

SWEET RHYTHMS

Written by

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FADE IN:

1

EXT. STREET - DAY -- PAST

1

It is a bright and beautiful summer day at the Cultural Food Festival set up on two blocks of a street. Tents of all different colors line up along the sidewalks.

People bustle with excitement. On one end of the festival is a large stage setup for performances from many different cultures. Cooks sweating behind the grills, vendors selling artwork and objects from their cultures, and festival goers having a merry time.

This is America after all. People from all over the globe gather here. Despite all the chaos that happens, the one thing people can come together for is food.

In a corner furthest away from the stage is a small food stall that sells traditional Japanese sweets and confectionery. A small banner attached to the tent reads "SUGA" in both English and Japanese. In the front, small colorful desserts lined up perfectly.

Behind the display is a register and a small working area with tools. Nothing back here is new, but all well taken care of.

This humble stall is run by Japanese immigrant YOUNG TOUMA KOGAWA (35). Touma is a small, slender man with a well-trimmed goatee. He wears a bright green bandana to keep his hair in place.

YOUNG KAITO KOGAWA (11), Touma's son, stands behind the register a bit bored. Their stall is located next to a seating area in which most of the patrons have already bought food.

Touma rearranges some of the merchandise to look busy. Kai stares at a nearby stall longingly, practically drooling. A smoked BBQ stall with a huge smoker attracts a line stretching over three stalls.

KAI

Hey Dad, can I get something to eat?

TOUMA

Be quick.

Touma hands Kai some cash. Kai looks at the long BBQ line with a frown. He picks a shorter line selling hotdogs.

2

EXT. STREET - DAY -- PRESENT

2

Much like the Food Festival 30 years ago, it is bustling with life. Tents and food trucks selling products from all over the world in addition to some healthier and trendier things.

"SUGA" is in the very same spot with the same setup. Everything is the same but a tad bit older. The people are older too.

TOUMA (70) sits on a stool behind the register with a cane leaning next to him. He has the same goatee and green bandana. As he reaches for a bottle of water, his hand tremor. The aftermath of a minor stroke.

KAITO (45) stands behind the counter in the same spot his father had stood. He wears an apron over his casual business attire.

In front of the stall is HANNAH KOGAWA (10), Kaito's daughter. She holds a tray of sample mochi nuggets. She smiles at every person that passes her. Most stop to take a sample to be polite, but none stay long enough to buy anything.

Hannah looks over at her father who awkwardly rearranges the merchandise being displayed.

Touma takes his cane and lightly whacks Kaito behind the legs and points to the boombox in a crate behind them.

KAITO

No, it's been like thirty years. I don't remember how.

Touma nods towards the tray in Hannah's hands.

TOUMA

The mochi is not bad.

KAITO

But, that's different.

TOUMA

No. It's the same, Kaito.

Kaito looks over at the boombox, then at the people walking by.

3

EXT. STREET - DAY -- PAST

3

Kai walks back to the stall with a giant Chicago-style hotdog, loaded with all the works. He admires his food for a moment then takes the biggest bite humanly possible.

Kai stops in front of the table. A tape recorder sits on the corner of the table. Touma is not in view.

KAI

Dad?

Food drops from his mouth. Kai walks around and spots Touma crouched down under the table grabbing a heavy cutting board.

KAI (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

Touma sets the cutting board on the table. *THUD*. He opens a tupperware containing TON-TON dough and pinches out a portion. He rolls out the dough to the length of the board.

Touma puts in a cassette tape and pushes 'record'. He takes out a small cleaver and taps the back of it on the board.

*Tap-tap-taptap-tap-tap.*

4

EXT. STREET - DAY -- PRESENT

4

The actual recording of rhythmic Japanese candy cutting plays.

*Taptap---taptap.*

Kaito holds a roll of TON-TON dough ready in one hand and a small cleaver in the other.

People continue to walk past. Kaito takes a deep breath and...

*Tap-taptap-tap-tappity-tap.*

Kaito taps along with the recording as if he were cutting along with his father. The song becomes more intricate as Kaito cuts the TON-TON dough.

Little nuggets of white doughy candy fly around the cutting board. The rhythm and beat pick up.

People around stop walking to see what's going on. Some sitting nearby even walk over to watch. A crowd forms.

Both Touma and Hannah smile at each other. Hannah hands out samples and Touma watches Kaito.

Replacing the boombox is Young Touma standing next to Kaito. Both are knocking their cleavers on the board. Together, they play a candy cutting duet.

FADE OUT.