

TOHOKU NO SHINGETSU (A NEW MOON OVER TOHOKU)
SCRIPT (ENGLISH)
Written by Linda Ohama
Copyright 2016 All rights reserved

THE OPENING:

00:00:21
Voice 1
Home

Voice 2
Family

00:00:27
Voice 3
History

00:00:30
Voice 4
Memories

00:00:34
Voice 5
Beauty

00:00:39
Voice 6
Love

00:00:41
Voice 7
Love

00:00:52
Voice 8
Comfort

00:00:54
Voice 9
Security

00:00:59
CARD:
earth

00:01:05
CARD:
In Japan's northeastern area TOHOKU

00:01:12
CARD:
14:46 Friday afternoon, March 11, 2011,
a magnitude 9.0 earthquake occurs

centred 251 km (156 miles) north of Tokyo,
off the northern Pacific coast of Japan.

00:01:23

CARD:

26-60 minutes later the tsunami begins to strike towns, one by one,
down a 650 (420 miles) strip of the Tohoku coastline.

00:02:13

NARRATION ENGLISH (VO)

88 years ago, the Great Kanto earthquake hit Tokyo-Yokohama, forcing my
grandmother to leave Japan.

00:02:23 (VO)

Now, three generations later, the Great Tohoku earthquake brings me back to Japan.

00:02:33 (VO)

I leave Canada to join the volunteers.

At first you see the loss, everything gone.

Soon I realize that there's much more to Tohoku than what first meets the
eye.

00:02:50

MALE VOICE (VO)

Like the stars in the daylight that you cannot see...

00:02:54 (VO)

Inochi...life...

Our thoughts and feelings cannot be seen either.

00:03:06 (VO)

The passion in the bamboo flute's notes...

and the colours of the violin or shamisen's sounds...

00:03:14 (VO)

cannot be written down on paper.

These are the emotions of the player.

00:03:26 (VO)

Shingetsu is the new moon that we cannot see.

It is a new beginning towards the the full moon from the same gravity force, only it
is invisible.

00:03:42 (VO)

There are many things in life that we do not see...

But niero, their tone exists.

00:04:00 (VO)

FEMALE VOICE

Our world is not only the things that we can see.

There are many things we cannot see...

00:04:09 (VO)

like the love that never leaves us.

00:04:26

FILM MAIN TITLES:

Yugen Productions Ltd.

Tohoku no Shingetsu: A New Moon Over Tohoku

00:04:58
Voices from Iwate, Miyagi & Fukushima, Japan

A film by Linda Ohama

00:05:22
ACTION: A black and white 'kura' door opens

00:05:24
ETSUKO ONUMA (VO)
Please. Come inside.

ETSUKO ONUMA
00:05:33
1,2,3,4. There are four sets of doors.
These strong buildings called *kura* were built to store our valuables...
to protect them from wars, earthquakes, fires, and theft...like our dolls here.

00:05:55
The interior of our *kura* was not damaged by the earthquake...but the *kura*'s
exterior walls cracked and crumbled.

00:06:08
I was across the street at the time...
the whole wall in the room fell on me.
I was lucky to survive!

00:06:19
I had to crawl out to escape, buried under the pile of debris.

00:06:26
MALE VOICE (VO)
Tohoku people, we are like the *kura*...
Safely guarding our history and culture deep in our hearts...
and keeping our thoughts and feelings hidden behind our many layers.

00:06:43
ETSUKO ONUMA
This is a very private area.
Visitors rarely see this deep inside.

00:06:52 (VO)
This is called the family *kura*.
The babies were born in here.

00:07:00
Our *kura* was built about 165 years ago...I'm now the sixth generation.

0000:07:07
Our history is passed down from generation to generation...

00:07:10
ACTION: Earthquake hits during interview

00:07:12
ETSUKO ONUMA
Earthquake! I'm scared! This is big.
It's a big one.
What a horrible feeling.

00:07:28
Frightening...So frightening.
What a shock...(sigh)

ACTION: Door closes

00:07:45

MALE VOICE (VO)

Our cultural traditions, our history, our hearts and souls...
are safely protected deep in ourselves.

00:07:58

CARD:

Water

ACTION: Archival footage

00:08:011

NARRATION (VO)

Leaving Tokyo behind and traveling north to Tohoku is like going back in time.

00:08:27 (VO)

Here strangers greet you when they pass.

Their lives strongly connected to the land, the sea and to each other.

00:08:42 (VO)

Life seems much simpler and a pace that moves much slower.

00:08:50

CARD:

Iwate Province

00:08:54

NARRATION (VO)

I go as far as Otsuchi town and meet a doctor who finds ways to save her family
and 100 others. But she finds it harder to save herself.

00:09:10

KANAKO SASAKI

My name is Kanako Sasaki.

I'm an acupuncture doctor.

00:09:20(VO)

My life was saved long before this tsunami came.

00:09:25 (VO)

When I was still a child...my deceased grandpa and grandma told me...
every year for Girls' Day festival on March 3rd...

00:09:25 (VO)

"You will never see the tsunami coming. NEVER!" they said.

00:09:42 (VO)

"But if you see a cloud of sea dust...Run and keep running to higher ground."

They kept telling me this when I was young.

00:09:55

KANAKO SASAKI

I have many fond memories of our house that washed away.

00:10:00 (VO)

My clinic was attached to one side of the house.

00:10:05 (VO)

This was the home where we raised our two daughters...

00:10:11 (VO)

Sera Sasaki and Misaki Ohta.

00:10:15

MISAKI OHTA

I'm Misaki Ohta. I have two kids. Both are boys.
Two weeks after my baby was born...I went to stay at my parents' house.

00:10:33 (VO)

We received this box from the hospital for the baby's umbilical chord.

00:10:40 (VO)

Born February 21, 2011 at 14:26.

00:10:45

Two weeks later, the tsunami came.
My baby was sleeping.
Then suddenly there was a loud "gaaaa!"
Things flying around.
I thought we would all die!

00:11:04

KANAKO SASAKI (VO)

I was in my clinic giving a treatment.
First I had to help my patient escape.

00:11:15

While my patient was getting dressed...I phoned my daughter to tell her,
"Please run. Save your children." Then the phone cut off.

00:11:31

MISAKI OHTA

As soon as I heard the tsunami warning siren blaring...
I felt this might be the end.

00:11:48

I started throwing things into the car.
Some milk. A pot of hot water. Tea.

00:12:02

Then my mom told us to leave first.
I felt so bad leaving my mom behind, all alone.

00:12:13

But she said she would follow soon behind us.

00:12:18 (VO)

So we left...my grandma and us.
Escaping up the mountain.

00:12:24

GRANDMA KOUKO OGUNI

It might be better to go on foot!
Roads all jammed with cars!

00:12:34

KANAKO SASAKI

I started loading up my car with medical supplies because...
I knew this was serious.
Many people would be injured.

00:12:46

Bandages. Disinfectants. Medicines.

00:12:51

In the short gap between the tsunami and the earthquake...
my husband phoned and somehow his call got connected!

00:13:03

It was a real miracle!
The lines were so jumbled and crossed.

00:13:11

KAZUHISA SASAKI (VO) and on camera
When the earthquake hit, I was driving my truck on the highway...so I pulled over
and stopped.

00:13:18

The radio reported a level 5 or 6 earthquake.
At first I thought the earthquake was centered around the Tokyo area.

00:13:26

Then I heard it was closer to Iwate province.
So I called Kanako on my cell phone.
I asked, "Are you okay?"

00:13:36

KANAKO SASAKI

"I'm alive", I told him.

00:13:38

"But this might be the end...
but Misaki and them have escaped."

00:13:44

KAZUHISA SASAKI

I felt so helpless...because I couldn't get to her right away.

00:13:56

KANAKO SASAKI (VO)

Suddenly the emergency siren stopped.
I knew I had to escape because I could see 'the cloud of sea dust'.

00:14:05 (VO)

First I ran to tell my neighbors to leave...
suddenly my body was scooped up by the water...
sweeping me off my feet.

00:14:29 (VO)

In all that water surrounded by fire....
it was like hell.

00:14:42

I kept telling myself, "I will not die! I will not die!"

00:14:49

I kicked things away with my feet.
Cars and things.
Kicking and kicking.

00:14:58

Someone grabbed on to me and I started to go under.
Sinking.

00:15:07

A boat in flames swept by...spreading fire from boat to house.
Burning house to house.

00:15:16

Some houses still had people inside.

00:15:21

Gas bombs were exploding left and right in the water.

00:15:31

I could only help 4 people.
But dozens were washing away.

00:15:46

I didn't open my mouth!
But I was chanting a Buddhist prayer.
I kept chanting this over and over.

00:15:56

Then I felt something pulling my shoulders straight up...
I could feel my deceased grandma and grandma with me.
Because of them, I couldn't die!

00:16:21

I could not die.

00:16:28

From the highway bypass above me, people were shouting...
"Kana! Grab my hand! Grab my hand!"
One voice was my former classmate screaming.

00:16:43

At first I didn't hear them yelling and screaming at me.
"It's okay! Grab my hand!" they shouted.

00:16:49

Everyone's hands grabbed me, pulling me out.

00:17:05

KAZUHISA SASAKI (VO)

I couldn't get to her quickly...because I had to take the longer Japan Sea route since
the Fukushima side was blocked.

00:17:24 (VO)

I phoned to tell Sera, "Mom's okay. Don't worry."
Then my phone battery went dead.

00:17:33

You couldn't buy gas.
Everything was touch and go.
I was just praying that everyone wasn't dead.

00:17:44 (VO)

I drove through the mountains to Otsuchi...
until there was so much debris I couldn't go any further.

00:17:56 (VO)

So I walked the rest of the way.

00:18:01 (VO)

Kanako was still somewhere else.

00:18:08

KANAKO SASAKI (VO)

Shortly after I was pulled from the tsunami...
I had to start helping the people injured.

00:08:19 (VO)

How many? A hundred or more.
Knee injuries. Back injuries.
The whole body.

00:18:29

Dislocations. Broken bones.
Basically using my bare hands.
Supplies were gone.
Needles gone.

00:18:39

We made splints from garden branches and found rope to make slings.
There was nothing left so we used anything we could find.

00:18:53 (VO)

This is te-a te, using your hands to heal.

00:19:08

CARD:

the same night on a local mountain

00:19:11

MASAO USUZAWA(VO)

Everyone fought hard to help.
Everybody. Together.
Even the children.

00:19:28 (VO)

There were about 130 survivors in our practice hall...

00:19:36

and more than 460 people took refuge in farmhouses around here.

00:19:45 (VO)

That night, using a wheelbarrow I started walking around to the farms.
They gave me rice, radishes, green onions, and vegetables.

00:19:56 (VO)

With those we cooked rice, miso soup and other warm foods.

00:20:02

We made about 600 rice balls...
and delivered the food to the survivors taking shelter around here.

00:20:28 (VO)

It got so cold, it started snowing.

00:20:32 (VO)

We did this for about 4 or 5 days...
waiting for outside help to arrive.
They couldn't get through yet.

00:20:44

MISAKI OHTA

It got so cold.
The milk was freezing.
So I had to use both my breast milk and bottle milk together.

00:20:56

My mom didn't arrive and my grandpa didn't arrive.
I thought we lost both of them.

00:21:07

GRANDMA KOUKO OGUNI

When my husband and Kanako finally walked up the mountain...
they said, "Otsuchi town is gone."
I couldn't believe it!

00:21:18

GRANDPA GOROU OGUNI

You see, fortunately my wife didn't see the tsunami.
No one told her anything yet.

00:21:26
GRANDMA KOUKO OGUNI

Nothing!

00:21:29
GRANDPA GOROU OGUNI

I built over 50 houses in our town...
about 50 homes over the years.

00:21:38
GRANDMA KOUKO OGUNI

You were always building things!

00:21:47

But we still have each other.
Now we have to look after ourselves.

00:21:53

I've never thought about this before, but this is the countryside.
Here, when you have something, only half belongs to you...the other half you share
with others.

00:22:06

Because of this disaster, we're forced to change our ways.

00:22:14

The disaster shrinks my spirit.
We are given many things...but it makes me feel ashamed.

00:22:23
GRANDPA & GRANDMA

-Oh. Earthquake.
-Yes. An earthquake.
-It's okay.
-Yes. It's okay.

00:22:31
CARD:
their town of Otsuchi

ACTION: Their town before and after

00:23:06
SERA SASAKI (VO)

Young people like me who left town for school or jobs...we survived the disaster.

00:23:23

But how can we feel truly happy that we lived...
when so many friends back home died?

00:23:34 (VO)

I came to Tokyo in 2009 to attend university in the Chiba area.

00:23:46 (VO)

The first time I went shopping after the disaster...
to buy things to send to my family...

00:23:57

seeing plain rice on the store shelves...
made me think of everyone back home with nothing.
After that I couldn't buy food for myself to eat.

00:24:16 (VO)

And whenever I saw my dad's favorite foods...
I wished he could enjoy tasting them.

00:24:35

This made feel increasingly guilty and more homesick.
I started having some negative thoughts.
Like quitting university...and other bad thoughts.

00:24:43

I want to understand...even a little...some of my family's tsunami hardships.
I can, but I can't.
I have to accept that.

00:25:02

KANAKO SASAKI

That's why my job can no longer be just acupuncture.

00:25:09

I have a duty as a survivor to do much more now for my children and my grandchildren...for the people of my town and the world.

00:25:21

CARD:
fire

00:25:30

CARD:

In Otsuchi town, Mayor Kato & 40 employees died maintaining City Hall; and 8 firemen were lost while manually closing the tsunami wall floodgates.

00:25:51

OTSUCHI MAYOR (VO)

We lost 10 percent of our population.
1,281 people died in our town.
This includes 437 people still missing.
This is our situation now.

00:26:11

I'm the current mayor of Otsuchi, Iwate province. Mr. Ikarigawa.

00:26:17

I grew up here surrounded by nature.
And I want to help my town become a wonderful place to live again.

00:26:34

Our first challenge is finding enough staff to run City Hall.
And there are new worries facing us, like the rise in deaths by suicide.

00:26:50

CARD:
Miyagi province

00:26:57

NARRATION (VO)

All along this coastline it's hard to imagine what life was like before the tsunami destroyed it.

00:27:06 (VO)

Old TV footage shot in 2006, five years before the disaster, helps us see a town that no longer exists today, and meet a family that no longer lives here.

00:27:13

CARD:
Archival footage 2006

00:27:18 (VO)

YUKO SATO

Our village used to be about 1,000 houses. Around 3,000 people.

00:27:23

YOSHIO SATO

We all went to school together from kindergarten to high school.

All our lives we waved at each other calling out, "Hi there!" "Hi there!"

00:27:37(VO)

This was our community.

00:27:42 (VO)

What a perfect life!

Delicious food to eat...walk everywhere...lots of kids around.

ACTION: beach scene

00:27:57

BEACH FOOD HUT SCENE

YOSHIO SATO

Delicious no?

YOUNG CUSTOMER

Really good.

YOSHIO SATO

You won't taste any better!

00:28:05 (VO)

We're all fishermen and farmers.

We shared our catch.

Shared everything...without giving or taking any money.

00:28:19

NEIGHBOURS SHARING SCENE

-Please eat this.

-What's this?

-Every year!

-It's just a little.

-So what are up to today?

-Not much.

00:28:35

CARD:

five years later: 2011

00:28:41

YOSHIO SATO

I had to pull my wife out of the house.

00:28:47 (VO)

She was looking for papers and money...when the earthquake was shaking.

"Forget those things!" I yelled.

00:29:01

SACHIKI SATO

I could have gotten everything out really fast.

But this guy, he drags me outside so I didn't get anything!

00:29:13

For 3 months, I went crazy thinking about this.

00:29:22 (VO)

YUKO SATO (laughing)

Mom, it's just your greed.

00:29:24

SACHIKI SATO

No. It's not my greed! I grew up very poor.
I didn't even get to go to school.

00:29:34

YUKO SATO

We can laugh about things now.
But mom and dad's generation experienced wartime hardships.
They had to do without things and worked very hard...
all for the sake of us, their children.

00:29:52

SACHIKI SATO

I've been my husband's helper.
It's been hard work for over 60 years now.

00:30:02

CABIN SCENE

YOSHIO SATO

It's warm in here.

SACHIKI SATO

I'm not cold. Maybe them.

00:30:07

YOSHIO SATO

She's a really good wife but...
she's a bit small so sometimes she's not very useful.

00:30:15

Just before we got married, a portable transistor radio came out in Japan.
It was really small and cute.

00:30:27

My wife was small and cute like a transistor radio...
so I married her.

00:30:36

CARD:

Archival footage 2006

00:30:44

YOSHIO SATO

Squash, cucumbers, tomatoes, eggplants, spinach...

00:30:50

We'll plant some flowers too.
They will bloom as beautiful as you are.

00:31:04

CARD

A few kilometres away

00:31:10 (VO)

KUNIO SAITO

Today we begin the story of 'Miyagi Province's Little Rakko'.

00:31:17

Before the tsunami, I was making YouTube videos of my dog.

This is from winter, one month before the disaster.

00:31:29 (VO)

When I posted that my dog had been killed...

so many people left different messages for me.

00:31:38

"Humans are more important than animals."

There were some messages like that on my YouTube.

00:31:48 (VO)

But I wish people could understand that dogs are like family members too.

00:31:56

Our family went to the school that was our 'designated refuge centre'...

fleeing there together with our dog.

But dogs were not allowed inside the centre.

That wasn't a choice...so I tied her up outside.

00:32:15 (VO)

KUNIO SAITO & SAKIKO OHASHI

-On the fence?

-Yes.

00:32:17 (VO)

KUNIO SAITO

While walking, I was taking video.

Here, the tsunami is about 10 minutes away.

00:32:29

The ground was liquefying, so we couldn't use our cars.

00:32:35 (VO)

I took this from the top floor of the school.

00:32:46

When the water receded the next day we went outside...

but our dog was gone.

00:32:53 (VO)

Only her collar was left.

00:32:58

Her name was Rakko (Sea Otter).

We always went for walks together.

01:33:12:11

ACTION: waves lap sandy beach

00:33:21 (VO)

CHIEKO SHOUGO

My job was to inform seniors and the disabled members of our community of emergencies.

00:33:34

The day of the disaster, my husband and I were out of town on business.
So the tsunami...we missed it.
We evaded the tsunami...

00:33:53

and I failed by duty to warn these people.
That is my heart's deepest sorrow.

00:34:08

My husband's brother and niece died.
But I failed the people in my neighborhood.
So many of those people were killed.

00:34:27

It's unforgiveable that I'm left alive.

ACTION: her destroyed neighborhood. Human grief.

00:34:41

CHIEKO SHOUGO

Here...is my home.

00:34:51

Look! It's blooming.

ACTION: human grief

00:25:54

NARRATION (VO)

Mountains of debris left behind.
Still haunted by the souls that once lived here.

00:36:03 (VO)

Despite their terrible pain and loss, it's remarkable to meet so many Tohoku people
who still show kindness to someone like me.

00:36:16 (VO)

Like Mr. Kowata who drives me through his devastated area, and shares their story.

00:36:26

YASUYUKI KOWATA

The words of this song are difficult to sing.
They haunt me.
"The mountains where I used to chase a rabbit.
The river where I caught fish.

00:36:37

I still yearn for those days in my hometown..."
This was a song I used to enjoy singing but...(chokes)

ACTION: a season passes

00: 37:25

NARRATION (VO)

A father who lost his only child takes me to her school.

00:37:32 (VO)

"I'm a lucky man" he says, "because I could be a father of a beautiful daughter for 12
good years....

instead of never being a father at all."

00:37:47 (VO)

As a mother, it's hard to imagine this loss.

00:37:56

TITLE CARD:

Okawa Elementary School, 4 kilometers inland

00:38:04

TITLE CARD:

74 of the 108 elementary children at this school died, or remain missing

00:38:15

TITLE CARD:

10 of the 13 teachers at this school died, or remain missing

00:38:40

AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHOIR FROM NEARBY SENDAI

(singing)

"Someday when I've followed my road...

I will come back to my hometown."

ACTION: go to black

00:39:01

MASAO USAZAWA

It would be great if our memories could be printed into photos.

00:39:07 (VO)

Photos are gone.

Your own face.

Family faces.

Lots of faces lost in the tsunami.

Zero left.

00:39:16 (VO)

Found photos are carefully cleaned.

Many photos remain unidentified.

And many are left unclaimed.

00:39:35

CHIEKO SHOUGO (VO)

Looking at these is like seeing a dream.

00:39:46

CARD

15:46 March 11, 2011: An hour after the earthquake, the tsunami reaches 320 km (200 miles) south, damaging the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant.

00:39:55

CARD

One day later on March 12th at 15:36 the first of four explosions occurs at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, releasing toxic radiation.

00:40:03

CARD

The earthquake, tsunami & nuclear explosions leave more than 470,000 people displaced in Iwate, Miyagi & Fukushima provinces.

The earth, water and air are left contaminated.

00:40:14

CARD:
air

00:40:20

KUMI KUMADA

Before the earthquake, we lived in Marumori, near the Fukushima border.
Our town was in the southern most region of Miyagi province.

00:40:33

Our cellphone was dead with no electricity to recharge it...
so our only information came from newspapers.

00:40:39

A day after the accident, we learned from the newspaper...

00:40:46 (VO)

'yesterday there was an explosion at the nuclear power plant.'

00:40:51

My heart ripped right out of me!
When the radiation level was the very highest...I allowed my children to play
outside all day long...
even to eat their meals.
Feeding them the radiation.

00:41:09

"What have I done!" I thought.
"How could this happen?"

ACTION: family home

00:41:31 (VO)

KUMI KUMADA

I wasn't cooking much, but I could make Japanese pancakes.

00:41:38 (VO)

The tsunami didn't reach as far as our area...and our house didn't collapse.
Once we became aware of the nuclear explosion...
we didn't allow our kids to play outside.

00:41:53

At this same time, our fifth child...started having lots and lots of nose bleeding.

00:42:06

JUSHI KUMADA

My name is Jushi. I am the fifth child in this family.
A fifth child in this family.

00:42:19

KUMI KUMADA

Until now he never had bleeding like this.

00:42:25 (VO)

Later I wondered if his nosebleeds were connected to his radiation exposure.
I worry a lot about this.

00:42:37

I wish we were informed about the situation much sooner.

00:42:44

Then I could decide whether to permit our children to go outside or not...
instead of being ignorant about the presence of radiation.

00:42:55

If only we all knew what was happening sooner...rather than later.
That's my feeling.

00:43:07 (VO)

My parents are from Hiroshima...
so immediately after the earthquake and nuclear explosion...
the kids and I escaped and stayed in Hiroshima for one year.

00:43:21 (VO)

My husband stayed behind here, to help the victims with the clean-up.

00:43:32 (VO)

It's only my faith in God that saves me from getting really depressed...

00:43:42

CARD:
wind

00:43:50

CARD
(GPS VOICE)

Above their town:
in the Marumori bamboo forests

00:43:58

TOSHIHIKO YATSU

It's not only the distance...
but the direction the wind blows.

00:44:04 (VO)

And it came this way...
in the wind.

Our distance from the nuclear power plant is about 55 km (34 miles).

00:44:30

CHILDREN IN FOREST

-I don't understand.
-Wind?
-It's not okay!

00:44:35 (VO)

TOSHIHIKO YATSU

Our agricultural products..the wild mountain vegetables...
the old forests...our bamboo...
all these things can't be used.

00:44:52 (VO)

Bamboo samples are collected and tested for contamination at the special test
centre.

This data determines its safety and handed down to the farmers.

00:45:10 (VO)

In our area, we also scrape the contaminated soil from the forest floor...
then take it all to the decontamination collection depot.

00:45:26 (VO)

But it's impossible to clean up all the mountains.

00:45:36 (VO)

Bamboo.
It's part of Japanese culture.

ACTION: Bamboo forest spirit alive in mourning

00:46:58

NARRATION (VO)

So where do half a million displaced people go to live now?

For the first six months, victims lived in cars, tents, schools, temples and sport centers.

Anywhere that is safe and still livable.

00:47:24 (VO)

These shelters are eventually replaced by temporary housing called *kasetsu*.

These refugee camps are scattered all over Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima provinces.

00:47:38 (VO)

Which *kasetsu* camp you are sent to live in, is decided mainly by lottery and not your hometown.

VOICES OF THE KASETSU

00:47:48 (VO)

VOICE 1 (ITTO)

It's so hard. You go out your door and there's no one you know.

00:47:53 (VO)

VOICE 2 (USUZAWA)

No one to talk to. Just watch TV

00:47:57 (VO)

VOICE 3 (KANAKO SASAKI)

It's difficult to go shopping..so eating habits have dramatically changed.

00:48:04 (VO)

VOICE 4 (NAKAO)

Japanese law states these *kasetsu* are meant for 2 years.

00:48:08 (VO)

VOICE 5(USUZAWA)

The space is so small.

2.73 x 2.73 metres (9x9 feet).

00:48:13 (VO)

VOICE 6 (MORI)

We hear all the neighbours conversations.

00:48:16 (VO)

VOICE 7 (SATO)

If you already had a mortgage before...it's hard to get a second mortgage for a new house.

00:48:24 (VO)

VOICE 8 (NAKAO)

Another year means it's going into 4 years. (2014)

00:48:27 (VO)

VOICE 9 (USUZAWA)

After that? Nobody knows...

00:48:41 (VO)

YUKO SATO

In June 2011, we were moved into *kasetsu* temporary housing.

00:48:51

YOSHIO SATO

In that small kasetsu, my spirit shrinks.
I have a loud fisherman's voice....so she always says "shhhh!"

00:49:01

SACHIKI SATO & YUKO SATO

-I'm so lonely.
-At the kasetsu?
-When I'm at the kasetsu.

00:49:07

SACHIKI SATO

No one comes by to visit.

00:49:16 (VO)

YUKO SATO

Although nothing is left out here, we can speak as loud as we want...
speak our own dialect and see the open sky.

00:49:24 (VO)

We can hear the sound of the ocean, and be free to be ourselves.

00:49:37 (VO)

YOSHIO SATO

Out here I feel alive again.
This is the only home and life I know.

00:49:47

CARD:

Fukushima province

00:49:51

NARRATION (VO)

A few months after arriving in Tohoku, I enter Fukushima's evacuated 'no go zone'
for the first time.

00:50:00 (VO)

The empty streets.
A ghost town where no one lives.

00:50:06 (VO)

The silence is eerie.
As the traffic lights still turn from red to green...
I cry.

00:50:17 (VO)

Being a volunteer, a mother, and grandmother who loves Japan is no longer
enough...
and this film begins on this street.

00:50:40 (VO)

YASUYUKI KOWATA

Because of the radiation, sleeping overnight is not allowed in this evacuation zone.

00:50:46 (VO)

Short day visits are allowed...
but we can't live in our houses yet.

00:50:58 (VO)

My company is here.
It's a wedding business.

00:51:05 (VO)

We built this business from scratch about 25 years ago.
It's not the type of place THAT you'd want to have a wedding any more.

(to the barricade police)

00:51:17

Hello.
That's our business over there.
We'll just go and take a quick look.
Thank you.

00:51:31 (VO)

Our wedding buses have been sitting here for 2 years.

00:51:36

Our wedding company, *Josui* (like water).

00:51:42

Oh the battery's dead.
Okay. All aboard!

00:51:53

This is our wedding chapel.

00:51:58

Come on.
Oh look!

00:52:18

Today's the first time to come inside. A shock.

00:52:31

This hurts.
We're ruined.

00:52:52

For 3 years, I've been waiting for the green light to return home...
to go live in our own house again with my wife and our cats.

00:53:06

That's why I started repairing our house...
so I can be ready when that time comes.
We just want to come home healthy.

00:53:20

However this is our fate, our destiny.
So I try not to think too negatively about our life.

ACTION: Driving through condemned zone

00:53:40

KIYOTO MONMA

Please stop to see my horses.

00:53:43 (VO)

YASUYUKI KOWATA

Mr. Monma's stables.

STABLE CHAT

00:53:48

KIYOTO MONMA & YASUYUKI KOWATA

-Come here.

-It comes to you?
- Come on girl.
-Look at that! Oh!

00:54:01

KIYOTO MONMA

After the explosions, everybody was evacuated.
So we moved all our horses to Tochigi province.

00:54:11

When they said it was safe to return, we brought our horses back here again.

00:54:19

Before the disaster we had 9 horses.
For many reasons, we have only 6 horses left now.

00:54:37 (VO)

My body might be getting a little old...
but my spirit is still strong enough to fight on.

00:54:46

I still have two hopes.
Number one is to preserve our sacred samurai culture...

00:54:59 (VO)

and the other is to save the samurai soul that lives in me.

00:55:12 (VO)

When I was a child I followed my grandfather around everywhere...
until finally we became one spirit.

00:55:31

I am so thankful, as I always hoped this would pass on to me.
Now I'd like to do the same thing for my grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

00:55:43

But our young children can't be here since this nuclear accident.

ACTION: Praying at the samurai god shrine

00:56:07 (VO)

TOSHINORI ITAKURA

After the nuclear plant explosions, people left and this became a ghost town.
That's when I left this house.

00:56:18

Please. Come in.

00:56:22 (VO)

When I come inside, my eyes are met by...a deteriorating home...an invaded
space...feces and filth everywhere.

The smell of animal urine chokes the air.

00:56:39 (VO)

This really breaks my heart.

I do get flashes of fond memories, but overall, it's depressing.

00:56:56 (VO)

(sees old photo)

My father...and me.

00:57:00 (VO)

All my life I've enjoyed living here together with my family.
Suddenly we're separated and it's very lonely.

00:57:09 (VO)

As much as I would like to come home to Odaka (Minamisoma)...

00:57:14

City Hall is open, but will all the shops resume business?
Will the hospital reopen?
Will my friends come back?
Will our house be livable again?

00:57:29

We can't turn back time concerning the nuclear accident...
we have to accept that.

00:57:37 (VO)

The Nomaoi samurai spirit is everyone's source of power to fight and stay strong.

00:57:45

MAYOR KAZUNOBU SAKURAI

I'm Kazunobu Sakurai.

I became Minamisoma City's mayor in 2010, one year before the disaster.

00:57:59

Before that I was an organic dairy farmer.

00:58:07 (VO)

Farming teaches us that we can't defeat nature.

I learned this with my physical body.

00:58:20 (VO)

We have to learn to respect and live alongside nature to go forward.

00:58:29 (VO)

NARRATION

Two weeks after the nuclear explosions, the mayor of this area takes a political risk
with his public plea for help to the world.

00:58:39 (VO)

Time Magazine named him one of the world's 100 most influential people in 2011.

00:58:47

MAYOR SAKURAI (from his YouTube plea)

We counted 14 days from the earthquake,
basic requisite materials are running short in the homes of remaining citizens.

00:59:00

And with the scarce information we can gather from the government or TEPCO
(Tokyo Electric Power Company), we are left isolated.

00:59:10

SAIKO SAITOH

TV reports said people within 10 km must evacuate.

The area kept growing. Soon that changed to 20 km.

00:59:23 (VO)

We were told, "Stay indoors.

Keep the windows closed."

00:59:32

"If you go outside wear smooth clothing, a mask and a hat."

Can you really live in a place like that?

00:59:40

MAYOR SAKURAI (from his YouTube plea)

We regret to say this, but we have to ask volunteers to act at their own risk.

Before the contamination expands further,
please give us your hand to help these people.

00:59:55 (VO)

KENJI YAMASHIRO

I heard about this situation walking with my cart in southern Japan.
I had to respond and come to help.

01:00:06

Initially I came to help victims relieve stress by teaching yoga in the refugee shelters.

01:00:17 (VO)

YOGA WOMEN

Tonight we'll sleep well...(laughter)

01:00:20

KENJI YAMASHIRO

(yoga class)

Reach up and feel that inner strength and energy seated in your body...

01:00:37 (VO)

Since the radiation is invisible, it causes a huge fear in people.

01:00:42

CARD:

contamination reading
from this location 2012

01:00:46

KENJI YAMASHIRO

Japan has experienced Nagasaki and Hiroshima...
and Daigo Fukujumaru off the Bikini Islands, the nuclear testing site.

01:01:00

So Japan has a long history with radiation.
It's something that is deeply imprinted in our minds.

01:01:10

Even Japan's monster Godzilla was awakened by radioactive exposure.
Right from childhood, our fear of radiation equals our fear of Godzilla.
This is all part of our Japanese collective memory.

01:01:30

NARRATION (VO)

Housing for long term volunteers is difficult to find in the disaster areas.
Kenji lived in this tent for several years.

01:01:46 (VO)

KENJI YAMASHIRO

Growing things and teaching yoga originate from the same source...
both nurture life energy with the same heart.

01:01:56 (VO)

That's why I started planting sunflower seeds in these abandoned fields.

01:02:04

Evacuees would be so sad to visit here and see their fields overgrown with tall
weeds.

01:02:12

If they see some flowers blooming instead...
they might feel some happiness and get a little power to carry on.

01:02:27

CARD

'Let the Flowers Bloom'

01:02:31

KENJI YAMASHIRO

Sometimes beauty found in something small and simple helps us see life differently.

01:02:40

NARRATION (VO)

In his fourth winter, he died during a bad snowstorm, in his tent near this field.

01:02:52

CARD:

Iwaki City, Fukushima

01:02:56

NARRATION (VO)

In Japan, a mandatory lunch program is provided by the school.

01:03:05 (VO)

And students are responsible for all the cleaning.

The floors, the toilets, the windows, and the school yards.

01:03:15 (VO)

These customs have been part of school life in Japan since my grandmother's time.

01:03:24 (VO)

Soon after the disaster, classes and customs resumed.

In Iwate, Miyagi and even Fukushima...

where mothers there express some of their worries.

01:03:34

CARD:

a few kilometres away

01:03:45

CARD:

tonne bags of contaminated soil and debris

01:03:56 (VO)

YUMI CHIBA

From March and April 2011...

local mothers started worrying about the radiation contamination.

Our community support network had fallen apart, basically shutdown.

01:04:13

FUKUSHIMA MOTHER 1

In Japan, especially in Fukushima, people don't like to stick out.

Expressing your concerns is really frowned upon.

01:04:27 (VO)

This is not part of our culture.

That's why things appear to be okay.

01:04:34

In reality, other mothers share our same worries and concerns...

but they choose to stay silent.

01:04:43

MOTHERS

-They're afraid.
-Yes. Afraid.

01:04:45

YUMI CHIBA

We can't even be open with our own husbands and kids.
In-laws are the worst.
We're left very isolated even in our own families.

01:04:55

FUKUSHIMA MOTHER 1

If I search for some information, they want me to stop.
"Let things be!" they say.

01:05:06

This really hurts my natural role as a mother.
What's a mother supposed to do?

01:05:13

We try our best to be careful with the food...
but there's a limit to how much we can monitor from home...
with school and everything.

01:05:24

FUKUSHIMA MOTHER 2

Please try and understand why we mothers are filled with concerns.
Our children still have a future ahead of them from now...
but they need a safe and healthy environment to grow up in order to have that.

01:05:45

YUMI CHIBA

The way things have been handled has had errors.
I want to declare that.
But it's time to change. Hand in hand.

01:06:10 (VO)

FUKUSHIMA MOTHER OII SAN

Perhaps we can live like the government tells us to live..
if we don't think, or worry too much about things.

01:06:26 (VO)

But will a person born and raised in Fukushima...
be accepted like everyone else?
Without discrimination?

01:06:40 (VO)

Will they marry?
Have a baby?
Live a normal life?
That's my biggest worry.

01:07:06 (VO)

NOBUAKI OHASHI

Fact is that Japan has developed a long continuous history...
now over 2,673 years old.

01:07:29 (VO)

This creates a straight uninterrupted line in the Japanese DNA.

01:07:40

Forty years ago I played the guitar.
The song Romanza...(mimics)...
I really liked it.

01:07:54
But these sounds had little connection to the Japanese culture.

01:08:08
In playing the *shakuhachi* bamboo flute,
the breath is connected to our vital energy source.

01:08:16
Breathe in from your nose...
and connect to your spirit.

01:08:48
This is a shortened sample.
It can be done a bit longer in one breath.

01:08:54
So if you are troubled or confused...
or in extreme pain...
this breath connects to your inner strength and you can walk on.

01:09:09
I totally drew my power from this!

01:09:12
Then afterwards, I had the strength to carry my *shakuhachi*...gather some donated
supplies and perform at different emergency shelters.

01:09:30
On one occasion, I was left breathless.
Tears fell from my eyes.
It was no longer about the music.

01:09:43
A strange thing happened as no sounds came out.
An old grandma and I joined to become one.

01:09:58 (VO)
Everyone shared that single moment together.
Without speaking a word...silently sitting in their own spaces.

01:10:11
The moment my tears fell, the others felt free to cry at last.
Finally they gave themselves permission to 'let go' for just a moment.
This is what happened.

01:10:28
With not even a sound, nothing became everything.

01:10:35
(wipes a tear)

I'm sorry.

01:10:40 (VO)
This shared culture is the reliable strength of Tohoku.
If our young people carry on this knowledge...we will be fine!
Japan will be fine too!

01:11:06
Maybe it all comes from our parents...
like carefully shaping rice balls.

01:11:21
Shaping our 'Japanese-ness' until it becomes an innate part of our soul.

01:11:41 ACTION
THE REQUIEM FOR MACHINES AND SOULS

01:14:09
CARD:
revival, dreams & memories

01:14:22 (VO)

KENJI YAMASHIRO

Our grandmas and grandpas are Japan's pioneers.
They dared to clear this land to make our fields and rice paddies.

01:14:36 (VO)

This life represents their blood, sweat and tears.
It's a part of ourselves that can't be thrown away so easily.

01:14:49 (VO)

After the war, Japan developed very rapidly.
People made lots of money and started buying things.

01:15:04 (VO)

When that affluent lifestyle suddenly disappears...
some of us can't carry on without our wealth and possessions.

01:15:20 (VO)

But joy can be found in many ways, if you let yourself feel it.
It can be a new beginning.
Even in adversity, there can be joy.

01:15:41(VO)

JUSHI

I was once the Miyagi provincial judo champion.

01:15:48

KUMI KUMADA

He seems to be doing okay.
When he's doing things he's really interested in and enjoys...
he seems to be more genki, 'full of vitality'.

01:16:01

JUSHI

My medal.
My dream is to be an Olympic judo athlete...
so I will practice hard.

01:16:22

KUNIO SAITO

If a man walks alone...
people think he doesn't have a job. True?
If you walk with a dog they say,
"Look! There's a nice guy."
A dog is good camouflage.

01:16:43 (VO)

One day...I saw a poster on the message board.
It was easy to recognize her because she had such a unique look.

01:16:57 (VO)

Firemen found her and took very good care of her.

00:17:05 (VO)

I called, "Rakko! Rakko!"
She wouldn't recognize me at first.
The firemen fed her lots of good food...so she almost forgot us.
We are very lucky.

01:17:24

CARD:

Minamisoma (Odaka), Fukushima

01:17:26 (VO)

NARRATOR

A friend from Canada sends me a newspaper article about a barber and his wife, the first to reopen a business inside the 'no go zone'.
So I go to meet them.

01:17:38

SUNAO KATO

I'm Sunao Kato.
My shop is called Kato Barbershop.

01:17:46 (VO)

Perhaps I might be the first person to come back here...
but I already had a business in town.
So I'm not really a pioneer...
simply a guy in a hurry to come home.

01:18:02

YOSHIYUKI KOWATA

Just seeing the barber pole turning gives me a lot of comfort.
It provides proof that life exists here again.

01:18:16

SUNAO KATO

From March 13th, 2011 for about one year, everyone evacuated this town.
From April 5, 2012: we could return during the day.
Three days later, we reopened our shop.

01:18:38 (VO)

There's two of us.
I think this is a big factor.

01:18:46 (VO)

At first, I was worried how things would be...
but from the moment I heard, "Can I get a haircut?" ...
and the first customer walked in the door...
I haven't had time to worry, just do my work.

01:19:06 (VO)

There's no water service, but we've always had electricity.

01:19:12 (VO)

MOKOTO KATO

On a busy day, we use about 80 PET bottles of water...
for shampooing and the toilet.

We carry the water here from our *kasetsu* housing.

01:19:28

As you can see, this town is empty and deserted.
But customers still make a special effort to come here.
I'm so grateful to them.

01:19:37

SUNAO KATO

Not a lot of customers come...sometimes 2 or 3 people in one day.
Even if one person comes, I feel I'm doing a good job.

01:19:52 (VO)

We made it this far...now we have to live the joy of being.
If you can't do that, you can't be in a place like this.

01:20:08

The nuclear power plant...
until now, the nuclear plant provided local jobs for our town.
That meant money for the local economy. We thought it was the lifeblood of
this area.

01:20:25

Now when something like this happens...you realize that being able to live
has priority over the economy.

01:20:36

If we need to change, we can change.
If there's not enough electricity, we can learn to cutback our use.

01:20:46

If we do have nuclear power plants...a secure plan is necessary to handle their waste
products and dangers.

01:20:55 (VO)

Our marriage is the same.
Except my wife...
has gained more power.

01:21:04

MOKOTO KATO

My husband has changed too.
He's happier and more relaxed.

01:21:10

SUNAO KATO

We've become a more balanced couple.
I'd like this renewed love between us to go on forever.

01:21:26

CARD:

Arahama, Miyagi

Only 5 fishboats in this harbor survived the tsunami

01:21:33 (VO)

YOSHIO SATO

My wife always took good care of the fishermen's shrine in our village.

01:21:39

She regularly offered fine rice wine, money and prayer to the gods.
People say that's why my boat survived.

01:22:03 (VO)

I'm 83 years old now and still going strong.
If someone eats one rice cake, I can eat two.

01:22:17

Two or three days after the tsunami, I came back here to check our place.
Our warehouse and house were gone.

01:22:34 (VO)

YUKO SATO

Dad and I hunted for our belongings scattered in all the debris, cleaning what we
found one by one.

01:22:43

SATO SAN

In the cold, the wind, everyday we looked.

YUKO AND YOSHIO SATO

-No car.

-The car was swept away.

01:22:52

YUKO SATO

We gathered only things that we recognized belonged to us...
like this pipe and these corrugated panels.

01:23:03 (VO)

We brought everything here...

but the pile was stolen.

01:23:11 (VO)

When we continued searching...carrying things back on our shoulders, this old song
came out of us.

With that kind of power, how can you fail?

01:23:35 (VO)

By September 2011, from the debris we found...Dad built this hut on the spot where
our house used to be.

01:23:51

YOSHIO SATO

Now smart city planners tell us,

"Live somewhere else and make this a park."

We're treated like village people with no brains.

01:24:01 (VO)

YUKO SATO

Here in Arahama, these yellow ribbons represent...
our Arahama people's wish to return to their land to live.

01:24:13 (VO)

YOSHIO SATO

About 50 families have these flying on their properties.

01:24:26

YUKO SATO

A park can go anywhere, but...

01:24:34 (VO)

YOSHIO SATO

We all have to agree, because we can't disagree.

01:24:44 (VO)

YUKO SATO

Japan is an island country...

it's impossible to move everyone away from the coastline.

01:24:54 (VO)

Although Japan is prone to tsunamis and earthquakes...

we still want to co-exist with nature.

Even the natural dangers.

01:25:04 (VO)

If danger comes, we'll run away.

01:25:15

CARD:

hundreds of tsunami warning stone monuments
have been erected in Japan over the decades

01:25:24

SACHIKO MOTOMOCHI

First. If there's an earthquake, beware of a tsunami.
Second. If the tsunami comes, move to higher ground.

01:25:32 (VO)

Third. Don't build your home below this stone's position.
Put here on March 3rd, 1933.

01:25:40

CARD:

Kirikiri, Iwate

01:25:44

CARD:

Otsuchi, Iwate

01:25:47

CARD:

Jodogahama Beach, Iwate

01:25:48

SACHIKO MOTOMOCHI

When I was a child we just took a picture.
Just a stone. That's all.

01:25:55 (VO)

People forget a lot of things.
It's so easy to forget...
and also it's difficult to pass on that memory.

01:26:17

MISAKI OHTA

My goal is to revive our traditional dance...
and not let this disaster take it away from us.

01:26:30

A mysterious feeling comes over me whenever I dance this.
How can I explain it?

01:26:40 (VO)

A power fills my body...a deep memory that's connected to our ancient history and
ancestors.

01:26:50 (VO)

This sacred dance honors the Sun god.
It tells the story about a time when the Sun disappeared.

01:27:01 (VO)

The world turned dark.
Evil omens were awakened.
People cried to the gods, "What should we do? What should we do?"

01:27:18 (VO)

"Sing and dance from your hearts," replied the gods.

Day and night the people sang and danced.

00:27:27 (VO)

Until one morning the Sun finally reappeared.

01:28:50

KIYOTO MONMA

When I put on my armor my samurai soul rises, filling me with an extraordinary feeling.

00:29:06 (VO)

Our sacred Nomaio tradition began over 1,075 years ago.

01:29:13

We still have to worry today about the safety of the young children. They are my whole life. My duty.

01:29:30

MITSUKIYO MONMA

Can you sing a bit of our samurai warriors' song for me?

01:29:35

KIYOTO MONMA

Maybe I can. Just a little...

ACTION: Samurai in armor ready to go to the new battle.

The questions that remain as the seasons (generations) pass on.

01:33:01

THE END

END ROLL CREDITS

Copyright all rights reserved: Linda Ohama, Yugen Productions Ltd. 2016

Script written by Linda Ohama

