

= Warning from Space =

Warning from Space (????????? , Uch?jin Tokyo ni arawaru , Spacemen Appear in Tokyo) is a Japanese science fiction tokusatsu film released in January 1956 by Daiei , and was the first Japanese science fiction film to be produced in color . In the film 's plot , starfish @-@ like aliens disguised as humans travel to Earth to warn of the imminent collision of a rogue planet and Earth . As the planet rapidly accelerates toward Earth , a nuclear device is created at the last minute and destroys the approaching world .

The film , directed by Koji Shima , was one of many early Japanese monster films quickly produced after the success of Toho 's Godzilla in 1954 . The film was loosely based on a novel by Gentaro Nakajima . After release , the film was met with negative reviews , with critics calling it " bizarre " and accusing it of using science fiction clichés . Warning from Space influenced many other Japanese science fiction films , such as Gorath . The film , along with other 1950s science fiction films , influenced director Stanley Kubrick , who would later direct 2001 : A Space Odyssey .

= = Plot = =

A small ship travels to a rotating space station . Aboard the station , a group of starfish @-@ like beings discuss how to warn humans of an impending disaster , deciding on contacting Japanese scientist Dr. Kumara . Meanwhile , flying saucers are spotted over the skies of Tokyo , baffling scientists . A journalist tries to get a statement from Dr. Kumara about the sightings , but Kumara replies that there is not enough evidence to formulate a hypothesis . At an observatory , Professor Isobe spots an object in his telescope apparently releasing smaller objects .

Isobe discusses his findings with Kumara and a physician , Dr. Matsuda , who believes they should get photographs via a rocket . The photographs they retrieve , however , turn out to be unclear , though they deduce the object has a high energy output . In the meantime , the extraterrestrials have been unsuccessfully attempting to contact humans . They begin appearing in lakes and rivers , frightening local fishermen and sailors . One of the aliens manages to secure a photo of Hikari Aozora , a famous Japanese entertainer . Their plan is for one of the aliens to mutate into the form of Aozora . Back aboard the space station , one of the Pairan leaders , Ginko , volunteers herself . Her starfish form is slowly mutated into a human form .

On Earth , Toru , Isobe 's son , discovers the disguised alien floating in the water . After her rescue , she exhibits superhuman characteristics such as jumping ten feet and materializing in different places without walking . Soon , she disrupts Dr. Matsuda 's work on a nuclear device , explaining she understands the complex equations he was writing and warning against the effects of a device , leading him to believe she is not human . Shortly afterwards , as the team of scientists discuss her abnormal traits , the camouflaged Ginko appears and reveals her true identity , explaining she is from Paira , a world on the same orbit as Earth but on the opposite side of the Sun . She then continues to reveal her mission , to warn Earth of an imminent collision of a rogue planet , which is dubbed " Planet R " by the media . They appeal to the World Congress about the situation , but are swiftly rejected . Only after they show Planet R and its rapid acceleration in the telescope does the World Congress launch its nuclear weapons , which ineffectively explode on its surface .

In the meantime , a group of spies have abducted Matsuda and are attempting to steal his formula to the nuclear device the disguised Pairan warned him about . Matsuda does not comply and is eventually tied to a chair in a remote building . As the Earth 's atmosphere heats up due to the approaching world , Ginko again arrives to learn why Planet R is not yet destroyed . They locate Matsuda through Pairan technology and gather the formula for the device . The scientists then all watch as the nuclear device is shot from the space station and destroys Planet R , cooling the atmosphere and removing the threat . Ginko then changes back to her original form aboard the space station .

= = Production = =

After the success of Toho 's 1954 film *Godzilla* , which depicted a giant dinosaur attacking Tokyo , many Japanese film studios began to produce similar monster films , including *Warning from Space* . Along with other films such as *Shintoh's Terrifying Attack of the Flying Saucers* and the American *Forbidden Planet* , *Warning from Space* became part of a fledgling subgenre of films based around science fiction creatures . The film also used the theme of atomic bombs that was present in many films at the time , but showed how the weapons , which devastated the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki a decade earlier , could be put to good use . Still others noted the film used another common theme of cosmic collisions in the style of earlier films such as the 1931 film *End of the World* , which depicted a comet on a collision course with the Earth .

The Pairan aliens were designed by the prominent avant-garde artist Tarō Okamoto , which used a single eye that is common among science fiction aliens . Although official film posters showed the Pairan aliens towering over buildings , the actual cinematic version of the aliens were on the scale of humans , at about two meters . Walt Lee reports that Gentaro Nakajima 's novel , on which this film was based , was in turn based on the Japanese folktale *Kaguya hime* . The film was one of fourteen Japanese color pictures produced in early 1956 , but the first color Japanese science-fiction film .

= = Release = =

Warning From Space was released in Japan in 1956 . Daiei also hoped to find a foreign market for *Warning from Space* , though the company found difficulty in selling it . Nevertheless , the film played at both King Cinema in Rangoon , Burma and Tai Khoon Theatre in Sandakan , Malaysia , in 1958 . The film did help Daiei achieve some success in the genre . It was passed for release , anglicized as *Warning from Space* , by the BBFC in the United Kingdom in 1957 , and later in the United States in 1963 . It was picked up by American International Television later in the 1960s . The film was released in Spain as *Asalto a la Tierra* , and in France as *Le Satellite Mystérieux* . *Warning from Space* has since fallen into the public domain , allowing companies to distribute the free film on DVD .

= = Reception = =

From retrospective reviews , a review included in the book *A Guide to Apocalyptic Cinema* , author Charles P. Mitchell called the film " bizarre " and gave it two stars . Similarly , in a 1978 issue of the magazine *Cue* , viewers were warned " don 't watch it . " In the 1986 *Encyclopedia of Science Fiction Movies* by Phil Hardy and Denis Gifford , the film is accused of using the science fiction clichés of flying saucers and atomic bombs . Gyan Prakash , in his book *Noir Urbanisms : Dystopic Images of the Modern City* , called the film " charming . " The film was noted for its misleading characterization of astronomers , with one author observing that it advanced the cinematic portrayal of astronomers as scientists in lab coats peering through an enormous telescope .

In his biography of Stanley Kubrick , author John Baxter traces Kubrick 's interest in science fiction films , which led to his 2001 : *A Space Odyssey* , to the Japanese kaiju eiga films of the 1950s , including *Warning from Space* , with its " nameless two metre tall black starfish with a single central eye , who walk en pointe like ballet dancers . " Baxter notes that despite their " clumsy model sequences , the films were often well photographed in colour ... and their dismal dialogue was delivered in well designed and well lit sets . "

= = Legacy = =

Warning from Space influenced Toho 's *Gorath* , a 1963 film which depicts a rogue planet on a collision course with Earth . The planet Paira in *Warning from Space* may have been an influence in the Daiei films *Gamera vs. Guiron* and *Gamera : Super Monster* , which feature the planet Tera , another planet on the opposite of Earth 's orbit . Critics have also noted plot similarities to the later Toho film *Monster Zero* , in that a friendly planet warns Japan of the atom bomb and subsequently

assists in celestial defense . The Pairans ' asteroidean appearance is similar to that of a later pentagrammic creation , Starro , a villain from DC Comics ' Justice League .