

Battle Without Honor and Humanity Synopsis

Synopsis

In the teeming black markets of postwar Japan, Shozo Hirono and his buddies find themselves in a new war between factious and ambitious yakuza. After joining boss Yamamori, Shozo is drawn into a feud with his sworn brother's family, the Doi. But that is where the chivalry ends and the hypocrisy, betrayal, and assassinations begin.

1946-1955: While in jail for killing a yakuza, Shozo Hirono does a favor for Hiroshi Wakasugi, another yakuza belonging to the Doi family. When Shozo is released, he joins his new friends (Sakai, Ueda, Makihara, Yano, Yamagata, Kanbara, Shinkai, and Arita) to form their own family under boss Yoshio Yamamori. By rigging an assembly election, Yamamori crosses Doi and, as a result, Wakasugi leaves the Doi to join his sworn brother Hirono in the Yamamori family. Conversely, Kanbara sells out Yamamori and joins the Doi family. Hirono assassinates Doi for Yamamori and return to jail. Wakasugi kills Kanbara and is in turn killed by the cops after being set up by Yamamori. Meanwhile, an internal conflict between Yamamori and Sakai unfolds over the sale of drugs by Shinkai and Arita. Yamamori has Arita kill Ueda, and Sakai wipes out Shinkai and Yano. Feeling threatened by Sakai's growing power, Yamamori tries to lure Hirono into killing Sakai, but he balks in hopes of restoring the family. Yamamori uses Yano's men to assassinate Sakai and succeeds. In disgust, Hirono turns his back on the Yamamori family.

Director Kinji Fukasaku

Born in Ibaraki Prefecture in 1930, Fukasaku is the director of TOEI's legendary yakuza series, "Battles Without Honor and Humanity". He worked as an assistant director at Toei Co., Ltd. from 1953 until 1961, when he burst into the limelight with the daring film noir, "Greed in Broad Daylight". He worked tirelessly thereafter, often making three films a year. Shot in cinemascope with a hand-held camera, "Battles Without Honor and Humanity" (1973) broke box office records, turned the yakuza genre upside down and placed Fukasaku in the pantheon of Japanese masters. Acknowledged by Quentin Tarantino and John Woo as a key influence, his 60th film, "Battle Royale" was sold to more than 80 countries. He passed away in 2003. His son, Kenta Fukasaku is also a film director.