

# Minori Chihara (Yuki Nagato)

"This time, Yuki's just a normal girl who falls in love with Kyon."

## By Kyon's side while recording

**-What were your feelings when you heard that *The Disappearance of Haruhi Suzumiya* was being made into a movie?**

"A movie?!!!" I was truly shocked. From all of the letters and e-mails I get from fans, I know they wanted to see the Disappearance story animated as soon as possible. I too looked forward to it myself; but for it to be a movie and not part of the television series? I would have never predicted it.

**-Did you have any special thoughts about the fact that it was a movie?**

This was the first time that I had participated in an animated movie. As a seiyu, I would go "wow!" and get goosebumps whenever I would listen to a story in a movie theatre.

**-Since it's a movie, wasn't the script thicker than the television series?**

It really was thick! I couldn't say anything as I flipped through it. Just that made me very nervous.

**-So you got nervous from the very first part of the movie? (laughs)**

But I had never seen such a thick script before! Or should it be "it was the first time I saw something like that?" But the one who looked the worst had to be (Tomokazu) Sugita-san. I'm sure his left arm had to be fatigued from having to carry the script around.

**-Were you recording your lines throughout one day?**

I recorded my lines throughout 2 different days. The first day I know we started at 11:00 and went until 22:00.

**-How long of an intermission did you take?**

We didn't take an intermission or a lunch break, but that's not to say we recorded for that time too. We would keep going until there was a good stopping point in the story. But even then, I wouldn't leave the studio.

**-You said you "wouldn't leave?"**

Even when it wasn't my time to record, I wouldn't leave the studio. Well, maybe it was more of a "I can't leave" feeling I had. Regardless, I didn't leave that place. Perhaps I just had to be by Kyon's side.



**-You certainly got into your role, didn't you?**

You could say that! In this story Yuki's just an ordinary lonely girl, so perhaps that feeling of wanting to be beside Kyon came from my acting. That's really strange isn't it?

**Yuki's heartrenching, difficult feelings**

**-What were your first impressions of Yuki Nagato after the world changed?**

At first, I felt like I didn't know this Yuki Nagato at all! That's why I was so confused. "How was I supposed to perform this role well?"

**-So you felt like this was a complete reversal from the Nagato up until now?**

There have been times when acting as her that I went "I don't know anything about Yuki!" but I still wanted to voice her. I'd just grin it and keep going on, but this Yuki Nagato isn't Yuki Nagato; she's just an ordinary girl. When I read the script this time, my face changed, I was scared, and I cried. This wasn't the Yuki I had played before and I didn't know who was her in this story. That's why I say that Yuki's feelings were heartrenching!

**-Would you say that you served as a link to Nagato's heartrenching feelings, Chihara-san?**

Do you really think so? I read the novel when the television series first started and I thought it was sad then, but since then I've re-read it and after playing Yuki I'd say it's even more agonizing. But I don't know Nagato. This time there was a bug inside Nagato that caused her to change the entire world, but I don't think that Nagato could have foreseen that coming. She's Nagato; that type of event wouldn't happen with her around, but then again, perhaps she could have known what would come and planned this in advance. It almost feels like there's two Yukis: one pure and one calculating. I couldn't possibly tell you which one is the real one.

**-From your standpoint, do you think she acted because she couldn't decide on a reply inside herself or perhaps she didn't know the uncertainty she was feeling?**

Uncertainty I'd say. But that's because I tried to play her as just a lonely girl who fell in love with Kyon.

**-So was the "fall in love with Kyon" part the same before the world changed as it was afterwards?**

That's the question isn't it? But when you think about it, she could've planned this out without even realizing it! (laughs) I'd say that Yuki is certainly in love with Kyon.



## Saying “Thank you” from the bottom of her heart at the end

**-Did you have anything specifically planned when you were preparing the role of the changed Yuki Nagato?**

When I played Yuki, her voice would be low, no intonation, and speaking without any interest at all. So I wanted to break down that atmosphere that the usual Yuki has. I wanted to keep her Nagatoish, but as a normal person instead, somewhat like putting it in normal human emotions instead. I nearly didn't have an answer for that difficult task.

**-So you don't feel as though you had a complete turnabout in character?**

I don't think so... what would you say? I think the fans would be too frightened if that would happen!

**-I think the fans would imagine you inside their head as the voice of the changed Yuki though.**

You don't think they were going “EH?!!” do you? (laughs) Frankly, this story at it's heart is a really pure tale, so I really had a lot of unease going into it. I don't know if everyone who saw it would be as moved though. The script itself was so wonderful; I don't know if I could go to the theatre and see it with the music, little touches, and everything else to make it completed. (laughs) Yuki cries after all! Believe me! You don't believe me?! I remember crying like that...

**-Was there a crying scene during recording?**

There was at the end. It was during the rooftop scene where Yuki and Kyon were alone and they were talking. Well, truthfully it was mostly Kyon that was talking (laughs). It was quite dangerous emotionally.

**-The emotions just filled you it seems. But if you cried, they would have to do a re-take, right?**

That's right. But during that scene, when Yuki says “Thank you” to Kyon, I was truly saying “Thank you” from the bottom of my heart. It was just such an overwhelming feeling, but it felt so natural.

**-That scene was truly lovely.**

It's due to the snow. It's so pretty, isn't it? It starts coming down and then Kyon mutters “yuki...”<sup>1</sup> But which one is he referring to? (laughs)

**-Usually Kyon wouldn't call out to her as “Yuki” though. It must have been a shock, right?**

But that's what makes it such a sweet scene. I was thinking “What are you saying Kyon?!” You sly devil you! Such a sweet guy.

**-But the other SOS Brigade members wouldn't say he's such a sweet guy...**

Well, you've got a point there! (laughs) But that's Kyon's softer side. Being so nice to Yuki, it's so sad when you know that her feelings won't be reciprocated. When I was reading the novel version of *Disappearance*, there was a line on page 102 that went “I found Haruhi.” I felt a giant “clunk” inside me when I read that line. Then I was shocked when I heard that line come from Kyon's mouth while recording. It felt so real. While I knew that Kyon loves Haruhi, this reminded me again that Haruhi loves him just as much... Yes.. it's so sad. (laughs)

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<sup>1</sup> The script has Kyon going “yuki” in katakana. It could refer to either the snow or to Yuki herself.

“It’s a heartrenching story that made me cry.”

### **Becoming more human in the original world**

**-The whole altered world was really an illusion, wasn’t it?**

It felt so sad and empty but, in a sense, that’s part of Yuki’s charm. You know, the Yuki right before Kyon went back was sooooo cute!

**-Was there anything after the world had changed back that you felt added to the characters?**

In the rooftop scene where Kyon and Yuki are talking, you can see their breathing come out. It’s so impressive and just adds to the human aspect of them. It’s so cold, but yet it’s so warm. And then the scene they added at the end was soooo cute! Those little kids having fun in the library! I could die!  
(laughs)

**-That last scene went by fast didn’t it?**

I had been told beforehand that it was a scene I should look forward to since it wasn’t in the original. It sure was a charming scene, wasn’t it? But, by then I was usually crying. (laughs)

**-After pulling off such a difficult role, do you feel relieved?**

I think everyone involved, the staff, the seiyu, everyone felt the same way. We loved working on and felt grateful to work on such a fine movie. I think that’s a natural way to feel when you work on something, but this feeling just kept overflowing for me. When we went to record, I didn’t feel any pressure, or should I say, perhaps I wasn’t afraid of messing up. And then little by little, we made such a fantastic movie.



Minori Chihara. Born on November 18th. Has played in many roles including Minami Iwasaki in *Lucky Star*, Chiaki Minami in *Minami-ke*, and Kagura Tsuchimiya in *Ga-rei-*. In February 2010, her album *Sing All Love* will be released and in April 2010, she will go on a 13 city tour.