

SCENE TWO

Several spirits have just berated Yasuda, insisting that he at least look into the suicide/murder case; Yasuda grudgingly agrees.

INT. SHINJUKU STATION, JR LINE PLATFORM - EVENING

Yasuda stands before the caution-taped section of the platform and takes a furtive look around before leaning over the caution tape to peer at the dirtied sections of the floor. Behind him, several ghosts look on in interest.

YASUDA

I really don't see anything that I could do to help here, though.

ROCKER GHOST

I'm tellin' you man, you gotta do something! I don' wanna play 'round no unsolved murder case, man, that shit's bad karma.

ACCOUNTANT GHOST

You do realize you're a ghost yourself, young man.

ROCKER GHOST

That's not the point here, man!

YASUDA

Guys, are you sure this is useful?

Past his shoulder, Ishida has descended the stairs and stands amidst the ghosts looking furious. The ghosts back away from Ishida looking uncomfortable as Yasuda, clueless to Ishida's presence, lifts up a section of caution tape to get a closer look.

YASUDA

All I can tell is that there's a chipped brick over there, and that's really not much -

ISHIDA

Yasuda!

Yasuda promptly tries to spring to his feet, gets tangled in the caution tape, and has to fight his way free before standing at attention before Ishida.

ISHIDA
Meddling with things again, I see!

YASUDA
No, sir! I just -

ISHIDA
Enough!

Yasuda flinches and stands tensely as Ishida goes on harshly.

ISHIDA
Talking to yourself out loud,
looking distracted on the job,
and now looking into the scene
of a suicide - just how much do
you intend to defile the image
of our company!

YASUDA
Sir, I wasn't doing anything,
I just thought that maybe there
was a possibility that we missed
something and that I could, you
know.

ISHIDA
No, Yasuda, I don't know. Do tell
me your ludicrous idea.

YASUDA
Do something?

ISHIDA
Don't make me laugh!

YASUDA
But -

ISHIDA
The police have already detained a

suspect, if there even is a need
for a suspect! This is no place for
you to be sticking your nose!

YASUDA

I might be able to -

ISHIDA

Able to nothing! - Yasuda, your father
never caused trouble in this way,
why do you insist on ruining the pristine
legacy that he left behind?

YASUDA

(exasperated)

I'm not insisting on anything, I
just feel like maybe, since we
work here and all, maybe I could -

ISHIDA

Do your job!

There is a note of finality in those words. Yasuda falls
back, looking frustrated and dejected. Ishida clears his
throat before going on sternly.

ISHIDA

You've already got plenty of strikes
to your name, Yasuda. Don't cross the
line again, or I may have to fire you.
And that would't be a pretty
option for you, would it?

YASUDA

(mumbling)

No, sir, it wouldn't.

ISHIDA

Good.

Ishida snorts and turns to leave, giving Yasuda one last
glare before heading up the stairwell. Yasuda sighs
dejectedly and rubs his cheek, turning to face the ghosts
again.

However, an unfamiliar, bloodied ghost has been standing right behind him and Yasuda has turned to step right before him.

GHOST

Um -

Yasuda lets out a startled yelp of surprise, steps back, trips over the caution tape, and topples over.

INT. SHINJUKU STATION, PLATFORM BENCHES - EVENING

Sitting on the bench, Yasuda groans as he rubs a cold canned drink against the bump on his head. The ghost from earlier stands near the bench, wringing his hands.

This is SAKATA, 16, the spirit of a high-school freshman wearing a blood-drenched school uniform and covered in bandages ranging from a medical eyepatch to an arm sling.

SAKATA

I'm - I'm really sorry,
I didn't mean to scare you
like that. Please don't be angry.

Yasuda looks up and gives a Sakata a weak smile, still rubbing the can against his head.

YASUDA

Don't worry about it, I'm not
mad. I was just a bit startled,
really. You weren't there like
a minute ago.

SAKATA

I'm sorry.

YASUDA

Really, it's okay.

A moment of awkward silence passes. Yasuda gingerly pulls the canned drink away and rubs his head.

YASUDA

So. You just wanted to talk?
(Sakata nods meekly)
Well, actually, I was just

about to call it a day and head home, but we can talk tomorrow if you want?

SAKATA

It's - it's something urgent.

YASUDA

Urgent?

(Sakata nods again.)

But. You're -- . There are still urgent things for you guys?

Sakata shakes his head, head bowed, fidgeting with his sling.

SAKATA

It's - not about me. It's about someone still alive.

YASUDA

Aah.

Another awkward moment passes. Yasuda fumbles with the drink and pops it open.

SAKATA

Um. You've seen - Kuwabara before, right?

YASUDA

Kuwabara? - not a name I'm familiar with.

Sakata pulls a wallet out of his pocket and opens it; blood spills from the wallet all over the floor, and Yasuda cringes back until Sakata pulls out a small picture and offers it forward.

Yasuda tries to grasp the photo but can't, so he instead studies it from Sakata's hand; it's of Sakata (less bandaged and blood-splatter-free) and Kuwabara, the thug lurking around the station, taken from what looks like a sticker photo booth.

SAKATA

He, um. Is around the station

a lot, and I think you might have seen him before.

YASUDA

Oh, so that's his name. Yeah, I saw him a few times before.

Sakata takes the picture back and pauses before speaking meekly.

SAKATA

He was arrested by the police. They think he killed the man who died today, because the security tapes showed him hanging around the platform a lot.

Yasuda coughs into his drink and sits back scratching his head awkwardly.

YASUDA

Well, kid. You know, I don't really know much about this whole mess - I wasn't even here yet when it happened, so I don't -

SAKATA

He didn't do it!

Just this once, Sakata's words are said clearly instead of being mumbled, and Yasuda looks taken aback. Sakata shrinks back again, looking sad as he speaks.

SAKATA

He's around the station a lot because of me.

YASUDA

(cautiously)
Because you jumped the rails?

SAKATA

(nodding)
I was - bullied a lot. He tried to help me, so when I still jumped, he must have felt guilty. So he started coming to the platform a lot,

and so he got arrested because of me.

Sakata starts sniffing, and Yasuda looks lost for words.
From down the platform, a heckling ghost shouts,

HECKLING GHOST

Give him a hug!

Yasuda stares uncomfortably in the heckler's direction for
a moment before giving Sakata a gentle pat through the head.

YASUDA

Hey, um. What was your name?

SAKATA

(swiping a sleeve across his face)
It's Sakata.

HECKLING GHOST

You should give him a hug!

YASUDA

Well, Sakata, listen.

(Sakata looks up meekly)
I'm not a detective or anything,
okay? I'm just a conductor here, so
I really can't do much.

(Sakata looks downcast)
But I'll see what I can do, okay?

HECKLING GHOST

Awwwww!

YASUDA

(shouting down the platform)
Will you stop that?

Sakata looks uncertain for a moment before hopefully
looking up at Yasuda.

SAKATA

Do you think you'd be able to
tell him about me?

YASUDA

Tell him what about you?

SAKATA

That - he shouldn't be around here all the time, and that I'm alright.

Yasuda scratches his head.

YASUDA

I can't guarantee anything, really. And - to be honest, I might get fired for trying anything, especially if I mentioned anything about you guys and got pinned as a nutter.

(Sakata fidgets nervously)

But I'll do try my best, alright?

Sakata gives another small nod, then tries to hug Yasuda and floats mostly through him. Yasuda flinches and gives an awkward pat through the area around Sakata's head.

SAGI (O.S.)

Go get a room, you two.

INT. SHINJUKU STATION, STAIRWELL - EVENING

Sagi leans against the railing, smirking. Sakata very quickly flinches away from Yasuda, looking halfway scared and halfway embarrassed, and scampers away down the railway tunnel.

Yasuda stares at Sakata's retreating back before looking to Sagi, awkwardly straightening his clothes.

YASUDA

Christ, he's just a kid. You didn't have to scare him like that.

SAGI

(shrugging)

Kid's fault for getting so twitchy, I didn't say much.

Sagi jerks her head towards the stairwell, hands in pockets and jacket undone. Her sunglasses are propped up against her forehead.

SAGI
C'mon, I'm taking you drinking.

YASUDA
Me?

SAGI
I don't see any other dork
standing around here.

Yasuda opens his mouth to speak, frowns, pauses, then
speaks dubiously.

YASUDA
What about your lackeys? Why me
instead of them?

SAGI
Oh, they're having some sort of
meeting.

YASUDA
And you're not there?

SAGI
(shrugging)
They can handle it on their own.
'Sides, if they can't handle a
little work on their own, I'll
fire'em anyway.

Yasuda sighs, straightening his cap.

YASUDA
Well, I was just about to -

Sagi grabs Yasuda's arm, grinning.

SAGI
Great. Let's go.

A few ghosts wolf-whistle as Yasuda is dragged along.