**Interesting real facts about the tsunami movie**

**Two inaccuracies with the movie…**

* Belón (mom) has praised the film's accuracy, noting only one difference in the colour of one of her children's toys: "The ball was yellow and in the film it is red," [she told the BBC](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-20783441). "The rest is exactly the same." Historians can probably let that one go.

The real family are Spanish, but living in Japan at the time of the Tsunami.

\*\*Disproportionate attention is given to rich white people versus the mostly not so rich Asian people who were the overwhelming majority of victims of the tsunami.\*\*

**True Facts**

* Many of the extras are actual survivors of the tsunami.
* Producers of the film heard an interview on Spanish radio where the family told their story of surviving the Tsunami and decided to make a film based on it.
* The crew filmed partially on location at the actual resort, since rebuilt, where the Belon family was vacationing when the tsunami hit. For the tsunami destruction scenes, a scaled model of the resort was used.
* The pool scene featuring the arrival of the tsunami was shot at the actual hotel pool where Belón and her family were, and it was staged in the exact same way.  
    
  The film opens with the sound of a jet engine because that’s how Maria Belón described the sound of the tsunami.
* Belón describes the water not as a wave, but as a wall. The terror is still recognizable in her voice as she recalls the moment she popped up out of the water to cling to a tree, concluded her family was dead and decided that she wanted to join them. Seeing her son pass by in the water instantly put her back into survival mode.
* The scene where Maria and Lucas hear the boy crying and set off to help him has been described to her as a heroic act, but Belón views it differently. “It was a selfish decision. It was something we did in order to go on with life.”
* This is another nice present we got from the water,” says Belón, referring to their discovery of a still-closed Coke can while she and her son wandered the destruction. She recalls that she’s a strict mom who only allows soda on special occasions, but she decided this circumstance totally counted.  
    
  Henry searches the hospital and keeps missing Maria and their son, in real life he made two trips through the hospital to miss Maria both times.

Family recap:

* Tomas (8), his father Quique, mother Maria and brothers Simon (5), and Lucas (10), were staying at the Orchid Resort Hotel in the Khao Lak region of Thailand.

Tomas, his father and Simon were in the pool playing with a ball when the tsunami hit.

Mrs Alvarez-Belon was watching as Lucas got out of the water to fetch the ball when they heard the roar of the 30ft (9.1 metres) wave.

When she resurfaced, Mrs Alvarez-Belon and Lucas took refuge up a tree until being taken to hospital by a stranger.

Tomas and Simon were left clinging to a tree for hours until they heard their father calling them.

It was two days before the entire family was reunited.

Tomas' story has been made into a film

Tomas said: "It was very hard. It was a time period where you knew that some of your family members were dead."

Mrs Alvarez-Belon spent more than a year being treated in hospitals in Singapore and Spain following a life-saving operation to repair injuries to her thigh and chest.

<http://frontrowfeatures.com/2013/01/03/nothing-is-impossible-for-maria-belon/>

interview written out with the mom

<http://on.aol.com/video/the-true-story-behind-the-impossible-517617192>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gx-W4Qv4fno>

maria on the view

**Why were Maria and Lucas hit by a second wave coming from the opposite direction to the first wave?**

It didn't come from the opposite direction. After they got hit by the first wave, the water changes direction and flows back into the ocean, meaning that the second wave was also coming from the ocean. This is unclear in the film, yes, but with a little common sense, this can be deduced. Think about how waves break normally on a beach: the wave comes in and washes on the shore and is pulled back out, what's called "undertow". The same principle applied in this scene only on a much larger scale.

**What's the long, stringy thing Maria pulls out of her mouth when she's vomiting?**

Most likely it's a piece of seaweed. Though we don't see what happens, a piece of seaweed had somehow forced its way down her throat while she was struggling underwater. The force of the water rushing inland had probably filled Maria's throat faster than she could realize and a lot of water was forced into her stomach with the seaweed.

This is like my High 5 out the door message…..

In this movie, one minute the mother is peacefully reading in paradise; the next moment she is clinging onto a tree for life. One minute her young sons are snorkeling to view brightly-colored fish, frolicking with dad in the pool, and being called to see pristine aqua waters; the next moment, they are submerged and tossed by violent waters into darkness.

Take from the movie lessons you can apply to your own life: Paradise can quickly turn to hell. Circumstances can change in an instant. Life, and those you hold dear, are precious.

