

## 光の山 玄侑宗久

Hikari no yama  
[Mountain of Light]

By Gen'yū Sōkyū

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玄侑 宗久

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When disaster struck on March 11, 2011, the Akutagawa Prize-winning author was the chief priest at the temple of Fukujūji in his hometown of Miharu, Fukushima Prefecture, which is within a 50-kilometer radius of the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant. Soon after the earthquake, he was tapped for the Reconstruction Design Council in Response to the Great East Japan Earthquake, and he has been conducting lectures and other activities around the country since then.

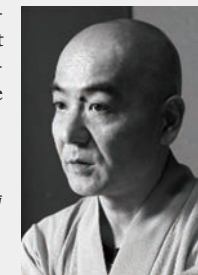
“As heartless as it may sound,” he says, “I couldn’t live without writing novels, just like we continue to breathe the air regardless of radiation levels.” This collection of six stories—which were born from that experience and which faithfully reflect the changing situation over the two years since that fateful day—captures the truth of the people living in the disaster area of Fukushima more vividly than any image or news report. It allows us to see the full scope of the tragedy of this disaster.

The figures who appear here include the young girl who has been too scared to drink the tea in her teacup since losing her parents in the tsunami. The mother carrying her infant as she looks for the body of her missing husband, and the government official at the morgue who helps them while dealing with the loss of his own daughter and grandchild. The young wife whose fear of radiation drives her to flee to Hokkaidō and to divorce her husband, who has chosen to live in a shelter, and their old friends—a husband and wife—who continue to live in Fukushima while harboring mixed feelings toward the woman.

Needless to say, this work is about more than just these individual stories of misfortune. What did the disaster actually take away from these people, and can they ever recover what they lost? How should they go on living? And what is the meaning of a human life? The stories here thrust pointed questions at the reader, but a benevolent light somehow manages to shine through. Surely this is a testament to the priestly virtue of the author and the inner beauty that lives on in the hearts of people in Japan’s northeastern Tōhoku region. (OM)

## Gen'yū Sōkyū

Born in Fukushima Prefecture in 1956. After working various jobs, he entered the Zen monastery of Tenryūji Temple in Kyoto. Currently, is the chief priest at Fukujūji Temple in Fukushima Prefecture. Received the Akutagawa Prize in 2001 for “Chūin no hana” [Flowers in Limbo]. Won the Minister of Education’s Art Encouragement Prize for *Hikari no yama* in 2014. His other works include the novels *Rira: Kami no niwa no yūgi* [Lila: At Play in the Garden of the Gods] and *Teruchan* [Little Teru].



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## 玄侑 宗久（ゲンユウ ソウキユウ）

1956年福島県生まれ。様々な仕事を経験した後、京都、天龍寺専門道場に入門。現在は福聚寺住職。2001年、「中陰の花」で第125回芥川賞を、2014年『光の山』で第64回芸術選奨文部科学大臣賞受賞。著書に小説として『リラー-神の庭の遊戯-』『テルちゃん』など。

芥川賞を受賞後も福島県三春町の生家、福聚寺の住職を続けていた作者は、2011年3月11日、福島第一原発から50キロ圏内にあるその地で被災。直後の東日本大震災復興構想会議では委員に選ばれ、全国各地で講演活動も行ってきた。

＜しかし因業なことに、やはり私は放射線量にかかわらず呼吸しつづけるように、小説を書かないでは暮らせなかった＞。そうして生み出されたあの日から2年間の、状況の推移を克明に映し出した6編の収録作は、どんな映像、報道より被災地・福島に生きる人間の真実を凝縮し、同時に、この震災の悲劇全体を見渡すことを可能にしている。

津波に襲われ、家族を亡くして以来、湯飲みのお茶も怖くて飲めなくなった若い娘。身元不明の夫の遺体を捜す妻と幼児、その母子に対応する安置所の係官も、実は娘と孫を亡くしていた……。被爆を恐れて北海道に逃れたまま、避難所暮らしを選んだ夫と離婚を決意する若い妻、彼女に複雑な思いを抱きながら現地で暮らし続ける旧友夫婦も登場する。無論、こうした個別の不幸を紹介するために小説が書かれたのではない。震災は彼らから本当は何を奪い去ったのか、それは回復可能なものなのか。彼らはこの先、どんなふう生きていけばよいのか。人間の命とは何か。読む者に鋭い問いを突き付けながら、それでもどこかに慈愛の光が差しているのは、僧侶としての作者の徳、東北の人びとが今も保つ心根の美しさゆえだろう。(OM)

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