

S H O C H I K U

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" HITOTSUYA "

(Solitary House)

KABUKI PLAY      in One Act

Written by Kawatake-Mokuami

To be presented by Ennosuke Troupe

at Daiichi Theatre Dec. 1946

C.C.D. J-2033

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25 Nov 46

CHARACTERS

Ibara	a witch inhabiting the "Solitary House"
Umazo	a rascal
Soroku	"
Hanawaka	a travelling child (Buddhist deity Kannon disguised)
Asaji	I bara's daughter

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The Scene of the Solitary House  
in Asajigahara

( A solitary cottage quite deserted Umazo and Soroku,  
pack-horse drivers are talking while smoking.  
The curtain rises with the sound of wooden clappers.)

Umazo: We've had much rain of late and we're rather in  
a miserable state. I intended to persuade the  
old woman to lend me some money, but she answered  
me that she would listen to me if I bring down a  
good bird.

- Soroku: Though she doesn't pay us properly, we make it our rule to watch the highway and bring here travellers who have missed their way and get our share of her earnings.
- Umazo: Some ten days ago, I found a blind man going from Ōshu to Kyoto and persuaded him to stay at hers. Though he looked poor, he must have had much money with him, for she gave me I kan as a prize.
- Soroku: She must have got very much, for, usually, it is a hard task to make her give even 100 mon.
- Umazo: She must have got scores of ryo, for she looked so merry and gave me drinks.
- Soroku: I've heard that she kills travellers every night and rob them of their money.
- Umazo: Even in the daytime, she takes travellers into a dark room and make them sleep on a stone pillow. As soon as they fall asleep, she cuts off the rope on which a big stone hangs ----- and there they are fairly crushed. She takes up all their money and clothes and bury the bodies in the field.
- Soroku: Though old, she looks very ~~st~~ strong and knavish. It is a miracle that such a daughter should be born of such a mother. The girl looks pretty and noble, and is very good-natured, too.
- Umazo: She often reproves her mother, but the mother remains untouched, so that she goes to the Kannon shrive every day to pray. Her to make her repent.

Soroku: It's very touching. But --- if the old woman should repent and mend her way, we shall lose our job on our part.

Umazo: Lady Kannon is sure to grant her prayers. We'd better hurry in getting our share before the time.

Soroku: Well, it has become cold all of a sudden.

Umazo: Oh, it's 20th of Sept. still. Very early to be so cold.

Soroku: It's because this is a desert.

Umazo: It's getting dark.

Soroku: Let's spread a drug-net on the highway and get some good prey for her.

Umazo: And then we'll have cups to warm ourselves.

(They disappear through the stage-passage.)

Gidayu reciting " "In the wild pampas grass

Of the wild Musashino,

There stands a solitary house

Inhabited by a wicked witch."

"A young boy,

Lost in his way,

Stands and hesitates before the door.

The old woman,

Appearing out of the cottage ----."

(Meanwhile the young boy Hanawaka, clad in a gay suit of clothes, appear into the passage. Ibara, the old woman, appears out of the house.)

Ibara: Mt. Fuji and Mt. Tsukuba have disappeared in the mist.

Hanawaka: As I am not much used to travelling, I feel so helpless to have lost my way when the sun seems to be falling in the west.

- Ibara: In my solitary house no one ever visits me ---- but the cries of wild geese.
- Hana: Oh, can't I find some ~~hamlet~~ hamlet?
- Ibara: I hope my daughter is soon to come home, as the church-bell of the evening has <sup>ring</sup> ~~ring~~ already.
- Hana: I think I shall ask for a night's lodging at the house over there.
- Ibara: I'll boil some water and get ready for supper.
- Hana: I'll hurry my way and get a lodging for the night.
- Gidayu: "The crows crow  
And tell the fall of the night.  
The boy, standing at the door -----."  
(The old woman takes to work. The young boy comes to her door, and, after some hesitation ----.)
- Hana: Good evening.
- Ibara: Who's that?
- Hana: I am a traveller from Kyoto going round the Kannon pilgrimage. I should like to ask a night's lodging of you.
- Ibara: Oh, you must be much perplexed.
- Gidayu: "The witch, glad at the proposal,  
Comes to the door and looks at the boy."
- Ibara: I should be much pleased to help you, as you look so much troubled. But, as you see, we're leading a miserable life here and have no spare bed.
- Hana: Oh, don't worry about such things, please. I'll be much obliged if only you let me lay myself under your roof,

- Ibara: You're quite welcome if you don't mind our peverty.
- Hana: Oh, thank you so much.
- Ibara: Step in, please.
- Hana: Excuse me.
- Y Gidayu: "The young boy, ushered in,  
Takes his place in the shabby house."
- Ibara: Will you have a cup of tea?
- Hana: Don't trouble about me, please.
- Ibara: Oh, I can do nothing for you however I may wish to.  
I'll let you have dinner when my daughter comes back  
from the Kannon temple.
- Hana: No, thank you. I've prepared it myself.
- Ibara: Will you have some rice-cake, then? Well, where  
are you going, may I ask?
- Hana: As I have told you, I am travelling from Kyoto  
to Azuma, making pilgrimage of Kannon holy places.
- Ibara: It is very admirable of you to make a pilgrimage  
when you're so young. Be at your ease, please.
- Hana: I am much obliged for the kindness you do me for the  
sake of Holy Kannon.
- Ibara: I intend to do good for my future life, for, as I am  
very old, I may be summoned even tomorrow.
- Hana: It's very admirable of you.
- Ibara: I make it my rule never to kill even an insect.
- Gidayu: "The witch, speaking demurely,  
Looks round herself.  
The lad, casting her eyes  
Toward the spinning wheel ----."

Hana: Well, old lady, what do you use the wheel for?

Ibara: It is quite natural you should ignore such a thing.  
It's a spinning-wheel we mean villagers use.

Hana: Will you just show me how to use it?

Ibara: Certainly, if it pleases you.

Hana: I shall appreciate your kindness very much if you will do so.

Gidayu: "The old woman  
Wheels and spins  
While singing a sad song."  
(Meantime the old woman shows how to spin.  
The lad looks on at her.)

Hana: Oh, I've been much amused.  
(There appears the daughter Asaji and, peeping  
into the house and finding a stranger, hesitates at  
the door.)

Asaji: A guest again! When I have prayed the goddess Kannon  
never let us have one!

Gidayu: "And she, wiping off some bitter tears,  
Addresses her mother."

Asaji: Hello, mother.

Ibara: Oh, you're so late to return.

Asaji: Well, the priest showed me the picture of the hell.  
He told me that those who do x evil in this world  
✓ are sure to fall into hell in the next <sup>x</sup> life.

Ibara: You needn't have listened to him. Here is a traveller  
who has lost his way. I've been waiting for you  
about ---- supper, you know.

Asaji: A traveller again?

Gidayu: "Finding, in the dim candle light,  
A noble figure ----."

Asaji: How handsome!

Gidayu: "And she looks downward  
All flashed up in the face."

Ibara: Greet him, Asaji.

Asaji: Welcome, young sir.

Hana: Oh, are you the daughter of the old lady? Thank  
you for your kindness.

Ibara: I'm sorry we have nothing to entertain<sup>t</sup> him with.

Asaji: Shall I go and get some rice pudding at Einryu-san?

Ibara: It's dangerous<sup>n</sup> for a young girl to go out at this  
time of the night. I think I shall make some back-wheat  
cake.

Asaji: That's a good idea.

Hana: I ~~should~~<sup>should</sup> be quite contented if only you would let  
me stay with you for the night.

Ibara: As you like it, sir.

Asaji: You ~~may~~ ~~may~~ must be a Kyotoite, I'm sure.

Hana: Certainly.

Asaji: There are many sites to see in Kyoto, I hear.  
Will you depict some of them?

Hana: Just as you please.

Ibara: Old as I am, I have never <sup>l</sup>seen to town. I should like  
very much to learn things about Kyoto before I die.

Hana: With pleasure, ma'am.



Gidayu: "Taking up the fan the girl had,  
The lad began to dance."

Hana: It is where the emperor's residence stands.

Gidayu: "The famous temple Chion'in  
Stands in the east,

And the Kiyomizu temple

And the shrine Gion."

"In the west of the city

Is Mt. Atago

famous for the tinted leaves."

"In the south is the temple Byodoin

Rounds which run many a pure streams."

"In the north are the famous Hanogawa,

The temple Kinkakuji,

Around which maidens of the city

Traffic in many things."

(The lad Hanawaka dances gracefully while the girl  
Asaji looks at him with much pleasure.)

Asaji: Oh, I'm so happy to hear all this.

Ibara: As I was much involved in your story, I forgot all  
about the cold weather, Let me make a little  
fire for you.

Asaji: No fire at all, mother?

Ibara: Carry in some bundles, please.

Hana: Oh, don't worry about me, please.

Ibara: I am cold myself.

Gidayu: "Old as she is,  
She takes up her hatchet  
And stands up with it."

Ibara: Come on, Asaji.

Asaji: Well?

Ibara: As he must be much tired, show him into the  
spare-room.

Asaji: All right, mother.

Gidayu: "Thus, telling the daughter.

To perform the usual design,

The old woman hurries outdoors."

The girl,

Following her mother with her eyes,

Sighs a deep sigh:

For her heart is affected with love."

(Asaji approaches Hanawaka.)

Asaji: You must be very tired.

Hana: I'm afraid I am, for I have walked much,  
having lost my way.

Asaji: Let me rub your feet, please.

Hana: Oh, you needn't.

Asaji: Let me, please.

Hana: How can I let you, my benefactor?

Asaji: Please let me; I do wish to.

Hana: I can never let a young girl rub my feet.

Asaji: Do you hate me, then?

Hana: Oh, no.

Asaji: Let me, then.

Gidayu: "Though I am much abashed,

I have to own that,

Returning from the Kannon shrine,

And seeing you for the first time,

I was so much affected by your beauty,

That I felt a thrill in me."

I much wish to marry you,

But, as I am of mean birth,

All I can do

Is just to rub your feet."

Asaji: Let me do so, please.

Hana: Do you really mean it?

Asaji: Certainly I do. Well, will you rest yourself  
in the next room?

Hana: Show me the way, please.

Asaji: Let me take your hand.

Gidayu: "Thus, hand in hand,  
They went into the dark room  
With love in their hearts."

(The two retire from the stage, when a church-  
bell is heard in the distance.)

Gidayu: "As the church-bell  
Tells midnight,  
The old woman, appearing out of the house,  
Sharpens the hatchet  
In the moon-light  
The two knaves stealing near -----"

(The two pack-horse drivers, Umazo & Soroku,  
appear into stage.)

Umazo: Ma'm.

Soroku:

Ibara: Hush!

(The three whisper to each other.)

Umazo: Oh, have you got a lad to-night?

Soroku: And to sleep in that room?

Ibara: I mean to kill him at the first stroke, but,

if it failed, you've got to catch him.

Umazo:

) Let's keep a watch behind the house.

Soroku:

Ibara:

Be very careful.

Umazo:

) O.K.

Soroku:

(The two hide themselves in a bush Ibara peeps into the house.)

Ibara:

Asaji, my girl.

(The girl appears out of the house.)

Asaji:

Mother!

Ibara:

Where's the lad? Has he gone to bed?

Asaji:

In the usual bed.

Ibara:

Well done. Let's cut off the rope.

Asaji:

Wait a minute, mother.

Ibara:

What for?

Asaji:

He isn't fast asleep as yet, I'm afraid.

Ibara:

Oh, we must never lose the chance. It will make things dangerous for us.

Gidayu:

"And she pushes off

The girl that clings to her.

And trying to step forward,

She happens to strike her own daughter

On the side.

As the girl falls unconscious,

The mother, not at all touched,

Proceeds to cut the rope.

There sounds a thud

And lo; a big stone falls on the floor

And the candle-light

Is put out by the vibration."

"The old woman,  
Approaching the stone,  
Gets surprised not to find the lad.  
Crushed under the stone.  
She stumbles over her daughter,  
Who regains consciousness  
And clings to her mother."

Ibara: I expected to have had the lad crushed under  
the stone. Can it be that he has discovered  
our plan and run away?

Asaji: Oh, excuse me, mother. I have let him escape.

Ibara: Why! What for?

Asaji: By no other reason but that I have taken fancy  
to the handsome lad, not thinking a bit of my  
mean self.

Gidayu: "The old woman sets her teeth  
And says in an angry tone."

Ibara: How vexacious! Have you set free the prey in  
the trap only because you fell in love with him?  
You duteless girl! How can I punish you enough!

Gidayu: "Pitiless and heartless,  
She catches her own daughter by the collar.  
And shakes her harshly."

Ibara: You naughty girl! For whom, do you think I do  
all this, when I am so old now and my days  
are numbered? That's all for you. I wish to  
make you rise in the world even if I am to be  
burnt in Hell. The number of travellers  
I killed on the stone pillow cannot be  
counted now. How can I stop it now? You

undutiful girl! So, so, so.

Gidayu: "She makes a fist,  
Beats & kicks her girl,  
With her eyes red with anger  
And her grey hair dishevelled.  
She looks just like a demon."

Asaji: It is natural that you should feel angry with me.  
But, as for me, I have been always praying the  
deity Kannon to make you repent of your conduct.  
As you say that it is all for me, I shall just  
drown myself in the river. Stop doing such things,  
I pray you.

Ibara: You impertinent girl! I'll just kill you with  
my own hand, if you are going to kill yourself.

Asaji: I'm quite at your mercy. I just pray you to mend  
your way after I am dead.

Ibara: You offending girl! Just wait for me to take  
your life.

Gidayu: "As the old woman  
Takes up the hatchet,  
Her eyes gets dizzy  
And her body benumbed.  
She stands transfixed on the spot.  
Just then, what is to be surprised,  
The young lad appears suddenly  
Under the old chestnut-tree in the garden."

Hanawaka: (reciting) "If you happen to lose your way  
near Asakusa,  
Just lay yourself in the grass  
And never think of taking lodge  
In the solitary house."

(A halo of light surrounds his figure. The two pack-horse men appear into stage.)

Umazo:

You suspicious lad!

Soroku:

(The two, trying to give cuts of sword to the lad, feel dizzy and fall on the ground.)

Gidayu:

"The lad, in a noble voice  
Announces clearly:"

Hanawaka:

The Buddha should be praised!

I am really the Bodhisattva Kannon. I came to stay here for the night for the purpose of making you repent. If only you regret your sin and praise the name of the Buddha, all your sins shall be forgiven and forgotten, and you shall be received into Paradise, thanks to the virtue of your religious daughter.

Gidayu:

"The old woman,  
Touched by the divine virtue,  
Falls on her knees."

Ibara:

The Buddha may be praised! It is very, very merciful of Him to receive me into paradise. Though I have repented my conduct, my old sins cannot be forgiven and forgotten. I would rather drown myself in the lake and so make up for my sins than ruin myself forever.

Gidayu:

"Human nature being good,  
She, though so wicked,  
Sheds bitter tears of regret."

Ibara:

Farewell, my girl.

(So saying, she puts her hand under her daughter's

chin and gazes at her. Then she pushes her away and tries to jump into the water, when the girl checks her.)

Gidayu:

"Then the Bodhisattva Kannon,  
Emitting radiant light  
And giving out sweet perfume,  
Disappears unto the top of the old tree."  
(The curtain falls with a mystical accompaniment of drums and samisen.)

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