

# Out of sight, out of mind

## Chapter 1

“Okay, this is weird...”

The Tendo Home  
Nabiki's Room  
7:15am

BEEP... BEEP... BEEP...

“Uuurh...” Slapping the alarm off, the Ice Queen of Furinkan High School disliked many things, one of them was getting up in the mornings.

Lurching out of bed reluctantly, she sat up and rubbed her head. *Ooh, feel a bit woozy today...* Pulling out two yellow earplugs she smirked to herself. *Heh, these babies have given me several good nights of sleep, too much fighting late kept me awake... Lucky I can hear my alarm through them...*

She put on a robe over her snug pyjamas, and walked downstairs to the sounds of Kasumi making breakfast. As was usual, she had brewed a cup of black coffee, ready for her younger sister.

“Thanks Kasumi...” Yawning loudly, she patted down an errant part of her hair and sat at the table, sipping her drink quietly, reading up on the stock market. *Hmm, shares in my companies did well yesterday... Lost a bit on two though... Might need to go deeper to get more back.*

Finishing off the mug, she placed it in the sink and went back upstairs. Dressing quickly and brushing her teeth, she returned to a full table downstairs.

Except for one person...

Looking around, everyone seemed normal, and it was too quiet. Soun for once wasn't crying his eyes out for some silly reason, Genma wasn't in panda form, eating his toast noisily and eyeing his friend's piece, Akane was seemingly happy, and Kasumi was her normal cheerful self.

*Where is he?*

Ever since coming back from China, Ranma had only spoken of what happened there once. He shuddered and told Nabiki to never ask him again. She insisted it was to make some money for the home by telling a story to people at school. The haunted look in his eyes gave chills down her spine, and she never had the heart to repeat what he told her.

“Hey...” She spoke to the silent table. “Where's Ranma?”

Everyone stopped to look at her, Soun even put down his daily paper.

Kasumi was the first to ask. "Ranma? Who's that, Nabiki?"

Nabiki's jaw dropped a tad, before she repeated herself. "You know who I mean. Ranma, Ranma Saotome. He's been living with us for a year and a half now...?"

Soun stared oddly at his daughter. "Saotome you say...?" He looked over to the bald man. "Is this Ranma fellow a relative of yours, Genma?"

The bespectacled man merely shook his head, confused.

"Huh?" Nabiki again was knocked for six. "This is your son we're talking about Mr Saotome. How could you forget him?" She angled a thumb at Akane. "You and daddy had him engaged to Akane here since he arrived, and been trying to marry them since..."

"What?!" Akane stood up, enraged. "You had me engaged to some boy I don't even know?!"

Soun paled and fell back a bit, Akane's red aura flaring around her. "N... No, my daughter, I wouldn't dream of it. I have no idea of what or who Nabiki's talking about..."

"Nabiki, it's not fair to tease your sister like that..." Kasumi scolded mildly, her expression returning to its happy state almost immediately. "Come on, here's your packed lunch, you got to rush off to school now..."

Still puzzled by events so far, Nabiki just accepted the wrapped container and placed it in her bag, and walked out with Akane.

### **Five minutes later On the street heading towards school**

"So, you really don't remember Ranma then?"

"Who the hell is this Ranma, Nabiki? You know I hate boys..."

"Yeah, but..." She drifted off. *What the hell is going on? Maybe Ukyo or Shampoo drugged them somehow...*

The local old lady using her ladle splashed water over Nabiki, again reminding her how Ranma had the same thing happen to him almost every day.

"Dammit..." Only her head and shoulders were damp, so she shrugged it off and ran the rest of the way.

### **Outside Furinkan High School**

"Ahh, Kuno-baby, my favourite customer..." *He'll sort this out...*

Surely enough, he came running out, his bokken in his belt. "Akane Tendo, my love!" He ran to her with his arms out wide for a big hug. "It is surely time that we date, for it has bee-"

After booting him away, Akane ran into the building. "Jerk... Every morning..."

Nabiki stared at the slumped figure of the kendo man, and dragged him to the nurse. "Kuno-baby, you'll help me, won't you?" She said, almost to herself.

### **Five minutes later**

"Ouch..." Kuno sat up, his stomach still reeling from the hit. "My beautiful Akane has a strength that no man apart from me can withstand..."

"Hello Kuno-baby..."

Turning, he stared at Nabiki. "What news have you? Any new photographs of my love?"

She arched an eyebrow. "No... I'm surprised... Don't you remember being beaten by Ranma every day?"

"Ranma?"

"Yes..." Nabiki felt a sense of déjà vu. "Ranma Saotome."

"Who is this knave you speak of? Me, the Blue Thunder, defeated by some vile sorcerer?" He stood up. "I know not of such a man. I have yet to be beaten by any male at this school." He walked out to go to his homeroom. "I shall depart, and let us speak no more of such blasphemy."

Nabiki stood there, stunned. *I knew he was stupid when it came to Ranma's curse, but what about forgetting Ranma himself? This hasn't happened before yet...*

Still in shock, she walked off to her homeroom, and after explaining her lateness to the teacher, she was allowed to sit in class.

Rummaging through her bag, she pulled out her daily bets and stared at them, all the ones with Ranma had obviously failed to happen yet.

"Hey, boss, what's wrong?" Her neighbour whispered.

"Ah... Nat-kun." Nabiki shifted over slightly. "Do you know what's going on? Where's Ranma?"

"Come to think of it..." The black haired girl pondered. "I haven't seen him today... Why?"

"Something strange is going on..." She then described about her family and Kuno, their complete memory loss regarding Ranma.

“Well... I know who he is... Cursed at Jusenkya, turns into a red head and is a great martial artist...” She thought for a moment. “Have you checked the others who know him?”

“Not yet... But I plan to...”

### **Lunch break Under the tree**

Nabiki walked over to the usual group, Akane and Ukyo were there, as were Sayuri, Yuka, Daisuke and Hiroshi. Ukyo had her portable grill ready, and looked over to the approaching guest.

“Hey, sugar, you fancy some okonomiyaki?”

“First, I want to ask you all something.” Everyone stopped to listen. “Have any of you seen Ranma?”

Akane growled. “Not him again, who is he, some pervert or what?”

The puzzled looks passed across everyone, and Nabiki was sad to see even Ukyo, his childhood friend, looked perplexed.

“No, sugar... But then again, I don’t know who this Ranma guy is...”

The others all replied the same, no knowing who he was. Nabiki sighed and scratched her neck. *Okay, this is weirding me out now...* “I’ll have a take away please...”

Taking the small pocket okonomiyaki, Nabiki walked back towards the school, towards her betting, gossip gatherers and rumour starters.

“Okay...” She looked at all of them. “I spoke to Natsuko earlier, I believe she told all of you...” They nodded in reply. “Right, I want all of you to find out anyone who doesn’t know who Ranma Saotome. Ask anyone if they’ve seen him, and if they don’t know who he is, note them down.” She gave them a piercing stare. “This has to be done by the end of today, no mistakes or exclusions. Get the teachers too... Go find out now!” They bowed quickly and ran off into the playground.

Nabiki looked back at Akane and Ukyo. “All bets are off...” *Ranma, where are you?*

### **End of school At the school gates**

Nabiki was leaning against the wall, her fringe covering her expression. *Dammit, I couldn’t concentrate all day...* The frown she had on was a permanent fixture so far. She eyed Akane walking home happily with Yuka and Sayuri. *How could they forget?*

Her three helpers walked up, exhausted. Natsuko brought up a list.

“Here, boss... You were right... not many people forgot about Saotome...”

Looking over her helpers, she guessed the people before looking at the names. Natsuko was drained and struggled to stand. Miyuki was missing a part of her hair, tears present for her missing ponytail, and Haruna was twirling a small doll made from sticks.

“Right... So Hinako-sensei, Principal Kuno and Hikaru Gosunkugi were the only ones who forgot who Ranma was, apart from Akane and the others...” She took the list anyway. Feeling some pity for her workers, she glanced back at them. “Share out the profits from last weeks bets amongst yourselves, you deserve it.”

Walking away, she sensed their brief excitement before being drawn into herself. So, *again it was people that knew him*. Walking by the clinic, having shut down a few months ago, she shook her head. *Tofu isn't around any more, so I can't ask him...*

An idea sprung into her head.

### **Ten minutes later Outside the Nekohanten**

Nabiki stared up at the sign, took a deep breath and strode in. The café was still as normal, customers were eating, though fewer than usual as the rush had ended a while ago, and generally a typical day. Walking up to the counter, she heard the ‘tock tock tock’ sound, and turned around.

“Hi Cologne.”

“Greetings Miss Tendo. It’s a surprise to see you here. What can I get you?”

Nabiki gave one of her smirks. “You, Mousse and Shampoo, for about five minutes.”

Cologne narrowed her eyes. “Why?”

“I’ll tell you when you’re all together.” Sensing the elder woman’s reluctance, she pulled out some notes. “I’ll pay for it.”

Looking at the money, she waved it off. “No need for that, I can tell this is serious. Please, sit here,” She indicated a nearby booth, “and I’ll bring the two of them out to join you.”

“Thanks Cologne.”

### **One minute later**

“What mercenary girl want? Shampoo busy!” The purple haired Amazon wasn’t happy.

“Please child, this is just for a moment.” Cologne intervened.

Mousse had his glasses on for once, and stared at Nabiki. “What is it, Nabiki Tendo?”

She sighed again. *I need to ask them first, then we go from there...* “Have any of you seen Ranma today?”

It came as no surprise to see that they gave curious glances to one another, their eyes mimicking those of the Tendos. “Who Ranma?” Shampoo asked.

Nabiki closed her eyes. *It's no use...* She stood up. “Thank you for your time, Elder Cologne, Mousse, Shampoo.” She gave a short bow, knowing that now, things had changed forever. “Sorry for bothering you. You can go back to work now.” She walked off, ignoring their questioning looks.

*Shampoo... She'd never forget her 'airen'. She didn't even call him that. Cologne... I'd've thought she'd know, but apparently not... Mousse didn't recall either...*

Nabiki walked off towards home, though without Ranma she admitted it wasn't the same as before he arrived.

### **Later that evening Nabiki's room**

Twiddling her pen between her fingers, she gave up and closed her text book and papers. *No way I can do homework now...* She got up and paced around the room. *Everyone's still the same, no recollection of Ranma, acting as if everything was normal...* She ground her teeth. *I even had to give Happosai one of my bras before I asked him...*

She felt stuffy and decided to open the window to let some air in. *Why am I the only one who remembers him?* Leaning on the window sill, looking out over the rooftops of Nerima she breathed in the chilly air, and hugged her arms, looking down as she held herself. *Huh?* On the sill, a tiny amount of black powder was being blown by the wind. Rubbing it with her finger, with was slightly greasy to the touch and smeared easy on her tip. Sniffing it quickly, she felt a bit dizzy and had to sit down to steady herself.

*What the hell is this?*

Taking a chance, she started to formulate an idea in her head. *Wait... It couldn't be...* She knocked lightly on Akane's door, but hearing some smashes outside the dojo, she guessed she was letting off some anger.

Letting herself in, she stalked over to the window, and sure enough found the same substance there. Checking each person's room, she found it in every case, Kasumi and Soun had the powder somewhere on the floor in an unnoticeable place.

Finally, she stopped at Ranma and Genma's room. *No... It's just his room now...* The sign on the front of the door said 'Genma' only. Checking that no one was there, she walked in, finding the futon that Genma slept in, unmade as usual. Searching, she found the powder was somewhere in the corner, almost hidden by some clothes.

Pausing a moment, she risked a look over her shoulder out the door, then decided to open the wardrobe. The tears filled up as she realised that nothing of Ranma's remained, none

of his red Chinese tops, nor black slacks, and even his few dresses and bras that the girls had got him during his time at the Tendos. His rucksack, along with the tent and sleeping bag, were gone too.

Closing the door, she left the room and retired to her bed, lying on top of the covers. *He's really gone, for good this time... No note... No goodbyes...* She closed her eyes as her cheeks grew wetter.

*No memories...*

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### **Author's Notes**

Wrote this in around four hours, as a distraction from my Love Hina book. Thought this up two days ago, and realised that it was too good to pass up.

Not sure how long this will become, I'm guessing roughly six chapters, but things might come up to make it longer or shorter.

Hope this was a good start, don't know when inspiration for the next chapter will hit me again, but it should be soonish...

- Jason