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SHOCHIKU

Kabuki Play

"KATSURAGAWA-RENRI-NO-SHIGARAMI" (THE STOCKADE OF  
LOVE AND OBLIGATION AT THE RIVER KATSURA)

ONE ACT

*Suruga Akusawa  
Chowdai's Tonan  
1777  
Samurai  
1751  
Edo*

TO BE PRESENTED BY SOJURO TROUPE AT THE TOKYO  
THEATER FROM APRIL 6th TO APRIL , '47.

C.C.D. J-2034



SYNOPSIS:

Obiya's son-in-law Choemon fell in love with Shinanoya's daughter Ohan. Choemon's faithful wife Okinu always tried to let Choemon and his mother-in-law make up with each other.

Meanwhile, his mother-in-law and his brother-in-law substituted a sword with which Choemon had been entrusted for a sham one and stole some money which he had been in charge of. Thus they tried to fix the guilt on Choemon and took him to task for it. However, Okinu skilfully settled the matter in her husband's favour. Moreover, as to one hundred "ryo" for the bill of exchange, he had spent the money so as to save the benefactor of Okinu's younger brother, it was known. Thereupon Okinu at last came to thank Choemon for his kindness.

On the other hand, however, Choemon was moved a great deal for Okinu's faithfulness to him. Thereupon Ohan called on him, agreed to separate from him at his request and went away.

However, Choemon who had to make a strict examination about the missing sword yielded to bonds of love and obligation and ran away from home.

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The Scene of the Store of A Dealer In Sashes,  
Toraishicho.

The main stage represents the store of a dealer in sashes located at Toraishicho. On the right-hand side there are paper sliding-doors, a family altar and a cupboard while on the left-hand side there are placed a variety of sashes. Under the eaves of the store there hangs a shop-curtain of a deep-blue color with the character "Cho" attached to an accent circumflex designed on it. The counter is equipped with a latticed case for books, a hanging stand for books and abaci and an ink-case.

In less than no time "Joruri" (a ballad-drama) is recited:

"Numbers of dry-goods store stand in a row on the street of Toraishicho. In Toraishicho there is a store of a dealer in sashes. The store-keeper is Choemon; his wife Okinu is very sociable; and his mother Otose is a stout-hearted woman though her face is wrinkled. His Mother Otose comes out of the kitchen."

(During the above-mentioned words, his mother Otose wearing a sash and a sleeveless "haori" coat comes out of the interior.)

Otose: As for Choemon, at breakfast he put down his chopsticks and ran out.

Although it's already after noon, he hasn't yet come back.

back. I guess he is drinking a lot of rice-wine at the restaurant "Kawato" at this time. When he comes back, I'll scold him.

"Just then Gihei comes back panting and comes in hurriedly."

(Over there Gihei wearing a "haori" coat and leather-soled sandals makes his appearance and at once enters the house.)

Gihei: Listen, Mother! The day before yesterday my elder brother went there to receive the money for the bill of exchange from Suruga, but we haven't yet seen the money, so I felt uneasy about it and made it sure at the post-office. They told me that they handed the money to Choemon-dono and showed me the very bill of exchange. Now I'm sure my elder brother has embezzled one hundred "ryo" for the draft.

Tose: Oh, that's right. When he comes back, I'll examine and torture<sup>n</sup> him so as to spite his father; I shall take pleasure in doing so. Well, Gihei, I've got one more good news.

As to fifty "ryo" we received from Hamamatsu yesterday, I've unlocked the safe with the duplicate key and pilfered the money for you. Since your brother pilfered the money for the draft which I've wanted to give you as you need money very much, I'll fix the guilt on him, too.

Gihei: Bravo, Mother! About this fifty "ryo" I -----.

"His younger brother whispers something to mother."

(Both of them talk with each other in whispers and are lost in thought.)

"Choemon wearing a sword comes back dejectedly and inclining his head, as he expects some trouble; he enters the house."

(During the above-mentioned words, over there Choemon wearing a "haori" coat and his ordinary clothes makes his appearance as if he were in deep thought, instantly comes to the gate and enters the house. Otose takes notice of him.)

Tose: Although the mansion is five or ten blocks away from here, it takes more than half a day for you to go there and come back.

What are you going to do with the family affairs?

It's absurd of you to spend your time with "geisha"-girls or barmaids from morning.

"She cries out so much that the former store-keeper clearly hears her words. Knowing that Choemon has come back as the hag has cried out, his father Shigezo comes out with his wife Okinu."

(From the inner room Okinu in a wife's coiffure and Shigezo come out.)

Shigezo: As I told you a short time ago, I wonder why you scold Choemon as soon as you see him. You oughtn't

brother the neighbors. I guess Choemon must be very hungry. Well, Okinu, give him boiled rice.

Tose: Oh, no, he mustn't have his meal now, as I must ask him a question. Say, Choemon, I want to ask you about the money which you went there to receive for the bill of exchange. Well, let me see it. Take out the money here.

"Being asked about it by her, Choemon seems to be nonplussed."

(Thereupon Choemon seems to be perplexed.)

Choemon: Well, although I went there to receive the money, sorry to say, the master was away, so I'll receive the money from him tomorrow according to the promise with them.

Gihei: Here, here, Brother, you mustn't tell a lie. Just now I went there and was told that they handed you the money; they took out the bill of exchange and showed it to me. Do you still pretend that you didn't receive the money from them?

Choemon: Well, let me see.

Gihei: If you receive the money from him tomorrow according to the promise with them, why did you give them the bill of exchange in advance?

Tose: Well, Gihei, you needn't examine him any more. I'm afraid he has already spent the money at Kawato. I'm also worried about yesterday's fifty/ "ryo".

Now take out the money, here.

"In less than no time Choemon takes a key out of his tobacco-pouch and unlocks a drawer of the safe."

(Just then Choemon rises to his feet, goes to the safe, un<sup>l</sup>ocks the safe with the key and gets astonished.)

Choemon: Eek! I cannot find the fifty "ryo" in here.

"Choemon gets astonished; Okinu and Chigezo also get astonished and speechless with amazement.

(Choemon pulls out the drawer and ransacks therein, but he cannot find the money after all, so he seems to be perplexed. Okinu seems to be astonished and lost in thought. Orose also pretends to think.)

Tose: Don't pretend ignorance, you thief!

Who could steal the money except you, as you've got the very key of the safe?

Bride, you must be very happy that your husband has stolen the money.

Gihei: Well, Mother, not only that but he has got another scandal. Although I heard from neighbors that my elder brother and our neighbor's daughter Onan love each other, I haven't thought he does such a thing. However, I've made a wrong estimate of him, I'm afraid. Here is a love letter sent to him by her. Shall I read this from here? Well, I'll skip the above parts. It reads as follows:

"Even now I can't forget when I slept together with you at the Shimomukiya Hotel on our way to the Ise Shrine. I'm now looking forward to seeing you again.

To: Choosama.

From: Chan."

What a bawdy guy he is!

Tose: Heavens!

What an illicit love you've made with her!

We owe her father a great deal. But you've seduced her and disturbed her marriage. Gihei, let him confess his misdeed.

"Although they are wicked people, what they have said sounds reasonable, so his father Shigezo cannot master his emotion."

Shigezo: Choemon, I'm sorry you've done such a shameful act. Although they say "Love laughs at distance," you've taken to amours shamefully, so I'm afraid I shall be laughed at by people because of your shameful act. You've become a discredit to us and put the good will of this store to shame.

"Hearing his father's complaint of him for the first time in his life, Choemon sheds tears. Okinu draws up to her father-in-law."

(Choemon drops his head. Okinu seems to be lost in thought and comes up to Shigezo.)

Okinu: Listen to me, please! No wonder you've become angry with



Choemon-san, but he isn't guilty of immoral conduct; I can assure you. He isn't in love with her.

Gihei: Here, here, Okinu, didn't you hear what I read just now?

To: Cho-sama.

From: Ohan.

It's a good evidence, isn't it?

Okinu: Well, "From Chosama" isn't addressed to him.

Ohan-san's lover is <sup>their</sup> ~~our~~ clerk Chokichi, I can assure you.

Gihei: Chokichi, eh? You may be right. Chokichi, ehokichi, come here right now.

I wonder if he is in.

"Gihei calls out at the gate when from the neighbor's house Chokichi comes running in a flurry.

Thereupon Shigezo feels at ease and smiles."

(Gihei goes out to the gate and calls out.

Thereupon from the neighbor's house Chokichi in a clerk's uniform comes out carrying bellows and a pair of chopsticks in his hand.

Gihei lets <sup>C</sup> Chokichi enter the house.)

Gihei: Hey, Chokichi, say clearly that you aren't in love with Ohan.

Okinu: Here, here, Chokichi-dono, you'd better tell the truth.

(Both of them pull Chokichi by the sleeve.)

Chokichi: Wait a moment, please. You don't give me time to speak out, I'm afraid.

Gihei: Now I'll tell you. Although Choemon-sama is in love with Ohan, Sister insists that Chokichi is her lover, so I want you to deny it.

Okinu: Here, here, Chokichi-dono, you must ~~xxx~~ speak the truth (Makes a sign to Chokichi with the eye so as to let him acknowledge it.)

"Chokichi understands Okinu's sign."

(Thereupon Chokichi understands her sign and gesticulates.)

Chokichi: I'm sorry to speak in public, everybody, but I'm Ohan-san's lover.

When we went to worship at the Ise Shrine this spring, she and her nurse were in the inner room at the hotel while I was sleeping in the room "Ro". At night the paper sliding-doors of the room were opened very slowly, so I thought a thief might have come into the room.

However, it was she that came into the room, calling me Chokichi, Chokichi.

Afterwards you can easily guess what I did with Ohan-san, can't you?

Gihei: Hey, hey, don't be silly!

As is written in this letter.

To: Chosama; From: Ohan, Cho-sama must mean Choemon.

Chokichi: Oh, you're very inquisitive, Gihei-sama. To: Chosama means me ---- Chokichi.

Gihei: Don't be silly!

Chokichi: Well, Ochan-han is my wife.

Gihei: Here, here, Chokichi, don't crack a joke. You haven't yet come of age and still have your forelock, so you cannot have your sweetheart.

Chokichi: Gihei-san, don't say such a silly thing.

Why can't a minor have a sweetheart? There were a great many lovers who hadn't yet come of age:

Osome and Hisamatsu, Kuganosuke and his sweetheart; Anchin and Lady Kiyō; Shirai Compachi and Komurasaki; Shirafuji and Genta. Shinanoya-Ochan and Clerk Chokichi are also minors in love.

If men who have their forelock cannot make love with girls, wrestlers and doctors won't be able to make their love throughout their life, I think.

Gihei: Here, here, how could such a nasty-nosed youngster as you make love?

This "<sup>C</sup>ho" must be the initial of my brother's name.

Chokichi: Excuse me, Gihei-san, but is there any difference in the character between "Cho" in the name of Choemon-san, the master of this store and "<sup>C</sup>ho" in my name though I'm a mere clerk? You'd better keep books without interfering in others' affairs.

Gihei: Huh!

"Chokichi makes a fool of him and goes to the gate."

Chokichi: By golly!

(Just then Gihei thrusts Chokichi out to the gate.)

Chokichi: Although my name is Chokichi, don't ill-treat me so much. Good-bye. (Enters the Shinanoya store.)

Okinu: Well, since he confessed that he misconducted himself with her, my husband isn't to blame for it.

Tose: Ah, I'm sorry.

But what did you do with one hundred "ryo" for the draft and another fifty "ryo" of Choemon?  
Now you must confess.

Choemon: Well, I admit I've misappropriated ~~a~~ one hundred "ryo" myself, but I don't know about the fifty "ryo". There must be some thief who has stolen the money with the duplicate key.

Tose: Who's the thief?

If there is, bring the thief here.

Do you mean to say that there is the thief who has ~~stolen~~ stolen the money with the duplicate key in this house?

Gihei ~~is~~ is so honest that he receives a receipt from even Mr. Shirakawa while I'm honesty itself, but are you going to fasten the guilt on Gihei and myself? You may be a beggar's son, but we are of good birth. Now tell me where the fifty "ryo" is.

"She swings a broom aloft and hits him with might and main. Thereupon Okinu runs up to her and holds the

broom tightly so as to check her."

(Otose hits Choemon with a broom with all her strength.

Thereupon Okinu runs up to her and holds the broom.)

Okinu: Don't!

Tose: Why?

Okinu: Even if you're angry with him, you mustn't do violence.

If I hold my tongue, I may be polite and dutiful to you, but I should say you aren't of very good origin, either.

"She loses her temper and speaks ill of her mother-in-law."

(Choemon thrusts his wife aside. Okinu seems sad.)

Choemon: Hey, you mustn't speak ill of your mother-in-law.

Okinu: But.

Choemon: No, you mustn't.

Okinu: Don't be silly.

I needn't be polite to her. Your mother isn't sensible, so I feel angry with her.

"She shakes herself and feels vexatious, so her husband feels pity for her."

(Okinu weeps out of sorrow.

Choemon seems to be in deep thought.)

Choemon: Right you are. Since she is my mother, I must put up with anything.

I hope you'll sympathize with me, darling.

"He clenches his fist and weeps bitterly."

(Choemon seems vexed.)

Tose: That's right. I'm your mother, so you cannot complain of my action. Well, Gihei, I want you to take my place and hit him with the broom till he confesses where the money is.

Gihei: Okay.

"When he swings up the broom, Choemon wrenches his hand."

Choemon: You cannot hit me, or are you going to hit me----- your elder brother?

Gihei: What shall I do, mother?

Tose: You cannot hit him as his younger brother, but you can do so on behalf of your mother. Hit him till he confesses it.

(Both Gihei and Ootose hit Choemon again by turns.)

"When both of them hit him, Shigezo seizes the broom from them and hits them instead."

'Shigezo snatches the broom from them and hits both Gihei and Ootose.)

Shigezo: Oh, you needn't let him confess it. If you touch even a finger of your elder brother, I'll hit you.

Tose: Well, Daddy, why do you take sides with Choemon who has stolen the money?

Shigezo: Don't say such a silly thing. Listen!

Choemon is the master of this house, so one hundred fifty or even one thousand "ryo" belongs to him and he can spend as much money as he wants.

It's silly of you to assert that he has stolen money and to examine him.

If you talk big so much, I'll relegate you to the status of a kitchen maid as in the past and let Choemon and his wife hit you and your son.

"Shigezo loses his temper. The married couple get moved to tears for his kindness while Otose and her real son look sulky."

(Otose seems to be indignant.)

Tose: Daddy, is that all? We also want to say something to you, though. Well, Gihei, I feel blue, so what do you say to going to the restaurant and having a drink with <sup>c</sup>chiken?

Gihei: Oh, that's a good idea.

(Both of them go out to the gate and gesticulate.)

"Both she and her son do not want to betray their weak points and go out together."

(Both Otose and Gihei go away to the left.)

"As it's getting dark, Okinu lights a great many paper-framed night lamps while Shigezo lights the candle on the family altar. Both husband and wife brighten up."

(During the time, Okinu lights the paper-framed night lamps. Shigezo brings the candle-stick from the family altar<sup>a</sup> and lights its candle.)

Shigezo: I'm afraid the hag doesn't know what obligations are though she is now living at ease. I should like to drive her away, but as I'm nearly seventy, I rather hesitate to divorce her and try to master my anger. However, I'll take her to the detached-house willy-nilly shortly and keep her from meddling in the affairs of the main house, so I hope you'll look forward to the time and won't fall sick. Well, Choemon, you may be worried about something or another, but I cannot expect to live so long in this world so I hope you won't give me any trouble. Ah, look at the sacred light. Only a wick and oil keep the light. Oil is compared to me -- Shigezo while the wick is compared to you, Choemon. What<sup>en</sup> the light is dark, we still



stir up the wick. When the wick is gone, the house will get pitch-dark even if there still remains oil.

But the trouble is that the wick is too narrow.

I'm afraid you're narrow-minded as a merchant and shameless; if you put up with any trouble and stir up your mind, you'll always become cheerful and be able to act as purveyor for the House of Kishu as ever.

I hope you'll set my mind at rest.

"After giving a lesson to his son and daughter-in-law, Shigezo enters the altar room. Okinu and her husband are impressed a great deal by Shigezo's kind words."

(Shigezo thinks for a while and enters the inner room.

After much consideration, Okinu gets near to Choemon.)

Okinu: Well, Choemon-san, I hope you won't become desperate.

Although my mother-in-law and brother-in-law are hard on me and I feel constrained, I can put up with their ill treatment, because I love you. Ten years have already passed since I became your wife, so I understand your mind well. You may enjoy your time with barmaids or "geisha" girls if you like. I don't want you to make an excuse even if I've happened to know your relation to Ohan. I think you still regard me as your wife though I may not deserve it.

Moreover, although I've already known your relation to Chan-san, I haven't showed any jealousy of it for fear that the kind father-in-law and the wicked mother-in-law

might understand it.

"I'm also a woman, so if my husband flirts with another woman, I feel angry at and jealous of it. However, I was afraid that you might feel fidgety and fall sick, so I didn't complain of it to you, but I worshipped at the Rokkaku-do Shrine and prayed that you would not desert me nor would you turn your back on me for Chan. I hope you'll sympathize with me and forever --."

Okinu: Please don't desert me.

"She prostrates herself on her husband's lap and tries to argue him down."

(During those words, Okinu gesticulates in various ways.)

Choemon: My darling, I beg your pardon. What you've said is quite reasonable. It is I that am to blame.

However, in fact I didn't spend the hundred "ryo" on pleasure-making, but I used the money for the ransom of Yukino who had saved your younger brother

Saijiro from death. As for the thief of the fifty "ryo", I know who is the thief, but if I investigate it, I'm afraid I shall be undutiful to my parent.

I can clear myself of the two matters, but I'm afraid I cannot easily clear my honour about my scandal with Chan. (Brings an abacus and shows some figures on it to Okinu.)

Well, you see I'm more than two times older than she is, so --. (Is on the point of saying and looks aside.) I'll tell you now. As a matter of fact, the reason is as follows:

On my way back from Kishu Province, I put up at the Shimomuki Hotel for worshippers at the Ise Shrine, a hotel at Ishibe where I always register, together with Chan, Clerk Chokichi and her nurse. There is a dirt floor at the entrance of the hotel. There is also a staircase and my room where I always stay is at the farther end. I think you've never been there, ~~so think you've never been there~~, so you'd better go and visit the Ise Shrine next time ~~together~~ together with me.

In front of this room there is a corridor at the corner of which there is a room for Chan, Chokichi and her nurse. As for me, I wanted to come back to the city as soon as possible so as to see you and father and had a drink on the table and fell asleep. While I was sleeping, I dreamt of you. Oh, no, I ain't telling you a lie. And I was dozing off. Well, it was about ~~mid~~ midnight when some one woke me up calling me Uncle, Uncle, so I awoke and to my great surprise I saw Chan at my bedside. I asked her why she came to my room at that time of night when she said that Chokichi made advances to her till he had put her hair in disorder

and wept. I said to her that Chokichi was to blame for it, but since he had been an apprentice at the store from his childhood, she oughtn't tell her mother on him when she would return home. Although I urged her ~~g~~ to go back to her room, she asked me to stay in my room. Since it was nearly dawn, therefor<sup>e</sup>, I allowed her to stay in my room. Well, Okinu, please guess what happened afterwards. I beg your pardon,

Okinu: Oh, you needn't apologize to me. But I'm glad you've confessed it to me. Now I'm relieved. Let's change the subject. I'll cook fish for you, so please have a drink and take a nap for a while.

Choemon: Well, I'll do so. Ah, I'm tired and feel very ~~alexan~~ sleepy. Now I will sleep.

"He lies down when his wife puts a pillow under his head and covers him with bed-clothes. She goes to the kitchen when he places his hands together so as to ~~exp~~ express his thanks to her in his bed-clothes."

(Choemon gets ashamed of himself and lies down.

Okinu takes out a pillow and bed-clothes, puts a pillow ~~and~~ under Choemon's head, covers him with <sup>the</sup> bed-clothes and goes to the inner room. In less than no~~h~~ time he sits up, sees Okinu off, and seems to be lost in thought.

Choemon: My darling, I must beg your pardon.

I'm ashamed of my folly. I'm glad you still regard me

as your husband and put up with it. I should like to  
live in conjugal harmony with you forever so as  
to express my thanks to you, <sup>though</sup> I'm afraid  
I shall have to die ahead of my father and be  
undutiful to him. What with his advice and what  
with Okinu's devotion to me, I feel the pangs of  
conscience. Although I understand my father's  
warning and Okinu's heart, Ohan is pregnant.  
I'm afraid I returned evil for the late Jihei-dono's  
kindness to me. To make matters worse, the sword  
forged by Masamune which I brought to the mansion  
has turned out to be a sham one, as the genuine  
one must have been substituted for a faked one  
when I was off guard. Thereupon the caretaker  
was afraid of incurring his master's displeasure  
and told me to investigate the circumstances and  
find out the real sword by the fourth bell tonight,  
though.

"Any investigation has ended in bubble, so I won't be able  
to make an excuse if I live." Although I've  
been ready to die, I've wanted to see my father and  
Okinu once for all and come back.

Now that I've given a lot of trouble to my wife Okinu,  
I shall have to take the last measure so as to  
make an excuse to Okinu and the mansion.

people of

"He offers prayers to Guardian Deity for Children and Gautama before he depart for another world."

(Just then Choemon brings the ink-case from the latticed counter and writes his last letter in Indian ink.)

"Shinanoya-Ohan who is in the same trouble as his stealthily looks in his house."

(Just at the moment Ohan comes out of the neighbor's house and is about to go up to Choemon. Choemon hides his last letter, covers the bed-clothes over himself and pretends to sleep.

Ohan enters the house by the gate and draws close to Choemon.)

Ohan: Well, Uncle, wake up, wake up. I've come to see you in reply to your words of this morning.

"She shakes him out of his sleep when he pretends ignorance."

Choemon: Who are you, who are you? (Gets up.)

Oh, Ohan, you've come here, so I think you've understood my words.

Ohan: As you told me, I've been persuaded of it and have come to see you once and away.

Choemon: Oh, well said! Well, then, we shall be relieved of the trouble and people will cease to gossip about us. Now, now, please get out of here if you've been convinced of my advice. I don't want to flirt

with ~~a~~ you any more.

Chan: Take it easy! I'll soon go home.

"I hope you'll take good care of yourself."

Let me see your face closely for the last time.

"She looks closely at him with tears in her eyes."

(Although Choemon doesn't speak of his determination to join the majority, he seems melancholy and hugs her tightly for the last time.)

Choemon: Don't speak any more. I do hope you won't fall sick, but you'll be filial to your mother.

Chan: Although ~~Y~~ you've cared for me up to now, I'm sorry I've let you feel fidgety instead of thanking you.

Choemon: Ah, I don't want to separate from you by death.

Oh, no, I don't mean that. Although I break off with you, I can see you every day. Ah, get out of here ~~before~~ before you're noticed by others.

"She is thrust aside."

Chan: Certainly. ~~She opens the sliding-~~

"She opens the sliding-screen and goes out wistfully.

Their love affair will no more give rise to scandals. Choemon has a presentiment of it."

(Chan puts her last letter at the gate and goes away.)

Chomeon: I feel worried about her attitude.

"He feels anxious about her, picks up her letter at the gate and holds it up against the light."

(Choemon feels uneasy, goes to the gate, takes up the

letter which Ohan has left and looks at it by the paper-framed night light.)

Choemon: Oh, this must be her last letter.

"Although he runs out, he cannot see even her shadow in utter darkness, so he again comes back from the street corner and looks at her last letter again."

(Choemon loses his head, runs up to the stage passage and again comes back thoughtfully; he enters the house and unfolds her last letter.)

Choemon: (Reads it) "I've no intention to break off with you and marry another man. Especially I am with child. If my pregnancy should be made known, I'm afraid it would be a disgrace to you though I don't mind my dishonour. I should like to apologize to Okinu-sama for my misconduct with you and before I'm scolded by my mother, I'll throw myself into the River Katsura. I hope you'll live in conjugal harmony with her, but you'll pay a visit to my grave from time to time."

Now that she has made up her mind to die in spite of her ~~mind~~ blooming age, I'm to blame for it.

"I'm afraid how my mother will grieve over my death and<sup>act</sup> discouraged, so I hope she'll recall my elder brother in Yedo to her house and let him look after her every day." Heavens! If you are going to die, I shan't



be able to live out all the more. Well, I'll die in the same river so as to apologize to your mother for my misconduct. Now I'm determined to do so.

"He yields to fetters of love and obligation and determines to go to the River Katsura"

(Choemon goes away.)

----- Curtain -----