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Ikiru

By Akira Kurosawa

TOHO CO., LTD.
Toho 20th Anniversary Film
Arts Festival Selection - 1952

IKIRU:

Produced by

SOJIRO MOTOGI:

Screenplay by AKIRA KUROSAWA,
SHINOBU HASHIMOTO, HIDEO OGUNI
Cinematography by

ASAKAZU NAKAI:

Music by

FUMIO HAYASAKA:

Cast:

TAKASHI SHIMURA:

Directed by

AKIRA KUROSAWA:

This stomach belongs to
the protagonist of our story.
At this point, our protagonist
has no idea he has this cancer...

PUBLIC AFFAIRS:

SECTION CHIEF:

My child has sensitive skin,
and that water gave him an awful rash.
PUBLIC AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT Plus it breeds mosquitoes like crazy.
And it stinks, besides.
Can't you do something? It would make
a great playground if you filled it in.
Please wait a moment.
Sir, they've come to complain
about a sewage pond.
- Engineering Section.
- Yes.
Ah, here is our protagonist now.
But it would only be tiresome

to meet him right now.
After all,
he's simply passing time
without actually living his life.
In other words,
he's not really even alive.
Odagiri,
how dare you,
during business hours?
But it's so funny.
Funny? What is?
It's the "Liar's Club. "
Someone sent it around.
Read it to us.
"I hear you've never even
taken a vacation.
Is that because City Hall
couldn't function without you?"
"No, because everyone would realize
that City Hall doesn't need me at all. "
Oh, no, this will never do.
He might as well be a corpse.
In fact, this man has been dead
for more than 20 years now.
Before that, he did live a little.
He even actually tried
to do real work.

A PROPOSAL FOR INCREASING
DEPARTMENTAL EFFICIENCY
SUBMITTED 1930

But now, there's barely a trace of
his old passion and ambition.
He's been worn down completely by
the minutia of the bureaucratic machine
and the meaningless busyness
it breeds.
Busy, always so very busy.
But in fact, this man does
absolutely nothing at all.
Other than protecting
his own spot.
The best way to protect your place
in this world is to do nothing at all.
Is this really

what life is all about?
Is this really
what life is all about?
Before our friend will
take this question seriously,
his stomach has
to get a lot worse,
and he'll have to waste much,
much more time.
But any proposal
for creating a park
goes to the Parks Department.
This really seems to be
a question of hygiene,
so you'd better try
the Health Department.
Go to the Sanitation Department.
See Environmental Sanitation.
Department of Prevention.
Infectious Diseases.
Lots of mosquitoes?
That's a job for
the Division of Pest Control.
The problem is seeping waste,
which means
it's a problem for
the Sewage Department at City Hall.
Originally, it was a ditch
with a road running over it,
which means the Roads Department.
We're waiting on a decision
from City Planning.
Go to Ward Reorganization.
The Fire Department objected
to draining that cesspool.
There are water pressure problems
in that area.
Are you kidding?
All we need's a good water supply.
There's no reason it has to
breed mosquitoes and cause rashes.
Think what a time we'd have
getting that filth out of our hoses.
Of course, we'd love a kiddie pool

in that neighborhood.
Try the Education Department. They
should have a Child Welfare Committee.
But the problem doesn't only
affect children.
We've had enough trouble
just rebuilding all the schools.
A problem this big belongs with your
Ward Representative to the City Council.
I'll give you an introduction
to the Deputy Mayor.
Show him my card
and he'll meet with you immediately.
Please, sit down.
Thank you for all your hard work.
The truth is that we truly appreciate
folks like you,
who know to bring
such complaints directly
to our attention.
That's precisely what inspired
our new Department of Public Affairs.
Don't skimp on your complaints.
Hey, you. Show these folks
the Public Affairs desk.
You'll need to take that up
with Engineering. Desk 8.
How dare you?
Stop giving us the runaround.
What the hell's this poster mean?
To help us kill time?
We call people like you time-killers.
All we want is to get
that stinking cesspool cleaned up.
If it's Engineering, Sewage,
Health, Sanitation or the Fire Department,
Public Affairs should sort it out.
Forget it.
We won't bother you anymore.
You're just laughing at us.
What a mockery of democracy.
Let's go.
Um, excuse me.
Unfortunately, the section chief

took the day off,
and it'd be easier for us
if you'd put this in writing.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS:

SECTION CHIEF:

What do you think?

The section chief
never takes days off.

Yes, he's been
kind of listless recently.

But we really can't have him
taking extended time off.

Exactly. It's not like him to take
a day off over a little cold.

Nothing moves unless he stamps it.

Yes, you're right.

I must say,
it's a terrible shame.

One more month
and he'd have broken the record of
30 years without a single absence.

Trust me, some people are
happy to have him gone.

Only a bureaucrat schemes
to replace his boss as soon as he's out.

What's that medicine
he's been taking?

Stomach medicine. He always slurped
his noodle bowl to the bottom,
but lately, he barely touches it.

Plain noodle soup. In all these years,
I've never seen him eat anything else.

And if the worst happens,
who'll replace him?

What's the rush? Lots more guys
have to die before it's your turn.

X-RAY LAB

- Hiraoka-san...

- Yes.

Your stomach?

Yeah, my stomach's bad, too.

It's what they call "chronic. "

These days I hardly feel alive
unless my stomach hurts.

- Suzuki-san...

- Yes.

That man over there...

His doctor told him

he's got an ulcer,

but trust me, it's stomach cancer.

In a word, that very thing.

And stomach cancer

is practically a death sentence.

The doc usually says

it's just a mild ulcer,

and that there's

no real need to operate.

And that you can eat whatever you want

as long as it's easy to digest.

If that's what he tells you,

you've got a year, at most.

But if you've got these symptoms,

you won't last a year:

First, if the pain is kind of heavy.

Second, if you can't stop

burping unpleasantly.

And your tongue's always dry.

You can't get enough water and tea.

And then there's the diarrhea.

And, if it isn't diarrhea,

well, then you're constipated.

Your bowel movements go black.

And then,

that meat you used to love so,

you can hardly touch it anymore.

And whatever you eat,

you vomit half an hour later.

And when stuff you ate

last week comes up

when you vomit,

well, then you're done for.

You've hardly got three months...

Watanabe-san.

Watanabe Kanji-san.

Watanabe-san.

Yes.

Sit down.
Um... it looks like
you've got a mild ulcer.
Honestly...
please tell me...
the truth.
Tell me it's stomach cancer.
I just told you,
it's a mild ulcer.
What about an operation?
Can't you operate?
Oh, no, there's no need to operate.
It'll heal on its own.
And my diet?
Well, just use your common sense.
As long as it's easy to digest,
you can eat whatever you like.
Does that patient have a year?
No, I'd give him six months.
- Six months?
- Yeah.
What would you do if you had only
six months left to live, like him?
What about you, Aihara?
The barbiturates are over there.
Is there a blackout?
The street lights
and neighbors are lit.
How strange.
I wonder if Dad's out.
Where's the key?
In your handbag.
Did Hayashi-san forget to lock up
when she went home?
She's only a part-time maid.
Full-time would hardly break the bank,
but a thief sure would.
That's just like Dad,
the petty bureaucrat.
Man, it's freezing.
Just as cold inside as out.
I just hate Japanese houses.
Have a great time out and come home
to this dump. We need a modern home.

- Honey...

- Yeah.

A house of our own would
cost 500,000 yen, right?
Use father's retirement bonus
as collateral...

Yeah, it ought to be worth
6 or 700,000 yen by now.

Plus a monthly pension of
12 or 13,000 yen.

And another 100,000 in savings.

But you think he'd agree?

If he doesn't, we'll tell him
we're moving out. That'll clinch it.

Besides, even Pop wouldn't want to take
all that money to his grave.

What's wrong, Dad?

Oh, nothing. Nothing at all.

That was strange.

Listen, honey.

It's not fair.

What isn't?

He heard our whole conversation.

It's really not fair.

It may be his house,
but this is our room.

I can't believe he snuck in here
while we were out.

Besides, if he's got a gripe,
he should come out with it.

Not go around acting
like a crabby kid.

Stop being so moody.

Forget about your dad.

He has his life.

We have ours.

Love me.

How sad.

She was so young,
and to leave such a sweet
little boy behind.

She must have regretted dying.

Cut it out.

The same broken record.

Hurry, hurry.
Mommy's leaving.
You can't use Mitsuo
as an excuse
not to marry again.
As soon as that boy grows up,
he'll never love you
the way you loved him.
And when he gets married,
they'll squeeze you out.
You've got to think about
your own future.
I'm telling you,
find another wife now.
Besides, my wife says,
the thought of you
and your oily skin
keeping up with the laundry
is too disgusting to bear.
Dad.
Mitsuo.
Good night.
You'll lock up down there, right?
Mitsuo.
What do you say?
What a great hit.
You know, the batter is my...
Mitsuo, Mitsuo.
That idiot.
What's he thinking?
Mitsuo.
Mitsuo, be brave.
It's only your appendix.
No worse than pulling a tooth.
Can't you stay for the operation, Dad?
Well, I've got some other things
to do and...
Mitsuo, Mitsuo.
Banzai, Banzai.
Banzai, banzai.
Dad.

CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION
IN RECOGNITION OF 25 YEARS
OF DISTINGUISHED CIVIL SERVICE

Watanabe-san left for work as usual.

What?

But he hasn't been in at all.

It's been five days now,
but he hasn't called in sick either.

The sub-section chief asked me
to check up on him.

Madam. Madam.

What? Impossible.

But it's true.

The man from his office said so.

What could Father be doing?

It's incredible, but it's really true.

The people at his house
were flabbergasted.

What a bother.

When the section chief s out,
I can stamp your paperwork.

But he has to approve
any resignations, right?

Don't tell me you want to quit?

I don't belong here.

Uncle, he even withdrew
50,000 yen from his account.

That miser?

Maybe he's got a woman.

That would be quite something.

- Now, dear.

- Never.

Oh, there's no telling
when it comes to love.

The least likely ones
have the highest risk.

If you ask me, he's actually
always been a real lech.

What they call a sullen lech. But he's
stayed single these 20 years for you.

It makes sense
he'd explode sooner or later.

Oh, no. He's lost
a lot of weight recently,
and his skin's

strangely dry and flaky.

I bet there's another explanation.

You saw him recently?
Four days ago.
He turned up that morning.
I thought there was definitely
something wrong.
But you know your uncle.
He just said, "Why the glum look?
If it's a loan, forget it. "
Hey, don't tell me he had good news.
Not with that long face.
Now, honey, it's just that
my husband thinks all men
are self-indulgent, like him.
Say, Mitsuo-san.
Did something happen at home?
No... nothing in particular.
Hey.
Deliver this to my place.
My editor's waiting outside.
And get some sleeping pills
at the drugstore.
There's a prescription
in my name.
But sir, the drugstore's
already closed.
Is it that late?
Around here, they close up
shop after dinner.
What to do?
I can't get to sleep unless
I take them with my nightcap.
Um, I don't mean to be rude.
But I happen to have
some sleeping pills with me.
Well, much obliged.
May I pay you the official price?
No, no.
I was planning to throw them away.
- But...
- No, really.
Really?
Then let me pick up your tab.
Oh, no.
You can drink, right?

Please, have another.
You hardly seem tipsy.
Why, thank you.
I throw up everything anyway.
In other words, my stomach...
I have stomach cancer.
- Stomach cancer?
- Yes.
That's a shock.
But then, what you're doing is crazy.
Yes, it's embarrassing, but...
But...
It's suicide to drink
when you have stomach cancer.
But... I can't die.
I'll just up and die on them.
I want to, but...
I can't... die.
In other words,
I can't bring myself to die.
I don't know what I've been doing
with my life all these years.
No children?
Your stomach hurts?
No, it's not my stomach...
It seems you're carrying
a heavy load indeed.
No...
It's just...
I'm such a fool.
I'm just...
so furious with myself.
Until just a few days ago,
I'd never even bought a drink
with my own money.
It's only now that I don't know
how much longer I've got to live
that I finally...
I understand.
I understand.
But drinking is plain crazy.
Besides, does it even taste good?
No, it doesn't.
But...

for a little while,
I can forget my cancer,
and all the other painful things.
Drinking...
this expensive sake
is like paying myself
back with poison
for the way I lived all these years.
In other words,
I mean,
it feels awful,
but it feels good at the same...
I can understand.
Oh, why...
Actually, I...
I have 50,000 yen here with me,
which I'd like to spend all at once.
But embarrassingly enough,
the thing is, I don't even
actually know how.
So what I'm trying to say is...
You want me to show you
how to spend it?
Yes, I realize
it's terribly forward of me...
But...
No, this money...
It took me dozens of years
to set aside this money.
All the more reason now to...
What I'm trying to say...
I understand.
But please put your money away.
Tonight's on me.
But that's not... I...
Just leave things to me.
Truly fascinating...
I realize it's rude
to call you fascinating,
but you're an extremely
rare individual.
I'm a half-baked fool
who writes meaningless novels.
You've really made me think tonight.

I realize what they say about
the nobility of misfortune is true.
Because misfortune
teaches us the truth.
Your cancer has opened your eyes
to your own life.
We humans are so careless.
We only realize how beautiful life is
when we chance upon death.
But few of us are actually able
to face death.
The worst ones know nothing of life
'til they die.
You're splendid.
Rebelling against life at your age.
Your rebellious spirit moves me.
You were a slave to your own life.
Now you will become its master.
I'm telling you, it's our human duty
to enjoy life.
Wasting it,
you desecrate God's great gift.
We've got to be greedy
about living.
We learned that greed is a vice,
but that's old. Greed is a virtue.
Especially this greediness for life.
Let's go.
Let us go reclaim the life
you have wasted.
Tonight it will be my pleasure
to act as your Mephistopheles.
A good Mephistopheles
who seeks no reward.
With a black dog to guide us.
Show us the way.
Listen.
These silver balls, they're you.
They're your life itself.
This machine liberates people
who strangle themselves
in their daily lives. A vending
machine of dreams and infatuations.
Over here, sweetie.

- Not so fast.

- But...

You don't know, but these women are the greediest of all mammals.

It'll cost you close to a dozen hats to get that old one back.

Besides, it's time to buy a new hat to switch to a new self.

Welcome.

Welcome.

We haven't seen you in a while.

The same for your friend?

What are you laughing at?

It's the honest truth.

He really has cancer.

- Then why's he drinking?

- You idiot.

That's why you'll never get it.

Ecce homo.

Behold this man.

This man bears a cross called cancer.

He's Christ.

If you were diagnosed with cancer, you'd die on the spot.

But not this fellow.

That's the moment he started living.

Right? Isn't that so?

Listen, the thing is, that's the etiquette.

Listen, you, over here, here.

Anybody want to request a favorite?

"Life is Brief. "

What?

"Life is Brief. "

Fall in love, maidens

Oh, that love song from back in the nineteen teens.

Life is brief

Fall in love, maidens

Before the crimson bloom

Fades from your lips

Before the tides of passion

Cool within you

For those of you

Who know no tomorrow
Life is brief
Fall in love, maidens
Before your raven tresses
Begin to fade
Before the flames in your hearts
Flicker and die
For those to whom
Today will never return
That's the spirit, man.
Life is brief
Striptease.
Now, this is what I call art.
No, it's more than art.
It's more direct.
In other words, that female body
gently undulating up there
on stage is a juicy steak,
a glass of liquor,
a bottle of camphor,
streptomycin, uranium...
Please, stop.
Hey, stop the car.
What? Had enough?
I think he's throwing up.
What a drag.
Say, let's sing something.
I hate feeling blue.
C'mon a my house
a my house
I'm gonna give you
a Christmas tree
C'mon a my house
a my house
I'm gonna give you a marriage ring
and a pomegranate too
C'mon a my house
a my house
C'mon a my house
a my house
I'm gonna give you a peach and a pear
I love your hair
Section Chief.
I thought it was you.

I hardly recognized you
in that new hat.
But I'm glad.
I was looking for your place.
Are you off to work?
No, I'm...
Do you have your seal?
No, my seal's back at home.
I want to quit the civil service.
I'm in a rush
'cause I found a new job.
- Then come to my house.
- Sure.
- Why are you quitting?
- Boredom.
It's killing me. Each day is
as predictable as the last.
Nothing new ever happens.
Still, I put up with it
for a year and a half,
but the only novel thing that happened
was you taking a few days off,
and now this new hat of yours.
That was it.
In any case, don't say anything
when Dad gets back.
I've nothing to say.
What I mean is, don't reproach him
about anything.
If you hadn't brought up
his pension...
You're so self-centered,
blaming it all on me.
You brought up his savings.
Said even he wouldn't
take them to his grave...
But it just doesn't make sense that
that's all it took to set Dad off.
Dad's never stayed out all night.
Let's stop this now.
We don't even know
what he's up to, let alone
if it's got anything to do with us.
I'll be going then.

Oh, c'mon in.
Honey!
Thirty years.
Thirty years in that awful place.
It kills me to think of it.
I'm sorry.
No, it's just,
recently,
every time I see that award,
it reminds me of
that joke you read us.
No, no, that joke hit the nail
on the head.
No matter how hard I try,
I can't remember a thing
I've done in that office
over the last thirty years.
All I remember,
what I mean is,
I was just busy,
and even then I was bored.
I had you all wrong, Section Chief.
You actually get it. What a shock.
That's crazy. Whatever uncle says,
I know Dad best.
But...
I can't even imagine Dad
with such a young girl.
This is the wrong form.
Are you going in to the office?
Yes, I've got to deliver this.
Then will you post my sick leave?
Why are you staying out
of the office?
It's a hot topic around there.
Like you mutated or something.
I just...
Are you really sick?
Actually, you look kind of pale.
It's just that what I mean...
I didn't think so.
So where do you go
when you pretend you're going to work?
You don't fool me.

But how odd.

Don't you know? Sakai-san came here yesterday and spilled the beans.

Who cares?

After 30 years with an unblemished record, you deserve at least six months off.

Besides, I'll cover for you.

I'm not like that Fish Kite.

- Fish kite?

- Yes, he's a human Fish Kite, that Sakai-san is. His lips are always moving, but he's just hot air inside.

Besides, he acts like he's some high flyer.

He makes 200 yen more a month than I do,

so he looks down on me.

Bye, then.

Say, wait, I'll go with you.

Madam.

Madam.

You're so lucky. I wish I could live in a house like yours.

Our place crams three generations in two rooms. It's like civil war.

And you have a wonderful son, right?

In any event, where do you buy ladies' stockings?

- You're buying some?

- Yes.

Western clothing stores carry them.

They're for your daughter-in-law, right?

I've heard she's very pretty.

According to our

Mr. Fish Kite's report.

- They look wonderful.

- I'm all dizzy.

- They make you that happy?

- So happy.

To buy them myself, I'd have to live on sardines for lunch for three months.

But why did you buy them for me?

In a word, your stockings had holes.

But the holes in my stockings

don't bother your legs.
It's just that I...
No, no. I didn't mean that.
I know how kind you are.
But right now, I feel kind of awkward,
so I made that awful remark. I'm sorry.
Want to hear something good?
Something good?
I got so bored I had to give everyone
at work a nickname.
Want to hear them?
Sea Slug.
- Sea Slug?
Can you guess?
Someone who's slippery and evasive.
Ohno-san, the sub-section chief.
Sea Slug... indeed.
Ditch-cover-board,
damp and soggy all year round.
- Would that be Ohbara?
- Bingo!
Next comes Flypaper.
- Flypaper?
- You know, sticks to everything.
Get it? Noguchi-san.
Next is Saito-san, the manager.
See if you can guess his nickname.
Saito, huh. Saito would be...
Saito's main feature
is that he's so featureless.
I don't really know...
Daily Special.
- Daily special?
- At the cafeteria.
Then what about Kimura?
Rice noodles,
always timid and trembling.
Say, I had a nickname
for you, too.
But I'm not going to tell,
'cause I had you all wrong.
No, don't worry, just tell me...
Oh, dear.
No, I'd rather you broke it to me.

Okay, then. The Mummy.
I'm sorry.
Oh, no...
In other words, I'm...
I'm going.
Thank you so much.
Do you really have to tender
your resignation today?
If you could make it tomorrow,
why not spend today...
You're not eating anything.
No, it's just...
You look so tired.
But I had a truly
marvelous day today.
But you snored through
the best part of the movie.
It's just that I overdid it
a little last night.
Kimura-san...
I really can't...
This isn't the sort of thing
I can tell just anyone.
It's quite embarrassing, but...
In other words, the reason
I worked like a mummy
these last 30 years...
Oh, no,
it's not that I mind you
calling me a mummy.
Because that's exactly right.
In other words, I don't blame you.
It's just that the reason
I made myself into a mummy...
In other words, I did it all
for my son's sake.
But as it turned out, my son
doesn't seem to give a whit.
But you can't blame it all
on your son.
Isn't that right?
Not unless he asked you
to make a mummy of yourself.
Parents are all the same.

My mom gives me the same
kind of line sometimes.
"The things I've suffered for you. "
And I'm grateful she had me.
But it's not my fault I was born.
What's the matter with you,
bad-mouthing your son to me?
It's just...
You know you still adore him.
No end in sight
for the electricity shortage.
Is that a fact?
They say we haven't had
such a heat wave in 30 years.
I see.
The thing is, there's something
I'd like to tell you.
I know I should have
told you sooner,
but it's not very pleasant business.
Father, let's drop it.
You see, I discussed it
with Uncle today,
and we have to address this
to avoid complications later.
For instance, we have our rights
as your heirs.
To avoid misunderstandings...
- Mitsuo!
- Fact is,
she's fleeced you out of 50,000 yen
in a few days.
Young girls these days...
- What are you...
Father, we respect your right
to freedom of expression.
We accept your degenerate behavior.
But we do have
some basic conditions.
Think of Kazue or, putting her aside,
of her family back home.
How dare you bring
a woman like that home.
And holding hands with her in your room.

I could hardly face the maid.
It's been two weeks now since
our protagonist abandoned his spot.
During that time,
various rumors and speculations
have swirled around our Watanabe-san.
All these rumors
and speculations coincide perfectly
with the notion that our Watanabe-san
is being very foolish indeed.
But Watanabe himself has
never taken his actions so seriously
in his entire life.
This isn't the city office,
where you waste a whole day
on an hour's work. It's more serious.
It's just, I...
Every minute I waste here
costs me money.
Then I'll see you tonight...
I'm exhausted at night.
I'd rather sleep than go out.
Besides, why are you always
taking me out?
It's just...
Let's stop doing this.
It doesn't feel right.
But, then, just one more night, okay?
No, it'll never end.
I'm sorry.
After tonight, no more, okay?
Shall we go for a stroll?
I've had it.
Next it'll be a sweet shop,
then a sushi or noodle joint.
What's the point of it all?
I feel badly that you keep treating me,
but I've had it up to here.
Besides, we've both run out
of things to say.
There's that face again.
The truth is,
you give me the creeps.
What's going on?

Why do you chase me around like this?

- In other words...

- In other words, what?

In other words, I really enjoy spending time with you this way.

Keep your old man's infatuation.

No, it's just that I...

Why can't you spit it out, instead of always dribbling?

- Are you mad?

- No.

I don't even know myself why I keep following you around.

It's just, all I do know is...

You see, I'm going to die soon.

I've got stomach cancer.

It's right here.

Can you understand?

No matter what I do,

I've only got six months or a year left.

Ever since I've known that,

the way I felt about you became like...

I know. I nearly drowned in a pond once when I was a child.

I felt exactly the same way then.

Everything seems black.

No matter how I struggle and panic,

there's nothing to grab hold of, except you.

- And your son?

Don't talk to me about my son.

I have no son.

I'm all alone.

- But...

No, you really don't understand.

My son is somewhere far, far away.

Just as my parents were

when I was drowning in that pond.

It hurts me even to think about him now.

But why is anyone like me so...

It's just that, that, you're, I mean...

When I look at you,

it warms me up

right here.
This old... this old mummy...
In other words, you're like,
you seem like my family...
No, that's not right. You're young
and you're healthy, so that's why...
No, that's not right.
In other words,
in other words, why are you so
incredibly alive?
You're just so alive.
That's why I'm envious.
This old mummy envies you.
Before I die, I want to live
just one day like you do.
I'll live that way before I die.
Until I've done it,
I can't just give up and die.
In other words, I just...
I just want something to...
I want to do something.
But it's just that, I don't know what.
But you do know.
No, maybe you don't, but you...
But I don't...
No, tell me, how can I be like you?
- But all I do is work and eat...
- And what else?
That's all.
I mean it.
All I do is make these little things.
Even making these is so much fun.
Making them, I feel like I'm playing
with every baby in Japan.
Why don't you try
making something too?
What can I possibly make
at that office?
You're right. It's just impossible
to make anything there. So quit and go...
It's too late.
It's not too late.
No, it's not impossible.
I know I can do something there.

I just have to find the will.
There is something I can do...
It's a matter of time before he resigns.
His son came yesterday about his pension.
Which means
you'll finally be section chief.
Well, you never know.
Good morning.
Section Chief.
Ohno, I'd like you to...

PETITION BY THE WOMEN'S COMMITTEE
TO REPAIR AND FILL IN CESSPOOL
THE ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT IS HEREBY
DESIGNATED IN CHARGE OF THIS MATTER.

But this belongs to Engineering.
No, this is just the sort of matter
that Public Affairs
must take the lead on.
This isn't just Engineering's problem.
Parks and Sewage also
have a responsibility.

- Say, get me a bicycle.
- Yes.

I'm going out to survey the site.
Put together a report today.
I think that's a little impossible.
No, not if you set your mind to it.
Five months later.

The protagonist of our story has died.
Let us see the deputy mayor.
He's here, right?
Five minutes.

Just five minutes, please.
What should I tell them?
- But why press it when nothing's wrong?
- Are you sure?

Our claim is based on
thorough research.
Deputy Mayor, sir.
Although technically the Parks Dept.
and the Ward Committee built that park
with your backing, wasn't it really
Watanabe-san who built it?
That's the word.

But Watanabe was section chief
of Public Affairs.
The Park Department builds parks.
Sure, we understand that.
But actually,
we're talking about the man who
kept the plan alive and saw it through.
The community residents believe
that was Watanabe-san.
They're all worried about why
Watanabe-san died in the park he created.
What do you mean?
Well, they had reservations
long before this.
You never mentioned Watanabe-san
in the speech you gave
at the park's opening ceremony.
They don't even call it a speech.
What was it, then?
Electioneering.
And also,
that Watanabe-san was snubbed
at the ceremony
and seated in the back row.
In other words, general sympathy
for Watanabe-san
has given rise to a special
interpretation of his death at the park.
Meaning that his was an act of silent
protest against city officials.
So you're saying that Watanabe
committed suicide,
or at least was prepared to,
when he froze to death there?
More or less.
It was snowing last night.
Sounds like a scene right out of a play.
However,
the truth is, an autopsy has clearly
established Watanabe's cause of death.
He neither committed suicide nor froze
to death. He died of stomach cancer.
- Stomach cancer?
- Right.

Intestinal hemorrhaging.
Watanabe died suddenly,
when he himself had no idea.
If you've any doubts...
Ohno,
refer them to his hospital.
It doesn't sit right.
These newspapermen
and their lack of sensitivity.
Actually, it applies
to the general public.
Their fundamental antipathy towards
city officials will never do.
They just don't understand
how we function.
Take that little park in Kuroe,
for instance.
Apparently the public seems to believe
that Watanabe built it.
But that's ridiculous.
I hate to say this at his wake.
And maybe I shouldn't,
in front of his family and relatives,
but I'll go ahead because I know
Watanabe himself would disagree.
Watanabe certainly went
to great pains
to make that park.
I take my hat off to his passion.
But all his efforts were
in the context of his office.
The idea that he went beyond
the scope of his office
to facilitate citizens' desires,
and actually made the park himself,
is nonsensical to those
who understand our bureaucracy.
I'm sure Watanabe himself is wincing.
However,
given that such rumors are surfacing,
perhaps we may have been remiss.
Everyone focused on that historic
project that rushed through construction.
Maybe we should have singled out

someone's service.

For instance,

section chief

of the Parks Department.

Or his superior,

the division chief in Engineering.

That's what you say, Deputy Mayor,

but here's what I think.

All the Parks' section chief and I did

was follow the dictates of our office.

But when you bear in mind

your own struggles

to rein in that notoriously political

City Council,

and realize the park's construction,

it's you, Deputy Mayor,

who should be singled out.

None of that, now.

Some people have even criticized

my speech at the opening ceremony.

Isn't that right, Ohno?

Some even say

I was electioneering.

Excuse me.

The residents of Kuroe

are here asking to burn incense

for the deceased.

Dear.

Mitsuo-san.

It sure is cold.

May I pour one for you?

Oh, no, I'll go get warm sake.

What do you say?

Why don't you all move closer down here?

Why not?

- Over here, please.

- Thanks.

Hayashi-san.

Here, Ohno-san.

Have all the big shots gone

to a meeting?

Yes.

No, they couldn't stand to stay here.

I don't care what anyone says.

It was Watanabe-san who made that park.
In their hearts, the deputy mayor
and his people know...
That's going too far.
As the deputy mayor said...
That's right. I'm not saying this
because I'm in the Parks Department,
but we planned, budgeted
and built that park.
No, that's not what I mean.
Let it go. I can understand
your feelings, but...
The point is,
he was in Public Affairs.
How dare he even think about
making a park.
Violating our bureaucratic turf.
No, if you've got to credit something,
it was coincidence that made that park.
- But in that...
- Just listen.
City council members had
an upcoming election to consider,
and the concession owners sniffed
a possible restaurant row,
and all that sure sped up work
on that landfill site.
- That's right.
- Yes.
That's exactly right.
But I just can't figure it out.
Why would anyone with his personality
suddenly up and change like that?
Right, it's a total mystery.
That's right, exactly.
In other words, with the benefit
of hindsight, it's obvious.
Watanabe-san must've known
he had stomach cancer.
That's why...
Oh, we were just discussing
whether or not your father knew
he had stomach cancer.
Well, if he'd known, I'm sure

he would have told me.

I see.

But I believe my father was fortunate to die without realizing he had cancer.

Because that disease is a death sentence.

I see. Well, that knocks out Saito's theory.

What's that theory?

It's just that five months ago, something transformed him.

You're right.

And none of us could make heads or tails of what had changed him.

Well, that's the woman's touch.

A young mistress' hormones can temporarily revive an old man. Happens all the time.

Put a real sheen back on his cheeks.

The truth is, he'd recently found a way to buff that sheen.

Right.

That explains that rakish hat.

You're right. Frankly, that hat was quite a shocker.

Section Chief,

I think that's a little impossible.

No, not if we set our minds to it.

But...

My point is, there was something extraordinary about his dedication.

Yes, that's right.

I don't mean to argue, but a woman's touch alone can't account for...

- But...

- Dear.

The thing is...

Just doesn't...

Not to change the subject, but there were times when his dogged dedication threatened to derail it all.

That's city hall for you.

Gotta guard your turf.

What I just can't wrap
my head around
is why a 30-year veteran
of the place suddenly...
That's because Watanabe-san...
In any event,
hawking that park proposal of his
around every section
practically guaranteed
everyone would dig in their heels.
Including our own section chief.
Parks were our business, not Watanabe's.
We have our own proposals
for new parks.
Can't you reconsider?
This site is really terrible.
But making a park isn't as simple
as you outline in your proposal.
No, this proposal is just a...
I understand.
I'll take my time
and go over it thoroughly.
But the thing is, ultimately,
the parks' section chief
caved in to his peculiar determination.
You've got a point there.
Our section chief gave in, too.
He was something.
Watanabe waited days
for the answer he wanted.
Our section chief used to
sneak around, trying to avoid him.
That's right.
Engineering Section Chief,
Section Chief.
Couldn't believe he stooped
to flattering peons like me.
Won't you please...
Isn't there a way...
Finally, we took pity on him.
That's right. In the end
we all took pity on him.
But, hey, you guys in Administration,
you were the worst of all.

That's not...
No, I always went with him,
so I know.
You made us beg for two weeks.
How could I forget?
I'm sorry.
But then, remember that shocker?
Yeah, what a shocker.
DEPUTY MAYOR'S OFFICE
But you know
what was even more shocking?
The thing with the deputy mayor?
I heard, I heard.
What a shock.
A lowly section chief
openly defying the deputy mayor.
Made history at City Hall.
About that new park.
It's one thing to show initiative,
but you don't want people to think
of you as self-aggrandizing.
And the City Council's got
problems of its own.
I think it's best you give up
that proposal.
Last night, we were treated
to a geisha party.
Man, geisha these days
are appalling.
One of 'em spent the whole evening
sulking and clammed up.
The madam said she was
a student, a moonlighter.
That's a laugh.
Won't you please...
reconsider this proposal...
What did you just say?
Yes.
Um...
About that park,
won't you reconsider your decision?
But the thing is,
when you think back, was it worth
his taking it that far?

He was crazy.
It's just that in City Hall
everyone's guarding his own turf.
But after that, the deputy mayor
did reconsider. So...
No, because the City Council rode him.
Coincidence, in other words.
It's too sentimental to attribute it all
to Watanabe-san's dedication.
Sentimental...
Is that so?
I don't see it that way.
The point is, the world is a dark place
if his dedication was pointless.
It is a dark place.
First of all,
just the sight of Watanabe-san.
It was like
he kept himself going
with nothing but work.
Wasn't that how it seemed?
Sometimes he even
gave me the chills.
When was that? I was...
It reminds me of seeing him
at that construction site.
How can I put it?
The way he gazed out over the site,
like a father or grandfather
tenderly watching a favorite child...
Of course it was.
Because Watanabe-san
cherished that park.
So, in that case...
It's exactly what I told you before.
Whatever anyone may say,
Watanabe-san built it...
But if the City Council and deputy
mayor hadn't been facing an election,
they'd have ditched the proposal.
Watanabe-san had nothing to do
with the crucial decisions.
No, that's not actually true.
- Oh, really?

- Really.

The folks who wanted
that restaurant row
hated having Watanabe
in their way. The thing is...
Section Chief.

- Hey, you Section Chief of Public Affairs?

- Yes.

Just the man I wanted to see.

Old man, you keep your fat trap shut.

What on earth are you trying to...

Don't fuck with me.

No hard feelings.

Just shut up and back down.

Hey, say something.

You're risking your life.

This is him, Watanabe.

I just don't get it.

Why would anyone like him just...

I just don't...

No. Watanabe-san knew

he had stomach cancer. I'm positive.

But...

I just suddenly remembered...

This is just inexcusable.

We've been at this for two weeks.

At least they could tell us
whether or not the funds are there.

Administration's just cruel.

They'll allocate the funds anyway.

It's not their personal money.

Now, now, there.

But doesn't it make you furious
when they walk all over you this way?

No.

I can't afford to hate people.

I haven't got that kind of time.

Meaning...

Say. Speaking of that...

I've got another one like that.

How beautiful.

How truly beautiful.

In the last 30 years,

I'd all but forgotten about sunsets.

But I haven't got time for this now.
Thought so.
Now I see.
Knowing he didn't have
long left to live...
It makes everything clear as day.
Otherwise, it makes no...
Well, that explains his extraordinary
passion and his outrageous behavior.
How else could he have been?
Absolutely.
We'd have done the same.
But any one of us
could suddenly drop dead.
Listen here.
Hey, Section Chief.
I mean you, the newly appointed
Public Affairs Section Chief.
Don't you hear me?
I haven't been promoted yet.
Hey!
Ohno!
- Cut it out.
What the hell did you just say?
"We would've done it, too?"
Don't make me laugh.
- Hey, cut it out.
You couldn't have done
what Watanabe-san did.
Make me laugh.
Say, Ohara-san...
The thing is...
I may look like this...
- I only graduated middle school...
- Watanabe-san...
So I'll never make section chief
in my life...
Compared to Watanabe-san,
we've all just...
We're just worthless scum.
Hey, you assholes, too...
Why, that's...
That's right, we're all scum.
But some of us were okay

when we started out at City Hall.
But the longer you stay...
Even I didn't used to be like...
You're not supposed to do
anything there.
Doing anything but nothing
is radical.
We have to act like we're
doing something but do nothing.
- That's right.
- That's exactly right.
The thing is,
in order to clean up a garbage can
somewhere,
you need a garbage can
full of paperwork.
That's exactly right.
That's just an excuse.
We're robbing people of valuable time.
The public's upset by bribes
and 40,000 cars and so on,
but those are just farts next to this
invisible, colossal waste of time.
Now you listen here.
I worry about these things, too.
But the thing is, inside that
complex system, it's impossible.
Besides, there's never time
to think in there.
Idiots!
No, but the thing is,
Ohara-san,
even within a system
where you can't get a thing done,
and battling stomach cancer at that,
Watanabe-san managed
to accomplish so much.
That's it.
That's what I'm trying to say.
That's why I get so angry.
That's what I'm saying.
That Watanabe-san,
with no expectations...
Exactly. When you remember

how Watanabe-san staked his life...
Who dares claim his achievements!
The deputy mayor.
Spit it out!
That's going too far.
Listen.
How do you think he felt
dying all alone in that park?
Just thinking about it...
A policeman brought this.
He said he'd found it in the park.
And he really wants
to light incense for the deceased.
Thank you for taking the trouble.
Come in.
You don't have to go.
Thank you for your trouble.
Let me pour you one.
Actually, I...
Last night, I was
on patrol in the new park
when I met him.

It was 10:

Nearly 11:

He was on the swing,
and what with all that snow,
I just assumed
he was some drunk.
No, it was a dereliction of my duty.
If only I'd taken him in,
like I first intended,
he'd never have ended up...
How can I apologize to you?
But he seemed to be
so perfectly happy.
How can I explain?
He poured his whole heart
into that song of his.
His haunting voice...
pierced...
the very depths of my own soul.
Life is brief

Fall in love, maidens
Before the crimson bloom
Fades from your lips
Before the tides of passion
Cool within you
For those of you
Who know no tomorrow
Hey, last night,
under the stairs, I found an envelope
with my name on it.
It had Dad's bankbook
and seal inside,
along with forms for expediting
his retirement bonus.
So he left it before
he went to the park?
But Dad was so cruel.
If he had stomach cancer,
why didn't he tell us?
Hey, his girl never showed up.
You think that was for real?
I'll do it.
I swear.
- Line up behind him.
We can't waste
Watanabe-san's death.
I'll work at it
like I'm a man reborn.
Sacrifice the self to serve the many.
- Don't forget this feeling.
- I'll do it...

PUBLIC AFFAIRS:

SECTION CHIEF:

Section Chief.
The sewage main break in Kisaki
is overflowing into Takao.
Engineering.
Your complaint is a matter for
Engineering, desk 8.
Kenbo, Yoko.
Yoko, Kenbo.
Suppertime.