

# *Kintōzaemon*

Translated by Nadia Chung

Characters:

Kintōzaemon: a mountain bandit

The woman: a traveler

Kintou (*appears carrying a long sword*): I'm the honorable Kintōzaemon and I'm not a righteous person. Because I've had a run of bad luck recently, I've decided to travel up the mountain, steal from whoever passes by, and hope my luck will turn. First, let me travel slowly, slowly. (*While walking around the stage*) Well, it is true that people say, "Both people and folding screens cannot stand without bending,"<sup>1</sup> but my present situation seems more the fault of my bad luck. Truly, there is no way to understand what I did in the past that led to this present result or what will happen in the future; all I can do is focus on the present moment.<sup>2</sup> Ah, while going on this way, I have already arrived at the mountain top. This area is desolate and far from people; on top of that, there are an abundance of places for me to hide, so I'll find one now. "Steal from easy targets, don't steal from those who appear difficult." That is the secret of being a mountain bandit. I'll await my target here. (*sits in front of Chorus seat*)

## **P511**

Woman (*appears with a sack on her head*): I'm a person who lives around here. My family lives on the mountain, but I have not heard from them for a while, so I'm visiting them today. (*while walking around the stage*) Well, it is true that this mountain path is lonely and desolate, and so I should have taken someone with me, but no one has the time to spare. If I waited for someone to have time, then I would be running late, so I decided to travel by myself. (*Pauses to look around*) What in the world is this, it seems like I have lost my way and ended up on a most desolate mountain path. I need to do something about it fast!

Kintou (*Standing*): Aha, she is perfect, I will ensnare her. Oi you, do you want to get beaten up by this long sword? (*Holds up a halberd and chases her*)

Woman: Alas, how sad, how sad. I don't know anyone here but someone please help me, please help me. (*Runs around the stage*)

Kintou: You, do you really think you can escape? Stop being so annoying.

Woman: How distressing, how distressing this is. At least please don't kill me. (*Prostrates*)

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<sup>1</sup> “人と屏風は直ぐには立てられぬ” is a Japanese proverb. A folding screen will not stand up unless it is folded, similarly, people living in the world need to bend (compromise) in response to their situation.

<sup>2</sup> From Buddhist scripture, “大乘本生心地觀經”: 過去欲知因，見其現在果。欲知未來果，見其現在因 (in Chinese). It means if you want to know the cause in the past, look at the present result. If you want to know the result in future, look at the present cause.

Kintou: Hey you, woman, do you think shouting in the depths of the mountains, someone will come? Don't think you can escape and pass through safely. So hand over your belongings to me now.

**P512**

Woman: What are you talking about? In this righteous, lawful age, if you do such thing, I will report it to the local court and you will get punished for it!

Kintou: What? You will report me to the local court and I will get punished?

Woman: Indeed.

Kintou: You have no idea what you are talking about, but I'm the honorable Kintōzaemon, and I have a decree permitting me to do whatever I like.

Woman: What are you saying!? You claim you've got permission to do this sort of thing? If that is true, then please show me that document.

Kintou: Oh, let me show you now! (*Puts down the halberd, and takes out a document from inside his robe.*) Come, come, read this.

Woman: I can't read. So allow me to just listen as you read out loud.

Kintou: Well then, listen carefully as I read out loud. (*Opens up the document and reads.*) "To the honorable Kintōzaemon who is a mountain bandit, first, you should steal from whoever is easy to take from, and don't steal from someone who seems difficult to take from."

Woman: That! Didn't it say don't steal from someone who seems difficult to take from? Because this is all I own, I can't give it to you, can't give it to you. (*Cries.*)

Kintou: Listen you, why don't you understand? If you give me your belongings I will spare your life, but if you don't, then I will slash you with this halberd!

Woman: Alas, how sad, how very sad. Please wait, please wait just a moment. You are saying if I don't hand over my belongings then you will kill me?

**P513**

Kintou: Yes, of course.

Woman: Nothing is more important than my life. Take this then. (*Hands him the bag.*)

Kintou: Oi, you are right. Pass it this way! (*Uses the halberd's handle to bring the bag close.r*) Come, come, come to me faster.

Woman: I can't stay at this place any longer. (*Crying as she walks toward First Pine.*) Oh, how miserable, how miserable, I have met a loathsome person today. If I'd known I would encounter such thing I would not have travelled by myself. I have no idea where that bandit is going. (*Looking at Kintōzaemon from the Shite Pillar as he opens the bag.*) Just as I thought, he is taking out items from my bag.

Kintou: Oh, I'm pleased, I'm so happy that such good luck has come to me. I have no idea what will be inside this bag. First let me open it up. Oh ho ho, what a splendid robe. It is a fine robe, indeed. I have been having such bad luck lately that my wife's temper has been

very bad. When I show her this, then she will be pleased. (*Taking things out of the bag one by one.*)

Woman: (*to herself*) No, you can't do that, that robe is from my mother who sewed it for me especially for the traveling. How irritating this is!

Kintou (*takes out a hair ornament*): Oh ho ho, what is this? A hair ornament. This is another nice object. My wife's hair is even shorter the tail of a frog<sup>3</sup>, when she puts this on, she will even be more cheerful.

#### P514

Woman (*to herself*): Ah, I'm getting angrier and angrier. He is so cheerful when taking out my precious hair ornament. What a detestable person. I need to do something to take back all the things. (*pondering*) Ah, I've thought of something. I will do it! (*Moves forward with silent steps to take halberd.*)

Kintou (*Too absorbed with taking out a mirror, lipstick, obi sash<sup>4</sup>, to realize what she is doing*): Wow, there's a mirror. What a fine object. She also has a lipstick. Ah, this is an *obi* sash. My, my, this is a splendid *obi*. There are so many objects here. My wife has an awful face, so if she can use these cosmetics, then she will be prettier. Good luck has finally come to me. When I bring these back to my wife, she will be so delighted. (*Puts everything back in the bag and ties it.*)

Woman (*Prods him with the halberd*): You, stop it!

Kintou (*surprised*): Don't joke around.

Woman: The joke is on you, you detestable person.

Kintou: That is dangerous cutlery, hand it over.

Woman: What, cutlery? You, just lie down and let me slash you. (*Points the long sword toward him.*)

Kintou: Ah, that is dangerous, DANGEROUS! At least please don't kill me. (*Prostrates himself.*)

Woman: You, do you want to give me back my belongings, or do you want to get slashed by this? (*Holds up the halberd.*) It's your choice.

Kintou: Ah, at least please don't kill me.

Woman: Do you truly want your life to be saved?

#### P515

Kintou: What do I need to do in order to save my life?

Woman: If you want me to spare your life, hand over the thing that you wear around your waist.

Kintou: Oh, you detestable person. Are you thinking to steal my *wakizashi*<sup>5</sup> short sword, even though you are a female? If you think you can steal it from me, then go ahead and try it. I'm not going to let you.

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<sup>3</sup> A metaphor that describes his wife's hair as extremely short.

<sup>4</sup> kimono sash

<sup>5</sup> It means "side insertion." It is a traditional Japanese sword, a shorter one.

Woman: Hey you, if you say you won't give it to me, then let me open up your belly. (*Holds up the halberd once again*)

Kintou: Arrg, watch out with that, watch out. I'll do it, I will do it.

Woman: Hand it over now.

Kintou: Don't hurt me. Here, take it. (*Takes off his wakizashi short sword, and pushes the scabbard in her direction.*)

Woman: No, hand it over in a way that shows you understand what I am saying.

Kintou: If I have to hand it over with care, then don't take it. (*Appears to take back the wakizashi short sword.*)

Woman: Listen you, if you say you won't give it to me, then I will chop off your head. (*Holds up the long sword once again.*)

### **P516**

Kintou: Ah, dangerous, dangerous! I'll do it, I will do it.

Woman: Hurry up and hand it over.

Kintou: Then you need to stay over there for the whole time.

Woman: Ok, I'll do what you say, just hurry up and hand it over.

Kintou: Here, take it (*Throws the wakizashi in the woman's direction.*)

Woman: Come to mama. (*Using the halberd to bring the wakizashi closer.*)

Kintou: Don't do anything dangerous.

Woman (*Strapping the wakizashi to her waist*): I feel better now that I've taken this from you. (*Points the halberd at the bandit,*) Oi.

Kintou: What?

Woman: Give me back my belongings.

Kintou: What are you saying? You already stole my *wakizashi*, now you want me to give back your belongings?

Woman: You detestable person, if you don't return them all, I'll pierce and kill you. (*Holds up the halberd as though she is about to act.*)

Kintou: Ah, I'll return it, I'll return it. Don't act so aggressive.

Woman: Hurry up and give it back.

Kintou: Here, take it. (*Pushes the hair ornament toward the woman.*)

Woman: Put it here. (*Uses the halberd's handle to bring it closer.*) Also, give me back all my other belongings. If you don't return them, I will kill you right away!

Kintou: Ah, I'll, I'll give them back. Of course, I'll return them. Hurry and take them. (*Throws the objects back to her one by one.*)

### **P517**

Woman: Give them back now. Don't give them back one by one, I want them all at once.

Kintou: Don't hurry me. I'll return all of them. Here, take the bag. (*Returns the rest of the objects in the bag.*)

Woman: You, give me back the bag too!

Kintou: Please, let me just have this bag.

Woman: You detestable person, if you don't return the bag, I'll open up your belly. (*Holds up the halberd.*)

Kintou: Ah, don't say that, I'll return it, I will.

Woman: Then hurry up and give it back.

Kintou: Well, well, you are such a bold woman. If I give back all your belongings, you need to give me back the halbert and the short sword that hangs at your waist.

Woman: First, give me back the bag.

Kintou: Okay, I understand, here, take it.

Woman: Hand it over here. (*Takes back the bag*). Well, that's all my stuff. Now, hand me the robe that you are wearing.

Kintou: Wait a minute, let me tell you something. Since I returned all your belongings, you should not be asking for anything else. Put down the halberd and the short sword that hangs at your waist and leave.

Woman: Hey you, if you don't give me the robe, I'll chop off your head. (*Threatens with the halberd*)

Kintou: Ah, I'll do it, I'll do it

Woman: Hurry up and hand it over.

## **P518**

Kintou: Well, Well, I'm in trouble. I thought she is a woman so I let my guard down, but she is not what I expected.

Woman: Hey, hey, what are you mumbling? Hurry up and hand it over!

Kintou: Well, well, well, don't rush me. I'm doing it now. (*Takes off his robe and throws it to her.*) Here, take it.

Woman (*Using the halberd to pull the robe closer*): Come to mama.

Kintou: What an arrogant person!

Woman (*while putting away the robe*): If you want me to spare your life, don't look at me as I leave.

Kintou: I won't look (*Prostrates himself.*)

Woman: If you look, I'll kill you with one sweep of this halberd. (*Carrying the halberd, bag, etc. starts to walk away.*)

Kintou: I'm not looking.

Woman: Don't look!

Kintou: I'm not looking.

Woman: Don't look!

Kintou: I'm not looking (*Raises his head a little bit and looks in the woman's direction. The woman sees this and turns back.*)

Woman: You looked! Hey you, I'm going to chop off your head. (*Holds up the halberd threateningly.*)

Kintou: Ah, I won't look, I won't look. (*Prostrates himself again.*)

Woman: I said don't look.

Kintou: I won't be looking.

Woman: Don't look, don't look, don't look, don't you dare look! (*Carrying the bag and halberd as she walks toward the hashigakari bridge.*) Today, good luck has come to me.<sup>6</sup> I should hurry up and get on with my journey. (*Leaves the stage.*)

Kintou: Not looking, not looking, not looking, I'm not looking. (*He raises his head to check if the woman has left or not.*) Wow, what a dreadful experience. I regret that I let my guard down when I saw that woman; not only did I not manage to steal anything from her, my own belongings were all stolen away. Well, well, what bad luck. What should I do? (*Pondering.*) You know, there is old saying that is pertinent in this case: "accumulate good deeds and the blessings will come."<sup>7</sup> In general, it means that if people give away or donate their things, good fortune will certainly come. I guess I ought to feel glad about this turn of events, so I will smile as if I'm celebrating as I return home. (*Laughs out loud, but then bursts into tears; alternates laughing and crying as he exits the stage.*)

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<sup>6</sup> Same line as Kintouzaemon said in the beginning of the play.

<sup>7</sup> The original phrase is “積善“の余慶,” which comes from 易經. It means that if one accumulates good deeds in this lifetime, then as a reward, even in future lives one will have good fortune.