

Manual for a worldwide manuke revolt

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2016

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Original translator's intro (2021)

This is the first chapter of the book *Sekai Manuke Hanran Tebiki*, or *Manual for a Worldwide Manuke Revolt*. As the title indicates, it's all a little bit foolish, but we can assure the reader that, while it's out of step with the society in which we live, it's certainly in keeping with the times. With large numbers of people out of work – many intentionally! - and with governments putting the screws to us to reopen the economy and reopen ourselves to further drudgery with less applause and free pizza, some advice about how to earn money you don't have to work for is a welcome thing. There's also a section on how to make friends and meet people, which I think we could all benefit from in these socially strained times. While this was written primarily for a Japanese audience, for those without bike parking lots or large scale public transportation near them there's plenty of inspiration to be had, or at least laughs.

This book is available through Kinokuniya and other sources for fine literature. For those interested in supporting the author more directly and who don't mind the hassle of using a Japanese intermediary to import it, you can find it at their storefront at shiroran5.base.shop.

Matsumoto Hajime was born in Tokyo in 1974. He runs the recycle shop "Shirouto no Lan 5." He's also vice president of the Koenji Kitanakadoori chamber of commerce. Since forming the Association to Protect the Broke Students of Hosei University in 1994, he's been starting *manuke* revolts in various places. He opened Shirouto no Lan (Amateur Riot) in 2005 in Koenji, Tokyo with Yamashita Hikaru and others. After that he put together lots of ridiculous demonstrations, including "3 person demo," "Gimme back my bike demo," "Make rent free demo" and "Stop nuclear power demo!!!!" He's run a guest house and is currently running a bar and more in Koenji while aiming for a worldwide *manuke* revolution by deepening ties with alternative spaces overseas and building a cultural network with the huge morons of the world. His writings include *Binboujin Gyakushuu~ tada de ikiru houhou* (*Poor People Strike Back~ How to live for free*) and *Sekai Manuke Hanran Tebiki* (*Manual for a Worldwide Manuke Revolt*) (Chikuma Shobou) and more. You can find his blog at matsumoto-hajime.com.

2022 translator's intro

Normally I wouldn't feel the need to write a second introduction in such a short period of time, but 2021 seems like an eon ago, and the rise of anti-work as a sometimes abortive, often online culture alongside the Great Resignation calls for further comment. In particular, it was the publication of the Tangping Manifesto in English that spurred me to bring this translation online.

Tangping has a lot in common with Matsumoto-san's revolt - indeed, he's written the introduction to the Japanese translation. While I can't speak for the man himself, the vision of "out of control" bodies that refuse "the order of time itself" and festivals that disrupt spaces of consumption and production alongside the calls for "secret affinity" among outsiders of society will sound very familiar to readers of this text. Indeed, with a little rephrasing, one could easily say, "...from the moment they threw a wild party on the subway, the manuke person's body was already outside the country. Not only does their existence constitute another ethnic group, but the land on which they party becomes completely detached from the old country."

Part of the value of this work is that it, like Tangping, inspires anarchists to imagine what a retiring stance towards Society can look like without asceticism or retreat from each other, constantly aspiring towards an existence without work or money and helping us laugh at our own failure to get there, though never giving up. The manuke individual can revel in the ashes of failed projects like r/antiwork, laughing at the pearl-clutching that followed an extremely manuke interview with a certain mod while at the same time appreciating the attempt to create more "secret affinities" with our fellow idiots around a mutual loathing for labor.

- Max Res, March 2022

MANUKE: Something blundered in concept or action. Or, that kind of person. Like "idiot," "dope," "blockhead," etc., a term used to scold a dim-witted person.

The "ma" in "manuke" refers to a space in time. In plays, dances, comedic dialogue [manzai] and elsewhere this "ma" refers to a length of time in which the sound and action ceases, and is also used in reference to rhythm and tempo.

"Ma ga nukeru" [lit. to miss a space] means missing a beat or losing the rhythm, not keeping pace with the tempo of something.

Deriving from this, it came to mean a slip-up in one's actions, and became a word used to scold a dim-witted person.

gogen-allguide.com/ma/manuke.html

Manual for a worldwide manuke revolt

Prologue

My fellow *manuke* of the world, rejoice! Throughout Japan, nay, the earth, huge morons have started making tons of unthinkable spaces in opposition to this pointless world. Totally fun places, places that seem on the edge of shutting down but keep it together and persist, extremely cool spaces, places with a full-throttle feeling of freedom, places that are too stupid, places where unexpected people of mystery appear one after another... What's that? What's goin' on? Hey, this looks fun!

And when you take a look at the television or the newspaper, they're filled with worthless stories. It's all gloomy and hard-luck news, and rich thugs are always up to no good... In an atmosphere where students have to think about advancing in school and working at the same time, broke good-for-nothings feel ashamed just walking down the street. There are those among the older generation with pleasant memories of the high-growth era that still say ridiculous things like, "All you have to do is work hard and you'll have a good life," but that time is long gone. They said that if we built all sorts of infrastructure we'd have an affluent society, but in the end all that did was increase the amount of work and made us busy instead. Damn, we got had!

But! The *manuke* of the world long ago noticed the fact that this value system was hopeless. **Alright! Let's ditch this lifeless world! What's most important to us is the freedom to do whatever we want!** And moreover, the truth is that there are already tons of great places where there's a wild sense of freedom, places making really incredible stuff, places where interesting people are constantly gathering, totally stupid art spaces, unthinkable concert spaces, excessively

nonsensical shops and more. When it's come to this, all the world's fools who've finally lost their patience can do is start tons of spaces for themselves and start living their own lives! **A world totally unrelated to** the kind of consumer society made by rich people and big companies **where all you do is work and spend money!!** And if those *manuke* start wandering around and the **interesting morons of the world get more and more connected, it seems like something wild will happen.**

In this book, we'll refine the first-of-its-kind plan to set up and maintain the spaces that will act like a base for this *manuke* revolution.

The first chapter will be on the most basic of basics, from how to make stupid friends and scam money to how to make unpredictable places of mystery.

Chapter Two will be on how to make a true shop. This will be an extremely practical introduction based on my own experience with a recycle shop, bar, guest house, event space and more.

Chapter Three will introduce laid-back *baka* centers already spread throughout Japan and the world, studying the means each used to cut out a space of their own!

Finally, in Chapter Four I'd like to plan for how to connect these various *baka* centers, or how to conspire to do something together, making the national borders between these idiots come rumbling down.

Alright, read this book, and let's open ridiculous shops and spaces one after another!!!!

**Manuke* space = *baka* center = autonomous space

*For the contact information and address of various spaces, see the table at the end of this book.

Something unexpected is starting! - Rehearsals for creating a *manuke* place

For starters, let's try doing something in the city. Get interesting folks who are wandering around there involved, make money through fraudulent means, it's fine if it's just temporary, let's think about ways of creating an atmosphere of autonomy in the city. If you try doing something wild in the city, even if it's small, it'll create a bunch of hints and clues for you. Alright, let's get started already.

A harbinger of something! Let's make a crowd

Walking around in the city, there's nothing interesting enough to draw a crowd. If you see people gathering from afar, you get excited, thinking, "Hey, what's going on?" Even more so if people are making a racket, that means it's a big deal! It should get people running over as fast as possible, starting by gathering at a distance to check out what's going on.

If there are times when poor people who've been ripped off meet in the beautiful spectacle of a mob beating up a rich person, there are also times when it might simply be brats who've found dog shit. If you've got arguments between drunks, you've also got an unpopular performer doing something or other. It might be some *manuke* who fell into a manhole being helped out, and it might be a scuffle between customers and the manager of a Yoshinoya when the amount of meat is less than usual. If you see a huge group of people gathered and rush over thinking there's finally

a big riot happening, it might just be that Pacific saury is half-price at AmeYo. Or else when you run over thinking a disorderly crowd is gathering, and it might just be an assembly of old women who've bought down futons for 50,000 yen!! That's no good, granny, buying something like that when you're gonna die soon!!

Well, anyway, for better or worse, when people are jumbled together doing this and that, it means there's something there.

When you go to an extremely poor country, you can form a crowd just by standing still for a minute. Even in post-war Japan, there was that thing where a white person who'd lost their way would have brats wondering if they'd be giving out chocolate, geezers and old bags gathering a little ways away to watch them just by stopping in the street (at least that's what I think happened)! No fair, no fair! You guys are always ready to crowd around if something happens! Woo, lemme in too!

Today's society feels kinda unpleasant, really, where despite people being interested in lots of stuff they act like they aren't. Hmm, this ain't good! This crowd ain't gonna form itself, so let's go all out trying to get people together. Nothing beats having experience with crowds and always being on standby to join a disturbance, so let's get prepared!

So, now that it's come to this, it's time for Operation Crowd! A crowd is a sign that something's happening. There's a strong chance that something wild's gonna happen, so when you're bored, all you can do is freeze in the street and form a crowd!

Operation Big Panic Big Party on the Yamanote Line

There are naturally occurring crowds like when people gather in the cool of the evening, but there are other ways of doing this too, such as throwing your own drinking party or just a big party out of nowhere in the street or in front of a train station and causing a big fuss. What makes street guerrilla actions really interesting is that, when you do them, you'll encounter new people you'd never expect to meet. That said, the kinda people who you're gonna get to join a guerrilla street drinking party are the kinda people you'd expect to be into that kinda thing – hmm, isn't there some way to bring in a totally unexpected group of people and turn it into a major disturbance?!

When this question occurred to you, here a solution: Operation Yamanote! **The Yamanote Line is constantly running in a loop**, and I've thrown guerrilla parties on there before. What's more, trains are on 24-hour service on New Year's Eve, so there's no last train! Yeah, this is great!

Now at that point it was already close to 1 AM, but I loaded into the lead car on the Yamanote Line with the layabouts and immediately set up a *chabudai* at the center! I then set out a bottle of *masu* sake and slowly began to drink. When I did this, the other people in the car began telling me, "Wow, that looks good!" to which I immediately called out, "Oh yeah, wanna glass?" and then my friends began to multiply! What's more, when I started handing out the large amount of paper cups I'd brought with me and pouring sake in saying stuff like "Hey, happy New Year!" I got a surprisingly good reaction! That's great, just what you'd expect early on New Year's morning. Whatever you do, people end up saying "Ahh, what a joyous occasion" – it's the most *manuke* day in Japan. Man, it's wonderful.

And just like that the entire train had become a big party between strangers, it was something to see. And naturally we were also stopping at stations. When we arrived and the automatic doors opened, we immediately offered cups to the people boarding and, with a "Please, help yourself" be-

gan pouring the sake! **We also got reactions of “my my” from old people when we offered them drinks as if we hadn’t just sneak attacked them.** In this way, we started a party among a ton of people in a moment, and started a big disturbance on the Yamanote Line!! And with almost everyone being new acquaintances, they were all saying stuff like “congratulations” to each other, totally incomprehensible—drinking parties this fun are pretty rare!

When the party was in full swing, it seemed like the JR people had finally noticed something, and when we stopped at some station they gave the announcement, “The train will remain stopped for a moment while we conduct an onboard inspection!” Oho, this means the cat’s finally out of the bag! Clean up! Clean up! We immediately folded up the *chabudai*, hid the *masu* sake, and stood around acting like we were normal passengers! Immediately, an attendant from the station came running in, but there was no evidence of the big party. They started to go back, saying, “Huh, looks like it was nothing...,” but the fact that only that car smelled strangely of sake, that there was an excessive amount of people drinking out of cups, and that people in that area were talking excitedly to one another, all of this was pretty suspicious. With a fair bit of doubt they ran their eyes over the car. At that, our mastermind made a displeased face and played dumb but, with them eyeing the *chabudai* and folded flag oddly, we knew we were in trouble, so we slowly slid out onto the platform, ran away in a mad dash, and dispersed! (By the way, one of our companions slipped up and was late to get away, and came back after being snatched up and severely chastised by the attendant).

Now, the failure to get away at the end was a little *manuke*, but this strategy was pretty good. Because you’re on a train, you’ve got the benefit of having people coming in whether they want to be there or not. What’s more, it’s totally unthinkable for the people waiting on the platform that, when the train comes and they board, there’d be a big party on it! Apparently there were people doing it on the Kansai Keihan train too, so it’s a very versatile plan, and you should by all means give it a try. **And, as a word of advice, your speed at running away is key.** Bending over backwards in an argument with the station attendants is a pain in the ass, so run away as fast as possible. And one more thing. If you do this on a train stuffed with people going to work or going home, it’s just going to be a huge bother to everyone, so it’s best to avoid this. In the end, getting into boxing matches with bloodthirsty salarymen being worked to the bone or pointless arguments with other poor people is just what the rich want. Plan to do it at a time when you’ll have a little space, and if things get hairy, run away as fast as you can! That’s key.

While we’re at it, let’s think about other ways we can put this plan into action!

Operation Hell Bus!

Board a city bus and throw a wild *manuke* party! Sounds pretty good... or so I thought, but on top of the bus being too narrow, unlike a train it can stop at any time, so the driver could absolutely shut it down in a second. Also, because people pass the driver as they board city buses, if you’re passing out sake to people there the driver’s gonna throw a punch at you from the side and that’s it. This is no good. If it were a country bus that loaded from the rear you could sidestep this, but on top of the fact that few people ride country buses they’re also full of old people, so even if you’re serving sake you just end up as a nice guy. Big panics be damned, it just becomes a heartwarming scene. **If this is a thing where people are gonna try giving you tamagoyaki or something in thanks, I dunno what to say.** The only thing left is Operation Hell Tour

Bus, but these days they aren't that different from buses filled with grannies and grandads going strawberry picking, so that sucks too! As I expected, buses aren't really fit for this.

Operation Store

There are many times when, on occasion, I'll set aside everything I'm selling in my recycle shop, spread out some mats, pull out the kotatsu and set up a TV, throwing a drinking party as if it were a family get-together. At times like these, just like with Operation Yamanote, people coming in thinking it's a normal recycle shop will, when all of a sudden confronted with this scene, exclaim "whoa!" as their eyes widen in surprise. Then, for whatever reason, they'll settle into the kotatsu and have a drink. This works pretty well, but, because my sales drop to zero, I don't wanna do this too much.

Operation Elevator

This one's no good. In addition to being too cramped and uninteresting, it leaves a bad impression. I'm sure you can remember all those times when, as a kid, you'd play hide-and-go-seek in the many elevators inside huge housing complexes and get slapped by lecturing old women on their way home from shopping, right? Thinking about it now, it really was a bother. On top of that, even if you do have people who happen to join in, they're getting off in some tens of seconds, so there's almost no excitement.

Operation Denenchofu

It's bad to get into it with fellow poor people. Meaning, if we're doing this, it might be a good idea to try venturing into a rich neighborhood. While it's not a drinking party, I once broadcast guerrilla online radio on the streets of Denenchofu, Tokyo's highest class neighborhood. Broadcasting the radio from the street while making a racket saying stuff like, "Damn, these rich people are ridiculous," I also interviewed the police when bringing stuff that had fallen around there to the police box, but these guys are tough! They're too good! They answered my questions politely, rich people were waving their hands at me from their second floor windows, everyone was very kind. Yeah, incredible! By the way, poor people that I try to get excited but can't are brutal, and mini rich people who I've barely succeeded with are narrow-minded. However, very rich people are completely unperturbed, they're very flexible. In the end, defiant poor people and the very rich are the wealthiest in spirit, there's no question.

But, no matter how nice people are, don't be fooled! People in their position have likely gotten there over the corpses of countless poor people. Here it might be best to choke back your tears and throw a big party! Hey rich people! Just you wait! Fuck you, waving your hands at us!

Operation Hotel Lobby

This one you can use. It doesn't work if you're somewhere like a small business hotel, but places like big hotels not only have big lobbies, but also lots of people. It also feels nice to sit down in an expensive couch and pretend you're among the privileged classes once in a while. There's even a chance that old guys, the kind that turned their backs on the All-Campus Struggle

era and are now company executives (the worst kind of old guys), will remember the old days and give you snacks. Alright, let's go get treated by those old guys!

Lots of random people show up at hotels, so you'll be able to use the lobby as a rule. If someone does end up saying something to you, you should disperse, saying something like, "Ahh, I was waiting for somebody, but I guess they're not coming... that asshole, I dunno what's wrong with them!"

Well, I'm not totally sure about all that, but the basics of this strategy are to have a drinking party in a place no-one would expect it and to get away as fast as possible. Try out all sorts of places – entrances to community centers, blind corners at department stores, airports, baseball stadiums, colleges, the Diet building, etc.

Also, it's best not to cause too much of a trouble for people. For example, on the train, people who don't wanna drink should be able to go to the next car, and as they've got their own freedom too, you should make a path for them to be able to leave. Though, people get overly bothered by little things in today's society, so I think you're bound to cause some amount of disorder, but how far you wanna take it is a case-by-case basis, so do whatever feels right! Good luck!

The fearsome, completely fraudulent property “Shin Yamagawa-sou”

Electricity and rent free?!

Whether it's in the street, in the park, while enjoying the cool of a summer evening or on the Yamanote Line, the really interesting part about making your own space in a public place is becoming fast friends with the *manuke* passersby who happen to pass through and shout “what the hell is this!” in surprise. This is one of the true charms of taking guerrilla action to create a space of mystery in the street. Ridiculous people keep appearing one after another, and on top of that everyone's there by coincidence, which makes it extremely thrilling and fun.

But, the thing that's really tough about this is keeping it up. You're doing it in a public space, so you've gotta get everything ready and gather people starting from zero every time, and when it's over you've gotta clean everything up and go home. On top of that, the space disappears the second things are over. Ahh, what a waste... and it's there you start asking whether you don't need a space that's always there. Doing something on the street is fine, but wouldn't it be nice to have a space where people can always gather and someone'll always be there when you go there?! So, with that in mind, before I opened my own shop, around the year 2000, I went looking for a shared space where everyone could gather.

First of all, when you're putting in the effort to look for a space, you should find one that's comfy. Life just keeps getting harder in Japanese society lately, so people will complain about every little thing. Just renting an apartment or a condo and getting together to drink with two or three people will bring complaints, and worse still you won't be able to do anything when it's late. So **set your sights on properties like offices, warehouses, and shops.** Usually places like rented office space are surrounded by other office space, so you're free to do pretty much anything you like because no-one's living there. Rented stores are good too, and there's no problem with people gathering in them. In addition, under the pressure of large-scale shopping malls, chain stores in front of train stations, and big stores, local shopping districts continue to decline. Shopping districts on the verge of collapse can be found anywhere in Japan, and if you're diligent about looking, empty retail space will often turn up. Warehouse property is good too, though of-

ten warehouses don't have any kind of accommodations or anything as a rule, so while they're good if you wanna create a space from scratch, they'll also cost time, money and labor depending on the situation. Also, when you're signing the contract for the warehouse it will often have the condition that "this is to be used as a warehouse only," so try discussing with them about wanting to use it as an office or event space beforehand. You've also got the option of using every trick in the book to pass everything you do off as "work in progress," but you'll also risk squabbling with the landlord and getting thrown out, so I leave that decision to the you the reader and however much you're up for that. Ah, the thing about this is – and this isn't just limited to warehouses but whenever you're renting a property and starting something – the fact is that while I'm talking to you about contracts and stuff, what you can get away with is mostly decided by how well you get along with the landlord and the neighbors, so things like going around and greeting everyone when you first move in and your daily interactions with people are extremely important. Calling over the neighbors when you're holding events or drinking parties is also good.

Property you keep secret from the landlord

So, while I went looking for property in the way I just described, the property I happened to discover just out of the blue was also incredible. I was able to rent a fraudulent prefab shed on the roof of a building close to Shinjuku, plus the whole roof. On top of that it was property that came from your typical suspicious real estate agent who, after first telling me, "There's no cheap property in this area!" and I stuck to it, said, "Well, actually there is." At that point there was also a reasonably priced condo, but being cooped up in a condo has the feeling of a secret hideout and seems like it would have a closed feeling to it too, so however you think about it, a place that's got a feeling of freedom like the mysterious roof of a building is better.

Now, the roof of this building was wild too. First, this old real estate agent was extremely shady, and when it finally came to us renting the property, he was strangely accommodating. All too quickly he started acting friendly to us, installing a high-end air conditioner out of nowhere and saying that prefab sheds on roofs get very hot in the summer. And when we finally rented it, this old guy slid in and said, "Whatever you do, I'm asking you, please keep this a secret from the landlord!" Whoa! So that was it! You're telling us that, because the landlord lives far away, you can just rent out the roof as you wish?! So that means that the rent we're paying goes straight to the real estate agent's pocket... Hmm, this goes deep! But, **when you sense this kind of complicated situation, you can't go too deep**. No listening to the details, just act like nothing happened and have a positive attitude, saying man, this place is great!

By the way, the area of the shed was about 8 *tatami* wide [about 142 square feet], and the roof about 4-5 times that. Rent for the whole roof space was 80,000 yen [about \$730 as of this translation]. For some reason there was no charge for electricity or water (**don't think too hard about it**). It was even hooked up for cable TV. But the electricity seemed to have low amperage, so the breaker would switch after using a little electricity, and when we asked the real estate agent to do something about, he'd mutter something like, "Ahh, that's tough, I can't just fix it myself. I'd need the key to there" and other nonsense. And then, after a few weeks time, the real estate agent's old man appeared out of nowhere with a big grin, saying, "Matsumoto-kun, I made a key! Now you'll be all set," and even more unintelligible stuff, and from the next day on we were able to use lots of electricity (**don't think too hard about it, seriously**). I remember thinking, man, Shinjuku is a pretty incredible place!

A hammock close to Shinjuku, with a rooftop pool

Leaving aside the sketchiness of the property itself, now that we had our hands on this kind of place, it was pretty convenient. We named it Shin Yamagawa-sou after my old apartment, Yamagawa-sou, which had turned into a guest house. Compared to the kind of place where things would happen unpredictably, whenever you went there there'd always be someone there, and you could leave stuff there too. It was surprisingly convenient because, especially when there weren't events happening, you could tell people hey, come over whenever you want. And, because it was on a rooftop, there was a strange sense of release. The building was located near the front of the Okubo station on the JR Soubu Line, and because it was about the height of the elevated rail platforms it really felt like it was right in front of you. There were mobs of salarymen who'd crowd the platforms when it was time to go to work in the morning or something. But for us, in the summer we'd be **playing music or sleeping in a hammock**, for now just watching the scenery of the station, pledging in our hearts that we'd stop taking work so seriously. It felt really good to be on a rooftop in a big city, and in the summer we wouldn't just put up a hammock, we'd also set up a **giant plastic pool** and swim around in it (water was free) and hang up a pointlessly giant flag, **making it a completely mysterious area**. It wasn't just a hangout, we'd do stuff like movie showings, exhibits for photographers, **one-day-only bars**, and have regular drinking parties. One time somebody brought a drum set and we turned it into a **studio for drum practice** (unsurprisingly, this was too loud, and the Yakuza from the neighborhood came and yelled at us). Anyway, we turned it into a space we could use for all sorts of stuff, and it was really convenient, it was a place where anytime something was happening everyone would just get together. This was a time in Okubo before the Korea fad turned the whole area into a kinda a Korea Town tourist destination. There were people there not just from Korea, but China and South America, the Middle East, even people who you couldn't tell where they were from, it was pretty mixed together. We got to know those people too and sometimes they'd come up to the rooftop to hang out, it was pretty interesting.

By the way, we managed this by having every set member be responsible for 5,000 to 10,000 yen a month for rent. At that time, we were putting out something called the "*Binboujin Shinbun*" [Poor People's Newspaper] with people who gathered around there, making t-shirts, and by making money selling those on the street we somehow ran the place.

Rent's free too!?

Well, we kept that place going for about four years, and management went smoothly as the membership changed, but shady places come with shady situations. One time, it seemed like that real estate agent got into it with the people who lived on the floor below, forcibly carrying out all the belongings from a room in the building and putting them in our rooftop space of all things. We felt kinda bad for the person who'd had their stuff carried out and left somewhere where it could get rained on, but well, we didn't know the situation so we weren't gonna butt in. However, we were paying our rent, so we weren't gonna put up with having this stuff left there. Even though we told the real estate agent to hurry up and do something he didn't move it anywhere, and in the end one or two months passed with a ridiculous amount of someone else's stuff piled up there, so as you might expect we lost our cool and said **we're on rent strike!!!** and as the real estate agent had his own faults he couldn't protest that strongly, so this went

surprisingly well. He finally cleaned up the stuff a few months later, but, our opponent being a swindler, we couldn't just pay up that easy. "Please guys, you're gonna have to pay up soon" he'd plead, "Ahh, but if you're just gonna do stuff like that, we can't feel secure here. **We'll see how things go for a little and pay after that**" we'd reply, with something vague even for us, having these kinds of elusive exchanges. Even if we ran into each other on the street he'd be looking as if he were gonna ask about the rent, **so we'd give him a big smile and greet him with a "Hello!" and start talking very excitedly about the weather** and overcome the situation. We realized that, even with the stuff gone, the property had become rent-free.

But of course, things weren't gonna go that easy, and after 8 months in this rent-free space, this old guy started saying, "Matsumoto-kun, this really isn't gonna work, if you don't start paying your rent we're gonna have you out by force." Thinking this meant trouble, we allied with the other tenants, didn't pass this guy the keys to the doors we changed the locks on, and make plans for a siege, but he wouldn't give up so easily. By this time, even if we tried to change the subject with a "Hey, how's it going?" or a "Well now," the next minute he'd say, "No way! This is no good!" On top of all that, he'd started posting posters with a **mysterious countdown** saying "Rent please. After XX days." Geez, that ain't good! The old guy's getting serious! Have things already gone this far?? So the night before the countdown ran out, in the middle of the night, a suicide squad of a few people moved all our valuables out of Shin Yamagawa-sou, and right after that the old guy called up a locksmith in the neighborhood, changed the locks, and announced the closure of Shin Yamagawa-sou. Thus the curtain closed on our mysterious hideout of 4 years!! Man, that was a close one!

This Shin Yamagawa-sou was a space in the deepest backstreets of Shinjuku, so from beginning to end it was all kind of a scam, but if you're looking to open a share space in a normal place it's probably not gonna end up in this kinda ridiculous situation, so I hope you'll feel at ease in your search to find a place.

The most basic of basics: how to make friends

When you're thinking of going out and doing something, if you're doing it alone, the chance of succeeding is definitely low, your personality is gonna become kinda stoic, and in the first place it's kinda boring. With lots of friends, when you're conspire to do all sorts of things, helping each other out, and coming up with good plans together, it's really heartening.

In struggling against this no-good society based around rich people, having ridiculous friends and acquaintances really is pretty important. So with that said, let's introduce the most basic of basics, how to make friends!!

Operation Dump Tons of Fliers

I've held plenty of guerrilla drinking party-type events in front of train stations and places like that. When you're doing this in your hometown or a town where you know lots of people, if you call up your friends and everyone's just drinking casually these events tend to spread. But, when you're doing it in a town where you're a total stranger, you've gotta start with zero friends. At times like these, I've often used something called Operation Flier. Here's what it's all about.

First, make a flier with whatever you want on it. Make a ton of fliers that say something like, "Wherever you go everyone's uptight and it's no joke! My fellow poor people, all we can

do is head on over to the front of the train station and drink!!!!” so even though you’re just drinking **they’re strangely high tension**. What’s important now is that you write your cell phone number in giant numbers. It’s the same strategy as with a newspaper page – if you write a headline in huge letters, people will think, “Whoa, that’s a big deal” even if the news that isn’t that big a deal. The same thing with handouts, if they’ve got a huge phone number written on them, there’s a strong chance they’ll think, “Alright, we’ve gotta drink!” and your phone’ll be ringing before you know it. Especially in today’s society where all information just goes through social networking sites, a classic handout will work perfectly. You can include stuff like your Line ID and QR codes in the information on there too, but in these times scattering paper everywhere has a pretty big impact.

So once you’ve got the flier made and you’re handing them out, avoid at all costs doing something tedious like standing in front of a station or somewhere handing them out one by one saying “take one if you want.” First, I recommend bike baskets. Any station will have 500 – 2,000 bikes parked around it. Try putting them in the baskets of these bikes. For time of day, I recommend doing it in the evening. Lots of people will be going home from work or school when the night comes, so get ‘em in before then. It’s the perfect time to do it because you can even put ‘em in the bikes of older women out shopping and good-for-nothings playing pachinko even in the evening.

Also, and this is a little risky so I don’t recommend it, you can do something drastic like **scattering them from rooftops or boarding the first train of the day and sticking them to the advertisements hanging inside** (it’s super effective because rush hour starts soon and there won’t be time to peel them off). Be very careful – if you’re seen doing stuff like this there’s a chance you’ll end up hogtied at the police station (and maybe in their care for a few days depending on the situation), and your running speed and other escape skills will be put to the test. Well, it might be safest for people who definitely want to go to the party to avoid this.

You can also put them in the spot where juice or tobacco come out of vending machines, stick them up in the stalls of public bathrooms and ticket machines in stations, leave them on all the tables with the guest seats in the second floors of McDonald’s (bring your running shoes), just spread a ton of them wherever they seem like they’ll stand out to people.

You can’t just spread them around either, because the more impact it has the stronger impression it’ll leave on the people who see you doing it, so think of it as a guerrilla action, and please try doing something wild!

Oh yeah, there’s one thing to pay attention to. If you’re spreading fliers around in a way that’s overly exposed, sometimes you’ll get a call from a cop or security guard saying, “You’re gonna cause trouble if you’re putting these around here,” so say something proper like, “What, really? Again?! Man, I made 50,000 copies, I dunno who’s handing out what or how. This is a real pain for me too! Today’s the day I’m gonna catch ‘em in the act and give ‘em hell!” or something and slip outta there.

So, doing stuff like that, once you’ve spread around 1,500 – 2,000 fliers near a station, go buy some canned beer from the convenience store and drink. Once you do, you’ll get about 10 – 15 calls from people being like, “I was thinking the same thing!” and, “What’s this all about?” Without a moment’s delay, say something like, “Oh, well, I’m drinking near the station right now, come and join!!!!” and pull them in one after another. If you do, just like that, it’ll become a mysterious sidewalk drinking party of 5 – 10 people. At this point, this drinking party of huge morons will just keep building energy! And these guys, they’re from around town, so they’re

gonna know a lot of the people walking by, and just like, “Oh, what are you doin’ in a place like this?” → “Aha, I’ll have a drink,” your numbers will increase naturally. Or someone will say, “I know a guy who’d love this” and friends will be calling their friends, and they’ll make it more exciting.

There’s local information online and in magazines, but the biggest source is the locals themselves. When they’re drinking they’ll start saying stuff like, “The barkeeper at the bar at the entrance to that alley is one crazy dude,” “There’s a really good event happening this weekend,” “You should meet so-and-so from the general store on such-and-such street,” “The shape of the soy sauce bottles at the Something-or-other Diner is something else,” and you’ll have a mountain of really important information falling into your lap in one night. When it gets to this point you’ve got it made, and the next time you show up there you should contact the people you’ve met and have them take you to all those wild spots.

Of course there will be times when all you get is creeps hanging around, or even times when you have bad luck and no-one comes. What’s important is that you just keep it up and try throwing yourself into it!

Operation Bar

I can already hear people complaining, saying there’s no way they could dump tons of fliers everywhere, but it’s easy once you give it a shot, and I wanna have you out there and excited to do it.

But, for the person who really thinks they can’t, there are easier methods out there. Just wander around town drinking. If you don’t like alcohol, oolong tea works too, and if you don’t like bars themselves, an independent cafe is fine too. What’s more, it doesn’t have to be somewhere serving alcohol, but a store with lots of weird stuff lying around, or a used clothing store filled with stuff you can’t imagine anyone wearing, or a strangely curated record shop... the point is, if it’s a place that fits your style even a little, it’ll get interesting when you’re partying and people start talking about strange things.

Using myself as an example, there’s a recycle shop I’d drop by in Nakano prefecture run by, as you’d expect, an oddball older guy. So, out of nowhere I said, “Hey, how about a beer,” we started drinking together, and then became friends. At the beginning, ‘cause we were both in the same business, we started trading goods, and while we were doing that I’d have friends go over his place to stay the night and train, and at the end of all of that we held the “Nantoka Fest” music event at a place he had at the mountain near his house.

This kinda thing is surprisingly common, like when you’ve got a favorite drinking spot and, before you know it, you’re part of a sandlot baseball team. Yep, just going somewhere and drinking will make something big happen. You don’t know what exactly, so try popping in lots of places.

So, first, go into every shop you can find with a kinda strange aura coming from it. Who knows what could be in there!

Selling stuff on the street

Now, even if you don’t have a store, you can just try selling something on the street.

Indeed, when someone's a customer, the pretense of someone selling something seems to make it easier to casually drop by. Now that I'm saying it it seems obvious, and even if you're interested, going out of your way to contact someone and going to their home or office might not be that easy (if you're saying "that's not that bad" then you're an advanced learner, and you can skip this section). Instead, because you've got the pretense of going to check out what someone's selling, it might make going easier because you can go home as soon as you want. And because this makes it easy to take the chance, it'll be easy to make friends.

I'll give a few more examples.

This one time, a friend of mine who's a gardener resorted to extreme measures. What was he thinking? Even though he was picking up stones at his job and lining them up on the side of the street priced at 300 or 500 yen, running a totally fraudulent shop, in the end he made a cool 0 yen and instead people thought he was too suspicious to talk to! A failure? You don't say! The guy himself said "Ahh, no good, huh?" but of course, selling stuff like you're in a third world country ripping off tourists is obviously gonna be tough!

On the other hand, there's someone next to my shop who does their own fortune telling, and while at first I thought it was pretty old-fashioned, it did really well as they kept it up, and there was a fair amount of different people coming in and out of there. Hmm, I guess this kinda thing still works!

When I go overseas, I see tons of open-air stalls. Stores like one **with a slightly soiled scale selling weight measurements for 10 yen each**. Trying to make money like this is ridiculous, but it was surprisingly popular, and eventually it had an electric display board, they were selling scales for use on the side of the road, things had gotten kind of out of hand.

Also, even in the old Shanghai there was something good being sold on the street – **a mechanism to stop the needle on your home water meter**. Well, not a mechanism so much as something with a really powerful magnet stuck to it that'd stop the needle from moving forward. **The old guy selling it was dressed lightly, always getting ready to run for it** as he gave a big speech, saying "All you have to do is put this in place, the needle stops, and you won't need to pay your water bill anymore!" And with that, the *manuke* crowd started crowding around. "Is that really true?" "Of course, just look!" - it was a big to-do. The guy selling it was suspicious too, and he wouldn't really let you take a close look. And when someone bought it there was a ruckus, with people crowding around them saying "Lemme see it!" and them saying "No!" That's great, what a fun sight! It's not clear whether you're gonna make friends like that, but at least having some connection with people is nice – at least, it's better than today's Tokyo.

Also, there are some ridiculous open-air stalls in Japan too. When I was drinking on the street a lot, I often went to Shimokitazawa, and in Shimokita I'd often see this guy a little older than me who had the air of an old man. Dressed in shabby clothing, he'd be riding a strangely eye-catching bike with all sorts of stuff piled on, and a sign on the bike with "**10 yen if you look**" written on it. Oho, now that's some way of doing business! It seemed like there were an awful lot of people staring at him, so I figured he was doing it because it was making him money. When I asked if people were giving him money, he said, "Yeah, surprisingly a lot. But they're slowly starting to avoid me, and the next time, if our eyes seem like they're gonna meet everyone rushes to avoid it, and they're gonna start avoiding me entirely." Hmm? We're trying to make friends here. It's not gonna work if they're avoiding you!! Don't do what this guy's doing.

By the way, selling stuff isn't something you can do unless you enjoy it, so if you open a shop but you're really just trying to make friends, you're only gonna tire yourself out and I don't

recommend it. But if someone who likes selling things starts selling them in all sorts of places, they'll start making tons friends as a matter of course, no question.

Operation Friend of a Friend (Operation Hatoyama Kunio)

Hatoyama Kunio, an old guy from the Liberal Democratic Party, caused a stir with the totally unnecessary statement “my friend has a friend in al-Qaeda.” I have no interest in whether this old guy's friends with al-Qaeda, but this is extremely enviable. Not the being friends with al-Qaeda, but because like, hey, are you really that spread out? To put it another way, is one of bin Laden's henchmen's friends friends with Hatoyama? Damn, that's nice. Though kinda unimpressive too...

Well, anyway, if you're thinking about increasing your friendships, the fastest way is through the friends of your friends. Meaning, if you've got a friend who seems like they're doing something interesting, go hang out with them too! No doubt some al-Qaeda-class people will be mixed in there!!! In short, you'll have the chance to expand your friendships that widely. Damn, that's incredible! Anyway, when you're doing stuff like I've talked about so far – drinking on the street, walking around drinking, selling things – if you follow up with the friends of your friends it'll be an easy conversation.

Operation Get Arrested

Even if you're following up with the friends of your friends, there are people who aren't gonna be friends with you. I'm talking about people in prison. Even if you go for visiting hours, they won't suddenly become your friends, and there are many sets of people who, even if they were on the outside, seem like they'd be pretty hard to make friends with. However, if you try getting arrested and end up in the pen, they act totally different. You can make lots of powerful friends this way, so it might be a good idea to go inside once in your life. I've been arrested myself, and the holding cell was good. It was really diverse – **there was a swindler, a drug dealer, a Chinese person who ran a ramen shop and hadn't done anything bad but whose visa had expired, an Iranian backpacker arrested with drugs, someone wanted for questioning who'd been on the run and was finally caught in a pachinko parlor, an old Yakuza guy, a manuke executive who'd been embezzling money from his company, the fall guy for a gambling den,** etc. etc. Given that these guys were all doing something out of the ordinary, it's no wonder there was a lot of talent under one roof.

Moreover, while you might be thinking of the scary image of the “criminal,” they weren't scary at all. Just because someone does something bad doesn't mean they're “scary” at all hours of the day. **For example, a murderer isn't acting like they're gonna kill someone when they're eating food, taking a shit, watching a movie, drinking tea while lazing in the sun, or talking to their niece who's come to visit for the first time in forever and they're saying “Wow, you've gotten big, how old are you now? Is math fun?”** Usually they're totally normal. That goes for swindlers and people involved with drugs too, it's the same with everyone. What's more, once they're in the pen, they've given up on being Yakuza or whatever, so no way anyone's cheating or killing each other. Once it's come to that, all you can do is have fun. But there's nothing in that cell, so day after day you're just talking about whatever and laughing your asses off, and if you've got nothing to do, soaking toilet paper in water and hardening it into dice, then starting to play with them and a piece of paper you've made into your own *sugoroku*,

sometimes getting found out by the guard who then confiscates the dice, to which the Yakuza tries protesting **“Hey, can’t we at least have dice?”** and getting scolded again when you’re chatting excitedly and fooling around even after lights out... at this point it’s almost no different from a field trip. With things like this, there’s no way you couldn’t make friends!!

On top of all that, there’s no end to the conversation as all these guys have pretty good stuff to talk about, so take it easy and try getting arrested. Oh, but when you’re doing it, it’s no fun getting arrested for something that’s gonna cause people trouble. You may as well try getting arrested for something like yelling “come on out rich people” in Denenchofu, or continuously turning yourself in even though you haven’t done anything, and things should go smoothly.

However, there are inconveniences like not being able to see your friends and not being able to drink, so based on that preferences will differ. Personally, though, I had a blast.

A sudden upset! Operation Internet

There’s a paper-thin difference between isolation and the world of the internet. Whether it’s Facebook or Twitter, if you’re doing a bunch of stuff you can meet a lot of people very quickly. However, you can’t tell whether these are true accomplices you’d go so far as meeting in real life, so even if you’re drowning in online interactions, if for some reason you get desperate and delete your ID, you’ve gotta start all over again at zero friends. It’s ridiculous. And what’s more, if you go through this roundabout way of doing things, you’re not gonna be able to help each other out when you need it.

But, if you combine it with all the plans I’ve written about up to this point, things get wild. For example, when I held a fish grilling get together in South Korea, people were dropping in one after another thanks to a bunch of them spreading information about it on Twitter.

Even better, it was the same with that guerrilla street drinking party in France people were talking about. People had gotten excited seeing it on Facebook, and over ten thousand crowded into a plaza, turning it into a big riot. All these *manuke* French people were saying “it’s awesome meeting these guys I’d gotten to know on Facebook in real life and drinking together,” the exact thing we’re thinking about right now.

Well, in any case, while you’re making good use of the internet too, try making tons of friends! For us poor people, making even a few accomplices allows us to avoid being turned into fodder for a society where we’re ripped off by rich people and live!!

The grand strategy for making money – from counterfeit bills to Operation Yakuza

I’ve said lots of stuff in this book, talking about making ridiculous places or putting mysterious plans into action, but everyone’s probably thinking “say what you want, but we’re gonna need money first!” Of course, there are lots of ways to start something spending almost no money, but there are times when you’re gonna spend a little too. And when you’re starting something, it’s better to have money than not. With that said, I’d like to study the greatest weakness of those who are reading and writing a book like this – getting money together. Don’t give up yet! It’s a piece of cake if you’re serious! Let’s try getting some reliable funding together once in while too!

Making counterfeit money

“I want money” → “Alright, I’ve gotta work” – that’s slave thinking. Going into business for yourself might be a little different, but if you’re being employed part time or doing corporate work, those ways of getting money together aren’t very interesting. After all, we’re making money for some bullshit shop or event, so we wanna try getting it using our best means of deception and spitting “Take that!” at the end.

Of course, the first thing you think of when we’re talking about frivolous ways of creating money is the much loved fake bill. But, this is pretty high difficulty. Before, when I was thinking of some way to make money, I was drinking with a friend and looking at bills with a magnifying glass when we saw a frightening amount of small patterns and characters on them. And of course, when I saw that the pattern on the lower-right hand part of the 5,000 yen bill is actually characters, I finally lost it! Damn it! You’re playing us for fools! Give us a break, government! You really don’t trust your own citizens that much? We can’t make counterfeit money like this!!! Well, when you really think about it, with the current economic downturn in publishing, we’re definitely gonna have bosses of publishing companies staring down bankruptcy saying “fuck it, now that it’s come to this, let’s just print money!!!!” before their final tax returns in March, but seeing how little counterfeit money is circulating, even with the skills of a pro it’s gonna be hard. Well, that’s that, let’s throw in the towel!

Trying to fool the bank

I remembered this when we were talking about fake bills, but once I knew this incredible guy. With his eye to the fact that if you accidentally cut a bill in half you can exchange it for a new one at the bank, he came up with this groundbreaking, unheard-of plan to increase his money somehow by cutting 10,000 yen bills down to 51% of their length, preparing a ton of them and bringing the 49% parts to the bank to exchange them for 10,000 yen, turning 500,000 yen into 510,000 yen and doing this over and over again. That’s incredible!!! However, beyond this not being worth the effort, it was also overly suspicious that someone was **bringing torn up 10,000 yen bills to the bank like every day**, and this character was soon found out and arrested. Truth is, I remember my mother warning me about this when I was in kindergarten and they were doing it on the news on TV, telling me, “This is just gonna be a waste of time, so don’t bother.”

Crowdfunding & black market hotels & unlicensed taxis

So as we’ve seen, the nation and the state are really obsessed with money, so doing something with money itself seems a little tough. It’s not impossible, but we’re no match for it. So with that (?), I’d like us to consider making money independently. First is crowdfunding, which has been popular lately. That thing where you raise money through donations on the internet. Well, this might be good, depending on how you use it. First, propose what you wanna do, and appeal to supporters. Then, by going through that site, you can make it widely known to people. If you can pluck at the heartstrings of people looking at the site thinking “I got a little extra money, I wonder if there’s anyone I can give it to that’ll use it for something good,” you’re gonna make a killing. Then, because you’re offering your supporters goods and services in return for their money when you’ve reached your funding goal, they feel like it’s due to them that the plan succeeded, and get

a little satisfaction out of it. You're also handing over as much as 5-20% to the site management for service fees, so all told they make a profit too, and it all works out in the end.

In this way, petty businesses planned around using the internet to provide a clever intermediary service and take a piece of the action are flourishing. Airbnb and others that list empty rooms as lodgings and taxi sites like Uber are varieties of this. These might be interesting depending on how you use them.

Well, that's fine, though things like this are kinda unpleasant. They're usually too good to be true.

Operation Liberal Democratic Party

It goes without saying that the Liberal Democratic Party is a proxy for big capitalists, the ultra-rich, big business and so forth. What's more, it seems that 9 out of 10 of these bad capitalists are growing fat off the money they rip off from poor people, so it's not too much to say that the LDP's money is our money. There you have it! Let's join the LDP and get our money back! Let's get that mountain of stuff they've got piled up, and have them footing our bills! When we lose in the election or a grand statesman who's our senior dies, that's our big chance! Rich people are supposed to be generous with their money, so they're not gonna balk at something like that. Doing something smooth like telling them, "I know a good way to dispose of this!" and juicing them might be good too. When someone dies, you can go all the way to where they're cremating them and cry big crocodile tears while you're secretly pulling out their gold teeth.

Egami T-shirt

For money-making plans that are a little more realistic, you could also make some kind of goods. T-shirts and mugs, stickers, pins, lighters, ballpoint pens, postcards, tote bags, etc., anything will do. If you're making it yourself, the going rate is usually at least 2 or 3 times what it costs, so if all goes well you'll literally be making money. If you're doing something yourself, as long as you've got your own character, shop, band, theater company or something, you should use artwork, logos and stuff associated with them. But if you keep selling the same things and they're not of someone very famous, you're gonna reach a limit. Plus there are probably lots of people who are gonna say they're not doing anything notable. At times like those, hit 'em with the hidden power to **make someone famous yourself**.

With that, something I've tried before is Operation Egami T-shirt. There's a man of leisure in Fukuoka named Egami Kenichiro who's constantly going overseas to wander around, and with all that leisure time he goes lots of places to hang out and knows lots of interesting locations. One time this Mr. Egami was coming to Tokyo to hang out, and since he was coming all the way here we made it an event where he'd introduce people to *manuke* spots overseas. Mr. Egami is poor, so we wanted to give him the money for travel... and that's when we came up with Operation Egami T-shirt. This required someone who was already famous, so regrettably it turned into us making him into goods. Keeping it a secret from him for the time being, we completed a logo with Mr. Egami's face and "KEN EGAMI" below it. First we printed a ton of stickers with this design on it (if you search on the web you'll find any number of cheap companies for this) and stuck them up all over town. We passed them out to our friends, and stuck them up in stores and anywhere else people we knew might pass by. When we did this he became the talk of the town,

with people who knew him saying, “Wha? Why is Egami-kun stuck up everywhere?” Of course, there are more people who don’t know him, and they’d get to the point where they were saying, “I’m seeing these everywhere, but who is this guy?” so we’d say something like, “He’s a famous revolutionary from the 60s,” or “He’s a death row prisoner arrested for causing an uprising to save the weak,” and they’d say, “Oh, really? Damn!” and he’d get more and more famous. Then, seeing our chance, we put t-shirts on sale! Once that happened, people would be like, “Ahh, that’s the thing I keep seeing around town! So that’s him!” and the shirts were selling like hotcakes, with even travelers from overseas buying them as souvenirs thinking they were of a “ronin revered in Japan.”

With all that we soon sold 50 shirts and made back the price of the stickers, so we were able to give him the money for the round-trip plane tickets from Fukuoka to Tokyo for the event. Oh, for this operation, you should really take into account who you’re making famous. Mr. Egami’s the kind of person who, when we told him about this on the day of the event, he was happy about it even while he was telling us to knock it off because it was embarrassing, but there are people who really won’t like it, or who, for certain reasons, are being pursued by others and it would be kind of sad if you stuck their face up all over town, so I’d like you to consider who you’re doing it to before carrying it out.

Try setting up at a free market

Free markets are surprisingly worth your time. They’re held in parks, squares and streets lined with shops, or sometimes in the middle of big events. Let’s set up at a free market and sell stuff like crazy. It’s interesting because if you show up with a friend it’s actually like play, and it’s a chance to get to know all sorts of people. Let’s sell a ton of inexplicable stuff and get our hands on a little capital. It’ll probably feel a lot better than day after day of boring work. By the way, the seller’s fee is cheap, and a small free market is about 500 to 1,000 yen, where a large-scale one or one where people are selling cars and stuff will run you about 3,000 to 4,000 yen. If you talk to the promoters, they’ll let just about anybody set up. Something to be careful of is, if you’re gathering up your personal belongings to sell, all you’re doing is turning your stuff into money, so you’re not actually building up your funds. If you run out of stuff then of course that’s it. Well, that kind of short-term way of getting cash is fine, but you can’t really call it making money, and you’re not gonna make that much.

So we wanna sell things we’ve gotten our hands on from somewhere and turn them into money. If you’re someone with business sense you’ve got the option of selling new goods you’ve gotten from a wholesaler, but this is close to becoming real business so it’s not easy. There are also lots of people who sell homemade goods, but this asks for sense and skill. If you’re someone with skills then you’re already free to make money for yourself, so leave this aside and think of something more fraudulent to do!

Now that I think of it, a few years ago there was that Occupy Wall Street movement telling rich people to stop bullshitting us, and these righteously pissed off Americans were saying “just 1% of the richest people hold most of the world’s wealth!” Got it, so all we can do is take it back! Great! The time’s finally come to steal back what’s been stolen from us by the wealthy with an explosion of popular anger! My fellow poor people! We must rise up!!! And so we descend on the neighborhoods of the rich to pick stuff up on garbage day. That’s alright, but when you really

think about you're making less money per hour than you would be at a convenience store, so it's no good! Oi, rich people! We're letting you off this time, but we're coming for you someday!

Operation Food Stand

Besides selling goods like you do at a free market, setting up a stand for selling food is interesting too. There are times where you can also set these up at city events and festivals. However, when it comes to food you'll need to keep things sanitary, and there are times where you'll need to get inspected and licensed in advance, so the bar is a bit high, but like the free market it depends on the time and the place, so if you see an opportunity you should try asking to see if selling food is okay. Particularly at local events you'll have these strange rules like, "It's okay to set up as long as you get along with everyone," so you can think of this as the next step after a free market.

Apart from being able to set up there's the question of what you're selling and how you're selling it, but whatever you do you'll be fine. Of course, you can't be selling shaved ice in the middle of winter, and it'd be strange to sell hot sake or oden in the middle of summer, but besides that, selling any common sense thing should work out just fine. You might get yelled at by people who are serious about cooking, but when you're eating at a food stall at an event, the atmosphere matters more than the actual flavor. What's more, when you're feeling good, almost anything you eat is gonna taste good, so it's important to sell things with a smile. Also important is seeming serious when you're selling. When you're doing something like a food stall, false impressions are a necessity.

I've sold food at downtown events many times, but when I've set up a normal long table, making stuff like salt grilled mackerel or nabe or running an izakaya, whatever I did I made almost nothing. But just when I was thinking "fuck this!" there was this one time when I bought some frozen xiaolongbao around the corner, secretly heated them in a microwave, threw them in a steamer for a second, and they sold out before I could catch my breath. They were selling so fast I kept having to rush out to buy more. The pleasant steam coming from the steamer might have made the difference, but this was also the only time I hadn't brought the long table I use for meetings, but a stand I'd used a long time ago. With just that difference, it didn't matter that it was frozen food and supermarket soy sauce, everyone was eating it up. I thought I was in trouble when a real Chinese person who seemed like a foreign student came, but they said it tasted good. Drunk people made sure to come back for seconds. Well now, I guess everyone likes frozen food!

A word on food stands

When you're secretly microwaving the food so people don't find out it's frozen, that "ding!" from the microwave really gets in the way, doesn't it! But don't worry! The thing that's making that annoying noise has metal parts like a bell on a bike, so if you take the microwave apart carefully with a screwdriver you can just remove it! This way, from the person running the stall to the customers, everyone's happy!

Operation Yakuza

If we're talking money, we're talking about the Yakuza. If we're talking about the Yakuza, we're talking money. People in the Yakuza are really good at making money! Now, good children, let's take a lesson in making money from Mr. Yakuza!!!

I'm in Koenji now, so I've got almost no direct interactions with the Yakuza. At most you'll see someone who looks the type wander through to shop. But before I opened my shop in Koenji, I was hanging out in places like Kabukicho in Shinjuku and Okubo, so I'd happen to meet those kinds of people while I was doing this and that. When this happened, I'd happen upon many a heartwarming episode involving money.

Stuff like, "Hey, how's X thousand yen to find a certain X who's doing X in X and tell him X?" or "Lately we've been Xing X in X, but now we're doing X. It's better off that way" or "We've been talking about Xing X's X's X, I'm gonna leave this to you..."Ahh, nevermind! This stuff is too scary! Actually, I can't even write it here! No good, next operation!

Operation Zojirushi

Let's introduce another one. This is a way of making money these guys in Taiwan were devising when I went there for a music event, Operation Zojirushi. Three bands with friends of mine were supposed to be performing too, and the Taiwanese guys were racking their brains thinking, "They're coming all the way here so we'd at least like to cover the travel costs, but our event's broke too..." Now these guys really hate working their asses off doing part time jobs to save up money for events. They've also got the philosophy that, if it's a bullshit event anyway, they'd better be making money through fraudulent means or it's no fun. Suddenly someone burst out, "Alright, let's comp their performance with other people's money!" How was this to be done? With a scheme like a reseller, they'd earn a little money with the difference in price between things bought in Japan and sold in Taiwan, so they said, "Could all you guys coming from Japan buy something for us?" Well, this is something anyone could come up with, but these Taiwanese guys were really serious, it was wild. Once they set their minds to it they started advertising the best selling products in Taiwan, setting up a special web page and listing Panasonic dryers at X, Zojirushi rice cookers for Y, etc. They also made an ad like an insert for newspapers, with ridiculous advertising slogans scattered on them like, "Granddad knows it, Grandma wants it, it's a Dyson vacuum cleaner!" "This will make for smooth sailing with your family and your wife!" and "This'll kill two birds with one stone 'cause it's covering travel fare for a band," it was a serious ad campaign!

By the way, none of the goods they were selling could be bought directly in Taiwan, and people were paying high prices for them from proxy services. This Operation Zojirushi became one where we were **setting prices lower than what they were in Taiwan but higher than they were in Japan**. People saw the site and the orders came rolling in. Those on the Japan side would be contacted when the orders were made, we'd immediately start looking for the cheapest price we could find, and with an "Alright, let's get it!" we'd buy it in Japan! Then the orders started piling up, and once we hit the limit on what we could bring we shut it down. After that, the mountain of goods was divided among the people coming from Japan to Taiwan and off we went. When it came time to depart, we brought this mountain of huge boxes for vacuums and rice cookers to Haneda airport. Arriving at the airport, we were lined up at the ticket counter with exactly the same luggage as those free-spending Chinese people you hear about these days! Oho, it's like looking in a mirror!!! So that's how it is! Greeting each other with a "So you guys are in on this too, eh (smirk)" in our eyes, we savored an affinity that crosses borders, though our destinations were different. We were going to Taiwan.

As a result of this Operation Zojirushi, they ended up making some tens of thousands of yen that was passed to the bands that played in addition to the cost of travel when they went back. Then these band guys started thinking, “They took such good care of us in Taiwan, I feel kinda bad,” and set it aside for lodging costs for the next time they invited Taiwanese bands to come to an event in Okinawa. Damn, this cash flow is kinda incredible! I guess you can do fundraising like this too!

Try getting money from funds

Now this is a full frontal attack, but you can get money from all sorts of foundations and funds. There are many government-affiliated organizations with funds too, and lots of cultural foundations run publicly or by large corporations. Their goal is to promote cultural exchange, so if your interests align they’ll give you money.

They give money to one-shot events, and to projects that are bit longer term. Of course this isn’t just limited to Japan, but there are lots of systems like this overseas as well, so everyone takes advantage of this. But, because the foundation is giving the money, they’re not just gonna scatter it to the wind, and there’s a ton of annoying back-and-forth with paperwork for reports and applications. On top of that, there are plenty of funds that attach conditions such as what you’re not allowed to do. Meaning that, while you’ll have to do some work and have a little less freedom, if you do it well you’ll get your hands on some money. Well, it’s got its strengths and weaknesses, but there’s no harm in trying. One thing to be careful of though is **don’t rely too much on that money**. At a base level you should run things with your own resources and budget this money on top. If you can’t do an event because they don’t give you money or the group itself exists because of money from the government or a foundation, that’s kind of unhealthy. It means you’ll be too weak, because that the minute the policies of the country or corporation change you’ll get crushed. For example, the second South Korea switched to a conservative government in 2008 most cultural funding stopped, and spaces and organizations disappeared one after another, and even in Japan, when Ishihara Shintaro became governor of Tokyo, all the facilities and services targeted towards young people disappeared at once. This is dangerous, so you should run things with your own resources, and when something comes up try applying to a fund or something.

Operation Auction

Auctioning is a way of selling things where things get heated and it gets really wild. People get ridiculously worked up. So let’s try it!

We once invited people from the Hong Kong DIY space Hidden Agenda to do a documentary screening and talk event. We wanted to get them money somehow for the travel, and we’d have been happy if we were able to raise something to support the activities of that concert space too. Of course, there were costs for holding this event too, so we had to make some money. The plan we came up with then was to hold an auction. We had the people from Hong Kong bring a ton of CDs from musicians who passed through that space and sold them at auction after the screening.

Now then, once we’d finished this emotional and tearful screening about these people overcoming all sorts of difficulties to run this concert space on their own, it was time for the auction! There were about 80 attendees in the venue, but no-one really knew about indie music from Hong

Kong or had information about these bands. On top of all this being new, this was also happening after they'd watched the movie, so they were already on the edges of their seats. First KIMI-chan, a central staff member of Hidden Agenda, would explain who the musician they'd selected was. What genre of music, what kind of concerts they performed, what their relationship with the space was, etc. Then she'd say, "Now let's take a listen to the music itself!" and play the CD. Of course, it's music, so people could tell whether they'd enjoy it or not, and those who did would want to have it. We'd start low at 500 or 1,000 yen. Then people would start yelling "1,200," "1,500!" and then we'd have a winner. We repeated this again and again, with recommended bands from Hong Kong being introduced one after another. Soon people couldn't wait to buy something, and the mood shifted to where people were saying "hurry! hurry!" as we were getting ready to play a song after introducing the band, and the second it started to play people were shouting "1,000," "1,200!" Hey, you guys aren't listening to the music at all! It's like we're quizzing people on the intros to songs! But thanks to all that, sales were booming. Of course, all the money from sales went to Hong Kong's Hidden Agenda. We had money from that day's entrance tickets and other things too, so we were also able to cover the flight, venue costs, and everything else.

I dunno if this has been helpful, but **after all, money's really a fraudulent substitute, its value is all in appearance.** Even looking at a product in a store, the price changes completely depending on how it's displayed, how the name is attached to it, or the lighting on it. In short, everything's a scam. That's right, there's a surprising amount of easy money to be had between one fraud and another, so without forgetting our total disregard for the world, let's get out there and make some fraudulent money! Don't worry, even if you blow it and are totally broke, we've got *baka centers* where *manuke* folks gather and our skills for getting by without a proper living come together!

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Translated by Max Res, 2021

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