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Kabuki Play "Ikiutsushi Asagao Nikki"

( " From Asagao's Diary " )

Two Acts.

Written by Yamada Kakashi.

( Travelling Troupe )

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Deletion P. 6.

Synopsis:

Miyuki, daughter of Akizuki Yuminosuke, one night went firefly-catching at Uji when she met a young warrior named Miyagi Asojirō (in reality Komazawa Jirōzaemon) and fell in love with him at first sight. Accordingly they pledged that they would marry in the near future. However, Komazawa was expected to return to his native place by order of his lord. Thereupon they were obliged to part from each other at the bay of Akashi.

Yearning towards her lover, Miyuki spent her days in tears till she went blind. At last she became a strolling musician and travelled from one place to another so that she might meet her lover again. One day she was called by a guest at an inn in the town of Shimada. At the request of the guest, therefore, she played the Japanese harp before him and his friend. The guest was moved to tears when she told her own story as requested by his friend; he was no other man, but her lover. Blind as she was, she could not see his face. On his part, he could fail to tell her his name by virtue of his office. Consequently he left a fan with his real name written on it, some amount of money and powder medicine for eye trouble with Tokueemon, master of the inn, so as to let the latter hand them to Miyuki and left the inn.

Afterwards she knew that the guest must be her lover Komazawa and ran after him. However, the River Ōhi was flooded and prevented her from going farther across it. Therefore she found herself at her wit's end and tried to drown herself. Just then Tokueemon rushed up to her and detained her from doing so. According to Tokueemon's advice, she swallowed the powder given

by her lover Komazawa when by the efficacy of the medicine her eyes opened to her great joy. Thus she was cured of her eye-disease and determined to run after Komazawa.

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THE FIRST ACT :

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The stage represents the inner room of an inn run by Tokumon, resident of Shimada Town on the Tokkaidoh line. On the right there is a passage. On the left there are side-doors. There are to be seen a wash-hand stand and garden lanterns down stage right. Beyond the bamboo-fence there is seen the garden where there are a wicket with a roof on and stepping-stones. In the room on the right there are an alcove and alcove shelves while in the centre there are sliding-screens. With orchestra the curtain rises. Just then Komazawa Jirozaemon, one of the guests of this inn comes back to the inner room. In the meantime, Okoh, a maid-servant, comes out of a side-door with a paper-framed night-light and puts it down in a proper place. After that she goes to the fireplace so as to poke the fire, arranges tea things and puts a cushion in the middle of the room. Komazawa Jirozaemon, wearing a ceremonious dress and two swords, goes out to the passage. Bowing to him in silence, Okoma folds his coat, puts it on the wardrobe and leaves. Komazawa happens to notice a screen on the left.

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Komazawa: Well, let me see.

The poem of a morning-glory written on this screen is the same as that I wrote down on the fan of Akizuki's daughter Miyuki as my keepsake when I parted from her at Uji, Yamashiro Province some years ago. During my voyage I happened to meet her again at Akashi, but she was in another ship, so she felt sad and threw this fan in my

ship, playing the Japanese harp. (takes out a ladies' fan from his pocket and looks at it) How strange that I should see this poem written on the screen in this inn! (looks closely at the fan. Just then Tokusemon, Master of the inn, comes out of the passage on the left with short steps.)

Koma.: Oh, Master. Tell me who wrote the poem on this screen and how you got it.

Toku.: Well, I'll tell you. Listen to me, please. As a matter of fact, the poem was written by a poor girl. I heard from the girl that she travelled from one place to another so as to look for someone after running away from home. After all she couldn't meet the person and spent her days in tears until unhappily she lost her sight. Afterwards she made her living by reciting the poem at Hamamatsu and its vicinity. In the meantime, a woman called on her from her native place, but the woman soon died of some disease and she became alone again. She walked as far as here, by reciting the poem. Blind as she is, she is very beautiful and has a good voice, so everybody in this neighbourhood feels pity for her, calls her Asagao (morning-glory) and takes care of her in some way or other. I've also sympathized with her and allowed her to put up at this inn. Now she is earning her livelihood by entertaining the lodgers of this inn. What a poor girl she is!

(Hearing his story, Komazawa thinks that the girl

must be his future wife and gets excited, but soon controls himself.)

Koma.: Oh, I've been moved to tears to hear the story. I feel very lonesome this evening. Do you mind calling the girl?

Toku.: Certainly. Just a moment, please! I shall soon send for her and let her play the Japanese harp or three-stringed guitar.

Koma.: I'm entirely in your hands.

Toku.: Very well. (leaves. Just then Iwashiro Takita wearing an ordinary clothes comes out with an ash-tray in his hand and takes a seat on the right.)

Iwashiro: Hello, Mr. Komazawa! You must have a dull time, I guess.

Koma.: Hello, Mr. Iwashiro! You are very early today, I think.

(Just at the moment Onabe, a maid-servant comes out from the garden.)

Onabe: I tell you Asagao Dono has only just come here. Shall I show her into this room?

Iwa.: What's Asagao?

Koma.: Oh, she is a blind strolling musician who entertains travellers by playing the Japanese harp or three-stringed guitar.

I've asked the master to call <sup>her</sup> in so as to beguile the time, you know.

Iwa.: I see. But you oughtn't to show her into this room. Better call her to the garden and let her play the Japanese harp or three-stringed guitar there. (seems

to be displeased)

Koma.: Call her right away.

Onabe: Certainly. (leaves.)

Asagao Dono, a guest is calling you, Asagao Dono,  
Asagao Dono.

(Onabe comes out again, puts a straw-mat in the garden, places a Japanese harp on the verandah and stands still. After a while, Asagao, in reality Miyuki, carrying a bamboo stick in her hand, comes out along the stepping-stones and sits down on the straw-mat.)

Miyuki: Have you called me, sir? Though I'm not good at playing the harp, I'll do my best to entertain you. (Looking at Miyuki's sad plight, Komazawa feels like crying, but keeps back his tears. Without understanding Komazawa's mind, Iwashiro thunders.)

Iwa.: Why have you come here in such shabby clothes, Asagao? Get away at once! (thunders. Miyuki gets astonished and is about to stand up)

Koma.: Don't say such a thing, Mr. Iwashiro. Though I've called her, unexpectedly -----.

Iwa.: Eh?

Koma.: Unexpectedly earlier she has come here, but anyway it's against your samurai (warrior) spirit to scold her. Say, Woman, I'm sorry to trouble you, but recite the poem of Asagao (morning-glory) for me.

Iwa.: (angrily) Well, you seem to be very much interested in this blind woman, Mr. Komazawa. (To Miyuki)

Now you may recite any poem.

Miyuki: Well, I'll recite.

(Onabe places the harp before Miyuki, who takes out, plectra from her bag when she drops one of them.

Onabe suddenly picks it up and hands it to Miyuki.

Miyuki starts reciting while playing the harp:

"How soon the morning-glory gets withered before the moening dew disappears!"

(Iwashiro seems to be lost in listening to the harp.

Komazawa looks to be engrossed in thought.)

Koma.: Oh, I've been moved to tears. Why do you say, Mr. Iwashiro?

Iwa.: Indeed she is very good at playing the harp and besides she is very beautiful. Say, Asagao, you must be very cold out there, so you'd better come in this room. I should like to hear you play the harp once more.

Koma.: But Mr. Iwashiro, you'd better excuse her now.

Iwa.: Don't say such a spiteful thing, Mr. Komazawa. I should like to hear her play the harp once more, you know.

Koma.: I see. However, I think she is very much tired now.

Iwa.: Then I'll give up asking her to play again. Say, <sup>a</sup> Woman, I don't think you're/born begger. Tell me your own story.

(meanwhile, Onabe leaves with the harp.)

Miyuu: Thank you for your asking me of it. Then I'll tell you my own story. To tell you the truth, I was born



in Chugoku Province and for some reason moved to the city of Uji with my parents to live there. One night I went firefly-catching when I became acquainted with a man and since then I've fallen in love with him. However, my parents didn't agree to my marriage, so I ran away from home and called at his mansion in the city after a lot of trouble, but sorry to say I was told that he had already started on a journey. Thereupon I also went out for a travelling so as to look for him, but I'm sorry to say that I became blind.

Iwa.: Oh, I sympathize with you, but I think you are too narrow-minded, for you're so much in love with the man though there are large numbers of men in this world. Hearing your story, I've become gloomy myself, so I'll drink to distract myself. Now, Woman, you'd better get away.

Miyuki: Then I'll leave here.

Koma.: Oh, Asagao, thank you for your trouble. If your husband should hear your story, he would be very glad. Don't you think so, Mr. Iwashiro?

Miyu.: It's very kind of you to say so. (goes away. Just then, Shinroku, a young warrior, comes out along the passage.)

Shinroku: The time is nearly up. So both of you had better get ready for your journey now, I think.

Iwa.: Oh, it's getting on for four o'clock. What do you say to going out with me now?

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Koma.: Well, I've something else to do, so I hope you'll precede me.
- Iwa.: Then I'll precede you. Excuse me.  
(goes to the right with the young warrior. Meanwhile, Komazawa claps his hands when the maid-servant Okoh comes out.)
- Okoh: What do you want with me, sir?
- Koma.: I want to talk with Tokueemon now, so call him right away.
- Okoh: Certainly. (leaves. Komazawa takes out the fan and a small ink-case from his pocket, writes his name on the surface of the fan in ink, and then takes out a package of powder medicine for eye trouble and a paper packet of some money from his pocket. Just then Tokueemon comes out.)
- Toku.: What can I do for you, sir?
- Koma.: Oh, Tokueemon, I'm sorry to trouble you so much, but I want you to let me see the woman named Asagao again.
- Toku.: Is that so? I'm sorry to say she has already gone to a place called Shimizu. So even if I send for her now, I'm afraid she won't come here till evening.
- Koma.: Oh, I'm very sorry to hear it. I must leave here at four o'clock, you know. Meeting is the beginning of parting, I should think.
- Toku.: Eh?
- Koma.: Tokueemon, I'll leave these three-articles with you, so I hope you'll hand them to her. Tell her that I'll give them to her as a reward for her service.

Toku.: Certainly. Oh, they are a lot of money, a ladies' fan and powder medicine for eye-disease, aren't they?

Koma.: Yes, the eye-medicine has effect to cure any eye trouble, you know. Hand it to Asagao by all means.

Toku.: Ah, you are very kind. Surely I'll hand these things to her and please her.

Koma.: Well, I'm entirely in your hands.

Toku.: Don't worry.

(Just then the clock strikes seven.--- it indicates four o'clock.)

Oh, it's striking seven now.

(Tokuemon claps his hands when Okoh and Otoku, maid-servants, come out and help Komazawa put on the coat. Just then Iwashiro comes out of the right; he is equipped for a journey.

From the garden-gate numbers of attendant warriors and footman come out.

The footmen arrange straw-sandals.

In the meantime, Tokuemon puts on wooden clogs and goes down to the garden.)

Toku.: May you have a pleasant journey!

Koma.: Thank you, Tokuemon. I hope you'll surely hand those articles to her.

Toku.: Certainly, I will.

Iwa.: Now Mr. Komazawa.

Koma.: After you.

(Iwashiro goes before Komazawa. Komazawa and others follow Iwashiro and leave. The maid-servant go to the inner room. Tokuemon sees them off.)

Toku.: They are both warriors, but quite unlike in nature.

Iwashiro is wicked while Mr. Komazawa is kind-hearted. Well, I wonder why Mr. Komazawa has given such lots of things to Asagao for her mere service.

(Just then Asagao, in reality Miyuki, comes back. Thereupon Tokueemon takes her by the hand and lets her sit down on the verandah.)

Toku.: Oh, Asagao, you are very late. The kind guest asked me to call you again, but I was obliged to refuse his request, for you had gone to Shimizu. He has only just left here. But I've a good news for you. He asked me to give you such a lot of money, a ladies' fan and a powder for eye trouble.

Mi.: Oh, that's nice. But I'm sorry I shan't be able to thank him for his kindness. (fumbles for the fan) Say, Master, what's written on this fan? Just look at it.

Toku.: All right. Oh, the poem of the morning-glory is written on this fan. On the back of the fan is written as follows: Komazawa Jirozaemon alias Miyagi Asojiroh.

Mi.: Alias Miyagi Asojiroh, eh?

Toku.: Yes.

Mi.: (gets astonished) Although his voice sounded quite familiar with me, I've never thought he is Asojiroh Sama. Say, Master, when did the guest leave here?

Toku.: Just now. Is he your acquaintance?

Mi.: He is my husband, you know.

Toku.: Eh? (gets astonished. It start raining.)

Mi.: Oh, I must go out hurriedly to see him.

(Tokuemon, however, keeps her from going.)

Toku.: ~~Wait~~ a moment! It's unsafe for you to go out  
alone in the dark.

Besides it's raining, you know.

Mi.: Let me go! I don't mind even if I might die.

(Tokuemon tries to detain Miyuki from going. After  
all Miyuki thrusts Tokuemon aside and goes to the  
~~stick~~ stage passage, leaning on the stick. However,  
the stick is broken, so she throws it away to the  
stage. It starts raining hard.)

----- Curtain -----

THE SECOND ACT :  
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The stage represents the ferry on the bank of the River Ohi.

It thunders with a flash of lightening. After a while it stops raining.

Matsuzoh and Shimaroku, both ferry-men, are wiping the perspiration from their face. Just then Miyuki makes her appearance over there and soon comes to the stage.

Mi.: Say, Ferry-men, please tell me whether a warrior named Komazawa Jirozaemon has already crossed the river or not. (seems to be out of breath.)

Matsu.: Oh, the warrior went across the river only a little while ago.

Shima.: The river is now flooded because of the heavy rain, you know.

Both: Sorry for you.

(Both of the ferry-men leave.)

Mi.: Oh, I'm sorry to hear that the river is inundated. (breaks down crying, but soon looks up at the sky with her blind eyes.) Up unite now I've put up with hardships and privation only for the purpose of meeting him again. But sorry to say it's all up with me now.

I should think I'm the unhappiest woman in the world. Well, I shall drown myself so as to meet him in another world, for I can't marry him in this world. (Thereupon Miyuki picks up pebbles, puts them in

her sleeves and is about to throw herself into the river. Just then Tokuemon hurriedly comes out of the left and keeps her back with a surprised look.)

Toku.: Wait a minute, Asagao Dono!

Miyuki: Oh, Master, what shall I do?

Toku.: I understand your sorrow.

Mi.: I've wanted to meet him again, but this river is flooded, you see. What shall I do?

Toku.: Don't get so much excited. You'd better swallow the powder medicine given by Mr. Komazawa right away. (Thereupon Miyuki takes out the powder from her pocket and swallows it at a gulp. How strange! Suddenly her eyes open and she rises to her feet.)

Mi.: Oh, Master.

Toku.: How strange! Your eyes are open.

Mi.: My eyes, eh? (comes to herself and becomes aware that her eyes are open.)

Toku.: Sure, your eyes are open; You're no more blind.

Mi.: Oh, how happy I am now!  
(Just then a cock crows.)

Oh, it's daybreak now.

Toku.: You must be very happy now.

Mi.: Sure. Thanks to this medicine, I've been cured of my eye-disease. (seems very happy, opens the fan and looks closely at it. It becomes dawn and the cock crows again.)

----- Curtain -----