Kabuki Plays On Stage
DARKNESS AND DESIRE, 1854-1864
EDITED BY JAMES A. BRANDON AND SAMUEL L. LIEBER

"The Ghost Stories at Yotsuya on the Tokaido"
pp. 134-143

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HONOLULU
Two-panel woodblock print by Utagawa Kuniyoshi (later Utagawa Toyokuni III, 1786–1864), chomura 2a, eighth month 1833. The right panel shows Owai’s ghost emerging from the lantern. Owai (Ogiwara Tōkichi) is famous in the Three Stories. The inscription on the lantern reads: “A fine house achieved for this autumn day, Owai, a stunning success.” Owai’s ghost, her husband, here called “Kampei Namono” (“Sani Sanyū” 1), stands, hallowed, within a snow-covered bamboo grove as Owai’s spirit materializes from the blazing lantern. (Tsukiohku Memorial Theatre Museum of Waseda University)
The Ghost Stories at Yotsuya on the Tōkaidō
*Tōkaidō Yotsuya Kaidan*

Tsunoya Nanboku IV

TRANSLATED BY PAUL B. KINNELLY

**Onbō Canal**
*Jumon Tsukō Onbōkō no Ba*

**The Dream**
*Yuure no Ba*

**Snake Mountain Hermitage**
*Hebikama Anjitsu no Ba*

1825 NAKAMURA-ZA, EDO
The Ghost Stories at Yotsuya on the Tokaidō

INTRODUCTION

Tsunyua Nanboku IV’s (1755–1829) The Ghost Stories at Yotsuya on the Tokaidō was first produced at the Nakamura-za in Edo in the seventh lunar month of 1825 as a five-act summer play (natsu kyōgen). An extraordinary production strategy was used whereby Acts III and V were presented on alternate days with 1748’s classic revenge drama The Treasure of Loyal Retainers (Kanadehon Chūshingura), allowing audiences to contrast worlds of dark and light: the newer play’s representations of ghosts and grim lower-class life were set against the aristocratic heroics of Japan’s outstanding vendetta play. Loyal Retainers was performed with costumes and sets in period (jidai-mono) style, and Ghost Stories at Yotsuya was performed with those suited to the gritty real-life (shinbun-mono) style of the Bunsei period (1818–1830). If Loyal Retainers epitomized feudal loyalty, Ghost Stories at Yotsuya treated this ethic as irrelevant, if not abhorrent. Ghost Stories at Yotsuya starred Ichikawa Danjūrō VII (1791–1854) and Ono Kikugorō III (1784–1849), the former as Iemon, an archvillain (kakuhyoku) in the newly developing subcategory of sexually appealing rogue (tsunaku), the latter in three roles: Oasa, Iemon’s wife, who becomes a vengeful ghost; Kohrei, Iemon’s servant, who becomes a ghost loyal to a feudal vindex; and Owa, an emissary avenger, Yomoshichi. Nanboku is renowned for writing plays in both the ghost play (kaidan-mono) and the real-life genres. Ghost Stories at Yotsuya is a masterful combination of those genres, a play providing spectacular moments of supernatural horror as well as depicting grinding poverty.

Nanboku drew on numerous and varied sources for Ghost Stories at Yotsuya, including contemporary novels (gihakun) (one actually written by Nanboku himself some twenty years earlier), historical records of an incident involving a mistreated wife and her jealous act of vengeance, the extremely popular (and frequently dramatized) tale of the Soga brothers’ revenge against their father’s murderer, and Nanboku’s own plays.

Translated here are Acts III and V, the “Onō Canal” “The Dream,” and “Snake Mountain Hermitage” scenes. Act IV has no plot relevance to either act. Act I (trans. Okumura 1996) establishes the evil characters of Nanzake and lemon, in particular lemon’s treachery toward his master Eiya Hanjan—from the Loyal Retainers’ world—and lemon’s murder of Owa’s father. This sets in motion the play’s main theme: Owa’s vendetta against lemon, which parallels the feudal
revenge against the evil Kō no Moronao carried out by the forty-seven remorseless samurai in *Loyal Retainers*. Act II embellishes lemon’s callowness. He is disgusted by Oiso’s unkempt appearance following childbirth and is impatient to rapidly restore his rank and stipend. With lemon’s consent, a neighbor poisons Oiso, which results in horrible facial disfigurement. Lemon seizes all of Oiso’s belongings to pawn in exchange for some fine clothes to wear at his wedding to the neighbor’s daughter. When Oiso learns of the wedding, she prepares to confront lemon at the neighbor’s mansion. Overcome with jealousy and rage, her hair falls out as she comb it (kanzushi), magnifying her ugliness. She dies accidentally—and gruesomely—before she can make the trip. Lemon blames her death on Kobei, his servant, and murders him. Then he orders his cronies to dispose of the two corpses by tossing them to either side of a raindoor (tobio) and tossing it into Oobō Canal.

The first scene in this translation, “Oobō Canal,” was probably performed at the close of the first of the original two-day performance and repeated as the first item on day two. The repetition would have served two purposes. First, it would have showcased the skill of Kikugorō, the star, in playing both male and female ghosts by means of quick changes (hoyogemari). In one of kabuki’s most famous stage tricks, the raindoor switch (tobingshiki), a single actor plays the part of both Oiso’s and Kobei’s corpses, which are tossed to either side of the raindoor. Both constantly try to live before turning into skeletons. The scene concludes with an elaborate nighttime mime scene (damari) in which lemon, Nanao, and Yomochiเช struggles for a letter that is vital to the feud. The second purpose of the repetition relates to physical performance conditions. The stage was lit by daylight through overhead windows and by candles when the windows were closed for scenes of darkness; audiences were thus accustomed to dim lighting. The performance at either end of the day would have occurred in intense gloom, emphasizing the shock value of the raindoor effect.

The next scene in the translation, “The Dream,” is the first scene of Act V. An act that strongly resembles a noy play in structure. In the first half of a noy play a character encounters a ghost without realizing its true nature; in the second half, the ghost reveals itself and discloses its attachment to the living world. The revelation enables the ghost to break that attachment and find peace. “The Dream” scene occurs at the time of the Taishō Festival (Festival for Separated Lovers) and the Bon Festival (Festival for the Pacification of the Dead), both held in midsummer. lemon dreams of a future when he has been promised to samurai status and of a past where he has met a young, beautiful woman who closely resembles
Oiwā. In fact, autumn flowers adorn Oiwā’s cottage, and, at the present time, the young woman is a ghost. These seasonal and time discrepancies are typical of no plays. The dream culminates with a highly erotic love scene (nuruba) and the ghost’s transformation into a monster.

The final scene in the translation, “Snake Mountain Hermitage,” is the second scene of Act V. In it the immense beauty of the summer cottage is replaced by the ominous gloom of Snake Mountain Hermitage in winter. The contrast of light and dark settings and of dramatic moods is typical of Nanboku’s writing. Lemon clings to a single hope: he intends to renounce his loyalty to Hangen to gain admission into Mōrono’s service. In a series of heart-stopping special effects, the ghost of Oiwā confounds lemon’s plan. The lantern-escape (chōchin nake) episode in which Oiwā’s ghost directly confronts Lemon was introduced in an 1851 production starring Kōgorō III. The episode has remained popular ever since and is included here. A series of murder scenes (sannshī) follow, terrifying in their graphic cruelty but magnificent for their stylized, dreamlike quality. Particularly intrusive is the Anadhatā change (badhวดangārakṣa) episode in which the ghost of Oiwā, played by an actor attached to a wheel built into the scenery, appears and disappears from behind a Buddhist altar. The play ends with the demise of Lemon during a highly stylized combat scene (takimassen).

An annotated text is available in Gunji Hasakazu, ed., Tokaidō Yotsuya Kaiden: Shinshū Nihon Rōten Shūsui, Vol. 45. Videotapes used were of the Kokuritsu Gekijo (National Theatre of Japan) productions of 1971 and 1982 and of the 1983 Kabuki-Za production.

CHARACTERS

Oiwā, wife of Tamia iemon
Tamia iemon, a handsome young man, husband of Oiwā
Oyumi, widow of Yō and grandmother of Oikhe
Omaki, servant of Oyumi
Oikhe, mother of iemon
Naōuke Gonbe, common-law husband of Osode
Akitapa Chōbei, servant of iemon
Kobotoke Kohi, servant of iemon
Satō Yomogiichi, a ronin, brother-in-law of Oiwā
Omori, servant girl
Shindo Genshiro, former husband of Oikhe
Jōnen, master of Snake Mountain Hermitage
Ombô Canal

(To acceleratingki clicks the curtain is slowly pushed open. The setting is a desolate, serenely gloomy graveyard by the side of the Ombô Canal, which flows beneath a high embankment—or dike—boiled by a thick hedge of goss. At extreme right the hana-michi contrasts with an eaten ramp that extends from the canal to a cluster of bushes atop the embankment. An upturned bucket sits on a small landing that adjoins the ramp. A shrine gate, the height of the embankment, is on the other side. At left, on top of the embankment, the branches of a massive pine tree dangle like fishing lines over wooden gruee tablets and an upright barrel. Also at left, a flight of steps descends from the embankment to a forge-anding where two poorwrights' women, OYUMI and her faithful servant OMAKI, sit. The fine quality of their dirty costumes hints at former occupations as mistresses and servants in a large, prosperous household. OYUMI, her body crumpled and hair bedraggled, seems utterly crushed by use, except for a single obsession. OMAKI3 mends her mistress' back and encourages her. At extreme left is a cooking pot suspended from a wooden tripod. Offstage, languid shamanism music completes the somber air.)

OMAKI: How are you feeling today, Oyumi?

OYUMI: Don't worry like that! I feel much better. (Burning with a grudge, I just want to find Tamura Iemon, who murdered my husband, Lord Iô, and my granddaughter, Onme! (She weeps, and OMAKI retreats a short distance out of respect.)

OMAKI: Now, now! I understand perfectly. You are all I have left in the world.

OYUMI: (Self-mocking): Yes, you have cared for me all through this trial. (She dons a red brocade amule from her bosom and holds it tenderly in front of her. She recalls the wedding night of OMAKI in kýôshô.) This amulet failed to protect Onme. Iemon displayed no less of it at all. (Overcome by grief, she lets her hands collapse into her lap.)

OMAKI: Don't talk like that. (She picks up a small bag of rice.) I'll make dinner while you pray for Onme's repose.

(Offstage drum plays water pattern [mizu no oto] as OMAKI turns her back to OYUMI, drunm muted from the river, and washes the rice. OYUMI wipes her eyes with a hand towel [tenugui] and starts to chant prayers, but, overcome with grief,
she clamps forward holding the axlet. A black-gartered STAGE ASSISTANT [kurage] manipulates a pole [kasiongane] to which a realistic rat prop is attached. The rat, which embodies the ghost of OIWÀ, jumps its way out from the edge of the canal and waits for an opportunity to rejoin the waifu. It then grabs the axlet between its teeth. Dorodororo drum pattern and OYUMI's mood music [shagam] recall with a mixture of astonishment and terror. OYUMI flies into the rat's mouth. OMAKI waves her hands as the rat wriggles around and around the landing. OMAKI loses her footing and plunges into the canal. Triple trizeke beats. Dorodororo, OYUMI screams and rushes after OMAKI. Finally OYUMI collapses sideways on a heap, her back to the audience. Double trizeke beats. NAOSUKE GONBEI appears on the banamichi to offset drums and flute [barnarumono] accompaniment. He has the air of a vagabond, eager to seize any opportunity that might come his way. He carries a bucket and long pole with a curved hook at one end and bears close-fitting pants that extend just below the knees in the manner of an ovi fisherman.

NAOSUKE (At shichisan): Not a single measly fish (see my work! He steams into the canal.) This spot looks promising, with all the water being threshed about! (Offstage shamisen music continues as NAOSUKE proceeds to the main stage. He walks partway up the ramp to the embankment and stops for a moment, coughing as if he has spined something in the canal. He puts down his bucket and lowers himself gingerly into the water, pole with curved hook at the ready. He dips the hook into the water three times. Dorodororo and trizeke beats accompany his attempts. The first two times turn up nothing but weeds. The third time, however, he feels an object on the hook. A clamp, or hook attached to it comes into sight. NAOSUKE tears the hair from the hook and spots the magnificent tortoiseshell comb hatred down to OIWÀ by her mother. Triple trizeke beats. He holds the comb at arm's length and intensity assesses its value. He in-laws [yomuras] concerning the price it might fetch. He climbs back onto the landing at right center while a lively shamisen accompaniment announces the simultaneous entries on the comings of the gray haired old lady, OKUMA, at right, and the stylishly dressed TAMIAI IEMON from left. OKUMA carries a long, narrow wooden grave tablet upright. IEMON wears the two swords of a samurai and a basket hat over his head to a disguise. He carries a long pole in his left hand and a box for fish bait in his right. Mon and son proceed at an identical pace toward the center. They concertose. IEMON places his right hand on the pole to defend himself. Trizeke beat. He recognizes OKUMA and relaxes. He receives her to sit on the barrel, and he sits on the ground slightly to her right.)

IEMON (Obviously relieved and delighted): Hello, it's you, Ma! I sure am glad to see you! OKUMA: Me too! I've come up with an idea to stop the manhunt for you. Do you remember that I worked as a cook in Moronao's household in the same time you were in Hangou's service? When I retired, Moronao gave me this letter in case I ever needed help. (She produces a small batch package from her bosom,
unwraps the package, unfolds the letter it contains, and passes it to EEMON. He inspects the letter, refolds it, and places it inside his kimono. As soon as I heard that you had lost your position with Hangan's clan, I sent a message to Moro- nao to remind him of the letter. Later, I heard rumors that you'd been implicated in the deaths of Osua, Ume, and Lord Itō. So, I decided to come up with a deception. (She holds out the wooden glove case.) We'll spread out even more rumors that you're dead by reversing this grave tablet! Aren't I the clever one?

EEMON (With relief): So that's what you're up to! A terrible plan! I've an idea as well. I'll shift the blame for the killings to my friend, Kanzo, and his servant, Ban-suke. But let's try your plan first! Set the tablet up here!

OKUSA: Okay! This spot looks good! (They both rise.) OKUSA sets up the tablet slightly to her left. Then mother and son stand back to admire their handiwork. They pause to double-take (smiles.) Well, I'll be off! Come visit any time!

EEMON: Good-bye, Ma! I'll be sure to visit!

(Offstage ravine me goes accompanied: OKUSA lifts the left horn of her kimono and causing it. Meanwhile, NAOSUKE, below and to their right, has listened attentively. EEMON sits down at center and, with his right hand, rests his fixing line into the water. Dejected. Holding oar underneath his left hand, he braces the fishing pole against the strong current while he sets the pole firmly in the embankment. He sets a barrel and takes a pipe and tobacco pouch from his left sleeve, halting when he realizes that he has no light. EEMON catches sight of NAOSUKE out of the corner of his eye. He rises and approaches NAOSUKE, not yet recognizing him.)

EEMON: Got a light?

NAOSUKE: Sure. He stands up, places his left foot on the upturned barrel, and looks up to get the light. Taku (twos.) EEMON bends down to accept it. (Well) Eemon!

It's good to see you!

EEMON: Starts backward and is on guard immediately.)

EEMON: Oh! Is that you, Naosuke?

NAOSUKE: (Casually) puts away the light, collects his bucket and pole, and revives the line. As he sets purposefully toward EEMON, may point over the barrel at left center. NAOSUKE steps just beyond EEMON's reach and puts down the bucket and pole. He coughs and then addresses EEMON in a challenging tone.)

NAOSUKE: Naosuke? I'm "Catch the eel-catcher"! (Meaningfully, he states a common proverb for a guerrilla.) You're the sworn enemy of Osua, my wife's sister!

EEMON: (Unusually) You're joking! What do you mean?

NAOSUKE: (Grouching) Come on! You can't have forgotten! Osua's younger sister is Onodie, my wife! (Baffled, I could say, "On guard, lemon!") But there's no need to fight. Instead, hand over that letter and I'll claim your position in Moronao's household. No one will know the difference!
LEMON (Protesting): This letter contains the seeds for my future!
NAOSUKE (Taking up the words of a popular ditty): "If you plant those seeds yourself, I'll dig them up right away" and turn you in to the cops!
LEMON (Gratingly): All right! There's no way out!
(Dorodoro. LEMON's fishing line begins to quiver nervously. Both NAOSUKE and LEMON, equally excited, LEMON bends down, picks up the pole, and heaves it in his catch. NAOSUKE ecstatically runs behind LEMON,fortune, the tablet set up by OKUMA, and knocks the fish on the head. Tsuke hoists NAOSUKE thrashes the tablet away to the left and it plummets to the large landing below, where it strikes OYUMI. Tsuke hoists. The shock revises OYUMI, who clutches her heart, props up the tablet, and stares at it in disbelief. The voice of OYUMI captures the essence of NAOSUKE and then LEMON. They lean toward her and listen carefully.)
OYUMI (Stunned): Well! The name "Tamiya Lemon" is inscribed on this tablet! (Her revenge rekindled.) Has he finally received his just reward? (OYUMI turns around, looks up, and spots NAOSUKE and LEMON. LEMON averts his face to avoid recognition. He pulls NAOSUKE's sleeve and whispers to him in a low tone, "He's dead." NAOSUKE nods his understanding.)
OYUMI: Excuse me, sir! May I ask you a question?
NAOSUKE: Oh! What?
OYUMI (Feigning incredulity): This tablet has the name "Tamiya Lemon" inscribed on it. Do you know how he died?
NAOSUKE (Feeling LEMON's discomfort): What! Tamiya lemon? He's here! (LEMON hugs NAOSUKE's sleeve and again urges him to say, "He's dead."
(Just kidding! He's certainly dead! No doubt about it! A close relative erected that tablet after Lemon's death. No one would go to all that trouble if he were still alive! Would they? It's true! He's dead!)
OYUMI: (With threatening doubts.) When did he die?
NAOSUKE (Perplexed): What do you mean? Certainly, today... (almost as if he realizes his error and changes tack) today is the forty-ninth day after his death and, thus, the end of the mourning period.
OYUMI! (Torn aback): Eh? Is it the forty-ninth day? Oh! Oh! Oh! (OYUMI thinks of OYUMI, pensively, hand buried in her hand towel. LEMON rises and scurries behind NAOSUKE, to creep up on OYUMI.)
NAOSUKE (Watching LEMON): There, there! (Determinedly OYUMI) Are you a sister of Lemon? Ah! That's it! (OYUMI lifts her head, by which time LEMON has descended the steps to the landing and is already behind her.)
OYUMI: No, no! Lemon is my enemy. He murdered my husband and my only grand-daughter! Since then my heart has burned with revenge! At last, my prayers are answered!
EMON: erts OYUMI into the canal, where she disappears without trace. Loud
muck beats against the brick and the splash. A large temple bell tolls. Dondoetc.
EMON: faces front, pushes his basket far from his head until it hangs from his right
shoulder, places his right foot on a short post at the edge of the landing, evol, with
his left foot well behind, stashes a raise. The bell tolls again together with a single loud
basket beat.

NAOSUKE: Tidy.

EMON: Your actions...

NAOSUKE: Are incredible!

(The bell tolls continuously as drums and bell in volume. NAOSUKE collects his pole
and bucket, rapid shamisen music plays, and he briskly marches off left. He com-
pletely forgets to collect the letter from EMON.)

EMON: (Scowling at OYUMI): That bitch popped up in one too many places for her
own good! (He avoids the step, bends over to pick in his fishing line, and vies
quickly in surprise.) Damn! The bait's disappeared!

(He replaces the bait and sits down at center. Drum plays water pattern [mira no
oto] with a shamisen accompaniment as AKIYAMA CHÔBEI enters right, on the
embankment, with a confident spring in his step. He wears the single sword of a
tengu man and a pole hand towel cover his shaggy hair. He removes the towel
and folds it before he stops at the sluice gate.)

CHÔBEI: (Pretending surprise): Ah. Tamiyâ! I didn't expect to run into you!

EMON: (Scowled): What? You!

(CHÔBEI: addresses EMON in a menacing tone. Throughout the following epi-
sode the standing CHÔBEI arranges the united EMON with contemptuous
hand gestures. Clearly he holds the whip hand and is determined that EMON
know it.)

CHÔBEI: Well, well! You've killed Osawa and Kôhei and, on top of that, Hô and his
granddaughter, too! Since you disappeared the police have been hunting
Kanzô, Bansuke, and myself for the murderers. Of course, we'll turn you in
straightaway if we're caught!

EMON: (Costed): Look here! Haven't we worked hand in hand until now? Surely we can
make a deal?

CHÔBEI: (Triumphant): Now you're talking! We'll all disappear if you come up with
enough hard cash.

( The dialogue grows increasingly repud.)

EMON: All right, but where can I find the money?

CHÔBEI: (Not taken in for a moment): Then I'm off to the police now!

EMON (Shocked): Wait!

CHÔBEI: The cash or the police?

EMON (To himself): Mean. What will I do for the money?
CHÔBEI: Well?

EMON: Well...

CHÔBEI: Well...

BOTH: Well, well, well, well... well!

(The repeated "well" is to a climax [kuriage].)

CHÔBEI: Well, where's the cash coming from?

EMON (comprehensively): Look! This letter bears the personal seal and guarantee of my fortune by Lord Moronao. Take it!

EMON: Prefers the letter to CHÔBEI, who reads it with great deliberation.

EMON: Well, and stands a respectful distance from CHÔBEI.

CHÔBEI: I see. You'll give us the cash in return for this letter.

EMON: That's right.

CHÔBEI: We have a deal, Taniya, sir.

EMON: That's agreed, Akiyama, sir.

CHÔBEI: Good-bye!

(To offstage shamisen and the talking of the bell, a smug CHÔBEI puts the letter in his kimono, walks behind EMON, and exits left. EMON watches him depart, his left arm outstretched in despair. EMON collects his fishing pole, basket hat, bait box, and tobacco pouch. To languid shamisen and lighttdorodo he crosses from the eastern ramp to the kansaiuchi. Drumbeats accelerate. EMON reaches shin-chiban as offstage flute and large drum play sound pattern [base no ono]. He halts and nervously looks around in all directions. A rainbow tourses the corpse of OIWA and KOBOTOKOE KOHEI on opposite sides floats into view from stage left. EMON is irresistibly drawn to the embankment, where a STAGE ASSISTANT relieves him of his belongings, except for the fishing pole. EMON peers down into the canal, spots the rainbow, and grimaces in horror. He recovers his nerve in an instant and strides quickly to the barrel. He faces front and, using the fishing pole, steers the rainbow to the bank, where it disappears. After a few moments, it reappears in a vertical position, immediately below EMON. Fast and loud tdorodo as EMON reaches the pole and draws the rainbow halfway up the embankment. The lights dim, tdorodo soften, and eerie flute swells. EMON places the pole on the ground to his right. He raises the cloth covering the rainbow and takes in the horrible sight. Thundering tdorodo. He throws the cloth into the canal, revealing the corpse of OIWA dressed only in a sooty, frantic kimono. Her arms hang down limply. Her head is set well back from the eyebrows and her hair hangs loosely beneath the shoulders. The forehead and skin around the right eye are horribly disfigured as a result of the poison. EMON consumes to give her. She begins to move her head and right arm listlessly.)

EMON: Oiwa, Oiwa! Forgive me! I'm sorry!
Standing on the embankment at Orsai Camp, man (Kakashi Takahashi) looking upwards into the cloudy sky of his home, Oshi (Tsuchi Tsuchi, or Sky), which had already gathered in the rainbow (sumo
mark: Kusam: Azure Shusuke)
(Oiwa straightens her left arm above her waist, with the extended hand clasching Oume's wrist.)

Oiwa (Weakly but firmly): Let the leaves of the Tamia and Hi family branches wither to exercise my vengeance!

Iemon (Still clutching dandies over her): Oh, Buddha! Save me! Save me! Save me!
(The left arm gradually falls back to its side in apparent submission. Then the corpse collapses back onto the raincoat): Ha! So you're not ready to make your peace yet!

Iemon turns the raincoat over to hide the corpse, but this action reveals another similarly cladded figure attached to the reverse side of the door. A cream of waterseeds covers the hood and shoulders.)

Iemon: My God! On the other side, too!

Iemon grasps the interior and holds them. The dramatic tension rises as deafening thud thud thud thud. Iemon whips away the weeds and reveals Kohei's corpse. A wide bald strip runs through the center of his hair, and one side of his scalp bears a bloody wound. The same area concealed in a compartment in the embrasure, plays both Oiwa and Kohei. He pokes his head through a hole to provide Oiwa's head, and after a quick makeup change, Kohei's head. Hesitates his arms through separate holes.)

Kohei: With a piercing stare: My master has an incurable disease. Give me your family medicine!

Iemon: Is this the work of a ghost, too?

Iemon abruptly recoils, then recovers his nerve and replaces the weeds covering Kohei's head. With the moment, he releases his grip, the mask drops, and the cloth covering the corpse falls to reveal a skeleton. Its head moves as if trying to speak. In terror, Iemon bolts upright and the skeleton collapses into the coolant. Booming through, Iemon raises both hands to fend off the ghost. As a last resort, he kneels, head bowed and hands clasped in prayer. The rings of a metal bell is heard. On its final ring the lights come up, revealing Sato Yomoshichi pacing down right, below the embrasure. On the embrasure Iemon is at center and Naosuke on left, dressed in a light summer kimono [yukata] tucked up to reveal his legs and cradling a fishing pole in his left arm. They begin a minor struggle as if in the darkness [shamisen] for a letter in Yomoshichi's obi containing details of the vendetta against Ko no Moronao. Shunsen music plays, Yomoshichi and Iemon reach for their swords and pose in a three to double tsuke beats. Naosuke, holding his pole vertically, attacks Iemon. They pose in a three to double tsuke beats. Iemon finger his sword hilts, forcing Naosuke to retreat several steps till his pole Naosuke robotic foot. Iemon brushes his left shoulder. Iemon raids him with an upraised left arm, Naosuke retracts left, Yomoshichi mounts the steps to the northern ramp and vanishes across with Iemon, brushing his arm. Double-tsuke beats. All three
The Dream.

(The curtain is pushed open to reveal the world that gradually fades. A single clock ticks. Silence.)

Eleven FOLLOWERS of JΩNEN, the master of Snake Mountain
Himdmung, are seated in a row across the stage and facing the audience. To the
accompaniment of loud shishōro, a small banner is raised at extreme singe left

 strike a mis. YOMOSHIKI, facing me, and IEMON, facing front, gape toward each other. Drevsh. NAGOSUKE walks with his pole on ELEMON moves toward the barrel. ELEMON grips the pole end raises his other hand high, then, in a single
sinuous movement, drops it behind his back. YOMOSHIKI raises his left leg and
pouts with both hands resting on his hips. Just before beats fade into loud drums beat
briefly. A single taiko beat. The bell tolls. IEMON casts off NAGOSUKE's pole.
YOMOSHIKI straightens, groans, steps away from ELEMON, and then counter-
meets, stopping by ELEMON's side. NAGOSUKE bends left. Offstage musician sing
OMON, carrying an umbrella that obscures her upper body, enters left and stops.
NAGOSUKE stands past OMON, stepping by her side. Both pass converge. Taiko
beat. YOMOSHIKI approaches OMON, touches her umbrella, momentarily starts
backward, and then moves boldly past her, grasping NAGOSUKE's horizontal pole.
He rests every the pole and grips ELEMON's left sleeve. OMON brushes IEMON
and retreats left, passing YOMOSHIKI. NAGOSUKE takes OMON's left sleeve,
and they all dance a single step right. OMON takes YOMOSHIKI's left sleeve,
forming an unbroken line, and all dance two steps left. Breaking the line, OMON
reaches YOMOSHIKI's sleeve, and all dance two steps right before reposing.
The men strike a powerful move with legs at splay. IEMON brings his right hand to his
chest. YOMOSHIKI raises his left arm above his head. NAGOSUKE holds his
pole vertically under his left shoulder. Double taiko beats. OMON counter-crosses
with YOMOSHIKI and meets IEMON behind the umbrella. Double taiko beats.
OMON, the umbrella still hiding her face, runs to shock and twists. Un-
behavioral to YOMOSHIKI, NAGOSUKE snatches the letter box. He raises
his pole horizontally, and the three men note it. As they struggle, the pole moves
rhythmically left, right, and again left. Relocating his grip, ELEMON casts the pole.
Double taiko beats. YOMOSHIKI reaches one quarter of the pole and changes
right while NAGOSUKE, moving left, keeps to the remainder. Double taiko beats.
NAGOSUKE covers left. YOMOSHIKI passes merrily, IEMON stands emote,
head high, slowly swinging his word out to his right. The men strike a final
powerful group move. Very loud, repeated taiko beats at YOMOSHIKI extends
his left leg wide. IEMON shoulders the word, and NAGOSUKE studies the letter
held high in his left hand. The curtain closes, leaving IEMON alone on the him-
mung, revealing that she is IOWA, played by a stand-in actress. She adjusts her
appearance to that of a lovely young lady and, forking herself all the while, exits
along the kutsukichō in the clacking of the ki.)
bearing a large Chinese character meaning “spirit” (kokoro), signifying the path to Buddhist paradise. Dorodorono fades and then swirls as the curtain is pulled aside to reveal a summer cottage at left, raised on a low platform. Strips of gaily colored paper on which poems are written for the summer Tanabata Festival drift in the air from bamboo poles on either side of a fan bamboo screen, whichеннед the cottage veranda. Squash vines and daisies from the roof to the eaves against an elegant background of plum and cherry trees. Vines also cling to a wicket of chestnut wood at center, adjacent to the cottage, while bath cloths are hung in profusion beneath the pastel, providing the autumn semblance of a peasant's cottage. A kite is a lattice fence leaning under the burden of squash. Thunderous dorodorono announces the presence of OIWA's ghost. Then silence. A solo offstage singer accompanied by a shamisen begins singing a plaintive song (kakogisou), which accentuates the eerie silence. A flute plays as a hawk flies into the cottage. A single loud ki-clack. An important! EMON appears on the fantomichi dressed ceremoniously in a dark formal kimono and the light-patterned hakama of a samurai. A pale blue silk bowl in the style of fireflies bearing their wings adorns his topknot, and he wields garden scissors. A hawk's rubber dangles from one hand while a replendent Bon Festival lantern hangs from the other. Behind EMON struts CHÔBEI, now dressed in a dandified manner and leading a dog played by an actor in a dog costume (nampilkan). CHÔBEI, with powdered hair, wears a white satin kimono and purple necks. The bamboo screen rises, disclosing OIWA. She wears a brightly colored light silk kimono with long, flowing sleeves and a black satin obi. The apron and towel, which cover her hair, complete the image of a beautiful country maiden. OIWA sits at a revolving wheel, weaving multicolor thread, with a petty, paper-enclosed lamp at her side. Her appearance is consistent with the legend that held that a woman could improve her needlework on the day of the Tanabata Festival. EMON's hawk is perched atop the lamp. EMON, standing at thischisan, and OIWA, in the cottage, catch sight of each other and strike a Tanabata mie, leaning toward each other like lovers yearning to reunite, in plaintive shamisen music and triple-take beats. The moment is symbolic, not literal, as EMON is outside and OIWA inside, thus making it impossible to actually see each other. As the moon floats free from its veil of clouds, both characters are passionate mi-kihi (wistful) appropriate to long-separated loves. Then the music ceases. A sharp ki-clack: fireflies manipulated with long poles by several STAGE ASSISTANTS swamp onto the stage, bringing the tableau to life.

EMON: The late evening shoals and white-capped waves of the Milky Way. . .

OIWA: Are spanned by a magpie bridge of reproach. (Returning to normal pitch.)

Although this hawk is not a magpie, it has wandered in here to rest.

EMON: I wondered where Kogasshi, my prize hawk, had disappeared to, so I went searching and hoped to stumble upon a beauty!
CHÔBEI: Truly, this evening is the Tanabata Festival. With a name that means “love-struck,” it’s no wonder that Kogasumi went astray on the very day that lovers meet. (He pauses.) LEMON: What’s that? Has he flown off to the Milks Way?

Chôbei: Tadaddle! My truant hawk is sure to be in the neighborhood. Come on! Search for him! Search for him!

(Exeunt Chôbei and LEMON. LEMON goes inside. Chôbei approaches the door of the cottage. Chôbei peeps inside, sees Oiwa, and is astounded.)

Chôbei: Master! Master! Look at that beauty spinning thread!

LEMON: What? A beauty?

Chôbei: Yes!

LEMON: Where? Where? (Curiosity compels him to peek inside the cottage.) I see! A rare country maid! Ask her about my hawk.

Chôbei: Yes sir! (He enters.) Hey, girl! My master’s hunting hawk has disappeared. Has it popped in here?

Oiwa: Yes. This hawk just flew in and perched itself next to me.

Chôbei: Terrible! I’ll call my master. (He returns to LEMON to tell him the good news.)

The hawk’s here!

LEMON: Is that so? I’ll go and collect it. Come with me!

(LEMON enters and is instantly smitten by Oiwa’s loveliness. To a sharp triple strike he strikes a move, legs apart, eyes bulging, and head thrust forward. LEMON sits down cross-legged upstairs, and Oiwa, as the dutiful hostess, moves closer. Chôbei sits behind his highly excited master.)

LEMON: Well, well! You do have a stylish home! My hunting hawk stayed in this vicinity, and when I learned it was here, I came to retrieve it.

Oiwa: How ceremonial you are! By all means, take your hawk.

LEMON: Too kind! I’d like to take it now but (excusing for an excuse to remain), well, a return journey on foot this evening would certainly be more trouble than it’s worth due to the darkness.

Chôbei: (Contemplatively) What’s that, Master? How can it be dark, Master? This evening is the Tanabata Festival. The moon is risen and it’s just like day! Besides, you brought this lantern on purpose for the homeward journey. The darkness will vanish when I light the lantern. Come! Let’s go home! (He takes the lantern from LEMON and, oblivious to his master’s wishes, hangs it from the roof as Oiwa goes inside.)

LEMON: What? You presumptuous fool! It’s only bright out front! I said I wouldn’t return because of the darkness, but since you mentioned this evening’s moon, you go! Set the hawk on your arm, take the dog, and go on ahead by yourself! Idiot!

Chôbei: Hey! Don’t order me around! Now that I’m your servant I call you “Master,” but before I was your comrade, Akiyama Chôbei, just like a dog is a sidekick.
and a hawk is a companion. (His scorn turns to anger.) You're the master to take them yourself; you're a wretch! (He flings the dog's brush at MON.)

EMON: No! Damn you! before was before! Now you're my servant, to take them home!

CHÔBEI: A mere servant? Don't you know what I mean? Now you've moved up in the world, but not so long ago, as Tanjiyou lemon, you were dirt poor and a villain! And then there's the disappearance of Osawa after you eloped with her! Take the dog home yourself!

EMON: No! You take it!

(CHÔBEI is abroad to both the dog and the CHÔBEI to sharp tinkle, hunts.)

CHÔBEI: (rushing the dog): Sic him, boy!

(The dog resounds, OWA emerges from the cottage and halts the conflict.)

OWA: Oh, dear! What's happened? Please don't argue. I overheard you say that before you became master and servant you had been comrades. Let me attempt to reconcile the two of you.

EMON: If you take charge, my heart will be in it!

CHÔBEI: As long as Tanjiyou understands; won't apologize, I'll agree!

OWA: All right. I shall reconcile the two of you!

CHÔBEI: You are amusing! (His mood changes as he rummages through his clothing.) Ah! Here's the sake that I brought! Shall we start? (He holds out the sake flask.) Pass me your cup, miss!

OWA: Yes; yes! (She rises and extends her cup to CHÔBEI.) Hmm. Well, there are a few skewered pieces of pickled mackerel left over from today's celebration. Help yourselves, both of you! (She delicately removes the skewers from the pieces and sets the food in a bowl.)

EMON: (Leaning back against OWA): Oh! How interesting these skewered pieces are linked just like the two of us.

OWA: Why would a splendid samurai like you fall in love with a country maid?

EMON: Such words of gratitude! Right now I'm a bachelor. He's my guardian, ah, servant.

CHÔBEI: Yes, yes! He had a wife, but she vanished. Well, as this is your home, you have to open formalities.

OWA: Then, let's begin! (CHÔBEI fills the cup that OWA holds out to him. She casts a glance at EEMON, emphasizing by a sharp look, and then drinks. Flirting:) I wonder to whom should next pass this sake cup?

EMON: Do me the honor!

CHÔBEI: Oh, yes! Marnate the skewered mackerel first!

OWA (To EEMON): Allow me.

EMON: Let's drink together.

(EMON and OWA both drink sake and snuggle together lasciviously.)

CHÔBEI (Scornfully): Will Master EEMON allow his servant-cumrade to drink, too?
JEMON: Of course! Serve yourself.

CHÔBEI: You're too kind! (Clutching the precious sake flask, he gulps down a few cups and rises wonderingly.)

JEMON: My serving servant, pass the cup and dance!

OJWA: [Mischieffully.] Yes! Dance!

CHÔBEI: No way! I'm not dancing for the two of you.

JEMON: It's a special request!

CHÔBEI: No! Who do you think you are?

JEMON (To GIWA): Come on! Help me!

OJWA: Yes! Yes! Please dance! Dance!

CHÔBEI: No! This is embarrassing!

[Offstage drums and flute music suggest a lively festive dance. OJWA cups her hands over CHÔBEI's eyes and JEMON turns him round and round. CHÔBEI smiles in a merry, erotic dance as the dogs bark until, eventually, women and dog apart in continuous dance beats. JEMON and OJWA are left alone.]

JEMON: He's an evil fellow! Well now, are you a farmer's daughter?

OJWA: I am a humble maid who was raised in a cottage near here.

JEMON: Oh, not raised in a cottage, and my family name, Tamiya, sounds like "cottage!"

OJWA: Well then, I shall call you Tamiya.

JEMON: Indeed, that's my name.

OJWA: [Suddenly.] Well, I have exactly the same name!

JEMON: Well, I have exactly the same name!

[Immediately, the mood transforms. To loud triple turtle drums, OJWA strikes a mix, standing consecutively inside JEMON's feet. The large drum plays the same pattern as one of the steps of proper feet to the bamboo poles, flutters bow, fillis, and drifts inward. OJWA's slightly picks it up and presents it to JEMON.]

OJWA: Here is my name.

JEMON: [Reading:] This is a verse in the One Hundred Poem collection that is offered at the Tanabata Festival. "A rock stands the rapids..."

OJWA: "And, after it divides the river, I know the two branches will meet again."

Divided in the end... (Last turtle drum as OJWA strikes a mix. Her bow thrust forward, she glows at JEMON.) It is Tanuzy whom I will meet.

(Just single, sheep's sake best.)

JEMON: [Euphorically.] You're the exact image of my wife. Ojwa, long ago when she was just a country girl...

OJWA: Separated by a tree! I am your lover. From today...
In "The Dream," wears the young and beautiful ghost of Okiku (Bando Tamasaburō playing the role), her attendant, having appeared in the play "Okiku in the Hundert_auts"

"Okiku in the Hundred Autumns." She is about to read the poem in her right hand, standing in the hall with the kimono that brings them together. "[A] lady in the One Hundred Autumns collection... A real name the

"(Un tensa Kiku, Engaku Shapparashi)"
EMON: I shall love you! Oh! I was blind to you before!

OIWA: You are glib!

EMON: As are the hearts of all men! (He raises OIWA by the arm, lays down his sword, and leads her trembling into the cottage.)

OIWA: No one can see except for your hawk.

EMON: It's a sight hawk, just like a prostrate on the Proud.

OIWA: Am I such a sight hawk?

EMON (Embraised): Not at all! The lamp! (He extinguishes the lantern.)

OIWA: Oh! Wait! There's no smudge, fire for the musquitoes.

EMON: Indeed! I can see striped mosquitoes! (Several stage assistants unroll a shoji screen to which are attached festoon props.EMON pulls it over a reflective niche to make lights.) Oh! It's the light of fireflies!

OIWA: In the gloom, even the fireflies fall in love with me. They resemble both the meaning glories and the dew which, like a dream, vanish instantly in the blaze of day! (She fixes her gaze on the hawker.)

EMON (Beginning “divided” dialogue [southern]): Even the sitting flowers...

OIWA: Share the fate of dew.

EMON: Oh! Blooming morning glories...

OIWA: With in autumn's breeze.

EMON: Ah!

OIWA: It is chilling!

(They pause in a single hand haiku beat, OIWA rising against EMON's lap. The offstage solo song comes to plaintive shamisen accompanied as the bamboo screen is lowered to conceal the lovers. Then, to lively strings and flute music, CHOBEE approaches the cottage, dragging the dog.)

CHOBEE: Hey! I'm so drunk! My eyes are spinning after all that sake and dancing! Loud Buddha! I feel terrible! I wonder where that wench Taniwa went with the girl? Even she gave me some awful books. I'll bet they're in the cottage. That's it! Damn them! (He exercises the dog, mending the figures of EMON and OIWA, which can be glimpsed through the bamboo screen. The dog barks and leaps its barked horn on CHOBEE's butt. He chooses the dog away to maintain its haiku beat.)

OUCH! Ouch! That beast made a real butt of my skull! How did Taniwa serenade her so easily? I'm green with envy! (He is a breathless with resentment.) I'll just take a peep. He stops to one side of the bamboo screen and peeps through the crack. A loud haiku beat. He repeats to serenade. My God! What's this? The girl has a moniker's face! I'm out of here! I'll grab the lantern, turn it all, and climb! (He reaches to place and summon his courage. Then he moans the lament from the scar. Once more, regaining his haiku beat and peep... / Master Taniwa! Master Taniwa! / His glories once more at the scene.)
A hanging squash basket begins to acquire the face of OIWA. A sharp tuke bent and it splits in two. Then, to continuous tuke bursts culminating in a dragging chuck, the head of OIWA langurs out. CHÔBEL is paralyzed with terror. Dear Buddha! Dear Buddha! Let me out of here!

(As light dorodororo plays, he flaps, trembling and in a cold sweat, toward the hanamachi. The bell tolls the hour and the stage chameleon play a mournful tune [sugomu], as the bamboo screen softs up. IEMON sticks, pushes the hook on his arm, and pats on his sword. OIWA catches the hem of his kimono.)

OIWA: Are you leaving, already?
IEMON: Yes. I'd better return home while the night remains young. I'll come again.

OIWA: Just a moment. You are a handsome man, and since you had a wife called Owa, you must be merely flirting with me!

IEMON: No! Why should I flirt? Although I had a wife called Owa, she was an evil woman. I left her because she was a damned nasty case!

(As sharp tuke bent.)

OIWA (Anguished): Have you eternally forsaken your former wife, of whom you speak so spitefully, Iemon? (She fixes IEMON with a somber stare.)

IEMON (Shuddering): Somehow your expression and that of Owa...

OIWA: Recollect each other? The light of the moon should guide me to Buddha's paradise, but instead it chills like the vengeful face of Owa. The twin tides of the same moon pound the hammered rock with pain from this world.

(As sharp tuke bent.)

IEMON: Heaven! What did you say?

OIWA: Vengeance on Iemon!

IEMON: My God!

(LEMON recalls from OIWA, and they eat a time to continuous, furious tuke pattern [uchage]. The hawk changes into a rat and leaps at IEMON. Light dorodororo rumbling. A black curtain falls up the moon. A sharp ki stirs. Suddenly OIWA reveals herself as a ghost to the reverberations of crashing dorodororo. Both OIWA and IEMON strike an aggressive tuke to triple tuke beat, the ghost with arms outstretched and IEMON with legs set apart and eyes glaring defiance.)

IEMON: Has revenge completely possessed you?

OIWA: To hell you come, Tamia!

IEMON: No way!

(Assembled by magical forces, IEMON attacks wildly. Prowling dorodororo. Several STAGE ASSISTANTS attack IEMON with flickering, phosphorescent green "sad firs" bursting at the ends of shrubbery. IEMON lights the firs to the brink of agonyized exhaustion with sound slashes punctuated by double tuke beat. He is var-
Snake Mountain Hermitage

(A bell is struck. The bell tolls and the stage is dark. Another bell is struck and the scene is dim. Yuki no one to indicate the arrival of winter. Off-stage music plays in the background. The interior of a hovel is seen, with gray walls, a bamboo door, a stove, and a seat.)

Outside, a man stands at a log gate, right, and covers four wooden green idahets and a willow tree. Seize and talking together are JUNÔ, the Black-robed Master of the hermitage, who claps a strand of rusty beads. and SHINDÔ GENSHTÔ, JUMÔ's father, dressed in white pagoda's attire. JONÔ, his followers, sit in a row across the back of the stage. The snowfall is heavy. In the upstaging scene, left, JUMÔ lies in painful exhaustion under a paper mosquito net. With a rattling sound, JUMÔ, seated in bed, is seen. He sees the sun through the net, each with accompanied by double battle boots. He is dressed in a dirty black kimono and grey type of a destitute man. His face is pale and fresh, covered by heavy, unrested hair that signifies a constant hardening of muscles. JUNÔ and his followers will arrive. JUMÔ helplessly. JUMÔ hoots from the room to continue battle boots.

JUMÔ: Not much, Omosound where can I see you! (She is on the stage of drawing his sword again but is deterred by JUNÔ and GENSHTÔ. JUMÔ sees their tears and experiences a flush of recognition, and his anger subsides as he falls in a heap beside them.) Oh, was it? (calmly) How terrifying! I saw fire curse from hell in the land of the living! (He tears himself from his dream.) Oh, Lord Buddha! Oh, Lord Buddha!

(Genahirô. JUMÔ bowers a sigh of relief. JUNÔ faces him and mixes his words to color his followers.)

GENSHTÔ: Hello, son! Don't you know your father?

JUMÔ: Ah! Is it really you? Why are you here?

GENSHTÔ: An old nuns cannot save two masters in a lifetime, so I'm in the middle of a pilgrimage to pray for salvation. (Changing the subject.) Your bone of illness...

JUMÔ: Is the result of a curse by a miserable ghost of a woman?

GENSHTÔ: Well, Are you recovering?
HEMON: Yes, I feel all right, although occasionally I have bouts of fever. In fact, the master of the hermitage brought me here.

GENSHIRO: I didn’t know that. [To JONEN.] I’m indebted to you.

JONEN: You’re much too kind!

GENSHIRO: In that case, I’ll stay a little while at the hermitage.

HEMON: Good! Then we shall be father and son until this snow melts! We’ll chat later.

(The small bell tolls the hour. The following scene is not in KABUKI.)

JONEN and GENSIRIO. The music increases in tempo. The door opens slightly, and the attendant, who has brought HEMON, enters in a dark kimono, black hooded.

OKUMA: (Full of concern.) Oh, mon! My dear husband, Genshirio, has unexpectedly dropped into the hermitage. Do you remember that after the divorce I entered the service of Lord Moronao? If I take the letter that left you to Moronao, he will have no money to burn!

HEMON: In any event, I want out of this hermitage! The pay-off will be a position of rank in Moronao’s household in the near future if the letter does the trick!

OKUMA: Genshirio will go back to work when he learns of our deal with Moronao!

HEMON: No question! At any rate, I’ll soon be strong again. By the way, have you had any trouble with rats lately?

OKUMA: Are you joking? Today there have been hundreds!

HEMON: Born in the Year of the Rat, so raw by nature. Okayama by name! Her spirit tomens both mother and son.

(Quiet offstage murmurs and percussion accompaniment [makugiri] creates a melodramatic mood. As the large drum softly plays, a curious motion, KOBAYASHI is seen entering the door. He is dressed in a magnificent formal costume, wears the two swords of a samurai, and carries an umbrella with a bell-type design. One FOOTMAN brings a heavy black box. HEMON hears the arrival and goes to his side of the hall, where he waits, doubled over in pain. OKUMA follows and sits close behind him.)

HEINAI: (Calling at the door.) I’ve come on business, Hemon, who is staying at this hermitage.

HEMON: Kobayashi Heinai! Come in out of the snowstorm!

HEINAI: Hemon slowly staggers away. HEINAI folds his umbrella, passes it to the FOOTMAN, and returns. HEMON and OKUMA bow respectfully, HEINAI makes past time to take the seat of honor, left.)

HEINAI: Good. After I examine the letter, which we discussed before, and ensure that the seal is authentic, I shall escort you to your investigation by Lord Moronao.
(To the FOOTMAN.) Display the clothes and swords of a retainer, which Lord Moronos has sent.

FOOTMAN: At once!

(To the FOOTMAN.) Place the gifts on a purple cloth that covers a large wooden tray.

OKUMA: Place the tray in front of HEINAI, who bow deeply.

HEINAI: (Formally.) Accept these gifts from Lord Moronos.

EMON: (Bowing.) Thank you. I shall entrust myself to you regarding the investiture.

HEINAI: Now show me the letter. It is time for the inspection.

EMON: (Rattling.) Ah! Because of my illness, I have entrusted it to someone nearby. I shall reclaim it later and give it to you then.

OKUMA: (Suspiciously.) Why was it necessary to give someone such a precious letter?

EMON: (To OKUMA.) What? Don't worry, Mother! (To HEINAI.) In any event, please inspect it later.

HEINAI: He rises and marches inferriorly to the door whileEMON and OKUMA bow deeply.

HEINAI: (Turning back.) I shall come again, and there I want to examine that letter without fail.

EMON: Yes, sir! Please convey my best wishes to Lord Moronos.

HEINAI: I'll take my leave.

HEINAI exchanges bows with EMON and OKUMA. Offstage numerous accompaniment as the FOOTMAN opens HEINAI's umbrella and leads it to HEINAI.

The bell tolls. HEINAI and the FOOTMAN depart. OKUMA rises and circles around to EMON's left.

OKUMA: (Angrily.) Smart! Where in the world did you put that precious letter?

EMON: Chohei tricked me! He said that he would bring me in to the police station. I handed it to him as collateral.

EMON: OK! So it was to hold him off for a while.

EMON: I'll recover it. Don't worry!

EMON: Heaven's sake! It's already dusk!

EMON: Sorry Ohsa will affect both of us with fever. Don't go soft on me!

EMON: Let's stay on guard!

EMON: I'll light the lamp. (The bell tolls. Offstage shamisen and singing establish a peaceful mood. EMON and OKUMA stand and slide a door to double thick doors. They run away from each other. OKUMA runs the room to prepare for sleep. Shamisen and song continue as EMON lights a small lamp and opens the doors. He picks up the water bowl and looks pensively at the winter scene. Ah! Mounds of snow, dazzlingly white! (He catches sight of CHOHEI) which is me! He runs outside the gate. EMON moves sympathetically, runs outside, and sees the grace tablet of OSHA. He speaks in a trembling voice amidst a burst of
the ghost. It is inscribed with both her posthumous and worldly names. Even if I pray for her she'll never achieve rebirth. Mitarashi's Bon Festival for the dead she'll be terrifying. Fearfully, still, I'll better pray for the brat and get on with it. He pours the holy water from a bucket and then kneels near the grave tablet. Kone stirs a little [narrow view], suggestive of wind blowing through reeds, signals the appearance of Oiwa's ghost. The bell rings repeatedly and the stage plumes into darkness. A flame circles within the proper latern. Lord Dorodororo on the flame scours to burn a hole in the proper. Thunderous dorodororo and off-stage narmones as the silhouette of Oiwa's fort becomes visible. Finally, the latern splits into two halves (chochon make), and Oiwa's ghostly head thunders through the gap. Nenroku game. Dorodororo resumes and the set is again plunged into darkness. A sharp snake head as the light begins to return. The bloodstained body of the ghost has emerged from the latern and stands, cradling LEMON's infant son, to the left of LEMON. LEMON spreads a few steps forward and then discovers the shape of the ghost. Dorodororo. LEMON stirs to her feet in horror in a half-standing position. Then she sits and speaks defiantly, vindictive ghost! Listen! You forced me to kill my father-in-law. To, Kihetsu, and my new bride on our wedding night. Your curse also drowned my mother-in-law and her wet-nurse. To crown it all, you cursed my own family and killed our newborn son. What a loving mother! Oiwa points twice at the infant and raises her hand to the scars on her face to remind LEMON of the abandonment of his son and of her own poisoning. LEMON sneers and prays. She's Jake beats. Oiwa clamps both hands near her ears. Then, tearing blood in the storm, she quickly circles LEMON and surrounds the infant. Dorodororo. Oiwa exits right, one arm pointing at LEMON. He drops the infant. A sharp knife clutches and the infant's toddler turns into a stone statue of fuka, the Buddha-statues of children. A sharp knife beats. LEMON furiously reenters inside the house. CHÔBEI enters right looking like a wild man from the countryside. LEMON is surrounded by screeching rats manipulated on the ends of standing by STAGE ASSISTANTS. 

CHÔBEI: (Tremulous) Beastie! (He kicks the rats away and enters the house.)
LEMON: What spirit? (He steps into space. Dorodororo resumes.)
CHÔBEI: (Hearing LEMON's voice, enters the hermitage) Is that you, Master lemon?
LEMON: Chôbei! Am I glad to see you! Listen! I've come by a slip-stream with the house of Moromoto to think that better I learned you, so I went it back right away.

(CHÔBEI x 2 in front of the Buddhist altar.)

CHÔBEI: Alright! I'll return it. When you entrusted it to me I took it home the same evening. However, I was overcome by a swarm of rats, which gnawed everything from my hair down to my fingernails. It was sheer hell! I'll return it! Anything to get rid of it!
LEMON: Did rats attack you, too? Oh! The ghost of Oiwa is here as well! (He strikes a terrified look at the two rats.) Lord Ikedah! Lord Ikedah! Hurry up and bring me the letter!

CHÔSEI: You've killed a lot of people and already laid the blame on Kanzô, Banadeke, and myself. Look, Tanaka! Why do you want the letter so badly?

LEMON: My mother originally belonged to Moronouen's clan, so it was easy for her to obtain my entry into his household. (He sheepishly stops.) Do you have anything? (Creating another excuse for LEMON is distracted.) The woman who plays Oiwa is attached to a wheel hidden behind the skirn. The wheel is inserted forward, and Oiwa extends her head over CHÔSEI's head. Tucking a hand towel (tenugui) from around his neck, she slowly strangles him. He attempts to get out a scream, but Oiwa stops one hand over his mouth. He falls dumb into one task heat. The wheel is released backward, and Oiwa drops the skirn onto the compartment of the altar's rear. LEMON, ignorant of Oiwa's attack, suddenly detects the ghost and strikes a frightened look up to triple task heat. He stuggles. Blood begins to drip from the top of the door, each drop has the time to accompany that of a task heat. Seeing the blood, LEMON summons all his willpower to look up.

LEMON: Is this the curse of Oiwa, too? (A letter falls from the altar's cowhide and LEMON grabs it.) The letter I entrusted to Chôsei!

(Just then, HEINA, attended by four FOOTMEN, comes rushing along the hanamichi to continue to take looks.)

HEINA: (From the door; LEMON; LEMON! Show me that letter you promised a little while ago.)

LEMON: Welcome! Yet, from the girl of your party, I have some doubts as to your purpose.

HEINA: The reason for my appearance is that I have orders to apprehend one Seki-guchi Kanzô and his servant, Banadeke, for the murder of a retainer of Lord Moronouen, one Hisaburo, and of his granddaughter. Now I intend to see that letter, so get a move on!

LEMON: Verily for yourself!

(LEMON presents the letter to HEINA. To a soft, menacing murmur of two doowoo doowoo, HEINA reads the lines. A sharp task heat.)

HEINA: (Agitated; My God! The seal and the crest have been erased away by rats! Now it's just a sheet of worthless paper! What's happened here?)

LEMON: Takes it out, staring at it in disbelief, sticks it away.

LEMON: It was the work of Oiwa's damned rats! (Disperantly.) There's no hope!

HEINA: My visit has been a complete waste of time! I'll inform my master. (To his FOOTMEN.) Collect the gifts, footmen!

FOOTMEN: Yes, sir! (They pick up the tray containing the gifts.)

LEMON: (Desperately.) All the gifts!
HEINAI: I shall return to Lord Morioka with my report. Food, Taniyoi! Food!

HEINAI laughs in division. Lord (donor) asks HEINAI and his FOOTMEN charge off along the hanamichi.

HIXMON strides a mile to make boats, staring blankly. At this moment, GENSHIRÔ peeks out.

IEMON: The curse of Oiso’s ghost, and the shriek of the rats have confounded my mother’s plans for my promotion. Erecting this grave tablet for Oiso was futile!

(As he starts toward the door, GENSHIRÔ restrains him.)

GENSHIRO: Son! You’re angry, but don’t break that table!

IEMON: I had intended to hold a proper prayer service for Oiso, but she won’t listen.

IEMON rushes toward the grave tablet, but again GENSHIRÔ stops him.

GENSHIRO: Wait! You haven’t an ounce of compassion! You’re just a traitorous ronin!

(Rage seeps up inside him.) This is good! A restless spirit and a dissatisfied ronin.

You even rebelled upon your mother, who had sheathed herself into the household of our ancestors, Morioka. Unprincipled son! You’ve tarnished your own father with a traitor’s brush! You despicable wretch!

IEMON shakes quickly and then sits as a deception.

IEMON: Father! I infiltrated our enemy’s household in order to assist my loyal comrades!

GENSHIRO: Lies! All lies! Traitor, Taniyoi! Die! (Momentarily forgetting that he is an octogenarian he leashes for the sword he no longer carries. Chagrined, he strides a mile to make boats.) I’m no longer a samurai because I’ve taken to the roads as a beguiling pilgrim. (Theirs he picks up the T-shaped wooden hammer used to strike his bell and throws it.) IEMON, mark his arrangement by a double unke beke."

IEMON: I disown you! We are no longer father and son!

IEMON: What! My own father disowning me?

GENSHIRO: I’m not your father! Do as you please!

(GENSHIRÔ continues to beat IEMON. Skull music is heard and a bell tolls the hour as GENSHIRÔ goes inside.)

IEMON (Angrily): Obstreperous rogue! What am I to do as well as come? Damn you!

(Continues to make boats at the sliding door open to reveal OKUMA in two.)

OKUMA: Oh, my! Ruth! Ruth!

(Menacingly threading the boat, held on shoulder by STAGE ASSISTANTS, drops at OKUMA from all directions as the fervently cries to shrug them.)

IEMON (Dismayed): Come on, Ma! Take heart! Cain up! Come on, Ma! (Desperately)

Come out! (To the rep. Vermin!) He picks up the wooden hammer and dashes left and right, each movement accompanied by a double unke beke. Eventually, he gets rid of the rats.

(Oh, the fever again! Pray for me!)

JÔNEN and his FOLLOWERS enter through the back door in response to IEMON’s distress.)
JÔNEN: Is it the sickness again? Quick! Pray!

FOLLOWERS: We understand! (They crowd OKUMA & linking hands while LEMON remains outside looking anguish.) All together now! Pray!

JÔNEN: Help us, Buddha!

FOLLOWERS: Help us, Buddha!

LEMON, entering the upper circle, joins in the chanting. Decadence continues, interspersed with double take beats. OIWA revolve around the circle and cross, coiling tightly at OKUMA, who is wracked with pain. No one apart from OKUMA and LEMON can see OIWA. Igg, moyanigato, OKUMA, with OKUMA by the collar and wields her body into complex contortions. Loud take beats. The proper circle disfigurements and the FOLLOWERS fall back. LEMON, with his sword, rises his head in a faithful gesture. Loud, take beats.)

LEMON: Come out! Pray! (They all chant now loudly. OIWA strikes a note in continuous take beats while she stirs at LEMON. Then she assumes her usual OKUMA.) I feel the eyes of the gods again! (There is silence. LEMON strikes a note to repeat take beats.) Pray! (They chant repeatedly as OIWA loses OKUMA and, in the accompaniment of a flute, rises and OKUMA's voice, with her voice, LEMON watches his mother die with a piling sound. The devils drop from in prone and rush out the rear door.) Lord Buddha! What a way for my dear mother to die! LEMON is no less for words. He approaches the corpse and inspects her bloodshot and hag. He looks at the hilt of his sword. Gıcırt. He draws his sword and falls. Decadence makes a crescendo as OIWA affects LEMON with species of agony. She slings the rope rope behind him and approaches the stall of the woman. LEMON sees her, and then strikes the walls. It collapses, emptying the cup of GENSHIRO, dolphoty by a note. LEMON reaches OIWA, versch, into the toil.) Lord Buddha! Father's hanged himself and I've lost both my parents in the blink of an eye! What heartbreaking corpses! All because of Oiwa! Oh! Oh! (To continuous take beats, SEKIGUCHI KANZÔ and BANSSUKE run onto the stage from the balcony, apparently eking off. They barge into the room, and LEMON roars in front. Urgent take beats surround HEINAI and FOOTMEN running onto the balcony, searching for the two. KANZÔ and BANSSUKE stop in at the door.)

KANZÔ: LEMON! I confess to all my past misdeeds, and both of me were arrested.

BANSSUKE: However, he avoided implicating himself under cross-examination, and when the interrogers' vigilance tapered, we ran for it and fled here.

KANZÔ: We're giving you time to run, and

(They automatically urge LEMON out here.)

LEMON: So you came all the way here out of loyalty to me!
KANZŌ and BANSUKÉ: Hide yourself! Disappear!

IEMON: I give it. But what will I do for money?

(KANZŌ and BANSUKÉ rise and exchange glances. A sharp slide beats.)

KANZŌ and BANSUKÉ: Get you!

(They see IEMON, but he breaks free, draws his sword, and brings at them. Each movement in the combat scene [tachimawari] is emphasized by a double slide beat, and each series of strikes and parries concludes in a rush.)

IEMON: A trap! Just as I thought!

HEINAI: Catch him!

KANZŌ and BANSUKÉ: Get you!

(Martial draw patterns accompany the tachimawari. They again try to seize IEMON, but he defeats KANZŌ, BANSUKÉ, HEINAI, and all the footmen one by one. Weary from his exertions, IEMON stands just outside the door.)

IEMON: A murderer haunted by a ghost can’t escape heaven’s net, but I’ll try anyway.

(A sharp slide. The stage rebuilds to reveal a donkey, now covered with partially obscured in a shower of falling snow. It appears to be far from the heavens. YOMOSHIKI enters left, wearing a light gray outer kimono with his head covered in a basket hat. He breaks IEMON off-balance from behind and then seizes the hat, which is removed by a stage assistant. He begins to take off his outer kimono, preparing to fight. The notice half removed, YOMOSHIKI strikes an aggressive pose with one arm and one leg thrust forward. Triple slide beats.)

YOMOSHIKI (Pacing): Hold it right there, Tanimura! IEMON: Oh! It’s Satō Yomoshiki! Why attack me?

YOMOSHIKI: You are the enemy of Owari, the elder sister of my wife, Oodono. I am her avenger!

IEMON (sarcastically): Bravo, Satō! Don’t get in my way!

YOMOSHIKI: On guard, Tanimura!

(Martial draw patterns accompany their fight. They pass aggressively, slash, and pass each other several times. YOMOSHIKI passes IEMON’s sword over his own. Slide beat. They beat until YOMOSHIKI scores a hit. YOMOSHIKI glances at IEMON, who holds his wounded right shoulder. They face in a joint vote to double slide beats. Light droplets, flames erupt at the end of pole held by stage assistants in signal that Owari is inflicting pain on IEMON. Slide beats accompany his agonized wail. Numerous rats onoshigane appear and warm up IEMON’s sword, forcing him to drop it. YOMOSHIKI, on bent knee, raises his standing IEMON through. With YOMOSHIKI triumphant and IEMON...
YOMOSHIKI! (Addressing OIWA): First rebirth in Buddha's paradise!

YENON: You're right, Yomoshiki!

YOMOSHIKI! and the dying YENON pass. Accelerating ki clicks as the curtain is quickly closed on the final tableau. Loud double ki clicks out the performance.