

# The Long Excuse

The Long Excuse

Cast

MOTOKI MASAHIRO  
TAKEHARA PISTOL FUJITA KENSHIN SHIRATORI TAMAKI HORIUCHI KEIKO  
IKEMATSU SOUSUKE KUROKI HARU YAMADA MAHO  
FUKATSU ERI

Original Story & Script & Direction by NISHIKAWA MIWA  
Original Book "The Long Excuse" written by NISHIKAWA MIWA published by Bungei Shunjun  
Song "Ombra mai fu" Singer: TESHIMA AOI  
Presented by KAWASHIRO KAZUMI NAKAE YASUHITO OTA TETSUO NAGASAWA SHUICHI MATSUI KIYOTO  
IWAMURA TAKASHI  
Producers NISHIKAWA ASAKO YOSE AKIHIKO Director of Photography YAMAZAKI YUTAKA  
Lighting YAMAMOTO KOSUKE  
Sound SHIRATORI MITSUGU Production Design MITSUMATSU KEIKO Editor MIYAJIMA RYUJI  
Costume Designer KOBAYASHI MIWAKO  
Make-up Artist SAKAI MUTSUKI Sound Effect KITADA MASAYA Casting Director TABATA TOSHIE  
Assistant Directors KUMA SHINJI KIKUCHI SEIJI Production Manager SHIRAISHI OSAMU

Film Partners Bandai Visual Co., Ltd. Aoi Pro. Inc. TV TOKYO Corporation Asmik Ace, Inc. Bungeishunju Ltd.  
Television Osaka, Inc.

Production Company Aoi Pro. Inc. Distributor in Japan Asmik Ace, Inc.

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2016/color/JAPAN/124min./vista/5.1ch surround

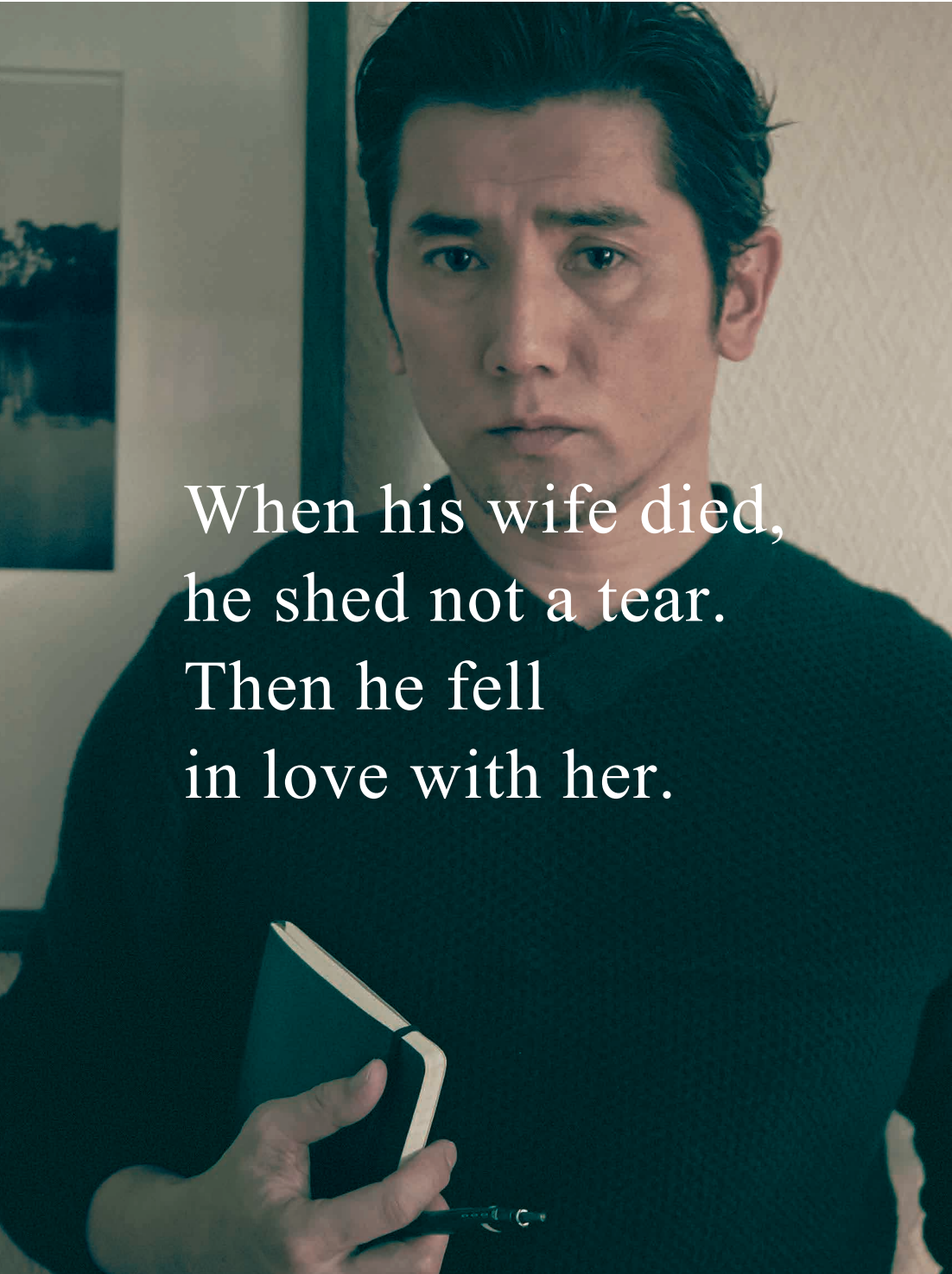
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When his wife died,  
he shed not a tear.  
Then he fell  
in love with her.

## The love story of a man who had no tears to cry when his wife died.

Sachio, who is with another woman when his wife and a friend die en route to a ski resort, has no choice but to act the part of a grieving husband. Meeting Yoichi, the truly desolated truck-driver husband of his wife's friend, he volunteers to help look after Yoichi's two young children. He discovers the pleasure of being useful, and his own existence takes on new meaning. Bringing humanity and charm to the role of a writer suffering a crisis of self-confidence and self-esteem, a man who cannot bring himself to cry even at the sudden loss of his wife, is MOTOKI Masahiro, in his first lead role since the Academy Award-winning *Departures*. TAKEHARA Pistol brings his powerful musician's presence to the role of Yoichi, while a supporting cast including FUKATSU Eri, IKEMATSU Sousuke, KUROKI Haru, and YAMADA Maho contributes a wealth of talent and energy. The shoot took place over the course of a year, and the real-time growth of FUJITA Kenshin and SHIRATORI Tamaki in the children's roles gives their performances a serendipitous charm. Writer-director NISHIKAWA Miwa has added several strong talents to her regular filmmaking crew. Director of Photography is YAMAZAKI Yutaka, known for KORE-EDA Hirokazu's *After the Storm*. TESHIMA Aoi lends an operatic touch with her rendition of Handel's 'Ombra mai fu'. This film is a deep dive into all the joy and pain of living, as viewers share the characters' griefs, confusions, and an ultimate joy that may even summon a few tears of its own.

### THE STORY

Winter. Sachio's wife Natsuko leaves for a ski trip with her friend Yuki, but once she is gone the young Ms Fukunaga arrives. The next morning there is a phone call: the bus carrying Natsuko and Yuki has tumbled over a cliff into a frozen lake. At Natsuko's funeral, Sachio looks appropriately solemn, but he is unable to shed any tears. The bus company holds a meeting for the bereaved. Suddenly there is an anguished shout from the back of the room. This is Omiya Yoichi, the late Yuki's truck-driver husband. Over and over he has been playing the recorded cell phone message his wife left for him as she set out. Spring. Sachio struggles with the practical aspects of widower-hood. He invites Yoichi and his children, Shinpei and his little sister Akari, to dinner. Akari has an allergic reaction and Yoichi, who has forgotten to bring her medicine, rushes her to a hospital. Sachio learns that Shinpei, who now has to help take care of Akari, can no longer study for middle-school entrance exams, and Sachio volunteers to help look after the children. As his relationship with them develops, he begins to appreciate the feeling of being useful. Summer. Sachio finds a memo on the notepad of Natsuko's battered cell phone: 'I don't love you any more. Not one bit.' In a TV interview he loses control, and starts raging at the departed Natsuko. Later, at a beach with the Omiyas, he imagines that he sees Natsuko, while Yoichi breaks down and cries over Yuki. Fall. Sachio tells Yoichi it is time to forget Yuki. Yoichi realizes that soon Akari will start school and Sachio will not be coming any more. He deletes Yuki's message from his phone. Soon after, Yoichi becomes meets a woman. Now Sachio feels abandoned. He tells Yoichi that, when Natsuko died, he was with another woman. Winter returns. Isolated and alone, Sachio still has a picture of the Omiyas as his cell phone wallpaper. Now Yoichi is injured in an accident with his truck. The hospital calls Sachio, who rushes to the Omiya apartment...

### MOTOKI Masahiro – KINUGASA Sachio ( 'TSUMURA Kei'/Author)

Born December 21st, 1965 in Saitama Prefecture, he was originally a member of the boy band Shibugaki Tai, making his acting debut in director GOSHA Hideo's *226 : Four Days of Snow and Blood* (89). He won the 1993 Best Actor Award of the Japanese Academy for his starring role in SUO Masayuki's *Sumo Do, Sumo Don't* (92), and both initiated and starred in *Departures* (08), the first Japanese winner of the Academy Award<sup>®</sup> for Best Foreign Language Film. Major credits include *Last Song* (94), *Tokiwa: The Manga Apartment* (96), and *Gemini* (99). For his roles in *The Emperor in August* and in *The Big Bee* (both 15) he won, among others, the 2016 Best Supporting Actor Award of the Japanese Academy, the 2015 Blue Ribbon, and the Kinema Junpo Best 10, and re-established himself as one of Japan's top stars. *The Long Excuse* is his first starring film role in the seven years since *Departures*.



### TAKEHARA Pistol – OMIYA Yoichi ( Truck driver)

Born December 27th, 1976 in Chiba Prefecture, he was captain of his university boxing team, coming second in an all-Japan tournament. In 1999 he began a career in music as part of the band Yakozen, which had its major-label debut release in 2003 and broke up in 2009. He released an new album, 'youth', in 2015, and is currently on a 112-stop all-Japan tour. His first lead film role came with KUMAKIRI Kazuyoshi's *Green Mind, Metal Bats* (06), and his credits include *Sketches of Kaitan City* (10) and *Scabbard Samurai* (11). A man of many talents, he has also published a book of illustrations, and exhibited his paintings.



### FUJITA Kenshin – OMIYA Shinpei ( Yoichi's son)

Born January 18th, 2004 in Chiba Prefecture. He has done commercial work, and appeared in MAEDA Tetsu's *The Boy Inside* (12). With little acting experience, at his audition he impressed director NISHIKAWA Miwa with a down-to-earth feeling of common sense she felt linked him to the character of Shinpei. His hobby is cooking, and he likes to sing.



### SHIRATORI Tamaki – OMIYA Akari ( Yoichi's daughter)

Born January 20th, 2010 in Tokyo. Active in commercials and advertising, she nailed this role at her audition. 'She wasn't shy with anyone at all,' says director NISHIKAWA Miwa. 'Her combination of simplicity and exuberant curiosity fit Akari exactly.' She also appears in a Japanet commercial NISHIKAWA directed. Her hobbies include moving around a lot, and reading.



### IKEMATSU Sousuke – KISHIMOTO Shinsuke ( Sachio's manager)

Born July 9th, 1990 in Fukuoka Prefecture, he made his motion picture debut in Edward ZWICK's Hollywood production of *The Last Samurai* (03). His first starring role came in *Tetsujin 28:The Movie* (05), and he won Best Newcomer awards from the Japanese Academy and Kinema Junpo for his performances in *Our Family and Pale Moon* (both 14). Other credits include *Love's Whirlpool*, *Undulant Fever* (both 14), *The Shell Collector*, *A Cappella*, and *After the Storm* (all 16). He will also be seen in several upcoming releases: OMORI Tatsushi's *Setoutsumi*, HIGASHI Yoichi's *Dareka no mokkin*, SATO Shinsuke's *Death Note: Light up the New World*, and MATSUOKA Joji's *Midnight Diner 2*.



### KUROKI Haru – FUKUNAGA Chihiro ( TSUMURA Kei's editor)

Born March 14th, 1990 in Osaka Prefecture. Following a 2010 stage acting debut, she made her first film appearance in *Tokyo Oasis* (11). She won Best Actress at the 2014 Berlin International Film Festival for her performance in *The Little House* (14), for which she also won the 2015 Award of the Japanese Academy for Best Supporting Actress, an award she won again in 2016 for *Nagasaki: Memories of My Son* (15). Other credits include *The Great Passage* (13), *Solomon's Perjury* (15), *A Bride for Rip Van Winkle* (16), the NHK morning serial *Hanako & Anne* (14), and the NHK Sunday night costume serial *Sanada Maru* (16). She also stars in the upcoming *Emi-Abi* (16).



### FUKATSU Eri – KINUGASA Natsuko ( Sachio's wife)

Born January 11th, 1973 in Oita Prefecture, she made her first film appearance in 1988, in KANEKO Shusuke's *Summer Vacation 1999*. For *Kiss to Moonlight* (89) she won both Best Actress at Rome's Fantafestival 1989 and the 1990 Newcomer of the Year Award of the Japanese Academy, and she was nominated for the Academy's Best Actress Award for *Haru* (97). With *Villain* (10) she won Best Actress at the Montreal World Film Festival. She is a regular in the *Bayside Shakedown* series (98, 03, 10, 12), while other credits include *The Professor and his Beloved Equation* (06), *Once in a Blue Moon* (11), and the Cannes prize-winner *Journey to the Shore* (15). She is also active in live theater.

### Director of Photography : YAMAZAKI Yutaka

Born in 1940. Credits include *Nobody Knows* (KORE-EDA Hirokazu, 04), *Canary* (SHIOTA Akihiko, 04), *Then Summer Came* (IWAMATSU Ryo, 07), *Still Walking* (KORE-EDA Hirokazu, 08), *Ain't no Tomorrows* (TANADA Yuki, 08), *Japan Lies* (HASEGAWA Saburo, 12), *Still the Water* (KAWASE Naomi, 14), and *After the Storm* (KORE-EDA Hirokazu, 16). He wrote, photographed, produced, and directed *Torso* (09).

### Lighting : YAMAMOTO Hiroshi

Born in 1969. Credits include *Don't Laugh at my Romance* (IGUCHI Nami, 07), *Ain't no Tomorrows* (TANADA Yuki, 08), *Hanezu* (KAWASE Naomi, 11), *Our Homeland* (YANG Yong-hi, 11), *Nishino Yukihiko no Koi to Boken* (IGUCHI Nami, 14), *Drive in Gamo* (TAMURA Masaki, 14), and *Till Death Do Us What?* (MAEDA Koji, 15).

### Sound : SHIRATORI Mitsugu

Born 1962. Credits include *Break Through!* (IZUTSU Kazuyuki, 04), *Sway* (NISHIKAWA Miwa, 06), *Hula Girls* (LEE Sang-il, 06), *One Million Yen Girl* (TANADA Yuki, 08), *Dear Doctor* (NISHIKAWA Miwa, 09), *Villain* (LEE Sang-il, 10), *Kaasan Mom's Life* (KOBAYASHI Shotaro, 11), *Dreams for Sale* (NISHIKAWA Miwa, 12), *Parasyte: Part 1* and *Parasyte: Part 2* (YAMAZAKI Takashi, 14 & 15).

### Production Design : MITSUMATSU Keiko

Born 1972. Credits include *Suzaku* (KAWASE Naomi, 96), *A Boy's Summer in 1945* (KUROKI Kazuo, 01), *Vibrator* (HIROKI Ryuichi, 02), *Nobody Knows* (KORE-EDA Hirokazu, 04), *Sway* (NISHIKAWA Miwa, 06), *Dear Doctor* (NISHIKAWA Miwa, 09), *Dreams for Sale* (NISHIKAWA Miwa, 12), *Like Father, Like Son* (KORE-EDA Hirokazu, 13).

### Editor : MIYAJIMA Ryuji ( J.S.E.)

Born in 1967. Credits include *Waterboys* (YAGUCHI Shinobu, 01), *Always - Sunset on Third Street* (YAMAZAKI Takashi, 05), *Sway* (NISHIKAWA Miwa, 06), *A Gentle Breeze in the Village* (YAMASHITA Nobuhiro, 07), *One Million Yen Girl* (TANADA Yuki, 08), *Dear Doctor* (NISHIKAWA Miwa, 09), *Kaasan Mom's Life* (KOBAYASHI Shotaro, 11), *Dreams for Sale* (NISHIKAWA Miwa, 12), and *The Eternal Zero* (YAMAZAKI Takashi, 13).

### Composer/Arranger : NAKANISHI Toshihiro

Born in 1956, he is a graduate of Tokyo University of the Arts, a top-ranked violinist in a wide range of genres including classical, jazz, and pop. He is also active in visual media, with more than 150 TV commercial and program credits to his name. He was a finalist in the TV/Cinema category of the 2000 London International Advertising Awards.

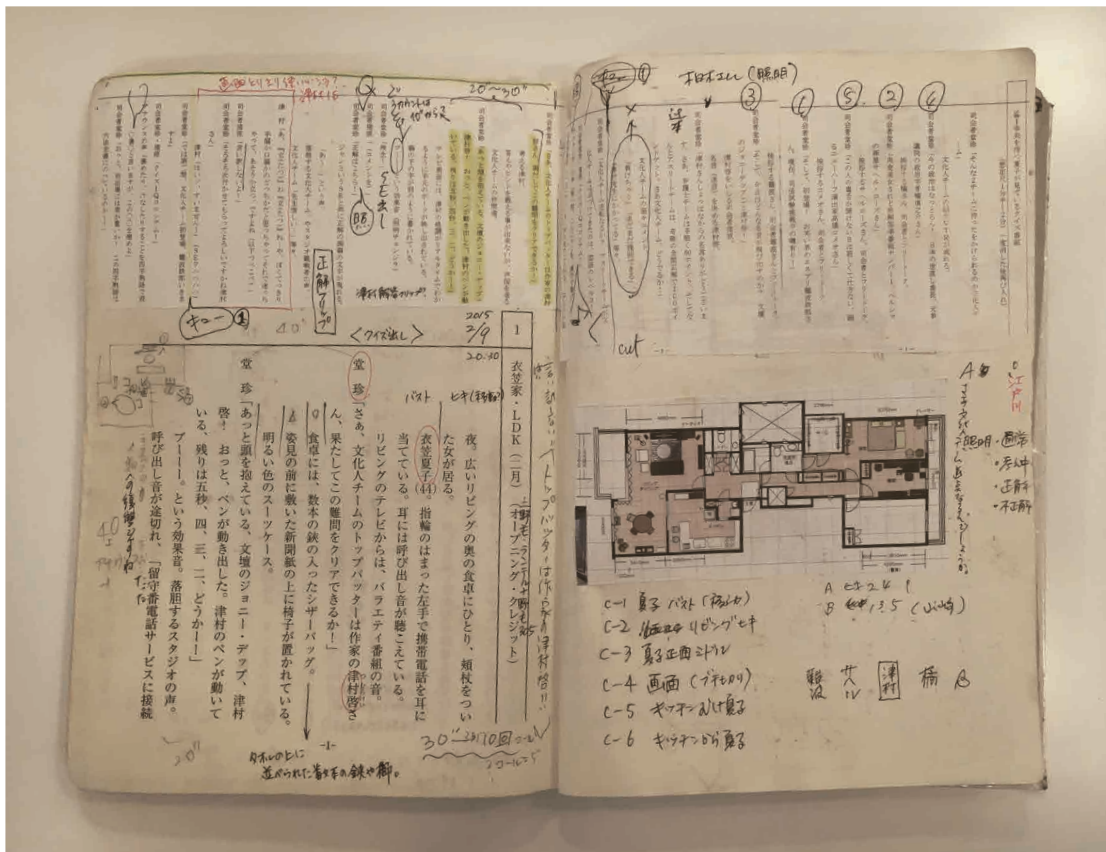
### Composer/Arranger : KATO Michiaki

Born in 1956, in 1989 he formed dido with OHTAKA Shizuru, releasing 'Pajina'on Polystar Records that year, and 'Ksana' on King Records in 1994. With other artists he has worked as an arranger and producer, and composed for TV commercials and for the stage. He has written extensively for animation, including 'Ora wa ninki mono', the theme song for the animated series *Crayon Shin-chan*, and has composed for erhu performer CHEN Min, samisen player AGATSUMA Hiromitsu, and more than 2,000 pieces of music used in JR railway and other commercials.

### Song Inserts : TESHIMA Aoi

Born in 1987, she first came to notice as the singing voice of Theru, heroine of MIYAZAKI Goro's *Tales from Earthsea* (06). 'Ashita e no tegami' , from her 11th album, 'Aoi Works—best collection 2011-2016', has drawn attention as the theme song for the Fuji TV drama *Love That Makes You Cry*. The tremendous appeal of her voice also makes her much in demand for TV commercials.





## A unique and moving story of love in all its magnificent vexation

“I wanted to try something I’d never attempted before. The story had its beginning in the aftermath of the 2011 tsunami disaster. A lot of people died, and there was a lot of sadness, but along with the undeniable grief we saw in the media, I was thinking that surely not everybody felt that way. There must have been some partings that were not on the best of terms. And those who have experienced that kind of parting are not limited to disaster victims. I myself have had partings that left feelings of regret, so I thought I’d like to write a story about that kind of end to a difficult relationship. I wrote it as a novel first because I was tired of writing things to fit into a two-hour motion picture time frame. With a novel I could write anything I wanted, and take things out when it came time to make it into a film. There were a lot of scenes from the novel I thought would work but didn’t, but it was easy with the film script to take out the character development parts that were needed in the novel. I’ve wanted to work with MOTOKI Masahiro since I started making films, and he was perfect for this role, the right age and everything. To me now he is Sachio, with that same vulnerable quality over an underlying . Of any of the characters in the films I’ve made, Sachio is the closest to me personally. It’s not often you get to describe things like the regrets, the recriminations, but also the joys, that 40 years of real life brings. In that sense this film might be kind of a compilation drawn from my own life.”

### NISHIKAWA Miwa – Writer (story & script), Director

Born July 8th, 1974 in Hiroshima Prefecture, NISHIKAWA Miwa attended the Waseda University School of Literature, and worked on the staff of KORE-EDA Hirokazu’s *After Life* (99). Upon graduation, she worked as a freelance assistant director, and in 2002 debuted as a writer-director with *Wild Berries*, which among other awards took Best Screenplay at the 2004 Mainichi Film Concourse. Her second feature, *Sway* (06), was a long-running hit that won awards both in Japan and abroad, showing at the Cannes Film Festival Directors Fortnight and winning the 2007 Blue Ribbon Award for Best Director. Her third film, *Dear Doctor* (09), was shown in competition at the Montreal World Film Festival, its numerous awards including Kinema Junpo Best Picture, and a Japanese Academy Award for Best Screenplay. Her fourth film, *Dreams for Sale*, premiered as a special presentation at the 2012 Toronto International Film Festival, winning prizes both at home and abroad. She also publishes, and has been nominated for several literary prizes: the Mishima Yukio Prize for her novelization of ‘Sway’, and a 2009 Naoki Award for ‘Kino no kamisama’, a story that came out of *Dear Doctor*. ‘The Long Excuse’ was also nominated for a 2015 Naoki Award, and for the 2016 Japan Booksellers Award. Other works include ‘Sono hi Tokyo eki goji nijugofun hatsu’ and ‘Eiga ni matsuwaru X ni tsuite’. She has won acclaim as an auteur whose creative passion extends through the entire process from original story to completed film.



NISHIKAWA Miwa

西川 美和