



Rest in Pieces

A Full English translation is available.

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Author: Karmarket **Illustrator:** Karmarket **Publisher:** Balaena Islet Publishing

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This collection of short stories by Karmarket masterfully builds a sense of creeping dread, where horror unfurls gradually. These poetic, darkly humorous stories end on an open note, leaving space for the reader's imagination to take hold.

In one story, a woman who sees ghosts encounters thousands of spirits in orbit—including her long-lost mother—just as an unknown entity begins to attack. In another, a man who lost his legs in a car accident feels them return in dreams, along with strange, unnamed limbs. A college freshman, in yet another tale, stumbles into a half-abandoned housing complex where shadows twist into a maze of illusions.

Elsewhere, in a drought-ravaged apocalypse strewn with the corpses of gods, a man and a peculiar child search desperately for hope. And in a future reshaped by cyborg technology, a bloody love triangle spirals into violence.

From spectral hauntings to futuristic nightmares, Karmarket delivers horror with depth, lyricism, and humanity.



Author **Karmarket**

Born in 1994, Karmarket graduated from Shih Chien University with a degree in Media Communication Design. He has worked as an assistant director on numerous music videos and commercials. Karmarket has also contributed to several Taiwanese feature films as a storyboard artist, director's assistant, post-production animator, and creator of social media promotional materials. Currently, he works as a freelance contractor and comic artist, with experience illustrating magazine covers, album art, and more.

As Powerful as a Meteor, As Delicate as Embroidery: Reading *Rest in Pieces*

by Tzu Ning Huang

From its very cover, *Rest in Pieces* boldly announces its unique aesthetic—both obscure and bold. A man's serene, closed-eyed face is surrounded by a burst of flowers, while the lower face depicts an eerie skeletal grin made of uneven teeth. Twisting branches represent organic tissue, giving the illusion that real muscle fibers are growing over bones.

This book is a collection of short stories, and if you've read Junji Ito, you might find yourself experiencing a similar sense of creeping dread. Every detail is magnified to a skin-prickling degree, with the horror gradually unfurling through the meticulous pen of the author, Karmarket. It's as if you can see the pores of fear itself. And yet, Karmarket's stories also carry a poetic flair—sometimes infused with dark humor, sometimes blending fantasy

with reality, and often leaving endings open, giving space for the reader's own imagination to bloom.

In "Ghosts From Outer Space," the protagonist is a woman who can see ghosts. In an attempt to escape this "curse," she becomes an astronaut, hoping that the void of space will offer some respite. But instead, she discovers that it, too, is filled with spirits—those of the countless dead. Among them, she encounters the soul of her long-deceased mother.

"Public Housing for Rent" draws from the author's personal experience in the film and TV industry. During a period of location scouting across Taiwan's aging public housing complexes, Karmarket became familiar with their unique atmosphere: high-density layouts,

clutter accumulated over decades, and the ghostly remnants of their long-term residents. The story vividly captures these spaces and the unseen lives that still linger in them.

"Deep Dive" begins with a deep-sea researcher father receiving a drawing from his daughter, which becomes a sort of amulet that protects him. Through her innocent perspective, the daughter imagines what challenges her father might face underwater. Her childlike drawings create whimsical "deep-sea angels" that seem to dance through the abyss. The story shifts between hyperrealistic depictions of the ocean and the colorful simplicity of her doodles, making it feel as though her creativity truly protects him from the dangers below.

The title story, "Rest in Pieces," is brief and wordless, but its impact is like a blazing meteor streaking across the sky.

It fast-forwards through the birth and evolution of life—from primordial chaos to the emergence of consciousness—before ending on a quiet image: the author hunched over a desk, drawing. This moment subtly ties the cosmic back to the personal.

Reading *Rest in Pieces* is like running your hand over an intricately embroidered fabric. The visual detail in every panel withstands close inspection, while the stories unfold in unexpected and thought-provoking directions. It's a thoroughly enjoyable mental whirlwind—one that invites both awe and reflection.

Tzu Ning Huang is an editorial consultant at Books from Taiwan. She loves to listen and tell stories, enjoys conversations and encounters with others, and appreciates time alone. She also loves to use photography and writing to explore the world.





