Remember to read this manga from LEFT TO RIGHT, NOT RIGHT TO LEFT!

In homage to Horohe Sakaguchi, who is and shall remain one of the best manga authors ever...

D.B.

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SHAKA, THAT MISCHEVIOUS MAN WHO HAD MORE THAN ONE MAN DOUBTING, THE TEACHING OF BUDDHA IS LIKE A STONE BEARDED. IT IS THE NOISE OF THE PAINTED BAMBOO.
WHO'S THAT MONK LEAVING THE GEISHA HOUSE?

IT'S IKKYU, OF COURSE!

WAAAA

OUCH!

HA! HA!

HIC!
WHAT A SHAME!

SO SHAMEFUL FOR A MONK!

SHAMEFUL FOR ANY HUMAN BEING, FOR THAT MATTER!

SHAMELESS!!

FLAP FLAP FLAP
CHAPTER 1
A RESOURCEFUL KID!
In the ancient times, rivalries were born between powerful families. However, these families united in the end and chose a sovereign ruler. Political power moved between the emperor, the nobles, and the samurai. After the Hogen and Heiji civil wars and Gempei war, the shogunate was formed in Kamakura, with Hojo as the regent. The emperor Godaigo then established a new government (known as the restoration of Kammu). Fifty years of hardship and a chaotic medieval era followed in the northern and southern courts.
GODS PROTECT US!

TCHAC!

AAH!
COME ON!

HURRY!

HELP US!!
SO MANY DEATHS...

DESPITE A PRECARIOUS FATE, THE WEAKENED POPULATION MANAGED TO SURVIVE.
PAF

TADA TATA

NO!!

BUDDHA! HAVE PITY ON US!

BUDDHA! HAVE PITY!

AAAH!
In Japan, the Buddhist tradition would have disappeared after the Shoko and Zojo eras (1,000 years each, following the death of Shaka, founder of Buddhism). It plunged the world in ruins and darkness (according to some people, the Shoko and Zojo eras would have lasted 500 years each).
THE WORLD IS IN SUCH DISORDER... ONE CATAS-
TROPHE AFTER ANOTHER...

WE ARE IN OUR DEATH THROES....

WHEN TAKAUSD ASHIKAGA ESTABLISHED
THE MURAMACHI SHOGUNATE IN KYOTO,
THE IMPERIAL COURT TORE APART
THE SOUTHERN COURT (EMPEROR GODAIGO)
AND THE NORTHERN COURT (EMPEROR
KOMYO, THE ONE TAKAUSD PUT ON THE
THRONE)
The influence of the Southern court decreased quickly.

In the year 1392, Yoshimitsu Ashikaga, grandson of Takauji, proposed the reconciliation of the two dynasties and an alternate heir to the throne. Gokameyama, the Southern Emperor gave the three sacred treasures (the Yata Mirror, the Kunisagi Sword, and the Yarasui Sacred Jewel) to Gokomatsu, the North Emperor as the sign of transfer of power.

But the rivalries remained...
THIS WAY!

EH?

HAH! HAH! HAH!

IMPERIAL RESIDENCE
WHAT'S HAPPENING?

FROM WHAT I HEARD, IYONO TSUBONE ALWAYS KEEPS A DAGGER IN HIS SLEEVE. SHE MUST BE PREPARING A DIRTY TRICK!

YOU MUST BE MISTAKEN

SHE'S THE DAUGHTER OF THE COUNSELOR KINO WHO USED TO SERVE ON THE SOUTHERN COURT.

IT WOULDN'T BE A SURPRISE IF SHE ATTEMPTED TO TAKE REVENGE ON US!
Zooooof

JYONO TSUBONE (PRINCESS TERUKO 16-17 YEARS OLD)
PRINCESS, IT'S TERRIBLE! THE EMPEROR WILL BANISH YOU IF HE TAKES THE RUMORS SERIOUSLY!
AND WITH YOUR PREGNANCY

TAMAЕ, THAT'S ENOUGH!

ONLY WHAT THE EMPEROR THINKS MATTERS!

I'M STILL SAD WHEN I THINK THAT YOUR HEIR WILL BE BORN IN SUCH A PLACE...

HAAH!
At the dawn of the 1st of July, 1394, Ikkyu was born in Rakusei.

*Noise of baby crying*
AAAH! HELP ME! A MONSTER!

COME HERE! YOU'LL CATCH COLD!

HA! HA! HA! YOU LOOK LIKE A SNOWMAN!

OUCH!

Yeah!
HEH!

... 

SENGUI-KUMARU!

WHAT'S THIS ABOUT? YOU HAVE TO BE GENTLE WITH TAMAE!

COME NOW! COME INSIDE AND PRACTICE YOUR WRITING!

... 

YES, MUM?
NO, PRINCESS! LET ME DO THIS!

ARE YOU SURE OF WHAT YOU'RE SAYING?

YES, PRINCESS! THERE REALLY WAS SOMEONE!

SCRIBBLES A, B, C, D...
LISTEN!

“I PICK UP THE FALLEN SNOW, I MAKE A BALL AND I AIM AT TAMAE!”

WHAT?!

YOU’LL SEE!!

HA! HA! HA!

HEH!

FLOP

ARE YOU ANGRY ...

SNIFF.

HMM... YOUR POEM IS RATHER NICE!
She's still crying...

Shhh!

Why are they crying, the both of them?
TCHIUP!

WAIT FOR ME!

WHAT'S THAT?

TCHIUP!

IT'S MAGPIE. LUNCH.

SHE'LL COME TO PICK IT UP LATER...
But it's suffering! Why doesn't she eat it immediately?

Huh... well... a bird... that doesn't think...

Oh...

I don't like this place!

It's the capital's cemetery...

The souls of the dead are wandering around us!

Let's leave!

Why don't I have a father?

Mum didn't tell me...
IS HE DEAD?

THERE! THERE!
HERE! THERE!

OH! LOOK, THERE! A RABBIT!
WHERE?

CHOUF

CHOUF

WHERE? WHERE!?

THIS WAY!

KRAOO KRAOO
IN THE MONASTERY?

WHY DO I HAVE TO GO?

I MUST TELL YOU THE TRUTH... YOUR FATHER IS...

THE EMPEROR GOKOMATSU!

WHAT?!
You know that we're under the reign of the Northern Court, don't you?

I'm from the south? The shogun fears the comeback of our dynasty to the power, and Tamae has often seen spies roaming around here.

Shouldn't you just tell dad?

We can't simply go and see him now. One day, you will understand why.

Anyway, you must go to the monastery.

But I don't wanna leave!

Please understand! If you get killed, I...

I wouldn't be able to live any longer!

Poor thing...!
TAKE YOUR TRAINING SERIOUSLY, AND BECOME A NOBLE MONK. WE SHALL NOT MEET AGAIN UNTIL THAT DAY.

BUT I WILL ALWAYS BE BESIDES YOU... NOW I MUST LEAVE.

M... N... N

NOOOO !!!
CALM DOWN!!

...

NO...

NO!

I DON'T WANNA STAY!

LET ME GO!
In 1390, at the age of 6, Senguikumaru entered the Zen Monastery Angokuji. The priest Shukan Zoge gave him the name "Shuken".

*Monastery Angokuji "Rinza" Zen Monastery according to the recommendations of the monk Soseki Takaumi and Tadayoshi Ashikaga. As a monstery "Angokuji" and a pagoda built in each of the 6 provinces of Japan. They were used as places of meditation and in homage to the war victims.
WAKE UP!
DRING

COME ON!

DRING

WAKE UP!

Pof
Pouf

WAKE UP!

STAND UP, KID!

COME ON!!

TAC
IT'S STILL NIGHT OUT...

WHO'S TALKING?

TONG!

KANJII ZAAIII BOOSATSULU*

GYOOSHIN HANNYAA!

HAALAA MITTAA!

GO TO WORK, KID!

TAPTAP

SLEEP ...

*SUSTRAS
GET IN, YOU LOAFER!

PAOF

MY LEGS CAN'T MOVE ANYMORE!

ONLY 10 LAPS LEFT!

KLONG
IN THE TEN MONASTERIES THE MEALS HAVE AN IMPORTANT PLACE IN DAILY LIFE. THAT'S WHY THEIR PREPARATION ISN'T ENTRUSTED TO NOVICES.
YOU MUST NOT MAKE A SOUND!

NEITHER IN DRINKING, NOR IN EATING, NOR IN PUTTING YOUR CHOPSTICKS DOWN!

I DO NOT WANT TO HEAR ANYTHING!

DON'T TALK! DON'T THE ZEN LAUGH! DON'T PRACTICE SCATTER DOES NOT THE RICE! DON'T SPILL TOLERATE YOUR SOUP!

CHORES
TEHAC

PHEW...

EH! KID! YOU'LL CUT THIS HEAP TOO!

KID!

THERE! HERE'S MY BUNDLE TOO!

MINE TOO!

AS USUAL... HE! HE!

PAOF

WHAT'S WITH THAT FACE?

WHAT?!

HOW COULD YOU POSSIBLY DARE SPEAK TO US THIS WAY?!

YOU'RE ONLY A NOVICE, YOU ARE NOTHING! SO BE SILENT!!

I DON'T WANT TO DO IT!
NO!

NO WAY!!

JUST SETTLE THINGS HERE AND NOW!

LET GO OFF ME!

STOP IT! THE EMPEROR IS...

YOU'LL SEE!

TCHOP

YOU'LL REGRET THIS!

PAM

GOING TO SEE THE EMPEROR? ARE YOU DREAMING, KID?!

HI! HI!

HE! HE!

NIARK! NIARK!

COME ON, GET TO WORK!

HE'S MY FATHER....!
MFP! I'M A LITTLE TIRED!

MEH MEH MEH!

TCHAC!

Pak

MUM...
CLING CLANG
GET UP!
TO YOUR FEET!

POUM
DID YOU HEAR ME?!

GO AND GET SOME WATER!

FETCH ME THE BROOM!
HURRY!

COME HERE!

BAM

STUPID CLUMSY KID!

PAAAF
AAH!

PHEEEW ...


HE! HE! THERE IT IS!

TCHAC!

NNH

RRRR-NNNN!

ZIP

SCHAK

AH!

WHO... WHO DID THIS?!
Ahh... It's you?!
Then it's fine...

You're still in training...

Hmmm... Old man is quite kind!

Klong

Ahh... My shoulders are hurting. Tetsuba! Come massage me!

Hmm... Chiklian! You go!

Hey, Chinnen! You go!

Hey, Shuken! Y...

He's in the restroom.
HA! HA! THAT SHUKEN! HE LEFT TO WHINE AGAIN!

I HAD A FEELING THAT HE HAS NOBLE ORIGINS...

AND HE'S VERY STRONG-MINDED.

BOOHOO...

TAKE YOUR TRAINING SERIOUSLY, AND BECOME A NOBLE MONK. WE SHALL NOT MEET AGAIN UNTIL THAT DAY.

CRAC!

YOU HAVE SUCH SOFT HANDS!

HARYO!

TODAY WAS HARD, WEREN'T IT?!
COME TO SEE ME LATER, I'LL CONSOLE YOU...

HA! HA!

TAP TOP
TAP TOP

LET'S SEE, TODAY'S OFFERINGS... 3 MEASURES OF GOLD AND A BAG OF DRIED GOURDS FROM YAMASHIRO WHO LOST HIS WIFE... 5 MEASURES OF RICE FROM...

SHUKEN!

I FORGOT TO PUT OUT THE CANDLES IN THE TEMPLE. COULD YOU GO INSTEAD OF ME?

YES, MASTER!
"SFX OF DOOR OPENING"

GRHH!
THERE, ALL PUT OUT.
UMEYA... ONLY ONE MEASURE...
THANK YOU. HOW DID YOU PUT THEM OUT?
I, ER... BLEW ON THEM.

OH, REALLY?
HUMAN BREATH IS IMPURE. YOU MUST NOT DIRECT IT TOWARDS THE BUDDHA.
TO SHOW RESPECT, FROM NOW ON, YOU WILL PUT THE FLAMES OUT WITH YOUR HAND OR A FAN.
YES, MASTER.
FINE.

TONG!
HANNYAA HAARAA
"LAUGHS"
HI! HI!

RAM RAM
MITTAA ... HMM ... ?

SHUKEN? HAVE YOU EVER SEEN SOMEONE RECITING SUTRAS FACED BACKWARDS?

NO, MASTER! BUT YOU TAUGHT ME THAT WE SHOULD NOT DIRECT OUR BREATH TOWARDS THE BUDDHA!

SO, FROM NOW ON ... I'LL TURN MY BACK ON HIM!

HUM ... "LAUGHS" HI! HI!

HE JUST SCORED!

HE'S DOING RATHER FINE!

HE! HE!

HJ J M!
YOU REALLY KNOW HOW TO HANDLE IT!

YOU SHOULD THROW OUT A CHALLENGE TO THAT SLUG, NIHE!

IT COULD BE INTERESTING! WHEN NIHE PLAYS GO, IT NEVER ENDS!

AND WE HAVE TO BRING HIM SOME TEA ALL THE TIME!

WE CAN'T EVEN REST A LITTLE.

HE USUALLY PLAYS WITH DANKA.

HMM HMM

SUCH A NICE WEATHER! I SHOULD GO AND SEE THE TEMPLE...

ACCORDING TO MASTER ZOGE, THEY HAVE QUITE A RESOURCEFUL KID, WHO THINKS HE CAN CHALLENGE ME...

ATTENTION, HE'S ARRIVING!
HA! HA! SOMEBODY WHO WRITES THAT POORLY CAN'T BE A PRIEST, SO I.

It's forbidden to enter here with leathers. The one who enters will be punished!

EH, NICE! DIDN'T YOU SEE THE PANEL? IT'S FORBIDDEN TO ENTER WEARING LEATHER CLOTHES!

YOU MUST BE SHUKEN! YOU SHOULD KNOW, KID, THAT I ALWAYS WEAR LEATHER PANTS!

AND, YOUR TEMPLE'S DRUMS ARE ALSO MADE OF LEATHER. WHAT DO YOU SAY TO THAT?

HA! HA! HA! HI! HI! HI! HI! HO! HO! HO!

YES. THAT'S THE REASON WHY WE BEAT ON IT ALL MORNING AND NIGHT TO PUNISH IT!

AND YOU COULD BE PUNISHED THE SAME WAY!

HUIH, WELL, YOU'RE QUITE STRONG! HA! HA!
ONE DAY, I'LL HAVE MY REVENGE!

WELL DONE!

SHUKEN! NEXT TIME, YOU'LL HAVE TO TAKE CARE OF KAWAUCHI, THE PAWN-BROKER!

AND ALSO TANGO!

AND THE OLD YAMATO!

YES, SURE! COUNT ON ME!

SHUKEN IS RATHER PROUD OF HIM.

TCHAK TCHAK

TCHAK
SO, OLD MAN?! I'M COMING BACK FROM THE ANGOKUJI MONASTERY. DON'T WORRY ABOUT HIM, HE'S FINE.

IS LIFE IN THE MONASTERY HARD? YES. HE'S COURAGEOUS, BUT HE WANTS TO HEAR FROM HIS MOTHER SO BADLY...

AH... SENGUIKUMARU IS SUCH A BRAVE CHILD... SENGUIKUMARU DOES NOT EXIST HERE ANYMORE. HE LIVES IN THE MONASTERY. YES, PRINCESS
Princess, you look quite pale nowadays.

You'll feel better after you eat the carp I bought at the market.

Waaah! They look delicious! I'll prepare them for dinner.

In town, people only talk about the new Kitayama Villa.

I heard that Yoshimitsu became a priest when he was prime minister. He wanted his son to become shogun. That's why he moved to Kitayama.
They use rare materials brought from foreign countries. The building is covered with gold... it's dazzling!

People say it cost a lot of money! Children call it "the gold house."

While becoming a monk, Yoshimitsu decided to live apart from the world. However, he seems to be continuing to exert his influence.

Yes, the samurai have become very powerful.

Then why do we have an emperor?
Chapter 2
The Five Monasteries
CAN'T YOU PAY A LITTLE MORE ATTENTION!? 

IT WAS YOSHIHIRO OUCHI, THE CAPTAIN OF THE SUJO REGION. HE WILL LEAD THE TROOPS TO SAKAI.

HE'S THE ONE WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THE UNIFICATION OF THE NORTH AND THE SOUTH?

THE CAPTAINS WERE ENTRUSTED WITH THE DISTRIBUTION OF EXPENSES FOR THE BUILDING OF THE GOLD HOUSE, AND THEY'RE NOT HAPPY.

SPECIALY OUCHI!

YOSHIMITSU HATES HIM TERRIBLY! HE'S TRYING TO ELIMINATE HIM BY ANY MEANS.

THERE'S A RISK THAT WAR MAY BREAK OUT AGAIN.
Yoshimitsu Ashikaga declared war.

Kyaaaa

Let's go!

Yoshiiro Ouchi led the troops of Hosokawa, Kyogoku and Akamatsu to Saka. He was under his direct command 2,000 horsemen, to which were added the 30,000 horsemen of Shiba Yoshimasa, Itsushiki and Togashi under the shogunate of Muromachi. The lords of the different provinces gained independence. Their power became higher than that of the captains to guarantee the stability of the shogunate. He had to demonstrate his power, or exterminate them.
BACK!

AAA!

TCHAK TCHAK

SCRAC

HIII!
HELP ME!

NOOO!
Ouchi, Toki and Yamana were defeated and killed. Yoshimatsu reinforced his despotic power.
WHAAH! WHAAH!

BUDDHA! HAVE PITY ON US!

HOW HORRIBLE!

WILL THIS CHILD REST IN PEACE?

WE ALL MUST INVOKE BUDDHA SO THAT HE WILL BE ABLE TO FIND THE CELESTIAL LAND

HOW IMPURE THIS WORLD IS ...

WHERE IS THIS PLACE?

IT'S THE WESTERN PARADISE* LET US PRAY TOGETHER BUDDHA! HAVE PITY ON US!

*Buddhist Paradise
Hey, Shukken! Come here! I'll teach you the local customs!

You'll spend the night with me!!

What?

Oh, you're so lucky! Good night!

Hey! Release me!!

Stop! Stop!

Apply yourself! From now on, it will be part of your duties under me!

Bam

Flap
Flop
Flop

So...cold!

You're staying up outside tonight, too?

I'm only waiting 'till they're all sound asleep.

Don't worry! Just imagine you're cleaning a carrot!

Myself, I come from a samurai family, but I didn't want to become one. So I ran away.

No...I was abandoned here.
BEING A SAMURAI, IT MEANS TO HONOR YOUR FAMILY, EVEN IF THAT MEANS KILLING WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

HOGEJAKU!

...IT'S REALLY COLD.

HE! HARYO! WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

THEY TAKE US, THEY USE US, AND THEY TOSS US ASIDE!

REALLY

HOGEJAKU?

MY FATHER ABANDONED ME...

ABANDONED
SHUKEN WAS THE LUNCH CALL ATTENDANT WITH A SHAVEN HEAD. HE BECAME A PRIEST AND LEARNED TO RESPECT THE DECATOG

ABANDON, FAVOR, MONASTERY, IDLENESS, TRUTH, GRATITUDE
TAKE YOUR TRAINING SERIOUSLY AND BECOME A NOBLE MONK. WE SHALL NOT MEET AGAIN UNTIL THAT DAY.

...A NOBLE MONK...
SHAKA* SAT UNDER A LIME TREE AND LEARNED TO CONTROL HIS PASSIONS AFTER LONG MEDITATIONS AND REPEATED MORTIFICATIONS.

WE CAN SAY THAT THERE ARE 108 PASSIONS UNDER THE FORM OF DESIRES OR OBSESSIONS, AS WELL AS WE CAN SAY THAT THERE ARE 84,000.

PFFFT! STILL THE SAME SERMON!

HO! HO!

HA! HA!

PERFECT!

ABSENT-MINDEDNESS IS AN OBSESSION! YOU DO EXACTLY AS YOU PLEASE!

PURIFY YOUR SPIRIT!

HMM ...

JAIN FOLLOWED THE EXAMPLE OF SHAKA TO ATTAIN NIRVANA.

*SHAKA, FOUNDER OF THE BUDDHISM, BORN IN INDIA ABOUT 560 BC. HE IS ALSO CALLED BUDDHA (THE ONE WHO REACHED THE SPIRITUAL AWAKENING) AFTER HIS DEATH, HIS DISCIPLES SPREAD HIS TEACHINGS AND THE SUTRAS WERE WRITTEN.
It was during the Song era that Japan adopted Zen Buddhism, but it was the shogun Takakili Ashikaga who converted to the Rinzai sect and made it a state religion.

Now, listen to the Decalogue!

"I will not harm life. I will not steal. I will not commit adultery. I will not tell a lie. I will not exaggerate. I will not speak abusively. I will not equivocate. I will not be greedy. I will not be hateful. I will not lose sight of the truth."

The powerful nobles and warrior families submitted to the new religion.

When you become an adult, you will respect these 250 precepts!

Ouch!

Tok

Rinzai Buddhism is stricter than Soto Buddhism.
The lotus is a flower that grows in the middle of muddy waters... however, it remains pure!

First, you must study then, you must study some more!

The Buddha is like a lotus flower.

Mwa! It's really good!

Me too, I want to become like master Yoshi... heh!

CRAK

BLAST!
SHUKEN!

But... they're sutras! You're able to read them?!?

Ah! There you are! I have a huge problem!

It's a bowl. Master likes a lot... it's a gift from a noble family...
What are we gonna do?

Where is Zoge?

He went to play with Nihe.

He! Since Shuken made fun of him, Nihe doesn't dare come again to the temple! We finally get some rest!

This is not the time to talk about it!

Eh, you there!

Shuken! Outside!

Go! Outside!

Ex... excuse us!

Yes! Pardon us! Hi! Hi!

Hmmm...

What are you gonna do?

He'll put you outside too!
SHUT UP! I'M THINKING!

CREAK!

I'LL TAKE IT UPON MYSELF.

WHAT?

REALLY, SHUKEN TRIES TO TAKE PUNISHMENTS INSTEAD OF YOU.

IF YOU TAKE RESPONSIBILITY, YOU'LL DIE!

I'LL DIE?

WH... WHAT...
SHUKEN... THAT... THAT... BOWL WAS MADE IN BIZEN. IT'S A REAL TREASURE... WHY??

MASTER
I TRIED TO KILL MYSELF TO REGAIN MY HONOR.

I SWALLOWED POISON!

WHAT?!

MASTER, YOU TOLD US THAT IF SOMEONE TOUCHED THE CONTENTS OF THAT POT...

THE POT, THERE?

... HE WOULD DIE INSTANTLY!

BUT... THERE'S NOTHING LEFT!

YES! I SWALLOWED EVERYTHING, JUST TO BE SURE!

THERE'S NOTHING LEFT!
REALLY...
I THINK I’LL FEEL FAINT...

Hi! Hi! Hi! THAT’S SO FUNNY!

HE’S REALLY STRONG!

I’LL KILL THAT....!!

PLACK!

GRRRRRR!

BRRROOM
Ouch! Flop flop ah-choo!

Are these sutras too...?

Moroiku mutsune morohomuware...

Everything is vanity, the ecstasy of the spirit, the silence of nirvana.

Those are the "three precepts".

Those to which Shaka aspired, sat under the lime tree.

Waaa! You know them by heart!? The "three precepts"...? I don't understand anything.
IT'S SAID THAT THE TEACHINGS OF BUDDHA HAVE 84,000 PRECEPTS. THERE ARE ONLY A FEW OF THEM HERE.

OH?

THEY WERE SPREAD AND GATHERED IN JAPAN NEARLY 1,000 YEARS AGO.

AH-CHOO! SO MUCH DUST.

8A,000 IN 1,000 YEARS...

HARMO ABANDONED EVERYTHING TO ENTER THE MONASTERY.

BUT STILL... 8A,000... IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO KNOW ALL OF THEM...

COME! COME! IT'S TOP QUALITY!

AH - THE CAPITAL.

YOU THINK THEY'RE SAMURAI HOUSES?

COME AND CHECK THE GOODS!

AH!

MMMM!!!
YES, YOU! YOU SEE MY POTION BASED ON TOAD AND WORM'S SPITTLE? THANKS TO IT AND TO MY SUPERNATURAL POWER, I CAN TRANSFORM YOU INTO GENIES!

IT'S A MIRACLE.... AND A FINE SOUVENIR OF KYOTO!

ON GUARD! ATTACK!

AAAH! I WANT TO BECOME A GREAT SAMURAI! GIVE ME WHAT YOU HAVE BEST!
PAM
OUCH
BUNCH OF SAVAGES!

BUT... SOMEONE STOLE MY PURSE!

HEY!

THIEF!

COME CLOSER!
COME CLOSER!
HERE'S WHERE THE LITTLE SHUIKEN LIVES!

HOOO!

REALLY?

WE ARE MESSENGERS OF DOGU TENZAN!

PLEASE WAIT A MOMENT.

SHUIKEN!!

YES?
MESSAGERS OF DOGUI
TENZAN.CAME TO GET YOU...

TENZAN?

IT'S THE BUDDHIST NAME OF YOSHIMITSU ASHIKAGA!

IT'S A GREAT HONOR, YOU KNOW!

YOSHIMITSU CAN DO AND UNDO THE REPUTATION OF THE TEMPLES
AND ANGOKUJI IS ONE OF THE MOST RENOWNED

THE SHOGUNATE NAMES...

...THE SUPERIORS OF THE DIFFERENT TEMPLES... GRANTS THEM LANDS AND PROTECTS THEM. YOU MUST GO THERE, AND BRING US HONOUR.

YES, MASTERS.
THE SHOGUNATE FEARS THE RETURN OF OUR DYNASTY TO POWER.

THE SHOGUNATE OF YOSHIMITSU

THE GOLD HOUSE
YOU MAY STAND.

I AM HAPPY TO SEE THAT HIS HIGHNESS IS DOING WELL.

ENOUGH BANTER.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF MY NEW RESIDENCE?

IN THE MIDDLE OF SUCH A LANDSCAPE, IT IS TRULY SPLENDID!

AND HIS PHOENIX, AT THE TOP OF THE ROOF, WATCHES OVER THE REIGN OF THE GREAT SHOGUN!
Kyonori Taira was the Prime Minister, but didn't manage to become Shogun whereas Yoritomo Minamoto was Shogun, but couldn't become the Prime Minister! Ha ha!

People call your residence of Kitanoko the "Flower Palace" and this one, the "Palace of Kitayama".

It's really interesting here...

Huh, a palace for a priest...

The last floor is built in Zen style on the second floor, there a 5th Kannon and three Buddhas at the 1st floor.

I planted a lotus there, as in the Western Paradise!

Kannon Bodhi. Satva.
DO YOU THINK EVERYBODY IS PLEASED WITH IT?

HIS HIGHNESS REINS OVER OLD AND NEW BUDDHISM. IT'S A SIGN!

DO YOU SEE THE FRAME OVER ME? IT'S A GIFT FROM THE EMPEROR!

HE'S TALKING ABOUT MY FATHER...!

HMM... THIS MEANS YOU'LL SUCCEED WITH ANYTHING YOU CHOOSE TO UNDERTAKE...

I HEARD THAT SOME CHINESE MESSENGERS BROUGHT YOU A LETTER FROM THEIR EMPEROR, WHO NAMED YOU "THE KING OF JAPAN".

HU! HU!

ZOGI!

TELL ME... WILL I REACH THE WESTERN PARADISE?

HUM, WELL... I CAN'T READ...
HA HA HA! MONKS DON'T LIKE THE IDEA OF AN EARTHY PARADISE, DO YOU?

ANYWAY, THE GOLD HOUSE - YOUR RESIDENCE IS AS RADIANT AS YOUR POLICY EVERYONE ENVIES YOU!

MAY PEACE BE WITH THIS WORLD!

TO PLAY CARDS, SEE NO, OR SING!

WITH ME, THERE'S...

SO... YOU ARE SHUKEN?!

YES, YOUR HIGHNESS.

HOW OLD ARE YOU?

I'M 8!

SOME SAY THAT YOU ARE ALREADY TRULY WISE.

IT'S TRUE!

WELL...

LOOK AT THIS CAREFULLY!
You see the tiger painted on the screen? At night, he goes outside and is very angry! Can't you help us control it?

Hm... This problem is quite difficult.

Of course! I will need a rope!
SHUKEN ...

FINE, I'M READY! ANYONE WANT TO RELEASE IT?

HU! HA! HA!

SUCH A YOUNG MAN! BRING HIM A REWARD!
WAAA! HERE, THERE ARE TSUKEMONOS* AND SOUP EVERYDAY!

PHEW...

SO HE'S THE SON OF THE COHABITANT OF THE EMPEROR... I CAN LET HIM LIVE... OR KILL HIM

WELL, AREN'T YOU HUNGRY?

YES, I AM!

MMM! ALL THIS FOR ME!

HMM... YOU SHALL NOT EAT!

IT'S CONTRARY TO YOUR RULES!

BUT I DIDN'T KILL THOSE CARP... THEY WERE ALREADY DEAD!

SCROM SCROM

*ERINED VEGETABLES
SHUKEN!

THE ONE WHO SERVES THE BUDDHA CANNOT EAT FISH OR MEAT!

! EXCUSE HIM! HE IS JUST A KID!

BUT... I'M HUNGRY!

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?! APOLOGIZE RIGHT NOW!

YES, YES! I CAN EAT EVERYTHING!

FISH, VEGETABLES ...

WELL!

HAH!

REALLY!
CLAC!!

AND THE BLADE OF A SWORD?!
HAVE YOU EVER TASTED THAT?

I BEG YOU...

HOG!

GLA GLA
NOT YET... BUT I'M CURIOUS OF EVERYTHING!

ANYWAY, MY MOUTH IS A BARRIER... SHE CAN'T LET THE DANGER PASS, BECAUSE I AM A DISCIPLE OF BUDDHA AND I STRIVE FOR PEACE!

YEAH...

IMPERTINENT LITTLE BOY!

SCHITT!

OK... YOU WON. HA! HA! HU!
Yoshimitsu is really rich!

SHH! Don't speak so loud!

Even if he's rich, he's aged a lot...

If you live that way in the imperial house...

Why doesn't mum have such pain to survive?

You and your mother should have been happier... Hmm... I'd best stop talking...

You must concentrate on your training!
WITH THIS, YOU WILL DISCOVER AWAKENING...

YOU WILL BE AT PEACE WITH YOURSELF

TADA!

TADA!

TADA!

TADA!

...?

LET'S SEE. TO SIMPLIFY, I'LL SAY THAT EVERY HUMAN BEING HAS AS PURE A SPIRIT AS THE BUDDHA HIMSELF...

MASTER, WHAT IS THE "EVIDENCE"?
Everybody?

But the heart is darkened by passions.

A monk must flee from such noise, and when his soul is as pure as the Shaka's, he will becomes a Buddha in his turn.

As Shaka...?

Buddha...?!
"KING OF JAPAN"...!

I AM ZEAMI*

BACKBITERS SAY THAT THE "KING OF JAPAN" IS SIMPLY A PUPPET OF THE EMPEROR MING...

*AUTHOR AND ACTOR OF NO
Till now, the shogun has been designated by the emperor. If a new government forms, the current situation will be disrupted. To avoid this, I could start by opening trade with China!

As you wish!

Onwards to the Yoshimitsu era!
Before, the no was despised by the nobles...

But thanks to you, it's proven its worth. My father Kwanami has received much success!

I saw the both of you for the first time at a performance in the temple Imagumano...

I was 17, and you...

I was 12!
YOU ACTED THE PART OF THE DEMON YAKSHA...

I WAS ASTONISHED!

YOU'RE FLATTERING ME...

THE FIRST TIME I SAW FARCES OF YAMATO... THE OLD KWANAMI WAS DOING WELL BUT NOW HE'S DEAD.

*THEATRE COMPANY OF THE YAMATO REGION
THE FAMOUS INUJO DONA TOOK HIS POSITION.

I LOVED SEEING HIS MUSES DANCING!

HE WAS AMONG THE BEST.

OH! IF WE WERE TO TALK ABOUT THE ELITE, I'D SAY OM!!

BESIDES, YOU SHOULD BE INSPIRED BY HIM!
TO REIGN YOU MUST HAVE THE WISDOM OF THE FOX AND THE STRENGTH OF THE LION.

I WANT AN OVERWHELMING CHARisma TO MATCH MY RANK. ALSO, IF I INCORPORATE ASPECTS OF CHINESE CULTURE, I COULD GAIN GREAT PRESTIGE.!

... AND I WOULD REMAIN THE "KING OF JAPAN"!
HU HU HU HA HA HA!
THE DREAM IS NICE...

...BUT THE AWAKENING WILL BE DIFFICULT...

YOSHIMITSU DOESN'T ESTIMATE ME LIKE HE DID BEFORE... AS IF I HAD CHANGED...

HMMMM?

I CAN STILL HEAR THEM... EVEN STRONGER...

THESE VOICES... THESE GROANINGS...
THE VOICES OF THE SPIRITS COME AND GO!

THE RATES DROP... THE SAMURAI FAMILIES FADE AWAY... THESE VOICES FULL OF OBSESSION... THESE VOICES... ALL THESE VOICES... WHY?

ALL I KNOW... IS THAT LIFE IS BUT A THEATRE PLAY...!
EH! HARRY! THE ANGOKUJI MONASTERY IS UNDER THE PROTECTION OF THE SHOGUNATE, ISN'T IT?

YES. WE WILL HAVE TO STUDY IN ONE OF THE FIVE MONASTERIES BEFORE WE CAN LEAD ONE TO DISPENSE THE TEACHINGS AND MANAGING THE TERRITORIES OF THE TEMPLES.

OR EVEN REIGN OVER THE "10 MONASTERIES".

THE FIRST ONE, THE SHOKOKUJI MONASTERY*, IS NEAR THE "FLOWERY PALACE".

ITS FOUNDER IS MYOHA SHINOKU. NOW, IT'S FUMYO, THE TUTOR OF THE EMPEROR, WHO MANAGES IT.

*SHOKOKUJI MONASTERY BUILT BY YOSHIYOSHI, INAUGURATED BY SOSEKI (1276–1350). MYOHA WAS THE NEPHEW OF SOSEKI.
It's the Shogunate that choose the superiors, samurai who else!

I'd have preferred to forget them when I entered the monastery...

Scratch

But yet you ask all this of me...

...
IF MY MUM HAS BEEN CHASED FROM SAGANO... IS IT YOSHIMITSU'S FAULT...? AGAINST MY FATHER'S WILL?

YES, OF COURSE! HE'S DONE NOTHING IN THIS MATTER. EVEN THOUGH HE'S THE EMPEROR.

FLAP FLAP
NO! IT'S HIS FAULT TOO!

BUT STILL...

I HATE HIM...

...
THE PORTAL

The portal marks the limit between Nirvana, the spiritual awakening, and the real world. These three entries symbolize the sutras, the lings, the Zen.
DURING THE MING DYNASTY, COMMERCIAL TRADES WITH CHINA BEGAN TO CENTER ON TRADE ROUTES WHICH WERE DEVELOPED UPON THEMSELVES. THE ECONOMY WASN'T BASED ON RICE ANYMORE, BUT ON CURRENCY.

TIOUNG! TIOUNG! TCHING! TCHING!
GION FESTIVAL

TONG! TONG! TCHING! TCHING!

*GION FESTIVAL: Divine service given from the beginning of the 9th century to get protection from the natural disasters. Starting from the 15th century, craftsmen and traders made it a non-religious fair.

FOR BUDDHA'S SAKE! YOU WON'T SAVE ANY POOR PEOPLE WITH YOUR PARAPHERNALIA!

WHAT? THAT PARAPHERNALIA WHICH YOU SPEAK OF, IS THAT OF A SAMURAI!

AH! MONEY...

Kin

Kin
The shogunate's financial resources were quite low. The shogun only had a few territories under his control (during the time of conflicts with the southern court, the territories of the Ashikagas and the old territories of the Hōjō were often captured and recaptured). The taxes received on the territories of the captains didn't fill in the deficit; a solution had to be found.

The traders had to pay more and more taxes and a new tax was laid upon the entire land.

The shogunate only survived thanks to the sake of lowly traders and pawnbrokers!

However, Yoshimitsu kept his exclusive right of appointment and discharge of the captains.
In 1405, Shuken had 12 years.

If I ask you!? Then I'll answer!!
WHAT IS THE TOTAL NUMBER OF SUTRAS?!

HMMMM...

IT TOOK ME A THOUSAND TIMES TO READ THEM BY 84!

WHAT??

IDIOT! IT TOOK ME 1000 TIMES TO READ THEM BY 84! THAT EQUALS 84,000!

HARYO!

AH?!

YES?!

SNAP
SHUKEN! THE PRIESTS HAVE GONE TO THEIR POETRY MEETING. YOU MAY GO AND REST.

HA HA HA! FINALLY GOT IT!!

You're quite at home here!
HARO!

YOU UNDERSTAND EVERYTHING?

AH! AND THEN HUM THERE?

YOU READ THEM ALL?

HMM... CONGRATS! YOUR COURAGE IS EXEMPLARY!

WILL THE MASTER GO TO HIS POETRY MEETING TODAY?

YES, BUT I KINDA SKIMMED OVER THE HARD PASSAGES.

...NO! THAT'S NOT TRUE!

YES! THE SAMURAI AND NOBLE FAMILIES TRY TO OBTAIN THE FAVOURS OF THE PRIESTS...
Ho! Ho! Master, the last two lines touched me deeply...

Fine...

Such refinement isn't for the louts!

We are truly proud to talk with a priest as erudite as you!

Hi! Hi! Hi!
Hi! Hi!

My turn to say the first two lines!

Really...

Such a flatterer!

Since the traders gained importance, they've adopted the same activities as the Zen monks!

Some temples make profit by lending the money of the collection at a high rate.

And since the shogunate isn't rich, he gives them this right, in return for a tax.

Shuken...?

"Money used to restore the funeral shelves, in homage to the ancestors."
SUCH RELENTLESSNESS!

SUCH A PURE SOUL...

ONE DAY, HE'LL BREAK APART, IT'S CERTAIN...

ZZZ

CREAK!
The rules of Buddhism spread more quickly than the laws of the country, but it’s thanks to them that the law is respected.

If the sutras and the people were just one, we would have peace in our country!

WAAH! AH! AH!

"Weren't just one. It's a nice one!"

By the way, when will you grant me your seal?"

*The master must certify the fact that his disciple has reached the spiritual awakening*
A NON RELIGIOUS PERSON ROLLING ON IT LIKE YOU ALSO WANTS THE POWER?!  

MY SEAL WILL COST YOU A LOT!

EVEN A RICH TRADER WOULD HAVE REASON TO COMPLAIN!

ATTACK!

HA! HA! HA!

HO! HO! HO! AHH...
HOO...

WHICH ONE OF THE TWO OF YOU WILL DO THE WATCH, TONIGHT?!

I DON'T KNOW WHICH ONE TO CHOOSE.

EVEN IF YOU DRESS UP LIKE A WOMAN, YOU WILL NEVER HAVE THE SOFTNESS OF THEIR SKIN... MY LITTLE...

O00H!

HOO! HOO!
NOOO!

MASTER...
SUTRA No.1...
AND THEN THE
BODHISATTVA...

GAVE TO
SEIZO A
SUNSHADE.
USING MAGIC, HE
TRANSFORMED
INTO A LARGE
SUNSHADE...

SEIZO IS
GUARDIAN
OF THE
SUTRAS.
AND MADE
3,000 ZEN
WORLDS
APPEAR.

THANKS
TO WHICH
TECHNIQUE?

SOME SAY
THAT A
YAMABUSHI*
CAN ALSO
CURE DISEASES
AND SEE
PROPHETIES.

*MOUNTAIN PILGRIM SUPPOSEDLY ENDOURED WITH SUPERNATURAL POWER.
I HEARD THAT WHEN YOU FLY, YOU CAN SEE UP TO 1,000 MILES AWAY!

Zoooooof

OH!

I'D LIKE TO HAVE THAT GIFT TOO!

FOR MEN! FOR THE WORLD!

HE?

IT'S NOT MAGIC! ONLY WISDOM CAN GIVE BIRTH TO SUPERNATURAL POWER!

SLAP
THAT'S IT... BUT WHAT DOES THE "3,000 WORLDS" MEAN?

IT MEANS UP, DOWN, NORTH, SOUTH, SEA, MOUNTAINS, LAKES, PONDS, RIVERS, SUN, MOON, STARS, TOWNS, VILLAGES...

I SAW A YAMABUSHI PUTTING OUT A FIRE!

I THANK YOU.

YOU'RE THE LITTLE SHUKEN, AREN'T YOU?

YES...

CONGRATS, SHUKEN! THE ELDERS DIDN'T OPEN THEIR MOUTHS!

IT'S STILL SURPRISING BEING ABLE TO HAVE EVERYTHING ENTER IN A SUNSHADE.
Shaka really wasn't a man like us. I can't manage to stay awake during classes.

Eh!? Shuken manages to walk while sleeping!

"Yuimagyo"! It's gibberish!!

He said "emptiness emptiness emptiness"!

Eh?

Material objects don't have any consistency. Only the spirit has.

Yes! Yes! It looks like the sutras we recite every morning! The "makahannyaaa ku kuyakubuku" thing!

"Ku" again, "emptiness".

Do you know what it means?

Not at all!
マカハニー、マミミョウヤ、ムミミヨジン・ミューナミューナ・・・
come one！
nothingness！emptiness！
everything must disappear！

I heard that ZoGe requested to go to the monastery Kenninji.
I don’t want to go there.

nothingness, emptiness it makes me hungry！

Let’s go eat some mashed beans！

Follow me！

hoo hoo...

What are you saying？!
And what will we pay with？

Euh...

I know！

hoo hoo...
HOO HOO...

YOU ARE THE LITTLE MONKS OF ANGOKUJI?

YES!

THEY REALLY DON'T HAVE ANYTHING ELSE TO DO THERE!

MAKE AN OFFERING! SMALL FOR YOU, BIG FOR BUDDHA!

REALLY! YOU KNOW YOUR STUFF! STILL, WE DON'T PRACTICE BEGGING IN THE MONASTERY!

IS THAT SO? GO ON, GET OUTTA HERE!

RASCALS!

WAHH! LET'S LEAVE!
PHEW...! I CAN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE!

TAKE WHAT, THE MONKS? RELIGION PUTS YOU TO SLEEP?

PISS OFF!!

I'LL EAT YOU! YAHH!!

STOP IT! IT MAKES ME EVEN MORE HUNGRY! HA! HA!

ME, RELIGION KEEPS ME FROM SLEEPING!
The Zazen... sitting isn't a goal, it's a means...

We sit to solve the Zen problems asked by our master.

When will I be able to join these meetings?

Well... I haven't taken part in them myself yet.

Hoo! Hoo!
HE REALLY LOOKS DIRTY WITH THOSE CLOTHES!

HOO! HOO!

SINCE HE TRAVELS ALONE, HE CAN BRING HIS QUEST TO A SUCCESSFUL END.

RINZAI...

... IS A SECT OF USELESS BUMS!

AAAH!

YOU'LL SEE!
CHINESE POEMS ARE COMPOSED OF 4 OR 5 VERSES OF 7 SYLLABLES.
Don't forget the rhymes, nor the 4 sorts of intonations...

The poem is a reflection of the heart.

Writing a poem seems to be much more interesting than the zazen or chores! Except that you have to write it in kanji, like the sutras!

The children of Kyoto call Kenninji "the temple of study". Tofukiji is nicknamed "the temple of Buddhism" because of its immense size.
KENNINJI IS THE THIRD OF THE FIVE MONASTERIES! IT'S SO BEAUTIFUL!

IT'S SAID THAT TATSUCHU CONSISTS OF 60 PAGODAS. THEY SPREAD OUT BETWEEN 4TH AND 5TH STREET.

REALLY?

IT WAS FOUNDED BY YOSAI.
It was built 200 years ago, during the Kamakura era.

Yosai went to study in China twice. He's the first one to bring tea to Japan.

Ah, China! I wonder what kind of country it is...

During the Heian era, people thought there was nothing across the sea but more water. During the Kamakura era, Dogen went to China and founded the sects Tendai, Shingon, and Soto.

Then Buddhism spread.

Honen, Shinran, and Nichiren founded their own sects.
ME TOO, I WANT TO GO TO CHINA!

I'D LIKE TO GO TO INDIA DURING THE ERA SHAKA WAS ALIVE!

ERR? WHAT?!

WHAT?!

I MET BUDDHA!
We're finally at the spring of year 1405.

The emperor went to the gold house recently.

He attended a no play! Even him...

The world changes...

Was Zeami playing?

Slurp

I don't think so... I think it was Inou Doa.

He had a great success!
NIHE! I brought you your favorite cakes.

Well, it if isn’t Shuken! It’s been a while!

I thought several times about taking my revenge, but...

HO! HO! HO!

BUT I haven’t given up!

Are you feeling bad?

Actually, I prefer the Dengaku or the Kyogen*. You?

My father! In the gold house!

* Dances and farces played during the intermissions of No
I feel close and far away from him at the same time. What kind of man is he?

After all, it's none of my concern...

It's not my problem anymore...
At the age of 15, Shukken began writing remarkable poems which became well-known across all of Kyoto.

Flowers cover the scent of spring. I go for a walk declining with emotion. Hundreds of flowers open and make the sky and earth feel their perfume. Wakes my soul is it an ephemeral dream?

It's said... that it delights you to go and see the cherry trees. That the leaves, while falling, purify the sky and the earth. It's so beautiful that you get the feeling of smelling their perfume once at home.

Not bad, not bad at all! It's pure, calm, noble, elegant.
FINE... DO YOU KNOW THAT THE CONFUCIANISM GOES HAND IN HAND WITH THE STUDY OF POETRY?

WHY?

WELL

ACTUALLY... CONFUCIANISM IS THE VIRTUE THAT BUILDS THE DIGNITY OF THE MONK, I'D SAY.

THE MONK MUST PERSEVERE THE DETAILED STUDY OF ALL THINGS.

IS THAT WRITTEN IN THE 84,000 SUTRAS?

HMM... I HAVEN'T REALLY READ THEM ALL...
THE MONASTERY IS LIKE...

... A SWAMP OR A FOREST. IT'S FULL OF OBSTACLES TO YOUR PROGRESS.

THE MONK FOLLOWS THE PRECEPTS, PLUNGES ITS ROOTS AT THE DEEPEST, JUST LIKE A YOUNG PLANT. HE STUDIES AND BECOMES STRONG LIKE A TREE.

MASTER! YOU TOLD ME THAT ANYBODY WHO STUDIES CAN FIND THE PEACE IN HIMSELF.

YES—ANY BEING CAN BECOME BUDDHA.

BUT HOW DO THE PEOPLE WHO AREN'T MONKS ACHIEVE THAT?

IT COSTS A LOT TO STUDY...

SOME DON'T EVEN KNOW HOW TO READ...

HMM...

YOU STILL HAVE MUCH TO LEARN... KEEP ON STUDYING!
I'M BUSY!!

CLAC

LET'S SEE...
TANGO...
A MEASURE
OF GOLD,
AS USUAL...

15 YEARS
OLD... IT'S
BEEN 9
YEARS
SINCE HE ARRIVED
HERE...
TAOM

HOW HORRIBLE!

HOW HORRIBLE!

IT'S A MACABRE DANCE!

THERE WILL BE ANOTHER EPIDEMIC IN KAWARA!
TAKE CARE NOT TO BE INFECTED!

HURRY UP!

SHUKEN, WE'RE LATE! BOTETSU WILL BE ANGRY AGAIN...

IT'S QUITE SPOOKY HERE!

IT LOOKS LIKE WE'RE IN HELL!
IN THE CASE OF WAR OR A FLOOD, THERE'D SURELY BE MANY VICTIMS! THOSE SLUMS WOULDN'T LAST LONG!

IT WOULDN'T LOOK GOOD

YEAH...

BUT THESE POOR PEOPLE CAN ONLY LIVE HERE...

THEY'RE GRAVEDIGGERS, BUTCHERS, AND TANNERS. VAGRANTS OR PEOPLE WITH INCURABLE DISEASES ALSO GO THERE TO TAKE REFUGE.

THEY'RE IMPURE PEOPLE...
THERE ARE EVEN ITINERANT ARTISTS...

KAWARA...

WHY...

ARE THEY LIVING THIS WAY?

THEY DISGUST YOU?! THEY'RE JUST HERE TO DO WHAT NOBODY ELSE WANTS TO DO!

IT MIGHT BE TRUE ON THE ISLANDS, BUT KAWARA IS REALLY SPECIAL.

THE STAIN OF THIS PLACE ISN'T ONLY DUE TO THE CORPSES. RANDANT CRIME HAS ALSO CREPT INTO THE VEINS OF THIS PLACE...

*KAWARA IN THE ANCIENT TIMES, KAWARA WAS A CEMETERY AND THEN A DISTRICT OF UNDESIRABLE SETTLED THERE LITTLE BY LITTLE.
TODAY, THE SUPERIOR GOES TO CHINA AS A COUNSELOR AT THE MING COURT.

I ENVY HIM. HE'LL HAVE ALL THE GIRLS HE WANTS THERE!!

I'M ALL NUMB...

IT SURE WOULDN'T HAPPEN TO US!
HEY, ARE YOU SHUKEN?!

DESPITE YOUR YOUNG AGE, YOU WRITE POEMS SKILLFULLY...

EITHER YOU WORK HARD, OR YOU WERE BORN GIFTED...

MIGHT YOU HAVE NOBLE ORIGINS?

SO?

WELL...

ACTUALLY
MY ANCESTOR IS GENJI.
MY FATHER BELONGS TO THE FUJIWARA!
MINE IS CALLED HIRA.
I ALSO HAVE BLOOD OF THE KYUJO!

STRANGE! SHUKEI REMAINS SILENT AS A STONE!
MEH! SOMEHOW, HE LOOKS RETARDED!
MAYBE HE'S ONLY SKILLED IN POETRY...

WE'RE ALL MONKS! ALL CHILDREN OF BUDDHA! IT'S NOT A MATTER OF EQUALITY OR UNEQUALITY!

IT'S SIMPLY A POINT OF VIEW...

WHERE I COME FROM MATTERS NOT!
BAH... HE WON'T GO FAR...

HE!

HE!

WHY!

IF YOU LEAVE THE TEMPLE, YOU COULD SUCCEED IN TRADING!

YOU COULD EAT BEAN PASTE WHENEVER YOU WANT!

MYSELF, I'M ONLY THE CHILD OF A SMALL TRADER. WHAT WILL I BECOME?

COME ON, LET'S GO BACK!

NO... I DON'T KNOW EITHER.

DO YOU KNOW WHO SHUKEN REALLY IS?
"See to respect the commands..."

The Zen... the commands.

The monk respects the laws. He studies a lot, and becomes strong like a tree.

Lies! The five monasteries bring only weariness and disappointment!

It's false!
CHAPTER 3
FOLLOW THE CLOUDS
YAAAH!

TADA TATA

YOSHI-MITSU IS DEAD

THIS IS ALL SO UNEXPECTED...

WILL HIS SON YOSHIMOCI TAKE OVER?

MORE IMPORTANTLY, DOES HE HAVE ENOUGH CHARACTER TO BE RESPECTED BY THE NOBLES AND THE SAMURAI?

AND BY HIS BROTHER YOSHI-TSUGU?

ON THE 6TH OF MAY, 1408, YOSHI-MITSU PASSED AWAY, AT THE AGE OF 51.

ABOUT 3,000 MONKS OF VARIOUS SECTS READ THE SUTRAS DURING HIS FUNERAL, IN THE RAKUHOKU MONASTERY.

FOOTNOTE: 2EAMI WAS 48 YEARS OLD
AND AGAIN...

EVEN THE "KING OF JAPAN" IS NOW TAKEN AWAY.

THE UPHEAVAL SCARED THE PRETENDERS TO THE THRONE AWAY...

EVERYTHING HAS TO END SOMETIME...
THE ACTOR MUST MAKE HIS PLAY INTERESTING, IN ORDER TO ATTRACT AN AUDIENCE...

NO IS LIKE A FLOWER.

AMONG THE COMMON PLANTS...

THE FLOWERS OPEN ONE AFTER ANOTHER, PROVOKING SURPRISE, STIRRING EMOTIONS...

FLOWERS ARE INTERESTING AND RARE AMONG PLANTS THE SAME CAN BE SAID ABOUT THE SPIRIT.

THEIR APPEARANCE IS BEAUTIFUL BUT BUT THEY'RE SO EPHEMERAL...

GLORY DOESN'T LAST LONG...
A flower withers. It has but one moment to shine... The Actor too, has his moment of glory...

NO...

But... but that doesn't comfort me at all!

IT TRULY IS A SHAME.

SUCCESS FOLLOWED MY FATHER UNTIL THE MOMENT OF HIS DEATH. HE MAINTAINED HIS IMAGE THROUGHOUT HIS YEARS. HE WAS THE PHOENIX OF THE ART...
A movement is assembling to appoint Yoshitsugu as shogun!

Indeed.

Father!

What is your secret?!

From now on, I do what I want!

Tcha!
You should renounce your plans to succeed your father, despite his wishes...

Missed...

Tchak

Yes! If we continue like this, our entire family will be treated as mere subjects of the new emperor!

My father went too far!

Renounce?! You can renounce if you wish!

You're insane.

Yes, Yoshimitsu went too far.

From now on, you will have to consult the captains. They're influential and essential advisers.
After the death of his father, Yoshimochi's first act was to destroy the Gold House.

CRAC

He used the salvaged wood to build another palace by 1409, at the death of Yasuko, Yoshimitsu's widow. The Gold House, as well as some other buildings, had completely disappeared.

Drinks, drinks! Somebody bring me something to drink!

Commercial trade with China was officially halted in 1411.

But trade continued in secret.
The Tenryuji Monastery has achieved the prime rank. Shokokuji is now in the background.

It's Yoshimitsu who promoted it to this rank... his son is taking revenge...

Ah... if only he could retire... what will become of the 5 monasteries...?
Yoshimochi succeeded his father at the age of 9 but held no real influence. Then Yoshitsugu was born from a different mother. He was particularly attentive to Yoshimitsu during the last years of his life. The ideal successor.

But Yoshimochi balks at the idea of retiring from power.

At least...

Yoshimitsu understood the Zen.

The disciple who seeks to understand the thoughts of his master is also very strong...

Whatever you can say...
THE EMPEROR GOKOMATSU WAS STILL YOUNG WHEN HE LOST HIS PARENTS. IT WAS A BAD Omen FOR YOSHIMITSU...

SINCE MY WIFE TOOK CARE OF HIM, SHE IS NOW SOMEHOW THE EMPRESS AND I HER HUSBAND SOMEHOW THE EMPEROR...

Huh...!

HE'S TALKING NONSENSE! BUT I CAN'T SAY A WORD

TSUNETSUGU ICHIJO, MAIN ADVISER OF THE EMPEROR.

YOSHIMITSU, YOU'RE THE REGENT OF THE COUNTRY THEN YOU ARE A LITTLE LIKE THE FATHER OF GOKOMATSU.
Hmmm... he coveted the place of the ex-emperor and wanted his son to take over for him.

Gokomatsu went to the gold house to visit Yoshimitsu, who was 15 years old at that time. He made him drink sake unbelievable!

Yoshimitsu didn't respect tradition. He even suspected the captains of treachery.

He even repudiated the hereditary succession of the captains!

He was really ambitious!

And then, suddenly, he goes off and dies of a bad flu...!
ANTAGONISM BETWEEN THE TWO HALF-BROTHERS ... THE SOURCE OF TROUBLE IS ALWAYS THERE

ANYWAY, MAY PEACE REIGN OVER THE 5 MONASTERIES

THE WAY OF THINKING OF THE 5 MONASTERIES DRIVES THE LITTLE MONKS TO WRITE POEMS IN THE CHINESE STYLE

YES, YOUR CONTRIBUTION IS INDEED GREAT

AND THE TEMPLE IS BLOOMING.

HA! HA! HA!

HA! HA! HA!

HA! HA! HA!

HU! HU! HU!
AH, GREAT!

MACKEREL'S MY FAVORITE FISH!

AND LOOK AT THIS CHINESE VASE!

IT'S SPLENDID TOO!

HA! HA! HA!

THE SUPERIORS OF THE 5 MONASTERIES WERE TUTORS OF SHOGUNS, GENERALS, AND CONSULTANTS IN POLITICS AND DIPLOMACY. THOUSANDS OF TEMPLES THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE COUNTRY DEPEND ON THEM. THE SHOGUNATE CONTROLLED THEM AND BECAME PROSPEROUS ONCE AGAIN.
"CLAC!  CLAC!  CLAC!"

"It looks like a procession in the honor of the Shogun!"

"Thanks! Thanks!"

"Buddha! Have pity on us!"

"It's the Heaven Sect..."

"Buddha! Have pity on us!"

"And there's the Nichiren Sect!"

"MAY PEACE REIGN FOREVER!"

"Owaf!"
*TO MAKE A NAME FOR ONESELF BY TEACHING LAWS ANO ZEN, AND TO DESPISE MANKIND, LEAVES ME SPEECHLESS IF ONE CAN'T DISTINGUISH RIGHT FROM WRONG. IT RESULTS IN A CONSTANT FIGHT WITH WRONG.
HMM... ONE WHO ENTERS A LIFE OF RELIGION TO SPREAD THE ZEN MUST DESIST HIMSELF TO OBEY THE ONES WITH NOBLE ORIGINS WHO HARDLY VALUE RELIGIOUS GOALS. THIS PROBLEM DOESN'T SEEM TO HAVE A SOLUTION.

MASTER!

THIS POEM EXPRESSES THE PRESENT SITUATION. THE FIVE MONASTERIES START TO DECLINE...

SILENCE!!

I HOLD YOU IN HIGH ESTEEM, BUT YOU SHOULD NOT CAUSE ANY TROUBLE... BE MORE MODERATE.

BUT!?
I KNOW WHO YOU ARE...

AND YOU ARE CLEVER...

THANKS.

THIS INNER POWER IS YOUR STRENGTH...

HE'S STILL REALLY YOUNG...
AH! YOU'RE ALIVE!

YOU MAY BE WONDERING THE SAME THING ABOUT ME...?
LOOK AT THOSE WHITE CLOUDS... WHERE CAN THEY GO?

HE! SHUKEN!

HERE YOU ARE, FINALLY! WE WERE WAITING FOR YOU!

WELL... I...

I THINK I'VE SEEN THAT MONK SOMEWHERE

HE'S THE PRIEST OF THE RUINED TEMPLE SAISONJI.

HE'S COMING!
TETSUJIN TOLD ME ABOUT HIM... HE SUCCEEDED EGBEN KANZAN AT THE MYOSHINJI MONASTERY. HIS MASTER, MUIN, WANTED TO GIVE HIM HIS SEAL, BUT THE "OLD MODEST" AS HE'S CALLED, REFUSED.

THE SUCCESSOR OF KANZAN!!

His real name is Soi Iken. He's weird... He doesn't even have a disciple.

IT'S HIM!

THAT'S ALL I MANAGED TO GET!

I'M HUNGRY!

PROF.
AH! SOUP!

THANKS A LOT!

THANKS... THANKS...

THANKS

YOSHIMITSU CLOSED THE MYOSHINJI TEMPLE DURING THE PREVIOUS TIMES OF UNREST...

KANZAN WAS THE DISCIPLE OF DAITO, FROM THE DAITOKUJI MONASTERY. DAITO WAS THE DISCIPLE OF DAO.

ALL FAMOUS NAMES!!

GUIGEN RINZAI PROPAGATED THE ZEN!

LIKE WITH A DYNASTY?!

WELL... ONLY SCRAP REMAINS OF DAITOKUJI NOW.

THAT'S NOTHING COMPARABLE TO GREATNESS OF THE FIVE MONASTERIES...
IDIOTS! DO YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENED WHEN DAITO HAD AN AUDIENCE WITH THE EX-EMPEROR HAHAZONO?!

HMM...

THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE LAW, MEETING WITH THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THAT MYSTERIOUS RELIGION!

DAITO HERME-TAGE (NARA SAKO)

THE REPRESENTATIVE OF OUR RELIGION, MEETING WITH THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THAT MYSTERIOUS LAW!

HMM...
WHAT MAKES THEM SO MYSTERIOUS? DAITO AND HANAZONO SAT FACE-TO-FACE

THE RESPECTIVE INCARNATIONS OF "INEQUALITY" AND "EQUALITY"

WHAT...!? THEN INEQUALITY APPLIES TO THE EMPEROR...!? 

THE ONLY RULE THAT IS HELD AT THE MONASTERIES IS THAT OF THE NOBLES.

RIGHT, HARYO!? 

ROOTS ARE ROOTS!

SHUKEN ...

AAAH!
WHAT’S HAPPENING?

THEY’RE STARVING.

HARVESTS HAVE BEEN BAD. PEOPLE ARE LEAVING FOR THE LARGER CITIES, BUT MANY DIE ON THEIR WAY...

SHIFIKU IKU, KIFU ISHIKI, SHIKISOKU ZEKU, KUSOKU ZESHIK!

MUMMY!

MUMMY!

MUMMY...!
SHOHO KUSO, FUSHO FUMETSU

MASTER! WHY DIDN'T THE BUDDHA SAVE MY MOTHER AND MY SISTER?

FUKU FUJO, FUZO FUGEN

IT'S DREADFUL...

DOUGOU!

LETS GO BACK HOME

SHUKEN! COME!

DON'T CRY. IT'S BETTER THIS WAY...

...
SHUKEN!

NO! NO!

WAIT!!

TAP TAP.

SLOWLY

PLEASE!
PLEASE!

LET ME BE YOUR DISCIPLE!

WHO ARE YOU?

I AM SHUKEN! I COME FROM THE ANGOKUJI MONASTERY!

AH, YES...

ANGOKUJI ...? YOUR STOKE IS FILTHY.

I...
YOU WEREN'T SERIOUS, WERE YOU?

HE'S WEIRD! EVEN MORE, HE LIVES IN A RUINED TEMPLE!

SAY, SHUKEN... LATELY...

I HEARD YOU WANTED TO LEAVE...

WOULD YOU ALLOW IT?!

I CAN'T PREVENT YOU FROM FOLLOWING YOUR OWN PATH...
YOU'RE HONEST AND YOU HAVE CHARACTER... YOU CAN TRY TO MAKE A NAME FOR YOURSELF!

MASTER ...

ARE YOU REALLY SURE?

BUT... LEAVING THE TEMPLE, IT MEANS SPOILING YOUR FUTURE...!!

YES, I'M LEAVING
YOU REALLY LOOK SERIOUS!

HARYO, UNCHIBO! FAREWELL...

SPOILING...

HE'S REALLY LEAVING...

FINALLY! THAT PARASITE IS FINALLY GONE!
LIKE THE CLOUDS, HE HAS NO PLACE TO GO, AND LIKE THE WATER, HE NEVER STOPS. HE'S NOW A TRAVELLING PRIEST...

A TRAVELLING PRIEST?

PLITCH PLITCH

SPOILING

IS THERE ANY REASON I CAN'T BE THE SAME AS HIM?
plitch
plitch
A BOODHISATTVA STATUE

FLITCH
THE SAIKONJI!
YOU GOT YOUR WAY WRONG. YOU HAVE TO GO BACK THE WAY YOU CAME!

*CROAK!

HAAH... THIS WAY...

*In Japanese, the word "frog" means the same as "to return" and "to go back."
IS SOMEONE HERE?!

HEY!

KR400
MASTER, I SAW YOU IN KAWARA... I WANT TO BECOME YOUR DISCIPLE!

MASSH! MAASSH!

CHAK WHAT?!

TCHAK

I BEG YOU!

SCHRIC SCHRIC SCHFRR!

SCHRIC!

HUUU... YOU'RE STILL HERE?
PREPARE HOT WATER!

WASH MY BACK!

WASH MY UNDERWEAR!

YES, MASTER!

YES, MASTER!

TCHOK

YES, MASTER!

PREPARE LUNCH!
CRUNCH!

SLURP!

TIP! TIP!

CRUNCH!

HMM...

WAM!

PREPARE MY BED!

O... OK!

RUN!
I’LL CALL YOU SOJUN ...

WHAT?

YES, M... MASTER!

DID HE GIVE HIMSELF A NAME TOO?

ZZZ!

ZZZZ
IN 1411, A NEW LIFE BEGAN FOR SHUKEN, 17 YEARS OLD AT THE TIME.

WHAT?! DISCIPLE AT SAIKONJI?!?

YOU WON'T GO THERE!

IT'S A LAIR OF MANGY DOGS!

BUT...

PRINCESS! I WANT TO GO THERE!
TEMPLE AND RUIN
YOU WILL HAVE CHORES HERE...

EVERY DAY.

FINE!

SEE YOU TONIGHT.

SUCH NICE WEATHER!

FINE!

SO WE WALK THIS WAY...
AT THE TEMPLE, FROM WAKING TO BEDTIME, THE DAY IS ALWAYS THE SAME: WAKING UP, SUTRAS, MEAL, TEA CEREMONY, HOUSEWORK, CHORES, Zazen... SUCH BOREDOM!

EHH...

LET'S START WITH THIS HOUSE...

HI!
I'VE ALREADY GIVEN SOME! GET AWAY!

KLONG

WHAT?

KYAAAA

WAAAH!

cot! cot! cot!

EEN!

BUDDHA! HAVE PITY ON US...

HUM... I'M ONLY A MONK.

BUDDHA! HAVE PITY ON US!

HE! HE!
Take this, that's for you!

Moreover, the price of the rice went down. Even a good harvest wouldn't save us.

With last year's rains, the harvest will be disastrous...

Even us, day labourers, will become more and more poor!

The tax collector comes once a year.
DID YOU CALL ME?

AH, THERE HE IS!

WE, FARMERS, PAY THE INTENDANTS AND ADMINISTRATORS WITH RICE, AND THEY PAY THE CAPTAINS WITH MONEY.

THEY SPECULATE ON THE CHANGES OF THE PRICE OF THE RICE TO MAKE A PROFIT.

IT'S QUITE COMPLICATED, BUT IT'S CUNNING!

THE WORLD IS CHANGING. NOW, TO BE INFLUENTIAL, YOU MUST HAVE MONEY!


EVEN THE ZEN TEMPLES MAKE MONEY!

ALSO, THE NOBLE FAMILIES AND THE SAMURAI'S BORROW MONEY AT A HIGH RATE!

IN OTHER VILLAGES, IT'S POSSIBLE TO PAY WITH MONEY. EVEN WE COULD HAVE GOTTEN RICHER!

AARGH!
Money fathers money, and the farmers don't get anything!

However, it's a nice strategy! They're waiting for the price of the rice to go at a high rate before they sell!

But before that, they got into a lot of debt!

Anyway, they're not starving!

And we can only shut up...

And we can only shut up...

Even the temples take advantage of people's misery...
THE...

ZOoooF

Hm... it's so good!

If only we could have seaweed rice every day...

Ah!

For... forgive us...

Sorry!

Take this too...
AAAH! IT'S BLEEDING...

DAY AFTER DAY, THE SAME CHORES... RUBBING HIS BACK...
OH...

I FELL ASLEEP AGAIN.

ALL THESE CHORES ARE SO TIRING!

AHHH...

SLEEP...

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

I... I'M MEDITATING!
WHY?

Bam

I'm concentrating to reach spiritual awakening!

I want to have a spirit as pure as Shaka's.

He!

Paof

Sojun! Why did you come here?

To study!

Go to bed! Tomorrow, we get up early!
WHY DOES HE BLAME ME FOR PRACTISING ZAZEN?

WHY?

WHY?

TCHIP!

SINCE I CAN'T CONCENTRATE IN THE TEMPLE, I'LL PRACTICE HERE!
FORGIVE ME, MASTER!

HE! HE!

WHAT A FUNNY MONK!

AT LEAST, NOBODY WILL COME HERE!

...

...
I HAVE TO CONCENTRATE...

CONCENTRATION.

HELLO!

HE, YOUNGSTER!

YOU'RE REALLY NAIVE!
THINK WELL!

YOU BLOOD... IS YOUR STRENGTH!

YOU WANT TO WASTE YOUR FUTURE?

BECOME A NOBLE MONK...

I AM BETRAYING YOU...

NO...

I CAN'T REMAIN AT THE TEMPLE...
I CAN'T MANAGE TO EMPTY MY MIND...

CONCENTRATE...
FORGIVE ME, I'M LATE. I'M GOING TO BOIL WATER AND PREPARE DINNER...

YOU PRACTICED ZAZEN TODAY, DIDN'T YOU?

WELL... Y... YES.

YOU HAVE SOIL AND DEAD LEAVES ON YOUR CLOTHES!

IT HELPS ME TO PURIFY MYSELF!

AHHH!

MASTER! WHY!?
PAAF

AHH! DON'T HIT ME!

I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU THINK!

GO IMMEDIATELY BOIL WATER!

SMACK

AAAH!

THERE'S NO DOUBTING IT! HE'S WEIRD...

HEY, MONK! GET AWAY FROM HERE! YOU'RE DISTURBING!

SPLOF

HEY! IT'S SHUKEN!
AH, YES!
HE HAS SUNK PRETTY LOW!
HE MUST SUFFER A LOT...
HE WANTED IT... HE'S FINALLY TASTING THE JOYS OF SACRIFICE! HE HE!

HE MUSTN'T EAT HIS FILL...

NOBODY IS CRAZY ENOUGH TO DO OFFERINGS IN THOSE SHABBY TEMPLES!

HE MUST BE SO POOR THAT HE CAN'T EAT CORRECTLY...

HE LOOKS EXHAUSTED...

GALA GALA

PFFF... TOO BAD!
TODAY, WE WON'T NEED TO GO OUT.

PLIC

PLIC

YOU'RE RIGHT! WITH THIS RAIN...

NO, THAT'S NOT IT!

EH? THAT CAN BE EATEN?

EH! I'M STILL ALIVE, AIN'T I?

MEALS ALLOW US TO CONTINUE OUR QUEST... IT'S A BLESSING OF GOD!

IT DOESN'T COST ANYTHING... WE JUST NEED TO GO AND SEE PEOPLE. BUT IF IT'S ONLY AS A MATTER OF FORM AND NOT FAITH, IT'S MERE BEGGING.
MASTER, WHY DO YOU BLAME ME FOR LOOKING FOR TRUTH WITH THE ZAZEN?

SLURP! SLURP! SORONCA!

THERE IT IS! THE WEATHER IS NICE! BUT WHERE ARE THE CLOUDS GOING...?

OH! THEIR SHAPES CHANGE LITTLE BY LITTLE!

THAT ONE, THERE! IT LOOKS LIKE A MUSHROOM!

MASTER! WHY DON'T YOU TAKE OTHER DISCIPLES?

YOU ARE STRANGE...

AND YOU, WHY DID YOU COME IN THIS RUINED TEMPLE?
YOU'RE DOUBTING... ARE YOU REGRETTING YOU CAME HERE?

NO! NEVER... NEVER...

OH! OH! SUCH ENTHUSIASM... OH! MY SHOULDERS HURT...

RRRRRRRR!

WHAT A WEIRD COMPANION...
MASTER...

SLURP! SLURP!

BROF!

IT'S BEEN ALMOST A YEAR THAT I'VE BEEN HERE... WHEN WILL YOU SHARE YOUR TEACHINGS WITH ME?

CRONCH!

SCRONCH!
TATADA

PILLAGERS!

AAAH!
SLAP
SWIPE EVERYTHING WORTHY!
PAAE!
HAH!
NOO!

C'MON! GIVE IT!
BUT... WE'LL STARVE TO DEATH!
SHUT UP!
TCHAK

PAPA! MAMA!
THAT MISERY MAKES ME SICK...
WE COULD SELL HER AT A NICE PRICE!

HE HE HE!

ARGH!

FLOK

ZAP

BITCH!

AAAH!

SCRITCH

AARGH!
I DON'T WANT TO BE A FARMER ANYMORE!

SO AMBITIOUS! HA! HA!

WOMEN AND SAKE, EH!

COULD YOU USE THIS!!

HEE!?

I WANT TO GO WITH YOU!
As soon as the Kamakura era ended, money replaced bartering trades. Changed of style little by little, Kyoto formed.
People drank more and more over than 300 sake shops opened...

Kin

Ah, life is beautiful!

Before, only the lords owned lands... now having money is enough!

Ha! Ha!

My dear... can you lend me money for cheap?

Hu! Hu! Hu!

Come one...

Money feeds well!
SAKE HAS A WEIRD TASTE HERE! LET'S END IT AND GET BACK HOME.

FINE, WE GOT OUR RATION!

I'VE ALREADY SEEN VIRTUOUS SAMURAI! JUST NEED TO HAVE AN EMPTY SKULL.

HIC! OUPS...

HEY, WAIT A MINUTE!

Zzzz

THEY OWE ME SOME MONEY! THEY WERE ABOUT TO RUN AWAY!

I CAN LEND YOU SOME! YOU CAN EVEN PAWN THE WOMAN!

MEN, WOMEN, YOUNGSTERS, OLD PEOPLE. THOSE WHO HAD MONEY LEND IT WITH INTEREST, THOSE WHO DIDN'T HAVE ANY BORROWED IT. THE GULP BETWEEN RICH AND POOR PEOPLE WAS GETTING BIGGER.

B... BUT...!?
WHEN THE IDLE HOURS COME, I SPEND MY TIME AT MY WRITING CASE, TO NOTE INCOHERENT THOUGHTS. MADNESS...
(IDLE HOURS- FOREWORD)

SO, BEFORE BECOMING A PRIEST, KENKO WAS SERVING AT THE COURT...? HOWEVER, HE WAS SO INSPIRED... I CAN'T DO IT MYSELF! I WATCHED THAT BLANK PAGE ALL DAY LONG!

I HAVE NO TALENT, I HAVE NO MONEY. I CAN ONLY COUNT ON MYSELF...

EVEN POOR, YOU KEEP YOUR INTELLIGENCE!

SLURP!

IN OTHER... HIC... WORDS...
I can't get used to the idea that the world is unstable...

Nothing is like before...

The tyranny of the samurais push them to seize the lands of the nobles. The imperial family and the rich families are under their hold.

It was the good old times...

Yes... it was the good old times...
THOSE STUPID SKINFLINTS NEVER HAVE A PENNY ON THEM!!

NO PITY... NOBODY COULD BELIEVE THAT!!

THE ONLY ONE WHO WOULD BELIEVE IT, IT'S HIM!

FINE, IT'S NOT THAT I DON'T HAVE TIME BUT...
LET'S GO THIS WAY!
NO! THIS WAY!

WILL YOU FOLLOW ME?

I LIVE IN THE SACRED MOUNTAIN KIMPISHI. I REMAINED UNDER THE WATERFALLS. I SUFFERED THE FREEZING WINDS. I REMAINED UNDER THE SNOW. I FASTED. I FOLLOWED THE RULES OF ASCETISM. WHEN I WAS LIVING IN THIS SIDE OF THE WORLD, I WAS DEAD!

MAH?

WHIZ!

COME WITH ME!

FLAP
LET'S 
UNITE!

LET'S 
MERGE!

GYAOOOO

BAOM

LET'S 
CAPTIVATE 
TOGETHER 
WHAT 
HARMS 
BUDDHISM!

TOGETHER,
WE'LL WIN 
AGAINST 
The 
WRONGS!
I CAN SEE IT EVEN AT ONE THOUSAND LEAGUES!

YOU, YOU RISK DIRTYING YOUR INNOCENCE!

BUT YOUR BODY IS INHABITED BY ANGER!

ZOUF

YOU LIVE IN A TEMPLE TO CLEAN THE UNDERWEAR OF THAT GOOD-FOR-NOTHING KENDO!

IF THE FAITH YOU'RE SEARCHING DOESN'T LOOK LIKE THIS...

QUIT EVERYTHING AND GO LIVE IN THE MOUNTAIN!

MORTIFY YOURSELF AND YOU WILL BE ABLE TO PURIFY YOURSELF!
COME ON! ARE YOU HESITATING?!

YOUR FAITH IS ONLY AN ILLUSION?

N...

NO!!

ZZZZ

S0?

HE'S A GOOD-FOR-NOTHING!

YOU'RE DOUBTING!

HE BRINGS FOOD TO THE PEOPLE IN KAWARA! HE'S A RIGHTEOUS MAN!!

I BELIEVE IN KENO...
Hypocrisy! Only the monks of the 5 monasteries are righteous! If you don't come, you'll sink into filth!

Quit everything for the hermit life!

Waaaah!

Quit everything!!

Paof

Aie!
OH! LITTLE MONK! ARE YOU OK!?

THE GOBLIN? WHERE HAS HE GONE?

HE TRANSFORMED! IT WAS A FOX!

THERE ARE MANY HERE.

HO! HO! HO!

AND EVEN IF I WAS DOUBTING OF KENO WHAT SHOULD I DO? WHY IS IT SO?
FOUR YEARS PASSED. KENO GOT TUBERCULOSIS

TODAY, SOMEBODY GAVE ME A WATER BASED POTION TO EASE YOU. IT WON'T ACT RIGHT NOW BUT...

IT LOOKS EFFICIENT...

HUUH HUUH!

LET'S MAKE THE CONCOCTED QUICKLY...

HE WEAKENS DAY AFTER DAY...
TCHAK TCHAK

Hah... Hah...

How is Mum doing? She must be almost 40...
SOJUN!  SOJUN!

MASTER!

HAAA!

Huh... SOJUN... I don't have much time remaining...

What are you telling!? I'll get better...

Tell me...

We've been together for a long time...

TOK
I gave you everything. There's nothing more that you don't know already...

Normally, I should give you my seal, but my master Munin didn't give me his... so you won't receive it... huh! huh!

Master! Anyway, I'm still not there...

You're doubting again...?

If you stop doubting, you won't manage to reach the spiritual awakening... but when you'll have reached it, you will still have to doubt... and that goes on... huh! huh!

That's good... continue!

Could you open the doors so that I can see outside?
THE COLD WIND BLOWS OUTSIDE...

IT DOESN'T MATTER. IT WILL GIVE ME THE IMPRESSION THAT I'M STILL ALIVE...

THE BODY AND SPIRIT HAVE TO OPPOSE EACH OTHER. ONE IS DRAGGED BY FORCE, THE OTHER ONE IS STUBBORN...

ZOOOF

BODY AND SPIRIT...

I'M STILL WEAK, BUT I WANT TO GO AND WALK IN THE WIND... WILL I BE ABLE TO BEAR THAT...

AND YOUR SPIRIT?

I DON'T KNOW IF IT'S THE BODY OF THE SPIRIT THAT COMMANDS...
BUT, YOU KNOW...

YES?

I HAVE OFTEN BEEN ANGRY AT YOU, BECAUSE I CAN'T BEAR DISCRIMINATION.

ME!? DISCRIMI...
MASTER! EQUALITY IS THE BASIS OF THE TEACHINGS OF THE BUDDHA! I DON'T FEEL IT IN ME ALREADY!

OH, REALLY... THEN WHY DO YOU WANT TO PURIFY YOURSELF?

WHAT?

WHY DO YOU WANT A PURE SPIRIT?

WHY DO YOU THINK OF IMPURITY WHEN YOU THINK OF PURITY? WHY DO YOU THINK OF WHAT'S RIGHT COMPARED TO WHAT ISN'T?

WHY DOES WHAT IS BEAUTIFUL FORCE THE IDEA OF UGLINESS IN YOU?

MY SPIRIT... MAKES BORN... DISCRIMINATION... MY SPIRIT...
ME!?
DISCRIMINATING...!? 

I CAN'T...
ON DECEMBER 1414, KENO DIED...

KENO FREE HIMSELF WHILE GOING... NO. I CAN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE...

WHAT DID THOSE FOUR YEARS AND A HALF BRING ME...? EVERYTHING IS COLLAPSING... IT'S THE END...

WHAT WILL I DO!? MASTER, SHOW ME THE WAY!
SOJUN PRAYED FOR HIS MASTER TO REST IN PEACE. HE WENT TO THE TEMPLE KIYOMIZU BUT IT WAS CLOSED.
THOSE WHITE CLOUDS... WHERE CAN THEY GO...?

MASTER!!

HE!!

HE??
HA! HA! HA!

...!

Hey! Young monk! You're an odd face! Wanna come around?

HA! HA! HA!

Hey! Ah! Ah! Ah!

COME ON!

Kawara has completely changed...
SOJUN WANDERED...

WE'RE HAVING SO MUCH FUN!!

HE WENT AGAIN TO KIYOMIZU, BUT SINCE THERE WERE VISITORS, HE HEADED TOWARD THE MONASTERY ISHIYAMA-ajes, IN OTSU.
TAKE THIS, YOUNG MONK! HERE'S SOMETHING TO EAT! IT'S A SPECIALTY OF OTSUKI...

TH... THANKS...

I KNOW THAT THE ADVICE OF AN OLD MAN LIKE ME AREN'T THAT IMPORTANT, BUT DON'T GET DISCOURAGED...
He shut himself up during 7 days without drinking or eating. He prayed for Kenko's rest.
MASTER... WHY SHOULD I... KEEP ON LIVING?

I CAN'T... I CAN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE...

KARA BRIDGE SETA RIVER
IF IT'S MY FATE, I CALL FOR THE PROTECTION OF KANNON... BUT IF I HAVE TO DIE, I WANT TO END AS MEAT FOR FISHES...

YES, THAT'S IT...
MAMA!!
PLAOTCH

AR. ARGH!

IT WILL ONLY MAKE HER SAD...

COURAGE, SOJIN!
SOJUN, then 22 years old, was sitting along the river. The few sunbeams were warming him up...
If you get the chance to go in KYOTO, follow IKKYU'S STEPS!

At 12 years old, Shukin learned the art of the Chinese poetry there.

Two of the 5 MONASTERIES were built by YOSHIMOTO, one of the 5 MONASTERIES was the residence of YOSHIMOTO, and the other was the residence of SHOGUN. The walls and roofs are covered with gold paper.

In 1228, one of the 5 MONASTERIES was built by YOSHIMOTO. It was called the "Temple of Buddhism," because the monks who came there to study were numerous. YOKAMI learned the art of the Chinese poetry there.

Sacred place of the famous between KYOTO and HAGI.

In 1274, KONJUNI met YOSHIMOTO, which made him famous.

Built in 1278, one of the 5 MONASTERIES was built by YOSHIMOTO. It was called the "Temple of Buddhism," its roof was declared a national treasure.
IKKYU'S BIOGRAPHY
(CORRESPONDING TO THE PERIOD COVERED IN VOLUME 1)

Jan. 1394 • Birth of Ikkyu in Sagano. His father is the Emperor GoKOMATSU, his mother IYONO TSUBONE.

Jui. 1394 • Start of Oei era. The shogun YOshimitsu ASHIKAGA hands the power to his son, and becomes Prime Minister.

1397 • Yoshimitsu undertakes the building of the gold house

1399 • Ikkyu enters the Angokuji Monastery. The captain Ouchi is beaten in Sakai by Yoshimitsu's troops.

1401 • The Monastery Shokokuji becomes first rank, while the Tenryuji Monastery becomes second rank.

1402 • Zeami establishes his theory of the "Flower Opening".

1404 • Yoshimitsu opens the trades with China.

1405 • Shikken enters the Monastery Hotoji where he's noticed by Seisohin.

1406 • At the age of 13, Shikken learns to write poems in Chinese.

1408 • At the age of 16, Shikken writes his first poem, known by all of Kyoto. Gokomatsu goes to the gold house to see a no performance with Inujo Doa. Yoshimitsu dies at the age of 51.

1409 • Shikken shows a poem to Botetsu that he wrote, in which he criticizes his Monastery. Yoshimichi has a new palace built in Kyoto.

1410 • Shikken becomes a disciple of Keno, and is called Sojun. The Tenryuji Monastery becomes 1st ranked.

1412 • Gokomatsu abdicates.

1413 • Sojun learned everything from Keno but doesn't receive his master's seal. Inujo Doa dies.

Déc. 1414 • Keno dies. Sojun goes to the Monastery in Ishiyama, then throws himself in the river, but doesn't manage to end his life...

TO BE CONTINUED...