

Yoshie

Note: Everyone in Japan speaks Japanese, the dialogue is in Japanese.

FADE IN:
INT. TOKYO HOUSE - YOSHIE'S ROOM - DAY (1952)

WE SEE a beige colored bedroom with tatami floors, sliding doors made of wood and fusuma. There are two desks and a bunk bed pushed against the walls.

YOSHIE, 10, wakes up on the top of the bunk bed wearing cotton flower patterned pajamas. MATSUE, 7, is Yoshie's younger sister. She's on the bottom bunk. She yawns and goes back to sleep.

Yoshie walks over to the bathroom to go through her morning routine by the sink - washes her face, combs her hair, and gets dressed in her white blouse and brown flare skirt.

MOM (O.S.)
(from a distance)
Yoshie! Matsue! Hurry up and eat!

Yoshie walks back to the bunk bed and wakes Matsue up. Matsue stares at Yoshie grumpily and pulls her blanket up.

YOSHIE
Matsue, you gotta wake up!

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

At the bottom of the stairs is KIYOKO (35), Yoshie's mother. She wears a kimono with an apron on top. She puts cooked rice into a small bowl and places pickled plums on top.

YOSHIE (O.S.)
(from a distance)
Coming--

Yoshie runs down the stairs for breakfast, and Matsue follows her.

MOM
Good morning!

Yoshie and Matsue pull a cushion by the chabudai (low table), as they sit on it in seiza posture.

YOSHIE AND MATSUE
(Matsue: half-asleep)
Good morning!

At the chabudai, YOSHIMATSU (45), Yoshie's father, wears a white button up shirt with suit pants. He eats rice with whitebait fish as he catches up on the latest newspaper. Yoshie's older brothers ARIYOSHI (20), SOKICHI (19), and KENKICHI (14) all eat rice with whitebait.

Kiyoko walks over to the chabudai, places chopsticks and the rice with the plums in front of Yoshie, and rice with whitebait in front of Matsue.

YOSHIE
Thank you, oh that looks good!

MATUSE
(quietly)
Thanks--

Yoshie and Matsue grab the chopsticks and CLAPS their palms together.

YOSHIE AND MATSUE

Itadakimasu!

Yoshie grabs the rice with the plum using her chopsticks, placing it in her mouth. She takes a few bites.

CUT TO:

INT. Genkan (door hallway) - DAY

Yoshie grabs her brown randoseru (backpack) and puts it on her back. She kneels down to put her black leather shoes on. Matsue stands next to her trying to do the same.

YOSHIE

We're gonna head out now!

Mom walks over to the genkan.

MOM

Have a great day at school!

Yoshie opens the door. Yoshie and Matsue wave back to Mom.

YOSHIE AND MATSUE

Bye!

EXT. YOSHIE'S HOUSE - DAY

Yoshie skips out to the front of their house. WE SEE Mom walking up to the front door by the genkan in her geta (sandals) as she holds the door.

MOM

Yoshie don't run!

BLACK, the family's jumpy black pointer dog swings his tail at Yoshie. She smiles and waves back.

YOSHIE

Bye Black!

Matsue looks at Black, laughing softly.

"TOKYO BOOGIE WOOGIE" by Shizuko Kasagi starts playing as WE SEE the title "Yoshie"

INT. 4-2 CLASSROOM - DAY

WE SEE a 4-2 sign and the bell RINGS. Inside the traditional 1950s Japanese classroom, students are at their own desks. Yoshie and the students bring out their homemade lunchboxes. WE SEE the different kinds of things inside the lunchboxes: rice with tsukemono or onigiris with vegetables and small portions of fish, eggs, or meat.

MR. FURUYA (27) is Yoshie's teacher. He wears a business suit with a button up shirt and a necktie. He sits at his desk with his lunchbox in front of him.

MR. FURUYA

Okay everybody--

He CLAPS his palms together.

MR. FURUYA

Itadakimasu!

Yoshie and her classmates repeats, and CLAPS their palms together.

CLASS

Itadakimasu!

Yoshie and her class start digging their chopsticks into their lunchbox. Some classmates are looking over their shoulders at others' lunch to see what they have for today, and some start to trade food.

MR. FURUYA

Oh yes, before I forget, I have an announcement!

BEAT

The class looks around at each other, then comes back to face Mr. Furuya.

MR. FURUYA

Starting tomorrow, the school's going to serve you something called kyushoku so you'll no longer need to bring homemade lunch!

Yoshie and her classmates all GASP at the pleasant surprise and turn to their neighbors.

KIYOUKO, 10, is the girl who sits next to Yoshie.

KIYOUKO

Really? I'm excited!

YOSHIE

I know right, I wonder what they're gonna serve!

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - DAY

The bell RINGS and WE SEE Yoshie walking (screen left) home. She leaves the frame, but then WE SEE Yoshie walking (screen right) into the classroom with Matsue. She's dressed in a green skirt with a white blouse, carrying the brown randoseru on her back - it's the next day.

INT. 4-2 CLASSROOM - DAY

The school bell RINGS.

Yoshie and a crowd of classmates stand at the front of the classroom near the door as Mr. Furuya pulls the FOOD CART (that holds three SILVER TUBS) into the classroom. The students' eyes slowly open wide as they're curious about what's inside the silver tubs.

Mr. Furuya waves his hands telling them to move over to the other side of the classroom. The students walk back to their seats.

MR. FURUYA

Okay class! I'll be serving you today but from tomorrow, a table group will be assigned to serve throughout the week! Every week I'll assign a different table group!

Mr. Furuya opens the lid of the silver tubs. From the first one he opens, WE SEE steamed vegetables.

BEAT

Some students lift themselves up from the chairs, trying to get a good glance.

ITO (10), is Yoshie's classmate. He sits across from her.

ITO

Oooo, nice!

Yoshie and Kiyouko turn their heads toward each other and laugh.

YOSHIE

Oh yeah he's right though, it looks good!

Mr. Furuya opens the lid of the second silver tub, and WE SEE WHALE KATSU. In the third silver tub, it's SKIMMED POWDERED MILK. Students lift themselves even more from their chairs.

ITO

Woah, it's whale katsu!

BEAT

Yoshie GULPS.

SIMANE (10), is Yoshie's classmate. He sits at the corner of the classroom.

SIMANE

Really? I've always wanted to try that ever since I heard it on the radio!

The class turns their heads towards Simane, laughing. But Yoshie's face stays still, TERRIFIED.

Everything starts to slow down - the classmates' running up to get food, the teacher serving them, the interactions between students, and students walking back to their seats. Yoshie's disorientated, looking right and left as sweat drips down her head. She gets up and GULPS, walking over to the line. She grabs a plate. Mr. Furuya smiles at her as he places vegetables, whale katsu, and skimmed powdered milk onto her plate.

She walks back, and everyone is eating sarcastically, looking directly at Yoshie. She sits and looks down at the whale katsu, HORRIFIED as it's bigger than the plate.

BEAT

The WHALE katsu starts to animate into a blue children's doodle with googly eyes. It starts to speak.

WHALE

(nervously)

No Yoshie! Please don't eat me!

Yoshie's eyes widen as she's freaked!

She blinks repeatedly, and opens her eyes, but the whale is making a puppy face at her.

Yoshie hears WHISPERS of her classmates, HORIUCHI, MIZUOCHI, SIMANE, NAKANO.

HORIUCHI

What's Yoshie gonna do?

MIZUOCHI

Oh yeah doesn't she not eat meat or something?

(pauses)

It's weird...

The whispers starts to get louder and overlap.

SIMANE

That's so bad.

NAKANO

Such a waste of food.

She turns around left and right to look at them but they aren't whispering about her - it's all in her head. They're just eating their whale katsu.

She moves the whale katsu to the side using her chopsticks. She grabs the vegetables instead, and eats.

Yoshie sees her classmates cleaning up their dishes. They run out of the classroom to go play in the courtyard. Others talk and laugh as they eat the whale katsu.

Yoshie sits still in her chair, looking down at her plate. Mr. Furuya notices Yoshie not touching her food. He stands up from his chair and walks over to her.

Mr. Furuya looks down at her with stingy eyes.

MR. FURUYA

Why aren't you eating the whale katsu? It's the best part-

Yoshie's eyes are still on the plate.

YOSHIE

(interrupting)

I don't want to eat the whale.

MR. FURUYA
Yoshie, even though it's been years since the war ended, food shortages are still continuing...

YOSHIE
I know but-

MR. FURUYA
(interrupting)
Meat is so hard to find these days so we're privileged to have whale katsu!

Mr. Furuya sighs and walks back to his desk in the classroom. He begins to grade papers.

Yoshie looks up and down to see if he's watching her, as she grabs a white towel from her pocket. She wraps the katsu and places it in the towel. She puts it in her randoseru without him noticing.

She sees the skimmed powdered milk still sitting on her desk. She sighs as she holds it up to take a big GULP.

She sticks her tongue out, it looks bumpy - the powdered milk left a rough texture.

Yoshie cleans her plate and runs out of the classroom to the courtyard.

Mr. Furuya notices and stops her.

MR. FURUYA
Yoshie? What about the katsu? You need to finish it!

YOSHIE
I ate it!

MR. FURUYA
Oh, alright go on then.

Yoshie continues to run out to the courtyard.

EXT. COURTYARD - DAY

Dodgeball begins as teams are separated by gender. There's two balls being used in the game. Yoshie runs into the girl's side.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - DAY

School Bell RINGS.

Yoshie opens her randoseru to place her water bottle. She sniffs her nose, smelling something. She looks through her bag and sees the whale katsu from earlier.

Kiyouko, Ito, and other classmates walks towards her.

KIYOUKO
Yoshie, are you ready to leave?

YOSHIE
Yeah.

She closes the bag and looks up to smile at the group. They walk out of the school and through the neighborhood of Nihonbashi.

EXT. FRONT YARD OF YOSHIE'S HOUSE - DAY

Yoshie walks to the front of her house where Black runs up to her swinging his tail excitedly.

YOSHIE
I missed you, buddy!

Yoshie pets him. She remembers something, so she opens her randoseru and grabs her

white towel. She unfolds it, and holds the whale katsue up to Black, waiting to see if he likes it.

BEAT

Black starts licking the whale katsu, then biting into it. Shortly after, he starts munching at it.

YOSHIE
(laughingly)
You like it?

Yoshie knocks and Mom opens the front door.

YOSHIE
I'm home!

Mom smiles.

MOM
How was school?

Yoshie puts her randoseru down on the genkan and walks over to the kitchen near the chabudai. Mom follows her.

YOSHIE
School served whale katsu and skimmed powdered milk today.
I just fed the katsu to Black, but I had to drink the skimmed
powdered milk...it was disgusting!

Yoshie's mom turns around and faces her back to Yoshie. She starts cutting up vegetables.

MOM
Oh Yoshie that's too bad, I didn't realize that it would be an issue.

Yoshie looks at her, confused.

YOSHIE
What?

MOM
I guess you'll have to deal with it and just eat the kyushoku they
serve. You know that's the real world right? When you get older, no
one's gonna help you. This is a good lesson Yoshie.

Yoshie starts to tear up in her eyes. She runs away to a different room. Mom turns around, confused where she went.

MOM
Yoshie?

INT. 4-2 CLASSROOM - DAY

CUT TO:

The bell RINGS. Yoshie is in line to get kyushoku as she holds the empty plate up to her chest. Her hands shake as she walks slowly in the moving line.

When Yoshie gets to the classmate who's serving for the day, the classmate looks at her crookedly. The classmate hesitates but serves her the curry that contains pork.

As Yoshie walks back to her seat, the class looks at her weird.

She hears the WHISPERS all over again.

The whispers get louder and overlap with each other.

NAKANO
Did you see what she was doing yesterday?

HORIUCHI
I know right, it's so bad.
MIZUOCHI

Such a waste.

Yoshie looks back at the classmates, but they aren't whispering about her - it's all in her head.

WE SEE Ito turn his head over to Yoshie. He sees that she's horrified to eat the pork.

Yoshie stays still as she looks down at the pork. After a while, she finally picks it up with her chopsticks. She holds it up to her open mouth and it gradually gets closer, but the mouth of the pork starts to animate and speak.

PORK
(shouting)
Yoshie, stop!

Yoshie's eyes open wide, shocked.

INT. YOSHIE'S HOUSE - DAY

CUT TO:

Yoshie opens the front door abruptly, wearing her randoseru on her back. She runs into the genkan (hallway).

YOSHIE
(loudly)
Mom!

She runs into the kitchen where Mom is. She's cutting vegetables again.

MOM
Yeah?

YOSHIE
I told you yesterday how they served whale katsu right? And you told me to deal with it but--

Mom turns around, facing her.

Yoshie starts to tear up.

YOSHIE
But-- I don't think I can.

Mom's facial expression starts to droop. Yoshie looks down at the floor.

YOSHIE
I've stuck with my belief of not eating animal products since I was a toddler, so it's really important for me to keep doing so.

Mom wipes Yoshie's tears.

MOM
I'm sorry I didn't listen to you. I had no idea how important this still was to you, thank you for telling me.

Mom smiles at Yoshie then pauses.

MOM
I think I have a plan.

INT. 4-2 CLASSROOM - DAY

CUT TO:

WE SEE the 4-2 class sign. The school bell RINGS as Mom walks through the classroom door.

MOM
Hi Mr. Furuya? I'm Yoshie's mother Kiyoko. Nice to meet you!

MR. FURUYA

Oh pleasure to meet you!

MOM

So Yoshie told me what happened during lunch and I wanted to let you know that she has this belief of not eating animals products.

Mr. Furuya looks suprised.

MOM

I let her be at home, not forcing her to eat anything she doesn't want to but when this happened, I told her to deal with it--

(pause)

It seemed really important to her though since she's stuck with it since she was a toddler--

Mr. Furuya nods.

MOM

So I'll pack her an empty lunch box with glass bins every time animal products are scheduled on the kyushoku menu.

MR. FURUYA

That's so interesting, never heard anyone with that belief before... But yes that's okay, please make sure she brings it!

CUT TO:

INT. 4-2 CLASSROOM - DAY

School bell RINGS. Yoshie opens the empty lunch box, places the pork from the curry in her lunch box, and the skimmed powdered milk into the glass bins. As everyone else eats, focused on their food, Ito, whose all done with his food, looks over to Yoshie's pork and what she's doing.

CUT TO:

EXT. FRONT YARD OF YOSHIE'S HOUSE - DAY

Yoshie holds up the pork to Black as he munches it. Yoshie laughs. She pours the skimmed powdered milk from the glassbins into his bowl and he starts licking it.

CUT TO:

INT. 4-2 CLASSROOM - DAY

Yoshie places the whale katsu into her empty lunch box and the skimmed powdered milk into the glass bins. Ito looks over again to see what she's doing as everyone else eats their food. He tries to get out of his chair but he hesitates.

CUT TO:

EXT. FRONT YARD OF YOSHIE'S HOUSE - DAY

Yoshie laughs as Black munches on the whale katsu. He licks the milk in his bowl.

WE SEE Ito hiding from the corner of Yoshie's house, as he smiles, watching what she's doing.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - DAY

Yoshie changes from her uniform shoes to her leather brown shoes.

KIYOUKO

You ready to leave, Yoshie?

YOSHIE

Yeah, let's go!

EXT. NIHONBASHI, TOKYO NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Yoshie, Kiyouko, Ito, and other classmates walks out of the school onto the Nihonbashi, Tokyo neighborhood.

Yoshie carries her randoseru on her back and holds two glass bins of skimmed milk.

ITO
Where should we play later?

KIYOUKO
Do you guys wanna come to my street?

YOSHIE
I don't think I can, I have dance less-

Yoshie trips on a pebble. She falls, her stomach laying flat on the ground. The two glass bins also slips from her hand onto the ground, SHATTERING into pieces. The milk drips on the ground, soaking in.

KIYOUKO
Yoshie, are you okay?

ITO
Yeah--

Yoshie lifts her head up,

YOSHIE
I think so...

She lifts her body by pushing her hands off the ground.

WE SEE Yoshie's legs covered in cuts. It's bleeding, but the wounds aren't too deep.

YOSHIE
Ow--

INT. 4-2 CLASSROOM - DAY

CUT TO:

WE SEE the 4-2 class sign. There are several students getting ready for class. Mr. Furuya sits on his desk, working. Ito abruptly runs into the classroom.

ITO
(loudly)
Mr. Furuya! Yoshie fell yesterday when we were walking home from school and since she was carrying those glass bins, it shattered everywhere!

MR. FURUYA
Oh no! Is she okay?

ITO
I think so, she got some cuts and wounds but you should really reconsider what to do with those animal products she never eats.

Yoshie walks into the classroom.

YOSHIE
Good morning!

MR. FURUYA
Good morning Yoshie, we were actually just talking about you,
(Pause)
Ito told me you fell yesterday?

Yoshie looks at Ito who's looking down at the floor. Yoshie starts to blush, embarrassed.

YOSHIE

(irritatedly)
Ito, why did you tell him?

Yoshie looks back to Mr. Furuya.

YOSHIE
I'm fine, Mr. Furuya.

MR. FURUYA
I know, but I don't want you to get badly injured next time so I think it's okay if you don't bring home the skimmed powdered milk anymore?

Yoshie lightens up.

YOSHIE
Oh really? Thank you Mr. Furuya!

CUT TO:

INT. 4-2 CLASSROOM - DAY

School bell RINGS. As Yoshie walks back with her lunch tray that includes whale katsu and vegetables, Ito comes up to her with his empty plate.

ITO
Hey Yoshie? If you're not gonna eat your whale katsu, can I have it?

Yoshie looks down at the floor, like she's still holding a grudge against him.

YOSHIE
Yeah sure, here.

Yoshie uses her chopsticks to place the whale katsu onto his plate. She turns around and smiles.

CUT TO:

INT. YOSHIE'S HOUSE - DAY

Yoshie gets her empty lunchbox out of her randoseru and places it on the kitchen sink. She gives a light smile.

CUT TO:

INT. 4-2 CLASSROOM - DAY

School bell RINGS.

Yoshie walks back to her desk with her lunch tray that includes whale katsu. Horiuchi walks up to her.

HORIUCHI
Hey Yoshie, can I have your whale katsu?

THE SCREEN SPLITS INTO TWO

Mizuochi walks up to her.

MIZUOCHI
Can I?

THE SCREEN SPLITS INTO THREE

Simane walks up to her.

SIMANE
Can I?

THE SCREEN SPLITS INTO FOUR
Nakano walks up to her.

NAKANO

Can I?

Yoshie is stunned.

THE SCREEN GOES BACK TO NORMAL.

YOSHIE

There's too many of you.

At the same time the boys starts to argue to Yoshie why they deserve it.

YOSHIE

(yelling)

Be quiet! How about you guys play rock, paper, scissors-- the winner can have my whale katsu.

INT. BUILDING - DAY

CUT TO:

WE SEE a "Class of 1954 Elementary School Reunion" sign on the door.

WE SEE present day Yoshie (70s), Ito (70s), Horiuchi (70s), Mizuochi (70s), Simane (70s), and Nakano (70s) all gathering together, laughing.

YOSHIE

That first rock, paper, scissors game, Simane won!

SIMANE

Did I?

(Pause)

Oh yeah!

NAKANO

Yeah you were so happy that day. You told me you came home running around telling your mom all about it!

They all laugh.

FADE OUT.