

**"A faceless student"**

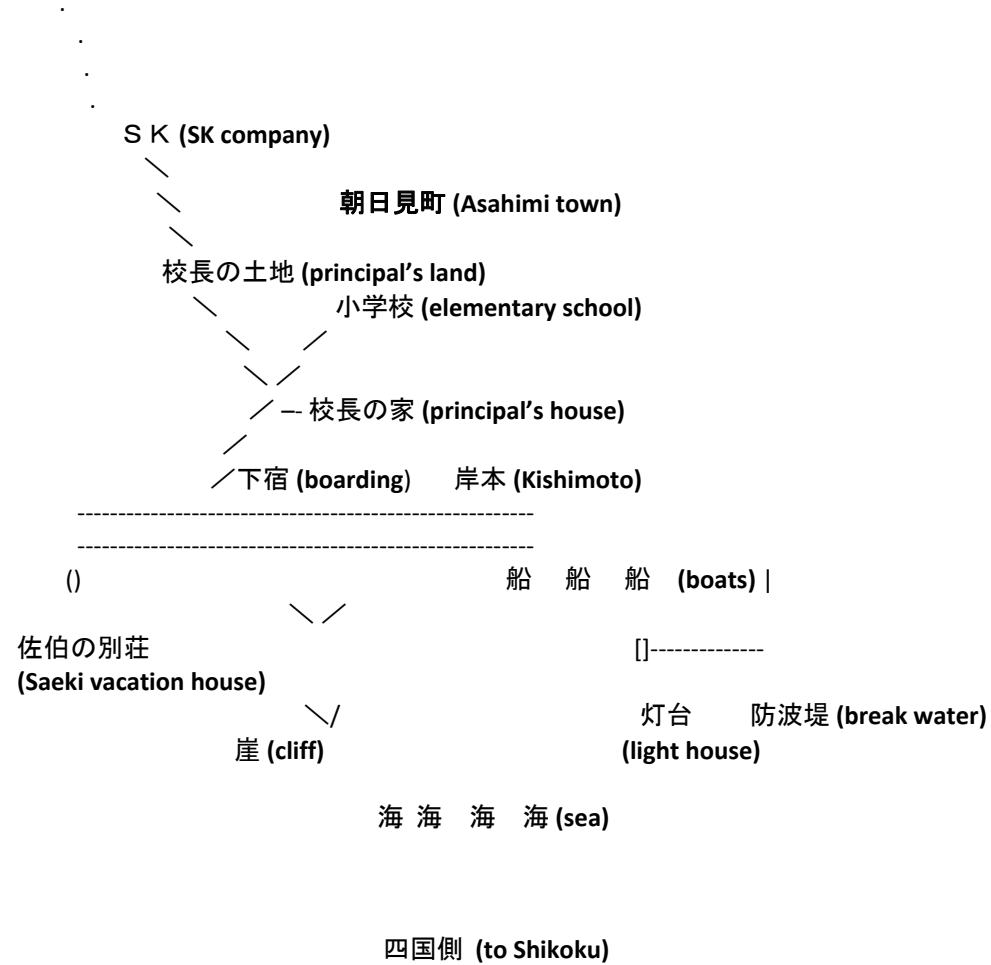
**By Rika and Junko Copyright 2006**

**Interactively written movie script by friends in the US and Japan**

**Translated into English by Rika**

**MAP**

西見市はこちら (Nishimi City)



## **Part 1 Witnessing**

**7/20 Sunday**

### **Scene 1**

A woman in her late 20's wearing a white blouse is walking. Her hair is long but is tied in the back.

It is midsummer.

Cicadas are making noise.

She is going down a hill lined with stone walls, wiping her sweaty face. (refer to a pic)

This is Asahimi Town, a small fishing village at the south end of the Miyazaki prefecture of Kyushu.

The woman was transferred to a small elementary school as a teacher. Her name is Minako Takada. It has been only 3 days since her arrival here.

If one turns left at the bottom of the hill, one would find a small Japanese sweets shop where she is boarding.

A Snow Cone sign/flag is waving in the wind. (refer to a pic)

As Minako returned, a woman in her 60s wearing a Japanese apron, welcomes her back.

Woman: "How was the school? OK?"

Minako: "Yes. The principal is very nice and the students are cheerful."

Saying so Minako goes upstairs.

The woman mumbles: "What a quiet girl."

There are still several unopened boxes in Minako's room. She is about to unpack them.

### **Scene 2**

That night, as she is about to finish unpacking, she goes outside for fresh cool air. Under a beautiful starry sky, there spreads a dark sea.

Minako glances at the peninsula that protrudes into the dark sea. It is about 50 meters away and a nearby lighthouse lights it up from time to time.

Minako sees a person falling from a cliff. (refer to a pic)

She sees another person running away.

Minako enters the house quickly and borrows a phone to call the police.

Minako: "A man... a man fell from a cliff!"

### **Scene 3**

Since it is a small town, they have only a police box. But the nearby Nishimi City has a police station. A police man from the police box says detectives from Nishimi will be here in the morning and surrounds the scene with a tape.

He mumbles complaining: "This is the first time for something like this to happen..."

## **Part 2 Sudden Illness**

**7/21 Sunday**

## Scene 1

2 detectives arrive in the early morning: an unlikable middle aged man with a round fan (Tokushima/Toku-san) and a young rookie with a sweet personality, Shun Morita. (refer to a pic)

The detectives find a dead man at the bottom of the cliff.

From his belongings, they determine that he is a freelance journalist from Osaka, but they cannot tell why he was in this town. There is some evidence of struggle at the top of the cliff.

Detective Morita: "This looks like a murder."

Toku-san: "We don't know that yet!" to correct him but inside his heart, he too thinks it is a murder.

The witness Minako could not see the face of the other man and she did not recognize the journalist either.

## Background Info

Minako was transferred to this town because the teacher she is replacing had to return to Hokkaido to care for her sick father. Minako is in charge of a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade class and a 4<sup>th</sup> grade class.

She chose to come to this small town because she wanted to get away from where she had been living.

## 7/22 Tuesday

### Scene 2

Next day, Minako is asked to go to the police. She repeats what she saw.

Toku-san is looking at the ceiling waiving the round fan and says: "Is that all?" repeatedly.

Morita bows deeply as Minako leaves.

Minako rushes to the school. She is late but she should be able to make it to the second period PE class, so she starts trotting.

### Scene 3

At the school, during the warmup exercise, a boy collapses and is taken to a hospital. He has a terrible abdominal pain, nausea and high fever. He is hospitalized for observation.

## Part 3 Seiko and Kayo

### Scene 1 (at the hospital)

His mother says to herself: "Since that new teacher arrived from a big city, we end up with a crime and illness...It's really..."

Minako knows that she is not responsible for these incidents but feels uneasy about going home, so she sits in the hallway. She starts nodding off because she has not slept much due to the last night's incident.

## In Her Dream

### (What happened a year ago in Tokyo)

In a school yard, Minako and several students are taking care of a flower bed. They are planting sun flower seeds.

Seiko: "Sensei, can I come during the summer break to take care of the flowers?"

Minako: "Sure, I plan to be here every day too."

The scene changes (in her dream) and there is a News program on a TV screen.

TV: "Yamada Seiko, a 10 year old girl who has been missing since 2 days ago was found dead today. It appears that she was strangled and stuffed into a carton box. A passerby found the box in an unused land near her school"

Minako drops her tea cup onto the floor.

The scene changes (in her dream).

A woman in a black suit comes running towards Minako: "It is all your fault. You made her go take care of the stupid flower bed. Give Seiko back to me. Give her back to me."

She grabs Minako's shirt by the neck and shakes it.

Minako: "Please stop" as she wakes up.

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It is a nurse who is shaking her trying to wake her up.

Nurse: "You seem to be very tired. You should go home. Yuta is stable."

Minako gets up slowly and leaves.

## **7/23 Thursday**

### **Scene 2**

Next day, she runs into the vice principal (Kanda) in a hallway.

Kanda: "Takada sensei, how is Yuta?"

Minako: "He is hospitalized because the abdominal pain and nausea won't stop. Has something like this happened to him in the past?"

Kanda: "No, Yuta is a very healthy athletic boy. But you never know with these kids. Kayo Kishimoto in your class was a healthy girl but she has been absent for a month."

Minako recalled a line of X's in the attendance sheet.

After school, Minako is alone in her classroom looking at Kayo's seat. For some reason, she is reminded of Seiko. Minako stands up quickly.

### **Scene 3**

It is near the harbor where lots of fishing boats were kept. There is a house with a crumbling roof. The name plate says Kishimoto. About 5 meters from the house, a man with tan is taking care of a fishing net. A brown cat is looking at it as if it were about to jump on a prey. (refer to a pic)

Minako says to the man:

"A... I'm a new elementary school teacher Takada. I'm in charge of Kayo's class."

The man turns around and says "Yeah" but his hands on the net does not stop.

Minako: "Kayo has been absent for a long time. What happened to her?"

Kishimoto: "She is sick."

Kayo: "Is she resting at home?"

Kishimoto: "No. She is at a big hospital in Fukuoka. Her mother is with her."

Minako: "What is wrong with him?"

Kishimoto: "It has some complex name. I don't understand it well. At first we thought it was just food poisoning 'cause he had a terrible stomach ache and nausea.. but I guess not."

Yuta's illness pops into Minako's head.

Minako: "A... if something changes, could you contact me?"

Kishimoto: "Yeah..." he says without looking at her.

As Minako walks back on the road by the sea, a big black foreign made car goes by. She thinks it is rare to see such a car but does not make much of it and heads home.

#### **Part 4 Black Foreign-Made Car**

##### **Scene 1**

The black car stops by the elementary school. A man in a dark suit comes out of the car. He lights a cigarette and takes a deep drag. Despite the summer heat, his face has not a single bead of sweat. His name is Keisuke Saeki, 43 years old.

##### **Scene 2**

Minako is in her room drinking cold barley tea, getting ready for tomorrow's class.

"Oh I left a file at school" she says.

She decides to go back to school to get it.

It is dusk and the sun is not as bright as before but because of the tea she had gulped, sweat covers her face.

When she arrives at the school, the black car she had seen earlier is parked there. "Some parent?" she thinks and goes to the teachers' office. She takes out a blue folder from her desk drawer and goes out to the hallway. As she passes by the principal's office she hears the principal talking with another man.

At that moment, a custodian calls out to her: "Takada Sensei! Try the cucumbers and tomatoes I grew"

Minako: "Looks delicious. Thank you."

And she leaves.

She takes out one tomato and wipes it with her skirt. And takes a bite.

She wonders: "I wonder who was visiting the principal."

But the tomato is so delicious that she forgets about the man very quickly.

#### **Part 5 The car that vanished**

##### **Scene 1**

At the police station, Morita is serving tea to Tokushima.

Morita: "Toku-san, that journalist had a bad reputation"

Toku-san: "Yeah. He wrote anything to make money. There must be many who wanted him dead."

As usual he is waving his round fan.

That moment, a feeble middle aged man comes running into the room.

"Toku san Toku san" Breathing hard, he puts both hands on Toku-san's desk.

Feeble detective: "That journalist Uchimura had rented a car. An employee at a rental car place watched News on TV and contacted us."

Morita: "Rental Car?"

Toku-san: "I see. That's why we did not find much of his belonging on him"

Feeble detective: "Uchimura rented a car in Miyazaki city that morning. It was a red Honda Civic. The employee said Uchimura seemed to have just arrived at the airport." The detective says in a hurried way.

Toku-san: "Then... he did not stay at any hotel. I wonder if he was planning to leave on the same day." He says to himself.

Toku-san: "Find that car right away!"

Feeble detective: "Yes. The rental car place is already looking for the car but they have not found it yet." He says in an apologizing way.

Toku-san: "Find that car. Something useful must be inside the car!" He yells.

The detective runs out of the room.

Morita: "There is a strong possibility that the suspect left the scene in that car.." Morita is leaning forward.

"I wonder where he is hiding the car. Maybe there is no useful evidence in it any more. The police in Osaka said they did not find anything useful in Uchimura's apartment. "

Toku-san: "What was he here for?" He mumbles with his fan moving faster than usual.

## **Scene 2**

About the same time, Minako is lying in her room looking at the ceiling.

She has just heard from the hospital that there have been no changes in Yuta's condition. Yuta's face, Seiko's face, Kayo's father's face seem to circle around the ceiling.

"Minako san! Dinner is ready" a woman shouts.

Minako feels saved by the light hearted voice.

## Part 6 Nightmare

### Scene 1

#### 7/24 Early Morning

Principal Koyama wakes up due to the sound of the strong rain that started from dawn. Because of the nightmare he had, his pajama is wet from his sweat.

He walks to the kitchen and takes a sip of water.

He recalls a raining day 30 years ago.

Back then, Koyama was enthusiastic about his career as a teacher. Looking forward to an upcoming wedding, he was living a happy life.

That day, it was raining from the morning. Because it was a day off, even though it was still early, he decided to grill a dried squid and have a drink. But he heard someone knock on the front door. He went to the entrance and saw a friend from college days standing there.

Koyama: "Taguchi.. it's been a while. I have not seen you since the commencement."

The friend appeared thinner than before and looked tired.

Taguchi: "I happen to be in this area, so I decided to stop by."

Koyama: "I see. I was about to have a drink. Join me."

Taguchi came in, looking around: "Looks very clean. Naoko is doing a good job."

Naoko, Koyama's fiancé, was also their classmate.

Koyama was an earnest but a boring man. On the other hand, Taguchi was what we call today "a cool dude" with good people skills and he always had many women around him. Taguchi was interested in Naoko but she was in love with Koyama.

They were having a great time talking about the college days and before they realized the clock was showing 1am. There was an empty Sake bottle lying next to them.

After a brief silence, Taguchi uttered something that shocked Koyama.

Koyama tried to grab Taguchi by the neck but they were too drunk and fell to the floor. Koyama heard a strange dull sound below him.

Koyama: "Taguchi. Taguchi. Are you OK? Hang in there. I'm gonna call an ambulance."

But there was no response. His pupils were open. Koyama told himself to calm down.

He was recalling what Taguchi had told him – Taguchi had lost his parents and he had no relatives. He had quit his job. He had nothing to do and suddenly decided to come here.

Koyama was about to dial 911 but instead, he grabbed a shovel and headed to an unused land his father owned.

In heavy rain, he dug a hole.

Koyama: "This was an accident. If Taguchi had not said something like that, this would not have happened. This was an accident."

---- what Taguchi had said ----

“Hey Koyama. After the commencement, you were gonna go out with Naoko. But she told you she had a cold and cancelled, right?”

Koyama could not remember it right away but he slowly recalled that Naoko did call him saying she was feverish and could not go out. He wanted to go visit her but she told him not to saying she needed to sleep.

Taguchi: “Naoko was with me all night. I was her first...” The rest of the sentence was never going to be heard.

**To be continued .....**



