chapter 5
Between Katata and Kyoto
Sagano, 1415, January

CLASH

EH?!
SENGU! KUMARU!
How is it possible...?
WHERE...
WHERE AM I?

WHERE YOU ARE?!
HE HE HE!

IN THE WORLD...

GO AWAY!

LOOK AT WHAT FATE'S GOT IN HAND FOR YOU!
MAKE YOUR CHOICE!
The wheel turns! Human's karma indicates which way to choose. Its thread spins the fate. It's unbreakable...

Hells, starving ogres, brutes, shrews, men, paradise... ha! ha! ha!
HA HA HA!

Noo!

HA!
WHAT A WEIRD NIGHTMARE...

THAC
SOJUN, ARE YOU FEELING BETTER?

MMH...

WHAT'S THE MATTER!?

I REMEMBER WHEN YOU WERE STILL A KID, YOU'VE GROWN UP SO MUCH!

SOMETIMES, I SEE YOU IN MY DREAMS... YOU'RE ANGRY AT ME BECAUSE MY HANDWRITING'S BAD...

AH!?

YOU'RE FINALLY SMILING!

IS SOMETHING BOthering YOU?
KENO... I CAN STILL HEAR YOUR VOICE IN MY HEAD...

WHERE ARE YOU NOW...?
MOTHER, I HAVE TO GO...

I'M FEELING MUCH BETTER.

I WILL SEEK OUT MASTER KASO SODON IN THE ZENKOAN MONASTERY OF KATATA.

RUMOR HAS IT THAT KASO IS A HIGH MONK OF THE DAITOKUJI MONASTERY...

BUT HE ISN'T THERE ANYMORE... He LIVES ISOLATED IN THE COUNTRYSIDE NEAR BIWA LAKE.

HE'S CALLED THE "ZEN OGRE"...

WHY DOES HE GO TO THAT MUCH TROUBLE...?
Mother... don't worry for me! Whatever happens, I won't act rashly again!

I only need to move!

I would expect nothing less of you...

Thanks, mother!

..., you must follow the path of Buddha...
In the beginning, the Daitokujii monastery was protected and subsidized by the nobles. When Yoshimitsu rose to power, the government, which named the superiors coming from the Kenninji and the Nanzenji, became more and more related to the monasteries.

Biwa lake, beginning of spring.
Ukimido
PLEASE! I CAME ALL THE WAY FROM KYOTO!
IT DOESN'T MATTER WHERE YOU'VE COME FROM, OUR MASTER ISN'T ACCEPTING ANY MORE DISCIPLES!

PLEASE, GRANT ME ACCESS....

RETURN TO WHENCE YOU CAME!

PLEASE!
Yoso! The guy from the other day! He's still at the door!

Hum... He's stubborn...

If I have to die, then so be it...

Buddhism is more important than anything else. I must not weaken while searching for the path...
AAH! HE'S STILL HERE!

HEY, YOU! THE REJECT!

IS HE DEAD?

HMMMM.

HOW LONG HAS HE BEEN HERE?

THIS IS THE FIFTH DAY!
TAKE THIS!
PLAOTCH

THROW SOME WATER AT HIM TO HAVE HIM CLEAR OFF!

OUCH...

HA! HA!
HE! HE!

HE! HE!

HE! HE!

HA! HA!

HE! HE!
HIM AGAIN?!

GET OUT OF HERE! YOU'RE DISTURBING!
SO, YOU CAME FROM SAIKONJI?

AND YOU ASSISTED KENO TILL HIS LAST BREATH?

HE WAS A GREAT MONK...
I AM SO! YOSO, FIRST DISCIPLE OF KASO!

YOU WERE GETTING ALONG WELL WITH KENO?, RIGHT...?

FINE! HERE ARE THE RULES... NO ROOM, NO FUTON FOR THE NOVICES. YOU MUST NOT BE CAPRICIENT, AND YOU WILL NOT EAT TO YOUR CONTENT!

AND ALSO...

...KASO IS AN ADEPT OF PURE ZEN. LIKE TETTO, WE ARE HERE TO STUDY!!

THOUGH KENO WAS FOLLOWING THE WAY OF DAIO, HE WAS STUCK IN THE MUD OF KYOTO... EVEN IF HE WAS AS STRICT AS KASO.

AS FOR YOU, YOU'VE BEEN IN CONTACT WITH THE CORRUPTION OF THE FIVE MONASTERIES FOR TOO LONG!
IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO LEAVE AGAIN... HE HE!

IT'S COLD...

BH?
Oh! A monk... take this, it'll keep your warm...

It's my boat, but feel free to stay.

You're new here?

Yes, yes...

Kaso is a great man...

Hum... I...

SCHH SCHH

Flap Flop

Thanks!

...
In Zenkoan, the monks lived from charity or the products of their gardens. Going days without food, like this one, was no rarity...
Biwa Lake... it's big....

Choose the wood well! It's for the fire.

Sure

Help me prepare the medicinal herbs.

You will sort, grind and bottle them.

Meanwhile, we're going to search for others.
Pay attention!

Concentrate on your task!

I... I'm sorry!

Ouch!

He was lectured by Kaso!

It seems that Kaso likes the meal! Herbal tea is good for one's health.

Indeed

Uh! Uh! Uh!
SOJUN! HURRY AND EAT!

HE HE!

AS SOON AS YOU'RE DONE, GIVE KASO A MASSAGE... HE HAS A LUMBAGO. THIS WILL BE YOUR NEW TASK.

OK

Routines were implemented... during the evening, everybody practiced Zazen.

IN SAIKONJI, I WASN'T ALLOWED TO PRACTICE Zazen... AND HERE I HAVE TO DO IT EVERY NIGHT...
KENO WAS THINKING DIFFERENTLY...

HERE'S SOME SOUP TO WARM YOU UP...
THANK YOU SO MUCH!

LIFE IS HARD THERE, ISN'T IT? KASO DOESN'T ALLOW YOU TO BEG...

WHEN HE GOES TO THE TOWN, HE REFUSES ANY KIND OF FOOD OR OFFER, EVEN IF IT'S FOR THE DEAD PEOPLE...

HOWEVER, HE STILL RECITES THE SUTRAS FOR THEM...

BEG...
KASO SAYS THE MONKS MUST NEITHER BEG, NOR TRADE...

Hey, you!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING!? APPRENTICES MUSTN'T EAT TO THEIR CONTENT!

TONG TONG

IF YOU FEED THEM, THEY'LL LOSE THEIR MOTIVATION TO WORK!

This boy is a disciple of Kaso! He has to meditate despite this cold!

A monk who relies on others is a scabbed dog!

If he meditates, then he should hear this!

Clang clang

Nothing bothers you, apparently!

Stop it! I said stop!
HAHH HAHHH

HAH... HAH...

COME ON, YOU'LL CATCH A COLD...

MONKS MUST NEITHER BEG, NOR DO TRADES...

NEITHER BEG...
BUT IF IT'S ONLY AS A MATTER OF FORM AND NOT FAITH, IT'S MERE BEGGING.

FAITH... THAT'S IT... IT'S NOT MERE BEGGING...

BUT...

IF YOU FEED THEM, THEY'LL LOSE THEIR MOTIVATION TO WORK!

WHAT'S THIS?!
I thought that if I add some white rice...

SLAM

WHERE DID YOU GET IT...

I... I BEGGED!

I thought... well... I...

YOU DIDN'T ANSWER ME!!

IDIOT!

MIND YOUR BACK!

AHH... MY BACK...
HOW MANY TIMES HAVE I TOLD YOU NOT TO BEG! IT'S DEGRADING...

...YOU MUST NOT READ SUTRAS FOR MONEY EITHER!

YOU MUST NOT DO IT TO EAT...

YOU LIVE FOR THE TEACHINGS OF BUDDHA, THAT'S ALL...

A MONK CLEARS HIS HEART AS A PEASANT CLEARS HIS GROUND...

KOF! KOF!

YOU LIVE FOR THE TEACHINGS OF BUDDHA...

CLEAR YOUR HEART...
KENO SCOLDED ME FOR PRACTICING ZAZEN... BUT KASO DOESN'T...

HO! HO! DO YOU REMEMBER ME?

CLANG CLANG

WHY...

WHETHER HE EATS OR NOT, KASO WEAKENS DAY AFTER DAY...

BLEH!

GO TO HELL!

AAAH!
PATCH

HAVE YOU SEEN HOW YOU WASH THESE VEGETABLES!?  

LOOK AT WHAT YOU WASTE!

YES...

TAKE THIS!

BA-BOM

OHHHHH!

IDIOTS! THERE'S RICE LEFT IN THE SPOON!

DID YOU HEAR ME, IDLERS!?
YOU MUST RESPECT THE FORMS! THE FORMS! THE FORMS!

YOU HAD YOUR HAIR SHAVED... YOU DEVOTED YOURSELF TO BUDDHISM! BUT DO YOU HAVE THE WILLPOWER!? 

OH... MY PILES... DON'T THINK OF YOUR PILES! FORGET YOUR PILES! FORGET YOU HAVE TO FORGET! FORGET TO FORGET!

EDITOR'S NOTE: PILES ARE HAEMORRHOIDS; SAME SPECIAL PASSING, SAME PREPARATION W.
Sojun found work making perfume bags and puppet clothes. He went to Kataba at nightfall, through the mountains.

Despite this, there were still days without bread...
Puppets... This is a girl's job!

It's not work for a monk! Why are you so silent?

I don't know!

I've gotten the impression that positions are rare...

I think you will succeed Kaso... However, there's Sojun and...
EXACTLY! THAT GUY IS 17 YEARS YOUNGER THAN ME!!

HE BRINGS WITH HIM THE POLLUTED AIR OF KYOTO TO CORRUPT US!

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!

Kyoto

I WON'T PAY FOR THIS ONE, IT'S NOT GOOD.

TAKE THIS...

HERE'S YOUR NEXT WORK...

BLA...
IT'S SO CUTE!

DON'T TOUCH IT! IT'S A TOY FOR THE NOBLES!

HEY! WE DON'T HAVE TIME TO REST!

IT'S NOT MY FAULT THAT THE BABY'S HUNGRY!

NUH HH!

BOUOUHH...

In those times, merchants formed guilds. They were under the protection of the nobles or temples. They could make products, open a store, and monopolize the market.
What's more, the temples, in search of new financial resources, allowed the foreigners of the town to trade... for a modest fee, of course.

Stable and artists were also organized into guilds.
YOSHIKAZU FAVOURS IT. IT'S SAID THAT HE BROUGHT HIS SON YOSHIKAZU TO SEE IT...

ZOAMI INTRODUCED THE SHAKUHACHI...

WHAT IS ZEAMI DOING NOW?

HE'S IN YAMATO TROUPE.

FARCE OR NO... I'D LIKE TO SEE THEM... BUT I CAN'T, I'M STILL AN APPRENTICE.
Hey! Lil' monk! You're interested in her!?

What about me? Don't you think I'm pretty too!? Ho ho ho!

You didn't come to have some fun!? Ho ho ho!

See you later!
THAT YOUNG GIRL... SHE'S ONLY A KID, BUT SHE ALREADY SELLS HER BODY...

SOJUNI! COME AND MASSAGE!

MASTER, HE WENT TO BRING PUPPETS IN KYOTO...

BUT I'LL MASSAGE YOU MYSELF.

NO! IT'S NOT NECESSARY ANY MORE!
THAT MONK IS STILL HERE!

HEY, TAKE THIS!
HUM...

DON'T LOOK AT ME LIKE THAT!

I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE, BUT I KNOW THERE'S ANOTHER WORLD...

IS THERE REALLY A HEAVEN? IF ONLY I COULD GO THERE AFTER DEATH...

WITH MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS!
IT'S RATHER CALM AROUND HERE WHEN THAT YOUNG MONK ISN'T AROUND.

HE...? YES, IT'S TRUE...
IT MUST BE REALLY HARD TO WORK IN SUCH A PLACE...

THERE ARE SURELY MANY GIRLS IN THE SAME SITUATION... IT'S NOT A LIFE...

You're really a good masseur...

Even though he visibly became thinner, Sojun kept on travelling between Katata and Kyoto
A monk clears his heart as a peasant clears his ground.

TAP
TAP
TAP

TAP
TAP
TAP
RIGHT FOOT ON LEFT THIGH! LEFT FOOT ON RIGHT THIGH!

RIGHT HAND ON LEFT FOOT! LEFT HAND DOWN ON RIGHT HAND! THE TWO THUMBS MUST TOUCH EACH OTHER!
STAY STRAIGHT!
CLENCH YOUR TEETH!
EYES HALF OPENED!
RESPECT THE FORMS!

NO! NO! NO!

NOT LIKE THAT!

OUH!

HA!

HEU!

ARGH!
OUCH! HE ALWAYS HITS US WHEN WE LEAST EXPECT IT!

I HEARD IT'S GOOD FOR THE BACK...

SOJUN COULD MASSAGE US...

Yeah...

CAN'T YOU SHUT UP?!

NO NEED TO SHOW YOUR INFERIORITY!

According to Kaso, I still have plenty to learn...
YOU BELIEVE I AM NOT READY YET... YOU TREAT SOJUN, THE NEW ONE, THE SAME WAY AS ME... HOWEVER, I WAS RIGHT BEFORE HIM!

BEFORE HIM!? HA HA!

SO, ACCORDING TO YOU, WHAT PUTS YOU ABOVE HIM?

WELL, EXPERIENCE

I'M DOING EFFORTS DAY AND NIGHT TO REACH SPIRITUAL AWAKENING!

I'M AHEAD OF ANYBODY ELSE REGARDING THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH!
IDIOT! SCURVY DOG!

AHH!

WHY?!

YOSO... WE'VE BEEN TOGETHER FOR SEVERAL YEARS BUT...

...HOW LONG WILL YOU KEEP ON ROLLING IN DUNG?!

?!
HE SAID 'DUNG'!?  

YES, HE DID!  

DUNG!

DO YOU STILL NEED TO KNOW WHO ARE THE WINNER AND LOSER...?

OUGH! OUGH!

THAT WILL MAKE YOU UNDERSTAND!

PATCH PATCH

PATCH PATCH
TAKE THIS... YOU SHOULD CALM DOWN.

ENOUGH!!

IT'S THE FIRST YOU'VE SHOWN ANY COMPASSION TO ME.

BUT I KNOW YOU'RE LAUGHING, DEEP INSIDE...

NO, I...

SOJUN, YOU MUST QUICKLY DRY THE WOOD YOU'VE GATHERED!

I DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW KASO COULD TREAT YOU LIKE THIS...

...WHILE NOBODY IS AS DEVOTED AS YOU ARE!

THE DISCIPLE CLEARED HIS MASTER'S DOUBTS!

DUNG - ? WHAT DID HE MEAN?
I DON'T KNOW!

DON'T ASK ME!

WHY DID KASO GET ANGRY WITH HIS BEST DISCIPLE?

KENO COULD SAY IT'S ONLY AS A MATTER OF FORM AND NOT FAITH. IT'S MERE BEGGING...

KASO IS OBSESSED WITH "FORMS"... "FORMS"... "FORMS"...
HM. SUCH GLOOMY WEATHER.

HEY! YOU'RE BACK!?

THE GIRL IS DEAD...
She was weak... she could not buy her food... she died of it...

On the contrary, I'm rather strong... hu hu hu!

See you later!

Yeah!

PLIK PLIK PLIK
IMPORTANT
ABOUT THE MOST
HE SEEMS
MATTERS...
AND ALL THAT
BEING ALIVE AND
HAVING ENOUGH
EAT... THAT'S
OWN IN HIS
AGAIN... THOUGHTS
IDIOT!
Hah! You're talking like you know something about it!

Stop talking crap and work!

Cheater!

Ouch!

Glot!

Ouch! Ouch!

Plit

...
DURING THE SONG DYNASTY, TOZAN WENT TO STUDY WITH MASTER UNMON...
Unmon asked him the following question...

WHERE DO YOU COME FROM?

I COME FROM SADO.

WHERE WERE YOU LAST SUMMER?

I WAS IN THE HOZUJI MONSTERY, IN KONAN.

WHEN DID YOU LEAVE?

ON THE 25TH OF AUGUST...

YOU DESERVE SIXTY HITS OF A STICK, BUT I'd RISK GETTING DIRTY! GO BACK TO WHERE YOU COME FROM!

EMPTY HEADED!!
I couldn't close my eyes last night... why would I deserve sixty hits from a stick? Please tell me!

Idiot!

Why do you go from one way to another?

What?

At that time, Tozan got a flash of inspiration...

That is what is called "The sixty hits of stick."
WHERE DO YOU COME FROM?

Why do you go from one way to another?

WHERE...

WHERE...

WHERE...

DID YOU FIND OUT WHY?

NO IDEA....

HOW WERE TOzan'S ANSWERS WRONG....

WHAT DID HE UNDERSTAND....?
"I hear the sound of the Gion Temple's bell... everything changes, nothing remains..."

"The color of Sara Soju's flowers, the reign of a proud person...

"This resembles the dream of an evening in spring..."
"The skill of the courtesan in the capital...."

"There were two sisters... Gyo and Ginyo. Gyo was treated as the favorite by the minister...."

It's a passage of the Heike saying. At the time when the Taira clan reached a high prosperity level, there were two sisters who were the favorites of Kiyomori Taira.
They were quickly treated "royally"...
A house was built for their mother, and, each month, 100 measures of rice and gold were brought to her. It lasted three years...

"THEIR SKILL BROUGHT THEM FAME... BUT THERE WAS A GIRL FROM THE KAGA PROVINCE, CALLED HOTOKU..."

WHAT?! THAT COURTESAN CAME HERE WHILE I HADN'T CALLED FOR HER!

HO, MAJESTY!

SHE'S SKILLED FROM WHAT I'VE HEARD...

SHE'S ONLY SIXTEEN...
A courtesane should only come when asked! Who does she think she is, to impose herself despite Gyo's presence!? Dismiss her!

For a courtesane to come without being requested is normal... You should hear her... She's determined, despite her age...

Do it for me.

Fine, fine why not...

I let you come because Gyo interceded on your behalf.

Start! Sing a song!
"Because he once saw his royal highness, the small pine will live forever..."

"The cranes, gathered together, will have fun on the hill of the turtles in this pond..."

"Hmm... not bad..."

"Have the tambourine come!"

"She dances well, she's young and pretty..."

"Kiyomorin fall completely for her..."

"Hotoke... stay close to me!"

"What about Gyo...?!"

"I'll dismiss her!"

"Bouh..."

"Gyo cried, because she had just lost Kiyomori."
She expressed her sadness writing a poem on the partition of her old room.

Whether they're opened or withered, the herbs of a meadow will suffer the fate that autumn has for them...

MOTHER!
The pension she received was cancelled. But one day...

Kiyomori orders you to go back and dance! Hotoke is bored...

Me? Entertaining Hotoke?!

It's terrible! Poor Gyo!

I won't go!

No!

Noo!!
Seeing her mother crying, Gyo decided herself...

YOU SEEM SO HESITATING! HA HA!

... OHH! OHH! OHH!

"ONCE, BUDDHA WAS AN ORDINARY MAN..."

"WE WILL BECOME BUDDHAS AS WELL..."

"IN EVERY CASE, WE ARE BUDDHAS. IT IS SAD TO REPUDIATE EACH OTHER..."
In every case, we are Buddhas. It is sad to repudiate each other...
I'M DIS-HONORED!
I WANT TO DIE!
I WILL FOLLOW MY SISTER IN DEATH!
DON'T MAKE YOUR MOTHER CRY! PLEASE!

The three of them went to Sagano, where they underwent monkhood.

Summer passed, autumn came...

Hotoke felt guilt from depriving Gyo from happiness. She thought one day her turn would come too, and decided to join Gyo to live with her family.
MOTHER... YOU MUST HAVE FELT THE SAME THING WHEN... YOU HAD TO LEAVE THE EMPEROR...

SNIFF... SNIFF...

MOTHER...

OUOUOUOUOU!

HA!
TONG

TONG

TONG

ZIIINN TONG

NOTHING REMAINS, EVERYTHING CHANGES!

I HEAR THE SOUND
BUT... THAT'S ME!

HA!
THIS RESEMBLES THE DREAM OF AN EVENING IN SPRING...
I solved the problem of the "sixty hits of a stick!"

"I must go away from the fleeing world to the non-fleeing world. A time of rest... may the rain fall, may the wind blow."

I, too, wandered like Tozan - and I was sad. I... I... "Him," it was me!

Hmmm... you noticed it...
The fleeing world is the world of passions... The non-fleeing world is the world without passions.

And you rest a little, between the two worlds... he he he!

That’s it!

May the rain fall, may the wind blow... it’s in the very nature of things!

This fatalism is interesting...

From now on, your name will be Ikkyu*! You deserve it!

Yes, yes, master!

"Ikkyu...

Sojun, was 25 years old then.

*Ikkyu means "One Rest"
HE SOLVED TOZAN'S PROBLEM!!

REALLY?! "IKKYU"... KASO SHOWS FAVOURITISM!

BLAM

GETTING ON MY NERVES, THAT ONE.
MOTHER...

HOW SHOULD I SAY THIS... I'M FINALLY FEELING WELL...

I WAS LIKE A BEAST OF BURDEN WITH NO LOAD TO CARRY.

BUT... I FEEL LIKE I'M LOSING MY STRENGTH...

WHAT'S HAPPENING TO ME...?

OHHH... I HAVE VERTIGO...
HEY, SOJUN!

NO, HUM... "IKKYU!"

I'D ALSO LIKE KASO TO RECOGNIZE MY VALUE...

CAN'T YOU TELL ME HOW YOU SOLVED THE PROBLEM?

WELL...

WELL? TALK!

HEY! WAIT!

YOU HAVE CUT THE GROUND FROM UNDER OUR FEET!

LEAVE ME ALONE!
In every case, we are Buddhas. It is sad to repudiate each other...

Go! Yoshitsugu took refuge there! He mustn't get away with this!

The Ashikaga brothers are fighting...

Aaaa! Brother! No...!
Yoshimochi (53 yo)

I assassinated my brother!

Since the disorders in Kamakura, he believed he would become shogun! He got what he deserved!

Stop drinking!

Mansa! When I was young, I often took care of Yoshitsugu. But he's always been so soft...

What an idiot!

Some important people lent him a hand...
Toki confiscated the power from the captains Yamana removed them from their service.

Hosokawa, Shiba, Hatakeyama, Akamatsu, and almost all the influential counselors were under investigation.

To hell with the counselors!

I am the shogun!

The heir of a thousand-year-old dynasty! Even though the captains thought it was important to transmit the territories without any incidents.

The end of Yoshimitsu aimed to sow confusion, exceeding their powers, the Ashikaga endangered the very foundations of the shogunate.

So you also think that the counselors are useful?

I won’t say it, but...
THE FINANCIAL POWER OF THE CAPTAINS FROM THE VARIOUS PROVINCES ALLOWED THEM TO RESIST THE SHOGUNATE TIL NOW THEIR MILITARY POWER IS STILL UNDER THE DIRECT CONTROL OF THE GOVERNMENT.

YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS, DOMINATING THE WORLD ISN'T WITHIN EVERYONE'S REACH...

ENOUGH!

I'M THE SHOGUN, ME! I'M THE SHOGUN!!

PISS OFF!!!
I HATE HIM!

THAT MIDGET FOUND THE SOLUTION! WHY NOT ME!?
GRRR...  IDIOT...  IDIOT...  IDIOT!

He left from that lazy Keno to arrive by accident at ours!
He studied with Keno...
And he got into Kaso's good books with his massages.
DEGRADING MANUAL LABOR IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS!

BEING A PRIEST IS FORGETTING THE WORLD!

PURIFYING ONESELF TO GO AWAY FROM THAT WORLD SOILED WITH WHIRLS OF PASSIONS...

WHAT'S THE POINT OF IT?

MASTER, WHAT HAVE YOU DONE!?

I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY YOU DIDN'T REPRIMAND SOJUN!
FAT! FAT!

SINCE HE SOLVED THE PROBLEM, SOJUN HAS LOOKED US UP.

AND THINGS AREN'T GETTING ANY BETTER WITH YOSO.

YOSO ISN'T IN PEACE WITH HIMSELF...

WHAT ARE YOU CHATTING ABOUT!!?

I BROUGHT THE MEDICINAL HERBS.

SLAM
DO YOU THINK THAT'S FUNNY?

HUM NO, NOBODY!

HE SCARES ME MORE AND MORE!

BEFORE, HE SURPASSED SOJUN, BUT HE'S GETTING MORE AND MORE DISCOURAGED...

IT'S HIS TRUE NATURE...

WE HAVE TO HOLD ON TOO.
RAN COMES IN HERE.

DON'T MAKE THAT MUCH NOISE! KASO IS SLEEPING!

IKKYU...IKKYU! RESTING! WHILE WE DON'T HAVE A SINGLE MINUTE FOR OURSELVES!

AT LEAST, IN THE DAITOKUJI, WE COULD REST A LITTLE.

CRAC

Oooh!
Ouch!

Idiots!

You're noisier than a horde of looters!

OFF

ARRR!

SPLAF

Devotion, devotion!
Buddha! You must...

...open your eyes!

Arrrr!
I'M TIRED...

I MIGHT NOT BE SUITED FOR THAT.

I DON'T WANT TO TAKE OVER MY FATHER'S BUSINESS. BUT WHAT SHOULD I DO? I CONSCIENTIOUSLY FOLLOWED MY TRAINING.

YOU THINK TOO MUCH!
THE THREE OF US, SEIGAKU, NANGAKU AND HOKIGAKU, WE'RE ONLY SONS OF FARMERS.

BECOMING PRIESTS WE THOUGHT WE WOULDN'T HAVE ANY MORE PROBLEMS BEING HOUSED AND CLOTHED!

AND NO HARD LABOUR!

I WANTED TO BECOME A MONK. I WAITED 3 DAYS AND 3 NIGHTS IN FRONT OF THE DOOR... FINALLY, THEY LET ME ENTER.

IT'S AS HARD TO BE A MONK AS TO BE A FARMER.

WE NEVER EAT OUR FILL! MY STOMACH ALWAYS GURGLES!

ONLY FOR KASO, I DON'T REGRET THAT I CAME. IF THE STUDIES ARE HARD, WE CAN'T DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT!

I LOVE STUDYING, IT ImproVES OUR KNOWLEDGE!

BUT I UNDERSTAND LESS AND LESS...

WHAT'S THE TEACHING OF BUDDHA? WHAT'S THE WAY THAT LEADS US TO HIM?
Whatever the spiritual awakening!

I'd like to know what I'll become, what I'll do later... that's all!

Dom

Damn! What is Sojun doing in Kyoto these days?!

It has always been a mystery!

He might be working for money...

What do you mean?
I DON'T THINK HE'S BORED THERE.

DO YOU COME?

IF YOU'RE A BIT FURTHER, NEAR KIYOMIZU, YOU CAN SEE MAGNIFICENT WOMEN!

I LOOK BEFORE.

SAKE SHOPS FLOURISH AS THE BAMBOO SHOOTS DO AFTER THE RAIN.

WOOT! GIRLS.

KASO CAN'T POSSIBLY SEE US.
SOJUN SURELY SUNK IN THE PLEASURES OF ALCOHOL AND FLESH... SO LUCKY!

GIRLS
GIRLS
GIRLS
GIRLS
GIRLS
GIRLS

SOJUN IS CONSCIENTIOUS, I DON'T THINK HE BROKE THE RULES!
WAAAH!!

I CAN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE!
Oooh! The demon came to get me!

Me too!

Pleasure! Pleasure!

Tapatapata

Ziiip

Ho! Ho! Ho! Ho!

In the end...

Those guys don't understand me. They can't understand me.
HE!

IS THERE SOMEONE...

YES...

Y... YES...

OLD WOMAN

WHO IS COMING? A YOUNG MAN?

YOU ARE CALM, FOR A YOUNG MAN...
YOU WILL SEE WHEN YOU BECOME OLDER AND YOUR EYES SINK IN THE DARK.
YOU WILL ONLY SEE VAGUE FIGURES!

BUT

YOU ARE MYSTERIOUS BEHIND THAT HARD VOICE...

A BIG HOLE. THAT'S IT.
A BIG HOLE OF SHADOWS WIDENS.
A BIG HOLE OF EBONY SUBMERGES ANY KIND OF LIFE.
AN OLD WOMAN LIKE ME MIGHT GET WEIRD IDEAS, BUT.

WHAT IF IT'S TRUE ..?

IF HE CLOSES HIS EYES WITHOUT REASON.

IS THAT POSSIBLE!?  YES!

THAT WORLD IS UNSTABLE.
COME ON... HAVE FUN AND FORGET ABOUT ME...

YOU ARE YOUNG, BRIGHT... IF YOU THINK CAREFULLY...

TIME PASSES BY QUICKLY.

BEFORE, I WAS FULL OF LIFE AND I WAS SHINING IN KYOTO. MANY GIRLS FEARED ME BUT I QUICKLY LEFT THAT LIFE.

HE! HE! HE!
KUff
KUff

I showed you a strange side of me
I cry just to think about it.

Well, I have to go home now

Hum, you live nearby?

Hmm...

What a sad landscape to see.
IT'S NOT A PLACE FOR A YOUNG MAN.
WHEN I WAS LITTLE I LIVED IN A SIMILAR PLACE.

THE WIND THAT WHISTLES MAKES ME THINK OF THE SIGHS OF THE DEAD PEOPLE IN THE CEMETERY.

GHOSTS MAKE MY WHITE HAIRS FALL.
YOU SAY YOU'VE LIVED IN SUCH A PLACE?

AND NOW?

I WALK AGAIN AND AGAIN AGAIN AND AGAIN?

YOU CAME RIGHT ON TIME BEFORE...

I HAVE TROUBLE WALKING.

THIS WORLD IS UNSTABLE... REALLY UNSTABLE.

IT LOOKS LIKE A CEMETERY, THERE.
...omou...omou...

...

OIH

I FELL DIZZY AGAIN
WHO'S COMING?

LOOKS LIKE A MONK. WE'LL BREAK THE MONK!

COME HERE!

STOP IT! HE'LL HEAR US!
Hey! Monk! What are you doing here!? Am I cursed?

You came here by accident!?

So? You like him?

No.

If you take her, you'll understand what you've never hope feeling!

What!? What's with that look?
WE'LL GO TO HELL!

YOU CAN LECTURE ME! I DID ALL I COULD TO SURVIVE! I STOLE! I KILLED!

SO, LITTLE MONK. WHAT'S HOLDING YOU BACK? YOU'RE NOT FREE?

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

YOU NEVER DID IT WITH A MONK, RIGHT?

HE! HE! A MONK AS PARTNER, NOT BAD, ISN'T IT?

UH! UH! UH!

NOO!! BRUTE!!
STOP IT!

HE! HE! HE!

SO, NOT BAD, RIGHT?

DON'T BE SHY! GIRLS, YOU CAN GET AS MANY AS YOU WANT!

COME ONE MAKES ME SWEAT, JUST TO THINK OF IT.

DON'T LOOK AT THE GROUND!!
THAT'S

OH!
HE TALKS!

YOU'RE
THE ONE
WHO ISN'T
FREE!

YOU'RE A
PRISONER OF
YOURSELF!

WHAT?
OF
MYSELF?

AAAHH!

BRUTE!!
WAIT A MIN! YOU'LL SEE!

AHH!

PLAOC!

BLOB
DAMN!

HEI! YOU NEVER DREAM OF GIRLS!

PLOC FLOC

JERK-

PLK
MOTHER!

FSSHH!

MOTHER!
MOTHER!

Huh... huh...

AH, THERE YOU ARE!

FINALLY...
OUCH!

MOTHER!

WAIT!
I feel lonely...
So lonely.

No...

I feel trapped...

My mother.
My life.

I'm the son of an emperor.
My rank forces me to live in the imperial palace.
Till now, I thought it'd only be temporary.

Even if I'm a monk...
What's the bad thing about being upset by our own misfortune and that of our mother? Isn't it natural?

You're straying from the way of Buddhism.

That's got nothing to do with it... have you ever thought of the despair of my mother?

I'm her only family... I can't remain indifferent! I can only feel pity!

Do I also need to abandon the idea of being a monk?

No, you don't understand.

I like to see her smile.
HER PRETTY SMILE

SOMETIMES, I'D HAVE WANTED TO ALWAYS SEE HER SMILING...

WHEN IT WAS DARK, UNDER THE EAVES, AT THE NIGHT GLOW, HOW MANY TIMES HAVE I SEEN HER CRYING...
EACH TIME, I FELT UNCOMFORTABLE.

I THOUGHT MY MOTHER WOULD HAVE TO LEAVE ONE DAY...

... WHAT PREVENTED HER FROM GETTING HER SMILE BACK?

I FEEL SOMETHING MYSTERIOUS IS BEING BURIED, TO BECOME ENORMOUS...
I THOUGHT I WAS ABLE TO PROTECT HER FROM THIS.

OH! THAT WAS IT!

YOU WANTED TO ALWAYS SEE HER SMILING!

BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!

I WANTED SOMETHING IMPOSSIBLE. I FINALLY SEE THAT.

IT'S AS IF I WANTED THAT FLOWER TO BLOSSOM INDEFINITELY.

I CAN'T STOP TIME... NOR GO BACK IN TIME.
SO IT'S USELESS!?
SUCH A CAREFREE ATTITUDE!

IT'S STRANGE! THAT'S NOT SOJUN!

NEITHER SHUKEN! NOR SEN-GU-KUMARU!

I WAS SEN-GU-KUMARU!
I WAS SHUKEN!
I WAS SOJUN!
TODAY, I AM IKKYU!
I KNOW IT!

NO, IT'S WRONG!
NAMES CHANGE BUT YOU ARE MYSELF!
SINCE I WAS BORN!

YOU'VE JUST SAID YOU HAVE CHANGED!
I... I...

Maybe nothing will change...

Maybe everything changes. The world. Myself as well.

No! I won't change!

If you're not myself... then who are you? Who is Ikkyu!??
I'M TALKING TO YOU!
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

THE MORE I THINK I SEE CLEARLY INTO MYSELF, THE MORE IT GETS BLURRY.

WHAT TO DO?

SCRATCH.

I MUST KEEP ON WALKING, MOVING FORWARD.
August 1419
Flooding in Kyoto

HELP!!

AAAH!

FSHSHSHSH...
It's the curse...

Buddha! Calm the spirits of the dead!

Sob sob

Aah!
Accept that pain is pleasure! Become stronger through faith!

It's the divine punishment! We have prayed enough!

Have pity on us ...

Pray! Pray! Pray for Buddha's protection!

Moan

Nooo!

Buddha! Buddha! Buddha!
DO YOU REMEMBER THE SPLENDORS OF THE CAPITAL?

OH... YOSO!

I WAS LOOKING AT THE LAKE... IT'S SO BIG...

SCRRR

BUT THIS IS THE WAY OF BUDDHISM, ISN'T IT.

HAVE YOU EVER WALKED ON WATER...?

IDIOT! YOU BELIEVE YOU'RE A TENGU*!? YOU'RE BEING FOOLLED BY MAGIC!

*GOBLIN WITH LONG NOSE
IF I COULD WALK ON IT, THE SURFACE WOULD SINK...
ARE YOU OK?
WHY DO YOU PRACTICE ZAZEN?

WHAT A QUESTION! YOU DESERVE A LESSON FOR THIS!

BUT SINCE I'M MAGNANIMOUS, IT'LL ONLY BE A WARNING THIS TIME!

WASH... WHEN YOU WERE HANGING ABOUT IN KYOTO...

YOUR BRAIN SOFTENED! THIS SHOULD WAKE YOU UP!
Lazy lump, because of doll-making, you'll become a real girl!

Show us your true nature! I'll help you get rid of Kyoto's dust!

Are you really capable of doing this?

Where does this certainty come from?

Buddy...

You always wonder about Buddhism...

But it's useless!
MASTER...
MASTER...

WHY SUCH A HURRY?

WELL... SOJUN SAID...
WHAT DID IKKYU SAY?

HUUH... YES, YES... IKKYU... HE'S TALKING CRAP OF YOU BEHIND YOUR BACK!

HE SAYS ZAZEN IS BAD FOR THE BODY AND CAUSES HEMORRHOID. MOREOVER, HE GOES TO KYOTO FOR HIS OWN PLEASURE!

IS THAT ALL?

HUUH...?!

WELL... ZAZEN HELPS ME GET CLOSER TO BUDDHA! I DISTANCE MYSELF FROM PLEASURES TO PURIFY MYSELF!

WHAT ABOUT YOU?
WHY ARE YOU LOOKING AT ME LIKE THAT?

DID YOU SAY WHAT I ASKED YOU?

YES... SOJUN DENIGRATES ZAZEN AND GOES TO HAVE FUN IN KYOTO...

I THOUGHT I WAS SEEING THE END OF THE WORLD...

I DON'T UNDERSTAND ANYTHING AT ALL...

IT'S FAVORITISM!

KASO SOFTENED SINCE SOJUN MASSAGES HIM!

YES! YOU'RE RIGHT!
RENOUNCE! RENOUNCE!

RENOUNCE! RENOUNCE! RENOUNCE!

RENOUNCE!

IT'S SOJUN'S FAULT IF KASO TOOK HIS ANGER OUT ON US!

OUCH! OUCH!

ENOUGH WITH THE WHISPERS!

PAM POOF

YOU'LL END UP LIKE SOJUN!

PEACE!
I forgot why I followed the way of Buddhism...

My mother decided it. I had to become a renowned monk to make her happy and see her smile again... but why!

Hmm...

I'm turning to the past again!

How stupid I am! I'm a monk now!

Mother... mother... I'm feeling sorry for myself again!

Even if I spend all my life to it, it's impossible to reach the spiritual awakening!
The sun went down, stars are invisible, all the ways disappeared in the darkness.

The sky and earth don't reflect on the lake anymore. It's silence.

The small boat pitches.
I'M TIRED.

It was pitching, simply...
CAW
FLAP

A CROW!

FLAP

FLAP FLAP FLAP

I UNDERSTAND...

FLAP

FLAP

FLAP FLAP FLAP
IT'S SO BEAUTIFUL! IT'S THE FIRST TIME I SEE THIS.

THE SUN SHINES!

IT SHINES SO MUCH!

SKY!

WIND!
WATER!
GRASS!
GROUND!

IT'S A MIRACLE!
I... I REVIVE!

I REVIVE!!
HA! HA! HA!

PHEW...

HA! HA! HA!
HUM... SOJUN! ARE YOU OK?

MOHIRA! INE! A CROW CRIED "CAW" IN THE DARKNESS!

IT USUALLY CRIES "CAW", RIGHT?

BUT WHAT'S THE CRY OF A CROW THAT DOESN'T CRY OUT?

WHAT??

A CROW THAT DOESN'T CRY CAN GIVE THE CRY IT WANTS!

WHAT...!? A CROW THAT DOESN'T CRY!??
AND US, HOW DO WE CRY OUT?

THAT...

FLOUC

HEY!

EXCUSE ME!!

WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH HIM NOW?
A CROW THAT DOESN'T CRY OUT CAN GIVE THE CRY IT WANTS...

YES! I'M SAD TO KNOW MY MOTHER IS SAD... I HAVE RESENTMENT TOWARDS MY FATHER BECAUSE HE HAS RESENTMENT. I WANTED TO REACH SPIRITUAL AWAKENING AT ALL COST TO ERASE THOSE PAINS...

...THEN I "CRY OUT"! I AM MYSELF!

MY VOICE BROKE THROUGH THE DARKNESS! SUDDENLY THE CRY OF A CROW... MY CRY!

MY VOICE AND THE CRY OF THE CROW FLEW AWAY IN THE AIR...

WOOD SHAVINGS FLEW AWAY...
IN AN INSTANT I DISAPPEARED!

IN THE SILENCE...

THEN WHEN THE SUN STARTED TO RISE "MY" DESTINY...

SKY AND EARTH WERE ONLY ONE...
YOU GOT OUT OF YOUR "SELF"!

YES... YOU HAVE BEEN REBORN!

TILL NOW, YOU WERE ATTRACTED DESPITE YOU BY THE INEQUALITY OF THINGS, YOU WERE WITHDRAWN ON YOURSELF...

BY THE INEQUALITY OF THINGS

NOW, YOU HAVE OVERCOME YOURSELF... YOU LIVE FOR YOURSELF!

FOR MYSELF...

ME...

FOR ME!

HUM... YES!
IKKYU!

YOU HAVE ONLY REACHED THE FRONTIER OF THE AWAKENING. YOU STILL HAVE SOME WAY TO GO...

AWAKENING DOESN'T COUNT... WHATEVER THE WAY THAT REMAINS TO GO.

MY "SELF" FLEW AWAY IN THE SHAVINGS...

IN FACT, WHO TRIES TO BECOME A MASTER?

I, WHO WANTED TO REACH THE AWAKENING, WHO REFUSED ANY ATTACHMENT, WHO PRACTICED ZAZEN... I STUCK TO THE IDEA OF AWAKENING...

WASN'T IT YOU, MASTER, WHO REPROACHED ME ALL THE TIME. EACH TIME I WAS THINKING ABOUT IT, I WAS WITHDRAWING INTO MYSELF!
THERE! YOU'VE JUST REACHED THE SUPREME AWAKENING!

YOU'RE THE ONE WHO WILL TAKE OVER FROM ME!

ARE YOU SURE, MASTER? PLEASE...

...IT'S A MERE PIECE OF PAPER!

IKKYU...

I'M AFFIXING MY SEAL TO YOU!

I HAVE BEEN WAITING THIS DAY FOR A LONG TIME!
SOJUN RECEIVED KASO'S SEAL!

HOWEVER, HE TRAMPED ON IT!

SUCH ARROGANCE!

THE SEAL...

THOSE WHITE CLOUDS...

KENO...
I finally understood why you blamed me for my behavior!

Finally, you have reached the spiritual awakening! He! He! He!

You saw through the world! You got rid relentlessly of worries and desires!

But do you think you have cut the links with your karma?
IF THAT'S THE CASE...

YOU CAN LIVE PEACEFULLY WITHOUT SUFFERING REPETITIVE REINCARNATIONS...

BUT YOU WILL BE MORE AND MORE TORmented!

YOU HAVE ALREADY NOTICED IT...
IF YOU SEPARATE FROM YOUR KARMA, NOTHING WILL BE LEFT TO SUPPORT YOU! NOTHING WILL BE LEFT FOR YOU TO HOLD UP! IT WILL BE NOTHINGNESS!

"NOTHINGNESS"!!

YOUR KARMA CONTAINS YOUR MOTIVATIONS TO LIVE...

CAN YOU LIVE WITHOUT THAT NET UNDER YOU?
YOU HAVE OPENED YOUR EYES! YOU SAW THE NOTHINGNESS!

YOU MUST LIVE ISOLATED! CAN YOU!?

BUT DO NOT WORRY! I CAN CATCH YOU IN MY NET FROM ANYWHERE!!

YOU WILL BE STUCK IN MY NET! MAYBE YOU WILL BE ABLE TO FLEE...

AHH!

AHH!
THE THREAD OF KARMA HAS AN UNMATCHED RESISTANCE!
THE THREAD OF KARMA HAS AN UNMATCHED RESISTANCE.
SIX POSSIBILITIES OF REINCARNATION! WHICH WAY TO TAKE!? HE! HE! HE!

Ikkyu felt less and less like going back to Zenkoan
That year, a drought raged in the country. A famine followed.

The dried lake Biwa was the cause of several deaths.

HUH! WHAT'S THAT SMELL?

IT'S THE CORPSES OF KAWAHARA... WIND BRINGS THEIR SMELL!

LET'S LEAVE QUICKLY!

THIS IS NOT GOOD FOR MY DELICATE SENSE OF SMELL...
WHAT IS THAT WITHERED FLOWER THAT YOU'RE CALLING?
IT'S MY FATHER!

MY SON... YOUR BEHAVIOR, YOUR VOICE... YOU'RE STILL YOUNG, YOU WILL PROCEED BY TRIAL AND ERROR AS I DID BEFORE YOU!

FATHER... I AM DISCOURAGED... YOU ARE A MASTER AMONG MEN.

WHEREVER I GO, YOU'RE FAMOUS.

I WENT TO SEE INUO DOA IN KYOTO. HE BETRAYED HIS ART TO PLEASE THE NOBLES.

ZOAMI INTRODUCED THE SHAKUHACHI IN THE NEW NO... PERSONALLY, I'M TIRED OF ALL THIS...

LISTEN, MY SON...
A fine voice. A young body. Everything ends up disappearing, it's the "flower of time"...

I... even withered. I keep on studying... I try, whatever it costs me...

I master the flower of one side...

"The flower of time" and "the flower of one side"... more. I believe the flower is sincere. More I get away from it...

The flower... sincere? What is it?

It's force!

The force you make born in you!
Along the year, it's possible to choose whatever flower, according to the time or the desire... From the plum tree of spring to the chrysanthemum in autumn.

I, Kanami, your father, I push back the limits of my art...
I WAS REACHING THE PEAK OF MY ART.

WHEN I PLAYED THE "NON-RELIGIOUS BUDDHIST," I WAS JUST A 16 YEAR-OLD NON-RELIGIOUS BUDDHIST, BUT THE AUDIENCE WAS DELIGHTED WHEN THEY SAW ME.

AFTER BUILDING A GOOD REPUTATION, I TOOK FULLY ADVANTAGE OF IT USING THE EXPERIENCE I ACQUIRED OVER MY LIFE.

IF, ONLY ONCE, YOU WERE ONE WITH ART... THEN YOU CAN MAKE MANY FLOWERS FLOWER AND MAINTAIN THEM!

I SHALL NEVER STOP... I SHALL ALWAYS CONTINUE...

ONE DAY, I MAY HAVE THE FORCE IN MYSELF...
DON'T FORGET! THE FLOWER ONLY FLOWERS WHEN ACTOR AND SPECTATOR MERGE...

THE SPECTATOR MUST IDENTIFY HIMSELF WITH THE ROLE THE ACTOR IS PLAYING! AFTER TRAINING A LOT, I'LL LIVE UP TO YOUR EXPECTATIONS!

IDIOT!

FATHER! YOUR MASK...

WHAT!? IT SMELLS THE FLOWER OF THE PLUM TREE... WOULD IT BE SPRING?
FATHER! WHAT'S THE MATTER!?

OUCH...

OOH!

HE HE...

HAVE I BEEN BLIND TILL NOW!? IT WAS HIS HEART WHICH WAS TALKING!
I FELT MY TOMB HAD GROWN BIGGER WHEN THE SMELL OF THE PLUM TREE FLOWERS CAME!

THAT IS WHAT YOU CALL HEART!

I DOUBTED A LONG TIME...

AN ACTOR CAN MAKE A SITUATION MORE BEAUTIFUL... BUT IF YOU DO IT, THE HEART OF THE SPECTATORS WILL GET AWAY FROM YOURS.

FATHER, REST A BIT! FORGET THE NO! THE SPIRIT OF EVIL IS TORTURING YOU...
All the men are tortured by the spirit of evil! All of them!

The spirit of evil!

The spirit of evil...
NO CLOUD COVERS MY HEART... WOULD IT BE PURE?

I MUST LIVE BY MYSELF!
WHEREVER I GO,
MAY THE RAIN FALL
AND THE WIND BLOW!