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*THE KYOGEN BOOK*  
An Anthology of Japanese Classical Comedies

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## A Demon in Love (*Setsubun*)

A demon forces his way into a house and tries to seduce the woman who lives there, but she cheats him out of his treasures and chases him out by throwing beans at him.

### *Cast of Characters*

Demon	( <i>Shite</i> )
Woman	( <i>Ado</i> )

WOMAN: I am a member of this household. My husband has gone to the Grand Shrine of Izumo to make his spring offerings. Since tonight is the Eve of Spring, I will carry out my home ceremonies alone. (*She sits.*)

DEMON: (*Singing.*)  
It is the very night of the Eve of Spring,  
It is the very night of the Eve of Spring,  
I come now to pick up beans, and  
Crunch and chew them.

STAGE ASSISTANT: (*Singing in response.*)  
Crunch and chew them.

DEMON: (*Speaking.*) I am a demon from the Isle of Eternal Youth. Tonight is the Eve of Spring when I always cross over to Japan. And as is my custom, I am on my way to Japan, where I intend to gather up some beans and crunch and chew them. (*Singing as he circles the stage.*)  
Leaving far behind  
My Isle of Eternal Youth,

Leaving far behind  
 My Isle of Eternal Youth,  
 I travel onward,  
 Continuing on my way  
 Through fleecy white clouds.  
 My feet as my only guide,  
 I travel onward,  
 My feet as my only guide,  
 I travel onward,  
 Until I arrive upon  
 The shores of Japan.

(*Speaking.*) I have traveled with haste and am now in Japan. Oh, how tired I am! How very tired! I would indeed like a rest, even if it be only under the eaves of some house. Well, I see a light yonder. I'll just have a peek inside. (*Stretching to look in through the gate, he suddenly puts his hands to his eye and backs away.*) Ow, ouch! Ow, ouch! Ow, ouch! Oh, I must say, that was painful! Most painful indeed! Oh, now I remember. People always hang holly in their gates on the Eve of Spring. So that is what stuck me in the eye, and it was truly painful. (*Singing.*)

All because of the great love in my heart for Japan,  
 Trying to see what's inside,  
 Through the window,  
 A hanging sprig of holly jabbed me in the eye,  
 And, oh, how I holly-ered!

(*Speaking.*) A thing like this deserves nothing better (*breaking the holly off and throwing it to the ground*) than to be broken off and thrown away! First I will announce myself. Hello in there! Is anybody home?

WOMAN: (*Standing.*) Someone is at the door. Who is there?

(*Opening the sliding door.*) Zara, zara, zara, zara.

(*The WOMAN looks back and forth, and the DEMON moves with her eyes, all the time pointing at himself in an attempt to attract her attention.*)

WOMAN: Nobody is there (*Closing the door.*) Zara zara, zara, zara.

DEMON: Well, what is this? A woman opens the door and I am standing here, right in front of her nose, but she says there is nobody here and pops right back inside. Ah, hah! As I am wearing my magic rain coat and my magic straw hat, there is no way she could see me! I will take them off and announce myself once more. Hello in there! Is anybody home?

WOMAN: Someone is at the door again. Who is there? (*Opening the door.*) Zara, zara, zara, zara. Oh, how awful! Get out! Get out of here!

DEMON: (*Running away in fright, but turning back when he doesn't see anything.*) Oh, here, here! What is the matter? You seem disturbed. Is something frightening out here?

WOMAN: What could be more frightening than a demon?! Get out! Get out of here!

DEMON: How glad I am to hear that! I thought there was some awful monster out here. You scared me for a minute. Listen! I am a demon from the Isle of Eternal Youth and not awful or frightening in any way. (*Moving toward the WOMAN.*)

WOMAN: Oh, how awful! Get out! Get out of here! (*Chasing the DEMON away.*)

DEMON: If you are so upset, I will leave, but I hate to go so soon after coming all this way. Won't you give me something to eat?

WOMAN: If I give you something to eat, will you get out of here?

DEMON: Just give me some food!

WOMAN: Here you are!

DEMON: Give it to me. (*Opening his fan and holding it out.*)

WOMAN: (*Pouring wheat into his fan.*) Zara, zara, zara, zara.

DEMON: What is this?!

WOMAN: Plain brown wheat, the mother of the three precious grains.

DEMON: What?! Plain brown wheat?!

WOMAN: That is what it is.

DEMON: (*Singing.*)

This demon's heart is deeply hurt with plain brown wheat,  
This demon's heart is deeply hurt with plain brown wheat.  
I know that it can be made to be edible,

But I am not possessed of the skill to cook it,  
So I'll just throw it down and tramp on it.

WOMAN: How hateful! Get out of here!

DEMON: You talk like that, and I'll stir it up (*stirring the wheat and throwing it at the WOMAN with his stick*) and throw it in your face!

WOMAN: With such a temper, it is no wonder you were born a demon!

DEMON: Well, I must say, now that I have gotten a good look at you, I see you are a fine looking woman. Do you live here alone, or with somebody?

WOMAN: Whether I live here alone or with someone, why should you care?

DEMON: That is because I feel I'd like (*moving closer to the WOMAN*) to care for you a little.

WOMAN: Oh, how awful! Get out! Get out of here!

DEMON: (*Singing.*)

Oh, I must say, what a lovely lady you are!

Neither China's Madam Li,

Nor Yang Kweifei,

Nor Japan's Komachi Ono have I seen,

But I cannot imagine

A greater beauty than you

Being anywhere in this world of ours.

Oh, love me, please, or I am sure to die.

(*Speaking, while holding up his sleeve.*) I say I have an awful rip here. (*Moving closer to the WOMAN.*) Won't you sew it up for me?

WOMAN: Oh, how awful! How could I ever be the wife of a demon? Get out! Get out of here!

DEMON: (*Laughing as he moves away.*) I ask her to sew up a little rip and she offers to become my wife. Oh, how she tugs at my heart strings! (*To the WOMAN.*) I know an amusing song that is popular on the Isle of Eternal Youth. Shall I sing it for you?

WOMAN: No! I do not wish to hear it.

DEMON: Oh, do listen to it! (*Singing.*)

Standing on the isle's point,

It seemed to me that she beckoned to me.  
But just as I started to move toward her,  
(*Tiptoeing toward the WOMAN.*)

I saw it was not me she beckoned to!

WOMAN: Oh, how awful! Get out! Get out of here!

DEMON: (*Moving away, singing.*)

Oh, woe! My heart breaks with bitter pain.

What a silly fool am I!

(*Speaking.*) Was that not amusing?

WOMAN: Amusing it was not!

DEMON: Then I'll sing some more. (*Singing.*)

In the Land of Tsu, at Nakajima,  
Damming up the banks of Nakatsu River,  
The straw earth basket carrier can not  
Keep it up, nor does he try.  
Feet unsteady with strong wine  
Totter and reel beneath his straw basket.  
Sober up and keep it up there!  
Sober up and keep it up there!  
With a yo, heave, ho!  
Yo and heave, ho!  
From tedium and great ennui,  
From tedium and great ennui,  
In my doorway a calabash suspend I.  
Of a sudden, a breeze  
Comes whisking through my door.  
Over that way, chakkiri hyo!  
Then back this way, chakkiri hyo!  
Hyo, hyo, ra! Hyo, hyo!  
Watching a hanging calabash  
Is amusing indeed!

(*Speaking.*) Oh, I say, this is hard to say, (*moving close to the WOMAN, holding his stick with one end in his crotch and the other poking at her face*) but won't you just lick the end of my stick a bit?

WOMAN: How could I do such a thing?! Get out! Get out of here!

DEMON: (*Moving away.*) Then I'll sing some more. (*Singing.*)

For my nocturnal attack,  
 My sword would shine far too brightly,  
 My halberd, I think, is much too grandiloquent,  
 And my javelin is too long,  
 My bow and my quiver  
 Would only make the dogs bark,  
 And a bamboo stick would only serve to annoy.  
 So I'll just shove right in  
 With a hardwood pole,  
 O'er the barrier,  
 In one lusty leap.  
 Oh, woe is me!

What a woeful night, a woeful night!  
 The little secret garden door  
 Began to creak and tap so lightly.  
 Expectantly my feet did speed  
 To see who had come to visit me,  
 But it was only the freezing north mountain blast  
 Swooping down to strike my door.

*(The DEMON sneaks up to and embraces the WOMAN from behind.)*

'Twas you, I thought, with hope,  
 Had come to visit me.

WOMAN: *(Breaking loose and chasing the DEMON away.)* Oh,  
 how awful! Get out! Get out of here!

DEMON: *(Moving away, still singing.)*

But, woe, it was none other,  
 Oh, than the cruel cold wind!  
 Even the dreary dripping drizzling rain,  
 When storm clouds leave western skies,  
 Gives way to azure hue,  
 But no one will requite my dampened love,  
 And fill my aching heart with bright blue cheery skies.

*(Weeping and speaking.)* Oh, I must say, you are a most  
 pitiless woman. I have courted you in every way I know, but  
 still you refuse my love. What a hard-hearted woman you are!  
*(He weeps again.)*

WOMAN: (*Aside.*) What is this? It seems as though that demon has truly fallen in love with me. They say that those from the Isle of Eternal Youth possess many rare treasures. I will see if I can cheat him out of those he has and make them my own.

(*To the DEMON, singing.*)

I beg of thee sincerely,  
My dear Sir Demon,  
That if thy love for me  
Be truly strong and deep,  
That unto me  
You bequeath all your treasures rare.

DEMON: (*Laughing.*) You seem well acquainted with the Way of Desire.

(*Singing.*)

A favor, between two so close, is easily granted,  
A favor, between two so close, is easily granted,  
Thus my treasures, one and all, I present to you.  
From the Isle of Eternal Youth,  
From the Isle of Eternal Youth,  
Come I with many precious treasures,  
My straw raincoat and hat of magic mighty,  
And my gold-striking hammer.  
Abra-kadabra-dab,  
Abra-kadabra-dab!

(*Giving the WOMAN his treasures.*)

Here they are, my treasures three, all I now give unto thee.

WOMAN: (*Aside.*) Now that I have these, I have nothing at all to fear.

DEMON: Well now, all is settled! (*He lies down.*) Now I am master of this house and your dear husband. Come, rub my back for me. Oh, how tired. How tired I am!

WOMAN: The time has come to throw the beans. (*Singing.*)

Now I bring forth and scatter  
My Eve of Spring beans.

(*Tossing beans about the house.*)

In with joy, in with joy!

(*Throwing beans at the DEMON.*)



Out with demons, out with demons!

DEMON: (*Getting to his feet and staggering off.*) Aaaggghhh!

WOMAN: (*Chasing the DEMON off.*) Out with demons, out with demons!

DEMON: Aaaggghhh!

WOMAN: Out with demons, out with demons!

DEMON: Aaaggghhh!

WOMAN: Out with demons, out with demons!