

**Tokyo Seven Roses****Volume II***Hisashi Inoue, translated by Jeffrey Hunter***Pub Date:** May 2013
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ISBN: 9780857280459**Category:** FICTION/
Historical
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Description

A lively post-WWII portrait of Japanese who, despite privation, find relief in laughter.

Tokyo Seven Roses is set in Japan during the waning months of WWII and the beginning of the Occupation. It is written as a diary kept from April 1945 to April 1946 by Shinsuke Yamanaka, a fifty-three-year-old fan-maker living in Nezu, part of Tokyo's shitamachi (old-town) district. After the war, Shinsuke learns by chance that the Occupation forces are plotting a nefarious scheme: in order to cut Japan off from its dreadful past, they intend to see that the language is written henceforth using the alphabet. To fight off this unheard-of threat to the integrity of Japanese culture, seven beautiful women – the Seven Roses – take a stand. They include Tomoe, whose husband perished in a B29 raid and whose stepfather has gone mad; Fumiko and Takeko, whose elder sister died in an air raid; Sen, another war widow; Tokiko, who lost her parents and older brother; and Kyoko and Fumiko, whose entire families were wiped out.

The seven, while resentful of Japan's leaders for having lured the country down the path to war and, painfully aware of their own responsibility in being so gullible, hate the United States. They set their sights on three powerful members of the education delegation who have come to finalize official policy regarding the Japanese language. The year portrayed was a bleak and painful time for Japan. Shinsuke's diary, however, is surprisingly cheerful, filled with a wealth of details of ordinary people's openhearted lives. The author draws a lively portrait of Japanese who, despite privation, find relief in laughter.

Readership: This book will appeal to readers of humorous historical fiction and of post-WWII fiction in particular, to those with an interest in translated works by award-winning and prolific Japanese writers and English-speaking fans of Hisashi Inoue, as well as women readers.

About the Author

Hisashi Inoue (1934–2010) is an award-winning Japanese scriptwriter, playwright and novelist, and winner of the Kishida Kunio Stage Drama Award (1972), the Minister of Education Award for New Artists (1972), the Naoki Prize (1972), the Japan SF Grand Prize (1981), the Seiun Prize (1982) and the Tanizaki Jun'ichiro Prize (1991).

Jeffrey Hunter has worked as a translator and editor for 25 years, specializing in religion, philosophy, art, architecture, and both modern and Edo-period literature.

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