

TABLE FIFTEEN

Written by Kevin Dobbs

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EXT. SHIBUYA, TOKYO - AFTERNOON (1937)

It's a Spring day, and we see Yoko Yamaguchi's large, traditional Japanese home on a narrow, cobblestone lane.

A mid 1930's American car sputters down the lane and passes by the house.

A mail man on a bicycle stops at the house and hurries, with a flat package, through the gate and to the front door.

INT. YOKO YAMAGUCHI'S FAMILY HOUSE, SAME AFTERNOON.

Yoko is a petite nineteen-year-old woman; she's independently minded (can take or leave tradition), attractive and is dressed in Western fashion.

An origami master, she's on her knees over tatami mats making an origami bird.

She peeks, periodically, out the open shoji doors, which open onto a lovely Japanese garden of stone, bonsai, and a pond with Carp and a small fountain.

A six-month-old baby boy is asleep in a cradle next to the kotatsu, and an older woman (a servant) is rocking the cradle.

Some of Yoko's origami is hanging from strings and sticks just above the cradle.

We see the baby's face fixing on the slowly spinning origami Cranes.

Yoko picks up from the kotatsu the same package the mailman delivered, opens it and finds a phonograph record.

She gets up from the kotatsu and puts it on a phonograph, and it plays Eddie Cantor's, "Makin' Whoopie."

Then she sits back down at the kotatsu.

When the song lyrics come to "Makin' Whoopie," she sings along and smiles demurely, shyly, and snaps her fingers.

YOKO
Makin' Whoopie. Makin' Whoopie.

As she continues to sing along, she picks up her origami bird and stands.

Then we hear the sound of a large truck coming from the lane outside.

Yoko holds the bird right next to her face as she stands at the garden door.

YOKO (CONT'D)
Listen, I know it will be hard for
you, bird, but I want you to fly
across the garden.

Yoko tosses the bird out into the garden, but the bird immediately nose-dives into a boulder.

At the same time, the truck backfires. Then it stops, and the engine shuts off. There are also the clacks and whinnies of horses.

EXT. LANE OUTSIDE OF THE YAMAGUCHI HOUSE - (A FEW MINUTES LATER)

We see that Yoko has cracked open one of the shoji windows and is spying on what's going on in front of her home.

In front of the large western-style home across the lane, a Packard is parked, in back of which is a large, flatbed truck whose furniture-stacked flatbed is covered with a thick burlap cover.

In back of the truck, there's a large horse-driven wagon containing only a well strapped-down, grand piano, the top and sides covered in velvet.

A uniformed Japanese man, Colonel Miyao (36), steps out of the driver's side of the Packard and hurries around to open the passenger-side door.

He is a proud patriot, elegant, tall and slender and has a good sense of humor. But he can sometimes become morose.

Then, a beautiful young, western woman, Anna Miyao (22), steps out.

She's tall and slim with blonde hair and big blue eyes. Having been a professional pianist and a Russian immigrant back in Harbin China, she's an independent thinker and is usually cheerful and fun loving.

Anna pauses and surveys the area; the young woman appears pleased but guarded.

Yoko hasn't met either of them and is becoming excited.

Two mover men step out of the truck.

Colonel Miyao address them.

COLONEL MIYAO

It's a Steinway. Make sure it goes
into the living room in one piece.

The driver's appear perplexed.

COLONEL MIYAO (CONT'D)

(Chuckling)

Just be careful, please.

EXT. OUTSIDE OF SHIBUYA TRAIN STATION AT THE HACHIKO
INTERSECTION. 7:00 AM. - (PRESENT DAY)

This intersection is famous for the massive TV screen
attached to the side of a large building.

Hide Yamaguchi (Yoko Yamaguchi's grandson) and his imaginary
lover, Anna Miyao, are walking together.

The imaginary Anna Miyao, wearing a circa 1930's floral dress
cut just above her knees, is the mirror image of Yoko's old
friend, Anna Miyao, from the late thirties and early forties,
and, as an imaginary figure, thinks exactly the way Hide
wants her to.

Hide (44), is a sturdy, tall, and good looking man. He's well
educated with a BA from Tokyo University but is conflicted
regarding his life with Anna, and, because he's always
depended on this imaginary lover, he's never had a
relationship with a "real" woman.

Hide's wearing a ramen house uniform with a blue, wide-sleeve
shirt, and blue head scarf.

They're waiting amongst a few thousand people to cross the
giant intersection on their way to work at the ramen house,
Family Noodles.

Hide and Anna are holding hands and smiling gleefully, smiles
that appear forced a bit.

Anna gazes at Hide adoringly.

ANNA

I feel safe with you, Hide. You
look so handsome today.

Hide laughs and raises Anna's hand to kiss it.

HIDE

Anna, your dress is as beautiful as
Grandmother's garden.

ANNA

I loved looking at your manly muscles in the bath last night. Can I watch you tonight, my love?

HIDE

Of course. You can anytime.

They both let out a "naughty" sneaker.

They continue on down a very noisy and busy boulevard, smiling and swinging their clasped hands as they walk.

But Hide stops, suddenly, and breaks their stride; he appears uncertain of something.

Anna looks up at him, admiringly.

Hide looks around, up and down, as if he's realized something for the first time.

Then he starts smiling, again, and continues on with Anna.

EXT. THE HOUSE OF Colonel AND ANNA MIYAO. Mid morning - (1937)

Yoko is standing on the Miyao's front stoop and is holding a small wrapped box, on which is a pink ribbon.

She lifts her hand to the large brass door knocker, quickly takes her hand away, then holds the knocker, again, and takes her hand away, again.

Afraid to go through with knocking, she hurries back across the lane and through her house's front gate.

Then we see Anna's face behind a slightly open curtain spying out the front.

She appears slightly worried but curious excited.

EXT. FAMILY NOODLES RESTAURANT. EARLY MORNING - (2015)

The Yamaguchi's own Family Noodles.

As Hide and Anna walk down the narrow street, Hide's hand is outstretched holding Anna's hand.

But since we're now seeing through the eyes of shop owners along the way, who are now opening their own shops for the day, we do not see Anna; we see only Hide holding out his hand.

OWNER OF A CORNER CONVENIENCE STORE
 (Bowing)
 Good morning, Hide-san.

The shop owner smiles as he flashes a look at Hide's outstretched hands where Anna should be walking.

SAME SHOP OWNER
 Oh, and good morning to you, too,
 Anna-chan.

Then, through Hide's eyes, we see Anna, again, waving at the shop owner.

ANNA
 Good morning, Adachi-san.

Anna stops walking, and then Hide stops.

ANNA CONT.
 Shouldn't you stop at Adachi-san's
 for your favorite caramel?

HIDE
 I almost forgot.

EXT. YAMAGUCHI HOUSE GARDEN - (1937)

This is a few days after the Miyao's move in across from the Yamaguchi's.

Yoko's swinging, slightly, on a bench swing in her garden.

The music of Chopin wafts from Anna Miyao's piano.

The quality seems perfect, and Yoko gently shuts her eyes, taking great pleasure.

Even when the music stops, Yoko keeps her eyes shut.

Anna Miyao appears in Yoko's garden.

Anna's blond hair swirls down past her right shoulder, and she's wearing a white and baby blue dress.

Yoko doesn't yet notice her presence.

Anna moves directly in front of Yoko.

ANNA
 I give lessons. I'm Anna Miyao

Yoko opens her eyes and sees Anna.

But Yoko keeps swinging and is paralyzed with joy and fear.

ANNA (CONT'D)
I said I give piano lessons.

YOKO
I'm Yoko. You are beautiful.

Both women smile.

EXT. FAMILY NOODLES. 7:30AM - (PRESENT DAY)

Hide, with Anna at his side, unlocks the restaurant's sliding front door.

On the right of the noodle shop is a row of colander vats against the wall, above which are stacks of fine ramen bowls. There's a counter with seating in front of the vats, and there are fifteen tables in the restaurant.

Kenji, Hide's assistant ramen master, enters almost immediately.

Kenji's a short, stocky man of about 65 years old; he drinks too much and likes to joke around.

We see table fifteen, which has a plaque on top that says, "Reserved for Anna."

Kenji glances to the side of Hide.

KENJI
Won't you have a seat, our wonderful Anna?

HIDE
Kenji, has the chashu been smoked for today?

KENJI
Done.

HIDE
Table condiments? Noodles for both lunch and dinner? Recently, the noodles have been too firm.

KENJI

Condiments, yes. Noodles, almost. The weather's dry right now, so I don't want to prepare too many noodles because they might dry out too much.

HIDE

But they are a little too dry.

KENJI

Please, don't worry. I'll fix it. If I can't, I'll eat them all myself.

HIDE

No, you won't. The pork broth base has been too oily lately.

KENJI

I'd have to talk to the pigs about that, Hide. I don't think they'll listen.

HIDE

(Chuckling)

You must make them listen.

Anna moves farther into the restaurant, twirling, as if dancing, over to table fifteen and daintily seats herself.

HIDE (CONT'D)

Repair man coming today for vat #3?

KENJI

10:00AM. He's never late.

HIDE

Fill the boiling vats and turn on the heat.

ANNA

(From table fifteen)

You look so handsome today, Hide. I love you so much.

Hide blows Anna a kiss and smiles.

INT. YAMAGUCHI HOUSE - (1977)

We see Yoko (58), Hide (7), Takao Yamaguchi (Hide's father and Yoko's son), Miwako Yamaguchi (Yoko's daughter-in-law).

Takao (40) is on the tall side and is overly serious about most family and business matters. He is a protective father.

Miwako (38) is a gentle, shy woman, and, unlike Yoko, Miwako is more traditional in her behavior. But she is petite like Yoko.

They are all in the tatami room adjacent to the garden.

Yoko is sitting at the kotatsu, and she's making origami.

Despite the passing years, the room appears well taken care of.

Hide sits across from her and is slurping miso soup.

Takao and Miwako enter.

They are dressed as if ready to go out for the evening.

Hide slurps more soup, somewhat aggressively.

Takao walks over to Hide and pats his head.

TAKAO

Don't slurp too fast, Hide, the
soup will not run away.

Takao addresses Yoko.

TAKAO (CONT'D)

Please, don't worry about Family
Noodles, mother. Kenji is taking
care of things tonight.

YOKO

Silly boy, Takao! Miwako, tell him.
It's his first night out in over
one year. Family Noodles can run
itself. I hope you've been talking
with Kenji about too much shochu.

Miwako has a habit of bowing profusely, always overly apologetic.

MIWAKO

We haven't been to Kabuki in years.
We won't go, again, for a long
time. I promise. I'm so sorry.

Yoko glares at them both as though they're completely absurd.

And she waves them, as if pushing, out of the tatami room door.

Takao and Miwako exit.

Yoko turns to Hide, looks at him adoringly, and takes him by the hand.

YOKO
Hide, are you ready for another
"Anna" story?

Hide looks up with excitement, smiles and nods.

YOKO (CONT'D)
Okay, but, this time, I can't tell
you every single detail.

INT. YOKO'S ANNA STORY (1937)

In 1937, not long after they meet, Yoko and Anna are winding their way up from Tokyo to the mountain resort, Hakone.

ANNA
I do love my husband. More than
anything. He likes to laugh
sometimes. But he's usually so . .
. formal.

YOKO
All Japanese men try to be formal
as if they have swords up there
butts.

ANNA
(Giggling)
My question is, who sticks it up
there? I'd like to have a talk with
him.

Both women laugh.

YOKO
The only reason my husband let me
take this trip with you is because
I told him that I am your guide. I
told him that I must teach you
about Japan; otherwise, you would
not succeed here.

ANNA
What did he say?

YOKO

He knew I was stretching the truth, but he also trusts me, or it's possible he simply doesn't care much. Anyway, he pretended to believe me. He said, "Then, Yoko, you should guide her well in Hakone. Just don't go naked in the hot springs."

ANNA

I wonder what he means by "naked." To what extent of nakedness is he referring? And he should also make clear of the location of nakedness, right?

YOKO

He made none of that clear. I think he's confused, possibly even talking about somebody else. After all, he often forgets who I am. Or, for that matter, that I'm even there.

ANNA

We shouldn't take a man with such judgement inadequacies seriously, now should we?

Both women laugh.

EXT. HAKONE HOT SPRINGS (ONSEN). SAME VACATION. DAY.

The scene opens at a hot spring, and we see Anna's and Yoko's naked backs.

Men and women in the hot spring, who would normally hold back their reactions, are visibly stunned by their beauty especially with regard to Anna as they've probably never seen a naked white woman.

The two young women, holding small towels over their pelvic areas, walk slowly to the pool.

Some of the men and women in the pool rise and bow in respect for their beauty. Others continue to look shocked and/or displeased.

Yoko and Anna enter the hot spring slowly because the water is extremely hot.

INT. TRADITIONAL RYOKAN (A TRADITIONAL RESORT).

Anna's and Yoko's vacation continues.

They're in a Tatami room with shoji doors and windows all around them.

Futons are rolled out, and the young women are wearing bedtime yukata.

They're drinking sake and are already tipsy.

ANNA

They looked at me as though I was
from another world.

She does an awkward somersault across her futon, stops and lets out a tipsy laugh.

YOKO

You are . . . from another world.

Anna's expression turns disproportionately serious. Yoko, sensing Yoko's mood, remains positive.

As the two women gaze at one another, Yoko's expression starts to turn solemn as well.

Suddenly, Anna starts laughing as if the seriousness was just a joke.

Now, both are laughing, and they start rolling around on the futon, again.

ANNA

I love your world, Yoko.

Anna settles on her knees.

They stare at one another, again, with smiles.

They hug.

INT. FAMILY NOODLES. DAYTIME - (2019)

Family Noodles is busy.

Attached to wall, there's a flat screen TV showing a chef awards show.

On the show, it's Hide, himself, receiving a prize for the best miso ramen.

Anna, at table fifteen, stands and applauds along with every one else in the restaurant.

Anna gazes, admiringly at Hide.

ANNA

My love, my genius!

A very large Sumo wrestler, dressed in a sumo yukata, steps up to table fifteen.

There is a small male attendant, also wearing a yukata, following his every move.

Hide runs over to the table to introduce Anna to the Sumo wrestler.

Several customers acknowledge the sumo champion as "Yokozuna," which is sumo's highest rank.

SEVERAL CUSTOMERS

Yokozuna. Yokozuna.

Hide acknowledges the sumo wrestler with many deep bows, and he introduces Anna to the famous wrestler.

HIDE

This is Anna.

Tomoyama-san bows deeply to Anna.

TOMOYAMA-SAN

Oh, yes!

Tomoyama-san looks to his attendant and rolls his eyes a bit.

TOMOYAMA-SAN (CONT'D)

I've been longing to meet the beautiful Anna Miyao at table fifteen.

HIDE

Only yesterday, the new Prime Minister, himself, met Anna for the first time.

TOMOYAMA-SAN

We have so many politicians. What I want to know is, do any of them want to wrestle me?

He turns to the crowd gathering around the table and laughs.

The nodding crowd returns his laughter.

TOMOYAMA-SAN (CONT'D)

Now, I will sit and enjoy your
great ramen.

INT. YAMAGUCHI HOME GARDEN. EARLY EVENING - (1977)

Yoko is swinging on the bench swing making origami figures.

Hide runs up wearing a proper school uniform.

Yoko kisses him, and he then climbs up onto the swing with
her.

YOKO

Hochi-sensei phoned yesterday and
told me that you daydream too much
in class. Is this true?

HIDE

A dream is a dream, whether it's
day or night . . . I have the
highest marks in his class,
grandmother.

YOKO

You are my little poet, aren't you?
Still, you must know the importance
of focusing, which is something you
should do even if you're the best.

HIDE

Grandmother, did Anna come into the
garden much?

YOKO

Silly boy. We were best friends.
She often sat with me for hours,
and we would never get board with
each other. That's friendship,
Hide. Sometimes, she would go into
her house, open her windows and
play piano for me. Our neighbors
never complained about the noise
because the music was so beautiful.

HIDE

But you never learned to play?

YOKO

I'm not good at everything, Hide,
but I am an origami master. Not
bad, right?

HIDE

You were naughty girls, right?

Yoko laughs and gives Hide a hug.

YOKO

We weren't as naughty as I'd have liked. Here's a story you might enjoy.

Hide lets out a sardonic laugh.

HIDE

Tell me a naughty story.

Yoko looks at the young boy suspiciously.

YOKO

Just what do you mean by "naughty?"

HIDE

You know, my friends and I sometimes throw eggs at cars, stuff like that.

YOKO

Sometimes you worry me, young man.

EXT. THE YAMAMUCHI HOUSE GARDEN, SUMMER MORNING - (LATE 1938)

Yoko is crouching and trimming a Bonsai.

Anna appears in the garden wearing what would be at the time a very revealing swimsuit, which shows her legs and a lot of her cleavage.

There is a towel over her shoulder.

Yoko stands and giggles.

YOKO

You're just a show off.

Anna giggles and pirouettes.

ANNA

I'm not young for long. You, too, my dear.

YOKO

(Pausing and pensive)
You and I will always be young.

ANNA
To Zushi Beach, then!

EXT. ZUSHI BEACH JUST SOUTH OF TOKYO. LATE MORNING.

A young military driver is standing with Yoko and Anna next to a large dark American car.

The two young ladies, Yoko in a more conservative swimsuit, run through the sand to the surf and kick up water, laughing and tickling each other.

Then, Anna stops because she's noticed something unusual.

Both stop playing. There's a crowd of dozens of men, women, and children, and they're all staring in blissful amazement at Anna.

YOKO
Do you want to leave?

ANNA
I'm a show off, remember?

Anna begins to pirouette and dance for the crowd.

Yoko begins to do the same, and in short order, many in the crowd start to dance and play in the surf alongside them.

INT. ZUSHI BEACH COFFEE HOUSE.

Anna and Yoko are talking and sipping coffee.

ANNA
I adore the colonel. When he's in Tokyo, he won't leave me alone.

Both giggle.

ANNA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
When he comes back from Manchuria, though, there's a distance in him that I've never encountered in anyone. It's as if, even though he's in our bed and is holding me, he is fully and completely over there in China taking care of some important issue. It's as though he's just grabbed hold of me somewhere in space and might let go of me at any moment.

YOKO

In China . . . Is he an administrator?

ANNA

I wish he were . . . Sometimes I have to awaken him from nightmares. His shrieking sounds like it's coming from another world.

YOKO

He's so lucky to have you.

ANNA

Truly, until he comes close to me, he's not happy. When he's just a few meters away, he looks like a man pacing inside a mausoleum.

Anna pauses and gazes out the window at the sea.

ANNA CONT.

Yoko, I barely know your husband.

YOKO

I barely know him either. He's almost never home. If he's not at his accounting firm, he's with his mistress, who is a woman I happen to like very much. Sometimes, she and I meet, and she lets me know how he's doing. Sometimes he even forgets our son Takao's name. I have to let things go in whatever direction he prefers. No choice.

ANNA

At least he gives you some freedom.

YOKO

One evening, recently, when we were having an argument, he claimed to have given you to me. "Anna is my gift to you," he said. "No," I said, "Anna gave herself to me." What a silly man sometimes. Anna, you are my freedom. No, the only man I want right now is my boy.

Anna gazes longingly out the window at the ocean surf.

ANNA

Yoko, you're so fortunate. I mean,
you're so fortunate to have a
child. We've tried so hard. . .

EXT. YOYOGI PARK. EVENING - (2019)

In a small clearing in the trees, Hide is still dressed in his Family Ramen uniform, and Anna is pirouetting in a see-through nighty.

ANNA

Oh, I love dancing for you, my
dear.

HIDE

And I love when you dance.

ANNA

I would do anything you ask. Do you
love my body, Hide? I want you to
love my body!

HIDE

Then throw off the nighty, my dear.

Anna, still dancing, quickly takes off the nighty and keeps dancing.

ANNA

My body is for you, my love.

As Hide watches Anna, his expression turns from happiness to concern.

HIDE

Okay, let's go home now.

Anna appears immediately at Hide's side wearing her usual late 1930's fashion.

ANNA

It's too early to go home. I could
dance all night if you want.

HIDE

(Solemn)

I know you would. You'll do
anything I want.

ANNA

Anything, my love. Anything.

INT. TATAMI ROOM OF THE YAMAGUCHI HOME. DAYTIME (1941)

Yoko is quietly making origami when Kaoru, her husband, enters.

As an accounting firm co-owner, Kaoru is a successful businessman and is very traditional.

He's is wearing a very expensive Western business suit.

Yoko, as is usually the case, takes on a business-like tone.

YOKO

My husband, you're actually home?

KAORU

Where is Takao?

YOKO

Taking his piano lesson with Anna.

KAORU

You raise him as though he is a girl.

Yoko puts her origami down and becomes slightly condescending toward Kaoru.

YOKO

Kaoru, Yoko and I are women. Takao is with us when he's not at school. We are not men. We don't know how to be men. Therefore, we cannot raise him to be a perfect man. He will be half girl, like it or not.

KAORU

At least he is a Yamaguchi.

YOKO

Yes, a Yamaguchi . . . By the way, how is our beautiful mutual friend?

KAORU

She sends her best and apologizes for taking so much of my time.

YOKO

On the contrary, I am indebted to her. Anyway, my life is filled with Takao and my wonderful Anna.

Kaoru's mood changes abruptly.

He steps closer to Yoko, who senses trouble and presses in on her origami harder.

YOKO (CONT'D)
As you can see, I'm very busy.

KAORU
Japan is changing.

YOKO
Japan will change. I will not.

KAORU
We have to think about our family.

YOKO
We're not at war with the Russians,
and she is married to an important
colonel, a hero, whose father is
even more important.

KAORU
She's not Japanese, Yoko. Don't you
see what's going on around us?

YOKO
My eyes can see. Yes, I can see it,
but I will not . . . I cannot yet
allow it to see me.

KAORU
Yoko, regardless of how things have
turned out for us, I still . . .

YOKO
I will not allow it to see *me*.

KAORU
What if it *already* sees you?

INT. THE MIYAO HOME GINKAN (FOYER). MORNING - (1940)

Yoko shows herself into the Miyao home.

She's takes her shoes off in the Ginkan.

Then she senses that something is wrong.

Next to the Ginkan is a Western style living room, where the Steinway grand piano stands.

YOKO
Anna? I'm here!

Anna isn't in the living-room, but there's a faint sobbing coming from somewhere in the back of the house.

YOKO CONT.

Anna?

Yoko hurries into the back of the house and finds Anna lying on a divan in the parlor; she's sobbing.

ANNA

They've given him an important medal.

Yoko sits on the divan with Anna and places a hand on her head.

YOKO

Then why are you sad, my dear?

ANNA

He told me that any medal is meaningless without a child. He was so, so . . . Not angry, no, not angry.

Anna sits up, and Yoko puts her arm around Anna.

ANNA (CONT'D)

He was so worried about me . . . And I'm the one who can't give him a child. Oh, God, he loves me so much, and all I can do is shame him.

YOKO

You shame nobody, Anna. You're husband loves you. Things are becoming impossible for all of us. Everything good has been tucked away in closets, and everything bad is out in the open. Right now, Anna, we have to survive.

ANNA

The rationing is the hardest. I want some meat so badly.

YOKO

I was looking at our gardens today. The tomatoes look good, cucumbers, squash. But somebody stole most of the carrots.

ANNA

Just let me know when you find some
meat out there.

YOKO

(With a chuckle)
I promise I'll grow some pork.

ANNA

(Cheering up)
Next to my squash will be fine.

Yoko hugs Anna.

INT. FAMILY RAMEN. (1980)

Family Ramen is busy as usual.

It's nearing the end of lunch rush, and customers are
starting to clear out.

Takao and Miwako are behind the counter working.

Hide, now an adolescent, is helping out by busing tables.

Takao is watching him closely and a bit nervously.

TAKAO

Hide, stop leaving table fifteen
empty. We lose money by not seating
that table. I don't understand what
you're problem is. I'm busy at the
colanders. You know that. I can't
run out there every time you miss
that table.

HIDE

But how about my friend, father?

TAKAO

Your friend won't know.

HIDE

Oh, yes she will.

Takao takes pause, surprised and worried about what Hide just
said.

TAKAO

Wait, you told me before that your
friend was a boy.

HIDE

It is a boy. I'm sorry.

TAKAO

Mr. And Mrs. Takaguchi have just stepped in. Put them on table fifteen. I mean it.

Hide looks over to table fifteen with fear in his face. Anna appears.

ANNA

Hide, my dear. My sweet, sweet dear. It's okay. I will be okay.

Hide seats the older couple at table fifteen, and Anna stays at the table with them.

Hide stands next to the table glaring at Anna.

The couple see him only staring at the chair.

THE OLDER WOMAN AT TABLE FIFTEEN

Is something wrong with that chair, young man?

TAKAO

Hide? Now! Leave the table!

Hide drifts back, looking at Anna who just keeps smiling and blowing Hide kisses.

INT. YAMAGUCHI HOUSE. (1980)

Yoko is with Hide in the tatami room.

YOKO

You need to study harder, Hide. You must go to Tokyo University one day.

HIDE

But, grandmother, I want to run Family Noodles someday.

YOKO

Your mother and father are working very hard so you can attend Tokyo University, Hide. We can't disappoint them.

HIDE

But I want to be with Anna.

YOKO

You must find a way to be with her here in the house, only.

HIDE

Please tell me an Anna story, grandmother. You haven't told me one for a long time.

YOKO

I've told you all of the stories hundreds of times. Thousands! Go to your bedroom and study.

Yoko walks over and gazes at the garden and has a few words with herself.

YOKO (CONT'D)

Oh, my, always Anna, Anna, Anna. What have I done?

INT. HIDE'S TATAMI BEDROOM. THAT EVENING.

Hide is sitting on his bed holding an old, black and white, framed photo of the real Anna Miyao.

He gazes dreamily at the photo.

HIDE

Please come to my bedroom, Anna. I will take you to all the places you love.

Hide kisses the photo.

HIDE CONT.

Hakone, Zushi Beach, the Ginza, and we'll go to Kyoto to the Temple of the Golden Pavilion. I love you, Anna. Always.

Hide stands up and begins to twirl around the room with the picture, kissing it often.

INT. YAMAGUCHI HOUSE. EARLY THE NEXT MORNING.

Yoko, in the kitchen, is wearing a pair of sunglasses (shaped like large coins), and is eating cold fish, rice, and miso soup.

Miwako is busy preparing food and is cleaning at the same time.

Takao sits down to his breakfast.

He stares sternly at Yoko and speaks after a moment.

TAKAO
It's a girl, mother.

YOKO
A girl. Oh, my!

Yoko stands straight up and turns her head to Miwako.

YOKO CONT.
I think you neglected to give me
some news. You're having a girl?

TAKAO
No, mother, I'm talking about Hide.

YOKO
Hide is a boy, my dear son, the
last time I looked, anyway.

Suddenly, Hide hops into the kitchen.

Takao stares, dumbstruck, at Yoko.

Hide sits down at the table and starts eating.

Yoko looks away as Takao stands.

TAKAO
I've lost my appetite.

YOKO
Family Noodles awaits you.

EXT. KYOTO, NOVEMBER. (1941)

It's about one month before the attack at Pearl Harbor.

Yoko and Anna, vacationing in Kyoto, are visiting The Temple
of the Golden Pavilion.

Since the Japanese are very much at war with China and other
Asian countries, we see many men walking past in military
uniforms.

However, Japan is not yet at war with the allied forces.

Yoko and Anna are kneeling together at the temple's alter.

Yoko, with a concerned expression, leers at Anna, who is praying with an abnormal intensity.

Anna keeps praying and Yoko is overcome with sadness for her friend.

Then Anna starts to cry.

Suddenly, Anna stops crying, opens her eyes, straightens up, and becomes calm, almost serene.

ANNA

Do you know what, Yoko?

Yoko places her hand on Anna's shoulder.

ANNA CONT.

I can't even find a god who can help us.

Yoko decides to quickly help Anna to stand in the effort to cheer her up.

YOKO

Let's go.

ANNA

We're in Kyoto, right. I might as well train to be a Geisha.

Anna laughs sardonically but does seem to be a bit cheerful.

YOKO

You can't be a Geisha. Number one, you're not Japanese. Number two, my husband wouldn't be able to come to Kyoto to enjoy Geisha anymore.

This pulls Anna out of her depressed stupor, and she laughs loudly.

YOKO (CONT'D)

Let's go to the izakaya and get very drunk.

The two women put their arms around each other and take off.

INT. TRADITIONAL IZAKAYA WITH BAR AND DINING. THAT EVENING.

Yoko and Anna are sitting at the counter with plates of food in front of them and large draft beers.

They're getting tipsy, Anna now slurring her speech.

ANNA

You know what? If I'm not mistaken,
we're in Japan.

YOKO

Actually, this is where the
Japanese come to escape Japan.

ANNA

Well, then, since I'm not Japanese,
what the Hell am I hiding from?

Yoko turns around and scans the izakaya.

She spots a middle-aged white man drinking and eating off in
a corner.

YOKO

Anna, there's a white gentleman
over there in the back of the
dining room.

ANNA

Well, come on, then.

Anna takes her beer and starts walking toward the man, and
Yoko follows, somewhat reluctantly.

Reggie, a good humored professor of old Japanese literature,
is a studios looking man (43), and he's wearing a light tweed
suit. He enjoys a little English banter.

Anna, staggering a bit, approaches his table with Yoko now
directly behind.

YOKO

Hello, white man! Do you mind if we
join you?

Yoko, still behind Anna, appears a bit embarrassed but happy.

Reggie is guarded but cheerful with a Queen's English accent.

REGGIE

Well, it's a bit abrupt, I must
say. But, one white and one
Japanese lady, all in the spirit of
détente, why the Hell not?

The three enjoy a tipsy chat at the gentleman's table.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

I'm Reginald Blithe, by the way, but please call me Reggie. I'm English.

ANNA

Yoko and Anna. What are you doing in Japan?

REGGIE

Oh, been here for nearly five years, Korea before here. I'm an English professor in Tokyo. Actually, I'm here to attend a conference at Kyoto University. I've given my presentation already on my haiku translations of Basho and Issa. Now, I aim to go on a bender all over the streets of Kyoto!

All three of them laugh.

And then Anna and Reggie became slightly solemn.

ANNA

Will you stay if war breaks out with England?

REGGIE

I've got a Japanese wife and two very young daughters. We've looked into leaving. But my life is here. If things don't get sorted out, Japan's foreigners will be interred, most likely at a camp in Kobe. Many of my Japanese friends believe war with the West is inevitable. If you're married to a Japanese, the authorities almost certainly won't kill you. My advise? That is, if you're asking-- if you can't leave Japan, find a secure place in the mountains. Even if the authorities know you're there, they probably won't bother with you because you'd be of no concern to them. Just don't attempt to assemble any radios or beacon lights, or they will ascend your mountain like angry rats.

ANNA

A lovely image, Reggie! Are you a poet, yourself?

REGGIE

I try to be, but these days poetry doesn't seem as important as it once was. I can barely translate poetry these days. Too distracted, you know?

Yoko is suddenly sad. Anna takes her hand.

YOKO

If the situation gets messy, I'll think of something, Anna. Reggie?

REGGIE

Yes, my lady?

YOKO

May we join you on your bender?

Reggie stands and raises his mug.

REGGIE

Cheers, my ladies!

INT. INSIDE OF A RYOKAN, TRADITION LODGING. SAME NIGHT.

Reggie, Yoko, and Anna are sitting at a kotatsu passing around a bottle of shochu, a very powerful Japanese wine.

They are all fairly drunk.

REGGIE

(Slurring his words)

I would like to make a t-t-t-toast.

They all raise their glasses.

REGGIE CONT.

To the white hunters of our world!

Yoko and Anna are so surprised by Reggie's statement, they laugh as they spit out some shochu.

Then, they raise their glasses.

ANNA

When will the white hunters come?

REGGIE

When they're goddamn good and ready, mate!

YOKO

When the white hunters come, do you think they will like me?

REGGIE

Dear, yes. They will like you a lot, and they'll all be happy to show you just how much.

They all laugh.

ANNA

Yoko, we'll meet the white hunters at the harbor, and we'll take off our k-k-k clothes right off the bat to show them that we're hunt-able.

REGGIE

Of course! Good show, my dear. After they're done with you, I'll make sure you get home safely.

They all laugh.

YOKO

Do you think they'll like sushi?

ANNA

Oh, right! Do you think they'll know how to use chopsticks? Oh, oh, oh, Reggie, I have a great idea. You, you, you can give poetry readings at the internment camp in Kobe . . . Read Basho and Issa in English and Japanese. How wonderful. They will love you.

REGGIE

Oh, dear. I was supposed to ring my wife this evening.

They all laugh very loudly.

Yoko turns to Anna.

YOKO

Do you remember where we're st-st-st-st staying tonight?

ANNA

Right here.

INT. SAME ROOM THE NEXT DAY. LATE MORNING.

Reggie, Yoko, and Anna are on the same futon in full street clothing except for Yoko, who is topless.

Anna, beginning to awaken and very hungover, reaches over to Yoko and drops a hand on her bare breast.

Realizing it's Yoko's breast, she sits up, startled.

ANNA

I my God, Yoko, it's your breast.
Oh, my God.

YOKO

I was hot, so I took my top off.

ANNA

Did you forget that there's a man
in bed with us?

REGGIE

Well, I'll never forget. Simply
wonderful.

Both women look at each other, shocked.

ANNA

Reggie, did we? I mean, did we
doooo anything?

REGGIE

No recollection, my dear. None at
all.

Yoko cups her breasts with her hands, and Anna quickly stands and looks around the room for their belongings.

ANNA

Thank you, Reggie, for the
wonderful evening, but we must be
back off to Tokyo.

REGGIE

I'd be happy to show you to the
station.

ANNA

Thanks so much, but we'll be just
fine.

REGGIE
Suit yourselves.

EXT. YOYOGI PARK IN SHIBUYA - (2019)

Hide and the imaginary Anna are sitting close together on a park bench.

Anna is glowering at Hide.

Hide is smiling sympathetically at Anna.

ANNA
I love you, Hide. You are the light
inside my heart.

HIDE
I love you, too, Anna.

ANNA
I love you more than anything in
the world. You are my sempai and my
hero.

Hide, showing slight exasperation, stares at her.

HIDE
Anna, you're too, too nice.

ANNA
You're so handsome, Hide. You're as
handsome as Ken Watanabe. I want to
gaze at you as you take a shower.

HIDE
Ken Watanabe, huh?

ANNA
Even more handsome.

Both Anna and Hide laugh.

HIDE
I love you so much, Anna. I don't
know how I could live without you.
But I also don't understand exactly
how you got here, I mean, with me
for all these years. You're not
even bored with me.

ANNA

Oh, Hide, I will stay with you even
if you become boring. Where would I
go?

INT. FAMILY RAMEN - (2019)

Yoko, Hide, and Anna are sitting at table fifteen.

Yoko is wearing her round sunglasses.

Kenji is scurrying around.

It's well after lunch rush, so there are only a few customers
in the restaurant.

Yoko and Hide are not eating but are drinking tea.

YOKO

I'm nearly a centenarian, Hide.

Kenji hears her, hurries over to the table.

KENJI

And you don't look a day over 70.

YOKO

I look like a mummy.

KENJI

You read too much Mishima and
Kawabata. . . More tea?

YOKO

Tell me what Anna's doing right
now?

Kenji overhears Yoko and hurries off to attend to other
duties.

HIDE

Oh, grandmother, she's watching TV.

YOKO

TV's not even on, Hide.

HIDE

It doesn't need to be on for her to
watch it.

YOKO

Look what I've done to you, my only
grandson.

HIDE
No, not, again. Please.

YOKO
My ashes will burn for eternity for
what I've done to you.

ANNA
Hide, do you want me to go for
awhile.

HIDE
No.

YOKO
What did she say?

HIDE
Everything is okay, grandmother.

YOKO
You're in your middle 40's, Hide.
Many women would love to be with
you. You're handsome, somewhat
rich, and so kind.

HIDE
Stop, grandmother.

Hide slaps the table.

Kenji ducks into the back as Hide starts shaking his head.

Anna sits, expressionless.

HIDE CONT.
You don't understand anything about
Anna.

Yoko's expression becomes worried but satisfied.

She sits up straight.

YOKO
Okay, Hide. Okay, my boy.
Everything is okay.

HIDE
I love her. Stop trying to find
suitable women, okay?

YOKO
No promises.

INT. MIYAO HOME. EVENING IN LATE NOVEMBER - (1941)

Anna answers her front door.

A postman bows deeply and hands her a special delivery.

Anna takes the letter into the living room and sits on her piano bench.

She opens it and we hear Colonel Miyao reading:

COLONEL MIYAO

My dearest Anna, I miss you so much. We are in Harbin, China where we are trying desperately to hold back the resistance. Even though my heart is with our Emperor, I must admit that I have trouble harming anyone. We are much stronger than they are, so I'm not in any danger. Also, my dearest wife, I want you to know that I've stopped thinking about the fact that we may not have a child. And I'm content to be with only you. I look forward to the time when the war is over, and I can sit and listen to your piano for hours, and be lazy in our garden. Life is like the wing of a moth, my dear. But my love for you is as tough and immovable as a bamboo forest.
Your Husband

Anna takes the letter and runs to Yoko's house and through the unlocked front door.

She looks all over the house but cannot find anyone, so she goes to the garden and sits in the swing, holding the letter to her chest.

Even though Yoko's not there, Anna talks to her, anyway.

ANNA

Yoko, I've received a letter today that has changed the way I walk, the way I play music. Yoko, I miss him so much. It's been so long since I've held him. I don't care what he's done in China. In fact, I can more than guess what he's done. But he's done it for his Emperor. Who am I to question that?

Suddenly, Yoko appears next to the swing and sits down with Anna.

YOKO

We must always question, only not too loud, or we might not be able to question, again.

Anna half ignores Yoko's serious comment.

ANNA

Right now, I am almost as happy as when I'm with him.

Yoko jabs Anna lightly with her elbow.

YOKO

He does have a great body. Any woman would want a little time with him.

Anna lets out an exasperated laugh and slaps Yoko's shoulder with the letter.

INT. YAMAGUCHI HOME - (2019).

At the table, in a Western style dining room, are Yoko, Hide, Anna and a good looking young Japanese woman, Junko Misoyama.

Junko is a very pretty young woman with excellent manners; she is keenly observant and bright.

Anna, at the head of the table, appears composed and happy.

Yoko is sitting across from Hide, and Junko and is paying close attention to their every move.

YOKO

Hide, Junko's grandfather and your grandfather worked with one another at Yamaguchi Accounting.

JUNKO

And they were together when they died in one of the Tokyo bombings.

She looks admiringly at Hide.

JUNKO CONT.

Hide, you're a successful business man like your grandfather.

HIDE

He was much more successful. I had to take over Family Ramen when father died.

YOKO

Hide had already been accepted at Tokyo University Graduate School when his father, my dear son, died in Family Ramen of a sudden stroke. But Hide did finish his bachelor's degree.

JUNKO

Yes, and Hide was very brave to bring your family's honor back by having the best Ramen shop in Shibuya.

Hide glares at Yoko suspiciously.

ANNA

How does Junko know so much?

EXT. ROPPUNGI, TOKYO. EVENING - (2019)

In this busy party district, Hide is on another Yoko-arranged date.

He and Akiko Nomo are walking past international restaurants and bars.

Hide, Anna at his side, is wearing a conservative suit and tie.

Akiko, on the other side of Hide, is a tall, glitzy, beautiful young woman wearing an extremely short mini skirt, and her hair is spiked and dyed many shades of red, purple and yellow.

Hide appears tentative. Anna does, too.

INT. NIGHT CLUB DISCO. SAME EVENING.

Akiko is dancing wildly with Anna next to her, and Anna seems to be mimicking her dancing style.

Hide's dancing is tentative, slow and awkward.

EXT. IN FRONT OF A LOVE HOTEL. SAME EVENING.

Akiko, Hide and Anna are entering the love hotel.

Akiko is an over-the-top outspoken person with no communication filter.

As they walk inside, we see walls covered with large pink hearts and even larger red lips.

When they arrive at their room, Hide is hesitant to enter.

Akiko has to force Hide into the room.

Anna stands back and is confused.

Now inside the room, Hide and Anna, are fully dressed and are sitting on the bed with Akiko, who is totally nude, standing in front of them.

AKIKO

I'm standing here offering you my
body, and you won't even touch me.
No man has ever treated me like
this.

Hide is absolutely paralyzed with concern over his next move.

HIDE

I think my grandmother really
doesn't know you. She said your
mother and father are doctors?

AKIKO

My mother's a brain surgeon, and
she did a slut procedure on my
brain. That's right. My mother made
me a slut.

Akiko laughs uncontrollably.

AKIKO (CONT'D)

Your grandmother probably met my
mother at a slut convention.

Anna and Hide look at each other.

ANNA

Akiko is very beautiful, Hide, but
she isn't, well . . .

HIDE

I know, but . . .

Akiko wonders who Hide's talking to.

AKIKO
You know what?

ANNA
Say something to make her feel
better, Hide. She's crazy.

HIDE
You're very beautiful, but I'm very
sorry, Akiko.

Hide stands.

Akiko gets close and rubs up against Hide, who is obviously
aroused.

He accepts a kiss from her, after which he steps back and
then bows deeply.

HIDE (CONT'D)
I am so sorry, beautiful lady.

Akiko pushes Hide onto the bed.

AKIKO
You will not do this to me. Not to
me. You have to understand that my
brain is wired differently.

Akiko rips Hide's shirt off as he submits to her.

HIDE
Akiko, you are not like a Japanese
girl.

AKIKO
I'm not even a girl. I'm the
product of two evil surgeons.

Akiko laughs wildly, again.

EXT. THE FRONT OF SHIBUYA TENNIS CLUB. (NOVEMBER 1941)

Soldiers and civilians are walking in front of the tennis
club.

Then inside the club, Yoko and Anna are playing tennis.

In the next court over, two middle-aged Japanese men, are
starting to play next to them and at a low level of skill.

The two men take notice of the lovely young women.

Takagi-san, undenounced to Yoko and Anna, is a cunning government investigator with a biting, sarcastic sense of humor; he's slim and medium height.

Takagi's partner, Kodena-san, is Takagi's "yes man." Kodena is short and overweight with thinning hair.

After the two men volley for a short time, Mr. Takagi approaches the women.

MR. TAKAGI

May we join you for doubles?

Anna and Yoko glance at each other. Both expressions appear agreeable.

Yoko bows to the men, who bow back

YOKO

We would be pleased if you would join us. Thank you.

MR. TAKAGI

I am Takagi and this is Kodena.

Anna also bows and so do the two men but not as deeply.

They begin to play, the men are not very skilled at tennis.

After a few games, one of the men asks for a short break.

MR. KODENA

May we bother you for a short break at court side to take water and freshen up a bit?

YOKO

Of course. We will take a break as well.

Anna is becoming suspicious.

ANNA

Yes, thank you very much. I think you're going easy on us.

The two men laugh as they all walk to court side to take towels and water from attendants.

Mr. Takagi bows to Anna.

MR. TAKAGI
Mrs. Miyao?

ANNA
(Taken aback)
Why, yes, sir. I am Mrs. Miyao, but
I haven't told you my name.

Anna and Yoko exchange glances, obviously concerned.

MR. TAKAGI
We are with the Japanese
Department.

Yoko hurries to Anna's side.

MR. TAKAGI (CONT'D)
Please, do not be uncomfortable.
But may I ask you some questions
today.

Yoko comes up close to Anna and whispers in her ear.

YOKO
They are Kempeitai. Do what they
say.

Anna and Yoko aren't sure how to react but are obviously a
bit frightened.

MR. TAKAGI
Mrs. Miyao, we trust that you are
in full support of Colonel Miyao?

ANNA
How do you know my husband?

MR. TAKAGI
And you are in full support of
Japan in its efforts to normalize
the Asian region?

ANNA
Of course. And you probably already
know that I'm not a communist?
Right? You must know that my family
fled the Bolsheviks to Harbin,
China in 1917! Since you know so
much, you must also know who my
husband's father is?

MR. TAKAGI

Ah, perhaps it was the Secretary of the Interior who asked us to keep watch. You never know.

Mr. Takagi snickers.

MR. TAKAGI (CONT'D)

If conditions change, we will let you know. For now, please carry on as usual. Oh, yes, Mrs. Yamaguchi? May we inquire?

YOKO

Of course, but . . .

Mr. Takagi bows deeply.

MR. TAKAGI

Most appreciated. Mrs. Yamaguchi, we can't help but wonder why you have no close Japanese friends. This has been a minor concern at the bureau. And we wonder what Colonel Miyao's thoughts are regarding this issue.

Anna and Yoko become even more frightened.

ANNA

Mrs. Yamaguchi has many Japanese friends.

MR. TAKAGI

Yes, Mrs. Miyao, but they are not close friends. Of course, you and your Japanese friend are extremely close like sisters, one might say? I could continue speculating, but I suppose that's not necessary.

YOKO

You are out of line, Sir!

Mr. Takagi snickers then takes on a serious demeanor.

MR. TAKAGI

For now, ladies, we won't let your husbands know how quick you were to join us in doubles.

(MORE)

MR. TAKAGI (CONT'D)

Be that as it may, our own situations might be conducive to more playing next time . . . but not only on the tennis court.

The two women are stiff with anger and fear.

INT. TENNIS CLUB COFFEE HOUSE

After playing tennis, both women sit, almost speechless, and are grappling with this sudden, major change in their lives.

They start with small talk.

YOKO

Well, I guess it was a good match.

ANNA

I guess.

YOKO

How is your chocolate cake?

ANNA

It is very chocolate.

YOKO

Oh, you know that, do you?

ANNA

Yoko . . . Yoko, did you know those men were going to approach us?

YOKO

Don't be . . .

ANNA

Because if you did know . . .

Anna starts tearing up.

Yoko raises her hands in the "stop" position.

YOKO

Oh, please stop.

ANNA

If you did know, you must know . . .

YOKO

Damn you, Anna, you are the Queen of Drama!

ANNA
Yoko?

YOKO
Wait.

ANNA
Yoko?

YOKO
(Dread)
Anna, don't.

ANNA
You know what you need to do.

YOKO
We'll go above their heads, Anna.

ANNA
And make it worse?

YOKO
You need me, Anna.

There is a momentary pause with the women fumbling around with their coffees and cake.

ANNA
I never needed you, Yoko. You're always with me because Japanese won't accept you as a friend.

Yoko lifts her tea cup, then slams it down hard on her saucer.

YOKO
What do you mean by that?

ANNA
I just don't know.

Yoko puts her face in her cupped hands, moans for a few seconds, and then sits up straight.

YOKO
Anna, don't do this.

ANNA
You're just a weird, strangely self absorbed Japanese girl, Yoko. Frankly, I could've befriended anyone. White, blond women in this silly country can befriend anybody.

(MORE)

ANNA (CONT'D)

We're just pet foreigners to you.
You were convenient for me, just
across the street. And you were
painfully easy to amuse.

Anna suddenly stands and hurries out of the coffee house.

Yoko is devastated.

EXT. THE MIYAO HOME. EARLY MORNING. (LATE NOVEMBER 1941)

Colonel Miyao pulls up the house in an army vehicle driven by
a soldier. He steps out and looks around.

After Colonel Miyao enters the house, Anna hurries in and
stops directly in front of him.

At first, because they haven't seen each other for a long
time, they're a bit uncomfortable.

But soon that feeling starts to give way to their painful
longing for each other.

ANNA

I hate being without you. But it
hurts to be with you, too.

COLONEL MIYAO

Would it hurt you more to hold me?

The two embrace and kiss each other with great passion.

INT. MIYAO HOME. A BIT LATER THAT MORNING.

Anna and Colonel Miyao are in the bedroom; it's obvious that
they've just finished making love.

They lay in bed facing each other holding hands, and the
colonel's expression changes from longing to concern.

COLONEL MIYAO

I don't do anything I'm not ordered
to do.

Anna just gazes at him with confusion.

COLONEL MIYAO (CONT'D)

If I didn't do those things, I
wouldn't be here with you today.

ANNA

I'm sorry I haven't given you a son.

COLONEL MIYAO

After what I've seen in China, I'm grateful you have not given me a son. I've seen what can happen to sons . . . If we are blessed enough to ever have a child, which I already told you in my letter that I don't need, we shall have a daughter, one who looks just like you.

ANNA

How about a girl with your face?

COLONEL MIYAO

My dear, I'm confused enough having just come back from China. Please do not order me to imagine such horror.

They both laugh and hug.

ANNA

Maybe your horror is my heaven.

COLONEL MIYAO

We must talk. We must plan.

INT. MIYAO HOUSE. LATE AFTERNOON - SAME DAY

Colonel Miyao and Anna are having tea at a small table in the living room and are having a serious talk.

COLONEL MIYAO

High command is up to something very big, of which I have not yet been appraised because the plan won't be carried out in China but rather somewhere in the Pacific. In a debriefing early this morning, Prime Minister Tojo said that our next step must include stopping the white hunters.

Anna puts her palm to her chest.

COLONEL MIYAO CONT.

I'm fairly certain they're planning an attack on the United States, but I don't know where that will take place. The secrecy is maddening. Things in Tokyo might become intolerable.

ANNA

But . . . Where do I go?

COLONEL MIYAO

Already the government has organized places for civilians to stay in Saitama and Gunma Prefectures in the mountains. Women, children, and the elderly will go first.

ANNA

Would I have to go?

COLONEL MIYAO

If it happens, you must be ready.

ANNA

I must go where Yoko goes, that is, if she'll still allow me.

COLONEL MIYAO

Don't lose your composer with Yoko, again, my dear. You can trust her just as much as you can trust me. Understand? She has relatives in Gunma. Anyway, if it can be arranged.

Anna looks off as if into a distance.

Colonel Miyao takes her hand.

ANNA

Arranged? I can't even ask you when you're going back.

COLONEL MIYAO

And I can't stand to tell you.

Colonel Miyao stands and paces. Then stops.

COLONEL MIYAO (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

The day after tomorrow . . . But I can't tell you the next time I'll be coming back.

(MORE)

COLONEL MIYAO (CONT'D)

The situation has heated up. My
supreme commander told me not to
expect a leave for another year, at
least. I'm sorry.

Anna stands and crosses her arms, then puts a fist to her
forehead.

Colonel Miyao steps over to Anna and takes her into his arms.

COLONEL MIYAO (CONT'D)

Tonight, I'm taking you to the
Ginza for dinner and then Kabuki.
After that, I'll take you to a
great jazz club in Shinjuku.

EXT. GINZA, TOKYO. OUTSIDE OF THE KABUKI-ZA. THAT EVENING.

Colonel Miyao and Anna, very well dressed (the colonel in his
dress uniform), step out of an official army vehicle onto the
sidewalk.

Immediately, other patrons notice Anna and stop and stare,
some of them with suspicious glares.

The Miyaos, taking concerned notice, walk right through the
throng and into the theater.

ANNA

We should go home, really.

COLONEL MIYAO

Nonsense.

During the Kabuki performance of the classic play, *Benten
Kozo*, Colonel Miyao and Anna are agitated by obvious glances
and glares in their direction.

Colonel Miyao finally decides to leave before the end of the
performance.

As they stand, the Kabuki actors freeze in place, pausing
their performance until the Miyaos leave.

SOME AUDIENCE MEMBERS

Go home, foreigner!

Outside of the Kabuki Theater, it's dark, and the Colonel and
Anna are standing and discussing the situation.

ANNA

I'm ruining everything.

COLONEL MIYAO
No, those people inside are ruining
everything.

ANNA
What now?

COLONEL MIYAO
Our only alternative, my dear, is
to be brave and go listen to jazz.

INT. SMOKEY SHINJUKU JAZZ CLUB. LATER THAT EVENING.

Colonel Miyao and Anna are comfortable in this jazz club
where nobody seems to be suspicious of them.

ANNA
Yoko loves Duke Ellington.

COLONEL MIYAO
Who do you love?

ANNA
Let me just say I'm glad you don't
play jazz on the phonograph all the
time like Yoko. I love her, but too
much is too much. As for who I
love, well, you know who I love.

COLONEL MIYAO
I'm sorry I'm not a musician.

ANNA
I already live 24 hours a day with
myself. I don't need another
musician.

COLONEL MIYAO
Isn't Yoko a musician?

ANNA
Be serious. Oh, maybe you've never
heard her play. She has her
talents, but, well . . .

COLONEL MIYAO
Understood, just as long as I
remain your favorite.

A Waiter approaches their table with a tray of drinks, which
he places in front of them.

Then he backs up and takes a business card from his shirt pocket and places it on the table to Colonel Miyao's right, and he picks it up and inspects it.

WAITER

Sir, a man named Mr. Takagi wanted me to give you his business card.

Anna grabs the card from Colonel Miyao and looks at it.

ANNA

I know this man!

She begins to panic and looks around to see if Mr. Takagi is in the bar.

As her eyes pan the foyer area, Mr. Takagi is standing there.

Takagi doesn't approach; rather, he smiles, bows and quickly departs.

INT. MIYAO HOME. SAME EVENING.

Anna and Colonel Miyao are sitting up in bed, talking.

Both appear happy and sad at the same time.

COLONEL MIYAO

I met Mr. Takagi a few years ago. After I brought you back to Japan, I had to undergo a few interviews because it was so unusual for an army officer to marry a foreigner. They were just doing their duty. Now, however, it's become more than simply interviews. All we can do is wait and see what happens. There's really no inconspicuous place for a white person in Japan because they stand out, especially non-Asians, in the city and in the countryside. Obviously, you can't go back to Harbin. What relatives you do have there aren't even living in Russia Town in Harbin. Some of them have fled to safer places, and they hope the war will end soon so they can resettle in Harbin . . . No, you can't go back to Harbin, too dangerous. Follow Yoko's lead. She'll know what to do.

EXT. MIYAO HOME GARDEN. NEXT MORNING.

Colonel Miyao and Anna are having tea at a table.

This scene is interrupted periodically with flashbacks of battle scenes that Colonel Miyao describes.

Anna is extremely stressed.

ANNA

You've not told me a single story
about your work in China.

COLONEL MIYAO

There was a Chinese boy, a
resistance fighter.

ANNA

A boy?

COLONEL MIYAO

Couldn't have been more than
fourteen years old. Boys and girls,
sometimes even the little ones,
fight.

ANNA

More tea?

Anna pours more tea.

COLONEL MIYAO

I was on top of a hill at my
command post well back from the
fighting. I had the boy in my
telescope.

ANNA

A skirmish?

COLONEL MIYAO

More like a battle . . . ten of our
men died, probably fifty Chinese.

ANNA

The boy in your telescope?

Colonel Miyao turns away from Anna.

FLASHBACK: As Colonel Miyao describes this scene, we see the flashback of a boy in battle as described.

COLONEL MIYAO

Something was dangling by a string from his eye socket . . . I quickly realized it was one of his eyeballs. I can't believe I'm telling you this! I'm ashamed.

ANNA

Finish the story.

COLONEL MIYAO

The dangling eyeball wasn't so odd, in and of itself. But, you see, the eyeball appeared to be getting in the way of his fighting, so he ripped it off the rest of the way, threw the eyeball into the distance, and continued fighting.

ANNA

I'm sorry you had to see that.

COLONEL MIYAO

When I saw him continue to fight with a conviction, a resolve I'd never before witnessed, I knew the Japanese wouldn't be in Manchuria much longer. I just knew . . . Then I lost him from my telescope, and who appeared in the boy's place but an apparition, a very clear image, of the great Yang Jingyu, who was a resistance leader that I had killed a few years earlier. He was a giant man, a head taller than the next tallest, and he was on a large white horse, seemingly disinterested in the fighting.

FLASHBACK: Through Colonel Miyao's telescope, we see Yang Jingyu on horseback wearing a Chinese Army officer's uniform.

He's alone on a hillside, and there appears to be fog encircling the horse's legs. The man appears ethereal.

He wasn't real, of course, but there he was. I saw him with my own eyes. And his horse didn't look quite real either. But I believe the young boy saw him, too, and was inspired by his presence.

(MORE)

COLONEL MIYAO (CONT'D)

And the boy's courage inspired the other Chinese soldiers, and it was then that I knew we wouldn't be able to have victory that day . . . So I ordered a retreat.

ANNA

Yang Jingyu?

COLONEL MIYAO

Maybe in his late thirties when I killed him, a Chinese hero. He was like a phantom. When I told the other soldiers of my sighting, nobody believed me. . . All I can say is that this man . . . this man seemed made from something that the rest of us aren't made of. Of course he's a man I would kill, again, that is, if he were alive.

ANNA

Did he see you?

COLONEL MIYAO

He was too far away to see me without a telescope, but he did appear to be looking right at me. Right through the lens of my telescope.

ANNA

Damned men. They have to be manly even when they're dead.

COLONEL MIYAO

Don't worry.

ANNA

You have to kill each other as if the world wouldn't have meaning, somehow, without the correct number of deaths.

COLONEL MIYAO

You sound so Russian. You're reading Tolstoi, again. Akhmatova?

ANNA

I've been reading the Princess Shikishi poems you gave me.

COLONEL MIYAO

I should have given you a more positive literature. Shikishi is perhaps too dark.

INT. THE YAMAGUCHI HOME. EVENING - (2019)

Yoko is sitting at her Kotatsu with Hide's mother, Miwako.

They are stringing green beans together.

MIWAKO

I wish you could be more patient with Hide's rather different outlook on life, that's all.

YOKO

Miwako-chan, you've been a wonderful mother and satisfactory daughter-in-law. Hide's issue is not of your doing. I take full responsibility. I filled his head with Anna. I was relentless and very naïve.

MIWAKO

We all forgive you.

YOKO

Thank you, dear. That shows your devotion to family.

MIWAKO

Complete devotion.

YOKO

I have a plan for Hide that might prove successful.

Miwako leans forward and becomes more attentive and obviously hopeful.

YOKO CONT.

The Internet, my dear. The Internet.

Miwako appears perplexed.

EXT. CHANG CHUN, CHINA. (1943)

Chang Chun, Jilin Province, China, is the Japanese colonial capital of Manchuria.

We see a large office building with Japanese flags flapping in the wind.

Colonel Miyao is looking out of the 3rd floor window.

INT. INSIDE THE SAME OFFICE.

We see the back of Colonel Miyao, who is still looking out the window.

A sargent enters the office.

SARGENT

It's Emperor Fui and the General, sir. The General would like you to come to his office.

COLONEL MIYAO

Sargent, has the Emperor actually left his palace? I'm surprised.

The sargent bows.

SARGENT

Should you see the general first?

COLONEL MIYAO

What's this is about?

SARGENT

What shall I tell the general?

COLONEL MIYAO

Tell the general I'll be in momentarily.

The sargent appears frightened and bows low.

SARGENT

Very well, sir.

INT. YAMAGUCHI HOUSE - (2019)

Hide is with Anna in his bedroom after work.

Anna, naked and sad, is sitting on the bed next to him.

ANNA

I love you, Hide.

HIDE

Of course you love me. . . because I make you love me. Without me, you wouldn't love anything because you wouldn't even be here.

Anna is perplexed.

HIDE CONT.

I'm over 40, and I still have an imaginary lover.

Anna begins to fade, and Hide panics.

HIDE

I'm not ready to lose you, Anna.

Anna comes back fully and smiles. Hide shakes his head and sighs with relief.

INT. CHANG CHUN, CHINA. THE GENERAL'S OFFICE - (1943)

General Mori, stately and patriotic commander of medium height, and Colonel Miyao are discussing various issues.

GENERAL MORI

What am I to tell the Emperor about the incident in Jilin City? Your commanding Major didn't carry out his duties intelligently.

COLONEL MIYAO

General Mori, sir, isn't it understood that, in the case of uprisings, we can eliminate as many as it takes to take care of the problem?

GENERAL MORI

That depends on who you're talking to. The Major eliminated an entire village and then burnt the entire village to the ground, and the Emperor has to go through the embarrassment of having to address the issue to his people. We all know he would rather be in his palace listening to jazz and playing with whores.

COLONEL MIYAO

Of course, sir, I understand. Remember, I believed this uprising needed a more thorough investigation before taking this kind of action.

GENERAL MORI

We can't afford it. Only the most important issues receive due diligence. Resources are dwindling.

COLONEL MIYAO

Yes, sir. You're correct, but it's also expensive to kill so many people. Need I remind you of the cost of just one bullet. Not to mention the cost of all the sake our men have to drink to carry out their duties.

GENERAL MORI

Your major is disorganized, Colonel. There are more efficient ways to carry out his duties, and it's your responsibility to make sure that he knows his responsibilities. As for saving money, just have the locals clean up the mess, afterwards. This should be common practice.

COLONEL MIYAO

This time we couldn't do that because every single person in the village was dead. May I suggest, sir, that we not eliminate the woman, children, and old people.

General Mori rises from his chair as his expression changes to slight anger.

He walks over to a window and peers out.

GENERAL MORI

You're far too merciful, Colonel Miyao.

COLONEL MIYAO

Oh, no, sir. With all due respect, it's not that.

GENERAL MORI

(Mockingly)

Please, sir, spare the children?
Spare the women? Spare the old
people? Sometimes, Colonel, you
disappoint me.

COLONEL MIYAO

Sir, you know that, at Tokyo
University, I studied economics.
I'm thinking only of the business
aspects of our struggles here.

GENERAL MORI

Is this why you turned down the
position in Harbin at Unit 731
along with a promotion . . .
because you're counting Yen?

COLONEL MIYAO

Sir, I turned down that position
because I'm not a medical
researcher. It's completely out of
my depth. . . I simply wouldn't
know what was going on. I know
nothing about bio-chemical
experimentation on the human body.

GENERAL MORI

I need to be completely sure of
you, Colonel Miyao. I need to know,
beyond doubt, that you honor our
emperor, not the Chinese emperor,
that impudent little jester in that
silly palace.

COLONEL MIYAO

Sir, I belong to the Emperor of
Japan. I honor him more than my own
life.

GENERAL MORI

Even more than your Russian wife?

COLONEL MIYAO

Sir, please, I thought we had an
understanding regarding that issue.

GENERAL MORI

That was then. This is now, Colonel
Miyao. Are we clear?

COLONEL MIYAO

It is clear, sir.

GENERAL MORI

Wait a moment, Colonel, I've been informed of a certain apparition. Lieutenant Moriyama has shared some information about you that has me concerned.

COLONEL MIYAO

Yes, sir?

GENERAL MORI

The lieutenant has nothing but respect for you, but he saw you, during a recent battle, looking through your telescope repeating the words, "Yang Jingyu," "Yang Jingyu."

Colonel Miyao appears a bit shaken but tries to hide his feelings.

GENERAL MORI (CONT'D)

You do understand that the Chinese hero, Yang Jingyu, is dead, that, in fact, you killed him and that we promoted you to full Colonel, in part, because of that, correct?

COLONEL MIYAO

Correct, sir. That is correct.

GENERAL MORI

This behavior makes you appear unpredictable in the eyes of your men, even weak. Do you understand?

COLONEL MIYAO

Of course, sir.

GENERAL MORI

I need no explanation for this odd behavior, but I do need consistent behavior when you are within eye and earshot of your men.

COLONEL MIYAO

Understood, sir.

GENERAL MORI

When you are on furlough, you should have more fun. What do you think all of these beautiful Chinese women are for?

(MORE)

GENERAL MORI (CONT'D)
 Drink hard, play hard, and then go
 back into the field.

Colonel Miyao appears slightly embarrassed.

GENERAL MORI (CONT'D)
 Good, then. Call in the silly
 emperor as you leave.

INT. INSIDE A TOKYO HIGHRISE APARTMENT - (2019)

Hide is with Akiko, again, the woman he tried to turn down
 for sex before.

He's on his knees in front of her as she sits on a sofa with
 her feet pressed into into Hide's face.

He is smelling her feet with unusual suction.

HIDE
 I can smell you. I can't believe
 it.

AKIKO
 (Snidely)
 These are feet. I walk on them
 everyday.

HIDE
 How can they hold up a whole body
 for so long yet smell so good?

AKIKO
 They smell good because you imagine
 they smell like your own balls,
 which men have always secretly
 wanted to smell. This drives men
 insane.

Next we see the two starting to have sex.

Hide is cautious and reluctant.

Akiko is patient with him.

Hide is on his back with Akiko on top.

HIDE
 Anna? Anna?

AKIKO
 Who's Anna?

HIDE

Anna?

Akiko, still on top of Hide, pauses for a moment and appears perplexed about Hide calling out "Anna."

AKIKO

Okay. If I understand this situation correctly, you want me to be somebody named Anna, right?

HIDE

Is that okay?

AKIKO

No, it's not okay, but since pleasure is never perfect, I'll try this because I like you.

An image of Anna making love fades in and out, seemingly trying to take over the woman's body.

HIDE

Anna? Oh, Anna.

Treating the situation rather like a drama assignment, Akiko accepts the deal with Hide and pretends to be fawning over Hide.

AKIKO

Hide? You fuck like an old ojii-san, but I love you, anyway. Oh, my love. I'll love you always. I'm getting hungry for sushi.

HIDE

You can't be Anna because you smell.

AKIKO

What does the slut smell like?

HIDE

Like empty space.

AKIKO

What does empty space smell like?

Suddenly, Hide's vision of Anna disappears and returns to that of Akiko, and he starts to laugh and starts enjoying the experience more.

HIDE

I'm such a fool. You're so much fun, Akiko.

AKIKO

Ah, so I'm Akiko, again.

Akiko slaps Hide on his butt.

AKIKO (CONT'D)

Way to go, Hide!

INT. YAMAGUCHI HOUSE - (2019)

Hide and Anna are back in Hide's bedroom.

Anna is looking out the window, and Hide stands in back of her.

ANNA

We can go back to visit Akiko whenever you want, my love. The need for smell and touch comes from the helpless side of you.

HIDE

I'll never have to go to her, again, only the one time.

ANNA

Once you've tasted the fruit, you can't go back to the way you were. It's okay. There's something all of us can't go back to. And I am made to change, after all. No need for you to worry. And I worry only as much as you want me to. I'm just a figment of your silly imagination.

HIDE

Aren't we all a figment of each other's imagination?

ANNA

Don't you have to check on your mother's and grandmother's household accounts?

HIDE

Grandmother gets too many chashumen deliveries from Family Noodles. It's fatty, yet she's not fat.

(MORE)

HIDE (CONT'D)

She has tricks--maybe centenarians can't gain weight--and it's expensive, 1200 yen a bowl. It's funny, she always leaves the bamboo only because she doesn't like it. She could tell Kenji to leave the bamboo out . . . But then it would no longer be a proper bowl of chashumen. To her, everything has to somehow qualify to exist.

ANNA

When you love me, Hide, are you really with me?

Hide paces the room.

HIDE

I can let you go. I can. But if I do, you will still always be with me.

ANNA

Can we go back to Akiko? I like her.

INT. YAMAGUCHI HOUSE - (2019)

Yoko (wearing her dark wire-rimmed glasses) and Hide are in the tatami room next to the garden.

Hide is sitting on the tatami mats, and Yoko is standing next to the window.

They are both looking into the garden.

YOKO

I've probably lived this long only to protect you, Hide. Why else would I want to stay in this awful body? All of my friends are ghosts now, and they haunt me daily; they ask, "Yoko, when will you join us?"

HIDE

Does Anna's ghost ever ask you that?

YOKO

What would you think of me, Hide, if I asked your permission to let me go ahead and die?

HIDE

(Pauses)

I have a craving for a powerful bowl of miso ramen from Family Noodles.

Hide phones Kenji at Family Noodles from his cell phone.

HIDE CONT.

Kenji, one chashumen and one extra strong miso ramen.

YOKO

The Yamaguchi men are such disagreeable bastards.

Hide chuckles.

YOKO CONT.

I've always allowed you your chuckles, Hide-chan . . . I suppose I'm thankful for them. It shows you have humor in your heart. But it also shows that you might not understand some essentials about life and of those who love you. For example, have you ever chuckled at your imaginary friend? I don't think so. No, you chuckle only at the living because you actually care about them. Maybe you should spend most of your time in Chiba at Disney Land, where you can sit on a bench and fall in love with all of those imaginary characters.

HIDE

Something is changing with Anna and me. I don't understand it. Our relationship has changed.

YOKO

Then explore that, Hide-chan. Time is of the essence.

Suddenly, Yoko grabs hold of the left side of her neck and winces in pain.

Hide becomes a bit panicked.

HIDE

Grandmother? Your heart? Where's your nitro?

Yoko stops wincing and settles down.

YOKO

It passed. It's an old carburetor
that won't accept oil, anymore.

Hide takes Yoko's left wrist, looks at his watch as he takes Yoko's pulse.

INT. THE JAPANESE CONSULATE IN HARBIN, CHINA - (1935)

This is where Colonel Miyao and Anna meet for the first time.

The council general is having a party, and many government officials from around Manchuria have been invited.

Most of them are Japanese as the occupation of the region was, a short time earlier, solidified with the placement of Chinese Emperor Puyi (who is in attendance) as the puppet emperor in Chang Chun.

Colonel Miyao is speaking with Japanese General Otani as they watch the emperor, snapping his fingers, leaning against a grand piano as an African American jazz pianist plays.

Many others, holding drinks, smoking, talking, and laughing, look on. The crowd is happy with the music.

General Otani faces the black jazz pianist.

GENERAL OTANI

The dark man came up from Shanghai just for this party. He's good at playing and jumping around.

COLONEL MIYAO

The women here love him.

GENERAL OTANI

He can have as many Chinese women as he wants.

COLONEL MIYAO

But, General Otani, sir, it's our Japanese lady guests who are the most excited.

We see a group of young, beautiful Japanese girls, and they're all giggling as they enjoy the jazz musician.

GENERAL OTANI

They are no more than school girls.
If we want him to make it back to
Shanghai, we need to make it clear
to him.

Colonel Miyao makes his way to the piano.

In between songs, he leans over and speaks into the black
man's ear.

COLONEL MIYAO

Only the Chinese girls.

The black man, not surprised at all, nods, then starts his
next song.

Colonel Miyao makes his way back to the general, during which
he nods at the concerned general.

Now at the general's side, again:

COLONEL MIYAO (CONT'D)

He understands.

The general smiles.

GENERAL OTANI

I'm impressed. You took care of
that as well as you took care of
that rebel insurgence near Jilin
City last week.

COLONEL MIYAO

This one was far more difficult,
sir.

The general laughs and is obviously pleased with Colonel
Miyao.

Colonel Miyao, bows and takes his leave.

He bows to many of the guests as he makes his way to the
kitchen.

He stops and talks with the chef.

COLONEL MIYAO (CONT'D)

What is the sashimi situation?

CHEF

Since we're inland, sir, we don't have as much fresh salt water sashimi as we would have in cities like Shanghai or Dalian.

COLONEL MIYAO

The general would like Sea Bream sashimi.

CHEF

Sea Bream came in just this morning.

COLONEL MIYAO

Good man. Can you make me a bowl of simple chashumen?

CHEF

(bowing)
Of course, sir.

Colonel Miyao takes notice of Chopin's Concerto #2, now coming from the ballroom's piano.

His expression shows that he's impressed.

The chef notices how impressed he is.

CHEF (CONT'D)

Sir, she's an important pianist in Harbin. Her family immigrated to China during the Bolshevik Revolution. Apparently, she was just a toddler when the Shostakovsky Music School in Moscow accepted her as a student of piano. Her father, by the way, is responsible for developing considerable commerce here in Harbin.

COLONEL MIYAO

Thank you.

Colonel Miyao takes his leave out of the kitchen.

Then we see him in the hallway leaving the men's restroom.

At the same time, a young, blond woman, Anna Mandelstam (later to become Anna Miyao), wearing a long formal dress, is leaving the woman's restroom.

The two nearly run into each other.

They're both a bit flummoxed and awkward.

COLONEL MIYAO (CONT'D)
Oh, that's why the music stopped.

ANNA MANDELSTAM
Even music needs a rest.

COLONEL MIYAO
Yours should never rest.

Anna gazes into his eyes a little suspiciously and steps back and turns her head toward the ballroom.

COLONEL MIYAO (CONT'D)
Of course, it is entitled to an occasional rest.

Anna looks at the colonel's uniform with confusion.

ANNA MANDELSTAM
Are you sure you're wearing the right uniform?

COLONEL MIYAO
I'm a new colonel in the Japanese Army, madam, Colonel Miyao.

ANNA MANDELSTAM
I don't . . . You seem . . .

Anna hesitates but keeps staring at his uniform.

ANNA MANDELSTAM (CONT'D)
Perhaps it is the right uniform.

Colonel Miyao smiles and blushes.

COLONEL MIYAO
May I suggest that uniforms are not natural to anyone as nobody is born with one . . . we are always looking for a security blanket. We never succeed in finding it, but we never stop trying.

ANNA MANDELSTAM
It's just that you look too young to be a colonel.

COLONEL MIYAO

And you look too young to be such a great pianist. I've never heard Chopin played with such delicacy.

ANNA MANDELSTAM

Thank you, Colonel, but I've known twelve-year-olds who could play better.

COLONEL MIYAO

(Big smile)

Well, why don't you bring them along next time?

They hesitate as they look out into the partying crowd, and then they both break out in laughter with the ridiculousness of that prospect.

INT. THE YAMAGUCHI HOME - (2019)

Yoko is in a small tatami room with shoji doors.

She has been interviewing young Russian women through Internet dating sites.

Sitting at a small desk in front of a desktop computer, she's talking with a young Russian woman on Skype.

Yoko and the interviewees are struggling with English.

YOKO

How old are you, dear?

YOUNG BRUNETT WOMAN

Say, again, please?

YOKO

How old?

YOUNG BRUNETT WOMAN

Oh, yes. I am weight 40 kilograms.

Now we see Yoko Skyping another young Russian woman, blond and heavy set.

YOKO

How far did you get in your education?

YOUNG BLOND WOMAN

Top in class at University of Moscow! I am doctor of babies.

YOKO
Where is the university?

The young woman appears confused.

YOUNG BLOND WOMAN
It is in Moscow, right? Does Hide
have good job?

Yoko Skypes another young Russian woman, who is blonde and very loud.

YOKO
I need to tell you the truth about
Hide. . .

LOUD BLOND WOMAN
Truth about Hide? Do not keep
anything from me! Nothing.

YOKO
Hide has an imaginary friend named
Anna.

The Skype screen goes blank.

We see that time is passing. There are Skype interviews with Yoko in this same room during the day and the night, and with Yoko wearing different clothing, as it's obvious that Yoko's search is taking a long time.

INT. THE YAMAGUCHI HOME. A LITTLE LATER - (2019)

Yoko is in the same small tatami room and is reading an email from Anna Tolstoi (28), a young pianist in Moscow, who contacted Yoko through a dating website.

Anna Tolstoi is a serious professional, a pragmatist but with a sense of humor.

Voice over with Anna Tolstoi reading an email to Yoko..

ANNA TOLSTOI
Dear Mrs. Yamaguchi, I'm 28 years
old. My hair is blond, and my eyes
are blue. I'm a slim 172
centimeters. I love piano and great
literature. I have a degree from
University of Moscow, and I speak
Russian, English, Japanese, and
French. I am a freelance
interpreter and translator.

(MORE)

ANNA TOLSTOI (CONT'D)

I hope to find a hardworking man with a lot of character--of course, self-sufficient, age up to fifty. I hope that Hide's a good cook, as I am not. And I hope he likes literature as much as I do. I am a professional and would prefer to work in whatever country I end up in. And I would like to have children one day.

Yours Truly, Anna Tolstoi

Yoko gazes at Anna Tolstoy's picture on the website, and we see the picture of a beautiful young woman with a striking resemblance to Anna Miyao.

Yoko becomes very excited.

YOKO

She looks like she could be a member of my Anna's family or even Anna's twin sister. Oh, my goodness!

Transition to Yoko's voice over as she types.

Dear Ms. Tolstoi,

Good day to you, Madam. I am Hide Yamaguchi's grandmother, Yoko. I like your email. Maybe my grandson will love you. He is sort of rich with a big heart and great food. I'm sure he will want to know you better. Can you come to Japan to visit us, pretty girl? Can we correspond? I speak a little Russian and English, along with Japanese, if you could Skype me.

Thank you, Yoko Yamaguchi, very old lady.

EXT. JILIN PROVENCE - (1943)

This scene takes place in the countryside about forty kilometers north of Chang Chun.

There's a battle between the Japanese army and the Chinese army along with many chinese underground partisans who are not wearing uniforms.

Colonel Miyao is commanding from about 200 meters on the Japanese side of the enemy line.

There are fighter planes strafing both the Chinese and Japanese sides of the line, and there's cannon fire.

Colonel Miyao is on the radio with Combat commander, General Otani, in Chang chun.

GENERAL OTANI
How many are there?

COLONEL MIYAO
About 600 to our 360.

GENERAL OTANI
Then what's the problem?

COLONEL MIYAO
Normally, sir, we could outlast them with our artillery. But they have gotten hold of some American cannons, and they have, we believe, five American P 47 fighters, which are tearing us apart.

GENERAL OTANI
They can actually fly them?

COLONEL MIYAO
The pilots are obviously well trained, sir.

GENERAL OTANI
I have only a few spare Zeros with mildly wounded pilots. I'm not sure if I can spare them. Our resources are thinning out, Colonel.

General Otani pauses in thought.

GENERAL OTANI (CONT'D)
I'm sending 4 tanks and 100 additional men.

COLONEL MIYAO
Yes, sir. Thank you!

GENERAL OTANI
You must come back with victory.

COLONEL MIYAO
Yes, sir.

Colonel Miyao puts the radio down and looks into the distance; he sees something familiar and grabs his binoculars.

On a hill amidst the fighting Chinese is a big man on a white horse looking directly into the Colonel's telescope.

It's Yang Jingyu, who isn't wearing an army uniform, and his horse is whinnying, but he appears undaunted by the fighting around him.

COLONEL MIYAO (CONT'D)

Why do you dare me, Yang Jingyu?
You're so far away. You have to
come closer to kill me, or, if you
weren't already dead, I would have
to come close to kill you. You're
not even there. But you are there.
Maybe if I do come close, will you
disappear like a proper ghost?

INT. YOKO IS AT HER DESKTOP COMPUTER - (2019)

She is happily talking with Anna Tolstoi over Skype.

ANNA TOLSTOI

I do like Hide's picture, quite
handsome. I'm very surprised that
he's not yet married.

YOKO

Oh, to be honest, his mother and I
have tried for years to match him
with some very nice Japanese girls,
but, as I've explained, he prefers,
well, girls who look like you.

ANNA TOLSTOI

I see, like his imaginary friend.
You mentioned that I look very much
like her.

Yoko holds up a photo of Anna Miyao to the screen.

YOKO

Can you see the picture clearly?

ANNA TOLSYOI

Oh, my, yes. She could be my twin
sister. Oh, my. How strange!

YOKO

I have been searching for months to find you. And, finally, you are here in front of me.

ANNA TOLSTOI

Oh, but, Yoko, we have not made any sort of agreement, yet. Let's not be hasty.

YOKO

I will bring you here, Anna, all expenses paid. You could stay at a lovely little apartment I have here in Shibuya. You would have no worries. Let's try this. Please, Anna. In fact, if this arrangement doesn't work out, I will send you back home with the money that you will have lost from not working. Or, if you wish, I can arrange for a visa for you to stay in Japan and continue your life and profession here.

ANNA TOLSTOI

It's just that I would have never imagined my life going in this direction--being matched with a man who has an imaginary lover who looks just like me. It's so odd.

YOKO

I truly believe that, after meeting him, you will want to be his "real" lover . . . Anna, the situation is complex. Hide is complex, but he is a good man. After talking with you these many times, I know that you are the one for Hide.

ANNA TOLSTOI

I feel you are my friend now, Yoko, and I don't want you, dear lady, to be disappointed. I fear you think I'm perfect. I am not perfect. I hope you don't want me to be a virgin.

YOKO

I don't want you to be a virgin. Hide will be complex enough to an experienced girl. And, dear girl, I'm a centenarian.

(MORE)

YOKO (CONT'D)
To us, anything alive, while
sometimes a nuisance, is perfect.

Both women smile and giggle.

ANNA TOLSTOI
Can we talk tomorrow?

EXT. BRIDGE OVER A WIDE BLVD IN TOKYO. DAYTIME - (2019)

Hide and Anna are standing behind steel webbing that prevents
walkers from falling to the busy street bellow.

They're holding hands as they watch traffic, which is
extremely noisy.

HIDE
I've been coming here for so long,
sometimes I forget that this bridge
holds me up, keeps me from falling
to my death.

ANNA
But you could've chosen to never
come up here.

HIDE
I'm worried about grandmother.

ANNA
I know her only through your eyes.
I feel only what you feel.

HIDE
She wants so much. . .

ANNA
But she doesn't want me, Hide.

HIDE
But that's too much. I think it
will kill me if you weren't with
me.

ANNA
Well, silly boy, it CAN'T kill ME.
Think about it. You won't have to
pay for two seats at the movie
theater, anymore, or when you take
the Bullet Train or fly.

HIDE
Why do we come here. It's so noisy!

ANNA

Because the noise drowns out the noise.

EXT. SHIBUYA TENNIS CLUB. (MID 1943)

Near the club's front entrance, Mr. Takagi and Anna Miyao approach one another.

TAKAGI

I'm glad that you received my note.

ANNA

You didn't state in the note a reason for this meeting.

TAKAGI

I trust you have tennis clothes in a locker here?

EXT. ON THE TENNIS COURT. (TWENTY MINUTES LATER)

Anna and Takagi are playing singles.

It appears that Anna is beating Takagi, who, as before, appears clumsy on the court.

Takagi talks loudly across the court, which Anna finds annoying and is making that known with negative facial expressions.

Anna is noticeably exasperated with Takagi's clumsy playing, and she's going easy on him as if he were an unskilled child.

ANNA

Your doubles are better.

TAKAGI

You and your friend beat us in doubles, too. Even though I'm not very skilled, I'm having fun. My serve?

Anna lobs the ball to Takagi so he can serve. He serves.

Suddenly, everything about his style of play changes from that of a clumsy beginner to a near-professional caliber player.

His serves are suddenly so powerful that Anna can barely hit them.

The one time she connects, the ball knocks the racket out of her hand.

She stands at the baseline in shock, and her expression changes from confusion to fear.

ANNA

Why? Why? Why are you doing this?

TAKAGI

Why not?

Anna walks quickly toward the clubhouse.

Takagi hurries after her and catches up to her.

TAKAGI (CONT'D)

You don't understand power at all, do you, Anna?

ANNA

So, I suppose you are a tough guy now?

TAKAGI

Oh, no, Anna. I could never be tough guy. That's what I've always hated about my culture. You see, I enjoy beating my people to a pulp but without ever striking them.

ANNA

You still think I'm a communist?

TAKAGI

Anna, I don't care, at this point whether or not you're a communist. The whole point has always been the fact that you're not Japanese.

INT. THE MIYAO HOUSE. (MID 1943)

Yoko and Anna are sitting on Anna's piano bench looking away from the keys.

YOKO

You were so patient with me, Anna.

ANNA

Oh, yes?

YOKO

Remember the piano lessons?

ANNA

(Smiling)

Oh, you call those piano lessons?
To me, it was more like, well, tea
with some hopeful clanking here and
there.

Both women laugh.

Yoko takes Anna's hand and holds tightly, looking her
straight in the eye.

YOKO

We have to leave Tokyo, Anna.

ANNA

Absolutely not!

YOKO

The bombs are much bigger now, and
they are landing more
indiscriminately.

ANNA

My husband would not be able to
find me. No, it's impossible.

YOKO

We'll just send the colonel a
message. He'll know exactly where
we're going to be because he
already knows where the place is.
It's a farm in the mountains of
Gunma Prefecture, not far from
Tokyo. They're close relatives of
mine. You'll like them. And we
should be safe.

ANNA

It's happening, isn't it? Oh, my.

YOKO

The Americans have bombers now that
fly so high that you can barely see
them, even in day time. Also, Anna,
I don't like the way other Japanese
are looking at you. I know you
hardly ever go out anymore--mind
you, I'm just fine with fetching
food and things for you--but I'm
not sure if I could defend you if
you got into serious trouble.

INT. YAMAGUCHI HOME - (2019)

Hide is with Yoko in the livingroom, sitting at the kotatsu drinking tea.

HIDE

I wish you could talk with Anna.

YOKO

I talked with her almost everyday for years.

HIDE

Yes, but . . .

YOKO

Are you having more problems with that ghost?

HIDE

I thought you loved her.

YOKO

If I'm going to love a ghost, it will be one of my own. One of my own making.

We see that Yoko is having a reminder revelation, that the imaginary Anna is, in fact, of her own making.

YOKO (CONT'D)

I suppose she IS of my own making . . . I'm going to make up for this, Hide. You'll see.

HIDE

Anna's been fading, grandmother. And I'm frightened. I can't live with her just leaving like that. It's too painful.

YOKO

How can I help you with a fading lover. Nothing I can do will stop her. Hide, I'm sorry, but she knows now that she has to fade. And nothing, my boy, can stop her now. But, Hide, there is something better coming your way. I promise.

HIDE

How could anybody be better than Anna? You're not fixing me up with another boring Tokyo girl, are you?

YOKO

Nothing like that, Hide. I promise.
I believe that things will become
clear very soon. Just please let
Anna fade. Let her go. You must let
her go.

EXT. A TRADITIONAL JAPANESE FARM IN GUNMA PREFECTURE. (MID
1943)

In a lush, green countryside setting (not far from Tokyo),
there are a few farm workers tending to crops.

INT. INSIDE THE FARM HOUSE.

An adult male, Takahazu (Taka for short), about 19 years old,
is rolling around on the tatami mats and is mumbling
gibberish. He is obviously mentally challenged, but he is
very handsome and kind.

Standing just outside the tatami room door are Yoko and her
son, Takao (6), and Anna, along with Yoko's Aunt Midori
Yamaguchi (50) and Uncle Kendo Yamaguchi (52), stand outside
the same tatami room door.

Midori and Kendo, successful upper-class farmers, are both
slim, tallish and are very healthy looking farmers.

KENDO

(To Anna)

We have to wait until Yoko's
cousin, Taka, is finished rolling
around on the tatami mats. Don't
worry, he is a gentle soul.

Anna and Yoko glance cautiously confused at each other.

MIDORI

Our boy doesn't do this everyday.
Only when he becomes excited.

YOKO

My cousin is so excited that you're
here, Anna.

ANNA

I'm just grateful that you all
would have me.

INT. THE FARM HOUSE - (THAT EVENING)

All are sitting in the dining room at a large kotastu lit with oil lamps, which are on posts surrounding the large table.

Aunt Midori is busily bringing food to the table.

Anna and Yoko and Yoko's son, Takao, sit on one side, and Kendo and Taka sit on the other side.

Taka, who is swaying side-to-side and back-and-forth, has a big smile on his face and can't take his eyes off Anna.

TAKA

Mother and father say I can't join up.

Anna appears perplexed.

YOKO

He means the army.

TAKA

They don't like me.

YOKO

Everyone likes you, Taka-chan.

TAKA

If Anna likes me, I'm happy. Can I sign up with Anna?

ANNA

(Smiling)

Well, I'll sign you up right now. Paper anyone?

Midori rises quickly and hurries over to the dining-room breakfront in which she finds some paper.

She then gives it to Anna along with a hanko pad.

Anna writes on the paper and reads it aloud.

ANNA (CONT'D)

I, Anna Miyao, wife of Colonel Miyao, hereby ask you to join Anna's army. I would be proud to have you serve.

Anna hands Taka the paper and points to the bottom of the page.

ANNA (CONT'D)
Please Hanko here, Taka-chan.

Yoko quickly reaches over and takes the paper from Taka and hankos the paper.

ANNA (CONT'D)
Well, Taka, congratulations! You're now officially a soldier of Anna's army.

Taka lifts his arms high.

TAKAO
Bonsai! Bonsai!

INT. THE FARM HOUSE. A FEW WEEKS LATER - (1943)

Yoko is in a tatami room, sewing, when she hears a woman crying. She rises and begins searching the house. Finally, she reaches Anna's bedroom.

YOKO
Anna, are you okay?

There's no answer, just more crying.

YOKO (CONT'D)
Anna, I'm coming in.

Yoko enters the tatami bedroom, and Anna is lying on her futon, which is partially covered with blood.

Anna's hand is covering her face.

YOKO (CONT.)
You didn't tell me you were . . .

ANNA
Don't touch me. I'm disgusting.

YOKO
Anna, are you still bleeding?

ANNA
I don't think so. I think it was a boy. Oh, Yoko, please don't tell the colonel.

YOKO
 Didn't he know?

ANNA
 After my third, I stopped telling
 him.

Yoko holds Anna.

ANNA (CONT'D)
 I am nothing to him. I am nothing.

Taka shows up at the door.

TAKA
 Anna, did you get hurt in the war?

ANNA
 Yes, Taka, I got hurt in the war.

TAKA
 I'll go get Dr. Mizoe.

Taka hurries away. Yoko becomes more concerned.

YOKO
 Anna, the doctor doesn't know
 you're here. I don't know how he'll
 react.

ANNA
 I don't need a doctor.

YOKO
 You've bled too much. You're as
 white as a ghost. Don't be silly.
 No, I'm afraid we're just going to
 have to take the chance.

INT. NARITA AIRPORT, TOKYO - (2019)

Yoko is pacing back-and-forth anxiously waiting at an arrival
 gate to meet Anna Tolstoi.

She holds a sign that says, "I am Yoko for Anna Tolstoi."

Shortly, Anna Tolstoi appears at the gate with an over-
 stacked luggage cart.

Yoko holds up her sign, and Anna hurries over to her.

Anna towers over Yoko.

Anna bows deeply to Yoko, who bows back, and they both smile.

ANNA TOLSTOI

Yoko, it's so wonderful to finally see you, but you're so . . . Oh, my. I had no idea over Skype.

YOKO

I might not have many centimeters, but I have more years than anybody.

ANNA TOLSTOI

I'll just find the ladies room and freshen up a bit.

INT. THE NARITA EXPRESS TRAIN

On their way back to Tokyo, Anna and Yoko are sitting together drinking canned tea.

ANNA TOLSTOI

When do you think you'll tell Hide about me. No hurry, of course.

YOKO

Yes, for now you can get to know Tokyo. I think you'll like your apartment. It's near the Yamaguchi family home in Shibuya.

ANNA TOLSTOI

Thank you, Yoko, for everything.

YOKO

I have a cell phone, so you can call me whenever you want. And it doesn't even matter where I am or what I'm doing. I guess it would be hard to use this in the bath or shower, but you know what I mean. Okay? If you don't have a cell phone, I'll get one for you.

Anna holds up a cell phone.

YOKO (CONT'D)

Let's get you to your apartment. You'll need rest.

INT. THE FARMHOUSE IN GUNMA PREFECTURE - (MID 1944)

Anna is getting ready for bed in a small tatami room.

There is a futon on the floor, on top of which are mounded up covers.

She is curious about the covers being so disheveled.

She reaches over and slowly lifts them, and Taka is underneath with a big, silly smile on his face.

Anna is startled at first but quickly regains composure.

Anna
Now, Taka, I think you lost your
bedroom.

Taka laughs and fixes his eyes on Anna's breasts, which are just barely covered by a nightgown. He's breathing hard.

ANNA (CONT'D)
Let me help you up.

Taka laughs, again, and hesitates, still staring at her breasts.

ANNA (CONT'D)
Now, Taka, you know how to be a
good soldier, yes? You're in the
army now, and you should act like
it.

Taka's breathing slows a bit, and he salutes Anna.

TAKA
Oh, yes sir. Will you take me to a
battle?

ANNA
Of course, but right now I think
I'll take you to your bedroom.

The scene continues with Anna and Taka outside of Taka's bedroom.

Taka keeps trying to brush up against Anna, who keeps gently pushing him inside.

As she closes his sliding door, Taka reaches out quickly and squeezes one of her breasts gently and, surprising himself, pulls back just as quickly.

Anna shuts the door all the way and smiles in a sad way.

As Anna steps into her bedroom, Yoko shows up at the door.

YOKO

He's never been with a woman.

ANNA

I wonder what people like Taka think about.

YOKO

Like a five year old in his mind. But Taka's body thinks like a grown man.

ANNA

Conflict. Even when you're simple, No matter what, there is conflict.

YOKO

To Taka, conflict is just a feeling. He just lets the feeling happen while we "normal people" always have to interrupt it and sometimes ruin it in the process. Sometimes I'm jealous of how he feels with such purity and joy. And when you correct him, he may feel sad but only for a moment, and then he just moves forward as though nothing has happened.

ANNA

And a very, very happy feeling, indeed.

YOKO

He used to sniff my feet and underarms whenever he had a chance. I had to become more strict when he started to suck my toes.

ANNA

But it does sound like you let him do it. Otherwise, how would you know he did it? You weren't imagining it, were you?

Both women laugh.

YOKO

Well, he is a beautiful man. Sometimes I wish my husband had some of Taka's qualities.

ANNA

One quality in particular.

YOKO
Don't leave me guessing, Anna.

ANNA
He doesn't have to go to war.

Anna pauses.

ANNA CONT.
Would you ever make love to him? I mean. I don't know if making love is the correct term? I'm sure you've thought about it.

YOKO
Yes, I've thought about it. But I would never do it unless. . .

ANNA
Unless?

YOKO
Unless I knew I would never see him, again.

We hear a child in the background.

YOKO (CONT'D)
I've got to get back to my son.

INT. SMALL COFFEE HOUSE. 4:30 PM. - (2019)

In a coffee house across the street from Family Noodles, Yoko and Anna Tolstoi are sipping coffee.

Yoko is watching family noodles, and she's obviously nervous.

YOKO
You must have patience, my girl.

ANNA TOLSTOI
Does he look a lot like he does in photos?

YOKO
He should be finished with his break soon. He usually leaves the house around 4:15. Maybe we shouldn't have come here so early. I'm sorry you're feeling nervous.

Anna is leaning coyishly, chin in hand, as she looks through the window, anticipating Hide.

ANNA TOLSTOI

Oh, I think I see him.

YOKO

In his Family Noodles uniform?

We see a closeup of Hide and the imaginary Anna.

He has his arm around her shoulders and is looking down at her and laughing.

IMAGINARY ANNA

Oh, Hide, I love you so much.

Now, we see Anna from Hide's eyes.

She's fading, in and out.

Then we see a worried expression on Hide's face.

HIDE

I'm not ready for you to go, Anna.

IMAGINARY ANNA

I'm ready when you are, my love.

We now go back into the coffee shop.

ANNA TOLSTOI

He's so handsome. But his left arm is extended out to the side; it's hooked and he's talking to the air and laughing.

YOKO

Did I not tell you?

ANNA TOLSTOI

Yes, but I, I, I didn't believe it, completely.

YOKO

Oh, you should see him as a challenge.

ANNA TOLSTOI

Yoko, I've known silly men--in fact, most men are silly--but I've never dealt with, well, a deeply sick man.

Anna Tolstoi and Yoko watch Hide enter Family Noodles.

YOKO

Funny, I've never really seen Hide's problem as a sickness--in fact, more immature than anything else.

ANNA TOLSTOI

Dear Yoko, Hide's problem is extremely serious. You are too close to the problem, perhaps. Maybe you're living in, well, a bubble? You must understand, to me this is scary. How do I compete with a ghost? I mean, Yoko?

YOKO

I felt something very special with you just now when you said, "dear Yoko," because Anna Miyao used to say that to me often . . . Anna, can we give this matter some time. We can meet, again, in a day or two.

ANNA TOLSTOI

Why don't you want me to meet him now?

YOKO

We need to make him think that the meeting wasn't arranged. He has to think it's all by accident. That way, the transfer from the imaginary Anna to you will seem, to him, as more seamless.

ANNA TOLSTOI

Seamless? Are you joking?

YOKO

I've lived a century, Anna. I lived through WWII. If we Japanese can recover successfully from that war, then we can all help Hide recover from his imaginary lover.

ANNA TOLSTOI

You understand that you just compared Hide's problem to WWII.

Yoko nods with a hopeful smile, and both women laugh.

YOKO

Anna, there are some things I need
to show you.

INT. THE YAMAGUCHI HOUSE - (A LITTLE LATER THAT SAME DAY)

In a small room that appears to be for storage, Anna Tolstoi and Yoko are sitting at a table, on which Yoko is carefully opening wooden boxes of photograph albums.

ANNA TOLSTOI

But, Yoko, I'm just worried Hide
will come home and see me.

YOKO

He won't come home for another few
hours. But if he were to come home,
unexpectedly, he probably wouldn't
notice much because, while at home,
he lives in a bubble with his
imaginary Anna.

Yoko holds out a picture to Anna Tolstoi.

YOKO (CONT'D)

This is a picture of Anna Miyao in
our garden.

Anna Tolstoi, gazing at the photograph, appears to be
transported to another place.

YOKO (CONT'D)

She loved our garden.

ANNA TOLSTOI

Only because you were there.

Yoko keeps showing Anna photos, also of herself and other
relatives.

YOKO

This is my husband, who died in the
war not too far from here. It
happened during a bombing raid.
Hide never knew him, of course.
This one is my son, Hide's father,
who is also dead. He started Family
Noodles in the early 1950s. He died
at work of a stroke when Hide was
just eighteen.

ANNA TOLSTOI

Yoko, I'm so sorry.

YOKO

The pain never really goes away,
but "time" is like a medicine that
makes the pain manageable. I
happily take that medicine
everyday.

Yoko gets up and takes another wooden box and brings it to
the table.

YOKO (CONT'D)

You should know that Hide is one of
the most accomplished ramen chefs
in Japan. This box is filled with
1st place awards, only a few 2nd
place, but we won't discuss the 2nd
place awards.

Anna Tolstoi laughs. And Yoko gazes at her admiringly.

Yoko places her hand on Anna's hand.

YOKO (CONT'D)

I do think you and Hide are a
perfect match.

ANNA TOLSTOI

(Smiling)

I haven't even tried his ramen,
yet.

YOKO

When the time is right.

Miwako, Yoko's daughter in law and Hide's mother (now in her
70s), enters the room.

She is much slower on her feet than Yoko.

Anna Tolstoi stands and bows to her.

MIWAKO

I am so sorry to interrupt, but
Hide has just phoned from Family
Noodles using Kenji's smartphone.
He has forgotten his smartphone in
his bedroom and will be here to
pick it up in about fifteen
minutes.

EXT. AT THE FARM IN GUNMA PREFECTURE - (SUMMER 1944)

It's a hot day, and Anna Miyao, carrying a small fishing pole, is walking slowly down a dirt path through a bamboo forest, and she's humming Smetana's *The Moldau*.

We hear the light splashing of a running creek.

Then the scene switches to Anna on top of a rock taking a worm from a small can.

She removes one worm and attempts to hook the worm, which keeps slipping from her hand.

Then we see Taka (a short distance from Anna and under foliage cover) stepping, naked, out of the creek.

He's obviously been bathing.

As he wipes himself off with a small towel, he notices, through a few layers of foliage and forest, Anna trying to bait her hook.

Taka, still naked, then approaches and stands about a meter behind Anna, who doesn't even know he's there.

As she continues to try baiting the hook, Taka, still naked, moves much closer.

Then Taka starts laughing at her, and Anna, turning around, is startled.

ANNA

Oh, good God, Taka. You're naked!

Taka continues laughing.

Anna motions her hand as if shewing him away.

ANNA (CONT'D)

Get away! Get away, Taka!

TAKA

Taka will show you fishing for trout.

Anna is still a bit frightened but is calming down.

ANNA

Taka, no, you're naked.

TAKA

I know trout. They are my friends. They let me eat them.

Anna's fear begins to ease, and her fear changes to embarrassment.

ANNA
Put your clothes on, Taka, please.

Taka holds up his small towel, which barely covers his crotch.

ANNA (CONT'D)
No clothes?

TAKA
Trout don't care.

ANNA
I'm not a Trout, Taka.

TAKA
You're prettier than Trout.

Taka steps a little closer to Anna.

ANNA
Taka, stay where you are!

Taka then steps past her and jumps into the water.

ANNA (CONT'D)
(Startled)
Taka?

Taka is now swimming around in the water, and Anna finds herself admiring his beautiful body. She begins to giggle lightly.

After a while, Taka stands up, chest-deep, in the water with a trout in his mouth.

Anna laughs. She then catches herself having a good time and doesn't know quite how to handle the situation.

Taka hops out of the water, trout still in his mouth, and, facing Anna, stands very close.

He then raises his arms like wings and, trout still in his mouth, starts doing the Yokozuna exercise, which Sumo champions do at the beginning of a sumo tournament, raising one leg at a time, high and to the side. Anna is amazed and overwhelmed, but she's taken with his innocent beauty.

ANNA (CONT'D)
Taka, my dear, we must go back to the house now.

Taka, having been allowed his fill of good fun, is okay with walking back to the house.

INT. TOKYO METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS IN UENO PARK -
(2019)

Anna Tolstoi and Yoko are enjoying an exhibition when they stop and chat while admiring a painting.

YOKO

I'm happy that, at least, you'll experience some of Tokyo.

ANNA TOLSTOI

I'm attracted to Hide. It's just that . . .

YOKO

There's a very comfortable and agreeable side to him . . . beyond the obvious strangeness.

ANNA TOLSTOI

I know there is a part of me that can be with Hide. And, well, I've been having a long conversation with that part of myself, and we're just looking for the best way to be with Hide.

YOKO

You'll know even more after you meet him and spend time with him. Anna, please don't feel that, if it doesn't work out between you and Hide, we'll no longer be friends.

ANNA TOLSTOI

You have to look at a painting for a good while before you even begin to understand it.

YOKO

But if you look too long at anything in the world, you can see things that might scare you.

INT. INSIDE COLONEL MIYAO'S DREAM - (MID 1944)

Colonel Miyao is sitting at a small oak, army desk on a small hill in the middle of a massive battle.

He is writing something on a piece of paper.

All around him, men are getting blown to pieces, fighter airplanes strafe the battle field, yet Colonel Miyao is undeterred and keeps writing.

Then we see the Chinese hero, Yang Jingyu (in uniform), appearing without his horse.

When the two men talk, the sounds of battle go mute.

COLONEL MIYAO
Where's your horse?

YANG JINGYU
Do you want to talk with my horse?

Yang Jingyu steps over to Colonel Miyao's desk and looks down at the document.

YANG JINGYU (CONT'D)
You seem very dedicated to this piece of paper.

COLONEL MIYAO
It's a love letter to my wife, Anna.

YANG JINGYU
Well, make it a good one. Tell me, Colonel, did you feel good after you killed me?

Colonel Miyao keeps writing as he talks.

COLONEL MIYAO
I felt good for my country. On a personal level, well, I would like to plant chrysanthemums inside your body.

YANG JINGYU
Do you need my permission? I am fertile.

Colonel Miyao is still concentrating on his letter, and the battle keeps raging around them.

COLONEL MIYAO
This letter might take a while.

YANG JINGYU

I can wait. You should plant your flowers near my heart, where your bullet fired through.

COLONEL MIYAO

Please consider the bullet a gift from Emperor Hirohito.

YANG JINGYU

Ah, yes. Your emperor enjoys botany.

COLONEL MIYAO

Marine biology, actually.

YANG JINGYU

So he will not enjoy the flowers?

COLONEL MIYAO

That is a good question.

We see Colonel Miyao's face, eyes shut, in a dark room. Then he slowly opens his eyes.

COLONEL MIYAO (CONT'D)

Anna.

EXT. GUNMA COUNTRYSIDE IN THE MOUNTAINS NEAR THE FARM - (MID 1944)

An army vehicle is making its way up a winding mountain road.

Then the scene switches to inside the vehicle. Mr. Takagi, in the back seat, is speaking with the driver who is wearing an army uniform.

MR. TAKAGI

I'll need you to accompany me to the front door.

DRIVER

Of course, sir.

Then we see the army vehicle pulling up to the house.

The scene switches to inside the farmhouse, in which there is much scurrying.

Family members appear to be quickly straightening things up.

Yoko and Anna Miyao are in a panic.

Then the two stand and take a moment to try and absorb what is about to happen.

Neither of them knows why the vehicle is there or who is inside. They are overcome. Yoko takes Anna's hands.

YOKO
Breath deeply.

ANNA
Oh, Yoko. It's all too hard.

YOKO
We have to be brave.

ANNA
Oh, I don't know if I can. I don't
know if I can.

Then we hear a knock on the door. It's a gentle knock.

Anna and Yoko appear confused.

Then Anna stands up straight and takes on a business-like, formal countenance.

Yoko takes Anna's hand.

YOKO
Anna, we must go to the door.

ANNA
Yes, Yoko, we must go to the door.

Yoko nods and the two slowly approach the door and then open it.

They're both stunned to see Mr. Takagi, who has a solemn expression.

Yoko straightens her back and glances at a telegram in Takagi's hand.

YOKO
How did you know I was here? Are
you here to take me to the
Foreigners' Camp in Kobe?

MR. TAKAGI
Anna, I know where all the
foreigners in Japan are. I've
always known you were here, and I'm
content with that, and, of course,
so is your father-in-law.

Mr. Takagi raises the telegram a little.

Anna waves her hand at the telegram and starts to panic.

ANNA

Mr. Takagi, what is that? Don't show me that. Don't you dare.

MR. TAKAGI

He was a great soldier, one of our most highly decorated.

ANNA

Who was a great soldier? Who was a great soldier?

Yoko puts an arm around Anna, and Anna looks at Yoko in disbelief.

MR. TAKAGI

I wanted to let you know in person. Colonel Miyao was not just any soldier.

Anna collapses to her knees, and Yoko falls with her. The two hold each other tightly while Anna howls in grief.

Mr. Takagi takes a deep bow.

INT. GUNMA FARMHOUSE.

This scene takes place a few days after Anna learns of Colonel Miyao's death.

Because Yoko's been worried about Anna's welfare, she's moved into Anna's bedroom temporarily.

Sometime in the night, we see Anna rising from the futon and leaving the room.

When dawn comes, the room begins to lighten.

We see both futons on the tatami mats, and Yoko is awakening.

She peers at the ceiling for a moment and then realizes something's wrong.

She turns her head to Anna's futon, and Anna isn't there.

YOKO

Maybe she went back to her own room.

Yoko panics a bit, gets up and hurries to the bedroom door and starts to open it when she sees something through the cracked-open door.

She shuts the door quickly, then opens it, again, to see Anna down the hall at Taka's bedroom door, where the two are kissing fairly passionately.

Yoko shuts the door and hurries back to her futon, covering herself.

Anna then enters the room and gets back under her futon.

Yoko's eyes are open but is looking away from Anna, who turns and looks in Yoko's direction.

ANNA

You breathe differently when you're awake.

Yoko sighs rather loudly.

ANNA (CONT'D)

When you're asleep, it's as if you're not breathing at all. And now? Now, I can almost hear your heart racing. I only hope I don't break Taka's heart.

YOKO

He'll remember last night as though it was a fun day fishing.

ANNA

I'll be travelling down to Tokyo today to take care of certain matters. Mr. Takagi told me that our houses haven't been badly damaged by the bombings. I'll be there for a few days. I'll check on the Yamaguchi house as well.

Yoko begins to shed tears.

YOKO

Okay, I'll get dressed.

ANNA

I need the time alone, Yoko.

YOKO

It's too dangerous. You're a white person.

ANNA

That's why you're not coming with me. What would your family do without you? I can disguise myself well enough to get through.

Anna rises from her futon, comes over to Yoko's futon and puts her arms around her.

ANNA (CONT'D)

I'll be back, Yoko. Don't worry.

EXT. THE FAMILY FARM IN GUNMA. THE NEXT DAY.

Yoko is at the creek with Taka. She is obviously worried.

TAKA

Anna went away yesterday. Right?

YOKO

The train from Maibashi is still running to Tokyo as of yesterday. Who knows about today?

Yoko takes off quickly toward the house.

YOKO (CONT'D)

I must get to her.

INT. YOKO ON A TRAIN TO TOKYO - (SAME DAY)

Yoko is worried as she looks at some bomb-damaged buildings and smoldering fires.

There's bombing sounds in the background.

And there is a Japan Railway (JR) employee (he's 60ish because Japan's young men are in the army), wearing a JR uniform, walking up and down the aisle making an announcement.

JR EMPLOYEE

If we see an obstacle on the track due to the bombings, you may have to evacuate. The next three stations are closed, so our next stop will be Shibuya Station, the terminal has sustained some damage. After you leave the train, please exit the station as quickly as possible.

INT. SHIBUYA TRAIN STATION

Yoko is frantically hurrying through the train station.

There are medics seeing to the needs of wounded civilians, and there are many dead bodies as well.

EXT. THE MIYAO HOUSE. A LITTLE LATER.

There's a little damage to the outside of the house.

The Yamaguchi house across the street is somewhat damaged as well. Yoko notices that her family garden is overgrown with weeds.

Yoko is standing on the Miyao's front porch and is trying to look through the tall windows flanking the door, but the shades are down.

Yoko raises her hand to hold the door knocker but then lowers her hand without knocking.

After another attempt, she goes through with knocking.

There's no response.

Yoko knocks several more times with no response, so she decides to call out for her.

YOKO
Anna! Anna!

Yoko begins to panic.

She walks around the outside of the house to see if there are any open windows, all the while crying out Anna's name.

Then she hesitates, remembering something and then hurrying into her own house; there, she locates a Miyao front-door key that Anna had once given her.

Yoko then unlocks the front door and enters.

She walks around the living room and notices that, on the grand piano, is an opened music book, and the piano key cover is open.

YOKO (CONT'D)
Anna? Are you here? Anna!

There is no response, so Yoko walks deeper into the house to the bedroom where Anna and the Colonel once slept.

Yoko stops in the doorway and sees Anna lying on the bed dressed in a satin and lace nightgown, and Yoko stops and glares at Anna for a moment.

She whispers.

YOKO (CONT'D)

Anna. Oh, my sweet Anna. What have you done?

Yoko hurries over to the bed, and she sees that Anna is dead. There's a letter next to Anna on the bed.

Yoko takes the letter and then collapses to the floor, crying.

We hear Anna reading the letter:

ANNA VOICE OVER

My Dearest Yoko, I know it will be you who finds me. Nobody but you would have the love for me, and the nerve, to walk through my door. I have left the house to you in my will because it needs your laughter. As you can see, I have killed myself in a most civil fashion. Poison is best for piano players, so I have been told. And I hope I am lovely in my nightgown, and I hope I have not fallen from the bed in my death struggle, as I wanted so for you to see me beautiful in the end because that is the way you think of me. I would have not done this if we'd been blessed with a child. Yoko, someday I shall see you, again. Love always, Yoko

INT. FAMILY NOODLES - (2019)

Hide and Kenji are cooking and discussing the day's food supplies.

HIDE

We're low on flour.

KENJI

The delivery should've arrived by now, but we have enough to last through tomorrow.

HIDE

We're low on beer and sake, too.

KENJI

There is never enough of that.

HIDE

Just make sure, okay?

KENJI

(Chuckling)

Maybe you need more of that sake,
huh, boss?

Anna Tolstoi enters the restaurant. A young server hurries up to her.

SERVER

Welcome. You can sit anywhere
accept table fifteen.

Anna pans the restaurant.

ANNA TOLSTOI

And where is table fifteen?

The server points to a table close to the kitchen and restaurant counter.

Then Anna Tolstoi resolutely walks over to table fifteen and takes a seat in a chair that faces the kitchen.

The server hurries over.

SERVER

I'm very sorry, but you can't sit
at table fifteen. It's reserved for
Anna.

ANNA TOLSTOI

That works for me since I am Anna.

The server turns her head to Hide, who has noticed Anna sitting at table fifteen and is perplexed.

Hide waves the server off, and the server sees to other customers.

Anna looks directly at Hide.

ANNA TOLSTOI (CONT'D)

Miso Ramen, please.

KENJI

You're gonna let her sit there?

Hide ignores Kenji and hurries over to table fifteen.

HIDE

Who are you?

ANNA TOLSTOI

I'm Anna.

HIDE

Anna? Anna? Can I touch you?

Anna holds out her hand, and Hide takes it with both hands.

HIDE (CONT'D)

You're not allowed to sit at table fifteen.

ANNA TOLSTOI

Why not?

HIDE

This table is reserved everyday for Anna.

ANNA TOLSTOI

I'm Anna, and I'm hungry. Miso Ramen, please.

Hide

But . . .

ANNA TOLSTOI

Miso Ramen.

Hide back-steps to the kitchen, his jaw dropped.

While Kenji prepares Anna's miso ramen, Hide can't take his eyes off Anna.

He is cautiously joyous. And Anna, trying to be coy, glances at him often and shoots him a smile.

When Kenji finishes the miso ramen, Hide takes it to table fifteen.

HIDE

One miso ramen.

ANNA TOLSTOI

Thank you.

HIDE

How do you like the miso ramen?

ANNA TOLSTOI

Don't know. I haven't tried it, yet.

HIDE

Do you like Hakone?

ANNA TOLSTOI

I haven't tried that, yet, either.

INT. YAMAGUCHI HOUSE - (A LITTLE WHILE LATER)

Yoko is sitting at the kotatsu looking out into the garden when her smartphone rings.

HIDE

I'm in Hakone with Anna.

YOKO

Aren't you always with Anna?

HIDE

This is a different Anna, even better than the other one. She smells so good.

YOKO

Aren't you in a bit of a hurry?

HIDE

I think we'll take our time up here. I'll let Kenji know to open up without me.

YOKO

Good idea.

Yoko is deeply moved but remains composed.

HIDE

Grandmother, she actually sat at table fifteen. As if she was always supposed to.

YOKO

There's a reason behind most everything, I guess.

HIDE

A day or two, okay?

YOKO

You're a grown man, have been for a very, very long time. Make up your own mind.

Hide laughs.

EXT. MIYAO HOUSE - (2019)

Workmen are scurrying around the house.

We hear the sounds of hammers and power saws.

Yoko is talking with a youngish workman wearing a Toshiba Company hat and uniform. The workman bows to Yoko.

WORKMAN

We have completed installation of the Toshiba Kitchen, "Mount Nasu Feelings." All drains and faucets are okay after replacing all plumbing in the house. And we have completed installation of two Toshiba "Tender Feeling" computerized toilets in both toilet rooms with "My Friend" spray capabilities.

YOKO

But I picked the "'All' Friends" spray, didn't I?

WORKMAN

Yes, you did. This one is exactly the same. Only, it is this year's model, brand new.

YOKO

Are the carpenters finished?

WORKMAN

They have finished all shoji doors and are nearly finished with the hard floors, and the two tatami rooms are completed.

YOKO

It's beautiful.

WORKMAN

When was the house last lived in.

YOKO

1944.

The workman appears stunned.

WORKMAN

My men polished the Steinway and
blew out the dust inside, but it's
in need of a tune up. And I'm
afraid we don't offer that service.
Perhaps you can find a tuner on the
Internet.

YOKO

I'm sure I can.

WORKMAN

Oh, I almost forgot. I found
something way in back on the top
shelf of the kitchen cabinet.

He reaches into a bag and pulls out the same origami bird
Yoko made back in 1937 and then threw into the garden, hoping
it would glide.

WORKMAN (CONT'D)

It was very dusty. I cleaned it for
you.

Yoko gently takes the airplane and smiles.

EXT. YAMAGUCHI HOUSE GARDEN - (2019)

Yoko is sitting in the garden swing, not swinging.

Miwako is sitting in a chair next to her.

YOKO

Why have I been granted so many
years of life with the terrible
thing I did to your son, Miwako?

Miwako slowly stands and steps over to face Yoko.

MIWAKO

None of us could know that great
story telling could be so
dangerous. Maybe you have lived
this long so you could bring Anna
back to us.

Miwako looks out into the garden.

MIWAKO (CONT'D)

I've always looked for the brightness in life. You know that. I never cared that people think I'm simple because of it. Right now, our garden is filled with light, again.

INT. MIYAO HOUSE - (A FEW DAYS LATER)

Yoko, wearing her sunglasses, is standing in the foyer waiting when she hears a man's and woman's laughter, which sends Yoko a wave of excitement.

We hear the door knock.

YOKO

Please, come in.

Hide and Anna Tolstoi enter the foyer.

The two are obviously very happy with each other.

HIDE

Grandmother, why are we meeting in this house?

YOKO

Anna, Hide told me he's proposed. Is it true?

ANNA TOLSTOI

Yes?

HIDE

Thank you for Anna, grand mother.

Anna and Yoko exchange "found out" glances.

HIDE CONT.

We fell in love when Anna come to sit at table fifteen. And we fell in love more during our stay in Hakone. We will marry. Neither of us has been more sure of anything in our lives. I've already made our appointment at the Ward Office, so we'll be legally married within a few days.

Yoko is speechless. She turns and walks into the living room.

YOKO

Let me show you the house.

After a bit, Yoko has finished showing them around.

They all walk back to the Toshiba kitchen.

HIDE

After all these years, you decided to rent out the Miyao's old place? It's just like new, grandmother. It must have been expensive.

YOKO

No, I would never rent it out. Never. This is Anna's house.

HIDE

And this is the first time I've ever been inside. That piano was Anna's? I'm a little surprised you never showed at least the piano to me.

YOKO

It was tuned earlier today.

HIDE

I don't understand. Are you going to sell the Steinway?

YOKO

I tuned it up for Anna.

Hide and Anna Tolstoi glance at each other with loving suspicion.

YOKO (CONT'D)

Well, I had hoped you would've guessed by now.

Hide and Anna begin to understand that Yoko is giving the house to them.

ANNA TOLSTOI

Oh, Yoko, you mustn't. This house is too special for me to have. I don't deserve the house or the Steinway.

Yoko gives the keys to Hide.

Suddenly, Yoko winces in pain and grabs hold of the left side of her neck. Then she winces, again.

Hide and Anna approach her and gently take hold of her arms.

HIDE

Grandmother, are you okay?

Both Anna and Hide continue holding Yoko up.

YOKO

Oh, I'm too excited.

ANNA

Breathe in slowly, Yoko. Then let it out, slowly.

Yoko regains her composure.

YOKO

I'm fine now. You two do what ever you have to do. There's something I need to do.

ANNA

We'll be across the street. Just phone if you need us. Are you sure you're okay? We'll leave the front door open.

YOKO

I'm fine, Anna.

Anna and Hide reluctantly leave, and they keep the front door open.

Then Yoko walks uncharacteristically slowly to the piano and sits on the bench looking out into the livingroom.

She flashes back to 1937.

She and Anna Miyao are both at the same piano, and Anna is giving the young Yoko a piano lesson.

Yoko's playing is worse than mediocre.

ANNA MIYAO

No, Yoko, strike that note more lightly.

Yoko strikes the key hard, again. And, again, a few more times but can't get it right.

ANNA MIYAO (CONT'D)

Well, why don't we go on to something else.

YOKO
Just as long as it's not piano?

The young women look at each other in happy resignation. They laugh and hug each other.

The flashback ends, and Yoko is smiling.

She winces in pain once more, but continues smiling through the pain.

She reaches into her pocket and pulls out the origami bird that the workman had recently found, the one Anna had taken from her garden back in 1937.

Yoko stands up and throws the bird toward the front door, and it takes flight and glides straight out the front door, which now looks like a plane of bright light.

Then Yoko sits back down on the bench.

YOKO (CONT'D)
Anna, you did come back home,
didn't you?

Yoko lets out a weak but joyous laugh.

She slowly dips her head in recognition of her body giving out, and then all we see are Yoko's feet.

Her glasses bounce lightly to the floor next to her feet.

The End

