

UNIVERSITE MICHEL DE MONTAIGNE - BORDEAUX 3
Centre de Bordeaux - Session : septembre 2002
D.A.E.U. -A- : ANGLAIS
Nature de l'épreuve : VERSION

- * durée : 3 heures
- * les sorties sont autorisées après une heure de composition
- * dictionnaire bilingue autorisé

Mourning the dead sister

Niki, the name we finally gave my younger daughter, is not an abbreviation; it was a compromise I reached with her father. For paradoxically it was he who wanted to give her a Japanese name, and I – perhaps out of some selfish desire not to be reminded of the past – insisted on an English one. He finally agreed to Niki, thinking it had some vague echo of the East about it.

She came to see me earlier this year, in April, when the days were still cold and drizzly. Perhaps she had intended to stay longer, I do not know. But my country house and the quiet that surrounds it made her restless, and before long I could see she was anxious to return to her life in London. She listened impatiently to my classical records, flicked through numerous magazines. The telephone rang for her regularly, and she would stride across the carpet, her thin figure squeezed into her tight clothes, taking care to close the door behind her so I would not overhear her conversation. She left after five days.

She did not mention Keiko until the second day. It was a grey windy morning, and we had moved the armchairs nearer the windows to watch the rain falling on my garden.

"Did you expect me to be there?" she asked. "At the funeral, I mean."

"No, I suppose not. I didn't really think you'd come."

"It did upset me, hearing about her. I almost came."

"I never expected you to come."

"People didn't know what was wrong with me," she said. "I didn't tell anybody. I suppose I was embarrassed. They wouldn't understand really, they wouldn't understand how I felt about it. Sisters are supposed to be people you're close to, aren't they? You may not like them much, but you're still close to them. That's just not how it was though. I don't even remember what she looked like now."

"Yes it's quite a time since you saw her."

"I just remember her as someone who used to make me miserable. That's what I remember about her. But I was sad though, when I heard."

Kazuo Ishiguro, *A Pale View of Hills*, 1982.