

DARUMA

Screenplay by

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Student Short

Film begins with an EXPLANATION/USE of DARUMA DOLLS

FADE IN:

INT. KUMO'S ROOM - NIGHT (SCN1)

ESTABLISH SHOT of a messy APARTMENT in the dark. A red and white SCREEN flickers in the corner of one room. A CLOSE-UP of the word FAILED is scrawled across the MONITOR as it flickers off and on. A head is slumped over, defeated in front of it. A calendar marks and upcoming date, MID-TERM SOLO FLIGHT, which is circled in red, looking to be only three days away.

KUMO pounds the DESK with her FIST, a photo FRAME falls over. She lifts her head and sees the FRAME to her right. She picks it up and stares at the picture of her and her mentor Akari, who is a pilot. KUMO places it back on the desk and hovers next to a box behind the frame. She picks it up, briefly looking at the tag:

TO - KUMO

FROM - AKARI

KUMO opens the lid and picks the object up from inside. It's a DARUMA DOLL. KUMO swivels the doll around in her left hand as her right hand searches for a PEN on the DESK. Solemnly she fills in the RIGHT EYE on the blank face.

KUMO places the DARUMA DOLL down and looks back at the screen. It continues to flicker FAILED. KUMO rubs her forehead, groaning. A popping sound goes off.

Startled, KUMO looks at where she placed the DARUMA and watches as the doll pops around, bursting to life in a blaze. KUMO raises her arms in defense. The DARUMA hovers above the MONITOR staring straight down at the awe-struck KUMO. It slowly floats down and turns to look at the PHOTO. KUMO glances at the PHOTO as well and meets the DARUMA'S gaze. They stare at each other for a moment.

KUMO grabs the SIMULATOR and slides it back in front of her. DARUMA blazes with determination.

FADE IN:

EXT. CAMPUS - MORNING (SCN2)

KUMO is late to class, she rushes down the sidewalk towards the TARMAC where the HANGAR is.

She ducks under the HANGAR doors and sees a crowd gathered around the lecture CHALKBOARD. It's all the GUYS in her class, they practically form a border around the only entryways into the HANGAR. KUMO goes from one side to the other, looking for a way in, DARUMA doing the same. KUMO becomes disheartened but DARUMA blazes in front of her and indicates there's a way to see the board.

KUMO notices a TRASHCAN/BUCKET that DARUMA is gesturing to. She grabs it, brings it over to the HANGAR, flips it upside down, and places herself above the crowd so she can tune in to the lecture. She steps on top of the TRASHCAN/BUCKET too fast, causing the object to slide and create a grueling noise

The chatter of the lecture stops and KUMO'S CLASSMATES turn their heads to stare at her before listening once again to the lecture.

FADE IN:

EXT. HANGAR - AFTERNOON - CONTINUOUS (SCN3)

KUMO stares up at the PLANE in front of her, some of her CLASSMATES are working together to pull out one of the PLANES and KUMO has been left to her own. She watches them finish rolling it outside of the HANGAR and then walk away past another building. She reaches for the PLANE and struggles to pull it backwards.

KUMO'S shoulders drop and she slightly sinks into herself. DARUMA appears in front of KUMO and blazes. KUMO slowly nods and grabs the PLANE once more and slowly lugging it over. DARUMA hovers and bounces around KUMO'S head cheering her on.

FADE IN:

INT. KUMO'S ROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS (SCN4)

KUMO comes home disheartened and discouraged. She lands on the end of her BED dramatically, face down, withdrawing into herself. DARUMA hovers down below at her feet, looking up at her. Close-UP of her eventually turning her head and staring past her DESK. Her gaze flits over to the PHOTOS on her wall and she spies one of herself when she was ten. Younger KUMO is dressed in a PILOT'S uniform that is too big for her. She is beaming as the HAT cuts down half of her face and the JACKET drapes her all the way to the ground.

Close-up of KUMO curling her hand into her bed followed by a medium shot of her pulling herself up off the bed. Camera shot of floor where Daruma has been hovering.

He watches Kumo as she walks past the camera. Kumo arrives at eye level with the photo. The photo of her younger-self stares at her. She turns away abruptly and heads toward her desk. Kumo sits down and starts up the computer, setting up the simulator. Daruma burns brightly next to her in the dark.

FADE IN:

EXT. HANGAR - EARLY AFTERNOON NEXT DAY - CONTINUOUS (SCN6)

KUMO walks up to the hangar, opens the garage door, and pulls the PLANE out with swift ease. She hops into the PLANE. Places the HEADSET on her ears. DARUMA is placed on the other seat and comes to life. He wavers around KUMO's hands as they begin to check the GAUGES.

INT. PLANE - CONTINUOUS (SCN7)

KUMO begins to go through the motions of starting the plane.

The PLANE taxis down the RUNWAY (KUMO POV) and begins to lift off. The camera shifts as KUMO looks out the WINDOW, we see the TARMAC below. The camera switches to looking at KUMO looking out the WINDOW. DARUMA appears next to her, they smile at each other.

The PLANE continues its ascent, KUMO checks her GAUGES. The PLANE jars. Blinking LIGHTS and ALERTS begin to go off. KUMO looks concerned, the PLANE jars once more, DARUMA hits the ceiling of the PLANE and is knocked out. A STORM begins to roll in.

KUMO radios in, the CALL is disrupted by the STORM, KUMO waits and radios once more, no answer. KUMO begins to hit the appropriate BUTTONS, pushing on the LEVERS.

EXT. PLANE - CONTINUOUS (SCN8)

Camera cuts to the STORM flashing, we see the PLANE drop and bounce. KUMO's expression through the window is one of tension. The plane nosedives into the storm. KUMO is seen radioing once more. The CLOUDS swallow the plane. Silence. 1.2.3. LIGHTNING flashes here and there.

The PLANE shoots back up and is in control. KUMO sags with relief against the seat and DARUMA slowly reignites. The PLANE glides past the camera from above.

CUT TO:

EXT. HANGAR - CONTINUOUS (SCN9)

KUMO lands the PLANE on the TARMAC. She taxis over to the HANGAR and sees her peers waving at her. They stream out of the hangar, running towards her and pointing up at the sky. KUMO cracks a smile, gives a small laugh from inside the plane. DARUMA returns to doll state and KUMO places him on the DASHBOARD before climbing out of the PLANE. The guys huddle around Kumo as she exits the plane.

KUMO looks up at the AIRCRAFT with a gleam in her eye. She's proud of today.

FADE IN:

EXT. TARMAC - AFTERNOON(6-7 YEARS LATER) (SCN10)

The camera settles onto the back of a young woman in a Pilot's uniform, standing on the TARMAC. We see KUMO front and center looking at a plane in the distance. KUMO turns around and smiles at Daruma who has flown up to her. Reaching a hand underneath DARUMA, he settles into KUMO'S palm. KUMO fills in DARUMA'S eye and we see the world in a wider screen. KUMO and DARUMA stare for a beat then DARUMA gives her a wink. DARUMA'S vibrant color ashes away leaving a dull DARUMA in its wake.

KUMO smiles, still holding the lifeless DARUMA doll in her hand, and walks off toward and airliner waiting for her on the TARMAC.