

# In Return

Von yamina-chan

## Sai

I hated it. Every time you refused that you know me, it hurts. Not because you were denying my presence or my knowledge. I understand very well, that not many people would believe you if you would tell them about me, a thousand year old spirit who is always by your side.

It saddened me of course that you claimed not to know me, but you had no other choice. I did not hate it because of that, but because my existence made you lie.

Someone as honest as you shouldn't be forced to lie to the ones you hold dear. I heard people call you a "loud mouthed brat" or "arrogant kid" but they are wrong. I know you better. Truth to be told, my first impression was not that good as well. I thought of you as lazy, disrespectful and rude boy who cared only about himself. How wrong I was! You, Hikaru, are quite the opposite.

Sometimes you appear rude, but that is simply because you say what you think. And that is why your tongue slipped quite a few times. Your heart and soul are open and you are willing to share and express your feelings and thoughts. You don't hide them. That's why I hated it that you had to do it sometimes. My presence caused you a lot of trouble and you had to deal with a lot difficulties all because of me.

I am sorry for that.

You are not lazy either. In fact, you are willing to put a lot effort in something that is important to you. With a determination and energy that is impressive.

And my biggest misapprehension was to think of you as egoistic. I witnessed the kindness of Torajiro and therefore I failed to notice yours at first, hidden behind bold comments or a cheeky grin. But you as well own a caring heart.

Despite the fact that you had no fondness for Go when we first meet, you let me play. Well, not that much back then but you let me play nevertheless. You just could have refused me and my selfishness. As much as I would have protested, in the end there is not much I could have done if you would have decided to never place a stone for me. But you did.

The joy I felt every time you let me play and every time I watched someone else while playing is something that is beyond my ability to express. When you started to play on your own, I was so proud of you and so glad that you finally understood the beauty of Go.

I clearly remember the first time you placed a stone by yourself. I was playing Tohya Meijin then, with your help of course. That game never came to an end, since you ran out after you placed your first stone. Afterwards you accused me, that I would have been taking over your body. I explained to you that it was not possible and that you placed the stone by your own and yet you still wouldn't believe me. At that time, our

argument wouldn't grow since you admitted to be impressed by Tohya Mejin and then we met Akari. I never brought the subject back again since I thought you were just to stubborn to admit, that you started to like the "boring old man game" as you used to call it. Now that I think about it, I wonder if you were still scared about me. The first and the second day you certainly were. I remember you talking about me taking over your soul, your body...and that you had own plans for your life.

Maybe, before you learned to trust me, maybe you let me play because you were scarred. I think, I would have been, If I were in your place. Then again, I was born in a different time then you. I never asked you, if you were scarred though, so maybe I misjudged that as well.

But there is something I know for sure: You had different plans for your life before we met. Go was not a part of it.

But in my selfishness I forced you to walk a different part. You didn't complain since you started to love the game for yourself. Well, at least you didn't complain that much. As far as I can tell your life changed a lot. For better or worse, I can't say but you would be a different person today, if you hadn't been able to see the stains on Torajiros Goban.

You changed and started to walk down the path of Go, the path that will eventually reach the divine move.

The Hand of God...my dream. My wish, that kept me in this world or so I thought for a long time. Will you be the one to find it, Hikaru? I hope you will. With or without me to see it.

I saw a lot of Go, when I were with you. I was able to learn about everything that had changed since my time with Torajiro.

And not only about Go, I saw much of how life itself had changed. I still don't understand much of what was going on in your time or how some things worked. The box for example, where we played NetGo against opponents I couldn't see.

You let me play back then with my own name. I didn't play as 'Honinbo Shusaku' nor did I play as 'Shindo Hikaru'. I played as 'Sai'.

I wonder if you knew how much that meant to me. The summer I was able to play with my own name again was precious to me. It is different from playing a game face to face but that luxury was taken away a very long time ago. My opponents are not able to see me, and on that box I wasn't able to see them as well. All that existed at that time was the Go.

I believe it fits to me and what is left of me.

A ghost that had stayed in the living realm for a millennium to play a game. My Go is all that is left from me.

And because of this, I am grateful that I was able to meet you, Hikaru. You let my play and my games will outlive the time I had when I was with you.

And you played not only because of me, and not only for me, but you also played WITH me.

Face to face.

You were the only one able to do that. Every game we played together was something special to me. Even though you had to place the stones for me too.

With every game I was able to see how much you had grown since we met each other. I had fun every time we played.

And yet...yet it wasn't enough for me. You are not the selfish one, Hikaru. It was me. Even though you changed your life because of me, even though I could play you and was able to watch your wonderful games, even though my presence was the reason

for many problems you had to endure, I still wanted to play more.

A good example for this was your Shinshodan game. You were to play Tohya Meijin, the man who was closest to reach the Hand of God among the living. The one I desired to face over the Goban. It was your game. Your welcome to the world of pros. You deserved to play him. And I took that chance away from you.

The games you gave me weren't enough any more and my fear to never be able to play against someone else then you ever again made me greedy.

It was your game and I took it away to satisfy my selfish wish to play against this man. However, the burden of the fifteen stone Handicap I gave myself, to not reveal my strength made it a really unsatisfying one.

In the end, neither of us was happy.

That I regret most of all in the matter of that chaotic game. I took it away but nothing good came out of it after all.

I am a thief.

This game should have belonged to you, not me. You had worked so hard to reach it.

I failed you, and yet you still worried for me. We went to that Go Event some days later, I remember. As if you wanted to apologize to me. You! There was no reason for it, I should have been the one to apologize.

And then, that day we visited Tohya Mejin in hospital. I couldn't believe it when you suddenly told him about me! Not everything, but you told him that I was a friend of you. At first, I was totally shocked. All the time you tried your best to let no one find out that we were connected. I was sure, that you would keep this secret forever. But you told him and arranged the game between me and him. I did not ask for it, I not even thought about it, and yet you still asked. Of your own free will.

It was one of the best games I ever played. But I think you leaned more from it then I did. And after that game...

I tried to tell you what would happen to me, but you did not understand. You were looking forward to a bright future, yet you could not see the dark clouds right above me. I assume, that was my fault as well.

I never talked with you about my worries or my fear or what scares me. I kept it all to myself. At the very beginning, I didn't trust you enough and later I did not want you to carry any more burdens then you already did. And then, when I finally started to talk about it you wouldn't take it seriously of course. I can't blame you for it.

I did, since it hurt me a lot, but now I understand why YOU could NOT understand.

It grieves me, that I could not prepare you for what happened.

I know, that you will have to face sadness for a while. I do not know, if it will be because of the loss of ME, or because of the loss itself but I know that you have to face pain. It is the way you are. Your kind heart will mourn the lost companion, even though I failed miserably as your friend.

Shindo Hikaru.

I enjoyed every single moment of our relationship, good ones and bad ones alike. I enjoyed to watch you grow in the Go I had been able to show you. I enjoyed the games we played together. I enjoyed everything you showed me. I enjoyed being with you.

You gave me so much in the short time we spent together, but what did I give you back in return?