

Japan's Twenty-Four Paragons  
of Filial Piety  
*Honchō Nijūshikō*  
Chikamatsu Hanji, Miyoshi Shōroku, Takeda Inaba,  
Takemoto Saburōbei, and Takeda Hanbei

TRANSLATED BY PAUL M. GRIFFITH

THE TEN TYPES OF INCENSE  
*Jūshukō no Ba*  
FOX FIRES IN THE INNER GARDEN  
*Okuniwa, Kusunebi no Ba*



Two-panel woodblock print by Utagawa Toyokuni III (1786-1864). Nakamura-za, Edo, third month (1851). "Princess Yaegaki" (Ichikawa Kōdani IV) flies in the air carrying the magic helmet. Ichikawa Danjūrō VIII is pictured in his two contrasting roles: Yaegaki's handsome betrothed, "Takeda Katsuyori," hand on sword, and "Shirasaga Rokurō," wearing bold red makeup (*kumadori*), a warrior in the service of villain Nagao Kenshin. (Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum of Waseda University)

# Japan's Twenty-Four Paragons of Filial Piety

## INTRODUCTION

*Japan's Twenty-Four Paragons of Filial Piety* was first performed as kabuki in the fifth month of 1766 at the Naka no Shibai in Osaka. It was based on the puppet play written by Chikamasa Hanji (1725–1783) and others that was staged a few months before at Osaka's Takemoto-za. Since then, it has had numerous revivals on both puppet and kabuki stages. The work is regarded as a classic of the history play genre (*jidaimono*) not only for its strong narrative structure but also, in a plot filled with intrigue and suspense, for its pure theatricality. The two scenes from Act IV translated here are the ones most often performed in kabuki today.

Set in the sixteenth century in an age of turbulent warfare, the play takes as its theme the fierce rivalry between the Takeda and Uesugi clans, led by the great warlords Takeda Shingen and Uesugi Kenshin (here called Nagao Kenshin). As the play opens, the Takeda and Uesugi clans are feuding over possession of the Suwa Hoshō helmet, a great treasure bestowed on the Takeda clan by the god of Suwa himself. The Japanese term "*hoshō*" refers to the unchanging essence of all universal matter, the Buddha's absolute reality. This helmet was lent to the Uesugi clan and they now refuse to give it back. In order to make peace, it is suggested that the two families be united by marriage. Thus Shingen's son, Katsuyori, is betrothed to Kenshin's daughter, Princess Yaegaki.

At this point, the shogun, Ashikaga Yoshiharu, is assassinated. As both Shingen and Kenshin were supposed to be attending the shogun but were absent, Shingen falls upon them for neglect of duty, and in order to allay suspicions, they promise to find the culprit. If, after three years they fail to do so, they will present the heads of their only sons in apology. Three years pass and no culprit is found. Katsuyori's head is now forfeit, but, instead of sacrificing him, Shingen substitutes the head of another young man who looks very much like his son. Shingen then orders that Katsuyori disguise himself as a humble servant called Minosaku and that he go to Kenshin's mansion to steal back the sacred Suwa Hoshō helmet. He is to go with a lady-in-waiting named Nureginu. She, in fact, was the lover of the deceased young man substituted for Katsuyori and, though her loyalty to the Takeda clan is beyond question, her genuine grief at the loss of her lover, and her mixed emotions in having to accompany one whom her lover so resembles, make her the most poignant character in the play. Her suffering is made all the worse because her own father,

whom she has now rejected, is, in fact, the shogun's assassin and is therefore the original reason for her lover's substitution and death.

When the "Incense" scene opens, Minosaku and Nureginu have successfully entered Kenshin's mansion, he as a gardener and she as lady-in-waiting to Princess Yaegaki. However, unknown to them, Kenshin has seen through their disguise and, surprisingly, has decided to promote Minosaku to the rank of samurai in order to send him with a letter to his military barracks in Shinjiri. Waiting at the barracks is the official envoy who had previously come to Kenshin's mansion demanding the head of his son, which, like that of Shingen's son, is forfeit for the failure to find the shogun's assassin. Furthermore, though they do not actually appear in the following two scenes, also staying at Kenshin's mansion are the late shogun's consort and her son, who is to become the next shogun. They are being protected by Kenshin, and this is the "young lord" to whom Minosaku refers in his opening speech.

The two scenes take place against this background of breathtaking intrigue, plot, and counterplot. The character of Yaegaki stands out against this dramatic complexity: in the midst of all the political scheming, she is the one character who refuses to take part, remaining constant and true even to the death. Her motivation is simple: she is led by an ideal of love for the man she is to marry and there is nothing that can sway her from her chosen path. Such unbending idealism is very close to the heart of the "red princess" (*akihime*) role type. Yaegaki is classified as one of the three great princess roles (*san hime*) in the kabuki repertoire not only because her actions are so laudable but also because the role requires an actor to express and maintain exceptional emotional intensity. Princess Yuki of *The Golden Pavilion*, translated in this volume, is another. It is often said that the portrayal of elegance and refinement is paramount for princess roles, but Yaegaki seems to go far beyond this. Indeed, much of the scene's effect relies on her shocking forwardness toward Minosaku, which goes against every rule of etiquette with which she was raised. It is debatable exactly when in the play Yaegaki becomes convinced of Minosaku's true identity, but the only real explanation for her behavior is her absolute certainty that this is the man to whom she is betrothed and to whom, therefore, she owes her love and allegiance.

In the "Incense" scene, Yaegaki's "entreaty" (*kudoki*) highlights her single-minded devotion. Speaking to Minosaku, she insists that they are fated to be together, and when she speaks of birds with wings the same color, she refers to a mythical pair of lovebirds whose bodies were joined, sharing the same pair of wings (*hiyoku no tori*). It is interesting that this particular section, which is an emotional climax, has given rise to different acting traditions (*kata*), all of which seek to give

a concrete illustration of the lyric. The standard *kata* today stems from Nakamura Utaemon V (1865–1940) and is used for this translation. Here, Yaegaki calls Minosaku's attention to the one-panel screen with its painting of a pair of birds. In other acting traditions, such as that created by Onoe Kikugorō IV (1808–1860), Yaegaki brings out a fan on which a pair of mandarin ducks (symbols of marriage and devotion) are painted, while Kikugorō VI (1885–1949) is known to have used model mandarin ducks floating in a pond. In all cases, we see how physical props are invested with significant meaning beyond their normal function and are used to externalize a character's psychology.

Some critics have claimed that Yaegaki is considered one of the three great princess roles for the "Fox Fires" dance, rather than for the "Incense" scene. This is because of the extreme technical skill in the manipulation of props and costumes that the dance requires over and above the portrayal of character. The actor's handling of the kimono's long sleeves is considered especially important in princess roles, and this can easily be appreciated in such sections as Yaegaki's entirety, in which the actor's skill imparts an air of gentle refinement that is central to the role type. The dance is even more difficult in this respect because the multilayered quick-change (*hikinuki*) costume is heavier than usual.

In the "Fox Fires" scene, the technique of "puppet gestures" (*ningyō buri*) may also be performed. The technique was first developed in the Kamigata region during the Tempō era (1830–1843), and was made popular in Edo by Ichikawa Kodanji IV (1812–1866). He first introduced *ningyō buri* in the "Fox Fires" scene at the Nakamura-za in the third month of 1850, and the technique is still seen occasionally. The "Fox Fires" scene is one of relatively few currently performed Kabuki dances—along with *The Butterflies' Travel Dance* (Chō no Michiyuki) and *Osaka hi in the Tower* (Yagura Oshichi)—that have *takemoto* accompaniment. Furthermore, most dances originating in the puppet theater are "travel scenes" (*michiyuki*) designed to lighten the mood between long and often static scenes of dialogue. The "Fox Fires" scene is again an exception. Though known for its stunning visual beauty and special stage effects (*kern*), the dance is nevertheless a logical extension of the drama of the previous scene, the strong emotions of which are intensified by the fact that we now find the character alone for most of the time.

The sources for this translation were the unpublished scripts (*daihon*) used for the Kabuki-za productions of February 1994, April 1998, and April 1999, with additional reference made to the text in Toita Yasuji et al., eds., *Meisaku Kabuki Zenshū*, Vol. 5.

## CHARACTERS

YAEGAKI, teenage princess, daughter of KENSHIN and betrothed to KATSUYORI  
NUREGINU, lady-in-waiting to KENSHIN, in reality a spy working for the Takeda house  
and known to MINOSAKU

MINOSAKU, in reality KATSUYORI, son and heir of TAKEDA SHINGEN, who has

infiltrated KENSHIN's mansion disguised as a gardener

NAGAO KENSHIN, general, enemy of SHINGEN and MINOSAKU  
SHIRASUGA ROKURŌ, samurai in KENSHIN's service

HARA KOBUNJI, samurai in KENSHIN's service

TWO SAMURAI, retainers of KENSHIN

STAGE ASSISTANTS, black-garbed kurogo

TAKEMOTO, chanters and shamisen players who narrate the action

## The Ten Types of Incense

(The curtain opens to accelerating *ki* clacks and offstage music [bagan] played by the large drum, flute, and shamisen, creating an imposing and grand atmosphere. A large room in KENSHIN's mansion is revealed. Center are the panels of a sliding door on which is painted a stream meandering through a garden of chrysanthemums. A one-panel standing screen, left, is decorated with a picture of two birds on a bare branch in the snow. On either side of this central section are two small rooms with sliding doors now closed. The TAKEMOTO chanter and shamisen player are seated on a raised platform at left.)

TAKEMOTO (Singing slowly and solemnly):

The flowing water / are our lives in constant flux, / and now transformed in / formal robes, Minosaku / studies his refection, / as calmly, with composure, / he makes his way into the room.

(The central sliding doors draw apart and MINOSAKU—in reality, KATSUYORI—enters. He is a handsome, white-faced youth, with forked still unstaven. He wears formal garb [kamishimo], consisting of a purple vest [kataguni] and trailing trousers [nagabakama] over a red kimono, and bears the two swords of a samurai. Holding his long sword in his left hand, he steps forward, then pauses.)

MINOSAKU: It is fortunate that I was brought up among common folk, for people do not know my face. Disguised as a gardener, I have penetrated this estate and I can now protect our young lord should any attempt be made upon his life. Yet, my intentions have been discovered, and I have been made a samurai. What am I to do now?

*(He makes his way to the edge of the stairs and seats himself with the aid of a black-robed STAGE ASSISTANT [kurogo].)*

**TAKEMOTO:**

Puzzled by this turn of events, / pensively he hangs his head, / his mind shut in with worry, / while, shut in her room, / is the daughter of the house, / Princess Yaegaki. / He who was her dear betrothed, / Lord Katsuyori, / gave his life through suicide, / since which dreary day, / within this single room, has / she confined herself, / contemplating the picture / hung in the alcove / and chanting sutras with the / sound of a prayer bell.

*(In the small room, right, white silk blinds are rolled up behind the sliding doors. Through the translucent doors themselves can now be seen YAEAGAKI, dressed in the typical red kimono and silver tiara of a youthful "red princess" [akahime].)*

YAEAGAKI has been told that KATSUYORI is dead, and as yet she has no idea that the man who committed suicide was a substitute who looked exactly like him. Seated with her back to the audience, she prays to a hanging scroll that is a portrait of her betrothed. A single prayer bell rings out poignantly.)

**TAKEMOTO:**

From the other side as well / comes a cricket's chirp, / crying tears that wet her sleeve / as Nureginu / mourns the departed on this / death anniversary, / now facing his name tablet / with hands in prayer:

*(In the small room right, white blinds behind the translucent doors are rolled up to reveal NUREGINU, seated facing front and praying as she strikes a small bell. She wears a simple black kimono as befits a serving lady. Finally, the sliding door is pulled back to show her in full view. She puts down the bell humming word, holding her Buddhist rosary, puts her hands together to pray for her dear one.)*

NUREGINU (*Sadly*): In all the wide world, who else is there to mourn for you, even today, on the anniversary of your death? How heartless! It is pitiable to think that you passed away quite unaware of father's evil. Surely, you must be lost in the next world. I, your wife, Nureginu, can only offer this meager service, but think of it as though a thousand . . . ten thousand sutras have been recited, and please attain salvation from this world! Hail to Amida Buddha. Hail to Amida Buddha.

**TAKEMOTO (*Passionately*):**

Hail to Amida Buddha!

*(MINOSAKU has overheard NUREGINU's words and is moved at the memory of the man who died in his place and who was called by his name.)*

MINOSAKU: Indeed, today is the twentieth of the eleventh month, the very day on which my substitute died. It is the anniversary of the other "Katsuyori's" death.

**TAKEMOTO:**

Days and months passed slowly by . . . / It has been over one year. / May the spirits of the dead / attain enlightenment / and reach speedy salvation! *(MINOSAKU points into the distance and then gestures "one" to represent one year. He brings his hand to his chest in prayer. The doors to YAEAGAKI's room slide open. Though he cannot see her, MINOSAKU overhears YAEAGAKI's words.)*

YAEAGAKI (*Speaking sadly to the portrait*): My dear Katsuyori, hearing that our engagement had been arranged between our parents, I could hardly wait for the day more I look at it now, the more beautiful you are . . . And to think of lying beside such a husband!

*(The smoke from the incense YAEAGAKI burns at the altar table slowly wafts upward toward the painting, almost as if it represented YAEAGAKI's own deep yearnings.)*

**TAKEMOTO:**

"It was my luck to be born / a pampered princess, / enjoying the beauty of / both moon and flowers. / By the side of your portrait, / is this incense smoke / of the ten fragrances, now / tribute to the dead?"

*(YAEAGAKI bows before the scroll and then turns to face the audience with her Buddhist rosary in hand.)*

"It was not for the purpose of / prayers for the deceased / that I had your form painted / as a picture scroll. / Now, may your soul come back in / the smoke of 'Returning Soul Incense'!"

*(YAEAGAKI is aware of the ancient belief that the spirit of a deceased lover could reappear in the smoke of this incense, and she now prays for her own betrothed to come before her.)*

"If a famous work of art / truly has power, / then I long to hear your voice . . . / I long to hear you / speak but a single word in / calling me your love." / So saying, by the picture, / she prostrates herself / and dissolves in bitter tears.

*(She rises, turns toward the painting, and falls to her knees, weeping.)*

MINOSAKU (*Sympathizing*): That tearful voice must be Princess Yaegaki's. She calls my name, thinking of me as her true husband. Here, the mourning princess . . . There, the mourning Nureginu.

**TAKEMOTO:**

Indeed, how wretched! / Beyond all words to express / is the sadness that lingers / in these women's hearts. / Thinking thus, despite himself, / he is moved to tears.

MINOSAKU (*Lifting a hand to wipe his eyes*): Without realizing, I wept.

**TAKEMOTO:**

Adjusting his collar, he / rises to his feet, / while from behind, with heavy heart, / Nureginu sees . . .

MINOSAKU walks to the back of the room, turns front, and seats himself on a tall stool [tabiki] placed by a STAGE ASSISTANT. NUREGINU is attracted by the sound and goes to look through a gap in her sliding doors. Recognizing MINOSAKU, with whom she is in league, she is baffled by his changed appearance. She slides the door open, walks out, and kneels just outside her room.)

NUREGINU: Minosaku, what's become of your appearance? Why do you dress in those robes?

MINOSAKU: Yes, you are right to be suspicious. Though not part of my plan, Kenshin has taken me into service, and now I wear the attire of a warrior and these two swords.

NUREGINU: Indeed, though foolish to think that just because you now wear the crested robes of a samurai, you could look the same as my husband, nevertheless, in that apparel . . . (Tearfully.) "This keepsake itself, is now the cause of my grief, for without it here . . ."

(The TAKEMOTO chanter continues for her with a slightly altered quotation from the famous poetry collection Kokinshū.)

TAKEMOTO:

"Then perchance I could forget / my memories of you. / So go the lines of the old verse, / a sad song of parting."

(NUREGINU is shocked at the close resemblance between her late husband and MINOSAKU now that he is similarly dressed. She takes a square of white silk cloth from her kimono breast, a memento of her lover stained with his blood. She slowly unfolds it and holds it out for MINOSAKU to see.)

"Yet, regardless of my keepsake, / your appearance now / differs from the partide / from my dear husband's, / and seeing you here like this, / I cannot forget."

(She clutches the keepsake to her breast.)

NUREGINU: It seems that I am lost on the path of transmigration.

(She caresses the keepsake to her cheek and dabs her tears. Just as she is about to cry out, she checks herself, rushes back into her room, and there begins weeping as she recalls her deceased husband.)

TAKEMOTO:

Now begging his forgiveness, / she sinks to the ground / as her weeping voice is heard / in the next room, where, / standing suspiciously, is / Princess Yaezaki. / Through a gap in the sliding door, / stealthily she peeks / and, making no mistake, she / recognizes him.

(YAEZAKI, until now lost in a reverie, is aroused by the sound of someone crying outside. She stands and goes to her sliding door. Seeing him, she, too, is shocked at MINOSAKU's resemblance to KATSUYORI's portrait.)

YAEZAKI: Can it be Katsuyori?

TAKEMOTO:

She strains to calm herself as / her heart leaps in her breast. / The thought that he resembles / the one who's passed away / is only the result of / a mind's delusion.

(She begins to rush out of her room but holds herself back after one step. She retreats, closes the door, and poses against the pillar. Thinking she is deluding herself, she shakes her head, glances back at the picture, and hides her face with her sleeve in embarrassment.)

"Before this painted portrait, / how ashamed I feel," / as back she now returns, / hands clasped together, / chanting the sutras again / with her prayer bell.

(She returns to kneel and pray before the picture. The sound of her bell rings out.) Meanwhile, Lord Katsuyori, / guessing the feelings / in Nureginu's heart, speaks / with a cheerless voice.

(NUREGINU comes out of her room and assumes a kneeling position near the door.)

MINOSAKU: A woman's heart is fragile, and your grief, understandable, . . . but you had best resign yourself to the ways of this uncertain world.

(MINOSAKU sympathizes with NUREGINU's loss, for he, the real KATSUYORI, was spared through her lover's death. He meditates sadly on the quirk of fate that brought about these circumstances.)

TAKEMOTO:

With these words, he counsels her, / while on the other side / is one grasping at part air, / imagining now / that her betrothed were alive / rather than deceased. / How she would long for him and / yearn to be at his side. / So, again, she takes a peek, / and when his features / with the portrait she compares, / rather than a likeness, / he seems the living image! / Is this not the real . . . / the genuine Katsuyori / who sits before her? / Without another thought, / she bursts from her room.

(Looking through a gap in the door, YAEZAKI is shocked again at MINOSAKU's likeness to KATSUYORI. After glancing back at the picture, she rushes out of the room, pauses, throws down her Buddhist rosary, and tides her hair before going to sit at MINOSAKU's side, where she shyly places her right hand on his lap.)

YAEZAKI (Passionately): Katsuyori! How I have longed for you!

TAKEMOTO:

But when she clings to him, and / begins to shed tears, / he reacts with a start. / Then, feigning ignorance . . .

MINOSAKU: Your words are most unexpected. I am a gardener named Minosaku who was only recently taken into military service, for which reason I have changed



Princess Yaegaki (Nakamura Utaemon VI), center, flirts with Katsuyori (Ichikawa Ebzo IX, later Ichikawa Danjuro XI), urged on by Lady Nureginu (Onoe Bakô VII) (Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum of Waseda University)

into these robes and donned these swords. I have no memory of this Katsuyori of whom you speak.

TAKEMOTO:

He pushes her aside.

*(He gently pushes her away, and she crosses several feet to his left. Though YAE-GAKI is correct in assuming that he is KATSUYORI, he still refuses to admit his true identity because she is KENSHIN's daughter and may, therefore, be untrustworthy.)*

YAE-GAKI: What's that? You are a samurai newly taken into service by my father, and before that you were the gardener Minosaku? *(Embarrassed, and beginning to doubt herself.)* I, of all people, should have known! Yet, as your features resemble his so closely I thought that perhaps . . . *(Slowly, deeply mortified.)* This results from my heart's passion. Here, before you both . . .

TAKEMOTO:

"How ashamed I feel!"

*(YAE-GAKI glances back at MINOSAKU, then, behaving as though he were indeed a total stranger to whom she suddenly felt attracted, she looks bashfully away again.)*

YAE-GAKI: Nureginu, come here.  
NUREGINU: Yes, madam.

*(Offstage musicians begin a sweet, romantic melody played by shamisen and Chinese fiddle [kokyû]. NUREGINU bows and follows her lady into her room, left, where both seat themselves, NUREGINU at right.)*

YAE-GAKI: Nureginu, that man who calls himself Minosaku, or whatever . . . Have you been close to him for long?

NUREGINU: *(Enthusiastically at first, then after realizing what she's saying, more seriously.)* Yes . . . No, not at all! *(She shakes her head strongly.)*

YAE-GAKI: Do not dispute it. He is surely someone known to you.

NUREGINU: Why, for my lady, of all people, to say such things! I only set eyes on him a moment ago. How could I possibly . . .

YAE-GAKI: Do not conceal it! Judging from your manner with him just now, are you not having a secret affair? . . .

TAKEMOTO:

"For so very intimate / do you both appear?" / But at such unexpected words, / there is horror and surprise.

*(YAE-GAKI coyly revolves a finger at her lady-in-waiting as though teasing her, and then shields her face in embarrassment. NUREGINU is alarmed and worried about giving away her own and MINOSAKU's plans.)*

NUREGINU: Why, as for what my lady says, how unbecoming to take an interest in such a man.

YAE-GAKI: If you say it is unbecoming, then he must certainly be known to you.

NUREGINU: *(Hesitantly.)* No, that was not my meaning . . . What I meant to say was, how unbecoming it would be of me to deceive my precious lord, your father, by taking a secret lover.

YAE-GAKI: In that case, if he is neither your acquaintance nor your lover . . . then, from now, I myself would like to receive his love.

*(NUREGINU is shocked by this open confession.)*

TAKEMOTO:

Pressing her fervently, she begs / that Nureginu / perform the task of go-between, / as, in the blinding light / of the setting sun, she lifts / a sleeve to her face. / How charming and endearing / is her appearance.

*(Implying, YAE-GAKI gestures in MINOSAKU's direction, and when NUREGINU hesitates, she pushes her gently from behind. At last, NUREGINU consents, and YAE-GAKI begins to check her appearance. They stand, and NUREGINU leads her lady out of the room. As they approach, YAE-GAKI pulls back bashfully, but NUREGINU forces her on until she is sitting beside MINOSAKU, hiding her face.)*

NUREGINU (*sitting at the left and speaking to YAEAGAKI*): Being one of your position, I still thought of my lady as a child and hardly expected such boldness with that Minosaku.

YAEAGAKI (*To one side*): My love began the moment I saw him, but let us speak no more of this. Here, at once . . .

NUREGINU: You mean that I should mediate?

YAEAGAKI (*Brashly*): That is so.

NUREGINU: But my, my . . . How true that even a great lord's daughter may fall into the path of love if she is careless. But, if that is how things stand, I will be the go-between.

MINOSAKU (*Shocked that NUREGINU seems about to give their secret away*): Wait, Nuregini! Do not be reckless in what you say.

NUREGINU: I understand everything. I . . . understand. (*She looks meaningfully at him and laps her right hand on her breast to reassure him that she knows what she is doing. NUREGINU has been struck by the lengths to which her young mistress will go for the sake of love and now believes she can turn this to her own advantage. She speaks to YAEAGAKI.*) It isn't that I refuse to be the go-between, but do you truly love Minosaku from the bottom of your heart?

TAKEMOTO:

Asked this question, all the more, / her face blushes red.

(YAEAGAKI slowly steals a glance at MINOSAKU, then, breaking into a smile, she covers her face with both sleeves.)

"With conduct ill becoming / a high-born princess, / would I say I loved him if / it were no more than . . ."

YAEAGAKI: A lie?

TAKEMOTO:

"For what possible reason / would I be so false?"

(YAEAGAKI coyly opens her fan, staring through its ribs at MINOSAKU. In a reverie, she looks out over it, drops the fan absentmindedly, and hides her face in embarrassment.)

NUREGINU: If you are certain in your heart, then you need only show me some definite evidence of your pledge, and, upon seeing that, I will act as go-between.

YAEAGAKI: Indeed, that is an easy request. Perhaps if I wrote it down . . .

NUREGINU: In this case, I have a special wish. The pledge that I desire is . . . (*she looks around to check that they are not being overheard, then, with conviction*) that you steal the Suwa Hoshō helmet!

YAEAGAKI (*Shocked*): What do you ask? Did you say steal the Suwa Hoshō helmet? (*She turns toward MINOSAKU. Now realizing that he must indeed be the real KATSUYORI, she speaks rapidly.*) So, you are Katsuyori after all!

TAKEMOTO:

At such words, he quickly covers her mouth.  
(*He lifts his fan to YAEAGAKI's face to silence her, horrified that someone else may be listening.*)

MINOSAKU: Why, how absurd to call me Katsuyori! I am Minosaku and have no idea at all to whom you refer. Do not talk so rashly.

TAKEMOTO:

Thus he speaks, and, into his face / deeply she gazes.  
(*Slowly, she looks up at him. YAEAGAKI is now certain that he is the real*

KATSUYORI, and she makes a fervent entreaty [kudoki] that he confide in her.)

"No more than betrothed, we had yet / a single pillow to share, / and though natural / for you to conceal feelings / of conjugal love, / yet are we like a pair of birds / with wings the same hue. / Though mankind little suspects / the ties that bind them, / still is it the custom for / all living creatures / to call with affection to / their parent or spouse."

(NUREGINU helps YAEAGAKI to take off her outer robe [uchikake], which she places behind the standing screen. Bowing to MINOSAKU, YAEAGAKI calls his attention to the two birds painted on the screen, then she rises to pose by its side. Overwhelmed by emotion, she steps back, colliding with a pillar. Somewhat embarrassed, she poses [kimari] with her arms wrapped around the pillar.)

"However hard for others / to distinguish your face, / how could I mistake the / appearance of one / for whom I have so longed, my / dear Katsuyori?"  
(*She looks sadly at MINOSAKU and returns to her room to look up lovingly at the painting. Coming out again, she sits beside him.*)

"While from the world and from men / you remain hidden, / and your person is kept / carefully disguised, / what need is there for such reserve / with I who am your wife? / I beg you reveal clearly / your identity / and reassure my heart . . ."

(*She lets out a sob.*)

MINOSAKU: Take care!

(*Startled by her loud cry and alarmed that others may overhear, MINOSAKU picks up his sword and stands to go, but, kneeling at his side, she holds on to the sheath and prevents him from leaving. They pose. He kneels again.*)

TAKEMOTO:

"I beg only this! / If now, my earnest desire / cannot be granted / then I beseech you to kill me. / Kill me, I implore!" (*She tugs ground to emphasize her feelings.*) Thus, clinging to his person, / bitterly she weeps. / (*She cries.*) Katsuyori, purposely, / speaks in an angry tone.

MINOSAKU: Your words are ludicrous nonsense! No matter how much you insist to the contrary, I am a menial servant and have no recollection of whom you speak. You should be more circumspect lest others see you. Move aside at once!

TAKEMOTO: He pushes her away . . .

YAEAGAKI (*Shocked by his strong denial. Then, no matter how much I implore, you are not Katsuyori? (Shamed and frustrated, she begins sobbing.)*)

TAKEMOTO: With a start, Minosaku / is taken aback / as, by the hilt of his sword, / she takes up the blade. / Seeing such impulsiveness, / Nureginu stops her quickly.

(NUREGINU rushes to YAEAGAKI's side and holds on to the sword.)

NUREGINU: My lady! Wait!

YAEAGAKI: No, no. Let me go at once. Let me die. If this man is not Katsuyori . . .

TAKEMOTO:

"Of my foolish ravings, / I am now ashamed, / and before my love's image, / I cannot excuse my heart's defilement. / No longer can I go on / living in this world." / Again they wrestle together, / and once more she is restrained. (*As they struggle with the sword, YAEAGAKI glances at MINOSAKU and shakes her head remorsefully. Briefly she covers her breast with her sleeve and looks over toward the portrait. At last, NUREGINU manages to win the sword over and goes to return it by MINOSAKU's side. Seeing that she is beaten, YAEAGAKI bursts into tears.*)

NUREGINU returns to kneel at YAEAGAKI's left.)

NUREGINU: My lady, wait. (*In a comforting tone.*) I expected no less from the child of a warrior's family. Your determination is splendid and, having witnessed your sincerity, I will let you meet Katsuyori after all. (*In a more cheerful voice.*) You guessed correctly, for Minosaku over there is indeed the real Katsuyori. Go to meet him at once.

TAKEMOTO:

Now as she's pushed toward him, / as one would expect, / her former bitterness shrinks / to a mere one-hundredth.

(NUREGINU points toward MINOSAKU, and YAEAGAKI becomes bashful, trying to escape back into her room. However, NUREGINU pushes her in his direction.)

YAEAGAKI (*Cry!*): My, but just look!

TAKEMOTO:

Though with all her heart she protests / at her cruel treatment, / after all is said, they both / draw close together / and, just as their passion grows, / Nureginu's heart / begins to beat more quickly.

(*After some resistance, YAEAGAKI goes to sit beside MINOSAKU and places one sleeve on his lap. Both are happy and, at this show of intimacy, NUREGINU, left, takes out her fan and begins to cool herself excitedly.*)

KENSHIN (*Offstage*): Where is Minosaku? The hour grows late, and my reply must be delivered to Shijiri.

(*Surprised, MINOSAKU gestures for the women to retreat quickly into YAEAGAKI's room while he himself descends to the bottom of the stairs and sits right. NUREGINU leads YAEAGAKI off left and closes the sliding door.*)

TAKEMOTO:

At which, he enters the room.

(*The painted doors at the back open to reveal KENSHIN with a black lacquered letterbox in his left hand. Inside the box, supposedly, is his reply to the shogunate envoy, who is now waiting at his military barracks in Shijiri. Having taken orders, KENSHIN's head is shaved, he has a short mustache, and he wears the typical high-collared, stiff brocade outer robe [omigoromo] of a high-ranking aristocrat. With his entrance, the atmosphere changes completely, for, in his aspect and speech, he exudes the authority of a powerful wardlord.*)

TAKEMOTO:

Minosaku is surprised / and starts to one side.

MINOSAKU: If all is prepared, I will leave at once.

KENSHIN (*Severely*): The particulars are contained inside this letterbox. Do not hesitate, but go this instant.

MINOSAKU: Yes, my lord.

TAKEMOTO:

He acknowledges receipt, / and with letterbox in hand, / now toward Shijiri / he goes with all speed.

(MINOSAKU carefully replaces his long sword in his obi, goes to take the letterbox in his right hand, bows slightly, and immediately makes his way to the haamachi, where he pauses at shichisan. KENSHIN, aided by a STAGE ASSISTANT, sits on a stool on the platform center. MINOSAKU still does not know KENSHIN's real intentions, but he suspects that KENSHIN has seen through his disguise. For this reason, MINOSAKU now transfers the letterbox to his left hand, keeping his right hand free to draw his sword in case of attack. He departs warily. *Offstage* stick drum, shamisen, and flute play until he disappears. The raised dais on which the TAKEMOTO musicians sit revolves to reveal a new chanter and shamisen player.)

TAKEMOTO:

Kenshin, with eyes fixed, / watches till he's gone.  
(*Satisfied that MINOSAKU has really left, KENSHIN nods to himself with a sinister air.*)

KENSHIN: Shirasuga Rokurō! Come here at once!

ROKURŌ: Yes, my lord!

*(Offstage musicians indicate the sounds of battle [tōyose]. ROKURŌ, carrying a naked sword, runs in from left to rapid tsuke beats. He wears a wide-sleeved brocade garment with hems split at the sides [yoten], and his hair is tied up with a headband. He moves right and bows, placing his sword on the ground.)*

TAKEMOTO:

With immediate reply, / Shirasuga Rokurō / advances before his lord. /

Kenshin, forcefully . . .

KENSHIN *(Rhythmically, in time with the TAKEMOTO shamisen [nori]):* Here in Suwa are the waters of the lake completely frozen over and impassable by boat. *(Faster, no longer in rhythm.)* The journey to Shiogiri must be made over land through a difficult mountain pass . . . Take care that you do not fail!

*(KENSHIN's implicit meaning is that they should overtake, ambush, and kill*

*MINOSAKU.)*

ROKURŌ: Yes, my lord!

TAKEMOTO:

"Your command will be obeyed!"

*(ROKURŌ, anxious to impress his lord, poses in a powerful mie.)*

ROKURŌ *(Rhythmically, to TAKEMOTO shamisen [nori]):* Even if Katsuyori should prove fearless, I, in turn, will display my mastery of the secret arts.

TAKEMOTO:

"Cliffs of sheer rock rise sharply / at Shiogiri, / where, over peaks and through valleys, / through high mountain passes, I'll persevere. / Though I must soar above heaven and earth, / still will I slash and cut and slash again / in pursuit of the foe."

*(With the sounds of battle in the background, ROKURŌ poses, looking up at the mountain peaks and then down into the valleys. Taking up his sword, he mimes fighting, ending in a stone-throwing [ishinage] mie to two tsuke beats.)*

ROKURŌ: Presently, I will have good news to report!

KENSHIN: That is well spoken. Now, go at once!

ROKURŌ: Yes, my lord.

*(He bows and runs to the hanamichi, where he poses in a mie. Then, beginning with slow and powerful steps, he gradually quickens his pace until he is running energetically to intercept MINOSAKU.)*

TAKEMOTO:

Both heart and limbs are filled with / the hot blood of youth / as the young warrior departs, / following swiftly.

KENSHIN: And now, Hara Kobunji! Come at once!

KOBUNJI: Yes, my lord!

TAKEMOTO:

Springing to attention is / Hara Kobunji, / making his way with all speed / into his lord's sight.

*(To the sounds of battle and rapid tsuke beats, KOBUNJI dashes in from left holding a spear. Like ROKURŌ, he wears the brocade garment with split hem of a warrior in combat. His face is red and his hair falls loosely about his ears. He halts left and bows, placing the spear on the ground.)*

KENSHIN: I have just dispatched Rokurō, but I am still dubious of the outcome if he is alone. Go now to assist him.

KOBUNJI: I humbly receive my lord's command and will go to join Rokurō at once.

TAKEMOTO:

"Like the leaves scattering in / the trees of autumn, . . . / one blade of pampas, / two blades of pampas . . . / with one thrust here and another there, / I will follow on."

*(He mimes the leaves tumbling down and, balancing on one leg while leaning on his spear, he performs a stone-throwing mie.)*

KOBUNJI: Once defeated, Katsuyori's head . . .

TAKEMOTO:

"Will be struck clean off / in the blink of an eye."

*(He mimes cutting off the head.)*

KOBUNJI: Of that my lord can rest assured.

TAKEMOTO:

Truly, with such energy, / such courage and strength, / he well deserves a lasting name / for loyalty in the house / of Uesugi.

*(He bows low.)*

KENSHIN *(Impatiently):* Quickly, go!

KOBUNJI: Yes, my lord!

TAKEMOTO:

And now, with renewed vigor, / he dashes away.

*(Again, to the sounds of battle, he makes his way to the hanamichi, where he poses heroically in a mie and exits.)*

In his wake, a suspicious / Princess Yaegaki . . .

*(YAEAGAKI and NUREGINU reappear and look on with expressions of concern. They approach KENSHIN and seat themselves on either side of him, YAEAGAKI to his left.)*

YAEAGAKI: Father, what was all the commotion?

KENSHIN: That young man was none other than Takeda Katsuyori. I have sent the other two to dispose of him.

YAEAGAKI *(Horried):* What? You mean to kill Katsuyori?

**TAKEMOTO:**

So stunned is she at the news, / she falls to the ground.  
(**YAEGAKI** lets out a cry and exchanges a desperate look with **NUREGINU**. Slowly she leans back in dismay. **NUREGINU** is also alarmed but is helpless to do anything in front of **KENSHIN**.)

"On this day, whatever else / may have come to pass, / to meet again my husband, / who just now departed, / was like the rare blossoming / of the most precious flower. / But from him in whom I rejoiced / must I now be parted / yet another time?"  
(She stares longingly after **MINOSAKU** and briefly crosses her sleeves to represent their union, then stands, overcome with tears.)

Calling upon her father / to be merciful, / to spare her dear lover's life, / she humbly implores. / Yet, though she clings to him weeping, / he pays no regard.

(*Kneeling at his side, she tries to move him, but he brushes her away.*)  
**KENSHIN** (*To NUREGINU, with loathing and hostility*): As for you who are Takekida's spy, there are detailed questions I must put to you! Disappear within!

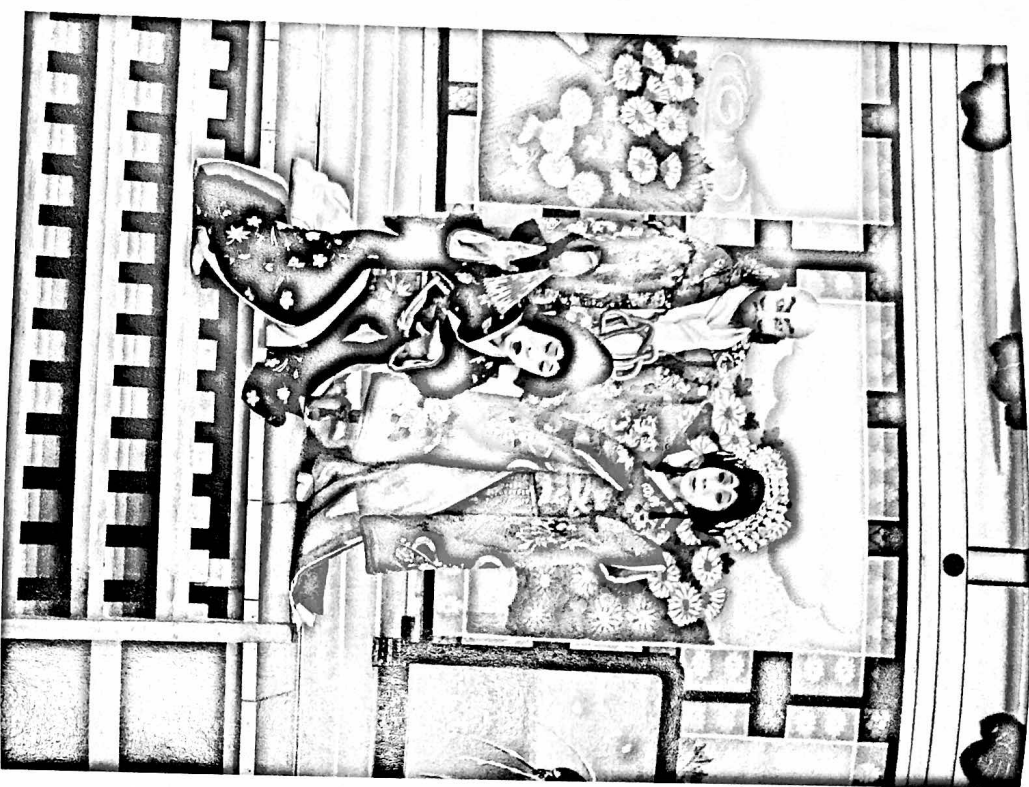
**TAKEMOTO:**

Begrudging in compassion, / the rough-mannered general / retires deep within his / private bedchamber.

(**NUREGINU** is shocked that **KENSHIN** knows she is a spy in league with **MINOSAKU**. Resolving to hurry after and warn **MINOSAKU** of his danger, she stands and straightens her kimono with a decisive air. Just as she reaches the top of the stairs, **KENSHIN** pins her to the ground with his fan and holds **YAEGAKI** back with his left hand, a fierce and unforgiving expression on his face. They pose in a final tableau [men no mei], with **KENSHIN** center, **YAEGAKI** left, and **NUREGINU** below. A single loud ki is the signal for offstage stick drum and flute to play excitedly [hayabue], expressing the conflicting tensions as the curtain is closed to an accelerating ki pattern.)

**Fox Fires in the Inner Garden**

(The curtain opens to offstage beats of the large drum, representing flowing water [mizu no oto], and accelerating ki to reveal the garden inside **KENSHIN**'s mansion. A brushwood fence with covered gate, right, leads to the mansion itself, while across a stone bridge over the pond, a small shrine, left, contains the treasured *Sutra Hossho heime*. A large stone lantern, lit, stands at center. A landscape of mountains is visible against the night sky. One stroke of the temple bell [honsuugane] suggests the late hour and the loneliness of the scene. We should imagine the strains of a sad song filtering out from the mansion. A large ensemble of **TAKEMOTO** musicians sits on a raised platform left. A brief introduction by solo shamisen is followed by offstage koto music.)



The villainous Nagao Kenshin (Bandō Mitsugorō VII) prevents Princess Yaegaki (Nakamura Utaemon VI), right, and Lady Nureginu (Nakamura Shikan VII), center, from interfering with his order to have Katsuyori killed. (Umemura Yutaka, Engeki Shuppansha)

TAKEMOTO (*Slowly*):

"By my thoughts of you / am I consumed, burning like / fox fires in the open plains, / deep into the night."

(A soft drummed offstage [dorodoro] signals the entrance of a white fox on the banamichi stage left [suppon]. Ployed by a child in a costume [nigunrumi], the fox makes its way to the main stage and onto the stone bridge to look down at its reflection in the pond.)

"Burning like fox fires, / fox fires of the open plains . . . / the fields ablaze with fox fires, / deep into the night."

(Offstage dorodoro is heard as the fox causes blinds around the shrine to lift of their own accord. The fox hops up into the shrine, poses at each pillar, and magically disappears into the main altar. The drum pattern for flowing water sounds as YAEAGAKI enters warily through the gate, on her way to warn KATSUYORI of his danger. Holding a lantern in one hand, she lifts up the hem of her kimono with the other. She wears a pale mauve long-sleeved kimono, a silver tiara on her head, and thick garden clogs of black lacquer on her feet. The bell tolls intermittently to suggest that she is quite alone as she walks about checking with her lantern. Koto music continues, as if coming from the mansion.)

YAEAGAKI (*Noticing the music*): From an inner room, I hear the blind musician . . .

TAKEMOTO:

"How well it describes me, the song / that he is singing."

(She turns to look back toward the mansion and sadly glances down at her own person.)

"Yet the one to be pitied / is Lord Katsuyori. / Though his life is now threatened / by an evil scheme, / of this, his present danger, / he is unaware."

(At the mention of her betrothed, YAEAGAKI looks into the distance, worried. She turns to the back and a STAGE ASSISTANT helps her out of her clogs and takes her lamp.)

"The cause of our parting, too, / was my pitiless father, / for though I begged and protested, / his cruel heart remained unmoved / by my pleading words."

(YAEAGAKI kneels and looks toward the mansion, thinking of her father, KENSHIN. She bows dutifully and shakes her head at the thought of his merciless nature. She taps the ground to show the depth of her feelings but shakes her head once more as she recalls the words she spoke to him. She rises, begins to move about, and then sinks again to her knees.)

"If you could feel compassion / at your daughter's grief, / then spare the life of my betrothed / and let us marry, I beg." / Thus, lamenting bitterly, / she falls to the ground.

YAEAGAKI (*She begins to cry but stops herself*): No, no. This is no time for tears. I must reach Katsuyori ahead of his pursuers and warn him of his danger. I must shorten path is . . .

TAKEMOTO:

"Across the lake of Suwai / Now must I hurry / and ask the bannan to take me / lest I be too late." / With courage and devotion, / she draws up her hems / and hastens toward the lake.

(She gestures in the lake's direction, stands, and mines pulling up her kimono. The water drum pattern offstage creates a sense of urgency as YAEAGAKI, holding both ends of her obi, hurries to shichisan. Looking ahead, she takes two tentative steps but then turns back.)

YAEAGAKI: No, no, no. (*Dropping her obi, she pauses briefly to think.*) The lake is now frozen over, and a boat will be unable to cross. I must go on foot, yet, with only a woman's strength, how am I to overtake Katsuyori's pursuers? (*Glances down at her legs, then looks in the pursuers' direction.*)

TAKEMOTO:

"What cruel fate determines that / I should stand helpless / as before my very eyes / my husband should die?"

(She looks back desperately across the frozen lake, his her arms in frustration, and falls to the ground in tears.)

YAEAGAKI (*In despair*): If only I had wings . . . How I long for wings that I might fly to his side to warn him!

(Rising to her feet, she gently moves her long sleeves like wings. She stamps lightly to emphasize her emotions.)

TAKEMOTO (*Passionately*):

"I yearn to meet . . . I yearn to see . . ." / For her spouse she longs, / and now with countless gloomy thoughts / is her mind confused. / For a hundred, a thousand years, / she'd weep through the nights, / but though she would cry her life away / and drown in bitter tears, / how little it would profit / her dearest husband.

(Desperate to reach her betrothed but helpless, she gazes and gestures across the lake. Grasping her sleeves, she sinks to the ground and holds one sleeve over another to represent her eternal bond with him. She shakes her head and wipes away a tear. Standing to think, she slowly turns toward the shrine, and it suddenly occurs to her to pray for assistance.)

Her only recourse . . . to beg the / gods and Buddha for help. / And so, now to the alcove / wherein is enshrined / the helmet of supreme truth / before which she prays.

(As she makes her way to the building, left, the offstage drum pattern for water indicates the pond she must cross, while a single shamisen plays with increasing speed to

*suggest her nervousness. Stepping up into the holy shrine, she sits, blesses herself, and bows low.)*

YAEGAKI: If this helmet is the sacred treasure bestowed upon the Takeda House by the god of Suwa, then it must be invested with no less than the deity's spirit itself. *(Bows in awe.)* Now, at Lord Katsuyori's time of crisis, I beg for assistance.

TAKEMOTO:

Imploring that he be saved, / she goes to take the helmet, / raising it to her head, / lifting it in reverence. / Fearful that others / would now suspect her actions / if they saw her face, / warily she steps down to / tread the stepping stones with care.

*(YAEGAKI lifts up her arms in supplication to the gods and turns to bow before the helmet. A hidden STAGE ASSISTANT takes the helmet from the altar and hands it to her. She looks around furtively to check that no one is watching and, in her anxiety, trips over the edge of the shrine. Supporting herself with one foot on the stair, she poses clutching the helmet to her breast. Offstage, a large drum plays the water pattern. A large full moon appears in the sky as she makes her way to the stone bridge.)*

TAKEMOTO:

Reflecting on the surface / of the garden pond, / now by the light of the moon, / she beholds a doubtful form! / With shock and astonishment, / she leaps to one side.

*(Holding the helmet overhead, she sees an image in the water. Startled, YAEGAKI dashes off the bridge and falls to the ground, right, frozen with fear. The helmet is placed on the ground by her side.)*

YAEGAKI: Without doubt, what I saw just now . . . *(pauses, terrified)* was a fox's shape! Why, reflected on the surface of the garden pond . . .

TAKEMOTO:

"What an uncanny sight!" / The pounding in her chest / she tries to stroke down . . . she tries to stroke down. / Though nervous and trembling, / now by slow degrees, / she goes back to look once more / upon the water, / yet all she sees reflected / is her own image.

*(By placing her hand in the breast of her kimono, she soothes her nerves. Standing, she inches slowly back onto the bridge. She shields her face with her sleeve until she has enough courage to look down.)*

YAEGAKI: Just now, the shape of a fox was reflected in this water. Yet, to look again, there is only my own reflection. Was it some phantom spirit I saw, or did my nervous state lead me to imagine it?

*(She slips a hand into her kimono breast and stands deep in thought. Suddenly, two loud strokes of the TAKEMOTO shamisen break the tension.)*

TAKEMOTO *(Strongly)*:

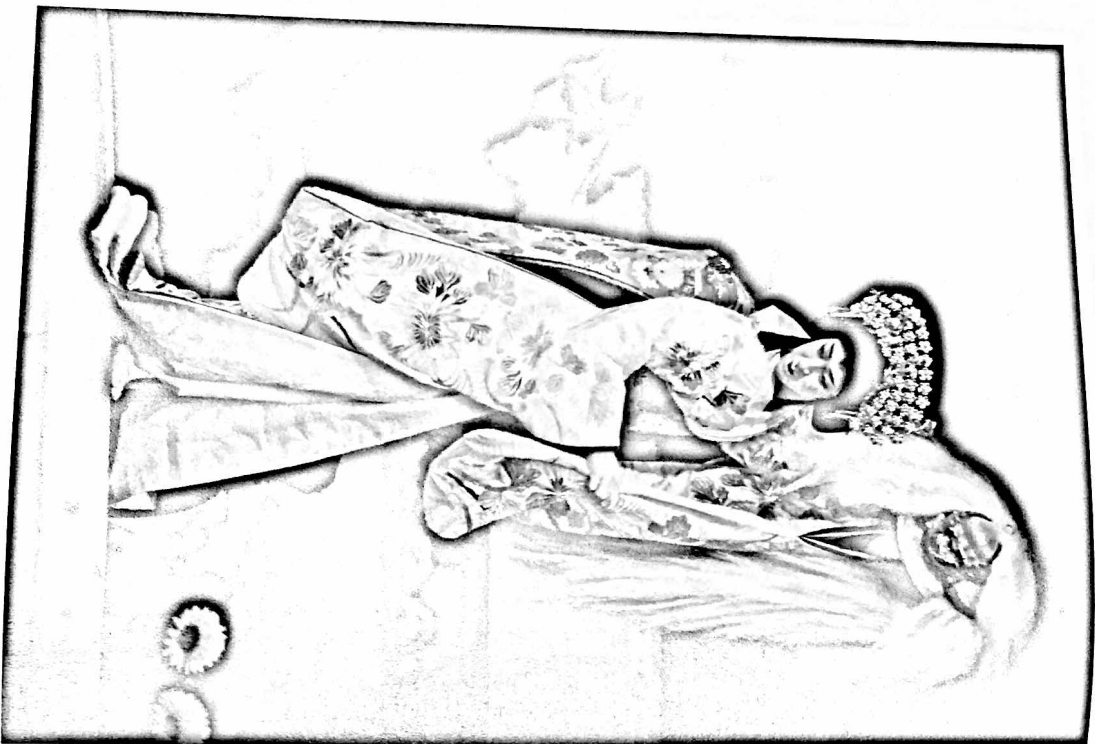
"How mysterious this is!" / Jittery and tense, / to the helmet she returns, / lifting it in respect. / Now, again, she goes to peek, / and in damn's moonlight clear, / clearly, clearly on the water, / a white fox's shape! / Like the pond's muddy verges / is her breast all choked, / as there by the water's edge / bolt upright she stands / gazing down in wonder at / the water's sight.

*(YAEGAKI crosses right to retrieve the helmet. Lifting it to her forehead reverently, she goes back to the bridge. The water drum pattern offstage suggests her pounding heart, shifting to a loud dorodoro when she looks down. She is shocked to see the fox's reflection again. Turning away in fear, she shields herself with the helmet as a STAGE ASSISTANT begins to pull out the threads holding the top layer of her kimono in place. Facing front, she crouches, trembling behind the helmet, as a of the shamisen quicken, she stands upright, and the STAGE ASSISTANT pulls off the outer layer of kimono [nikimuki], revealing a white kimono beneath. With the helmet held above her left shoulder, she poses [kamari] to loud dorodoro, two tsuke beats, and one toll of the bell. Dorodoro softens and flute and drums play the magical fox pattern [raijo]. The STAGE ASSISTANT attaches the helmet to the end of a long pole [sashigane] and gently lifts it out of YAEGAKI's hand, taking it right. Startled to find that the helmet is no longer at her side, she sees it hovering in midair. Hoping to catch it with her sleeves, she runs toward it, but it eludes her and floats away left. Chasing after it, she manages to bring it to the ground, emphasized by a single tsuke beat. Dorodoro swells, then silence. The STAGE ASSISTANT takes the helmet off the pole and runs off.)*

YAEGAKI *(Kneeling above the helmet)*: It is true . . . I have heard that the god of Suwa has the fox as his emissary, and if this helmet represents his divine person, then there will be countless fox spirits in attendance. How miraculous, for without doubt they are protecting it!

*(YAEGAKI lifts up the helmet and stands. The offstage water pattern is played as she approaches the lake, but she is stopped by a pair of samurai who suddenly appear from behind the fence. They wear yellow tabi and small knee patches. Hakama over their brocade upper kimono are tucked up, leaving their legs bare and free for combat. One samurai wrests the helmet from YAEGAKI, but, mysteriously, she is able to hold him back. The three pose to a shrill note from the flute and two tsuke beats. Indicating her possession by the fox spirits, YAEGAKI's right hand is curled under the a fox paw. Aided by the foxes' strength, YAEGAKI continues the dance battle [shosha-date] with the samurai, retrieving the helmet and causing the men to somersault onto their backs. Momentarily they lie defeated.)*

YAEGAKI: Yes, now I remember! If the lake is frozen over, one need only find where a fox has already crossed. Following its footprints, even men and horses may



Princess Yaegaki (Bandō Tamasaburō V) holds the magical helmet overhead and gazes into the pond, where she sees the reflection of a fox spirit. (Umemura Yutaka, Engeki Shuppansha)

pass without worry. Yet, to cross before a fox would mean drowning beneath the water. All men know this of Suwa Lake!

**TAKEMOTO** (*Boldly, courageously*):

Even if across the ice / no fox has yet passed, / the thought of her dear husband / gives her strength of will. / Added to that, the helmet / with its power divine / that now must be returned to / Lord Katsuyori. / This is the sacred wish of / the god of Suwa.

(*Seated, YAEAGAKI hits the ground with her knees to emphasize her resolute spirit. She bows to her beloved and then turns toward the shrine, lifting her hand and lowering her head in gratitude.*)

**YAEAGAKI**: I will obey!

(*She puts her hands together and rubs them in heartfelt prayer.*)  
**TAKEMOTO**:

"I will obey . . . I will obey! / How thankful I am!" / Thus, taking up the helmet / to place upon her head, / instantly, the dancing shapes / of fox fires ablaze, / flickering all about her, / burning here and there.

(*YAEAGAKI stands and the two samurai reappear to challenge her. She holds the helmet above her head and the samurai pose on either side of her to loud dorodoro, flute, and tsuke beats. Balls of flame representing fox fires float through the air, suspended on poles held by STAGE ASSISTANTS. YAEAGAKI, left, holds the helmet aloft as the men attempt to pull her from behind.*)

Flames roaring in confusion, / how wondrous the sight! / Here protecting the helmet / of the Buddha's supreme truth!

(*The fight continues to offstage dorodoro and tsuke beats. The men cannot defeat the power of the fox spirits. YAEAGAKI disappears behind the fence, right, as the men pose, holding the helmet between them. The helmet held by the STAGE ASSISTANT flies left, causing the men to revolve dizzily. It beats them across the bridge into the shrine. Using the shrine's sacred straw rope, they try but fail to catch the helmet, which flies back toward YAEAGAKI. Controlled by the fox spirits, the men take out short silver truncheons [jitte] and begin to fight each other to loud offstage dorodoro.*)

At last, to Suwa Lake she goes, / starting now to cross / . . . as though taking to the air.

(*Now in a pink kimono, YAEAGAKI reappears through the fence with helmet in hand. With the offstage water pattern creating suspense, she stands motionless, invisible to the two samurai. Once again they approach the helmet and challenge, only to be confronted by YAEAGAKI, who defeats them again and again. She forces them back into the shrine building, where they hold the sacred rope over their shoulders. YAEAGAKI hurries to shichisan to fast beats of the tsuke, trips, and falls to her knees. Turning to the men inside the shrine, she rises and, with a single wave of the*

helmet, causes both to somersault and lie unconscious. She poses triumphantly to two tsuke beads. The blinds come down to close off the shrine. The helmet now seems alive in her hand. YAEAGAKI briefly stumbles back, overwhelmed by its power. The large drum sounds forcefully offstage (ōdoro) together with the stick drum and flute playing a fast fox pattern (haya raijō) as YAEAGAKI starts down the hanamichi, at times struggling in fear against the helmet but pulled forward toward the frozen lake. Tsuke beads echo her footsteps and the curtain closes to accelerating ki.)

## GLOSSARY

This glossary is restricted to terms used in Volume I. Glossary terms in other volumes will differ somewhat, as may the definitions themselves. Long vowels are given only for italicized words and not for terms likely to be found in a standard English dictionary. Cross-referenced words are in bold italic type. A literal translation is given only for selected terms.

**adauchi** (revenge), the subject of vengeance, which fills so many plays. Also **kadaiuchi**.

**ai biki**, a black stool, either high or low, placed under an actor by a **kōken** or **kunago** to ease the strain of sitting or standing over a long period. Often it helps to give the actor additional stature.

**ai guma** (blue shadow), stylized **kumadori** makeup of bold blue-grey lines on a white background, suggesting an evil nature.

**aikata**, melodic excerpt played during dialogue or action by offstage shamisen to suggest mood or emotional context.

**akahime** (red princess), young, upper-class, female role type of extreme refinement and fragility, so-named because the character usually wears a bright red, long-sleeved (**furisode**) kimono.

**akatsura** (red face), role of a red-faced minor villain in a **jidaimono**.

**aragoto** (rough business), bravura acting style, a specialty of the Ichikawa Danjūrō acting family, particularly in **Kabuki Jūhachibon** plays.

**aradhitogami**, a powerful character who may be considered a kind of demigod.

**asagimaku** (light blue curtain), large curtain of light-blue cotton rigged downstage in order to cover the full width of the stage. When dropped, a new scene is suddenly revealed.

**banzuke**, program or poster advertising a play and its cast.

**batabata**. See **tsuke**.

**Bon**. See **Obon**.

**boshi**, hat or purple cloth worn on the crown of a woman's wig.

**bukkaeri** (sudden change), a quick, onstage costume change technique by which stage assistants remove basing threads so that, at the proper moment, the top half of the costume falls about the actor's waist with the inside lining covering the lower half of the kimono. This lining matches the newly revealed upper half, the effect being as if the entire costume has been changed. The actor strikes a **mie** and the assistants hold up the rear portion of the dropped fabric to increase the actor's size. See also **hayagawari**, **hikinuki**.