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Fancy-goods dealer Hikosaburoh came up to Yedo all the way from Osaka, because his father Hikobeh had been arrested on a charge of killing an old lady for the purpose of stealing a large sum of money from her.

However, Hikosaburoh believed that his father had never committed such a crime and one day happened to meet two palanquin-bearers named Gonza and Sukeju as well as their neighbours.

The palanquin-bearers had seen the real murderer and went to the magistrate's office together with the landlord and Hikosaburoh so as to inform the magistrate of the fact. After all Hikobeh was found not guilty and released from prison alive though he had been supposed to be dead.
S H O G I K U

Kabuki Comedy "GONZA TO SUKEJU"

("GONZA & SUKEJU")

Two Scenes.

Written by Okamoto Kidoh.

To be presented by Ennosuke and Sumizoh

Joint Troupe at the Tokyo Theatre from August 7th to August 31st, 1946:
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CHARACTERS:

Palanquin-bearer Gonza.
Gonza's wife Okan.
Palanquin-bearer Sukeju.
Sukeju's younger brother Sukehachi.
Landlord Rokurobeh.
Fancy-goods dealer Hikobeh.
Hikobeh's son Hikosaburoh.
Plasterer Kantaroh.
Monkey-leader Yosuke.
Priest Untetsu.
Priest Gantetsu.
Bansaku Ishiko.
Others: Men, Women, Children, Policemen & palanquin-bearers.
FIRST SCENE

Time: The Kyoho Era when Echizennokami Ohoka was the magistrate of Yedo; afternoon of the early part of July.

The stage represents the tenement-houses of Hashimoto-choh, Kanda, Yedo. On the right there is Palanquin-Bearer Gonza's house and on the left, Palanquin-Bearer Sukeju's; each of the houses is a hovel with torn paper sliding-doors. Gonza's house has the kitchen in the interior while Sukeju's has the kitchen on the left. There is placed a palanquin in the dirt floor of Gonza's house. Between the houses there is a stool.

On the left there stands a willow. There is also an alley on the left.

To-day is the day for clearing water in the common well for tenement dwellers. Untetsu and Gantetsu, both priests, who are living in another tenement-house opposite to Gonza's and Sukeju's house have already come out to do the work. Untetsu has a close cropped head while Gantetsu has a shaved head. Both of them sit down on the verandah of Gonza's house and are wiping the perspiration from their face. Sukeju's younger brother Sukehachi is about twenty years old; he has a tattoo on his arm; he is half naked; he ties a towel around his head and stands with bare feet, carrying a coarse flat fan in his hand. Gonza's wife Okan who has been a courtesan is twenty-six to twenty-seven years old; she covers her head with a towel, wears a summer clothes with the sleeves tucked up with a cord. Three of them are now drawing water from the well. At a little distance Monkey-leader Yosuke who also ties a towel around his head, carries a monkey on his back, wears a summer clothes and stands absent-mindedly with bare feet. Outside the
sound of a drum beaten by a street-tumbler with a lion's mask on is heard.

Untetsu: Very hot indeed!
Gantetsu: I'm afraid I cannot draw water from the well if I wear a bamboo-hat. The sun shines on my bare head, so I feel dizzy.
Untetsu: Very likely. Today's pumping is very hard; it's hell on earth, I should think.
Okan: Gantetsu San, you'd better cover your head with a towel like us.
Gan.: In such a case men do not look lively unless we tie a towel around our head instead of covering it although women are an exception.

Sukehachi: Ha, ha! Don't make me laugh. Whether you tie a towel around your head or cover your head with it makes no difference. You're a mere priest all the same.
Okan: Yosuke San, won't you also have some tea? (offers a cup)
Yosuke: (comes forward and bows to her politely) Thank you, I will. As a matter of fact, I've been very thirsty up to now.

Sukehachi: Though it's your trade, you ought not to have brought your monkey in such a case as pumping.
Yosuke: Well. (Looking back at the monkey) This is so familiar with me that it doesn't want to leave me even for a while, you know.
Okan: It's a lovely monkey, isn't it?
Yosuke: Yes, isn't it!
Sukehachi: Then I'll also love it. (pats the monkey on the head)
Hey, Monkey, come on and help us without observing us on your master's back. You've long hands, so you ought to pull the rope with us and draw water from the well. (pulls the monkey's ear. In next to no time it scratches him.) Ouch, ouch! Confound it! Why have you scratched me so suddenly?

Okan: Oh, you are to blame for it, for you've bullied the monkey.

Yosuke: I'm sorry this monkey is very rough. I'll apologize to you in its place.

Sukehachi: Ouch, ouch! (Stroking his palm) Indeed it's very violent. It's not an Yedo monkey but a country one.

Okan: Oh, there is no such difference between monkeys. Don't mistake monkeys for eels. (laughs.)

Untetsu: Taroes might become eels, but I've never heard that monkeys would be transformed into eels.

Gantetsu: Ha, ha! It's a laughing matter indeed.

Sukehachi: Hey, Yosuke. Let me your country monkey.

Yosuke: What are you going to do with it?

Sukehachi: Since I've been scratched by the monkey and laughed at by you, I should like to let it run here and scratch all of you.

Okan: (gets surprised) Don't say such a silly thing. What a disgusting fellow you are!

Untetsu: Don't be mischievous! You mustn't do such a thing. (rises to his feet. Sukehachi tries to snatch the monkey from Yosuke's hand. Yosuke resists him. In this struggle Sukehachi is again scratched by the monkey.
Sukehachi: Hang it! I've been scratched again. Now I've lost my temper.

I'll kill the monkey and sell it to Momonjiya at Ryohgoku.

Yosuke: What are you going to do with my pet animal?

(Sukehachi and Yosuke still quarrel. Just then Sukehachi's elder brother Sukeju, aged about thirty comes out from the right; he also ties a towel around his head, has a tattoo on his arm and stands with bare feet.)

Sukeju: Hey, what are you fussing about? Don't take so much rest.
We must finish it before it gets dark. Otherwise we should be scolded by the landlord.

Yosuke: My goodness! Let's go, shall we?

Untetsu: Okay.

Gan.: We shall have to work hard again.

(Thereupon Yosuke, Untetsu and Gantetsu leave for the right.)

Sukeju: (to Okan.) Hey, Madam. What about your husband?

Okan: He is taking a nap in the inner room.

Sukeju: Gracious me! Since this is the day for clearing the well once in a year, all the tenement dwellers are working with might and main without engaging in their trade. He is the only one who is idling away his time. What an idle man he is! Wake him up and bring him here right away.

Okan: (gets angry) Don't thunder so much. In the place of my husband, I'm working hard, am I not?

Sukeju: However hard you may work, you cannot do it well.

This is not such an easy work as clearing at Yoshiwara,
(one of the red light districts in Yedo) Drag out your yusband right away.

Sukehachi: Up until now I've not yet become aware of Gonza's absence, but it's absurd that he is taking a nap like a thief while we're working hard. (To Okan) Take him here right away.

Okan: Don't call him hard names. His trade is busy especially at night, so no wonder that he is taking a nap.

Sukeju: But I'm in the same trade as he. I'm working with all my strength, so it's absurd that my pal Gonza is taking a nap.

Okan: However, my husband is a forward bearer, so you ought to sympathize with him.

Sukeju: Though I'm a pusher while he is a forward bearer, it makes no difference, I should think.

Suke.: If he is proud of being a forward bearer and doesn't want to work, I'll never ask him again to help me and from now on my elder brother and I will go out for work.

Okan: Are you going out with your brother to carry a sacred paranquin? (turns round to the right and laughs at them mockingly)

Have you anything to carry for your trade?

Sukeju: (feels a little confused) Hum! I can find a palanquin anywhere. Don't you think so, Hachi (=Sukehachi)?

Suke.: Yes; if you go to the river, you will see many a palanquin on it when the tide is on the flow.

Okan: Don't be silly. Don't mistake old wooden clogs for palanquins. You're a chatter-box, I think.

Sukeju: Oh, you're more talkative than I. All the neighbours are worried about your gossips.

Gonza ought to have married a more gentle woman even if she is a ex-courtesan.
(Just then Gonzacho is about thirty years old and has a tattoo on his arm opens the paper sliding-door of the inner room and comes out, holding the edge of his summer clothes.)

Gonza: Hey, I've been overhearing you in the inner room. Why have you called my dear wife named? I admit my wife has been a courtesan at Yoshiwara, but we've married after loving each other, you know.
I don't think there is any directive of the magistrate which bars love marriage. Serve you right!

Okan: Indeed it's both of you that are bothering us and other neighbours. You're alway quarreling each other and I make it a rule to mend the quarrel, you know.

Sukeju: Shut up! That's exactly what I should like to you. From morning till night you're quarreling between husband and wife, aren't you? Who do you think acts as your mediator?

Sukeju: Oh, it's no good quarreling with such a courtesan. Hey, Gonza. (sits down on the verandah) Why are you lying down all day long? Don't you know all the tenement dwellers are occupied with clearing the water of the well? Wash your sleepy face and come out to pull the rope with us. Since you're my pal, I've given you an advice. So you ought to thank me.

Gonza: Ah, my wife is taking my place, isn't she? It's enough to select one person from one house, I should think.

Sukeju: Women are of no use in such a rough work. From my house my brother and I are working hard like this.

Gonza: Oh, nobody has asked you to do so. You are both doing it of your own free will, I suppose.
I'm sorry you've waked me up by making much ado though I've fallen asleep. (rubs his eyes) Hey, Okan, give me some tea.

Okan: Certainlly. (pours tea into a cup which Gonza drinks. Just then on the right many people's voice is heard.)

Many People: Now let's pull, pull.

Sukeha.: Brother, it has started again. Let's go right away.

Sukeju: Okay. It's no good talking with such people.

Many people: Let's pull, pull.

Sukeju: Wait a moment!

Sukeha.: Wait a minute!

(Both Sukeju and Sukehachi tie the towels around their heads more tightly and hurriedly go to the right.)

Okan: What disgusting men they are!
I don't feel like going there again.

Gonza: Oh, you needn't go there. (takes up a flat fan)
Sorry we're troubled by mosquitoes even in the daytime.

Okan: It's still hot, but autumn has already come. The number of striped mosquitoes has increased, I think.
(Takes up the fan and fans Gonza)

Gonza: Gracious me! To-day you're very kind to me. Did you remember the past by their words?

Okan: Oh, no, I'm doing so to spite them.

Gonza: Do you mean you don't want to be nice to me without spiting them?
I feel very lonesome.
(On the right many people's voice is heard.)

Many People: Let's pull, pull.
(On the right both Untetsu and Gantetsu pull the rope for clearing the well ahead of others. Subsequently two men, one child of tenement-houses and Sukeju pull the rope.)

Sukeju: (looks back at Gonza) Hey, come out right away.

Gonza: Have your own way!

Sukeju: What? (tries to get near to Gonza when he totters, being pulled by the rope) Oh, don't pull at random. Hey, Gonza, don't you want to come out? Don't pull so hard.

(Sukeju and others go to the right, being pulled by the rope. Yosuke with the monkey on his back and Sukehachi remain there.)

Sukehachi: Hey, hey, why are you and your wife watching us with folded arms? Come out right away. Otherwise you would smart for it.

(Yosuke's monkey holds Sukehachi's hair and pull it.)

Sukehachi: Who are you, eh? Don't play a trick on me! Don't!

(Sukehachi leaves for the right, being pulled by the monkey.)

Gonza: (laughs) Ha, ha! It's a good show indeed.

Okan: That guy was scratched by the monkey, you know.

Gonza: Such a guy is suited to play with the monkey.

Okan: Indeed he is like an actor in a monkey play.

(Both Gonza and Okan split their sides with laughter. Just then splash is heard at the edge of the well on the right Okan looks back at the right.)

Okan: All the people of the tenement-houses are working, so I think I have to help them without escaping. Shall I go and help them?
Gonza: Oh, you needn't go there. Nobody but Suke. brothers will find fault with us. If any other man complains of it, I'll hold him down.

Okan: But I'm afraid we shall be scolded by the landlord.

Gonza: Well. (thinks a little) I remember we were scolded bitterly by him.

Okan: I don't mind others, but I should think we ought not to hurt the landlord's feelings.

Gonza: But he is a good-natured man, so I don't think he'll evict us.

Okan: Kind as he is, we must try not to get him angry.

Gonza: Well, maybe. (thinks again) Then I might go and help them. (is about to stand up and thinks again) But if I go out to help them, I'm afraid I'll do so, being threatened by Suke. brothers. So I'll quit doing so. You had better not do so, either.

Okan: Is it all right for me not to do so?

Gonza: If we're scolded by the landlord, we ought to apologize to him. If so, he'll excuse us, I assure you.

Okan: I don't mind making apologizes to the landlord, but ---

Gonza: Better make up your mind to apologize to him.

(From the right Sukehachi comes out, holding the monkey in his arms. Running after him, Yosuke comes out.)

Yosuke: Here, here, where are you going to take my monkey?

Sukehachi: This monkey has played a trick on me repeatedly, so I'll throw this into the well.

Yosuke: Don't do such a violent thing.
Sukeju: Hey, Hachi, don't do such a silly thing.
Sukeha.: Why is it silly?
Sukeju: Don't play with the monkey at such a busy time. Go right away.
Sukeha.: No, I won't. I must throw this into the well by all means.
Sukeju: Since we're clearing the well, it's foolish of you to throw such an animal into it. Don't do such a thing.
Sukeha.: Shut up!
Sukeju: If you don't listen to me, I'll throw you into the well instead of the monkey.
Sukeha.: Don't crack a joke.

(The two brothers fight with each other. Taking advantage of their unguarded moment, Yoichi gets back the monkey and runs off to the right, carrying it on his back.)

Gonza: What disgusting people they are!

(To Okan) Keep them from fighting.

(Both Gonza and Okan come down from the verandah and forcibly separate the brothers from each other.)

Gonza: Don't quarrel between brothers.

Okan: Hach San, you mustn't resist your elder brother.

Sukeha.: Keep your nose to yourself! I'll not regard him as my elder brother, for he sided with the monkey and struck me.

Sukeju: Oh, you're inferior even to the monkey.

Gonza: Since it's the quarrel between brothers, none of you can expect to get the smart-monkey. Better quit fighting.
(From the right Landlord Sukehachi comes out.)

Sukehachi: Here, here, what are you doing? Don't idle away your time, for the work will soon be finished.

(Sukeju leaves for the right.)

Sukehachi: Sukehachi, I hear you've been playing with the monkey at this busy time.

Sukehachi: Oh, you're mistaken. I've been fooled by the monkey, you know.

Sukehachi: Anyway go and help others right away. You are the most foolish fellow in the tenement-houses.

Sukehachi: I'm no match for you, Mr. Landlord. (goes out to the right, being scolded by Sukehachi.)

Okan: Mr. Landlord, it's very hot today, isn't it?

Gonza: Please take a seat here.

Sukehachi (looks at Gonza): Oh, you've not been to the well, I'm afraid.

(Sukeju comes out from the right.)

Gonza (gets startled): Mr, as a matter of fact, I've had something else to do.

Okan: Better apologize to him at once. (makes a sign to Gonza with the eye)

Gonza: Some urgent business has prevented me from doing so, you know.

Sukehachi: Some urgent business?

Gonza: Yes, I've had a sudden illness in my family.

Sukeju: Oh, what a disgusting fellow you are! Hey, Mr. Landlord, you mustn't be taken in by him. What he has said is a lie, you know.

(Both Gonza and Okan get excited and wave their hands.)
Sukeju (thunders more and more): Indeed it's a lie, a barefaced lie. You were taking a nap and you didn't come out after all though I urged you to do so repeatedly.

Gonza: That's why I said I had a sudden illness in my family.

Sukeju: Where is the patient, eh?

Gonza: It's me.

Sukeju: What a disgusting fellow you are! I know you've been drinking rice wine from morning. Don't say such a silly thing.

Okan: The wine has disagreed with him, you know.

Sukeju: Don't tell me a downright lie.

Rokurohbeh: Indeed it seems to be a lie. Hey, Gonza, did you forget what I told you last year? It's only once in a year to clear the water of the well. Why did you feign illness and take a nap? Both you and your wife are very idle. I admit your wife once made her appearance at the well, but soon disappeared. Now go out and work hard.

Gonza and Okan: Certainly.

(From the right many people's voice is heard.)

Many People: Let's pull, pull tightly.

Rokurohbeh (looks at the right): See they are pulling hard.

Make it snappy!

(As before, Untetsu and Gantetsu in the Van and the two men and child come out, pulling the rope. Sukeju rush up to them and pull the rope. Gonza and Okan also come out and pull the rope. Just then from the alley on the left Fancy-goods dealer Hikosaburoh, aged about twenty comes out; he wears travelling suit.
Sukeju: Now, pull, pull.
Gonza: Pull, pull.
All: Let's pull.

(Hikosaburō comes up, avoiding the people pulling the rope, but collides with Sukeju.)

Sukeju: Look sharp!

(Pushed out by Sukeju, Hikosaburō totters and runs into Gonza this time.)

Gonza: What a nuisance! (kicks Hikosaburō, who trips over a stone and falls. Paying no attention to him, all of them leave for the right, pulling the rope.)

Rokurobē: Here, here, don't do violence.

(looks after Hikosaburō) I'll apologize to you for their rudeness.

Hikosaburō: Oh, I must beg your pardon myself. Sorry to have come out at such a busy time, for I'm a stranger to Yedo.

Rokurobē: Oh, you're very polite. As you see, now they are clearing the water of the well. So I'm afraid they have made such a rudeness to you. I'll apologize to you in place of my tenants. Please excuse them. Oh, you've become dirty. (wipes the knees of Hikosaburō with his towel)

Hikosaburō: Oh, never mind. Are you the landlord?

Rokurobē: Yes, I am. Here is Hashimoto-closh, Kanda. I'm Landlord Rokurobē of the tenement-houses.

H: Oh, I see.

(All come out from the right, pulling the rope.)
Sukehachi (to Hikosaburoh): Why are you standing absent-mindedly?

Don't stand in my way!

Hokurokubeh: Don't say such a rude thing to a stranger.
you ought to avoid him, you fool.

Sukehachi: I'm sorry I've been scolded again. (In a loud voice)

Now let's pull, pull.

All: Let's pull.

(All of them leave for the right, pulling the rope.)

R: I'm awfully sorry all my tenants are very rude and selfish. By the way, have you come here to see anyone?

H: I've come here to see you.

R: Really? They take a seat here.

(takes the lead and sits down on the verandah of Gonza's house. On the right splash is heard.)

R: Where have you come from?

H: I've come from Osaka.

R: Oh, you've come all the way from Osaka to see me.

Are you not Hikobeh San's?

H: Yes, I'm fancy goods dealer Hikobeh's son Hikosakuroh; my father had long been living in your tenement-house.

R: Ah, are you Hikobeh San's son?

(suddenly changes colour) Glad you've come all the way.

H (in trembling voice): Mr. Landlord, is it true that my father died in prison?

R: I'm sorry for you. As I wrote to you, he was arrested last December and was taken ill while under examination and this march (The word sticks in his throat) died in prison after all.
Thank you all the same for your kindness. (puts down his hands; his eyes are filled with tears) According to your letter, my father stole into the retreat of an inn named "Komeya" in Bakurochoh and killed the retired lady aged 63 and then snatched one hundred ryoh from her hand. Is it true?

(with a sympathetic look) Well, I never thought that Hikobeh San had done such a terrible thing, but he confessed the fact after all under a severe examination at the magistrate's office, so I've been told. (From the right Gonza comes out in a sluggish manner and going around the back of the house stands under the willow listening to their conversation.)

But I don't think it's true. My father was not such a merciless and wicked man as stole anything from others to say nothing of killing others for the purpose of stealing money. I'm afraid under the severe examination he might have asserted what he had never done. Anyway it cannot be true.

I understand your mind. However, this case was settled by the famous magistrate Echizennokami Choka of the South Office, so it cannot be a wrong judgment.

Do you mean that the examination had already been finished then though you said just now that he died during the examination?

To be frank with you, the case was settled by his confession and when it was decided that he would be executed in prison, he died in prison, you know. Therefore I
wanted to bury his body and asked officials to give it to me, but I was refused to do so, for he had committed a serious offence. Please don't take it amiss.

H: I'm sorry to hear it. (weeps. A little while ago from the right Okan came out when Gonza beckoned to her with the eye. Thereupon Okan came up to Gonza through the back of the house when Gonza whispered something to her. She went to the back of her house from the left. Gonza sat down on the verandah of Sukeju's house.)

H: (dries his eyes) Though Mr. Ohoka is a famous magistrate, I'm afraid he made wrong judgment on this case. My father had never done such a thing, I bet you.

R: (as if consoling him) Speak more calmly. Whatever you say now, the case was settled and he dies, so it's no use crying over spilt milk, I should think.

H: I know what has been done cannot be undone. I should like to say to officials, however, he was falsely charged and I must clear his name, Mr. Landlord, please help me doing so. I'm a stranger to Yedo like my father, so I beg you to help me. (places his hands together.)

R: Don't let me cry by saying such a thing. (dries his eyes) Since it's your request, I should like to help you, but I'm afraid I couldn't. (is lost in thought. In the meantime, Okan who came out of the inner room stealthily and took up a fan is fanning Rokurobeh and Hikosaburoh so that they might not notice her.)

Sukeju: (comes out of the right) Ah, ver hot indeed!
Gonza: (in a small voice) Hey, hey.

(Called by Gonza, Sukeju goes through the back of the tenement-house and comes up to Gonza on the left.)

Sukeju: What?

(Gonza points to Hikosaburoh and whispers something to Sukeju, who nods and thinks.)

Hiko.: I'm very much excited, but I'm quite young and besides unfamiliar with this place. Tell me if you've any good idea, please.

Roku.: Wait a moment! Now I'm thinking it over, but it's a difficult matter, you know.

H: However, I must clear my father's name by all means. When I left Osaka, I promised my mother and younger brother that I would clear his honour by all means, by attesting that he was innocent, you know.

R: I ask you to keep quiet for a while and let me think a little more, for I cannot concentrate my mind on it if you talk so much.

H: (nervously) If I should return home now, I'm afraid I should break my word with my mother and brother. It's up to you whether I shall become happy or not.

R: I understand what you mean. That's why I'm now cudgeling my brains. (To the right) Hey, hey, stop drawing water for a while, for I'm now thinking. (thinks again. Hikosaburoh is looking at him impatiently. Meanwhile, Okan dries her eyes, for she wept in sympathy with Hikosaburoh.)
(in a small voice) Shall I tell it to him now?

But I'm afraid you might be involved in the matter if you would tell it to him.

Very likely (thinks.)

Mr. Landlord seems to be at a loss. I feel rather pity for the young guy.

I also sympathize with him. But if we would make some mistake, we would have a hard time of it in respect to the matter, I'm afraid. Better think it over.

Well. (hesitates a little)

Say, Mr. Landlord, haven't you thought of any good idea yet?

Well, it's a difficult matter indeed. Since the case has already been tried, I'm afraid I shall have to quarrel with Mr. Ohoka if I deny his judgment. Unless there is a good evidence showing the innocence of your father or a witness who asserts the existence of the true criminal, I cannot expect to succeed in it.

(folds his arms. Gonza rises to his feet so as to say something when Sukeju in a flurry seizes him by the sleeve and detains him from doing so. Thereupon Gonza again hesitates.)

(cannot put up with it) Do you mean you cannot do it at any cost?

I don't mean it's impossible, but it's a dangerous work, I should think. This is the first time I've come across such an important matter.
H: (resolutely) Then I'll not ask you any more and I'll have my own way. (is about to rise to his feet)

R.: (seizes him by the sleeve) Wait a minute! What are you going to do by changing colour?

H: I'll rush into the magistrate's office right away.

R.: Rush into the magistrate's office, eh? You mustn't do such a thing. It's against the law to rush into the office and make a petition.

H: I know. But it cannot be helped now. I'm ready to be punished severely and I'm determined to carry it out. Don't keep me from doing so. (thrusts him aside and is about to go.)

R: I'll not let you do so. Though you are young, you mustn't do such a reckless thing. Wait, wait a moment!

H: Let me go, let me go!

R: You mustn't go; you mustn't. (Hikosaburoh tries to thrust him aside and go. Rokurohbeh detains him from doing so. Okan beckons to Gonza nervously and urges him to take some means.)

Gonzac: Gonza comes forward determinedly and stands in the way of Hikosaburoh.)

Gonza: Hey, wait a minute!

Hiko.: Don't interrupt me. (tries to thrust aside Gonza, who keeps him from doing so by holding him down.)

G.: I don't mean to interrupt you. I'll give a good advice to you. Hey, hey, Sukeju, help me keep him from doing so.

Okan: (comes out to the verandah.) Suke San, you ought to help him. (Sukeju resolutely rises to his feet.)

Sukeju: (to Hikosaburoh) Wait, wait a minute! We'll give a good
advice to you. Listen to us calmly!

Gonza: You ought to listen to us.

(Both Gonza and Sukeju forcibly push back Hikosaburoh to the verandah. Gonza and Sukeju take seats on the stool.)

Roku: Indeed I’ve perspired copiously because of this matter. I’m sorry. (wipes the perspiration from his face) Have you really any good advice?

Gon.: Well, Sukeju, you take the initiative.

Sukeju: I’m afraid I can’t, for I’m not good at talking.

G.: Don’t tell me a lie. You always thunder at the top of your voice, don’t you?

Suke.: Oh, you’re more talkative than I.

Roku.: Hey, hey, don’t quarrel. Hey, Gonza, you speak first.

Gon.: Must I take the initiative? I’m sorry.

Roku.: Tell it to me clearly, for I’ve named you first.

Gon.: I cannot help it. (holds his head) I’ll tell you. To tell you the truth, it was at the end of last November. (To Sukeju) Hey, what day of the month was it?

Suke.: Well, I don’t remember well, but I think it was about the previous night of the second festival.

Gon.: That’s right. At nine o’clock on the night Sukeju and I went to the alley of Bakurocho after finishing our late work when a guy tying a towel around his cheeks was washing something in the rain-water tank. So we wanted to know what he was doing and lifted the lighted lantern when we knew he was washing his sleeve.

Roku.: Hum. go ahead!
(looks back at Sukeju) Hey, you ought to tell, too.

Both of us might be involved with the matter, I'm afraid.

Roku.: Then, Sukeju, you continue the story.

Suke.: Say, Mr. Landlord, should we've made a wrong size-up of him, what would happen to us, eh?

Roku.: Well, you might be charged with a serious offence or a minor one according to the circumstances.

Suke.: Isn't a murder case a felony?

Roku.: Of course.

Suke.: Well, I don't want to be involved in the matter. Gonza, you'd better talk about anything you know. I don't know anything about it.

Gon.: Don't pretend ignorance! You were carrying the palanquin with me, weren't you?

Okan: (to Gonza) Say, my dear, you'd better tell what you know about it right away. I should like to hear about it, too.

Hiko: (draws near) Please tell it to me at once.

Gonza: Well, I shall have to tell, I'm afraid. As I told you just now, he was washing, his sleeve in the rain-water tank and besides he carried something sparkling in his hand.

Roku.: Did he? What did he do, then?

(They draw near to him and listen to him.)

Gon.: He was washing the edged tool, you know.

Roku.: Was it really an edged tool?

Gon.: Yes, I'm positive. But we passed by him, though we thought he was a queer guy. The next morning I heard that that night an old woman aged over sixty was killed.
at the retreat of an inn named Komeya in Bakurocho and
one hundred ryoh was taken away.

Roku.: hun! (thinks) Don't you know how old he looked and what
sort of man he was?

Gon.: That's the point. (To Sukeju) Hey, may I tell it?

Suke.: Wait a minute! Hey, Mr. Landlord, I don't know what Gon
(-Gonz) is going to say, but it has nothing to do with
me, you know.

Gon.: Oh, you might be mixed up in it, for you're my pal.

Suke.: But I didn't say anything about it, you see.

Gon.: Oh, it makes no difference.

Okan: Tell the main thing right away. I feel nervous, you
know.

Roku.: Indeed I feel nervous, too. Now tell the main thing
at once.

H: Please tell it to me right away.

(sidles up to Gonza.)

G.: Don't urge me only. Hey, Sukeju! you're very cunning. You'll
smart for it.

H: Please tell right away, right away.

Gon.: Okay, I'll tell you all about it. That man was about
34-5 years old and looked like a workman.

H.: Looked like a workman?

Sukeju: (to Gonza) Hey, hey you'd better not go into details.

R.: Shut up! (to Gonza) Was there anything characteristic
of him?

Gon.: Well. (hesitates)

R.: (as if threatening) Hey, Gonza, why do you want to keep
it anything in secret in my presence? If you don't tell
it frankly, you'll be sorry for it.
Okan: My darling, why do you hesitate to tell it to us, eh?
Gon.: We'll, I shall have to tell, I'm afraid.
(drops his voice) I cannot say for certain, for he was tying a towel around his cheeks and it was very dark at night. But he seemed to be our neighbour.
Roku.: Who was he, eh?
Gon.: (determinedly) He looked like plasterer Kantaroh living at the back street of Toshimachoh.
Okan: Oh, really?
Roku.: I see. Hey, Sukeju, you must tell me frankly, too. Did he really look like Kantaroh?
Suke.: Okay, I'll tell you. (In a loud voice) He must be Kantaroh of Toshimachoh, Plasterer Kantaroh. Surely he is Kantaroh.
Roku.: Hey, don't talk in such a loud voice.
H.: Ah, I'm very glad to hear it. I owe both of you a great deal. I appreciate your kindness. (places his hands together and bows to Gonza and Sukeju.)
Okan: But I wonder why you didn't tell it earlier and save Hikobeh san from his false accusation.
Gon.: Of course I wanted to do so, but I was afraid I might have been mixed up with the matter without any evidence.
Roku.: What faint-hearted men you are!
O.: I don't know why Hikobeh San was falsely charged. I should think, however, you were very unsympathetic to him and have kept it in secret up until now though you knew he was an honest man.
Roku.: Exactly so. You ought to have told it to me earlier. If so, I might have done something to relieve him from
his false charge. (As if scolding) Oh, you are to blame for it, for you've kept it in secret up to now. In other words, as a result you let Hikobeh San die before your very eyes, I think. Hey, Hikosaburoh San, you needn't thank, Gonza and Sukeju. They're your enemies. So you had better knock them down, as I'll act as your attestor.

(Gonza and Sukeju get startled.)

G.: We're not your enemies.

Sukeju: Your enemy is Kantaroh.

G.: Kantaroh is your enemy.

(As saying, both of them are about to run off.)

Ay: Wait, wait! You mustn't run away. I'll excuse you, but do you pledge that you'll lend a helping hand to Hikosaburoh San so as to atone for your sin?

G.: (exchanges glances at Sukeju) Okay, we'll help him at any cost.

R.: I'm glad to hear it. (To the right) Hey, hey, come on, any one of you.

(From the right with Sukehachi in the van Untetsu and Gantetsu come out.)

R.: Oh, Sukehachi, are there three hemp ropes in your house?

Sukehachi: Well, no so many, I'm afraid.

Okan: I think we have one in our house.

Sukehachi: Anyway I'll go and look for the ropes.

(Sukehachi enters his house. Okan enters the inner room.)

Untetsu: Nothing else?
Roku.: Well, you had better stay here for a while; I've something else to ask you.

(Okan comes out of the inner room, carrying a hemp rope with her.)

Okan: Will this do?

Roku.: Yes, that will do, (receives the rope. Sukehachi also comes out of his house, carrying two hemp ropes with him.)

Sukehachi: Mr. Landlord, will they do?

R: Yes, there are just three ropes in all.

Sukehachi: What are you going to do with the ropes?

R: I'll put the ropes on three men.

All: Eh?

G.: Whom do you mean by the tree?

R.: Firstly I'll rope you.

G.: Eh?

R.: Secondly I'll rope Sukeju.

Sukeju: Eh?

R.: And then I'll rope Hikosaburoh San.

H.: Must I be roped, too?

R.: I'll rope these three men together and take them to the magistrate's office.

Sukehachi: Oh, you mustn't. I don't know whether or not the other two men have done any wrong doings. But I believe my elder brother has never done any evil. Although I often quarrel with him, he is my only shouldn't be roped. Tell me the reason why you must rope my brother.

R.: Don't get so much angry.
The young man here is Fancy goods dealer Hikobeh San's son. He is going to appeal to the court about his father's false charge with your brother and Gonza as his witnesses.

Sukehachi: Oh, Mr. Landlord, you ought to take him as his witness yourself without roping them.

R.: Now I'll tell you the reason for it. This is a difficult matter, you know. It's of course proper for Hikosaburoh San to settle down in some lodging-house and through the influential man of the place to appeal to the magistrate's office.

However, it takes much time to take such a measure. Besides since it's the petition on re-examination of the case which has already been settled, it might be shelved. After much consideration, therefore, I'm determined to rope these three people and take them to the magistrate's office. There I'll say like this. "Fancy-goods dealer Hikobeh's son Hikosaburoh called on me and said that his father was falsely charged, so the magistrate was responsible for it as well as the landlord and siding with him Palanquin Bearers Gonzah and Sukeju committed many outrages.

Gonza: (gets astonished) Don't tell me a lie. We've never done such a thing.

Sukeju: Don't say such a reckless thing at the magistrate's office.

R.: Keep quiet! Without taking such a drastic measure I'm afraid the officials will pay no attention to it. Therefore I'll go on to say like this: Thereupon all
the people of the tenement-houses held down the three men and like this I took them here, so please advise them not to do violence. Now you understand, don't you?

If so, I'm sure they will deal with the matter.

Sukehachi: Indeed it's a good idea.

Okan: Mr. Landlord, you're very good at telling a lie though I have thought you're an honest man.

Sukehachi: Exactly so.

R.: Don't say such a silly thing. I'm earnest, you know. Thereupon when you're called to the court, you must tell what you know about it. Hikosaburoh San, you should tell the magistrate anything you want to say. Gonza & Sukeju, you ought to say what you've seen to the magistrate and that the old lady at Bakurocho must have been killed by Kantaroh. (thinks) Hikosaburoh San is confident of it, but I wonder whether the other two will be able to talk eloquently or not.

Gonza: I'll do my utmost. I ought to have told so earlier as scolded by my wife. As a matter of fact, I've repented of it.

H.: I'll leave it to you. (To Sukeju) I hope you'll also help me.

Sukeju: Take it easy! I'm an Yedo man to my finger-tips. If I make up my mind, I'll be able to say anything even to Mr. Ohoka (the magistrate)

G.: Oh, you've suddenly taken heart. What a queer guy you are!

R.: Very glad you've screwed up courage. Now I hope three
of you will be roped by me.

Okan: (thinks) Even if they are roped and taken to the magistrate's office, will they soon be returned home?

R.: I cannot say anything about it, but they might be put in prison during the examination.

O.: Oh my! Must my husband be put in prison, too? (bursts out crying) I'm sorry my husband is innocent, but put in prison. If he cannot be returned home, what shall I do?

Sukehachi: If my elder brother must be put in prison during the examination, he'll have a hard time, I'm afraid. Mr. Landlord, do you mind roping me in his place and taking me to the office? Since it's a fiction after all, there will be no difference, I should think. Everybody knows that I'm rough I might be more suitable for the work.

R.: But when the event of that night is examined in detail, you'll have some trouble, so I shall have to rope your brother.

Sukehachi: (looks into Sukeju's face) Brother, are you okay?

Sukeju: Don't worry about me. I'm all right.

Sukehachi: But I rather think I'm more suitable for the work. Shall I not be able to take his place?

R.: Take it easy. (To Okan) You needn't cry. Since I'm with them, you may set your mind at rest about it.

Okan: (with an easy look) I'm afraid it's also your lie, Mr. Landlord.

R.: I don't tell a lie at random, so you may set your heart at ease.
Okan: Should my husband never return home, I would curse you to death. So keep it in mind. (bursts out crying.)

H.: (feels sorry) I'm awfully sorry to trouble you so much. (To Rokurobeh) Then put the rope on me. (puts his hands behind.)

R.: Oh, I'll rope you. (To Untetsu and Gantetsu) You ought to rope Gonza and Sukeju.

Untetsu: Okay. Both of the disgusting men in the tenement-houses will be roped.

Gan.: The mills of god grind slowly, but they grind exceedingly small.

Gonza: Oh, it's none of your business.

Sukeju: Now I'm at your mercy. But I'll remember. (Gonza and Sukeju get ready to be roped.)

Roku.: Never mind! Rope them tightly.

Un.: Let's rope them tightly.

Gan.: Ha, ha, ha! Very interesting indeed!

Okan: Oh, it's by no means interesting. It's a discredit to them.

Suke.: Hey, don't talk nonsense. If you say such a thing, you'll smart for it.

R.: Don't quarrel! Be quiet!

(Untetsu and Gantetsu rope Gonza and Sukeju while laughing. Meanwhile, Rokurobeh ropes Hikosaburoh.)

R.P: But I'm sorry to take this man to Sukiyabashi, though I don't mind the two others. (turns round to the dirt floor.) Oh, there is the palanquin.
But Gonza and Sukeju are roped. Hey, Sukehachi, find out your pal and carry it with him.

Suke.: Must I carry the palanquin?

R.: Sure. It's your trade, isn't it?

Sukehachi: But I don't think you'll pay for my trouble.

R.: Don't talk nonsense. Find out your pal right away.

Oh, Untetsu, you help him carry the palanquin.

Un.: Mr. Landlord, though it's your instruction, I've never carried the palanquin for living men.

Sukehachi: Now I cannot help it. I'll act as forward bearer, so you'd better follow me slowly.

Un.: Ah, I'm sorry, but anyway I'll have to do so.

(Both Sukehachi and Untetsu take out the palanquin from the dirt floor.)

Hikosaburoh: Oh, I don't want to trouble them so much.

R.: Oh, don't stand on ceremony! You'd better get on the palanquin.

(Rokurohbeh holds Hikosaburoh's hand and lets him get on the palanquin.

Sukehachi & Untetsu make ready to carry the palanquin. Okan enters the inner room. Just then from the right monkey-leader Yosuke comes out vacantly.)

Yosuke: Mr. Landlord, what about clearing the well?

R.: Oh, I'll leave it to you, for on a serious business I'll have to go to the magistrate's office. Well, I must ask you to do something. Gantetsu will hold Gonza's rope, so I ask you to hold Sukeju's.

Yosuke: (gets astonished) Where must I go, eh?
R.: You must go to the magistrate's office of the South Street.

Yosuke: Eh? (trembles)

R.: You needn't be afraid of it. I'll go with you, too, so you may set your mind at rest.

Yosuke: I see.

R.: But you'd better leave the monkey with some one.

Yosuke: Oh, this monkey doesn't want to leave me, so let me take it.

R.: Then you may do so. (To all.) Now let's go out before it gets dark. Do what I've told you.

(Thereupon Santetsu holds Gonza's rope and Yoichi holds Sukeju's to take them. Meanwhile, Untetsu and Sukehachi try to lift up the palanquin when Untetsu totters.)

Sukehachi: Hey, keep up your nerve!

Untetsu: But I'm an amateur, you know.

(From the inner room, Okan comes out, carrying a brandnew towel and sheets of paper with her.)

Okan: Wait a moment, please. (puts the towel and paper into Gonza's pocket) My darling, I hope you'll return home safely.

Gonza: Oh, don't cry! I'll soon be back.

Sukehachi: (looking at the scene) Ah, I've also left something in the house. Wait a minute! (rushes into the inner room of his house.)

R.: (becomes aware that he has left something at home) Ah, I've also left something. Hey, Untetsu, go to my house and bring my "haori" coat and footwear, for I cannot go to the office in this condition.
Untetsu: Mr. Landlord, you always keep me busy, I'm afraid.

R.: Don't say such a cheeky thing. Go right away.

U.: Okay! (leaves for the right.)

Okan: (to Gonza) I think you'd better change your clothes.

G.: It's rather troublesome to be roped again, so I'll go in this clothes, for I'm not going flower-viewing.

(From the cupboard Sukehachi takes out small coins and comes out.)

Sukehachi: Money is everything, I should think. These small coins might be of any use to you, so you'd better carry them with you. (stuffs the money into Sukeju's pocket.)

Sukeju: Oh, such a small money will not do any good to me. Besides if you give the money to me, you'll be unable to get the rice for tomorrow, I'm afraid.

Sukehachi: Oh, never mind, I'll be able to live without eating anything only for a day. Anyway you'd better carry the money with you.

Okan: I feel very uneasy. (to Gonza) I should like to give you some money, so I'll just go to the pawn-shop at the back. Wait a minute.

Gonza: Oh, there is no time to do such a thing. I'll soon be back, so I need no money.

(From the right Untetsu comes out with a summer "haori" coat with him.)

R: Thank you for your trouble. (puts on the coat) As I've told you before, I've never had such an experience in my life. This is my first trial, you know. I feel I'm shaking myself.
Gonza: Mr. Landlord, you're our leader, so you mustn't tremble.

Sukeju: Take courage!

R.: Take it easy. Let's go right away.

H.: I'll leave it to you everybody.

Gonza: Let's go.

Sukeju: Okay.

(Rokubeh takes the lead. Sukehachi and Untetsu lift up the palanquin with Hikosaburoh on when Untetsu again totters and Sukehachi does the same thing. Gonza and Sukeju are about to go, pulled by Untetsu and Yosuke with the ropes. Okan sees them off with an uneasy look. Just then the $ bell at Kokuchoh strikes seven in the evening.

----- Dark Change ----
SECOND SCENE

S E C O N D  S C E N E

Same as the First Scene (Gonza's house and Sukeju's): morning about one month after the First Act.

At Gonza's house Gonza and his wife Okan are quarreling at the table for rice wine.

Gonza (bares one shoulder): Hey, I'll strike you to death.

Okan: Oh, if you can kill me, you may do so. Even if I'm you wife, I'll not be killed so easily. Do you want to become like Kantaroh?

G: Like Kantaroh, eh? I've never killed any one, you know.

O: Now you're going to strike me to death, aren't you?

Kantaroh killed a perfect stranger, but you're going to kill your wife, so your crime will be more severe than his.

G: Confound it! There isn't much difference between you and the dog in the street. I should say I like the dog much better than you, for it wags its tail when it sees me.

Okan: It's very unkind of you to say such a thing. I'm working from morning to night for you, but do you mean to say you don't care for me? You and your neighbour Sukeju ought to have been put in prison at that time. I wonder why the magistrate allowed you to go on probation and let you return home safely.

G: Did you forget that you shed tears for me then? I remember when I was placed on probation and returned home safely you cried with joy just like a child and thanked the magistrate for his kindness. So you're very whimsical, I think.
Gonza: Gentle as I am, it's no wonder that I'm angry with you, for you've said such a selfish thing.

Okan: Why is it selfish for me to ask you to get rice wine for me, eh? I'm the master of this house though it's a hovel, so it's no wonder that I should drink rice wine.

Okan: If you talk big, you ought to acquire the money for rice wine.

G: I'm pressed for money, so I ask you to make some money. Don't you understand?

Okan: No, I've nothing to give in pawn, you see.

G: That's why I ask you to go to the landlord's to accommodate me with some money.

Okan: You've not paid him the house-rent about half a year, you know, so I cannot ask him to do such a thing. Besides you're now placed on probation, aren't you?

G: That's much better, I think. So I want you to go and ask him about it.

Okan: Then you'd better go there yourself.

G: Since I cannot go myself, I ask you to go there. It's your duty as my wife.

Okan: Oh, I don't think it's my duty to go and borrow money. (scoffs at him)

G: There are few women who make light of their husbands like you in this world, I should think.

G: There are in this world not so many men who bully their wives like you, I assure you.

G: Now I've lost my temper. I'll not let you live. (Gonza jumps down to the dirt floor and brings in the bar of the palanquin. Thereupon Okan hides herself behind the shaky palanquin. Gonza lifts up the bar and...
runs after her. From the right monkey-leader Yosuke comes out with the monkey on his back and looking at the scene stands between them.)

Yosuke: Ah, you are occupied in the quarrel between husband and wife as usual. Better be quiet.

Gonza: She doesn't obey me, so I should like to strike her to death.

Okan: Listen to me, please. Now he cannot go out for work as you know and we can hardly get rice. However, he asks me to get rice wine for him and bullies me, you know. If I retort to him even a bit, he threatens me, so I'm disgusted with him.

Y: I don't mean to side with any one of you, but it seems the husband is in the wrong.

G: Why are I wrong?

Y: Oh, the reason is evident. Now you're on probation. If what I've heard from your wife is informed to the magistrate, you'll have more trouble, I suppose. You must behave yourself better until the matter is settled.

G: I've often told him about it, but he doesn't obey me, you know.

G: Shut up! Get away! (turns red a little)

Indeed! As you told me, if such a thing is made known to the magistrate, I shall have more trouble, I'm afraid.

Y: Sure. That's why you ought to behave yourself better.

G: Hum! (gets more and more dejected) I'm awfully sorry.

(Just then from Sukeju's house a thundering voice is heard, too.)
Sukeju:  Why I'll knock you out, you rascal.
Sukehachi: Oh, I'm ready to fight with you. Let's fight at a more spacious place. Come on!
(Kicking the patched paper-door of the kitchen open, Sukehachi takes up a wooden pestle and rushes out. In next to no time Sukeju takes up a kitchen-knife and comes out.)

Okan:  Ah, they are fighting at the next door house.
Yosuke:  Ah, he is carrying a knife. Oh, it's very dangerous.
(Yosuke puts the monkey on the verandah and tremblingly tries to mediate the struggle when from the right Untetsu and Gantetsu carrying wooden gongs in their hands come out and get surprised at the scene.)

Untetsu:  Ah, they've started again.
Gantetsu:  He is swinging the knife. Very dangerous indeed!
(Sukeju and Sukehachi struggle with each other. After much consideration, Untetsu and Gantetsu bring the palanquin from the dirt floor of Gonza's house and thrust it out between Sukeju and Sukehachi taking advantage of their unguarded moment with the assistance of Yosuke. Both Sukeju and Sukehachi get confused.)

Sukeju:  Oh, it's a nuisance.
Sukehachi:  Put it away at once.
Untetsu:  Wait a minute.
Gantetsu:  Very dangerous indeed!
Yosuke:  Stop fighting between brothers.
Gonza:  What noisy men they are! (comes out to the verandah)
Hey, Sukeju, stop fighting. Remember we're on probation. If you do violence, you'll be punished severely.
Sukeju: I know. But I've got angry with him.

Okan (comes out): Don't fight from morning. "But's the bone of contention, eh?

Sukeju: Since I'm on probation, I'm confined to the house, you know. I'm sorry to say that he doesn't sympathize with me and goes out for pleasure-making every night. Last night he didn't return home after all. Therefore this morning I was obliged to draw water from the well and boil rice. When he came back, he ate the boiled rice made by me without apologizing to me. So I scolded him \*\* bitterly, but he retorted to me. He must have been jilted by some girl last night and he got cross with me, I think. It's no wonder that I should be angry with him, you see.

Sukehachi: Though you're my elder brother, you'd better boil rice for me once or twice in a year. "ho do you think bought the rice?

Sukeju: Now I'm on probation, you see.

Sukehachi: I admit I'm your younger brother, but you oughtn't to let me work alone. Even if you're on probation, you can earn some money by making sandals at home, but you're idling away your time. You and Gonza ought to have been thrown into prison at that time. I wonder why the magistrate allowed you and Gonza to go on probation and let you return home.

Gonza: Oh, you've said exactly the same thing as my wife. I've never done any wrong doing like your elder brother, so I'll not be put in prison. If you doubt my words, you'd better ask Mr. Ohoka of me.
Sukehachi: Oh, I needn't take such a trouble. I know you'll soon be expelled from Yedo. Don't you know that Plasterer Kantaroh was returned home last night?

Sukeju (gets astonished): Really?

(Gonza also gets surprised and sidles up to Sukehachi.)

Gonza: Hey, hey, is it true?

Okan: Has Kantaroh been really returned home?

Sukeju: It's quite news to me. (thinks again)

Hey, are you not telling a lie?

Sukehachi (with an adamant look): If you doubt my words, you'd better go to Kantaroh's house at Toshimachoh and peep in it. I'm sure he is now drinking rice wine and singing in celebration of his release from prison.

Gonza: I'm very much surprised to hear it.

Okan: It must have been a mistaken identity, I believe.

Untetsu: Very likely. I hear early this morning Mr. Landlord and Hikosaburo San went to Sukiyabashi according to the magistrate's directive.

Sukeju: Hum! (exchanges glances with Gonza)

Yosuke: I've heard from Mr. Landlord—that Plasterer Kantaroh is living a desperate life and he is more like a gambler than a plasterer by trade. And since the end of last year he has suddenly become wealthy by winning games and is idling away his time by wearing a smart clothes and going to red light districts.

Besides on the night the old lady of Bakurochoh was killed he returned home late at night and was stealthily got into his house by knocking at the door. So I've been told.
Moreover, there are a lot of suspicious points about him. In conclusion Kantaroh must be the very criminal.

Mr. Landlord expressed his joy by saying that in nine cases out of ten we would win the case. But I wonder why it has come to such a pretty pass.

Easy-going as Mr. Landlord is, this morning he went out with a serious look. So it must be a very difficult matter to deal with.

As Hachi (=Sukehachi) said, Kantaroh was returned home last night. So there is no doubt about it.

I'm awfully sorry to hear it.

(to Gonza) Darling, what are you going to do?

Well, I'm quite at a loss. Hey, Sukeju, what shall I do?

Indeed it's troublesome. I should say you are to blame for it, for you've made uncalled-for remarks.

I'm afraid Mr. Landlord was so inquisitive that I was obliged to tell him what I had seen. Didn't you also attest what I said at the court?

The magistrate urged me to do so, therefore I was obliged to recognize the fact, you know.

I was by no means willing to say so.

But what is done cannot be undone. What must we do, eh?

Well, I'm afraid I don't know. Hey, Hachi, haven't you any good idea?

Oh, all of you are now in trouble. So it's not time for you to quarrel with me.

As for me, I ought not to quarrel with my husband at such a critical moment.
Gonza: At worst I might be expelled from Yedo. (thinks)
However, when I'm called again, I might be put in prison.

Yosuke: Hikosaburo is still young and he has done so from the
motive of his filial piety, so he might be excused.
But I'm afraid the other two might have such a trouble.

Sukeju: At that time I was ready to be put in prison.
But now I don't feel inclined to be put in prison.
I oughtn't to have said so at that time.
Hey, Gonza, I'll bear grudge against you throughout my
life.

Gonza: Don't say such a thing. Since it has come to
such a pretty pass, I think we must share the trouble.

Okan (pulls Gonza by the sleeve): Darling, I think you'd better
run away from Yedo for the time being.

Gonza: but if I run away, I'm afraid the other people
will have more trouble and you will be put on probation
in my place.

Okan (sheds tears): Since it's for you, I'm quite willing to
take your place.

Sukehachi: well, then, Brother, you'd better run away, too.
If you want to run off, you'd better do so before Mr.
Landlord and Hikosaburo can return.

Ountetsu: But if we allow the two men to run off, I'm afraid not only
Mr. Landlord but also all of us will have much trouble.

Oantetsu: That's right. If so, we shall have a lot of trouble.
They shouldn't do such a reckless thing.

Yosuke: Should they be arrested on their way, they would be
punished more severely, I think.

Sukeju: I see. I think I shall have to wait for Mr. Landlord.
Sukehachi: But when Mr. Landlord returns home, it'll be too late
to do so, I'm afraid.

Yosuke: It's not a good thing for them to run away.

Okan: Then can you think of anything better?

Yosuke: Well, I don't know. Anyway it's a troublesome matter.

Sukeju: I'm sorry that we're charged with rushing into
the landlord's house, siding with Hikosaburoh.

Gonza: Besides now Kantaroh has turned out not to be the slayer.
So we shall have a great trouble, I suppose.

Sukeju: Well, we shall have to run off all the same.

Yosuke: Oh, you mustn't do such a thing.

(Yosuke, Untetsu and Gantetsu hold down Sukeju.
From the alley on the left Plasterer Kantaroh, aged
32-33, wearing a fine clothes and carrying a cask of rice
wine and dried cuttle-fish with him comes out.)

Untetsu: Ah, Kantaroh has come.

Yosuke: Really?

Gantetsu: Sure, he has come.

(They exchange glances with one another. Gonza and
Sukeju unintentionally step back. Kantaroh nonchalantly
greets all of them.)

Kantaroh: Hello, everybody. It's suddenly become cold, hasn't it?

Yosuke (with a somewhat uneasy look): Indeed we can enjoy cool
wind both in the morning and in the evening.

Kantaroh: I'm sorry not to call on you often, though I'm living in
your neighbourhood.

Yosuke: The same to you.

(They cannot sound Kantaroh's mind and look at him
with an uneasy look.)

Kantaroh: Are Palanquin-bearers Gonza San and Sukeju San living
here?
Okan (feels fidgety): Yes.

Sukehachi (takes courage and comes forward): This is Gonza's house and that is Sukeju's. What do you want with them?

Kantaroh: I've often seen you at the bath-house. Are you Suke San's younger brother? I'm Kantaroh of Toshimachoh. (notices Gonza and Sukeju) Oh, here you are, Gon San and Suke San.

(Kantaroh sits down on the stool. Gonza and Sukeju bend their heads with no word.)

Kantaroh: To tell the truth, I was put in prison for a month, but owing to Mr. Choka's good judgment I was soon found not guilty and was allowed to return home last night.

Okan (still moves restlessly): Congratulations!

Kantaroh: I hear Gon San and Suke San were especially troubled by the matter, so I've brought these things in return for their kindness. Please take them.

Okan: Thank you. (still hesitates)

Kantaroh (to Sukehachi): Then, Hachi San, please take them.

Sukehachi (pulls a long face): Why do you give these things to us?

Kantaroh: As I told you just now, I was discharged from prison after being found not guilty, so I've already made a present of something to my other neighbours. Now I should like to give these things to Gon San and Suke San as a token of friendship.

Sukehachi: I wonder why you're going to give these things to them. (looks closely at Kantaroh)

Yosuke: Oh, they are a cask of rice wine and cuttle-fish. Very nice indeed!
(Yosuke with the monkey on his back and gets near to the cask and looks into it when the monkey suddenly stretches its hand and snatches the cuttle-fish.)

Yosuke (gets surprised): Don't be mischievous!

(gets back the cuttle-fish from the monkey and strikes it on the head) Now, you must apologize.

(Yosuke puts down the monkey from his back and holds down its head and tries to let it make a bow when the monkey pushes away his hand and showing its teeth leaps on Kantaroh, who gets surprised and loses no time in putting down the cask and squeezing the monkey's throat and puts it to death, showing his true character.

After that he throws away its dead body. All the others get aghast and look at him. Meanwhile, Yosuke holds the monkey's dead body and bursts out crying.)

Yosuke: Oh, my monkey died.

Untetsu: Oh, it died.

Okan: What a pity!

Kantaroh (suddenly changes his voice): Oh, I'm awfully sorry. Has the monkey died?

Yosuke (cries): Yes, it has.

(Kantaroh takes out three gold coins from his purse and covers the money with a sheet of paper and offers it to Yosuke.)

Kantaroh: I'm sorry I lost my senses and killed the monkey, for it suddenly flew at me. Since it was very important for your trade, I must pay for it.

Please take this money and excuse me.

(Yosuke still weeps in silence.)
Untetsu (gets near to Yosuke): I'm sorry for you, but now that you've been given three gold coins, you'll be able to get another monkey, I bet you.

Gantetsu: Since it was an unexpected misfortune, you'd better put up with it.

Yosuke: This monkey has been my pet for many years, so I cannot exchange it for money.

Untetsu: But what is done cannot be undone. (receives the money from Kantaroh's hand) Now you'd better get another monkey for this money.

(Both Untetsu and Gantetsu hand the money to Yosuke and soothing him take him to the verandah of Gonza's house. Meanwhile, Yosuke holds the dead monkey under his arm and still cries.)

Kantaroh: I wonder why I've done such a violence.

Please excuse me. Ah, I'm sorry the cuttle-fish has been spoilt. Please take only the wine.

(Kantaroh kicks the cuttle-fish with his foot and puts down the cask of rice wine on the verandah of Sukeju's house. During the time Gonza and Sukeju exchange glances with each other and come forward to Kantaroh ceremoniously.)

Gonza: Hey, Kan-san, I must beg your pardon. As a matter of fact, the son of Hikchen who had been living in one of these tenement-houses came here all the way from Osaka and asked the landlord to appeal to the court about the innocence of his father. Thereupon the landlord took pity on him and cared for him. We were also involved in the matter and talked nonsense and at last were taken to the magistrate's office, you know.
Kantaroh (coolly): I know. I'm sorry I troubled you a great deal at that time.

Sukeju: Hear me out, please! We were very much afraid that we would say ambiguous things at the court because we only glanced at the guy. However, the landlord urged us to say what we saw and as a result caused you much trouble. Now we repent of it, you know. Please excuse us.

Okun: Since it was such an unpleasant mistaken identity, I suppose you would be reluctant to pardon them, but I do hope you'll excuse them.

Kantaroh (calmly): Oh, you needn't apologize to me so much. If I were angry with you, I wouldn't have come here to thank you by bringing these things. (Rather cynically) I've not been popular with you, for I've been leading a dissipated life, I should think. That's why I've had such a trouble, I suppose.

Gonza: Don't say such a thing. Please pardon us.

Sukeju: From now on I'll never speak ill of others, so please pardon me.

Kantaroh: Don't repeat the same thing so much.

Now that I've come here to thank you, I hope you'll receive this cask of rice wine. It's by no means poisoned, you know.

Sukehachi (gets angry): Hey, Kantaroh-san, my elder brother and Gonza are apologizing to you so much, for they mistook you for the criminal. Why don't you say frankly whether you'll excuse them or not? You needn't thank them.

Kantaroh (scoffs at him): That's your prejudice, I should think. If you don't want me to express thanks to them, you'd
better think that I've brought the rice wine in celebration of my release from prison.

Sukehachi: Why did you say that "My wine isn't poisoned"?

Even if there is no poison in the wine, you've something wicked in your tongue. I'll refuse to get the wine in my brother's place, so take it and go home right away.

Kantaroh: Oh, I don't want to quarrel with you. I ask you to speak more gently.

(From the right a dog comes out and tries to fly at Kantaroh while barking violently. Kantaroh again shows his fierce character and glares at the dog. The dog barks at him more violently.)

Untetsu: The stray dog has come out.

Gantetsu (to the dog): If you don't run away, you'll be killed, too.

(Both Untetsu and Gantetsu let the dog run off.)

Okan (as if making an excuse): The stray dog is a nuisance, for it barks at any stranger.

Gonza: Even a dog barks at a suspicious-looking man. There is a grain of truth in Hachi's idea, I should think.

(To Kantaroh) Anyway I don't want to receive such a thing from you. Take it with you and go home. Hey, Suke, I think we oughtn't to have apologized to him so much.

Sukeju: I quite agree with you in the respect. (To Kantaroh) Indeed you've said spiteful things to us by using mild expressions. It's not like a man for you to bully us in that way. You're not worthy of being a true-born Yedo man, I think.
Kantaroh: Indeed you're Yedo men to your backbone.
(mocks at them again.) Though you are proud of being
Yedo men, you sided with the Osaka man and put a false
charge on me, didn't you?

Sukeju: Shut up! Since such a man as you live in Yedo, we hundred
percent Yedo men have such a discredit, you know.
Take it home with you right away. (throws away
the cask of rice wine)

Kantaroh: Are you apologizing to me or going to pick a quarrel with me?

Gonza: Now it cannot be helped. Let's start fighting.

Okan: Wait a minute, my dear!

Gonza: Well, I don't mind whether I shall be in prison or
beheaded. I should like to kill such a fellow.

Okan: You mustn't start fighting again. Stop doing so.
(Okan tries to keep Gonza from fighting)

Kantaroh: I think all of you are now desperate, for you'll soon
be punished severely. I don't want to fight with
such crazy people and to be put in prison again,
for I've been released from prison quite recently.
(Kantaroh laughs and is about to go to the left
when Sukeju leaps on him with no word and slaps him
in the face.)

Kantaroh: Dog gwonit! What are you going to do with me, you mad man?
(Kantaroh again changes colour and glares at them.)

Don't you know Kantaroh of Toshimachō?
If you want to fight with me, you must train yourself.
Sukehachi: We are living men. You cannot expect to strike us so easily as squeezing the monkey to death.
(Sukehachi clings to Kantaroh, who thrusts aside the former. Sukeju clings to Kantaroh, too. Gonza also thrusts aside his wife and leaps on Kantaroh. Both of them after all knock down Kantaroh and strike him.)

Gonza: Hey, Yosuke, he's your monkey's enemy. You'd better strike him with us.

Untetsu: Indeed he's the monkey's enemy.

Gantetsu: Let's strike him as a token of friendship among tenement dwellers.
(Yosuke takes up a bamboo whip and Untetsu and Gantetsu take up the wooden gongs; they give blows to Kantaroh.)

Kantaroh: Oh, all of you will become criminals.
Kill me if you want.

Gonza: If we let him return home, we shall have trouble, so let's bind him with a rope.
(Sukehachi rushes into the inner room and brings the hemp ropes. Gonza says to Okan.) Bring the rope here.

Okan: Is it all right for you to rope him?

Sukeju: Never mind. Rope him.

Gonza: Now rope this gay right away.
(Sukehachi fastens Kantaroh with the rope.)

Untetsu: I think punishment is too severe.

Gantetsu: I'm afraid we might be involved with this matter if we go too far.

Untetsu: Whatever happens hereafter will have nothing to do with us.
(Untetsu and Gantetsu run off to the left.)

Yosuke: Now that I've punished him, I think I'd better go.
(holds the dead monkey and runs off to the alley on the left, but soon turns back.)
Yosuke: Hey, officials are coming here.
Gonza: Oh, really?
Sukeju: That's too bad. What shall I do?
Sukehachi: What shall I do?

(The three get confused and look around. Sukeju takes notice of the palanquin.)
Sukeju: This will do.
Gonza: That's it. Make it snappy!

(The three drag Kantaroh who is roped and push him into the palanquin and lower the blind. Okan looks outside with an easy look. Just then from the alley Police Inspector Bansaku Ishiko and two policemen come out with Untetsu and Gantetsu in the van.)
Bansaku: Are you sure that Plasterer Kantaroh is at this back?
Untetsu: Yes, he is fighting with some people of tenement-houses.
Bansaku: Is he?

(Bansaku boldly comes forward. Gonza, Okan, Sukeju and Sukehachi withdraw with uneasy looks.)
Bansaku: Where has plasterer Kantaroh of Toshimachō gone?
Four: Eh? (exchange glances with one another)
Bansaku (gives an evasive reply): Such a guy isn't here.
Bansaku (looks back at Untetsu, Untetsu and Gantetsu): Didn't you say that he is surely here?
Untetsu: Yes, Kantaroh is ---. (flurry)
Sukeju (in a xxxxx/checks him with the eye): Kantaroh has already returned home.
Bansaku (as if doubting his words): Has he?
Untetsu: But he was here just now.
Gonza: He has gone home, you know. He is nowhere near here, you see.
(Untetsu and Gantetsu doubtfully look around when Kantaroh in the palanquin cries out.)

Kantaroh: Say, Mr. Official, Kantaroh is here.

(Gonza, Sukeju and others get startled)

Bansaku (looks back at the policemen): Be ready!

(The policemen lift the blind of the palanquin and take Kantaroh out of it.)

Bansaku: We've come here to arrest Kantaroh according to the magistrate's directive. Who has roped him forstalling us?

Gonza: Is Kantaroh under arrest, eh?

Bansaku: Yesterday he was discharged from prison and returned home. However, he has been found guilty after all. So we've been dispatched here to nab him again.

Sukeju: Oh, I see. (feels at ease) As a matter of fact, I roped him.

Gonza: I also roped him.

Sukehachi: I did the same thing.

Bansaku: Is that so? I'll tell you in detail about it.

(To the policemen) Take him.

Kantaroh: I was allowed to go home by the magistrate, so I wonder why you'll arrest me again.

Bansaku: Don't talk nonsense! Stand up!

(Bansaku takes the lead and the policemen forcibly take Kantaroh with them and leave for the left.

All the others get speechless with amazement and cast backward glances at them.)
Gonza: It's like a dream, isn't it?
Yosuke: After all Kantaroh was arrested. Nemesis has now come to him, for he killed my pet monkey.
Okan: Since he killed the monkey so mercilessly, he must have killed the old lady.
Unetsu: That's right. It's indeed a lucky hit, though I was very much worried about it.
Gantetsu: Now you might be praised by the magistrate instead of being scolded.
Okan: I'm very glad to hear it. As a matter of fact, I was very much astonished when I was told of the officials' coming.
(From the alley Landlord Rokurohbeh and Hikosaburoh come out.)
Okan: Ah, Mr. Landlord has come back.
Rokurohbeh: Oh, here you are. Now I'm very happy, for I've been freed from my burden. (takes a seat on the stool)
Hikosaburoh: Thanks to you, my cherished desire has been realized, so I'm very happy now.
Gonza: That's good. I tell you officials came here just now and arrested Kantaroh.
Hikosaburoh: Has he been arrested already, then?
Sukeju (boastfully): We roped him and handed him over to the officials, you know.
Rokurohbeh: Oh, that was very nice.
Sukehachi: But why was Kantaroh released from prison and returned home once for all after he had been arrested before?
Rokurohbeh: Mr. Ohoka is a wise magistrate all the same. Although Gonza and Sukeju said at the court that they had seen Kantaroh on that night, they lacked any evidence while Kantaroh never confessed the fact there. Thereupon the magistrate couldn't pass judgment on him for lack of evidence, so let him return home. However, the magistrate ordered his men to keep watch for Kantaroh. Hey, Hikosaburō, Mr. Ohoka is a wise judge, isn't he?

Hikosaburō: Yes, indeed.

As Mr. Landlord said just now, the magistrate allowed Kantaroh to return home by letting some detectives follow him secretly. Kantaroh, of course, had a guilty conscience and as soon as he got home, he took off the board of the ceiling and took out the purse which he had hidden in the ceiling and burnt it in the kitchen-range.

Rokurohbeh: Indeed Heaven's vengeance is slow but sure. When he took out the purse from the ceiling before burning it in the kitchen-range, the detectives saw him in the very act of doing so. Of course the detectives informed the magistrate of it. Therefore today he was doomed to be arrested by order of the magistrate.

I'm sure he'll never be able to be discharged from prison again because of the evidence. By the way, Gonza and Sukeju.
Gonza and Sukeju: Yes.

Rokurobheh: Of course you'll be excused from domiciliary confinement.

Both: Very glad to hear it.

Rokurobheh: You're in a humble position of life, but you are chivalous and helped Fancy-goods Dealer Hikosaburoh by informing the magistrate of the real criminal. Therefore you'll be called by the magistrate again and praised by him shortly, I assure you.

Both: That's good.

Sukehachi: "ill they be given prizes, then?

Rokurobheh: Well, I don't know.

Yosuke: Now I'm also relieved. But I'm sorry for Hikobeh san.

Okan: Now he is found not guilty, but he is dead, I'm afraid.

Rokurobheh: Indeed Mr. Choka is a wise man. I'm sure you'll be very much surprised.

(Rokurobheh makes a sign with the eye to Hikosaburoh, who goes out to the alley.)

Gonza (is lost in thought): However wise Mr. Choka is, I don't think he'll be able to revive the dead.

Sukeju: "as the proverb goes, 'Dead men tell no tales.'

Rokurobheh: "ut the magistrate revived him and let him return home, you know.

All: Ah?

Rokurobheh: Mr. Choka knew from the first that Hikobeh san wasn't the criminal and he was arrested by some mistake, so the magistrate made public that he had died in prison and in fact kept him alive, however.
Okan: Is Hikobeh San alive, then?

Rokurobeh: Yes, he is.

Gonza: Is he really living? I feel as if I were bewitched by a fox.

Sukeju: Don't be silly! I know he is alive. Indeed Mr. Choke is a wise man.

Sukehachi: That's right. He is worthy of being in his high position.

Yosuke: If Hikobeh San is alive, I don't mind the loss of my monkey.

(From the left two palanquin-bearers, Hikosaburoh and his father Hikobeh come out; Hikosaburoh holds his father by the hand.)

Hikosaburoh: Don't worry, everybody! My father is all right.

Rokurobeh: A ghost will not haunt in the daytime.

Look at him closely.

Hikobeh: Thank you very much, everybody.

Gonza: Oh, Hikobeh San.

All: Hikobeh San, Hikobeh San.

(All of them become happy and surround Hikobeh.)

-------- Curtain --------