**House on a Hill**

by Emi Tsuruta

This was early in the summer a few years back. I was off school - working at my summer job, but I had time on weekends. I decided to drop by at one of the Japanese Student Union's get-togethers just to see what was going on. It was packed. A lot of new students had just arrived from Japan, all wide-eyed, eager to learn more about life in 'America.' There were so many people there that day it was hard to find a place to sit. A seat finally opened up, so I sat down. All the guys seemed entranced by these two Japanese girls sitting at our table.

It wouldn't say it was their looks exactly, but I think more their style that was getting them all this attention. One, a girl named Minori, had a small face and Dumbo ears, but these deep lustrous black eyes. She'd done her long hair up in this incredibly elaborate hair-style, hanging loose at the back but with a swirly bobtail on top. The other girl, Nao, was a bit plainer by comparison, but she had this sultry pouty look, and had tweezed her eyebrows into these exotic-looking curves. The two of them were obviously used to getting attention. The guys all sat there hanging on their every word, but Minori and Nao just laughed, seemingly more interested in talking with me and the other girls than the guys.

After the meeting ended, I mentioned to Minori and Nao that sometimes I hung out at Antonio's Cafe near my friend Satomi's dorm. It had just been renovated, a new open design with huge picture windows looking out onto the tree-lined boulevard with lots of sunlight streaming in. They said they wanted to check it out, so off we went. A few guys followed us for a while, but I eventually managed to lose them by cutting through the dorm. Finally, we could talk in peace.

Minori and Nao were both college students in Tokyo, but worked in 'hospitality' to earn money to come here to the States. I wasn't sure exactly what this meant - were they barmaids perhaps? - but I decided it would be better not to pry. They were studying English here for the summer, but were keen on getting out and seeing more of the city while they were here. They also mentioned that they were interested in getting in shape for summer, so I offered to take them to the swimming pool at the campus fitness center.

A few days later, I got a call from Minori, and we set a day up to go swimming. Nao showed up dressed in jeans and a t-shirt while Minori was wearing a track suit she must have bought here. Nao had on these mirror sunglasses which made her stand out, but anyway, I think they were trying to tone down their sexiness, and blend in more.

My old boss Ted was at the front desk. Even in their rough get-ups, Minori and Nao still managed to catch his eye.

"Wow, Emi! Where have you been hiding these beauties?"

"Hey, Ted. These are my new friends, Minori and Nao."

"It's a pleasure to meet you," he beamed, taking Minori's hand, and kissing it. They both giggled. He showered them with compliments, but I wanted to go in, so I hinted that he should make them up some day passes.

"Funny guy," Nao laughed. I knew Ted too well to agree, but I guess he has his charms.

There wasn't anyone in the change room when we got there, but you could hear people splashing around in the pool. We ducked into one of the aisles with a bench and lockers. Minori and Nao eyed me curiously, wondering what they were supposed to do. In Japan, it's quite normal to get naked when you change, but they were a bit cautious here, being in a new country and all.

"You have to have a shower before you go in," I explained. "Once you close the lock, you need another quarter to lock it again, so bring your swimsuit and towel with you."

The two of them seemed a bit nervous about undressing in this strange place, but soon all three of us were naked.

Minori had this faint grin on her lips. Maybe she was just proud of her body, but it made me wonder if she might have exhibitionist leanings too. She was more petite than American girls, but her slender waist made her breasts and hips look big by comparison. Her black bush was thick and lush, and her hips, wide and curvaceous. I guess guys can tell how she looks under her clothes, and that's why she gets all this attention.

Nao was more slender and willowy although her breasts were still pointed and full. She pursed her lips, carefully hiding whatever it was she was feeling. I'm sure guys must find her sexy too, but she seemed more restrained to me, less wild than Minori.

Anyway, I showed them the way to the showers, getting a little thrill from wandering around the change room buck naked. While we were showering, an older American woman came in with her young daughter, the two of them in swimsuits. The woman seemed a bit concerned by our nudity, so I turned away hiding my body from the daughter. Once the woman and daughter left, the three of us toweled off, and pulled our swimsuits on, before heading out to the pool.

There weren't that many people there, mostly parents and kids, so we didn't attract as much attention as sometimes. I used the ladder on the side to enter the pool, and Minori and Nao followed me in. They were both decent swimmers. We swam a few laps, not really racing, but just at a leisurely pace. Nao got out, and somehow this older guy managed to corner her, and started giving her advice. He seemed harmless enough, so I let them be while Minori and I continued to swim laps. Afterwards, the three of us dried off, got dressed, and headed to a nearby restaurant for something to eat.

I think they enjoyed the swimming, but Minori said they wanted to try other things, so the next time, I took them to play volleyball at one of the community centers. My Chinese-American athlete friend David was kind, showing them how to play. Some of the other guys weren't so nice, kind of staring at our bouncing breasts while we jumped around playing. The guys were laughing about something, but we didn't know what at first. Apparently, one of the young Filipino guys had admitted to fancying Minori, and the other guys were teasing him about it.

When we went in for a shower, we heard this tremendous ruckus at the door. Apparently, this guy's friends had tried to push him into the girls' changing room. I felt nervous because Minori, Nao and I were naked, but anyway, the young Romeo managed to fight off his friends, and leave before he got a look at us. That was close! Nao in particular looked a bit worried by their mischief, but after we got dressed, and came back out, the boys kept their distance. Maybe they realized they'd gone a bit far.

Soon after, the three of us went back to Antonio's cafe for lattes. This was in the middle of a heat wave, so I quite innocently asked them how they were coping. It sounded like Minori's place was fairly cool, but Nao lived on the top floor of a three-storey house, way up the mountainside on the east side of town.

"What do you do when it gets really hot?" I asked, curious.

"I open the fridge door, and stand in front of it," Nao answered. I have to admit that the first image that popped into my mind was of Nao standing there naked in her kitchen, but I managed to resist the urge to ask. Minori wasn't quite so delicate, and blurted out,

"Naked?"

Nao didn't answer, but instead got up to go get her latte from the counter. Minori turned to me, and asked point blank,

"Do you ever lounge around naked at your house?"

I was a bit taken back by the question, not because I was offended of course, but rather wondering how she knew. I'd been making every effort to be the good girl around these two, because I wasn't sure how they felt about this whole nudity business. It's true that we'd showered together naked a couple of times, but I thought I'd been on my best behavior the whole time.

"Why? Do you?" I asked, deflecting the question back to Minori. Nao had gotten her drink, and sat back down.

"Yeah, sometimes, when my roommates aren't around...," Minori confided, her voice drifting off at the end, evidently embarrassed for admitting it, when neither of us wanted to. I wasn't really sure how to play this. It wasn't clear yet how Nao felt, and in any case, the conversation turned back to how hot Nao's place was. I had an extra fan I wasn't using, so I offered to lend it to her.

I have to admit that I found Minori's little revelation - about running around her apartment naked - encouraging. A lot of my female friends are fairly conservative, but I now wondered if Minori and perhaps Nao were a bit more open-minded about these things.

Nao was quite anxious to get her fan, so the next day, I dug it out, and got ready. It was really hot out that day, so I just wanted to wear something light. I had this new pair of red white and blue tartan shorts that fit my rear snugly, but had a draw string at the front that I could loosen. I also pulled on this red, pink and yellow bikini top and a pair of thong sandals. I don't usually wear such risqu? clothes on the street, but I figured it would be just Nao, Minori and me, so they wouldn't mind. Nao's room mates were apparently out of town.

I met Minori on the way. She was in a good mood, and didn't seem bothered by my outfit. The bus stopped halfway up the mountain, so we did have to walk the last bit in the hot summer sun. Nao's house was beautiful though. The walls were white stucco in the Latin style. It looked like it was built by some rich Hispanic Don back in the olden days.

Nao met us at the front gate, and thanked me for bringing the fan. She downplayed how beautiful her house is. It was true that we had to walk up this long winding outdoor staircase to get to the third floor.

"Who lives in the other flats?" I asked.

"There's a painter and his girlfriend on the second floor, and I'm not sure who lives on the first," Nao explained.

There was a nice little terrace on the landing just outside Nao's front door.

"Wow! Cool!" I cooed. "Do you ever sunbathe out here?" I asked curious.

"No," Nao replied coolly. Inside, her flat was incredibly hot, as she had warned.

"Here, let me get your fan set up," Nao said taking it from me. She looked pretty happy to finally get a breeze going. The flat itself wasn't that large, just a main room and small kitchen with bedrooms in the back. Minori wandered here and there, poking around, checking the place out.

"Do you mind if I take a shower?" I asked while Nao plugged the fan in, and turned it on. The breeze was nice, but it was still pretty hot.

"Um, I guess not," Nao replied, a bit surprised at the question. She did want to be a gracious host though, so she ran off, and came back with a towel for me to use. The bathroom was pretty tiny, just this ultra-narrow space wedged in on the side of the house. The cool water of the shower was refreshing though, and helped wake me up.

Once I was done showering, I lightly brushed myself off with the towel, and got out of the tub. My shorts and halter were on top of my bag, but somehow I didn't feel like getting dressed again in this heat. I opened the door a crack, and peeked out. Nao seemed to be in the kitchen fixing us some lemonade, while Minori had disappeared off somewhere. I still wasn't sure how Nao felt about this whole nudity business, so I ended up wrapping the towel around me, and tying it in a knot just above my breast. I guess I kind of wanted to see what Nao would do, if I went out there like this. Even after I stepped out into the main room, Nao didn't look up at first.

"Could you take that out to Minori?" she suggested putting two glasses of lemonade on the counter. "She's out on the porch."

Amused that Nao hadn't noticed that I was dressed in a towel, I came over, and picked up the drinks. She finally looked up though, and frowned.

"Emi! Put some clothes on for heaven's sake."

I laughed, and intending to oblige, set down the drinks, heading back towards the bathroom. Just then, Nao remembered something, and disappeared off into the back to get whatever it was. Hmm. If she's going to be like that, maybe I can just slip outside, and see what Minori thinks of my outfit.

Checking my towel, I scooted back over, and picked up the drinks again. I quietly tiptoed over to the door, and slid my feet into my sandals. Balancing the two glasses against my tummy, I slowly turned the knob, and opened the door to outside. Minori was seated over at the top of the stairs, admiring the view. She heard me come out, but I don't think she noticed how I was dressed at first either. When she finally turned to see me, she let out a laugh.

"Hey, hey, hey! You shouldn't be out here like that," she chided, more playfully than Nao had.

"Here. Nao made us some lemonade," I said, grinning. I sat my bare bottom down next to Minori on the top stair. She looked over at me, her cat eyes sparking at my audacity.

"You are so funny!" she laughed.

I peered out over the edge, trying to tell if anyone below could see us. There were several houses there, but there didn't seem to be any windows facing up this way. Even so, I was getting more and more excited at being out here in just a towel.

"It's such a beautiful day out today," I grinned. Minori peered out over the edge too, but seemingly came to the same conclusion I had - no one could see us.

Up until then, I'd been pressing the towel tightly against my side with my arm, but seeing how calm Minori seemed with all of this, I relaxed, inadvertently letting the towel go. Slowly, it slid down, gradually exposing my pink nipples to the sun's gentle glow. I noticed, but thinking it was no big deal, left it like that.

Eventually, Nao came out, cradling a lemonade of her own.

"Hey! I thought I told you to get dressed," she hissed at me.

"This is an amazing place you have here," I gushed, trying to change the subject. "You can see the whole city and the ocean and everything."

Nao was worried about my indecent attire, but she did come over to the railing, and looked out at the view.

"Um, yeah, I guess," she granted. Minori stood up, and joined Nao at the rail.

I was growing tired of these coy games though. Holding the handrail in one hand and my cup in the other, I stood up. The knot in my towel had already come undone, so as soon as I stood, the towel unraveled, and fell down the stairs. I hadn't really intended to take things quite this far, but I was now standing here - stark naked - at the top of these stairs overlooking the whole town.

Minori actually broke out laughing. I laughed too, and motioning that I wanted to go after my towel, I handed the empty cup to the scandalized Nao. I'd blamed Minori for being proud of her naked body before, but now that I was the one naked, it felt great.

Giggling uncontrollably, I made it all the way down to the landing on the second floor before I stopped. It did appear that the artist and his girlfriend were out, but here I was naked on their doorstep. I was much closer to the houses now, but that just got me more excited still.

I could hear Nao calling me back, but my curiosity - and desire - were getting the better of me. Forgetting about the towel, I ducked around the end into the shade of the stairs. I was trying to remember what was at the bottom of the stairs on the first floor. I'm not sure if I would have gotten up the nerve to actually go down there, but anyway, before I could, Minori and Nao came down after me. Nao picked up my towel, and held it out to me.

I was terribly nervous and jittery, but I didn't take the towel from her at first. I was trying to read Nao's expression. She had stopped yelling at least, but maybe she was just worried about attracting attention. Minori looked a bit uneasy, still not quite sure what to make of all this. I was kind of glad that the two of them seemed as calm as they did, because that perhaps meant they didn't think I was so strange after all. Minori finally whispered,

"So what do you think you're doing down here? Nao's neighbors live right there you know."

"They are obviously not home," I countered.

"So what now? Are you just going to stay out here naked like this?"

"It is a lot cooler," I joked, still trying to break the tension. I could see that Nao wasn't really in a laughing mood, so I finally took the towel from her, and wrapped it back around me. Nao motioned for me to go back upstairs, so I did, the two of them watching out from behind, just to make sure no one else was around. I waited for them on the third floor landing, still wanting to get naked again, but keeping covered for Nao's sake.

"Here. Let's go back inside," Nao insisted. I went back in, and it did feel a bit cooler with the fan running. I sat down Indian style on Nao's living room carpet, waiting for them to say something.

"That was quite some stunt," Minori snorted. "Do you always do things like that?"

"Not always," I replied. "What about you? You said you get naked at your place."

"When I'm alone, I do," she admitted.

"What about you, Nao?" I asked. "Haven't you ever tried? You must be tempted with the heat and all."

"My roommates are usually here," she said, not answering the question.

"They are not here now," I noted. This was a not so subtle invitation to join me. Minori looked at Nao, but Nao didn't seem so keen.

"You look so comfortable - being naked I mean. Don't you feel embarrassed?" Nao asked, more softly now.

"Of course I do... but that's part of the fun of it," I confided. It's rare that I am so honest, but for some reason, I felt that I could trust the two of them. There was something about them. They seemed more sophisticated, more worldly than a lot of my friends.

We had a really long talk that day. They told me many things - experiences they'd had being naked, their dreams, or stories they'd heard. I was right I think. They were definitely curious about it, even if they weren't quite ready to wander around naked.

That day was a real breakthrough in some ways - one of the first times I felt able to open up, and tell people how I really feel. Maybe they didn't understand 100%, but they did seem to accept that this is the way I am.

I have a lot more stories to tell about Minori and Nao and that summer, but anyway, I guess I should stop for now. More next time.