

And there emerged, also standing, a single pine tree.

Where once had stood more than 70,000 such pine trees, when the waters of the tsunami withdrew, there was only one single pine tree left on the coast of Rikuzentakata.

This one tree experienced the tremendous power of the tsunami, suffering through a pain all its own.

It saw houses, fishing boats, and thousands of fellow trees being carried out to sea.

It was the final witness of people being swept away by the water. It heard their screams intermingled with the water's roar.

It was pummeled by hats and shoes and bags and a million other personal belongings smashing into its trunk.

It was the last to see many of the dogs and cats and other living things which were all washed away along with the people who loved them.

And it was this lone pine tree which first saw the morning sun and felt the strong winds of a monsoon the following day.

The waters of the tsunami came from the ocean, and it was there they returned. Sometimes tranquilly calm and other times raging with violence, the ocean is a living contrast.

Good and bad...order and disorder...love and hate...life and death...the ocean neither knows these things, nor cares about them. The ocean just is. The waters cover all.

In its tiniest form, the taste of a drop of seawater is no different from that of a human tear.

This is understandable, as the ocean has absorbed countless tears since the beginning of time.

