

Note on Transliteration

This book uses the Hepburn system of romanization. It does not italicize Japanese words that have entered the English language, like *yakuza*, *tatami*, or *udon*. Rather, it defers to their conventional English form. At times, an italicized Japanese word may be introduced alongside its translation in parentheses, only to be replaced thereafter with its English translation. The terms that are retained throughout the text in their original form—like *otoko* (man)—constitute an intrinsic part of San'ya's world and resist translation. Quotation marks foreground the referential quality of words: "*hiyatoi rōdōsha*" (day laborers) are not just "day laborers"—in fact, the generic term *day laborer* (*hiyatoi rōdōsha*) denies these men their personhood as "men" (*otoko*), or rather, as *otoko*. For definitions of italicized Japanese words, see the glossary. Note also that, unless the person's name has become known in English—like Ken Takakura or Takeshi Kitano—I retain the original Japanese order of names, in which the first name comes after the family name, as Takakura Ken. All names of people from San'ya are fictive. Unless otherwise indicated, translations are my own.

