

SHOCHIKU  
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4/29/46

"SUKEROKU YUKARI-NO HODO-ZAKURA" Kabuki-Play.

I ACT.

Written by Tsumura Jihei.

To be presented by Kikugoro, Kichimon, etc.  
at the Tokyo Theatre May 5 - 31, '46.

Seen & Approved  
5/7/46

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(Facade of Miuraya, a brother in Yoshiwara. When the curtain rises, the explainer explains the origin of this classical play and then urges the Kato-bushi reciters to take to singing.)

Satobushi reciting: Spring has come to the Yoshino mountains  
And the flowers are out in Miuraya house,  
here in Yoshiwara.

The name of Hanakawado (Sukeroku's family name)  
is as fragrant as the blossoms.

(Meanwhile six courtesans, Yaeginu, Ukihashi, Kocho, Aizen, Tagasode and Umazaka come in accompanied by young maids.)

Agemaki, a courtesan of the highest class, comes in through the passage attended by six man followers, three woman followers and two child attendants.)

Yaeginu: Look folks, there comes Agemaki looking as if rolled on a boat.

Ukihashi: Sure. She must have drunk much.

Kocho: She was already drunken enough when I met her at Matsuya just now.

Fujizome: Now, Agemaki, where have you.

All: Drunk so much?

Agemaki: Well, folks, many thanks for your kindness to have waited for me here. Yes, I have drunk much, for when I was walking along the street, every door called for me and offered me cups after cups. No one ever has equalled me in drinking, no matter how heavy a drinker. Yes, yes, I have drunk much, but I am not intoxicated though I am by no means proud to own it.

Child attendant 1: Oh, dangerous, Agemaki.

Agemaki: Thanks for your advice, child. But, I am not a bit drunken.

Man follower 1: You'd better hurry, meam

Man follower 2: To the bench there.

Agemaki: Come on children.

Children: We're coming.

Child 1 (taking out a drug): Here's a medicine to sober you down.

Child 2: It's called Sode-no-ume, you know.

Agemaki: Many thanks. (Takes the drug) Well, as you know,  
I have drunk so much because everything has gone  
against me in my love with Sukeroku.

Katobushi reciting: The cuckoo coos and warbles.

With such a sad voice.

Sad is our fate

Of leading a life of slavery

Here in this world of shame;

Where affection is not real

Nor love, true.

(Meanwhile Shiratama, a courtesan, comes into the stage-passage attended by three man followers and two child attendants. Ikyu, a rich old samurai, follows her, accompanied by four man followers - Gompei, Moroku, Kampachi, Fushichi -----, three younger men and four women.

Ikyu: There's a proverb saying that a pair of fair arms makes a pillow for a thousand heads. On the other hand, however, it is also a courtesan that will never be moved for night, for money. Tonight I'm sure I'll get the mitten again. It's rather a pleasure for me now that I'm through so many hard experiences. Now folks, shall we commit double suicide with wine?

Gompei: What the boss says stands such reason. Love and wine are the source of gallantries.

Moroku: Here on the streetx Naka-no-machi, the fancy men hide their faces in deep hats.

Kampachi: Nightingales come and visit the flowers.

Fushichi: We, thronging here,

Gompei: Are the followers

All: Of Ikyu, the "Rich Beard."

Ikyu: Well, folks, there are many courtesans sitting on the bench. Are they the debutantes?

Gompei: Oh, yes, sir.

Ikyu: Why, I think I shall have a good time with them.

Shiratama: Well, Ikyu, you're so many minded. That's why Agemaki hates you.

Ikyu: Oh, I was wrong.

Shiratama: Mind it, please.

Ikyu: Let's go and get acquainted with them, at least.  
(They all come into the stage.)

Courtesans: Hello, Mr. Ikyu.

Ikyu: You all know my name? Many thanks.

Yaeginu: Now, Agemaki, Mr. Ikyu has come.

Agemaki: Don't make such ado about it. Well, Mr. Ikyu, I've been long waiting -----.

Ikyu: Waiting for Sukeroku, eh?

Agemaki: What?

Ikyu: I know well that you're very intimate with him though you're trying to conceal it from me.

Agemaki: But, the other day, when you came to know our connection, you permitted us, after a long preach, to see each other.

Ikyu: Well, yes, I did.

Agemaki: And why are you thwarting our love again?

Ikyu: I did permit you, then. But, I won't, now. What is Sukeroku? He's a robber.

Agemaki (angry): What did you say?

Ikyu: Whenever he fights, he takes the sword of his opponent. That proves the fact that he is a robber. Are you going to enjoy your time with him?

Agemaki: I have not a life to enjoy myself. But, though I don't know why, I -----.

Ikyu: In love with Sukeroku?

Agemaki: I'm afraid I am.

Ikyu: I am only sorry for you, for you will one day be robbed of all your things if you go on associating with him.

Agemaki: You may call me mad, fool or anything you like. But, to call Sukeroku a robber, it's a little too much.

Ikyu: It's not too much. If you keep company with a robber, you too, will come to search for the purposes of others and you will become a couple of homeless waifs.

Ikyu: It's very importunate of you. Sukeroku is faithful to his own principle of gallantry. "Like attracts like you know. I shall now take to calling you hard names. (Putting on airs.) Well, Mr. Ikyu, when I compare you with Sukeroku, one looks fine and one looks ill-natured. You're as like as chalk and cheese. The ocean and the inland sea, they are both seas;

but the difference is that one is deep and the other is shallow. A courtesan will have such a miserable life without a fancy-man I shall never mistake you for Bukeroku even in the dark.

Ikyu: Hur (touches his sword.)

Agemaki: Well, cut me down if it pleases you. Cut, or killed, I shall never give him up. Do cut me, Mr. Ikyu.

Ikyu (Putting away his sword): Go away.

Agemaki: Where shall I go?

Ikyu: To Bukeroku.

Agemaki: Have you no say?

Ikyu: Go away.

(Agemaki stands up and goes to the passage)

Shiratama (calling her back): Now, Agemaki you ~~xxxxx~~ will drive Bukeroku into troubles by getting so mad and angry with Ikyu. Well, Agemaki, just come back.

Agemaki: I have no mind to go against the words of you, my best friend, though I should be very glad to go to my dear Bukeroku.

Shiratama: Will you come back, then?

Agemaki: Certainly I shall. (Going back to the main stage.) I say, Mr. Ikyu, I'll never see you again. Well, Shiratama.

Shiratama: Why, Agemaki.

Agemaki: Come on, children.

Children: Okay.

(Agemaki, Shiratama and the children go out.  
Shakuhachi ---- a kind of flute ----- sounds  
behind the stage.)

Yaeginu: There comes a strolling flute-player.

Aizen: He is not a flute player, but a young fellow.

Ukihashi: Well?

All: Certainly he is.

(Sukeroku comes into the passage.)

Katobushi reciting: Urged by the sound of Samisen,  
Here he comes, a dashing young fellow,  
His X handsome face reflecting upon the  
rainy sky.

Courtesans: Well, Sukeroku, what's the Xorigin.

All: Of your head-band?

Sukeroku: You mean this turban?

Song: This is the taken of our promise.  
Which never forgotten will be.  
For we have promised  
Never to change our mind.  
As the evergreens change not their colour.  
Along the banks of the river Sumida,  
Willows are weeping and cherries are out.  
Flowers and Blossoms fall down upon the parasols.  
Fuji and Tsukuba are seen beyond the flowers.  
Flowers, don't hurry to fall:  
Don't be impatient for the day of appointment.  
The night of rendez-vous will come in time  
Sukeroku: The woman loved by me -----.

Song: "Is Agemaki"

And thus he shuts his umbrella

With much ~~glace~~ grace.

All: Hurrah

Yaeginu: We've been waiting for you, Sukeroku.

Ukihashi: Come here

All: Just for a moment.

Sukeroku: Oh, how are you? You are all as beautiful as ever.

May I thrust myself among you?

Courtesans: Please do

Sukeroku: Excuse me (Sits on the bench.)

(A drug-peddler comes in accompanied by the master and mistress of Miuraya and propagates the effect of the medicine "Uiro" in a dance.)

Courtesans: Will you have a fill of tobacco? (Each offers a pipe to him)

Sukeroku: Look out for fire.

Courtesans: Oh, don't mind.

Ikyu: Now, courtesans, will you give me just one fill?

Yaeginu: We would fain give you one if we had a pipe.

Ikyu: You've got so many.

Yaeginu: These pipes have been offered already.

Ikyu: To whom?

Sukeroku: To me. What a thing! As soon as I appear at the end of the street, every door calls for me and offers a pipe.

Last night, when I just dropped into Matsuya, lighted pipes were piled up mountain high. If you ever step into this kind of life, you should be treated like this. However rich you may be, you cannot get it for money.

Well, old man, if you want a pipe, I will fain  
lend you one.

Ikyu: Thank you so much. Will you?

Sukeroku: All right. You shall have one.

(Sukeroku offers Ikyu a pipe pinching it up with his  
toes.) How do you like it?

Ikyu: (Laughing) Ha, ha, ha. He is a simpleton after all,  
though he looks fine. He must be a workman or a  
porter for he seems to be a good walker.

Well, the real gallantry is to walk the way of  
justice, to behave oneself, never to make pretexts  
and to be faithful to one's pride.

In these prostitute quarters, young unemployed are  
apt to act important. I won't mind them no more  
than I mind mosquitoes buzzing about my ears.

I think I shall smudge them off.

(Burns an incense.)

Sukeroku: As the "Sanryaku", a famous Chinese book on tactics,  
says, strategy must change according to one's  
opponent. Those who are impertinent must be  
treated with the foot; those who are rude must be  
treated with sandals. That's the way with gallantry.  
There can be no secret nor initiation for the real  
gallantry. As for such a rascal, it's enough  
to shake and knock him down.

Well, ladies, a snake frequent Yoshihara of late, I  
hear.

All: Oh, goodness.

Sukeroku: Oh, you needn't be frightened, for it won't bite you. It has a blustering air, white hair and beard, and looks just like Kichimon. Well, this snake is so tenacious that he visits a courtesan every night though he always gets the mitten. He often burns an incense. What for is it? Just to smudge away the lice infesting his beard. He's so smart that no one will know the real reason.

Mombei (behind the stage): I won't. (Comes in. He seems to have come out of a bath. O-Tatsu, a brothel matron, follows trying to check him.

Mombei: I won't.

Ikyu: What are you grumbling about, Kampera.  
(Mombei's nick-name)?

Mombei: Why, boss, just listen to me. Such a woman! Come here, woman. You've made double dealings with courtesans.

O-Tatsu: What do you mean, sir?

Mombei: Don't make a fun of me. Well, the famous Kampera, after cups and feasts, designed to want to have a bath. and ordered you to make all the courtesans come into his bath-room and wash his back. You seriously answered that you would comply with my request. And so I have been waiting and waiting for them. But, no one appeared and I was half boiled up in the tub. Could it be ever called proper to treat a rich man like this? Don't hesitate, Present all the vicious women before me. I'll just boil them in the bath and eat them up.

Ah, I feel dizzy!

Yaeginu: How do you dare to call us such names,  
Mr. Kampera?

Ukihashi: If you go on, we shall just fit up your month  
with a door.

Kambei: Shut up. If you fix a door to my month, my words  
will go out through my nostrils. Come, bring out all  
the vicious women here. I'll just tie them  
in a row so that I could tell the beads with them.

Yaeginu: How could you do that!

Aizen: Just look how unattractive he looks.

All (laugh.)

Mombei: You've laughed at me. All right. See what I do  
(cries like mad.)

(Fukuyama, a macaroni-peddler, comes in with  
his carrying-box and runs against Mombei.)

Mombei: Ouch!

Fukuyama: Oh, excuse me.

Mombei: Why, do you think that it's enough to say that,  
after knocking your carrying-box against me?  
You freckled loose-looking simpleton!

Fukuyama: I'm so sorry. I was in such a hurry, you know.  
Excuse me, please.

Mombei: I won't excuse you. Don't move an inch.

Fukuyama: You won't pardon me when I have made so many  
apologies?

Mombei: Of course not.

Fukuyama: Do what you would, then. Though it may compromise the honour of the famous shop Fukuyama, I am so fond of ~~quarrels~~ quarrels. I'm as quick in temper as in carrying macaroni. I'll just make you see how bold ~~and~~ and daring I am.

Mombei: You impertinent! I can stand no more.  
(Swings about his first. Sukeroku interferes him and twists his arms.)

Mombei: Ouch!

Sukeroku (to Fukuyama): Go along.

Fukuyama: Oh, thank you.

Mombei: Don't move.

Sukeroku: Go, quick.

Mombei: Don't move, or you'll be killed.

Sukeroku: You must keep patient, sir.

Mombei: "I must", you say?

Sukeroku: Do be patient.

Mombei: "Be patient", you say? That sounds strange.

Sukeroku: Oh, don't be so particular. Put up with him.

Mombei: You've been so daring. You don't know me, I'm sure.

Sukeroku: Oh, what you say! Every one knows you. You're so famous here in Yoshiwara and in all the world, too.

Mombei: Do you know my name?

Sukeroku: No, I don't.

Mombei: Don't make a fun of me.

Sukeroku: I don't know you, but God knows.

Mombei: How do you dare! You don't know me?

Ah, I see. You've come here to Yoshiwara for the first time, I'm sure. Be all ears, now.

Well, this gentleman standing here is my boss. He is named Kan-u after the hero of the Chinese novel Sangokushi. His cognomen is Un-cho, and he is usually called "Ikyu the Bearded."

I am his favourite follower Kampera - Mombei and I am rich enough, too. No, take off your turban and make an obeisance to me.

Sukeroku: All right. All right. Your words sound dignified.

But, his macaroni will get spoiled during your speech, I'm afraid. (To Fukuyama)

Go along, quick.

Mombei: You shan't.

Sukeroku: Why do you say so when he has apologized so many times. Ah, I see. You're hungry. All right;

~~ixsaxxxxkankraxkxngryx~~ I'll stand you that.

(Takes out a bowl of macaroni)

Sukeroku: Just have a bowl. Or, are you keeping maigre?

Mombei: I won't eat it.

Sukeroku: Don't be so proud. Will you have it with pepper?

(Mombei sneezes) Shall I feed you from my mouth?

Mombei: Feed me?

Sukeroku: Yes, feed you.

Mombei: An eaglet never feeds an eagle. I shan't eat it.

Sukeroku: Won't you?

Mombei: Certainly I won't.

Sukeroku: Do what you would. (Pours the macaroni over Mombei.)

Mombei: Oh, I've been cut.

Fukuyama (going out): I told you so.

(Asagao-Sembei comes in, with many fellow-attendants.)

Sembei: Why, boss.

Mombei: Oh, Sembei.

Sembei: What's the matter?

Mombei: I'm sorry I've been taken by surprise. Am I seriously wounded?

Sembei: Why, boss, you aren't hurt at all.

Mombei: Not at all? Why, I'm bleeding so. Oh, this is macaroni.

Sembei: Well, I never.

Mombei: Fall on him, fellows.

Sukeroku: What did you say? Well, boys, if your clubs ever touch me, you shall lay dead in heaps.

All: Why!

Sukeroku: Put off your clubs.

All: All right. (Retires.)

Sembei: You youngster, simpleton, fool. I've never seen anyone challenge my boss. How could you dare! You've thrown the macaroni over him. And such badly-made macaroni, too. I'm angry with ~~him~~ him now. Well, young boy, remember my name and put it in your book in hell. I am called "Sembei the handsome". I'll just throw you away.

(Falls on Sukeroku, when he is fairly flung down by Sukeroku.)

Sembei: Ouch.

Mombei: Why, Sembei, what's the matter?

Sembei: I've got hurt by knocking against the root there.

Mombei: Oh, the root is your opponent. Well, then, the one that has won the match is -----.

Sembei: Well?

Mombei: The root.

All: Oh, what a fellow!

Mombei: You smart young wretch, what is-----.

All: Your name?

Sukeroku: I'll tell you by and by, for those who ever step into these quarters should know my name. In the first place, it will make a charm against ague. In the second place, it will make a talisman against getting the mitten from prostitutes. Though I am short in size, I am ~~xx~~ bold in mind. The old man making charcoal far in the suburbs of Edo rumours of me and of my quarrels as well as the old woman owning the brothel Mitani here in Yoshiwara. I've never been defeated in quarrels. I'm also famous for this purple turban of mine and for my hair-dressing.

Many opponents in quarrels are for me what much water is for a fish. I am known all through Edo as Sukeroku of the family Hanakawado or as

Sukeroku, lover of Agemaki. Folks, come nearer and worship me on your knees.

All: Hurrah!

(Mombei trembles with fear.)

Sukeroku: You dirty, shabby, freckled man. Are you going?

Mombei: Fall on him, folks.

(Mombei and Sembei fight with their swords.

Sukeroku knocks them down with his ~~shaku~~hachi (long flute).

Yaeginu: Mr. Sukeroku has won the day.

Courtesans: Oh, bravo!

Sukeroku (looking at Ikyu): Well, you old chap, all your followers have been defeated by me. You must feel much mortified. Unsheathe your sword and give a cut at me. Won't you? Why do you remain so silent? Are you dumb or deaf? Do unsheathe your sword. You spiritless! Just like a rat watched by a cat. Oh, poor, he has died. All right, all right, I shall say a requiem for him.

(Takes off one of his sandals and puts it on Ikyu's head.)

"I beseech the Buddha Amitabha that this animal will get enlightenment and that he will go to paradise."

(Ikyu throws away the sandal and touches the hilt of his sword.)

Sukeroku: Unsheathe your sword. Won't you?

(Ikyu is on the point of unsheathing his sword, when he looks at it and stops.)

Ikyu: I think I won't.

Mombei: Why, boss, if you are so meek and weak, I feel weak, too.

Sembei: You are always so proud of your fighting arts.

Ikyu: An elephant won't take to heart what a hare does with him. No one kills a fly with a long spear. He is not a match for me. Now, fellows, take care of your purses.

(Sukeroku unsheathes his sword and cuts the arm rest in the middle.)

Sukeroku: You see my skill now.

Ikyu: Folks, fall upon him.

(His followers fall upon Sukeroku. Meanwhile Ikyu, Mombei, Sembei and the courtesans go into the house Miuraya. Shimbei, a white-wine-peddler, comes in. Sukeroku unsheathes his dirk. His opponents run away from him. Shimbei, left behind, squats on the passage.)

Sukeroku: They are so weak. Well, I think I shall have a cup with Agemaki.

Shimbei (addressing): I say, young man, just a moment, please.

Sukeroku: "Young man" you say? You're so daring to say that. What's the matter?

(Comes to the passage. Shimbei squats flat, ready to flee.)

Who on earth is he that has called me and then disappeared? I am Sukeroku, boss of all gallants in Edo. Come out. Where are you hiding? (Goes into the main stage.)

Shimbei: I say, boss of all gallants, will you wait just for a moment?

Sukeroku: Calling again. What's the matter?

(Goes to the passage. Shimbei squats down again.)  
Where are you hiding? If you make a fun of me, I'll just sweep you into the river and kick a roof-beat into your nostril. What do you mean by doing such a thing?

(Comes into the main stage.)

Shimbei (Standing up): I say, wait a minute, please.

Sukeroku: (Finding Shimbei) Just stay where you are. Don't move an inch.

(Brings Shimbei to the main stage, taking him by the collar.)

Who the hell are you?

Shimbei: It's me.

Sukeroku: Me? What a face have you to say that to me?

(Looks into Shimbei's face and gets surprised.)

Shimbei: It's me, you know.

Sukeroku: Why, Shimbei, my elder brother!

Shimbei: Oh, you recognize me, at least.

Sukeroku: What for have you come here?

Shimbei: Just to be swept into the river. You may kick a boat into my nostril, if you like. Which nostril, right or left? You may choose whichever you like.

Sukeroku: Oh, I said such things because I didn't know that you were the peddler.

Shimbei: Did you say that without noticing me?

Sukeroku: How could I, if I knew it was you.

Shimbei: "A pebble in the dark may hit your parent" you know.

Sukeroku: Um -----.

Shimbei: Well, Sukeroku, what on earth are you thinking of? Our father laid down his life in order to save those of his fellow merchants. We brothers have made up our mind to wipe out the stain on his name and have done our best to attain our object. I myself have become a white-wine-peddler.

As for you, you kill your time here in Yoshiwara and quarrel day in, day out. Mother is so anxious about you and is always asking me to preach you. "Who was it that cut a man at Takecho?" "Sukeroku". "Who was it that threw a man into a heap of sand?" "Sukeroku". Not a day passes without our hearing your bad name, though the sun may forget to shine. What <sup>the</sup> a dence has made you such a knave? I'll listen to you no more now. I'll just sever our brotherly relation and have nothing to do with you. I despise you. I'm disgusted with you.

Sukeroku: I thank you very much for your kindest advice.  
But, it may be said that I quarrel as a filial duty.

Shimbei: What! A filial duty?

Sukeroku: Well, I shall tell you how it is. Our father lost the sword Tonokirimaru and got into troubles for that. It's our greatest duty to find it out and to console his spirit. We have tried our best, but all in vain. Well, these prostitute quarters are frequented by so many rakes that I thought it convenient to seek for our enemy here in Yoshiwara. I pick quarrels on dandies and rascals and force them to unsheathe their swords so that I may examine them.

It's pitiless of you to get angry with me without ever listening to my reasons. All right, all right I'll stop quarreling and become a monk to please you all. Hail to the Buddha

Amitabha and all the Buddhas in the Ten Directions;  
I beseech you to forgive me for my quarrels heretofore.

Shimbei: I've thought so, Sukeroku. I've been thinking it must have been to find out Tonokirimaru that you are idling away your time. It was very bad of me to make such a preach. Oh, this month of mine, it's to blame. "You month, why on earth did you say that? Take care and never repeat it again. Say that you're sorry for that." "Oh, I'm so sorry." My month says that he is sorry for it. Put up with him, please.

Sukeroku: Oh, may I keep quarreling, then?

Shimbei: Of course you may. Make as many quarrels as you can.

Sukeroku: I'll try my best, sir.

Shimbei: All right, all right. Do your best.

Sukeroku: I feel quite relieved now, that I've got the licence.

Shimbei: I, too, feel easy at heart. Well, Sukeroku, have you found any clue?

Sukeroku: Not exactly. But, some time ago, Ikyu stopped on the point of unsheathing his sword. I wonder why ~~was~~ it.

Shimbei: Ah, he looks knavish enough to be suspected. I'll stay here this evening and pick a quarrel on him.

Sukeroku: But you are so.....

Shimbei: Oh, I can be animated enough if you stay with me. and help me.

Sukeroku: All right. I'll teach you how to quarrel.

Shimbei: Oh, will you?

Sukeroku: Let's have a rehearsal, then. Put out your elbow so, step out your foot so.

Now, say: "You knavish samurai, why did you knock against me? I'll sweep you away into the river and kick a roof-boat into your nostril. What do you mean by being so rude to me?"

That will make him angry enough to unsheathe his sword.

Shimbei: I see. I'll try.

(Takes out his towel and makes a turban of it.  
Imitating.)

"You knavish samurai, why did you knock against me?  
I'll kick a roof-boat into your nostril. What do  
you mean?"

All right, all right. I know quite well now ~~XX~~  
how to be gallantly.

Sukeroku: Why, there comes a gull.

Shimbei (affected): "What on earth do you mean?"

(A young boy comes in from the right, hiding his  
face in a sedge hat. Sukeroku robs him of his  
sword looks at it and then throws it off. The boy  
picks it up, sheathes it and is on the point of  
going away, when he is called back.)

Sukeroku: Creep between my legs.

Boy: Creep between your legs? Why, ever since I was born  
of my mother's womb, I have never -----.

(After hesitating for a minute.) It cannot be  
helped, I'm afraid.

(Reluctantly creeps between Sukeroku's legs.)

Shimbei (trembling): Creep between my legs, young man.)

(The young boy does as he has been told and then  
hurries to the stage-passage.)

Boy: Oh, I've eaten such dirt. (Goes out.)

Sukeroku: What a fellow!

(A samurai comes in, accompanied by a follower  
Sukeroku snatches his sword from him, looks at  
it and throws it away. The follower picks it up  
and hands it to his master. The warrior sheathes it.)

Sukeroku: Creep between my legs.

(The warrior claps his hands and then creeps between Sukeroku's legs on all fours.)

Shimbei (trembling) Creep between my legs.

(The warrior creeps)

Follower(mortified): I cannot stand it any more.

(He is on the point of unsheathing his sword, when his master checks him.)

Warrior (feigning to be dumb): A-a-a-. (Goes out, followed by his attendant.)

Sukeroku: What a weak warrior!

A man of fashion (comes in): Taking a walk along this street is always very stylish, you know. And she is always slender and beautiful. It's quite natural that many a man courts her. Well, well, she is the best ~~xxxxx~~ courtesan here, after all. (Takes to the left, when he is addressed by Sukeroku.)

Sukeroku: Creep between my legs.

Man: . Creep between your legs! Well, I never! Isn't it rather unromantic to creep between another's legs here in these quarters? All right, all right, I'll just do it in fun, as the famous minister Kanshin (personage in Chinese history) did in his young days.

(Takes off his sandals and creeps.)

Man: My goodness! I'm all mud.

It's by no means romantic, I'm afraid.. She will get disgusted of me if she ever sees me in this state.

Shimbei: Creep between my legs.

Man: Once again? Well, well, well!

(Creeps between Shimbei's legs.)

I've done enough, I'm sure? Oh, I'm quite puzzled.

(Goes out)

Sukeroku: Well, such a strange fellow.

(Agemaki's voice behind the stage.)

Agemaki: Take care of your steps, if you please.

Sukeroku: That's Agemaki, I'm sure. She seems to see off a visitor. I have a very black crow to pluck with her.

Shimbei: Oh, yes, make as much complaint as you can.

(Gets as mad as a March here.)

Mitsue, Sukeroku's mother, comes out of the house Muraya, disguised as a warrior, her face hidden in a sedge hat.

Agemaki: Are you going back now? I am very sorry to part from you.

(Mitsue nods. Sukeroku and Shimbei check them in the middle of the stage.)

Sukeroku: Wait a minute, you samurai.

Shimbei: Wait a minute.

Agemaki: Do be patient, Sukeroku.

Sukeroku: Shut up, you vicious woman!

Agemaki: What a violent word.

Sukeroku: What, if it is,

Shimbei: We'll just take it out of them.

Sukeroku (to <sup>Mitsue</sup> Mitsue): Why did you tread <sup>a</sup> on me, when the road is wide enough. Take off the mud on my socks.

Shimbei: He must he must.

Agemaki: You'll be sorry for it afterwards.

Sukeroku: Shut up, woman. (To <sup>manko</sup>Mitsue) Why don't you answer me?  
Are you deaf, or are you dumb? It's impolite  
to be wearing such a hat before respectable persons.  
Take it off. You won't? All right. I'll make you.  
(He takes off her hat and gets surprised to get  
face to face with his mother.)

Agemaki: Well Sukeroku, you may do whatever you want now.  
(Sukeroku looks dejected.)

Shimbei: Well, shall I beat him, Sukeroku?  
(Sukeroku tries to check him.)  
Oh, don't stop me. Now, man, do you see how gallantly  
I am? Ouch, it's painful to be gallantly. Well,  
I am Kasubei the white-wine-seller, you know.  
I have a fist here, which my parents gave me to use  
to knock down my enemies.  
(Puts out his fist, but, on looking at <sup>manko</sup>Mitsue, utters  
a helpless cry.)

O-o-o. A-a-a.. My heavens!

<sup>Manko</sup>  
~~Mitsue~~: Why, Sukeroku, what a conduct! All right. I'll ac-  
cept your challenge. Knock me, tread on me.  
What a knave you have become!

Sukeroku: I say, mother---- --. Ah, I see (To Agemaki.)  
You urged her to do all this, eh?

Agemaki: I? Oh how could I?

Sukeroku: Whose idea was it, then?

Agemaki: Your mother is so anxious about you that she can  
hardly sleep at night and -----.

<sup>Manko</sup>  
~~Mitsue~~: Agemaki, dear, don't say anything to him, I pray you. I won't either. It's outrageous of him to conduct like this when he has a great object to attain.

"He who touches pitch shall be defiled therewith".

Oh, Mr. Kasubei the wine peddler, I thank you heartily for having made my son such a rascal.

(Shimbei tries to escape.)

Where are you going? Come here, please.

(Takes Shimbei to the main stage and looks at him.)

Why, you're Shimbei.

Shimbei: I don't know whether I am Shimbei or Kasubei.

<sup>Manko</sup>  
~~Mitsue~~: What a man you are!

Shimbei: I'm so ashamed of myself that I wish the ground will open and engulf me.

<sup>Manko</sup>  
~~Mitsue~~: What a pair of brothers! Both of you! (Through tears) I cannot but kill myself to atone for my negligence.

(Tries to go out. Shimbei, Suckeroku and Agemaki tries to check her.)

Shimbei: Just a minute, please. Tell your story to her, quick.

Suckeroku (to <sup>Manko</sup>~~Mitsue~~): It's quite natural that you should think it shameless of me to behave as I do, mother. But, to tell the truth, I am far from being negligent of my duty. The reason why I pick

quarrels with everybody is to find out Tomokirimaru.  
I don't quarrel for pleasure, you know. Set your  
heart at rest, please.

~~Manko~~  
~~Mitsue~~ (After a pause): Now I feel quite easy at heart. Take  
care of yourselves and do your best to find it out.

Sukeroku: You will forgive us, then?

Shimbei: Oh, thank you---- --.

Sukeroku: So much.

~~Manko~~  
~~Mitsue~~: Well, Agemaki, I now feel quite easy at heart. It's  
all for you. Thank you.

Now, Sukeroku, I shall give you a mascot to keep  
you from dangers. (Takes off her paper coat and  
gives it to her son.) It will tear easily if you  
behave violently.

Shimbei: Oh, it will surely encourage patience.

Sukeroku: Thank you so much for your kindness, mother.

I shall put it on at once. (Puts it on.)

~~Manko~~  
~~Mitsue~~: Oh, Madam Agemaki, I can never thank you enough  
for your kindness. Come, Shimbei, let's  
go home. Come, Sukeroku.

Sukeroku: I must stay here a little longer, I'm afraid, for  
I have some idea about the sword.

~~Manko~~  
~~Mitsue~~: All right. Come, Shimbei.

Shimbei: May I accompany you?

Agemaki (To ~~Manko~~  
~~Mitsue~~): It's so cold this evening. Take care  
and don't catch a cold, please.

~~Manko~~  
~~Mitsue~~: Oh, thank you. Well, Agemaki.-----.

Agemaki: Well -----.

Shimbei: Good night.

(<sup>Mando</sup>~~Zitsue~~ and Shimbei go out.)

Ikyu (behind the stage): Agemaki. Agemaki.

Sukeroku: That's Ikyu's voice, I'm sure.

Agemaki: Oh, Sukeroku, remember your paper coat, please.

(She hides Sukeroku under her long over-dress.

Ikyu comes in. Two child attendants follow him.)

Ikyu: Here you are, Agemaki.

Agemaki: Why, Mr. Ikyu.

Ikyu: I have been looking for you for a long time. What have you been about?

Agemaki: Well, Mr. Ikyu, I've drunk so much that I feel like exposing myself to the wind. But, I'm afraid you're too old to do so. You had better go to bed now.

Ikyu: If you stay here, I shall, too. Well, Agemaki, if poor Sukeroku sees us together here, he will fret and fume, I'm sure.

(Draws nearer to Agemaki. Sukeroku pinches him on his leg.)

Ouch, someone has pinched me on my leg.

Agemaki: Why, pinched you on your leg? How mischievous! Don't be so naughty, children. .

Child I: No, we have not -----.

Children: Done that.

Agemaki: No excuses. Go into the house, quick.

Children: Aye. (Go out.)

Ikyu: No, it was not the children. There's someone  
----- (Goes nearer to her.)

Agemaki: Dear me! Well, Mr. Ikyu, there are so many stars,  
aren't there?

Ikyu: You don't say so. Stars are out every night.  
Oh, you mean that one, eh? That's the "Robber Star",  
you know, that keeps an eye on courtesans that  
others have engaged. Altair cannot meet  
Venus so long as I, the Milky <sup>way</sup> River, lie between  
them. (It refers to a Chinese traditon) Isn't it so?  
Agemaki?

(Sukeroku pinches again.)

Ouch! He pinches me again! Where is he?

Agemaki: Naughty children!

Ikyu: They are not here, you know.

Agemaki: (To herself) Oh, that's it. (To Ikyu) It must  
be a rat.

Ikyu: A rat?

Agemaki: Oh, yes.

Ikyu: Certainly it is. A rat, a rat. There runs a rat  
round your feet.

Agemaki (frightened.) Dear me! Where?

Ikyu: Just there.

(Sukeroku jumps out. Agemaki goes into the house.)

Sukeroku: Ikyu?

Ikyu: Sukeroku?

Agemaki: Remember your paper coat, Sukeroku.

Ikyu: Ikyu, the excellent cat, has long noticed that

Sukeroku, a dirty rat, is hiding in the petticoat of Agemaki, a vicious woman. Why do you rob, Sukeroku? You can not be properly called a gallant if you go on doing such things.

You rascal, you coward!

(Strikes Sukeroku with his fan.)

Sukeroku: I wish to be as lucky as you are. My brother and I, we have not yet attained our aim though we have been doing our best for eighteen years. You're lucky enough to beat your rival in love. I envy you. I wish I were as lucky as you. As for me, I cannot even resist you, for my mother's paper-coat will tear if I behave violently. Strike me, kick me, if it pleases you.

Agemaki: It's admirable of you to be so patient.

Ikyu: You must know a little of filial duty to take care of the paper coat given by your mother.

Well, ----- (Takes out a censer-stand.)

Well, Sukeroku, you, your mother and your brother are just like this ~~xx~~ censer-stand. You can support any weight if you stick and unite together.

But, if ever you three get separated, you will, just like this stand, -----.

(He unsheathes his sword and cuts the censer-stand in two while Sukeroku stares at the weapon.)

Sukeroku: Why, that is surely Tomokirimaru.

(Ikyu, surprised, sheathes his sword, and then after a pause goes into the house.)

Agemaki: Why, Sukeroku, the paper coat has been torn.

Sukeroku: Torn? Why, I can bear no more now that it has been torn off, though I have been suppressing my anger hitherto.

Agemaki: Don't be so impatient.

Sukeroku: Now, Agemaki, the sword Ikyu wears is -----.

Agemaki: Tomokirimaru?

Sukeroku: Hush! (whispers in her ear.)

Agemaki: So you will?

Sukeroku: Wait for him to come back.

Agemaki: You'd better make haste to get ready, I should think.

Sukeroku: All right (Goes out. Agemaki follows him with her eyes. The curtain falls with the sound of wooden-clappers.)