



Seeing this lone tree in Rikuzentakata also brought to mind another story, this one from Japanese folklore, in a tale called “Tono Monogatari (The Legends of Tono)”. Tono, which happens to be only 50 kilometers away from Rikuzentakata, is a place where the living and the dead mix together.

One of the legends is a story called “Destination of the Soul”, which arose after the massive Sanriku tsunami which occurred in the Meiji period.

In this story, a man who lost his wife in the tsunami, lives with his surviving sons in a small hut on the ocean’s shore. As the legend says, this was the place where the souls of the dead often return.

One moonlit night, he came across the dim figures of a couple walking along the beach in a thick night fog.

The woman was the ghost of his dead wife, and her companion was the ghost of a man whose life had also been taken away by the tsunami.

In life, they had been kept apart, but in death, they were finally able to be together.

The wife had found happiness in her death, while the husband had found sorrow in his life.