

QUESTIONS ABOUT  
*THE GUEST CAT*  
By Takashi Hiraide  
Part 2

The narrator tells about how a cat comes into his and his wife's lives. The story meanders through many apparently unrelated events, and the reader eventually realizes this book is about more than the narrator's relationship with a cat.

The questions below concern the chapters 16 to 29 consisting of pages 73 to 136.

Chapter 16

1. Why doesn't Chibi come to visit this night? How does the narrator find out what happened?

Chapter 17

2. Where is Chibi when the neighbors discover her the first time? Where is she the last time they see her? Where do they bury her?

Chapter 18

3. What happens when the narrator asks for permission to visit Chibi's grave? What, in his opinion, is the basis for the neighbor's response?
4. As their home is to be sold, they must find a new place to live. What is their requirement for the location of the new home?

Chapter 19

5. The narrator tries to understand the neighbors' motives for not allowing him to visit the grave. What do you believe their motives are?
6. This chapter includes a description of how Chibi shows up while the narrator is bathing. It also includes a poem and a description of birds bathing in a pond but says nothing about how Chibi reacts to discovering the narrator bathing. What do you believe the author wants to show us?

Chapter 20

7. Immediately after the narrator describes his own bath, he describes a bath taken by his landlord where workmen have to be summoned to help the old man to his bed. Why do you believe the author includes this chapter? What does he want us to learn?

Chapter 21

8. The old woman returns home for two weeks, but when she leaves, two events prevent the narrator and his wife from seeing her off. What are those two events?

9. Which of the old lady's possessions do they decide to keep?

#### Chapter 22

10. The narrator sees a dragonfly in the garden and believes it could be the same one he saw the previous year. Why does he believe this? What does he entice this dragonfly to do?

#### Chapter 23

11. When the narrator discovers a praying mantis eating a cicada, what does he do? What does his wife do?

#### Chapter 24

12. The death of Chibi leaves holes in both the narrator's family and the neighbor's family. How does the neighbor's family fill this hole? Why doesn't the narrator's family do the same thing?

#### Chapter 25

13. The narrator and his wife discover a new apartment not far from the old one. What do they discover while investigating the land surrounding their new apartment complex?

#### Chapter 26

14. How many feral cats are left by the time autumn comes? What do they name their favorite? How does the narrator's wife induce her to come into their new home?

#### Chapter 27

15. After bringing the first cat into their home, they decide to trap a second one and bring it home. When the narrator attempts to do this, what happens?

#### Chapter 28

16. What is going to be done to the old house after the old lady sells it? During a snowfall the last day of January, the narrator and his wife walk past the house. What do they find?

#### Chapter 29

17. Why does it matter to the narrator that he has miscalculated the day of Chibi's death?
18. At the end of the last chapter, the narrator quotes the words of the neighbor woman: "I never go that way on my own." Why does he tell us this? What does he want us to understand?
19. Do you believe this is just a story the author made up, or is he telling us something real that actually happened to him?