

# STAFF PICK

## THE BRIEFCASE

NOVEL BY HIROMI KAWAKAMI

*The Briefcase* (alternate title: *Strange Weather in Tokyo*) by Hiromi Kawakami reminds me of a long autumn night. This book is a love story between a couple of over 30 year age difference. As their relationship slowly develops across the changing four seasons, I felt as if I were watching a movie with beautiful scenery. The story begins when 37-year-old single woman Tsukiko happens to meet her high school teacher at an Izakaya (a casual bar) after over ten years. It feels like the story is slow, but their serious relationship and distance feel very comfortable. The fearlessness they show

for each other and their adorable moments of jealousy make me cry and laugh. I read it without getting tired of it. Also Kawakami uses very polite and delicate Japanese words because Sensei is a Japanese language teacher. I enjoyed it. A lot of people mention that these two people often drink with seasonal small dishes that sound very delicious. You will want to prepare the same dishes with Sake and enjoy the long night with this book in your hand.

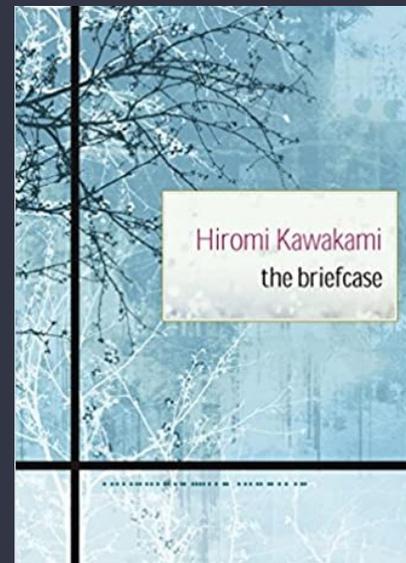
The novel also has been made into manga and film.

— Hiroko, Library Staff  
December, 2020

## ABOUT AUTHOR

**Hiromi Kawakami** (川上 弘美) 's acclaim for her essays, stories, and novels include the Pascal Short Story Prize for New Writers and the Akutagawa Prize. Her novel *Strange Weather in Tokyo* was short-listed for the 2013 Man Asian Literary Prize and the 2014 International Foreign Fiction Prize. *Manazuru* won the Japan-U.S. Friendship Commission prize. She lives in Japan, where she taught biology and is a member of the Science Fiction Research Association.

— from Publisher



Title: *The Briefcase*  
(later published as *Strange Weather in Tokyo*)

Author: Hiromi Kawakami

Publisher: Counterpoint Press  
Year: 2012

Pages: 176

Translated by Allison Markin (translated Kawakami's *The Ten Loves of Nishino* (2019), Fuminori Nakamura's *Last Winter, We Parted* (2014), and many others.)

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Original Japanese:  
*Sensei no kaban* センセイの鞆  
Heibonsha, 2001

### OTHER WORKS BY AUTHOR INCLUDE:

