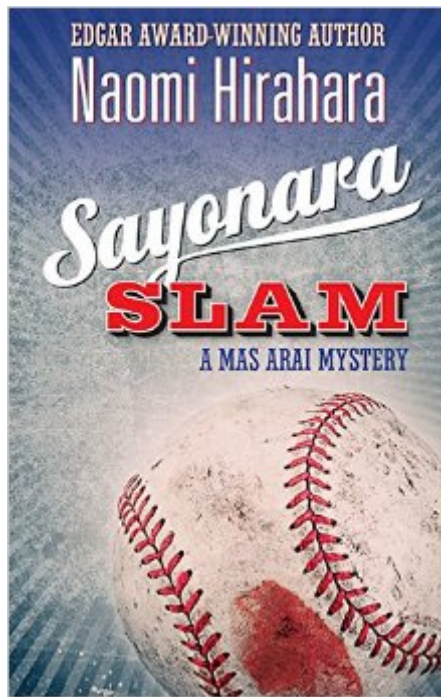


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Sayonara Slam (A Mas Arai Mystery)



Synopsis

Hirahara has a keen eye for the telling detail and an assured sense of character. • Los Angeles Times At Dodger Stadium it's Japan vs. Korea in the World Baseball Classic, but before the first pitch is thrown, Mas Arai finds himself in the middle of a murder. Mysteries layer atop mysteries in this sixth in the award-winning series featuring the most unlikely of sleuths, an aging, widowed, not-exactly-communicative gardener from Altadena, California. Who is that unusual woman throwing knuckleball pitches to warm up the Japanese team? Who sent thugs to threaten Mas and accuse him of treason? And what were in the deleted files on the murdered sportswriter's computer; and did they hold secrets that led to his death? The more mysteries Mas uncovers, the deeper he gets drawn into a situation that soon grows dangerous; including the danger of losing the affection of the woman he might someday admit he loves. • What makes this series unique is its flawed and honorable protagonist. . . . A fascinating insight into a complex and admirable man. • Booklist (starred review)

Book Information

Series: A Mas Arai Mystery

Paperback: 280 pages

Publisher: Prospect Park Books (April 26, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1938849736

ISBN-13: 978-1938849732

Product Dimensions: 5.4 x 0.7 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 10.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars • See all reviews • (21 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #154,243 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #173 in Books > Literature & Fiction > United States > Asian American #599 in Books > Literature & Fiction > Genre Fiction > Sports #1046 in Books > Mystery, Thriller & Suspense > Mystery > International Mystery & Crime

Customer Reviews

California writer Naomi Hirahara may have created one of the most unlikely sleuths in mystery history. Mas Arai is nearing eighty years old, a curmudgeonly almost-retired gardener, with only one regular client, a dilapidated car, failing eyesight, dentures, and a house in Altadena filled with his no-longer-estranged daughter and her family. A survivor of Hiroshima, Mas is a simple widower who doesn't get why the younger generation is so flashy, or needs to talk so much. In this sixth

instalment in Naomi Hirahara's Edgar Award-winning series, Mas is helping out his son-in-law Lloyd, now head groundskeeper at Dodger Stadium, before Japan faces South Korea in the World Baseball Classic. What should be a leisurely day sharpening mower blades ends up as something else altogether. First Mas is surprised to see a female pitcher throwing to the Japanese team in warm-ups. Then he meets Smitty Takaya, a Dodgers executive who played in Japan and explains the woman, Neko Kawasaki, is a minor league knuckleballer preparing the Japanese hitters to face Korea's elite closer, a rare master of the unique, hard-to-hit pitch. The day gets more bizarre as Mas learns there's a largely forgotten Japanese Garden at Dodger Stadium, and is then questioned by police after an abrasive and disliked Japanese sportswriter, Itai, keels over dead. A man Mas had given a bottle of water to, just minutes before. While the death doesn't delay the game, things get more complicated when young journalist Kimura Yukikazu arrives from Japan to replace Itai. Yuki is the grandson of Akemi, Mas's childhood girlfriend, and had stayed with Mas and gotten into trouble many years ago. Now he wants to hire Mas as a driver and translator as he investigates Itai's death.

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