

**Japan Culture Research Project 2003**

**Topic: Youkai and Kaidan**

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Robert and Kappa in Kyoto, April 2003

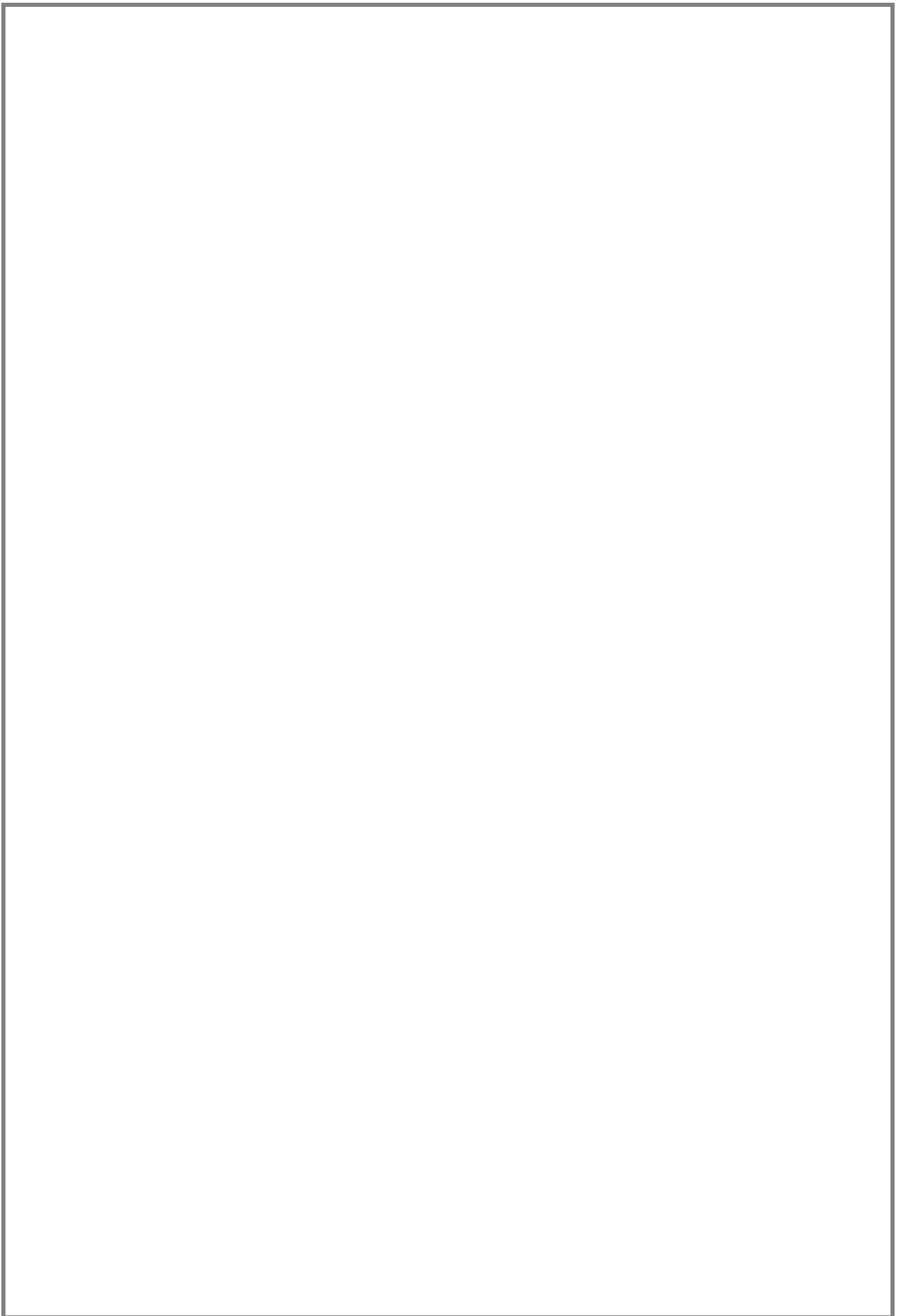
## *Preface*

*As a child I spent countless hours playing in my neighborhood, collecting insects and wild animals, just like most boys used to do. And because I spent my first few years in Florida, I enjoyed catching lizards the most. I had many lizards that I kept as pets, and thus I became interested in them. My parents, as good parents, encouraged me to learn more and bought me books about lizards and dinosaurs. So it wasn't long before I discovered Godzilla, who had just arrived to the United States about the same time.*

*My parents took me to see the movie in theaters and I remember that I loved it, and I was convinced that it was the best movie ever. Godzilla became quite popular in the States, and my parents bought me a few toys, which I used to carry with me at all times. Then they began to show Godzilla movies on TV, and I remember watching every single movie, of course there weren't so many movies, so they began to show Gamera and other movies as well, thus as a child I became a fan of Japanese monsters, even though I had no idea they were from Japan.*

*The first contact with Japanese Youkai, as such, happened many years ago, during my high school days. A friend of mine who had a Super Nintendo once rented a video game called "Geomon," a story about a tricky thief. The enemies in the game were all Youkai. The jumping umbrellas, the long necked ladies and the turtle men were not the monsters I knew from western culture, but they fun and memorable.*

*A few months later I found another video game for the Super Nintendo called "Pocky and Rocky," where you choose to play as either Pocky a young Shinto maiden or as Rocky the Raccoon (well actually probably a Tanuki). Your mission was to stop some goblins that had kidnapped the princess of the moon and her rabbits. This game had even more monsters, yet most important of all I noticed that many monsters were the same in both games, thus there was some common source for them, and I became interested in finding out the origin of these monsters. Unfortunately I was too young and I had no idea where to begin at the time.*



## Introduction

I have been only one year so far in Japan, but thanks to my students, the staff at KIA, my friends in Japan and the kindness of the people in general, I have been able to learn a lot about the country, its society, customs and language.

There are infinite possibilities of topics to write about Japanese culture, but before coming to Japan nevertheless I had already decided to study about Youkai, which is something I had been very interested in, yet didn't really understand at all. When I began to look for information about Youkai and Kaidan I noticed there is plenty of information, but it just isn't available in English, so I hope the information of this report may be useful to others, who like me have seen Youkai, but couldn't really understand them.

One thing I have noticed during my research is that most people think that Youkai is a strange topic to study, and not a very important aspect of Japan, but I completely digress. Japan's export of entertainment has increased dramatically in the last few years and more and more people around the world are being exposed to Japanese culture, and because of the Youkai boom, especially Youkai. Entertainment media is full of Youkai and every time more people have a chance to enjoy Japanese Youkai, either in games, comics or animations like "Spirited Away". The fact that I was able to find "Gegege no Kitaro" in English is a sign of this trend. Japan's youkai will most likely be highly recognized around the world in the next decade. I am sure Kappa, Tengu and many others will be as famous world wide as Vampires, Elves, Dragons, Mummies, etc.

I hope this report helps foreigners and Japanese alike to learn more about Youkai and Kaidan. Youkai are fun, and we can learn many things about Japan. Youkai come from the imagination of the people, and thus are not restricted by anything, they are a pure product of the mind of a country.



This report is divided in to two parts. Part one gives some background information about youkai, and the current Youkai boom. While part two is a short compendium of Japanese youkai. Finally at the end of the report there is an appendix with six selected Kaidan stories from Lafcadio Hearn.

This report is part of my "Ushinokoku Project." Visit the website for updated news and more information about Youkai beginning October 2003.

<http://www.ushinokoku.com>

**∞ PART I ∞**

## Kaidan, Ghost Stories in Japan

One of the most popular and oldest forms of entertainment has been enjoying stories, and because humans are multifaceted there are many kinds of stories. Some kinds of common stories for example are funny stories, adventures stories, love stories and strange stories, or Kaidan as they are called in Japanese. Kaidan literally means “Mysterious Talk”, and is a little broader in concept than the English meaning of “Ghost Story.” Stories about cursed objects, mysterious lands and unsolved mysteries, for example would all fit within Kaidan label, but not within ghost stories label.

In the US ghost stories has traditionally been a kind of story that we tell during autumn, specifically Halloween. Whereas in Japan, Kaidan have been traditionally used as a way to cool down from the suffocating heat of summer. Before the wonders of electricity and air conditioning it was almost impossible to escape the summer heat, so the Japanese figured out that telling ghost stories was a good way to refresh themselves. The cold chill of fear that follows a scary story cooled them people down, and provide some temporary relief. Thus the best season to enjoy monsters and ghost stories had been in summer.



Even today during the hot months of summer we are “treated” with many Kaidan and other forms of entertainment with Youkai, Japanese monsters. On television we can see Kaidan dramas, and many long running stories will have a Kaidan story special or something like that. In bookstores, during summer, we can see find many Kaidan books and scholarly books about Kaidan and Youkai as well.

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It is now summer time, and two long time running forms of Kaidan and youkai entertainment are the Haunted houses and Kabuki Kaidan plays.

First lets take a look at the haunted houses. At almost all big festivals, which are a common thing during summertime we can find a haunted house. Most haunted houses are an eclectic mix of

youkai ranging from the traditional youkai, western monsters like vampires (Dracula as it is usually called in Japan), and the monster of Dr. Frankenstein, the characters of Gegege no Kitaro, and modern characters of comics and games.

Secondly we have the plays at Kabuki-za, there we can enjoy Japan's classical Kaidan. This summer I went to Kabuki-za to check out what Kaidan play I could see. Here is a synopsis of the play I transcribed from the program's pamphlet.



### **Kaidan Botan Doro (The Ghost Story of the Peony Lantern)**

*“One of the most famous ghost stories of Japan shows the ghost of a beautiful young girl who visits the man she loves nightly, her way lit by a lantern decorated with peonies. The clatter of her wooden clogs announces her appearance, “...karannn...karannn...” Originally a Chinese story, it became a Japanese classic when it was transformed into a long Rakugo story by Sanyutei Encho (1839-1900). Otsuyu the daughter of a samurai family falls in love with a young samurai named Shinzaburo, but she falls sick and dies when he stops visiting her. Her ghost begins to visit him nightly preceded by the ghost of her nursemaid carrying a lantern decorated with peonies and he welcomes these meetings, not realizing that she is dead. But a priest sees the signs of death and protects Shinzaburo with holy amulets and a powerful Buddhist statue. The ghosts then bribe Shinzaburo's greedy servant Tomozo and his wife Omine to take the amulets away. The result is that Shinzaburo is killed by the ghosts and Tomozo and Omine run away with the money. But the money doesn't bring them Happiness.” [Kubiki-za Theater Program, August 11<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> 2003]*



## **The Youkai Boom**

Although Kaidan were originally a summer-time entertainment, and people thought about them only during that season, nowadays we can find Youkai all year-round. Scholars that study Kaidan and Youkai have called this phenomenon “The Youkai Boom”. People have rediscovered the entertainment value of Youkai, thanks to movies like Mononoke Hime and Spirited away, in addition to tons of other Manga stories as well as video games like Pokemon for example.

The Youkai boom, of course didn't happen spontaneously, it began slowly and in our age of science and reason, the youkai boom has actually been a surprise to many. In Japan during Edo period there were hundreds and hundreds of Youkai, but with the Meiji restoration and the rapid development, many Youkai were pushed into extinction. They no longer had a purpose in society. Allegorically we could say that science began to occupy the natural



habitat of Youkai, and began to exterminate many of them. Nevertheless along with science came a few new youkai like Aliens, Robots, Mutants, Psychic Phenomenon, Super viruses, Mysterious phone calls, Cyborgs, Prehistoric animals, and Clones.

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The Youkai boom is two sided. On one hand youkai have made a resurgence in our forms of entertainment, and on the other scholars have realized that youkai are an important field of study. Youkai were created from our imagination and thus are in a way representations of our thoughts and society, they have an important anthropological value, as we can learn much about a society by looking at the youkai that exist. Youkai like any other invention, are created where there is a need, so when something is mysterious or difficult to explain people make use of youkai, thus youkai are a mirror of society. Youkai are like a sort of envelope, they lay just beyond what is accepted and understood. Thus we can learn many things about people by looking at the monsters they produce.

Yet now that we have turned to science to explain the unexplainable, youkai are no longer a good way to define a society in large, but youkai can still give us many clues about what is important and what are the belief of a society.

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## Fathers of the Youkai Boom

When you ask most Japanese people about Kaidan they immediately think about two important figures Shigeru Mizuki, and Lafcadio Hearn, probably the most recognizable names within the world of Youkai. Yet two other monolithic figures who have played key roles to keep Japan's traditional Kaidan and Youkai alive were Yanagita Kunio and Sekien Toriyama. Because of these four authors traditional Kaidan and Youkai have been kept alive, and are actually thriving during the current Youkai boom.

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### ***Shigeru Mizuki***

Shigeru Mizuki studied fine arts in Musashino. Later he was conscripted in the imperial army and assigned to the south pacific. During World War II Mizuki lost his left arm during a bombing.

After the war In 1957, he began creating comics. He wrote many mangas beginning with "Rocket Man", "Yurei Ikka" and "Kappa no Sanpei". But by far his most important work has been "Gegege no Kitaro", originally a the stories of Kitaro began as a kami-shibai (dramatically narrated picture card stories) and eventually moved into a boy's magazine. The first comics of Kitaro were titled "Hakaba no Kitaro" ("Kitaro of the graveyard"), but when it became an animated series its name changed to the widely known "Gegege no Kitaro". Kitaro so far has been serialized in your animated programs and a few movies. Thanks to this Youkai stayed alive in the mind of the Japanese, and it led up to a generation of Youkai lovers, who are responsible for keeping the Youkai Boom going.



### ***Lafcadio Hearn***

Lafcadio Hearn was born in Lefkas, Greece. He was the son of Dr. Charles Hearn from Ireland, and Rosa Cassimati from Greece. He traveled alone to the United States where he became a remarkable writer and Journalist. Yet Hearn was not a very social or easygoing person, and had tendencies to get into arguments, and cause polemic.

He came to Japan in 1890 as a journey reporter, but as soon as he arrived in Yokohama, he quit because he didn't like the contract. Instead he worked for the next 6 years as a High school English teacher.

In 1896, he moved to Kobe and worked as a journalist, he became a Japanese citizen and began to use the name Koizumi Yakumo. An uncommon name taken from the "Kojiki." Shortly afterwards he moved to Tokyo and began to work as a teacher at the Imperial University of Tokyo.



### ***Yanagita Kunio***

Kunio Yanagita (1875-1962) is said to be the founder of Japanese folklore studies. Yanagita conducted research about Japanese folklore, and established the methods for future folklore research in Japan.

He worked as a journalist for the Asahi Shinbun from 1919 to 1930, and wrote over 1000 articles and 100 books during his career. Yanagita was interested in all aspects of folklore, and not particularly in Youkai, but his work Yokai Meii, a compilation of Youkai names, inspired Shigeru Mizuki to recreate many youkai such as the Ittan Momen.



## ***Sekien Toriyama***

Toriyama Sekien, an edo period artist, compiled many previous varieties of “Youkai Art” and passed them on to posterity through his works. The most famous and recognizable of these works is “Gazu Hyakki Yagyō” (Images of the one hundred demon parade). He is mostly known as the teacher of Utamarō, a famous Unkyō-e artist famous for depicting beautiful women.



## The Youkai of Japan

Japan has a wide variety of Youkai, ranging from the amusing and lovely to the terrible and grotesque. In the past Japan was greatly influenced by many ideas from China, and from Buddhism. Along with new ideas also came some monsters. But even these imported Youkai changed and adapted to Japanese society over time and became Japanese, the most famous youkai that followed this pattern of development is the Tengu, that changed from a dog into a red faced long nosed monk. There were also many spirits and youkai that have inhabited Japan since times immemorial, like the Kitsune.



The most popular youkai in ancient literature were the Oni, who the Samurai fought on many occasions; Tengu, who tried to trick holy men; and Yuurei, that we can find in tragic love stories. The other hundreds of youkai belonged to the peasants, and remained a part of the oral culture, and folklore like the Kappa.

**∞ PART II ∞**

The Short Compendium of Youkai from Japan that I have compiled is by no means an exhaustive list, but In the future I hope to complete a more exhaustive work about Youkai in English. I think the reader will find in this compendium many well-known Youkai as well as many not-so-well-known Youkai

Classifying Youkai into categories is very difficult, and one could say in grand part a feeble thing to do, but I decided upon four categories, Youkai, Obake, Oni and Yurei; but just like any categorization in any field of study, these categories are mostly arbitrary and used should only be used as an aid. The divisions used for the compendium are related to the “cause of origin” of the creature.

**Youkai:** Normally translated as goblins, these are monsters that are born monsters, they simply exist like any other animal may exist and are not really bound to the metaphysical world. They have varied personalities and in general are just mischievous.

**Obake:** An obake is a supernatural creature that is originated from something else. “Bakeru” in Japanese is a verb that means, “to change.” Usually the presence of negative feelings is what creates Obake. So generally speaking when Japanese people hear the word Obake they think of “evil monsters.” Nevertheless I defined this category by cause of origin, not on any moral basis, and not all Obake are necessarily harmful.

**Oni:** The Oni are creatures that inhabit hell, the Buddhist hell. People, who have sinned, in general giving into worldly desires, become Oni.

**Yuurei:** Usually translated as ghosts, but the category is much broader in the Japanese mind frame. Spirits may be a better approximation of the word. Following this line of thought I have used this category for spirits and not only ghosts.



妖怪

**Youkai**

## 垢舐 (Aka-name)

Mud Licker

The Aka-name is a very old youkai and not many people remember it now. The Aka-name looks something like a cross between a frog and a human, with wild hair, a long tongue, and feet that end in a single clawed toe. It enters the bathroom when no one is around and licks its surfaces, leaving behind a trail of sludge.

Because the bathroom is a place where water and dirt mix, it is a place where many things live, including slugs, molds and bacteria. The sludge produced by these things appears in all bathrooms, and it was said to be the work of the Aka-name.



## 足長手長 (Ashi-Naga-Te-Naga)

Long legs - Long arms

This youkai is actually not one, but two youkai. Ashi-Naga (from “Long-leg Country”) looks like a human with extremely long legs (about 2.7 meters long) and very short arms; and Te-Naga (from “Long-arm Country”) on the contrary has very long arms about 3 meters long and short legs. These two youkai are always encountered together, with Te-Naga sitting on Ashi-Naga’s shoulders. Together they look like a giant, and compensate their shortcomings with a perfect symbiosis.

They were seen around Chokai Mountain, between Yamagata and Akita prefectures, but now you can encounter them all around Japan’s coastline, including Kanagawa’s Shonan. Ashi-Naga-Te-Naga can be found catching fish along the beach, just before a front of bad weather.

## 土用坊主 (Doyou-bouzu)

Midseason Bonze

The Doyou-bouzu is a native youkai of Kanagawa prefecture. It looks like an earthworm, with a human face. It lives underground and rarely pops its head out from underground. The Doyou-bozou comes at the middle of each season (Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall), according to the lunar calendar, not the solar calendar, and you can see him while you are weeding your garden. It is a friendly youkai that doesn’t harm people.

## 蝦蟇 (Gama)

Dire Toad

The Gama looks like a giant toad, or bullfrog, big enough to swallow a person whole. It is an evil predator of humans, which lives under the wooden foundations of old houses. From their hiding spot they feed on the inhabitants of the household. At night while everyone is asleep the Gama uses its long flexible tongue to reach into the house and slowly drain the life force of its hosts. After some weeks of this nightly activity the hosts becomes weak and ill, too weak to even move, then the Gama strikes, it enters the house and eats its hosts in one bite.

## 一目小僧 (Hitotsu-me-kozou)

One Eyed Monk

When you ask a Japanese person to tell you about youkai one of the most common answers is the Hitotsu-me-kozou. This youkai looks like a young Buddhist monk, but has only one eye in the middle of its head, and a very long tongue. It enjoys scaring people but is more or less inoffensive and normally won't cause harm it simply enjoys scaring people. It is said that you can ward off a Hitotsu-me-Kozou by hanging a weaved basket on a pole at the entrance of your house. The Hitotsu-me-kozou will feel ashamed about its single eye when it sees the many "eyes" of the basket, and leave the area in immediately.

In the Youkai compilation of Toriyama Sekien, there is an image of an One eyed monk, but its not a Hitotsu-me-kozou, it's the Ao-Bouzu. The Ao-bouzu, is an adult monk, who is said to be the teacher or leaders of other youkai, while the hitotsu-me-kozou are mischiefs.

## 井戸の神 (Ido-no-gami)

Well Spirit



The Ido-no-gami looks like a human with the face of a catfish that inhabits wells, and sometimes is confused with a Kappa. They protect the wells they inhabit, and as long as a community takes good care of its well the Ido-no-gami will be pleased and everything will be fine. But if the community does not take good care of its well the Ido-no-gami will be enraged and cause disease.

If you throw something dirty into a well the Ido-no-Gami of the well will appear and punish you, so remember to not throw junk into a well, or you might be thrown in there as well!



## 鎌鼬 (Kama-Itachi)

Sickle Weasel

The Kama-Itachi is a weasel with sickle-like claws, and incredibly fast. So fast it cannot be seen when it is moving. When they hunt they look like a whirlwind, cutting and slashing everything in their way.

Kama Itachi occasionally attack people, and when they do so, they kama-Itachi come in trios. They attack using the following strategy, the first one pushes the victim on to the floor, the second slashes the victim and the third heals the wound so it won't bleed too much. Of course this all happens so fast to even notice how many kama-Itachi there really are, but it is based on evidence of the wounds caused by the kama-itachi's attack, which are generally very deep, but they bleed little.



## 河童 (kappa)

River Child



The Kappa is the most popular Youkai in Japan. Originally quite monkey-like, it is believed that their origin was as monkey servants of river spirits. These Monkey Kappa are nowadays called Kawa-Saru (River Monkey).

The name of Kappa is now used for another youkai. The youkai people call a Kappa nowadays is a green turtle boy with webbed fingers, bobbed hair and a bowl-like depression on the top of its head. The bowl on the top of its head is its distinguishing figure, and the Kappa must keep this bowl full of water because it is what gives it strength. If

the water is spilled the Kappa becomes weak and eventually dies. Some kappa are good and help villagers, while others are evil and drown children and cattle, so it is hard to say what is the personality of a kappa, it is probably better to not stereotype the Kappa.

Yet for a youkai the kappa is very multifaceted and enjoys playing, having matches of shogi (a game similar to chess), and sumo wrestling with travelers, but beware that kappa is incredibly strong for its size. The best thing to do is to bow deeply before a match; the Kappa will bow too and spill the water from its head. They also are bone-settlers and irrigation engineers, so a friendly kappa was an asset to a farming village.

Kappa's diet is not so varied, they feed mostly on two things, the guts of humans and horses that they drown in rivers, or their favorite food cucumbers. Because kappa likes cucumbers a kind of sushi prepared with cucumbers is called a kappa-maki (kappa-roll). As they say the best way to a person's heart is through their stomach, so the best way to befriend a kappa is to give it cucumbers. You should write your name on a cucumber and throw it into the river, the Kappa in the river will see your name and remember you gave him a cucumber and won't bother you or your family. The Kappa has a good and long memory, so once a friend always a friend.

## 川獺 (Kawa-uso)

River Otter

The Kawa-uso like the Tanuki and Kitsune is a henge, an animal capable of shape changing. The Kawa-uso live in families near rivers and use team work to confuse travelers, so they fall into the river. The Kawa-uso unlike the Tanuki and the Kitsune is a henge of Chinese origin. In ancient China it was believed that Kawa-uso could transform into beautiful children. Once the Kawa-uso became a Japanese youkai nevertheless it gained the ability to transform into any type of person, but in most stories atleast one of the Kawa-uso transforms into a beautiful boy or girl.

## 狐 (Kitsune)

Fox

Kitsune are foxes, but in Japan foxes are capable of many magical feats. They live in societies like those of humans and many times draw humans into their world with their magic. The Kitsune tend to be beautiful, elegant and well-mannered tricksters and usually transform into beautiful women to trick others.

The Kitsune have two more aspects that are equally important to that of tricksters. First we have the Kitsune-bi (Kitsune Fire) these are mysterious fires we can see at night in the distance, similar to what western people call Fairy Fires.

Second the Kitsune-tsuki or Kitsune possession. Kitsune many times poses people in order to communicate some important information of the gods, or to play tricks, but occasionally they do it simply to ask for food.

Kitsune are also closely related with Inari, the Fox god. Inari is a messenger of the gods and brings good luck to the people (farmers), so Inari shrines can be found all across Japan, and is without a doubt the most popular Shinto god.

Finally it is useful to note that Japanese foxes love Aburage (deep fried tofu), so gifts of aburage are the most common offering to Inari shrines. And this liking has also has given the name to Inarizushi (A sushi ball wrapped in aburage) and Kitsune Udon.

## 子泣き爺 (Konaki Jijii)

Old Man crybaby

The konakijijii a youkai from the mountains of Shikoku, it looks like a human baby with the face of an old man. Its primary power is the ability to control its weight at will, it can weigh as little as a feather or as much as an elephant.

They normally wait on the side of the road, crying loudly in order to draw the attention of someone. When someone finally does arrive and tries to pick the poor baby up the konaki-jijii becomes incredibly heavy and crushes the victim.

The Konaki-jijii and the Ubu-me are monsters that attack in similar fashion and there might be some overlap between these two monsters.

## 貉 (Mujina)

Badger

If you ask most Japanese what is a Mujina, they are not really sure. Everyone knows that there is a henge, transforming animal, called a Mujina, but they can't explain what it really is. Reason for this is that the Mujina is actually the same as a Tanuki, it was declared to be the same animal in the court of law, when a hunter that was hunting Tanuki declared he was not hunting Tanuki, but Mujina. Mujina was the word used in certain dialects of Japanese to refer to Tanuki in the past.

Although they are the same animal the Mujina is normally thought of as transforming into a faceless man or woman, not a monk or objects. The Mujina is a more mysterious youkai that enjoys scaring people while the Tanuki is more funny and in general prefers to trick.

## 塗り壁 (Nurikabe)

Blocking Wall

The Nurikabe is a youkai from northern Kyuushu, it is normally invisible, but it looks like a wall with short stubby arms and legs. The Nurikabe can pop up all of the sudden making it difficult to get to places we need to reach.

You take too long to reach someplace you need to reach, along a well-known path, it is probably because of the doings of a Nurikabe.

## 送り犬 (Okuri-Inu)

Hunting Dog

These youkai live in packs and look just like a feral dogs or wolves. They stalk travelers at night, waiting for the traveler to trip and fall. If a traveler does trip the Okuri-Inu come out from the woods and pounce on the hapless traveler and eat him alive at once.

The Okuri-Inu are very dangerous, but luckily it is easy to protect oneself from the Okuri-Inu while traveling. An offering of Sekihan (Red beans and rice) will be enough to satisfy their hunger. In some places these youkai are also called Yama-Inu.

## 雷じゅう (Raijuu)

Lightning Weasel

With storms and typhoons comes lightning and with lightning comes the Raijuu, these creature looks something like a large weasel with pointy hair. It is an odd youkai that enjoys eating navels. Because of this whenever there is a thunder and lightning, mothers warn their children to cover their navel, so the raijuu can't steal it.

All though the Raijuu may seem like an unusual Youkai, on the contrary it is one of the most famous youkai of all time! Pokemon's hero Pikachu is actually an undeveloped Raijuu. If a Pikachu is exposed to a "lightning stone," it transforms into a true Raijuu.

## 轆轤首 (Rokuro-kubi)

Long Necked Goblin

Rokuro-kubi are human-like youkai, who actually enjoy living among human society. Rokuro-kubi are very social and tend to act just like another member of the community. For this reason it is impossible to guess who is a Rokuro-kubi and who is not. So maybe someone you know is actually a rokuro-kubi.

The Rokuro-kubi's special feature is its necks that can stretch incredible distances and twist like a snake. Although the Rokuro-kubi normally keeps its true identity a secret, it has the urge to occasionally show its true form to people. So in order to satisfy their needs they often show themselves to drunk and blind people, to avoid exposing their true identity. Most rokuro-kubi are women, but there are a few men as well, they can easily breed with humans, giving rise to Hanyou (Half-Youkai).



### 鯨 (Shachihoko) Killer Whale.

The Shachihoko is a Chinese sea monster that looks like a fish with the head of a tiger, and it can transform into a Tiger when it reaches land. They normally can be found swimming next to whales, watching that the whale follows the laws of the sea, which restricts the whale to eat only small fish. If a whale breaks this law the Shachihoko bites off the whale's tongue, killing the whale.

Although a Youkai the Shachihoko is more famous as a traditional architectural piece. Golden Shachihoko have been routinely used to decorate the roofs of castles, as to protect the castles from fire and other natural disasters. The Shachihoko of Nagoya castle are the largest of their kind and especially famous.

### 狸 (Tanuki) Raccoon-Dog

Tanuki are another symbol of Japanese folklore, like the Kappa. Tanuki are a kind of youkai that is called a henge, transforming animals. They normally are very rough in character, and transform into crazy old monks, and unlike other henge they don't transform into beautiful humans. Another peculiar thing about tanuki's transformations is that they transform into objects, like teapots or rolls of silk. Also among their magical repertory they can create illusions, like making leaves look like money and manure look like rice balls.

Another very interesting belief about Tanukis' that males' testicle are supposedly incredibly big, measuring around 8 tatami in size. There is a wealth of Youkai art in which the large size of Tanuki testicles is

depicted including the image here, where the young Tanuki are using the adults testicles as a drum in an event called a Tanuki-hayashi. A Tanuki-hayashi is when we hear mysterious music of drums in a forest at night.

Tanuki are of the few henge that are known to really hurt humans, which makes many stories of these furry fellows quite disturbing. Even in fairytales tanuki are rather aggressive.

Like the kappa and the kitsune there is food named after tanuki, its tanuki soba. The origin of the name is not really clear, but it might be because have been the specialty of a soba restaurant located near Tanuki-Hashi in Shibuya.

## 天狗 (Ten-gu)

Heaven Hound (Japanese Long-nosed Goblin)

Tengu is a common name for a whole family of Youkai that inhabit mountains and play tricks on travelers, especially Buddhist monks. Tengu are often related with Yamabushi [mountain priests].

The mountains of Japan have always been magical places packed with youkai, but the Tengu came from China along with Buddhism during Nara period. In Chinese they are called T'ien-ku, which means Heaven-hound. These canine demons inhabited mountains and kidnapped people as their primary activity. It was said that shooting stars were hints of T'ien-ku activity.

The Tengu that first arrived in Japan looked just like humans, and it was impossible to tell the difference between a Tengu and a Yamabushi, except for their Tengu magic, which consists mostly of the ability to create illusions.

Later on Tengu began to take on characteristics of birds and thus gained wings and became short Crow-like humanoids called Karasu-Tengu, and Koppa-Tengu (which look like a cross between a monkey and a bird). These two classes of Tengu grow from large eggs, but their leaders the Dai-Tengu are raised from human babies that have been kidnapped. The Dai-Tengu is the most recognizable of all Tengu types, and they look like humans with red faces and long noses. Dai-tengu dress like Yamabushi, with tall single-toothed wooden clogs (Used to climb mountains), and a fan made from Japanese Acacia leaves.

The most famous clan of Tengu is the Kurama clan that lives on Mt. Kurama near Kyoto. They are excellent swordsmen and taught the great Mitamoto-no-Yoshitsune, a hero in the 10<sup>th</sup> century, how to conquer his



enemies. He learned many secrets of the Tengu and used them to battle his enemies, there is probably a connection between these tengu and the origin of Ninja's, who also used to be Yamabushi.

## 海坊主 (Umi-Bouzu)

Sea Monk

The Umi-Bouzu is a huge Youkai with long spiked tentacles, and a slimy head covered with seaweeds. It lives in the ocean and attacks boats and ships.

It can be seen waiting under the surface of the water, it will look like a big shadow. Fortunately for sailors the Umi Bouzu doesn't attack ships unless the crew pays attention to it. So remember if you are on a boat and see an Umi-Bouzu under the water, don't say anything just ignore it!

## やまびこ (Yamabiko)

Valley Echo

The Yamabiko is a black animal that looks something like a cross between a dog and a monkey. They live on mountains and in valleys and are responsible for creating echoes. The Yamabiko can imitate voices perfectly and instinctively repeats whatever it hears.

We can't encounter a Yamabiko by chance, but there is a special ceremony that can be done to summon a Yamabiko. You need 100 candles and you must put them out one by one, then when the light from the last candle goes out, for that split second you can see the Yamabiko appear, but the consequences of such a summoning are unknown.

## 山男 (Yama-Otoko)

Mountain Man

The Yama-Otoko is a large humanoid, sometimes with a single eye, that lives on the mountainside and eats deers, and other large game. They are not very smart, but they are strong and similar to an Ogre, a Cyclops, or a Yeti. They are dangerous and will snack on humans if given a chance. Sometimes the Yamaotoko is classified as an Oni, because of its vicious nature, but they are not inhabitants of hell.

## 山姥 (Yama-Uba)

Mountain Witch

The Yama-Uba looks like women (young or old depending on her age), and live in small huts on the mountains. They are very seemingly very warm-hearted hostesses, but before long they try to eat their guests. They are very powerful, and have many magical spells, and the ability to read peoples minds

Kintaro's (A famous strong boy of fairy tales) mother was a renowned courtesan of the red district of Kyoto, who was impregnated by a ghost of a lover. Dishonored in this fashion she went off to live in the Ashigahara Mountains and raised Kitaro to be a strong boy, who would become a samurai, and one of the four Vassals of General Minamoto-no-Raiko



お 化

け

O-bake

## 油赤子 (Abura-akago)

Oil-licking infant

The Abura-akago is a human infant, which can be recognized by its rough tongue (caused from licking hot oil). A normal infant may transform into an Abura-akago if its mother dies in an unfortunate way.

The deceased mother transforms into a Hito-dama, and the infant transforms into an Abura-akago, and consumes oil in order to maintain its mother's flame.

The Abura-akago can be seen walking around the house looking for oil from oil lamps; and you can usually find its mother's Hito-dama floating in the vicinity. Nowadays that there are few oil lamps, the Abura-akago eat kerosene from kerosene heaters.

## 一单木綿 (Ittanmomen)

Cotton roll.

This obake from Kagoshima is a piece of cotton cloth one tan in length [ancient unit] and flutters through the air at night looking for prey.

When it finds a victim it wraps itself around the victim's face and suffocates the victim.

## 血塊 (ke-kkai)

Blood Homunculus

Childbirth has always been a magical event, and it is a common belief that it should be carried out properly, cleanly and purely. Failure to follow these basic ideas is what created the kekkai.

When a child is born, there is always blood and placenta that come out along with the child. These things, that are not very pleasant, if not disposed with properly the placenta and blood transform in to a kekkai. The kekkai looks like an amorphous blob made of blood that lurks around and scares people with its grotesque appearance.

## 溝出 (Mizoi-dashi)

From the Gutter

This youkai originated in Kamakura, during the Kamakura era. It is a barrel of rice that has a corpse inside.

Because funerals were very expensive and poor people could not afford them, sometimes they would put their dead in rice barrels and disposed of them in the gutters. Because the corpse was trapped so was the spirit and the Mizoi-dashi became an obake, or wrestles spirit.

The Mizoi-dashi occasionally sings or cries, and haunts the areas where they have been thrown away.

## 猫又 (Nekomata) Pseudo-Cat



Cats were first introduced to Japan from China as “hand fed tigers.” Cats being cute soon became popular pets, but as anyone who has had a cat knows, they are also problematic pets. They would break paper curtains and drink the lighting oil from lamps they are mischievous. Thus they became occasionally related with other youkai, like Tanuki and Kitsune. When cats grow old they can become a Neko-mata (or Bake-neko), and gain special powers similar to those of the Kitsune and Tanuki. But Neko-mata can control other cats, and even make skeletons dance; the Neko-mata is a very powerful youkai.

Neko-mata’s looks just like a cat, but their distinguishing feature is having two tails. Of course there is a method to avoid having a cat become a neko-mata, and it consists of cutting off its tail, this is the reason why so many Japanese cats have short tails.

## 逆柱 (Saka-bashira) Up-side-down Pillar

Occasionally a carpenter makes a mistake and sets a pillar up side down in a house. This mistake is a Saka-bashira, an up-side-down pillar.

A Saka-bashira is not in it’s correct position so it becomes restless and haunts the house, making creaking sounds, and causing the family living in the house to have terrible nightmares. In general a saka-bashira is considered a bad omen, and disaster follows where a pillar is set up side down. Yet occasionally the carpenter in an attempt to curse a household does a Saka-bashira on purpose.

It should be said that carpenters and architects used to be considered as powerful as wizards, and they were knowledgeable of many secret arts. Building a house in the traditional style was as much of an engineering process as a magical ceremony, and even nowadays many company buildings still follow some of these ceremonies to assure good fortune.

## 九十九(Tsukumo)

99 years old Utensil

In the past before our modern disposable goods mentality, tools and utensils were very precious, and many times stayed with a family for generations. Throwing away a utensil was not a thing people liked to do, and most felt guilty about it. Tsukumo were created from that feeling of guilt.

It was believed that utensils had a soul, and that they became stronger the more they were used. This belief was so deeply rooted that all musical instruments and swords had personal names and were treated like family members.

When a tool or utensil reached the age of 100, it became very powerful, and gained magical powers, including the ability to become human. People were scared of this, and threw away utensils when they reached 99 years of age. These tools, once they became obake, felt betrayed and cause havoc, they normally traveled in groups and they had societies that parodied human society.

Tsukumo is a class of youkai and there are many types, as many as utensils, but the two most common are the Honekarakasa or Kasabake (Jumping Umbrella), and the Burabura (Torn Paper Lamp).

鬼

Oni

## 天の邪鬼 (Ama-no-jaku)

Heaven-Imp

The Ama-no-jyaku is a small devil with horns and tail. It is a youkai of Buddhist origins, and should be classified as an Oni, but unlike most Oni the Ama-no-jaku is small and weak, but very clever.

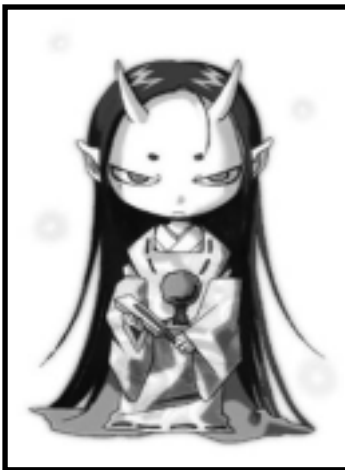
The Ama-no-jaku can read people's hearts and minds, and with this information it tempts those with weak souls until it breaks their will, and makes them sin and go to hell. They are very dangerous monsters.

## 餓鬼 (Gaki)

Buddhist Ghoul

Gaki are not really oni, since they don't inhabit Jigoku (Hell), instead they live in Gakido, which is reserved for people who wasted food during their lives. In Gakido the Gaki suffer from eternal hunger and thirst, because their throat is only as big as needle hole, so even though they constantly eat, they cannot swallow and satisfy their hunger. On special occasions during the night they can cross into our world and come to eat all that they can, including animals and people.

## 盤若 (Hannya)



Women who become consumed with jealousy become a hannya, a type of vampiric female oni, with horns and long teeth. Occasionally a man can become a hannya, but normally men filled with jealousy just become common Oni.

Hannya are very common in Noh plays, and you can find many beautiful Hannya masks among Noh props. The masks features are always the same and have long sharp teeth and horns.

## 火車 (Ka-sha)

Wheel of Fire

The Ka-sha does not look like a burning wheel at all. It looks like a large humanoid tiger. Yet it's name is suiting because it derives from the way in which it travels, right before its appearance or disappearance a

vortex of black clouds will form in the sky and the Ka-sha walks through the center of this eddy from, or back to, hell.

The Ka-sha appears at funeral sites, and steals the bodies of dead people, who sinned greatly during their life, from their caskets. Once it has taken the body it returns to the vortex and disappears with the body.

## 生剥(Nama-hage)

The Nama-hage is a kind of Oni, which inhabits Oga Peninsula in Akita prefecture. The Nama-hage are very big and wear traditional straw traveling suits called kappa, and carrying a bucket and a knife for preparing fishes.

The Nama-hage always travels in pairs (one blue skinned oni and one red skinned oni) and visits the houses of people on the 31<sup>st</sup> of December. They come into peoples houses and ask for bad children to take them away. But people send them off with some mochi and sake.

In reality, in Akita prefecture the Nama-hage are actually young men who wear a costume and perform and travel their neighborhood, this is a tradition that has been kept for a long time, and is part of the celebrations to say good bye to the year that is to pass.

## 鬼(Oni)

Buddhist Demon

The Oni are the Buddhist version of demons, that live in Jigoku (Hell). They are very big almost 3 meters tall; their skin color ranges from blue to red to black; and have a large mouths full of sharp teeth and pair of horns; some have one eye, but others have three or more eyes.

Most Oni wear a tiger skin and carry a huge iron club called a kanabo. The Oni are incredibly tough and most swords won't cut their skin. Even if a sword does manage to cut them they can reattach severed limbs easily.

Traditionally Oni had either the head of a Bull or the head of a Horse, and not the human like faces that we currently see. These traditional truly Buddhist oni are called Go-zu (Cow Head) and Me-zu (Horse Head).

幽霊

Yuurei



## 後追い小僧 (Ato-oi-kozou)

Tailing boy

The Ato-oi-kozou is mountain ghost that originated in Kanagawa. They are sprits of deceased children. But contrary to what one may guess Ato-oi-kozou are not necessarily spirits of children who died on the mountain. In ancient times it was believed that mountains were places where souls went on their way to the other world, so Ato-oi-kozou can have originally been children from anywhere. Ato-oi-kozou look like young children (between ages 4 and 10) dressed in rags and furs, and don't leave footprints.

Walking around the mountains at about lunchtime. They follow travelers and like to chat, ask questions and get a free meal. They are harmless spirits, yet if you are tired or scared of these yuurei you can get rid of them by leaving some food (such as a sweet potato or a rice ball) on a rock or a tree stump, they will take the food and leave you alone.

## 人魂 (Hito-dama)

Ghost Fire

The Hitodama is a floating ball of fire. The hitodama phenomenon is very common, it occurs when organic matter decomposes giving off phosphorous gases. It is said that the hitodama is actually the roaming spirit of a dead person.

You used to be able to find Hitodama haunting graveyards, until the government dictated the law all that corpses must be cremated.

Two other youkai similar to the Hitodama are the Onibi and Tengubi. These are also floating fireballs, but they are monsters not spirits. The Onibi and Tengubi are actually similar to the western Will-'o-the-wisp.

## 生霊 (Ikiryou)

Doppelganger

The Iki-ryou is not a ghost under western standards, but it is for the Japanese. Iki-ryou are the spirits of living people, not dead people. Iki-ryou looks just like the person they originated from, but can either be visible or invisible.

A person, whose heart is filled with negative emotions towards someone else, such as envy, jealousy, hate or anger, will manifest an iki-ryou. But it is important to note that the person who is manifesting a Iki-ryou is rarely aware about what they are doing.

Iki-ryou haunt the house of the person who is the target of its creator's feelings, and sickens or kills the target. In literature most Iki-

ryou originate from womens jealousy towards their husbands lover, but it is possible for men to manifest Iki-ryou too.

## 死霊 (Shiryou)

Specter

The Shi-ryou is a kind of ghost that unlike most Japanese ghosts shows signs of death. They are actually unusually grotesque for ghosts according to Japanese standards in general ghosts are quite beautiful.

Shi-ryou originate from people who had extremely violent deaths, and are more often from men who died in battle, while yuu-rei are normally ghosts of people who died from emotional shocks. Also unlike Yuu-rei, Shi-ryou are violent and not very social or interested in talking, they just haunt the areas where they died and occasionally claim a victim, they don't usually have a direct connection with one person as yuurei do, who haunt people, and not places.

## 産女 (Ubu-me)

Laboring Maiden

This ghost looks like a woman holding a baby in her arms, wearing a red skirt, dyed red from the blood of recently giving birth. When a woman dies while giving birth, she transforms into an Ubu-me.

The Ubu-me appears near rivers and bridges on rainy nights, and asks the people she encounters to hold her newborn baby for a moment. Once someone besides the Ubu-me holds the baby, the babies weight increases and becomes heavier and heavier. Anyone but the strongest of heroes are probably too weak to hold the baby for more than a few seconds, and when they drop the baby it causes the rage of the Ubu-me, who then curses the unfortunate victim of its haunting. Yet if one is strong enough to hold the baby for a while, the Ubu-me is grateful and is finally freed from her condition as a ghost and can leave this world in peace.

## 雪女 (Yuki-Onna)

Snow woman

Yuki-onna is the most famous Japanese Yuurei of them all, and is known worldwide thanks to the writings of Lafcadio Hearn. The Yuki-onna appears as a beautiful young lady, with skin as pale as it can be (a sign of great beauty in ancient Japan), wearing a white kimono and traveling around the snowy countrysides of the northern reaches of Japan.

She normally freezes people during the cold winter nights, but the story that made her famous was her union with a handsome young man who was able to warm her eternally frozen heart.

幽霊 (Yuurei)  
Ghost

Reikon is the Shinto term for soul, which all people have, that joins the souls of its ancestors when a person dies. But when a person dies in an unfortunate way or is not given proper burial, the Reikon may become a wandering ghost, called a Yuurei.

Female Yuurei are the norm (yet some males may transform into a Yuurei). A Yuurei normally appears as a beautiful young woman, with long flowing hair. No legs and lame hands. They are dressed in ceremonial clothes for the dead, which is a katabira (white kimono) and a hitakakushi (which is a triangular piece of paper), which is put on the forehead of a dead person and allows the reikon to reunite with its ancestors.

## Appendix I

### Some Kaidan Stories by Lafcadio Hearn

- 1 "The Story of Mimi-Nashi-Hoichi," Kwaidan, Lafcadio Hearn
- 2 "Diplomacy," Kwaidan, Lafcadio Hearn
- 3 "Mujina," Kwaidan, Lafcadio Hearn
- 4 "Yuki-Onna," Kwaidan, Lafcadio Hearn
- 5 "A Passional Karma," In Ghostly Japan, Lafcadio Hearn
- 6 "Story of a Tengu," In Ghostly Japan, Lafcadio Hearn

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## THE STORY OF MIMI-NASHI-HOICHI

More than seven hundred years ago, at Dan-no-ura, in the Straits of Shimonoseki, was fought the last battle of the long contest between the Heike, or Taira clan, and the Genji, or Minamoto clan. There the Heike perished utterly, with their women and children, and their infant emperor likewise--now remembered as Antoku Tenno. And that sea and shore have been haunted for seven hundred years... Elsewhere I told you about the strange crabs found there, called Heike crabs, which have human faces on their backs, and are said to be the spirits of the Heike warriors [1]. But there are many strange things to be seen and heard along that coast. On dark nights thousands of ghostly fires hover about the beach, or flit above the waves,--pale lights which the fishermen call Oni-bi, or demon-fires; and, whenever the winds are up, a sound of great shouting comes from that sea, like a clamor of battle.

In former years the Heike were much more restless than they now are. They would rise about ships passing in the night, and try to sink them; and at all times they would watch for swimmers, to pull them down. It was in order to appease those dead that the Buddhist temple, Amidaji, was built at Akamagaseki [2]. A cemetery also was made close by, near the beach; and within it were set up monuments inscribed with the names of the drowned emperor and of his great vassals; and Buddhist services were regularly performed there, on behalf of the spirits of them. After the temple had been built, and the tombs erected, the Heike gave less trouble than before; but they continued to do queer things at intervals,--proving that they had not found the perfect peace.

Some centuries ago there lived at Akamagaseki a blind man named Hoichi, who was famed for his skill in recitation and in playing upon the biwa [3]. From childhood he had been trained to recite and to play; and while yet a lad he had surpassed his teachers. As a professional biwa-hoshi he became famous chiefly by his recitations of the history of the Heike and the Genji; and it is said that when he sang the song of the battle of Dan-no-ura "even the goblins [kijin] could not refrain from tears."

At the outset of his career, Hoichi was very poor; but he found a good friend to help him. The priest of the Amidaji was fond of poetry and music; and he often invited Hoichi to the temple, to play and recite. Afterwards, being much impressed by the wonderful skill of the lad, the priest proposed that Hoichi should make the temple his home; and this offer was gratefully accepted. Hoichi was given a room in the temple-building; and, in return for food and lodging, he was required only to gratify the priest with a musical performance on certain evenings, when otherwise disengaged.

One summer night the priest was called away, to perform a Buddhist service at the house of a dead parishioner; and he went there with his acolyte, leaving Hoichi alone in the temple. It was a hot night; and the blind man sought to cool himself on the verandah before his sleeping-room. The verandah overlooked a small garden in the rear of the Amidaji. There Hoichi waited for the priest's return, and tried to relieve his solitude by practicing upon his biwa. Midnight passed; and the priest did not appear. But the atmosphere was still too warm for comfort within doors; and Hoichi remained outside. At last he heard steps

approaching from the back gate. Somebody crossed the garden, advanced to the verandah, and halted directly in front of him--but it was not the priest. A deep voice called the blind man's name--abruptly and unceremoniously, in the manner of a samurai summoning an inferior:--

"Hoichi!"

"Hai!" (1) answered the blind man, frightened by the menace in the voice,--"I am blind!--I cannot know who calls!"

"There is nothing to fear," the stranger exclaimed, speaking more gently. "I am stopping near this temple, and have been sent to you with a message. My present lord, a person of exceedingly high rank, is now staying in Akamagaseki, with many noble attendants. He wished to view the scene of the battle of Dan-no-ura; and to-day he visited that place. Having heard of your skill in reciting the story of the battle, he now desires to hear your performance: so you will take your biwa and come with me at once to the house where the august assembly is waiting."

In those times, the order of a samurai was not to be lightly disobeyed. Hoichi donned his sandals, took his biwa, and went away with the stranger, who guided him deftly, but obliged him to walk very fast. The hand that guided was iron; and the clank of the warrior's stride proved him fully armed,--probably some palace-guard on duty. Hoichi's first alarm was over: he began to imagine himself in good luck;--for, remembering the retainer's assurance about a "person of exceedingly high rank," he thought that the lord who wished to hear the recitation could not be less than a daimyo of the first class. Presently the samurai halted; and Hoichi became aware that they had arrived at a large gateway;--and he wondered, for he could not remember any large gate in that part of the town, except the main gate of the Amidaji. "Kaimon!" [4] the samurai called,--and there was a sound of unbarring; and the twain passed on. They traversed a space of garden, and halted again before some entrance; and the retainer cried in a loud voice, "Within there! I have brought Hoichi." Then came sounds of feet hurrying, and screens sliding, and rain-doors opening, and voices of women in converse. By the language of the women Hoichi knew them to be domestics in some noble household; but he could not imagine to what place he had been conducted. Little time was allowed him for conjecture. After he had been helped to mount several stone steps, upon the last of which he was told to leave his sandals, a woman's hand guided him along interminable reaches of polished planking, and round pillared angles too many to remember, and over widths amazing of matted floor,--into the middle of some vast apartment. There he thought that many great people were assembled: the sound of the rustling of silk was like the sound of leaves in a forest. He heard also a great humming of voices,--talking in undertones; and the speech was the speech of courts.

Hoichi was told to put himself at ease, and he found a kneeling-cushion ready for him. After having taken his place upon it, and tuned his instrument, the voice of a woman--whom he divined to be the Rojo, or matron in charge of the female service--addressed him, saying,--

"It is now required that the history of the Heike be recited, to the accompaniment of the biwa."

Now the entire recital would have required a time of many nights: therefore Hoichi ventured a question:--

"As the whole of the story is not soon told, what portion is it augustly desired that I now recite?"

The woman's voice made answer:--

"Recite the story of the battle at Dan-no-ura,--for the pity of it is the most deep."

[5]

Then Hoichi lifted up his voice, and chanted the chant of the fight on the bitter sea,--wonderfully making his biwa to sound like the straining of oars and the rushing of ships, the whirr and the hissing of arrows, the shouting and trampling of men, the crashing of steel upon helmets, the plunging of slain in the flood. And to left and right of him, in the pauses of his playing, he could hear voices murmuring praise: "How marvelous an artist!"--"Never in our own province was playing heard like this!"--"Not in all the empire is there another singer like Hoichi!" Then fresh courage came to him, and he played and sang yet better than before; and a hush of wonder deepened about him. But when at last he came to tell the fate of the fair and helpless,--the piteous perishing of the women and children,--and the death-leap of Nii-no-Ama, with the imperial infant in her arms,--then all the listeners uttered together one long, long shuddering cry of anguish; and thereafter they wept and wailed so loudly and so wildly that the blind man was frightened by the violence and grief that he had made. For much time the sobbing and the wailing continued. But gradually the sounds of lamentation died away; and again, in the great stillness that followed, Hoichi heard the voice of the woman whom he supposed to be the Rojo.

She said:--

"Although we had been assured that you were a very skillful player upon the biwa, and without an equal in recitative, we did not know that any one could be so skillful as you have proved yourself to-night. Our lord has been pleased to say that he intends to bestow upon you a fitting reward. But he desires that you shall perform before him once every night for the next six nights--after which time he will probably make his august return-journey. To-morrow night, therefore, you are to come here at the same hour. The retainer who to-night conducted you will be sent for you... There is another matter about which I have been ordered to inform you. It is required that you shall speak to no one of your visits here, during the time of our lord's august sojourn at Akamagaseki. As he is traveling incognito, [6] he commands that no mention of these things be made... You are now free to go back to your temple."

After Hoichi had duly expressed his thanks, a woman's hand conducted him to the entrance of the house, where the same retainer, who had before guided him, was waiting to take him home. The retainer led him to the verandah at the rear of the temple, and there bade him farewell.

It was almost dawn when Hoichi returned; but his absence from the temple had not been observed,--as the priest, coming back at a very late hour, had supposed him asleep. During the day Hoichi was able to take some rest; and he said nothing about his strange adventure. In the middle of the following night the samurai again came for him, and led him to the august assembly, where he gave another recitation with the same success that had attended his previous

performance. But during this second visit his absence from the temple was accidentally discovered; and after his return in the morning he was summoned to the presence of the priest, who said to him, in a tone of kindly reproach:--

"We have been very anxious about you, friend Hoichi. To go out, blind and alone, at so late an hour, is dangerous. Why did you go without telling us? I could have ordered a servant to accompany you. And where have you been?"

Hoichi answered, evasively,--

"Pardon me kind friend! I had to attend to some private business; and I could not arrange the matter at any other hour."

The priest was surprised, rather than pained, by Hoichi's reticence: he felt it to be unnatural, and suspected something wrong. He feared that the blind lad had been bewitched or deluded by some evil spirits. He did not ask any more questions; but he privately instructed the men-servants of the temple to keep watch upon Hoichi's movements, and to follow him in case that he should again leave the temple after dark. On the very next night, Hoichi was seen to leave the temple; and the servants immediately lighted their lanterns, and followed after him. But it was a rainy night, and very dark; and before the temple-folks could get to the roadway, Hoichi had disappeared. Evidently he had walked very fast,--a strange thing, considering his blindness; for the road was in a bad condition. The men hurried through the streets, making inquiries at every house which Hoichi was accustomed to visit; but nobody could give them any news of him. At last, as they were returning to the temple by way of the shore, they were startled by the sound of a biwa, furiously played, in the cemetery of the Amidaji. Except for some ghostly fires--such as usually flitted there on dark nights--all was blackness in that direction. But the men at once hastened to the cemetery; and there, by the help of their lanterns, they discovered Hoichi,--sitting alone in the rain before the memorial tomb of Antoku Tenno, making his biwa resound, and loudly chanting the chant of the battle of Dan-no-ura. And behind him, and about him, and everywhere above the tombs, the fires of the dead were burning, like candles. Never before had so great a host of Oni-bi appeared in the sight of mortal man...

"Hoichi San!--Hoichi San!" the servants cried,--"you are bewitched!... Hoichi San!"

But the blind man did not seem to hear. Strenuously he made his biwa to rattle and ring and clang;--more and more wildly he chanted the chant of the battle of Dan-no-ura. They caught hold of him;--they shouted into his ear,--

"Hoichi San!--Hoichi San!--come home with us at once!"

Reprovingly he spoke to them:--

"To interrupt me in such a manner, before this august assembly, will not be tolerated."

Whereat, in spite of the weirdness of the thing, the servants could not help laughing. Sure that he had been bewitched, they now seized him, and pulled him up on his feet, and by main force hurried him back to the temple,--where he was immediately relieved of his wet clothes, by order of the priest. Then the priest insisted upon a full explanation of his friend's astonishing behavior.

Hoichi long hesitated to speak. But at last, finding that his conduct had really alarmed and angered the good priest, he decided to abandon his reserve; and



he related everything that had happened from the time of first visit of the samurai.

The priest said:--

"Hoichi, my poor friend, you are now in great danger! How unfortunate that you did not tell me all this before! Your wonderful skill in music has indeed brought you into strange trouble. By this time you must be aware that you have not been visiting any house whatever, but have been passing your nights in the cemetery, among the tombs of the Heike;--and it was before the memorial-tomb of Antoku Tenno that our people to-night found you, sitting in the rain. All that you have been imagining was illusion--except the calling of the dead. By once obeying them, you have put yourself in their power. If you obey them again, after what has already occurred, they will tear you in pieces. But they would have destroyed you, sooner or later, in any event... Now I shall not be able to remain with you to-night: I am called away to perform another service. But, before I go, it will be necessary to protect your body by writing holy texts upon it."

Before sundown the priest and his acolyte stripped Hoichi: then, with their writing-brushes, they traced upon his breast and back, head and face and neck, limbs and hands and feet,--even upon the soles of his feet, and upon all parts of his body,--the text of the holy sutra called Hannya-Shin-Kyo. [7] When this had been done, the priest instructed Hoichi, saying:--

"To-night, as soon as I go away, you must seat yourself on the verandah, and wait. You will be called. But, whatever may happen, do not answer, and do not move. Say nothing and sit still--as if meditating. If you stir, or make any noise, you will be torn asunder. Do not get frightened; and do not think of calling for help--because no help could save you. If you do exactly as I tell you, the danger will pass, and you will have nothing more to fear."

After dark the priest and the acolyte went away; and Hoichi seated himself on the verandah, according to the instructions given him. He laid his biwa on the planking beside him, and, assuming the attitude of meditation, remained quite still,--taking care not to cough, or to breathe audibly. For hours he stayed thus. Then, from the roadway, he heard the steps coming. They passed the gate, crossed the garden, approached the verandah, stopped--directly in front of him. "Hoichi!" the deep voice called. But the blind man held his breath, and sat motionless.

"Hoichi!" grimly called the voice a second time. Then a third time--savagely:--  
"Hoichi!"

Hoichi remained as still as a stone,--and the voice grumbled:--

"No answer!--that won't do!... Must see where the fellow is."...

There was a noise of heavy feet mounting upon the verandah. The feet approached deliberately,--halted beside him. Then, for long minutes,--during which Hoichi felt his whole body shake to the beating of his heart,--there was dead silence.

At last the gruff voice muttered close to him:--

"Here is the biwa; but of the biwa-player I see--only two ears!... So that explains why he did not answer: he had no mouth to answer with--there is nothing left of him but his ears... Now to my lord those ears I will take--in proof that the august commands have been obeyed, so far as was possible"...

At that instant Hoichi felt his ears gripped by fingers of iron, and torn off! Great as the pain was, he gave no cry. The heavy footfalls receded along the verandah,--descended into the garden,--passed out to the roadway,--ceased. From either side of his head, the blind man felt a thick warm trickling; but he dared not lift his hands...

Before sunrise the priest came back. He hastened at once to the verandah in the rear, stepped and slipped upon something clammy, and uttered a cry of horror;--for he saw, by the light of his lantern, that the clamminess was blood. But he perceived Hoichi sitting there, in the attitude of meditation--with the blood still oozing from his wounds.

"My poor Hoichi!" cried the startled priest,--"what is this?... You have been hurt? At the sound of his friend's voice, the blind man felt safe. He burst out sobbing, and tearfully told his adventure of the night.

"Poor, poor Hoichi!" the priest exclaimed,--"all my fault!--my very grievous fault!... Everywhere upon your body the holy texts had been written--except upon your ears! I trusted my acolyte to do that part of the work; and it was very, very wrong of me not to have made sure that he had done it!... Well, the matter cannot now be helped;--we can only try to heal your hurts as soon as possible... Cheer up, friend!--the danger is now well over. You will never again be troubled by those visitors."

With the aid of a good doctor, Hoichi soon recovered from his injuries. The story of his strange adventure spread far and wide, and soon made him famous. Many noble persons went to Akamagaseki to hear him recite; and large presents of money were given to him,--so that he became a wealthy man... But from the time of his adventure, he was known only by the appellation of Mimi-nashi-Hoichi: "Hoichi-the-Earless."

[1] See my Kotto, for a description of these curious crabs.

[2] Or, Shimonoseki. The town is also known by the name of Bakkan.

[3] The biwa, a kind of four-stringed lute, is chiefly used in musical recitative. Formerly the professional minstrels who recited the Heike-Monogatari, and other tragical histories, were called biwa-hoshi, or "lute-priests." The origin of this appellation is not clear; but it is possible that it may have been suggested by the fact that "lute-priests" as well as blind shampooers, had their heads shaven, like Buddhist priests. The biwa is played with a kind of plectrum, called bachi, usually made of horn.

(1) A response to show that one has heard and is listening attentively.

[4] A respectful term, signifying the opening of a gate. It was used by samurai when calling to the guards on duty at a lord's gate for admission.

[5] Or the phrase might be rendered, "for the pity of that part is the deepest." The Japanese word for pity in the original text is "aware."

[6] "Traveling incognito" is at least the meaning of the original phrase,--"making a disguised august-journey" (shinobi no go-ryoko).

[7] The Smaller Pragna-Paramita-Hridaya-Sutra is thus called in Japanese. Both the smaller and larger sutras called Pragna-Paramita ("Transcendent Wisdom") have been translated by the late Professor Max Muller, and can be found in volume xlix. of the Sacred Books of the East ("Buddhist Mahayana Sutras").--Apropos of the magical use of the text, as described in this story, it is worth remarking that the subject of the sutra is the Doctrine of the Emptiness of Forms,--that is to say, of the unreal character of all phenomena or noumena... "Form is emptiness; and emptiness is form. Emptiness is not different from form; form is not different from emptiness. What is form--that is emptiness. What is emptiness--that is form... Perception, name, concept, and knowledge, are also emptiness... There is no eye, ear, nose, tongue, body,

and mind... But when the envelopment of consciousness has been annihilated, then he [the seeker] becomes free from all fear, and beyond the reach of change, enjoying final Nirvana."

## DIPLOMACY

It had been ordered that the execution should take place in the garden of the yashiki (1). So the man was taken there, and made to kneel down in a wide sanded space crossed by a line of tobi-ishi, or stepping-stones, such as you may still see in Japanese landscape-gardens. His arms were bound behind him. Retainers brought water in buckets, and rice-bags filled with pebbles; and they packed the rice-bags round the kneeling man,--so wedging him in that he could not move. The master came, and observed the arrangements. He found them satisfactory, and made no remarks.

Suddenly the condemned man cried out to him:--

"Honored Sir, the fault for which I have been doomed I did not wittingly commit. It was only my very great stupidity which caused the fault. Having been born stupid, by reason of my Karma, I could not always help making mistakes. But to kill a man for being stupid is wrong,--and that wrong will be repaid. So surely as you kill me, so surely shall I be avenged;--out of the resentment that you provoke will come the vengeance; and evil will be rendered for evil."...

If any person be killed while feeling strong resentment, the ghost of that person will be able to take vengeance upon the killer. This the samurai knew. He replied very gently,--almost caressingly:--

"We shall allow you to frighten us as much as you please--after you are dead. But it is difficult to believe that you mean what you say. Will you try to give us some sign of your great resentment--after your head has been cut off?"

"Assuredly I will," answered the man.

"Very well," said the samurai, drawing his long sword;--"I am now going to cut off your head. Directly in front of you there is a stepping-stone. After your head has been cut off, try to bite the stepping-stone. If your angry ghost can help you to do that, some of us may be frightened... Will you try to bite the stone?"

"I will bite it!" cried the man, in great anger,--"I will bite it!--I will bite"--

There was a flash, a swish, a crunching thud: the bound body bowed over the rice sacks,--two long blood-jets pumping from the shorn neck;--and the head rolled upon the sand. Heavily toward the stepping-stone it rolled: then, suddenly bounding, it caught the upper edge of the stone between its teeth, clung desperately for a moment, and dropped inert.

None spoke; but the retainers stared in horror at their master. He seemed to be quite unconcerned. He merely held out his sword to the nearest attendant, who, with a wooden dipper, poured water over the blade from haft to point, and then carefully wiped the steel several times with sheets of soft paper... And thus ended the ceremonial part of the incident.

For months thereafter, the retainers and the domestics lived in ceaseless fear of ghostly visitation. None of them doubted that the promised vengeance would come; and their constant terror caused them to hear and to see much that did not exist. They became afraid of the sound of the wind in the bamboos,--afraid even of the stirring of shadows in the garden. At last, after taking counsel together, they decided to petition their master to have a Segaki-service (2) performed on behalf of the vengeful spirit.

"Quite unnecessary," the samurai said, when his chief retainer had uttered the general wish... "I understand that the desire of a dying man for revenge may be a cause for fear. But in this case there is nothing to fear."

The retainer looked at his master beseechingly, but hesitated to ask the reason of the alarming confidence.

"Oh, the reason is simple enough," declared the samurai, divining the unspoken doubt. "Only the very last intention of the fellow could have been dangerous; and when I challenged him to give me the sign, I diverted his mind from the desire of revenge. He died with the set purpose of biting the stepping-stone; and that purpose he was able to accomplish, but nothing else. All the rest he must have forgotten... So you need not feel any further anxiety about the matter."

--And indeed the dead man gave no more trouble. Nothing at all happened.

(1) The spacious house and grounds of a wealthy person is thus called.

(2) A Buddhist service for the dead.

## MUJINA

On the Akasaka Road, in Tokyo, there is a slope called Kii-no-kuni-zaka,--which means the Slope of the Province of Kii. I do not know why it is called the Slope of the Province of Kii. On one side of this slope you see an ancient moat, deep and very wide, with high green banks rising up to some place of gardens;--and on the other side of the road extend the long and lofty walls of an imperial palace. Before the era of street-lamps and jinrikishas, this neighborhood was very lonesome after dark; and belated pedestrians would go miles out of their way rather than mount the Kii-no-kuni-zaka, alone, after sunset.

All because of a Mujina that used to walk there. (1)

The last man who saw the Mujina was an old merchant of the Kyobashi quarter, who died about thirty years ago. This is the story, as he told it:--

One night, at a late hour, he was hurrying up the Kii-no-kuni-zaka, when he perceived a woman crouching by the moat, all alone, and weeping bitterly. Fearing that she intended to drown herself, he stopped to offer her any assistance or consolation in his power. She appeared to be a slight and graceful person, handsomely dressed; and her hair was arranged like that of a young girl of good family. "O-jochu," [1] he exclaimed, approaching her,--"O-jochu, do not cry like that!... Tell me what the trouble is; and if there be any way to help you, I shall be glad to help you." (He really meant what he said; for he was a very kind man.) But she continued to weep,--hiding her face from him with one of her long sleeves. "O-jochu," he said again, as gently as he could,--"please, please listen to me!... This is no place for a young lady at night! Do not cry, I implore you!--only tell me how I may be of some help to you!" Slowly she rose up, but turned her back to him, and continued to moan and sob behind her sleeve. He laid his hand lightly upon her shoulder, and pleaded:--"O-jochu!--O-jochu!--O-jochu!... Listen to me, just for one little moment!... O-jochu!--O-jochu!"... Then that O-jochu turned around, and dropped her sleeve, and stroked her face with her hand;--and the man saw that she had no eyes or nose or mouth,--and he screamed and ran away. (2)

Up Kii-no-kuni-zaka he ran and ran; and all was black and empty before him. On and on he ran, never daring to look back; and at last he saw a lantern, so far away that it looked like the gleam of a firefly; and he made for it. It proved to be only the lantern of an itinerant soba-seller, [2] who had set down his stand by the road-side; but any light and any human companionship was good after that experience; and he flung himself down at the feet of the soba-seller, crying out, "Ah!--aa!--aa!!!"...

"Kore! kore!" (3) roughly exclaimed the soba-man. "Here! what is the matter with you? Anybody hurt you?"

"No--nobody hurt me," panted the other,--"only... Ah!--aa!"

"--Only scared you?" queried the peddler, unsympathetically. "Robbers?"

"Not robbers,--not robbers," gasped the terrified man... "I saw... I saw a woman--by the moat;--and she showed me... Ah! I cannot tell you what she showed me!"...

"He! (4) Was it anything like THIS that she showed you?" cried the soba-man, stroking his own face--which therewith became like unto an Egg.. And, simultaneously, the light went out.

(1) A kind of badger. Certain animals were thought to be able to transform themselves and cause mischief for humans.

[1] O-jochu ("honorable damsel"), a polite form of address used in speaking to a young lady whom one does not know.

(2) An apparition with a smooth, totally featureless face, called a "nopperabo," is a stock part of the Japanese pantheon of ghosts and demons.

[2] Soba is a preparation of buckwheat, somewhat resembling vermicelli.

(3) An exclamation of annoyed alarm.

(4) Well!

## YUKI-ONNA

In a village of Musashi Province (1), there lived two woodcutters: Mosaku and Minokichi. At the time of which I am speaking, Mosaku was an old man; and Minokichi, his apprentice, was a lad of eighteen years. Every day they went together to a forest situated about five miles from their village. On the way to that forest there is a wide river to cross; and there is a ferry-boat. Several times a bridge was built where the ferry is; but the bridge was each time carried away by a flood. No common bridge can resist the current there when the river rises. Mosaku and Minokichi were on their way home, one very cold evening, when a great snowstorm overtook them. They reached the ferry; and they found that the boatman had gone away, leaving his boat on the other side of the river. It was no day for swimming; and the woodcutters took shelter in the ferryman's hut,--thinking themselves lucky to find any shelter at all. There was no brazier in the hut, nor any place in which to make a fire: it was only a two-mat [1] hut, with a single door, but no window. Mosaku and Minokichi fastened the door, and lay down to rest, with their straw rain-coats over them. At first they did not feel very cold; and they thought that the storm would soon be over.

The old man almost immediately fell asleep; but the boy, Minokichi, lay awake a long time, listening to the awful wind, and the continual slashing of the snow against the door. The river was roaring; and the hut swayed and creaked like a junk at sea. It was a terrible storm; and the air was every moment becoming colder; and Minokichi shivered under his rain-coat. But at last, in spite of the cold, he too fell asleep.

He was awakened by a showering of snow in his face. The door of the hut had been forced open; and, by the snow-light (yuki-akari), he saw a woman in the room,--a woman all in white. She was bending above Mosaku, and blowing her breath upon him;--and her breath was like a bright white smoke. Almost in the same moment she turned to Minokichi, and stooped over him. He tried to cry out, but found that he could not utter any sound. The white woman bent down over him, lower and lower, until her face almost touched him; and he saw that she was very beautiful,--though her eyes made him afraid. For a little time she continued to look at him;--then she smiled, and she whispered:--"I intended to treat you like the other man. But I cannot help feeling some pity for you,--because you are so young... You are a pretty boy, Minokichi; and I will not hurt you now. But, if you ever tell anybody--even your own mother--about what you have seen this night, I shall know it; and then I will kill you... Remember what I say!"

With these words, she turned from him, and passed through the doorway. Then he found himself able to move; and he sprang up, and looked out. But the woman was nowhere to be seen; and the snow was driving furiously into the hut. Minokichi closed the door, and secured it by fixing several billets of wood against it. He wondered if the wind had blown it open;--he thought that he might have been only dreaming, and might have mistaken the gleam of the snow-light in the doorway for the figure of a white woman: but he could not be sure. He called to Mosaku, and was frightened because the old man did not answer. He



put out his hand in the dark, and touched Mosaku's face, and found that it was ice! Mosaku was stark and dead...

By dawn the storm was over; and when the ferryman returned to his station, a little after sunrise, he found Minokichi lying senseless beside the frozen body of Mosaku. Minokichi was promptly cared for, and soon came to himself; but he remained a long time ill from the effects of the cold of that terrible night. He had been greatly frightened also by the old man's death; but he said nothing about the vision of the woman in white. As soon as he got well again, he returned to his calling,--going alone every morning to the forest, and coming back at nightfall with his bundles of wood, which his mother helped him to sell.

One evening, in the winter of the following year, as he was on his way home, he overtook a girl who happened to be traveling by the same road. She was a tall, slim girl, very good-looking; and she answered Minokichi's greeting in a voice as pleasant to the ear as the voice of a song-bird. Then he walked beside her; and they began to talk. The girl said that her name was O-Yuki [2]; that she had lately lost both of her parents; and that she was going to Yedo (2), where she happened to have some poor relations, who might help her to find a situation as a servant. Minokichi soon felt charmed by this strange girl; and the more that he looked at her, the handsomer she appeared to be. He asked her whether she was yet betrothed; and she answered, laughingly, that she was free. Then, in her turn, she asked Minokichi whether he was married, or pledge to marry; and he told her that, although he had only a widowed mother to support, the question of an "honorable daughter-in-law" had not yet been considered, as he was very young... After these confidences, they walked on for a long while without speaking; but, as the proverb declares, *Ki ga areba, me mo kuchi hodo ni mono wo iu*: "When the wish is there, the eyes can say as much as the mouth." By the time they reached the village, they had become very much pleased with each other; and then Minokichi asked O-Yuki to rest awhile at his house. After some shy hesitation, she went there with him; and his mother made her welcome, and prepared a warm meal for her. O-Yuki behaved so nicely that Minokichi's mother took a sudden fancy to her, and persuaded her to delay her journey to Yedo. And the natural end of the matter was that Yuki never went to Yedo at all. She remained in the house, as an "honorable daughter-in-law."

O-Yuki proved a very good daughter-in-law. When Minokichi's mother came to die,--some five years later,--her last words were words of affection and praise for the wife of her son. And O-Yuki bore Minokichi ten children, boys and girls,--handsome children all of them, and very fair of skin.

The country-folk thought O-Yuki a wonderful person, by nature different from themselves. Most of the peasant-women age early; but O-Yuki, even after having become the mother of ten children, looked as young and fresh as on the day when she had first come to the village.

One night, after the children had gone to sleep, O-Yuki was sewing by the light of a paper lamp; and Minokichi, watching her, said:--

"To see you sewing there, with the light on your face, makes me think of a strange thing that happened when I was a lad of eighteen. I then saw somebody as beautiful and white as you are now--indeed, she was very like you."...

Without lifting her eyes from her work, O-Yuki responded:--

"Tell me about her... Where did you see her?"

Then Minokichi told her about the terrible night in the ferryman's hut,--and about the White Woman that had stooped above him, smiling and whispering,--and about the silent death of old Mosaku. And he said:--

"Asleep or awake, that was the only time that I saw a being as beautiful as you. Of course, she was not a human being; and I was afraid of her,--very much afraid,--but she was so white!... Indeed, I have never been sure whether it was a dream that I saw, or the Woman of the Snow."...

O-Yuki flung down her sewing, and arose, and bowed above Minokichi where he sat, and shrieked into his face:--

"It was I--I--I! Yuki it was! And I told you then that I would kill you if you ever said one word about it!... But for those children asleep there, I would kill you this moment! And now you had better take very, very good care of them; for if ever they have reason to complain of you, I will treat you as you deserve!"...

Even as she screamed, her voice became thin, like a crying of wind;--then she melted into a bright white mist that spired to the roof-beams, and shuddered away through the smoke-hold... Never again was she seen.

(1) An ancient province whose boundaries took in most of present-day Tokyo, and parts of Saitama and Kanagawa prefectures.

[1] That is to say, with a floor-surface of about six feet square.

[2] This name, signifying "Snow," is not uncommon. On the subject of Japanese female names, see my paper in the volume entitled *Shadowings*.

(2) Also spelled Edo, the former name of Tokyo.

## A Passional Karma (Story of the Peony Lantern)

ONE of the never-failing attractions of the Tôkyô stage is the performance, by the famous Kikugorô and his company, of the *Botan-Dôrô*, or "Peony-Lantern." This weird play, of which the scenes are laid in the middle of the last century, is the dramatization of a romance by the novelist Enchô, written in colloquial Japanese, and purely Japanese in local color, though inspired by a Chinese tale. I went to see the play; and Kikugorô made me familiar with a new variety of the pleasure of fear.

"Why not give English readers the ghostly part of the story?"--asked a friend who guides me betimes through the mazes of Eastern philosophy. "It would serve to explain some popular ideas of the supernatural which Western people know very little about. And I could help you with the translation."

I gladly accepted the suggestion; and we composed the following summary of the more extraordinary portion of Enchô's romance. Here and there we found it necessary to condense the original narrative; and we tried to keep close to the text only in the conversational passages,--some of which happen to possess a particular quality of psychological interest.

\*  
\* \*

--*This is the story of the Ghosts in the Romance of the Peony-Lantern:*--

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There once lived in the district of Ushigomé, in Yedo, a *hatamoto*<sup>[1]</sup> called Iijima Heizayémon, whose only daughter, Tsuyu, was beautiful as her name, which signifies "Morning Dew." Iijima took a second wife when his daughter was about sixteen; and, finding that O-Tsuyu could not be happy with her mother-in-law, he had a pretty villa built for the girl at Yanagijima, as a separate residence, and gave her an excellent maidservant, called O-Yoné, to wait upon her.

O-Tsuyu lived happily enough in her new home until one day when the family physician, Yamamoto Shijô, paid her a visit in company with a young samurai named Hagiwara Shinzaburô, who resided in the Nedzu quarter. Shinzaburô was an unusually handsome lad, and very gentle; and the two young people fell in love with each other at sight. Even before the brief visit was over, they contrived,--unheard by the old doctor,--to pledge themselves to each other for life. And, at parting, O-Tsuyu whispered to the youth,--"*Remember! if you do not come to see me again, I shall certainly die!*"

[1. The *hatamoto* were samurai forming the special military force of the Shôgun. The name literally signifies "Banner-Supporters." These were the highest class of samurai,--not only as the immediate vassals of the Shôgun, but as a military aristocracy.]

Shinzaburô never forgot those words; and he was only too eager to see more of O-Tsuyu. But etiquette forbade him to make the visit alone: he was obliged to wait for some other chance to accompany the doctor, who had promised to take him to the villa a second time. Unfortunately the old man did not keep this promise. He had perceived the sudden affection of O-Tsuyu; and he feared that her father would hold him responsible for any serious results. Iijima Heizayémon had a reputation for cutting off heads. And the more Shijô thought about the possible consequences of his introduction of Shinzaburô at the Iijima villa, the more he became afraid. Therefore he purposely abstained from calling upon his young friend.

Months passed; and O-Tsuyu, little imagining the true cause of Shinzaburô's neglect, believed that her love had been scorned. Then she pined away, and died. Soon afterwards, the faithful servant O-Yoné also died, through grief at the loss of her mistress; and the two were buried side by side in the cemetery of Shin-Banzui-In,--a temple which still stands in the neighborhood of Dango-Zaka, where the famous chrysanthemum-shows are yearly held.

## II

Shinzaburô knew nothing of what had happened; but his disappointment and his anxiety had resulted in a prolonged illness. He was slowly recovering, but still very weak, when he unexpectedly received another visit from Yamamoto Shijô. The old man made a number of plausible excuses for his apparent neglect. Shinzaburô said to him:--

"I have been sick ever since the beginning of spring;--even now I cannot eat anything. . . . Was it not rather unkind of you never to call? I thought that we were to make another visit together to the house of the Lady Iijima; and I wanted to take to her some little present as a return for our kind reception. Of course I could not go by myself."

Shijo gravely responded,--

"I am very sorry to tell you that the young lady is dead."

"Dead!" repeated Shinzaburô, turning white, "did you say that she is dead?"

The doctor remained silent for a moment, as if collecting himself: then he resumed, in the quick light tone of a man resolved not to take trouble seriously:--

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"My great mistake was in having introduced you to her; for it seems that she fell in love with you at once. I am afraid that you must have said something to encourage this affection--when you were in that little room together. At all events, I saw how she felt towards you; and then I became uneasy,--fearing that her father might come to hear of the matter, and lay the whole blame upon me. So--to be quite frank with you,--I decided that it would be better not to call upon you; and I purposely stayed away for a long time. But, only a few days ago, happening to visit Iijima's house, I heard, to my great surprise, that his daughter

[1. Perhaps this conversation may seem strange to the Western reader; but it is true to life. The whole of the scene is characteristically Japanese.

had died, and that her servant O-Yoné had also died. Then, remembering all that had taken place, I knew that the young lady must have died of love for you. . . . [*Laughing*] Ah, you are really a sinful fellow! Yes, you are! [*Laughing*] Isn't it a sin to have been born so handsome that the girls die for love of you?<sup>[1]</sup> . . . [*Seriously*] Well, we must leave the dead to the dead. It is no use to talk further about the matter;--all that you now can do for her is to repeat the Nembutsu.<sup>[2]</sup> . . . Good-bye."

And the old man retired hastily,--anxious to avoid further converse about the painful event for which he felt himself to have been unwittingly responsible.

2. The invocation *Namu Amida Butsu!* ("Hail to the Buddha Amitâbha!"), repeated, as a prayer, for the sake of the dead.]



Shinzaburô long remained stupefied with grief by the news of O-Tsuyu's death. But as soon as he found himself again able to think clearly, he inscribed the dead girl's name upon a mortuary tablet, and placed the tablet in the Buddhist shrine of his house, and set offerings before it, and recited prayers. Every day thereafter he presented offerings, and repeated the *Nembutsu*; and the memory of O-Tsuyu was never absent from his thought.

Nothing occurred to change the monotony of his solitude before the time of the Bon,--the great Festival of the Dead,--which begins upon the thirteenth day of the seventh month. Then he decorated his house, and prepared everything for the festival;--hanging out the lanterns that guide the returning spirits, and setting the food of ghosts on the *sbôryôdana*, or Shelf of Souls, and on the first evening of the Bon, after sundown, he kindled a small lamp before the tablet of O-Tsuyu, and lighted the lanterns.

The night was clear, with a great moon,--and windless, and very warm. Shinzaburô sought the coolness of his veranda. Clad only in a light summer-robe, he sat there thinking, dreaming, sorrowing;--sometimes fanning himself; sometimes making a little smoke to drive the mosquitoes away. Everything was quiet. It was a lonesome neighborhood, and there were few passers-by. He could hear only the soft rushing of a neighboring stream, and the shrilling of night-insects.

But all at once this stillness was broken by a sound of women's geta<sup>[1]</sup> approaching--*kara-kon, kara-kon*;--and the sound drew nearer and nearer, quickly, till it reached the live-hedge surrounding the garden. Then Shinzaburô, feeling curious, stood on tiptoe, so as to look over the hedge; and he saw two women passing. One, who was carrying a beautiful lantern decorated

[1. *Komageta* in the original. The geta is a wooden sandal, or clog, of which there are many varieties,--some decidedly elegant. The *komageta*, or "pony-geta" is so-called because of the sonorous hoof-like echo which it makes on hard ground.]

## The Peony Lantern

with peony-flowers,<sup>[1]</sup> appeared to be a servant;--the other was a slender girl of about seventeen, wearing a long-sleeved robe embroidered with designs of autumn-blossoms. Almost at the same instant both women turned their faces toward Shinzaburô;--and to his utter astonishment, he recognized O-Tsuyu and her servant O-Yoné.

They stopped immediately; and the girl cried out,--

"Oh, how strange! . . . Hagiwara Sama!"

Shinzaburô simultaneously called to the maid:--

"O-Yoné! Ah, you are O-Yoné!--I remember you very well."

"Hagiwara Sama!" exclaimed O-Yoné in a tone of supreme amazement. "Never could I have believed it possible! . . . Sir, we were told that you had died."

[1. The sort of lantern here referred to is no longer made; and its shape can best be understood by a glance at the picture accompanying this story. It was totally unlike the modern domestic hand-lantern, painted with the owner's crest; but it was not altogether unlike some forms of lanterns still manufactured for the Festival of the Dead, and called *Bon-dôrô*. The flowers ornamenting it were not painted: they were artificial flowers of crepe-silk, and were attached to the top of the lantern.]

"How extraordinary!" cried Shinzaburô. "Why, I was told that both of you were dead!"

"Ah, what a hateful story!" returned O-Yoné. "Why repeat such unlucky words? . . . Who told you?"

"Please to come in," said Shinzaburô;--"here we can talk better. The garden-gate is open."

So they entered, and exchanged greeting; and when Shinzaburô had made them comfortable, he said:--

"I trust that you will pardon my discourtesy in not having called upon you for so long a time. But Shijô, the doctor, about a month ago, told me that you had both died."

"So it was he who told you?" exclaimed O-Yoné. "It was very wicked of him to say such a thing. Well, it was also Shijô who told us that *you* were dead. I think that he wanted to deceive you,--which was not a difficult thing to do, because you are so confiding and trustful. Possibly my mistress betrayed her liking for you in some words which found their way to her father's ears; and, in that case, O-Kuni--the new wife--might have planned to make the doctor tell you that we were dead, so as to bring

about a separation. Anyhow, when my mistress heard that you had died, she wanted to cut off her hair immediately, and to become a nun. But I was able to prevent her from cutting off her hair; and I persuaded her at last to become a nun only in her heart. Afterwards her father wished her to marry a certain young man; and she refused. Then there was a great deal of trouble,--chiefly caused by O-Kuni;--and we went away from the villa, and found a very small house in Yanaka-no-Sasaki. There we are now just barely able to live, by doing a little private work. . . . My mistress has been constantly repeating the *Nembutsu* for your sake. To-day, being the first day of the Bon, we went to visit the temples;

and we were on our way home--thus late--when this strange meeting happened."

"Oh, how extraordinary!" cried Shinzaburô. "Can it be true?--or is it only a dream? Here I, too, have been constantly reciting the Nembutsu before a tablet with her name upon it! Look!" And he showed them O-Tsuyu's tablet in its place upon the Shelf of Souls.

"We are more than grateful for your kind remembrance," returned O-Yoné, smiling. . . . "Now as for my mistress,"--she continued, turning towards O-Tsuyu, who had all the while remained demure and silent, half-hiding her face with her sleeve,--"as for my mistress, she actually says that she would not mind being disowned by her father for the time of seven existences,<sup>[1]</sup> or even being killed by him, for your sake! . . . Come! will you not allow her to stay here to-night?" Shinzaburô turned pale for joy. He answered in a voice trembling with emotion:-

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[1. "For the time of seven existences,"--that is to say, for the time of seven successive lives. In Japanese drama and romance it is not uncommon to represent a father as disowning his child "for the time of seven lives." Such a disowning is called *shichi-shô madé no mandô*, a disinheritor for seven lives,--signifying that in six future lives after the present the erring son or daughter will continue to feel the parental displeasure.

"Please remain; but do not speak loud--because there is a troublesome fellow living close by,--a *ninsomi*<sup>[2]</sup> called Hakuôdô Yusai, who tells people's fortunes by looking at their faces. He is inclined to be curious; and it is better that he should not know."

The two women remained that night in the house of the young samurai, and returned to their own home a little before daybreak. And after that night they came every night for seven nights,--whether the weather were foul or fair,--always at the same hour. And Shinzaburô became more and more attached to the girl; and the twain were fettered, each to each, by that bond of illusion which is stronger than bands of iron.

2 The profession is not yet extinct. The *ninsomi* uses a kind of magnifying glass (or magnifying-mirror sometimes), called *tengankyô* or *ninsomégané*.]

## IV

Now there was a man called Tomozô, who lived in a small cottage adjoining Shinzaburô's residence. Tomozô and his wife O-Miné were both employed by Shinzaburô as servants. Both seemed to be devoted to their young master; and by his help they were able to live in comparative comfort.

One night, at a very late hour, Tomozô heard the voice of a woman in his master's apartment; and this made him uneasy. He feared that Shinzaburô, being very gentle and affectionate, might be made the dupe of some cunning wanton,--in which event the domestics would be the first to suffer. He therefore

resolved to watch; and on the following night he stole on tiptoe to Shinzaburô's dwelling, and looked through a chink in one of the sliding shutters. By the glow of a night-lantern within the sleeping-room, he was able to perceive that his master and a strange woman were talking together under the mosquito-net. At first he could not see the woman distinctly. Her back was turned to him;--he only observed that she was very slim, and that she appeared to be very young,--judging from the fashion of her dress and hair.<sup>[1]</sup> Putting his ear to the chink, he could hear the conversation plainly. The woman said:--

"And if I should be disowned by my father, would you then let me come and live with you?"

Shinzaburô answered:--

"Most assuredly I would--nay, I should be glad of the chance. But there is no reason to fear that you will ever be disowned by your father; for you are his only daughter, and he loves you very much. What I do fear is that some day we shall be cruelly separated."

[1. The color and form of the dress, and the style of wearing the hair, are by Japanese custom regulated according to the age of the woman.]

She responded softly:--

"Never, never could I even think of accepting any other man for my husband. Even if our secret were to become known, and my father were to kill me for what I have done, still--after death itself--I could never cease to think of you. And I am now quite sure that you yourself would not be able to live very long without me." . . . Then clinging closely to him, with her lips at his neck, she caressed him; and he returned her caresses.

Tomozô wondered as he listened,--because the language of the woman was not the language of a common woman, but the language of a lady of rank.<sup>[1]</sup> Then he determined at all hazards to get one glimpse of her face; and he crept round the house, backwards and forwards, peering through every crack and chink. And at last he was able to see;--but therewith an icy trembling seized him; and the hair of his head stood up.

For the face was the face of a woman long dead,--and the fingers caressing were fingers of naked bone,--and of the body below the waist there was not anything: it melted off into thinnest trailing shadow. Where the eyes of the lover deluded saw youth and grace and beauty, there appeared to the eyes of the watcher horror only, and the emptiness of death. Simultaneously another woman's figure, and a weirder, rose up from within the chamber, and swiftly made toward the watcher, as if discerning his presence. Then, in uttermost terror, he fled to the dwelling of Hakuôdô Yusai, and, knocking frantically at the doors, succeeded in arousing him.

[1. The forms of speech used by the samurai, and other superior classes, differed considerably from those of the popular idiom; but these differences could not be effectively rendered into English.]



## V

Hakuôdô Yusai, the *ninsomi*, was a very old man; but in his time he had travelled much, and he had heard and seen so many things that he could not be easily surprised. Yet the story of the terrified Tomozô both alarmed and amazed him. He had read in ancient Chinese books of love between the living and the dead; but he had never believed it possible. Now, however, he felt convinced that the statement of Tomozô was not a falsehood, and that something very strange was really going on in the house of Hagiwara. Should the truth prove to be what Tomozô imagined, then the young samurai was a doomed man.

"If the woman be a ghost,"--said Yusai to the frightened servant,"--if the woman be a ghost, your master must die very soon,--unless something extraordinary can be done to save him. And if the woman be a ghost, the signs of death will appear upon his face. For the spirit of the living is *yôki*, and pure--the spirit of the dead is *inki*, and unclean the one is Positive, the other Negative. He whose bride is a ghost cannot live. Even though in his blood there existed the force of a life of one hundred years, that force must quickly perish. . . . Still, I shall do all that I can to save Hagiwara Sama. And in the meantime, Tomozô, say nothing to any other person,--not even to your wife,--about this matter. At sunrise I shall call upon your master."

## VI

When questioned next morning by Yusai, Shinzaburô at first attempted to deny that any women had been visiting the house; but finding this artless policy of no avail, and perceiving that the old man's purpose was altogether unselfish, he was finally persuaded to acknowledge what had really occurred, and to give his reasons for wishing to keep the matter a secret. As for the lady Iijima, he intended, he said, to make her his wife as soon as possible.

"Oh, madness!" cried Yusai,--losing all patience in the intensity of his alarm. "Know, sir, that the people who have been coming here, night after night, are dead! Some frightful delusion is upon you! . . . Why, the simple fact that You long supposed O-Tsuyu to be dead, and repeated the Nembutsu for her, and made offerings before her tablet, is itself the proof! . . . The lips of the dead have touched you!--the hands of the dead have caressed you! . . . Even at this moment I see in your face the signs of death--and you will not believe! . . . Listen to me now, sir,--I beg of you,--if you wish to save yourself: otherwise you have less than twenty days to live. They told you--those people--that they were residing in the district of Shitaya, in Yanaka-no-Sasaki. Did you ever visit them at that place? No!--of course you did not! Then go to-day,--as soon as you can,--to Yanaka-no-Sasaki, and try to find their home! . . ."

And having uttered this counsel with the most vehement earnestness, Hakuôdô Yusai abruptly took his departure.

Shinzaburô, startled though not convinced, resolved after a moment's reflection to follow the advice of the ninsomi, and to go to Shitaya. It was yet early in the morning when he reached the quarter of Yanaka-no-Sasaki, and began his search for the dwelling of O-Tsuyu. He went through every street and side-street, read all the names inscribed at the various entrances, and made inquiries whenever an opportunity presented itself. But he could not find anything resembling the little house mentioned by O-Yoné; and none of the people whom he questioned knew of any house in the quarter inhabited by two single women. Feeling at last certain that further research would be useless, he turned homeward by the shortest way, which happened to lead through the grounds of the temple Shin-Banzui-In.

Suddenly his attention was attracted by two new tombs, placed side by side, at the rear of the temple. One was a common tomb, such as might have been erected for a person of humble rank: the other was a large and handsome monument; and hanging before it was a beautiful peony-lantern, which had probably been left there at the time of the Festival of the Dead. Shinzaburô remembered that the peony-lantern carried by O-Yoné was exactly similar; and the coincidence impressed him as strange. He looked again at the tombs; but the tombs explained nothing. Neither bore any personal name,--only the Buddhist *kaimyô*, or posthumous appellation. Then he determined to seek information at the temple. An acolyte stated, in reply to his questions, that the large tomb had been recently erected for the daughter of Iijima Heizayemon, the *hatamoto* of Ushigomé; and that the small tomb next to it was that of her servant O-Yoné, who had died of grief soon after the young lady's funeral. Immediately to Shinzaburô's memory there recurred, with another and sinister meaning, the words of O-Yoné:--"*We went away, and found a very small house in Yanaka-no-Sasaki. There we are now just barely able to live--by doing a little private work. . . .*" Here was indeed the very small house,--and in Yanaka-no-Sasaki. But the little *private work* . . . ?

Terror-stricken, the samurai hastened with all speed to the house of Yusai, and begged for his counsel and assistance. But Yusai declared himself unable to be of any aid in such a case. All that he could do was to send Shinzaburô to the high-priest Ryôseki, of Shin-Banzui-in, with a letter praying for immediate religious help.

## VII

The high-priest Ryôseki was a learned and a holy man. By spiritual vision he was able to know the secret of any sorrow, and the nature of the karma that had caused it. He heard unmoved the story of Shinzaburô, and said to him:--"A very great danger now threatens You, because of an error committed in one of your former states of existence. The karma that hinds you to the dead is very strong; but if I tried to explain its character, you would not be able to understand. I shall therefore tell you only this,--that the dead person has no desire to injure you out of hate, feels no enmity towards you: she is influenced, on the contrary, by the most passionate affection for you. Probably the girl has been in love with you

from a time long preceding your present life,--from a time of not less than three or four past existences; and it would seem that, although necessarily changing her form and condition at each succeeding birth, she has not been able to cease from following after you. Therefore it will not be an easy thing to escape from her influence. . . . But now I am going to lend you this powerful *mamori*.<sup>[1]</sup> It is a pure gold image of that Buddha called the Sea-Sounding Tathâgata--*Kai-On-Nyôrai*,--because his preaching of the Law sounds through the world like the sound of the sea. And this little image

[1. The Japanese word *mamori* has significations at least as numerous as those attaching to our own term "amulet." It would be impossible, in a mere footnote, even to suggest the variety of Japanese religious objects to which the name is given. In this instance, the *mamori* is a very small image, probably enclosed in a miniature shrine of lacquer-work or metal, over which a silk cover is drawn. Such {footnote p. 95} little images were often worn by *samurai* on the person. I was recently shown a miniature figure of Kwannon, in an iron case, which had been carried by an officer through the Satsuma war. He observed, with good reason, that it had probably saved his life; for it had stopped a bullet of which the dent was plainly visible.]

is especially a *shiryô-yoké*,<sup>[1]</sup>--which protects the living from the dead. This you must wear, in its covering, next to your body,--under the girdle. . . . Besides, I shall presently perform in the temple, a *segaki*-service<sup>[2]</sup> for the repose of the troubled spirit. . . . And here is a holy sutra, called *Ubô-Darani-Kyô*, or "Treasure-Raining Sutra:"<sup>[3]</sup> you must be careful to recite it every night in your house without fail. . . . Furthermore I shall give you this package of *o-fuda*,<sup>[4]</sup>--you must paste one of them over every opening of your house,--no matter how small. If you do this, the power of the holy texts will prevent the dead from entering. But--whatever may happen--do not fail to recite the sutra."

Shinzaburô humbly thanked the high-priest and then, taking with him the image, the sutra, and the bundle of sacred texts, he made all haste to reach his home before the hour of sunset.

[1. From *shiryô*, a ghost, and *yokeru*, to exclude. The Japanese have two kinds of ghosts proper in their folklore: the spirits of the dead, *shiryô*; and the spirits of the living, *ikiryô*. A house or a person may be haunted by an *ikiryô* as well as by a *shiryô*.

2. A special service,--accompanying offerings of food, etc., to those dead having no living relatives or friends to care for them,--is thus termed. In this case, however, the service would be of a particular and exceptional kind.

3. The name would be more correctly written *Ubô-Darani-Kyô*. It is the Japanese pronunciation of the title of a very short sutra translated out of Sanscrit into Chinese by the Indian priest Amoghavajra, probably during the {footnote p. 96} eighth century. The Chinese text contains transliterations of some mysterious Sanscrit words,--apparently talismanic words,--like those to be seen in Kern's translation of the Saddharma-Pundarika, ch. xxvi.]

[4. *O-fuda* is the general name given to religious texts used as charms or talismans. They are sometimes stamped or burned upon wood, but more commonly written or printed upon narrow strips of paper. *O-fuda* are pasted above house-entrances, on the walls of rooms, upon tablets placed in household shrines, etc., etc. Some kinds are worn about the person;--others are made into pellets, and swallowed as spiritual medicine. The text of the larger *o-fuda* is often accompanied by curious pictures or symbolic illustrations.]

## VIII

With Yusai's advice and help, Shinzaburô was able before dark to fix the holy texts over all the apertures of his dwelling. Then the *ninsomi* returned to his own house,--leaving the youth alone.

Night came, warm and clear. Shinzaburô made fast the doors, bound the precious amulet about his waist, entered his mosquito-net, and by the glow of a night-lantern began to recite the *Ubô-Darani-Kyô*. For a long time he chanted the words, comprehending little of their meaning;--then he tried to obtain some rest. But his mind was still too much disturbed by the strange events of the day. Midnight passed; and no sleep came to him. At last he heard the boom of the great temple-bell of Dentsu-In announcing the eighth hour.[1]

[1. According to the old Japanese way of counting time, this *yatsudoki* or eighth hour was the same as our two o'clock in the morning. Each Japanese hour was equal to two European hours, so that there were only six hours instead of our twelve; and these six hours were counted backwards in the order,--9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4. Thus the ninth hour corresponded to our midday, or midnight; {footnote p. 98} half-past nine to our one o'clock; eight to our two o'clock. Two o'clock in the morning, also called "the Hour of the Ox," was the Japanese hour of ghosts and goblins.]

it ceased; and Shinzaburô suddenly heard the sound of *geta* approaching from the old direction,--but this time more slowly: *karan-koron, karan-koron!* At once a cold sweat broke over his forehead. Opening the sutra hastily, with trembling hand, he began again to recite it aloud. The steps came nearer and nearer,--reached the live hedge,--stopped! Then, strange to say, Shinzaburô felt unable to remain under his mosquito-net: something stronger even than his fear impelled him to look; and, instead of continuing to recite the *Ubô-Darani-Kyô*, he foolishly approached the shutters, and through a chink peered out into the night. Before the house he saw O-Tsuyu standing, and O-Yoné with the peony-lantern; and both of them were gazing at the Buddhist texts pasted above the entrance. Never before--not even in what time she lived--had O-Tsuyu appeared so beautiful; and Shinzaburô felt his heart drawn towards her with a power almost resistless. But the terror of death and the terror of the unknown restrained; and there went on within him such a struggle between his love and his fear that he became as one suffering in the body the pains of the *Shô-netsu* hell.<sup>[1]</sup>

Presently he heard the voice of the maid-servant, saying:--

"My dear mistress, there is no way to enter. The heart of Hagiwara Sama must have changed. For the promise that he made last night has been broken; and the doors have been made fast to keep us out. . . . We cannot go in to-night. . . . It will be wiser for you to make up your mind not to think any more about him, because his feeling towards you has certainly changed. It is evident that he does not want to see you. So it will be better not to give yourself any more trouble for the sake of a man whose heart is so unkind."

But the girl answered, weeping:--

"Oh, to think that this could happen after the pledges which we made to each other! . . .

Often I was told that the heart of a man changes as quickly as the sky of autumn;--yet surely the heart of Hagiwara Sama cannot be so cruel that he should really intend to exclude me ill this way! . . . Dear Yoné, please. find some means of taking me to him. . . . Unless you do, I will never, never go home again."

Thus she continued to plead, veiling her face with her long sleeves,--and very beautiful she looked, and very touching; but the fear of death was strong upon her lover.

O-Yoné at last made answer,--

"My dear young lady, why will you trouble your mind about a man who seems to be so cruel? . . . Well, let us see if there be no way to enter at the back of the house: come with me!"

And taking O-Tsuyu by the hand, she led her away toward the rear of the dwelling; and there the two disappeared as suddenly as the light disappears when the flame of a lamp is blown out.

[1. *En-netsu* or *Shô-netsu* (Sanskrit "Tapana") is the sixth of the Eight Hot Hells of Japanese Buddhism. One day of life in this hell is equal in duration to thousands (some say millions) of human years.]

## IX

Night after night the shadows came at the Hour of the Ox; and nightly Shinzaburô heard the weeping of O-Tsuyu. Yet he believed himself saved,--little imagining that his doom had already been decided by the character of his dependents.

Tomozô had promised Yusai never to speak to any other person--not even to O-Miné--of the strange events that were taking place. But Tomozô was not long suffered by the haunters to rest in peace. Night after night O-Yoné entered into his dwelling, and roused him from his sleep, and asked him to remove the *o-fuda* placed over one very small window at the back of his master's house. And Tomozô, out of fear, as often promised her to take away the *o-fuda* before the next sundown; but never by day could he make up his mind to remove it,--believing that evil was intended to Shinzaburô. At last, in a night of storm, O-Yoné startled him from slumber with a cry of reproach, and stooped above his pillow, and said to him: "Have a care how you trifle with us! If, by to-morrow night, you do not take away that text, you shall learn how I can hate!" And she made her face so frightful as she spoke that Tomozô nearly died of terror.

O-Miné, the wife of Tomozô, had never till then known of these visits: even to her husband they had seemed like bad dreams. But on this particular night it chanced that, waking suddenly, she heard the voice of a woman talking to Tomozô. Almost in the same moment the talking ceased; and when O-Miné looked about her, she saw, by the light of the night-lamp, only her husband,--

shuddering and white with fear. The stranger was gone; the doors were fast: it seemed impossible that anybody could have entered. Nevertheless the jealousy of the wife had been aroused; and she began to chide and to question Tomozô in such a manner that he thought himself obliged to betray the secret, and to explain the terrible dilemma in which he had been placed.

Then the passion of O-Miné yielded to wonder and alarm; but she was a subtle woman, and she devised immediately a plan to save her husband by the sacrifice of her master. And she gave Tomozô a cunning counsel,--telling him to make conditions with the dead.

They came again on the following night at the Hour of the Ox; and O-Miné hid herself on hearing the sound of their coming,--*karan-koron, karan-koron!* But Tomozô went out to meet them in the dark, and even found courage to say to them what his wife had told him to say:--

"It is true that I deserve your blame;--but I had no wish to cause you anger. The reason that the *o-fuda* has not been taken away is that my wife and I are able to live only by the help of Hagiwara Sama, and that we cannot expose him to any danger without bringing misfortune upon ourselves. But if we could obtain the sum of a hundred *ryô* in gold, we should be able to please you, because we should then need no help from anybody. Therefore if you will give us a hundred *ryô*, I can take the *o-fuda* away without being afraid of losing our only means of support."

When he had uttered these words, O-Yoné and O-Tsuyu looked at each other in silence for a moment. Then O-Yoné said:--

"Mistress, I told you that it was not right to trouble this man,--as we have no just cause of ill will against him. But it is certainly useless to fret yourself about Hagiwara Sama, because his heart has changed towards you. Now once again, my dear young lady, let me beg you not to think any more about him!"

But O-Tsuyu, weeping, made answer:--

"Dear Yoné, whatever may happen, I cannot possibly keep myself from thinking about him! . . . You know that you can get a hundred *ryô* to have the *o-fuda* taken off. . . Only once more, I pray, dear Yoné!--only once more bring me face to face with Hagiwara Sama,--I beseech you!" And hiding her face with her sleeve, she thus continued to plead.

"Oh! why will you ask me to do these things?" responded O-Yoné. "You know very well that I have no money. But since you will persist in this whim of yours, in spite of all that I can say, I suppose that I must try to find the money somehow, and to bring it here to-morrow night. . . ." Then, turning to the faithless Tomozô, she said:--"Tomozô, I must tell you that Hagiwara Sama now wears upon his body a *mamori* called by the name of *Kai-On-Nyôrai*, and that so long as he wears it we cannot approach him. So you will have to get that *mamori* away from him, by some means or other, as well as to remove the *o-fuda*."

Tomozô feebly made answer:--

"That also I can do, if you will promise to bring me the hundred *ryô*."

"Well, mistress," said O-Yoné, "you will wait,--will you not,--until to-morrow night?"

"Oh, dear Yoné!" sobbed the other,--"I have we to go back to-night again without seeing Hagiwara Sama? Ah! it is cruel!"

And the shadow of the mistress, weeping, was led away by the shadow of the maid.

## X

Another day went, and another night came, and the dead came with it. But this time no lamentation was heard without the house of Hagiwara; for the faithless servant found his reward at the Hour of the Ox, and removed the *o-fuda*. Moreover he had been able, while his master was at the bath, to steal from its case the golden *mamori*, and to substitute for it an image of copper; and he had buried the *Kai-On-Nyôrai* in a desolate field. So the visitants found nothing to oppose their entering. Veiling their faces with their sleeves they rose and passed, like a streaming of vapor, into the little window from over which the holy text had been torn away. But what happened thereafter within the house Tomozô never knew.

The sun was high before he ventured again to approach his master's dwelling, and to knock upon the sliding-doors. For the first time in years he obtained no response; and the silence made him afraid. Repeatedly he called, and received no answer. Then, aided by O-Miné, he succeeded in effecting an entrance and making his way alone to the sleeping-room, where he called again in vain. He rolled back the rumbling shutters to admit the light; but still within the house there was no stir. At last he dared to lift a corner of the mosquito-net. But no sooner had he looked beneath than he fled from the house, with a cry of horror. Shinzaburô was dead--hideously dead and his face was the face of a man who had died in the uttermost agony of fear;--and lying beside him in the bed were the bones of a woman! And the bones of the arms, and the bones of the hands, clung fast about his neck.

## XI

Hakuôdô Yusai, the fortune-teller, went to view the corpse at the prayer of the faithless Tomozô. The old man was terrified and astonished at the spectacle, but looked about him with a keen eye. He soon perceived that the *o-fuda* had been taken from the little window at the back of the house; and on searching the body of Shinzaburô, he discovered that the golden *mamori* had been taken from its wrapping, and a copper image of Fudô put in place of it. He suspected Tomozô of the theft; but the whole occurrence was so very extraordinary that he thought it prudent to consult with the priest Ryôseki before taking further action. Therefore, after having made a careful examination of the premises, he betook himself to the temple Shin-Banzui-In, as quickly as his aged limbs could bear him.

Ryôseki, without waiting to hear the purpose of the old man's visit, at once invited him into a private apartment.

"You know that you are always welcome here," said Ryôseki. "Please seat yourself at ease. . . . Well, I am sorry to tell you that Hagiwara Sama is dead."

Yusai wonderingly exclaimed:--

"Yes, he is dead;--but how did you learn of it?"

The priest responded

"Hagiwara Sama was suffering from the results of an evil karma; and his attendant was a bad man. What happened to Hagiwara Sama was unavoidable;--his destiny had been determined from a time long before his last birth. It will be better for you not to let your mind be troubled by this event."

Yusai said:--

"I have heard that a priest of pure life may gain power to see into the future for a hundred years; but truly this is the first time in my existence that I have had proof of such power. . . . Still, there is another matter about which I am very anxious. . . ."

"You mean," interrupted Ryôseki, "the stealing of the holy *mamori*, the *Kai-On-Nyôrai*. But you must not give yourself any concern about

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that. The image has been buried in a field; and it will be found there and returned to me during the eighth month of the coming year. So please do not be anxious about it."

More and more amazed, the old *ninsomi* ventured to observe:--

"I have studied the *In-Yô*,<sup>[1]</sup> and the science of divination; and I make my living by telling peoples' fortunes;--but I cannot possibly understand how you know these things."

Ryôseki answered gravely:--

"Never mind how I happen to know them.... I now want to speak to you about Hagiwara's funeral. The House of Hagiwara has its own family-cemetery, of course; but to bury him there would not be proper. He must be buried beside O-Tsuyu, the Lady Iijima; for his karma-relation to her was a very deep one. And it is but right that you should erect a tomb for him at your own cost, because you have been indebted to him for many favors."

Thus it came to pass that Shinzaburô was buried beside O-Tsuyu, in the cemetery of Shin-Banzui-In, in Yanaka-no-Sasaki.

[1. The Male and Female principles of the universe, the Active and Passive forces of Nature. Yusai refers here to the old Chinese nature-philosophy,--better known to Western readers by the name FENG-SHUI.]

--Here ends the story of the Ghosts in the Romance of the Peony-Lantern.

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\* \*

My friend asked me whether the story had interested me; and I answered by telling him that I wanted to go to the cemetery of Shin-Banzui-In,--so as to realize more definitely the local color of the author's studies.

"I shall go with you at once," he said. "But what did you think of the personages?"



"To Western thinking," I made answer, "Shinzaburô is a despicable creature. I have been mentally comparing him with the true lovers of our old ballad-literature. They were only too glad to follow a dead sweetheart into the grave; and nevertheless, being Christians, they believed that they had only one human life to enjoy in this world. But Shinzaburô was a Buddhist,--with a million lives behind him and a million lives before him; and he was too selfish to give up even one miserable existence for the sake of the girl that came back to him from the dead. Then he was even more cowardly than selfish. Although a samurai by birth and training, he had to beg a priest to save him from ghosts. In every way he proved himself contemptible; and O-Tsuyu did quite right in choking him to death."

"From the Japanese point of view, likewise," my friend responded, "Shinzaburô is rather contemptible. But the use of this weak character helped the author to develop incidents that could not otherwise, perhaps, have been so effectively managed. To my thinking, the only attractive character in the story is that of O-Yoné: type of the old-time loyal and loving servant,--intelligent, shrewd, full of resource,--faithful not only unto death, but beyond death. . . . Well, let us go to Shin-Banzui-In."

We found the temple uninteresting, and the cemetery an abomination of desolation. Spaces once occupied by graves had been turned into potato-patches. Between were tombs leaning at all angles out of the perpendicular, tablets made illegible by scurf, empty pedestals, shattered water-tanks, and statues of Buddhas without heads or hands. Recent rains had soaked the black soil,--leaving here and there small pools of slime about which swarms of tiny frogs were hopping. Everything--excepting the potato-patches--seemed to have been neglected for years. In a shed just within the gate, we observed a woman cooking; and my companion presumed to ask her if she knew anything about the tombs described in the Romance of the Peony-Lantern.

"Ah! the tombs of O-Tsuyu and O-Yoné?" she responded, smiling;--"you will find them near the end of the first row at the back of the temple--next to the statue of Jizô."

Surprises of this kind I had met with elsewhere in Japan.

We picked our way between the rain-pools and between the green ridges of young potatoes,--whose roots were doubtless feeding on the substance of many another O-Tsuyu and O-Yoné;--and we reached at last two lichen-eaten tombs of which the inscriptions seemed almost obliterated. Beside the larger tomb was a statue of Jizô, with a broken nose.

"The characters are not easy to make out," said my friend--"but wait!" . . . He drew from his sleeve a sheet of soft white paper, laid it over the inscription, and began to rub the paper with a lump of clay. As he did so, the characters appeared in white on the blackened surface.

"*Eleventh day, third month--Rat, Elder Brother, Fire--Sixth year of Horéki* [A. D. 1756].' . . . This would seem to be the grave of some innkeeper of Nedzu, named Kichibei. Let us see what is on the other monument."

With a fresh sheet of paper he presently brought out the text of a kaimyô, and read,--

*"En-myô-In, Hô-yô-I-tei-ken-shi, Hô-ni'--'Nun-of-the-Law, Illustrious, Pure-of-heart-and-will. Famed-in-the-Law,--inhabiting the Mansions-of-the-Preaching-of-Wonder.' . . . The grave of some Buddhist nun."*

"What utter humbug!" I exclaimed. "That woman was only making fun of us."

"Now," my friend protested, "you are unjust to the woman! You came here because you wanted a sensation; and she tried her very best to please you. You did not suppose that ghost-story was true, did you?"



## Story of a Tengu<sup>[1]</sup>

IN the days of the Emperor Go-Reizen, there was a holy priest living in the temple of Seito, on the mountain called Hiyei-Zan, near Kyôto. One summer day this good priest, after a visit to the city, was returning to his temple by way of Kita-no-Oji, when he saw some boys ill-treating a kite. They had caught the bird in a snare, and were beating it with sticks. "Oh, the poor creature!" compassionately exclaimed

the priest;--"why do you torment it so, children?" One of the boys made answer;--"We want to kill it to get the feathers." Moved by pity, the priest persuaded the boys to let him have the kite in exchange for a fan that he was carrying; and he set the bird free. It had not been seriously hurt, and was able to fly away.

Happy at having performed this Buddhist act of merit, the priest then resumed his walk. He had not proceeded very far when he saw a strange monk come out of a bamboo-grove by the road. side, and hasten towards him. The monk respectfully saluted him, and said;--"Sir, through your compassionate kindness my life has been saved; and I now desire to express my gratitude in a fitting manner." Astonished at hearing himself thus addressed, the priest replied;--"Really, I cannot remember to have ever seen you before: please tell me who you are." "It is not wonderful that you cannot recognize me in this form," returned the monk: "I am the kite that those cruel boys were tormenting at Kita-no-Ôji. You saved my life; and there is nothing in this world more precious than life. So I now wish to return your kindness in some way or other. If there be anything that you would like to have, or to know, or to see,--anything that I can do for you, in short,--please to tell me; for as I happen to possess, in a small degree, the Six Supernatural Powers, I am able to gratify almost any wish that you can express." On hearing these words, the priest knew that he was speaking with a Tengu; and he frankly made answer;--"My friend, I have long ceased to care for the things of this world: I am now seventy years of age;--neither fame nor pleasure has any attraction for me. I feel anxious only about my future birth; but as that is a matter in which no one can help me, it were useless to ask about it. Really, I can think of but one thing worth wishing for. It has been my life-long regret that I was not in India in the time of the Lord Buddha, and could not attend the great assembly on the holy mountain Gridhrakûta. Never a day passes in which this regret does not come to me, in the hour of morning or of evening prayer. Ah, my friend! if it were possible to conquer Time and Space, like the Bodhisattvas, so that I could look upon that marvellous assembly, how happy should I be!"--"Why," the Tengu exclaimed,

[1. This story may be found in the curious old Japanese book called *Jikkun-Shô*. The same legend has furnished the subject of an interesting *Nô*-play, called *Dai-É* ("The Great Picture"). In Japanese popular art, the Tengu are commonly represented either as winged men with beak-shaped noses, or as birds of prey. There are different kinds of Tengu; but all are supposed to be mountain-haunting spirits, capable of assuming many forms, and occasionally appearing as crows, vultures, or eagles. Buddhism appears to class the Tengu among the *Mârakâyikas*.]

"that pious wish of yours can easily be satisfied. I perfectly well remember the assembly on the Vulture Peak; and I can cause everything that happened there to reappear before you, exactly as it occurred. It is our greatest delight to represent such holy matters. . . . Come this way with me!"

And the priest suffered himself to be led to a place among pines, on the slope of a hill. "Now," said the Tengu, "you have only to wait here for awhile, with your eyes shut. Do not open them until you hear the voice of the Buddha preaching the Law. Then you can look. But when you see the appearance of the Buddha, you must not allow your devout feelings to influence you in any way;--you must not bow down, nor pray, nor utter any such exclamation as, '*Even so, Lord!*' or '*O thou Blessed One!*' You must not speak at all. Should you make even the least sign of reverence, something very unfortunate might happen to me." The priest gladly promised to follow these injunctions; and the Tengu hurried away as if to prepare the spectacle.

The day waned and passed, and the darkness came; but the old priest waited patiently beneath a tree, keeping his eyes closed. At last a voice suddenly resounded above him,--a wonderful voice, deep and clear like the pealing of a mighty bell,--the voice of the Buddha Sâkyamuni proclaiming the Perfect Way. Then the priest, opening his eyes in a great radiance, perceived that all things had been changed: the place was indeed the Vulture Peak,--the holy Indian mountain Gridhrakûta; and the time was the time of the Sûtra of the Lotos of the Good Law. Now there were no pines about him, but strange shining trees made of the Seven Precious Substances, with foliage and fruit of gems;--and the ground was covered with Mandârava and Manjûshaka flowers showered from heaven;--and the night was filled with fragrance and splendour and the sweetness of the great Voice. And in mid-air, shining as a moon above the world, the priest beheld the Blessed One seated upon the Lion-throne, with Samantabhadra at his right hand, and Mañjusrî at his left,--and before them assembled--immeasurably spreading into Space, like a flood of stars--the hosts of the Mahâsattvas and the Bodhisattvas with their countless following: "gods, demons, Nâgas, goblins, men, and beings not human." Sâriputra he saw, and Kâsyapa, and Ananda, with all the disciples of the Tathâgata,--and the Kings of the Devas,--and the Kings of the Four Directions, like pillars of fire,--and the great Dragon-Kings,--and the Gandharvas and Garudas,--and the Gods of the Sun and the Moon and the Wind,--and the shining myriads of Brahma's heaven. And incomparably further than even the measureless circling of the glory of these, he saw--made visible by a single ray of light that shot from the forehead of the Blessed One to pierce beyond uttermost Time--the eighteen hundred thousand Buddha-fields of the Eastern Quarter with all their habitants,--and the beings in each of the Six States of Existence,--and even the shapes of the Buddhas extinct, that had entered into Nirvâna. These, and all the gods, and all the demons, he saw bow down before the Lion-throne; and he heard that multitude incalculable of beings praising the Sûtra of the Lotos of the Good Law,--like the roar of a sea before the Lord. Then forgetting utterly his pledge,--foolishly dreaming that he stood in the very presence of the very Buddha,--he

cast himself down in worship with tears of love and thanksgiving; crying out with a loud voice, "*O thou Blessed One!*" . . .

Instantly with a shock as of earthquake the stupendous spectacle disappeared; and the priest found himself alone in the dark, kneeling upon the grass of the mountain-side. Then a sadness unspeakable fell upon him, because of the loss of the vision, and because of the thoughtlessness that had caused him to break his word. As he sorrowfully turned his steps homeward, the goblin-monk once more appeared before him, and said to him in tones of reproach and pain:-- "Because you did not keep the promise which you made to me, and heedlessly allowed your feelings to overcome you, the Gohôtendo, who is the Guardian of the Doctrine, swooped down suddenly from heaven upon us, and smote us in great anger, crying out, '*How do ye dare thus to deceive a pious person?*' Then the other monks, whom I had assembled, all fled in fear. As for myself, one of my wings has been broken,--so that now I cannot fly." And with these words the Tengu vanished forever.