

# Convenience Store Woman

Sayaka Murata

## Suggested Discussion Questions

1. Describe Keiko Furukura. Talk about the various aspects of her behavior that make her an oddball.
2. In what way does Keiko view Small Mart as an almost-utopia. How does her job there lend purpose to her life? Consider, for example, the manual that prescribes how she is to conduct herself with customers. How does she think of her fellow employees?
3. (Follow-up to Question 3) What does it suggest about Keiko's internal life (her soul, her personality) that she can "hear the store's voice telling what it wanted, how it wanted to be." She goes on to say, "I understood it perfectly." What does she mean that she understands the store "perfectly."
4. What is Keiko's relationship with Shiraha? What do you think of him, especially his lectures on the Stone Age—about the men who hunt and those who don't.
5. When Shiraha complains about the convenience store job, Keiko tells him, "Shiraha, we're in the twenty-first century! Here in the convenience store we're not men and women. We're all store workers." What do you think of that statement? What do you think she means by it?
6. What in Japanese society is Convenience Store Woman taking aim at? Does the satire have relevance to our own culture? How would you describe the author's attitude toward Keiko? Is it one of condescension, disapproval, acceptance, admiration? Or does Murata view her heroine in a neutral fashion?

