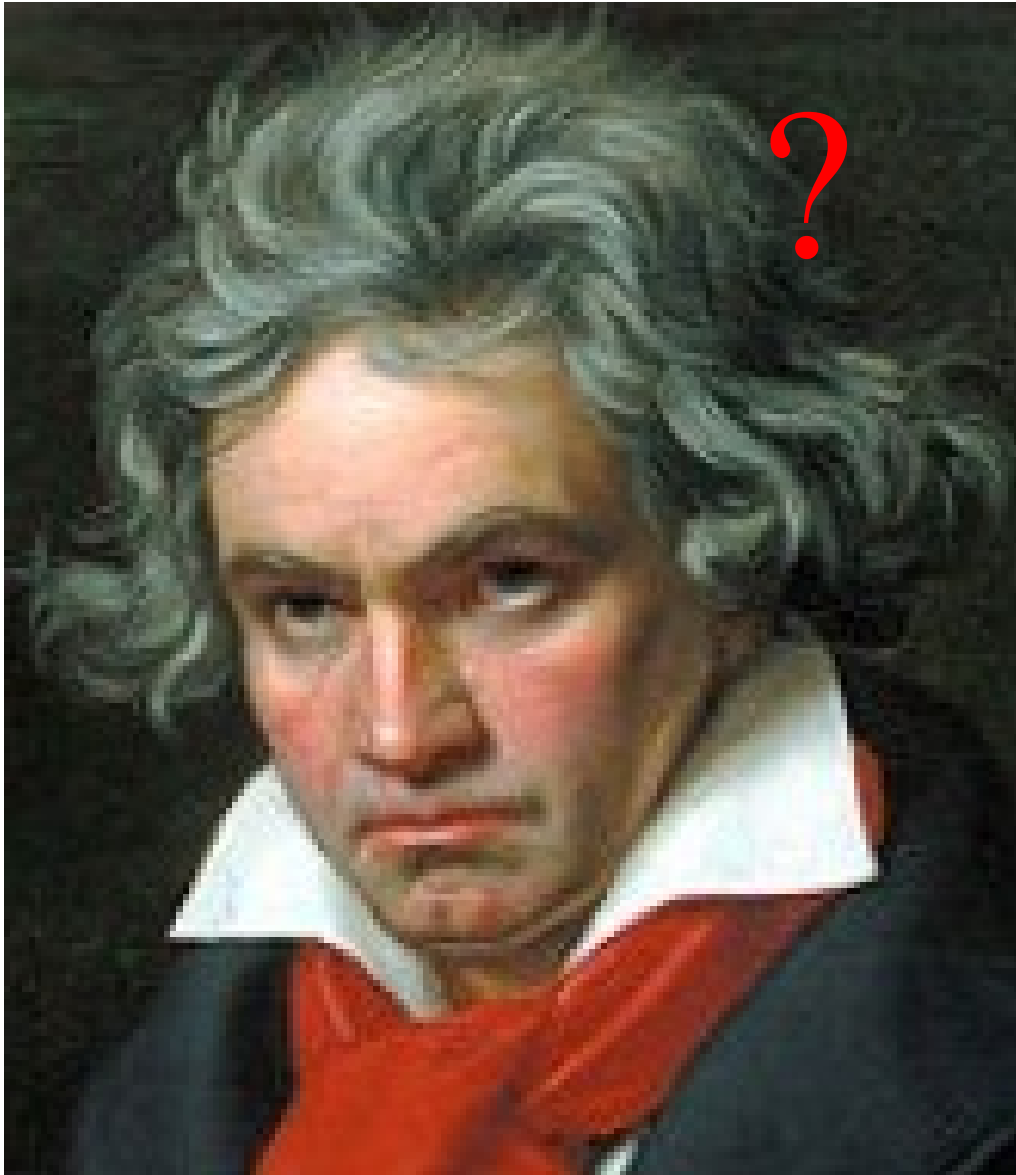


Shizuo Kato returned to his apartment from the supermarket. Today was a special sale day, and bananas were cheap. Then Kato saw someone in front of the apartment. It was Beethoven.



Beethoven is a musician who lives on the second floor of the apartment. On the other hand, Shizuo Kato was the Manager of the apartment. Shizuo Kato approached Beethoven. Because he was acting a little strange.

"Mr. Beethoven. Is something wrong?"



"What?"



"What's the matter, Mr. Beethoven?"

"Oh, you must be Kato-san. Please help me. Something has a firm grip on my leg and I can't get out"



"Your leg is stuck? It doesn't seem like  
You are stuck in a hole. How is that  
possible?"





"It's true. See?"

Beethoven attempted to pull out one of his legs, which was still stuck to the ground, but no matter how many times he tried, he could not succeed.



"I don't know what it is, but if the residents are in trouble, as their Manager, I can't but help."

Shizuo Kato put down the shopping bags and grabbed Beethoven's legs with both arms.





"Then I'll go with one, two, three...one, two, three...

put all your energy into it. That's one, two, three."

"Nuh-uh-uh."

With a thump, Beethoven's feet fell off.  
"Oh, thank God. I thought I was going to  
miss the last train here."  
"Miss the last train?"  
"The one that never came back."







"Mr. Beethoven. How the hell did this happen?"

"I came downstairs. I thought I would take a walk and think about the destiny. Suddenly, I felt a strong grip on my leg. It's like there's something there."

"Here? Is there something here? Are you sure?"

At Beethoven's words, Shizuo Kato got down on all fours, put his head close to the problem spot, and tried to observe. Then his head was grabbed and he could not get it off.



"Oh, my head!"

"Mr. Kato!"

Beethoven grabbed Shizuo Kato's head  
with both arms.

"One, two, three, one, two, three,"  
he said. With a thump, Shizuo Kato's head  
fell out.

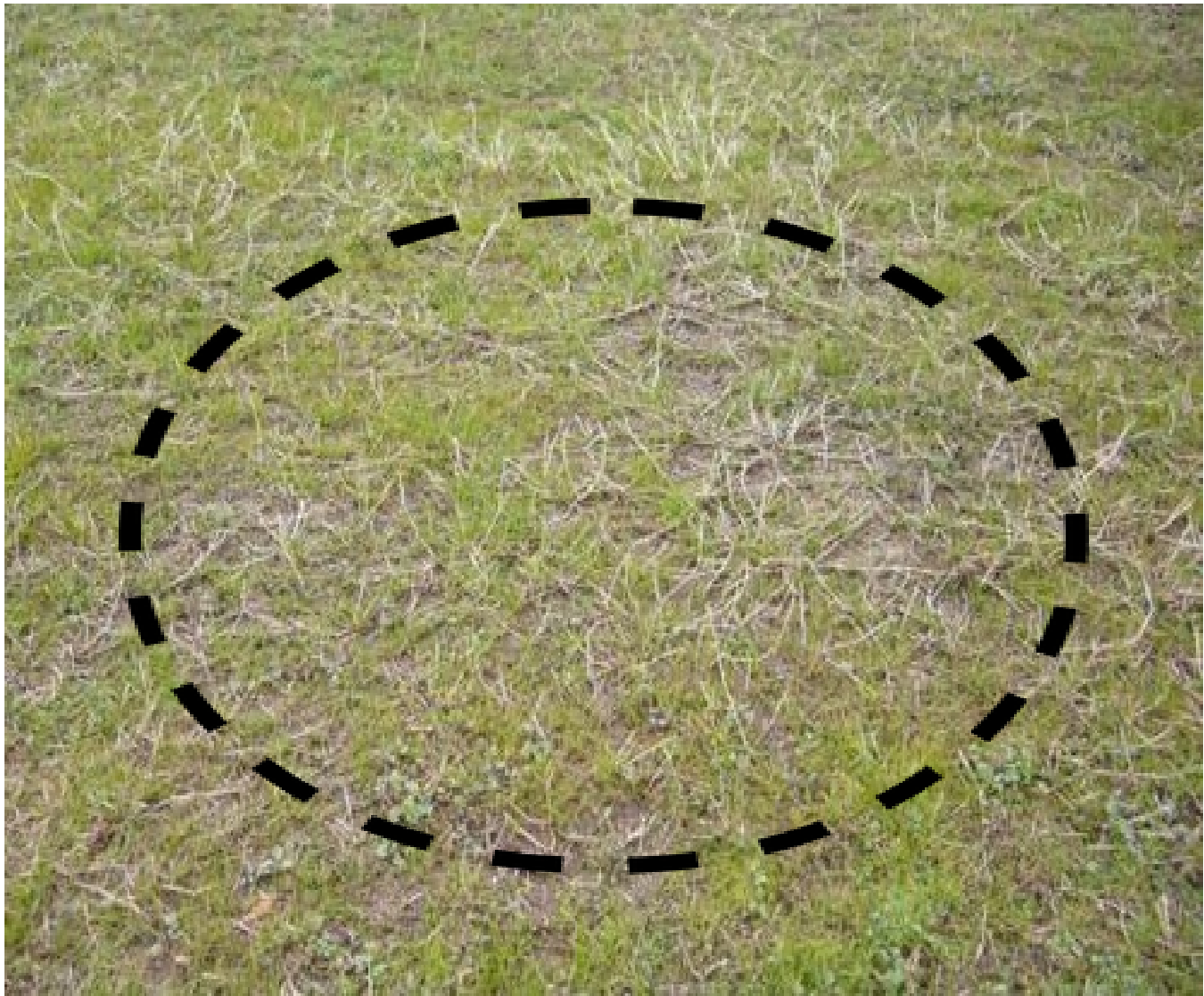


Kato moved a little away from the problem point. He said, "Hmmm. It was a close call. It sure looks like there's something in there."

"Mr. Kato, isn't this the Jibakurei we've heard so much about?"

"Jibakurei?"

(Jibakurei= earthbound spirit)







"Yes. Among the spirits, the ones that cannot float away and possess the land they have a connection with are called Jibakurei spirits. A typical example is the spirit at the scene of a car accident".

"You know a lot about this."

"Yes. Yes, I am a Mu reader."

Mu=Famous Japanese occult magazines.



"I see. Well, let's see what we're going to do about it."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean, This is the front of an apartment, so there is a possibility that one of the residents will suffer the same fate. Not only the residents, but also visitors and children passing by could get caught by him."



"That's true, but what are you going to do about it?"

"He grabbed your leg, didn't he? He grabbed my head, too. He might grab anything that he can grab. Is there anything suitable?"

"I don't have anything suitable," Beethoven said.

"I forgot. I was on my way home from shopping."

Shizuo Kato ripped a banana from a shopping bag he had left behind.

"Here, how do you like it? Oh, I got it."

Kato pressed the banana against the problem spot, it stood vertically. Kato tried a few times to make sure the banana would not come loose.

"Okay, it's gripping tight, Let's cover it with something and make it off-limits with a rope.

Mr. Beethoven, please help me."





Shizuo Kato called out to Beethoven,  
and they went back to their apartment to  
get the materials. Then Cleopatra, who  
lived upstairs, returned from her date.  
She said,  
"Oh my God, Antonio. It's so quiet.  
These days, dates are always at chain  
taverns. Oh, look at all those bananas!



Cleopatra stepped into the problem spot and grabbed a banana. The banana came off easily.

"Oh-ho-ho-ho, I got it."

But when Cleopatra turned to walk away, one of her legs stuck.

"Hey, let go of me!"

Cleopatra struggled, but the situation remained the same.

She had no choice but to check around and talk to the earthbound spirit.

"I'll tell you something between you and me. I have terrible athlete's foot. Do you understand?"





Cleopatra called out to him and pulled her foot and it slipped out.  
Oh-ho-ho-ho. I'll go home and have a snack.

Mitsufumi Asagure is a novelist. He made his debut at the 8th Mephisto Award in 1998. Received the 56th Japan Mystery Writers Association Award in 2003. Shortlisted for China's special writing competition for "Lunar Colony Novel"2024.His works have been translated in Italy and South Korea,China,and adopted as junior high school textbooks. a member of the Japan Literary Artists Association and the Japan MWA.

※This is the first volume of an Experimental Laugh Theater.