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# A Brief Respite[[1]](#footnote-1)

This refers to a lull or brief moment of peace and quiet usually during a time of difficulty or trouble. For me, watching the NHK program 雲霧仁左衛門 every Saturday evening is such a brief respite from all the negative news bombarding us every day. I like this program for several reasons, the two foremost being the beautiful cinematography and the unhurried and clear speech of the actors which makes it easy for me to understand what they say and follow the story. I especially enjoy the performances of Nakai Kiichi, who plays the protagonist Kumokiri Nizaemon, and Kunimura Jun, who plays Abe Shikibu, the Bakufu official tasked with capturing Kumokiri.

Being an avid fan of Japanese history and culture I also enjoy this program because it is set during the Edo Period, and even though it is fiction, the scenery showing the buildings and lifestyles of that era are interesting for me. The music is also soothing. All of these factors help to create a brief respite in which I can forget the troubles of the world and the pressures of my work. I also wonder about how realistic the portrayals are, especially in regards to how people lived, dressed, behaved, and appeared at that time. I suspect that the television program presents them in a romanticized light and that in reality everything was much bleaker than as shown in the program.

I think we need moments such as these, times when we can forget, even if only briefly, the troubles and problems afflicting the world today. I know that I do. It is during this brief respite that I am able to think of other matters than the depressing accounts of rising pandemic infections, protests occurring around the world, and just about all of the news which strikes me as being negative. Even the news clips of people once again gathering and going out as they did prior to the pandemic disturbs me because it is almost certain that such behavior will inevitably lead to a further increase in infections.

Respites tend to be brief, especially in times of trouble, so it is always with some regret when each episode of Kumokiri ends after a short 38 minutes and I am again returned to the real world and all its problems.

1. [小康](https://ejje.weblio.jp/content/%E5%B0%8F%E5%BA%B7) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)