

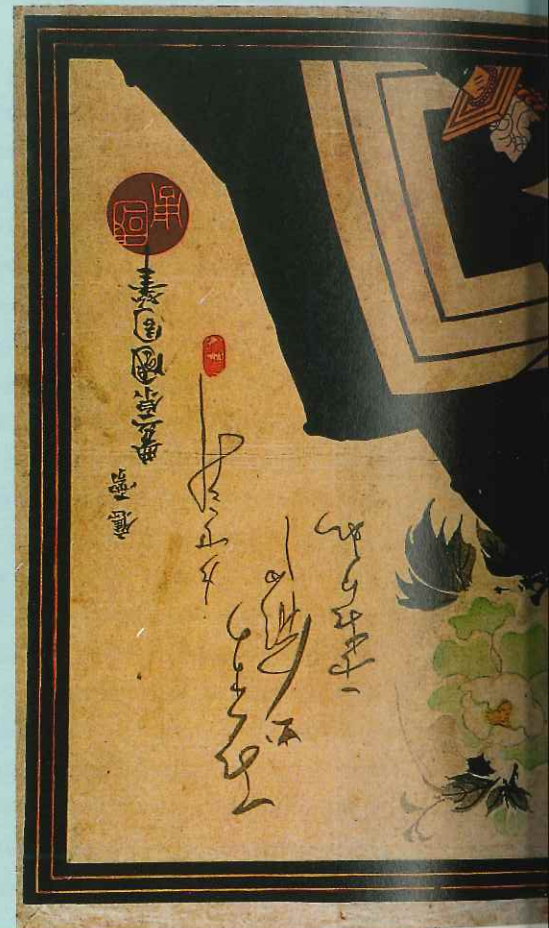


Two-panel woodblock print by Toyohara Kunichika (1835–1900) of Ichikawa Danjūrō IX as Kamakura no Gongorō Kagemasa in the "face-showing" (*kaomise*) production at the Shintomi-za, Tokyo, November and December 1878. The huge personal *mimasu* crest of Danjūrō on the sleeves, bold *kumadori* makeup, and oversized costume, wig, and sword are characteristic of the actor's bravura (*aragoto*) acting style. The *haiku* poem alludes to the custom of placing on display a felicitous papier-maché or clay figure of an animal or person, perhaps an actor: "An auspicious doll, resting in an alcove niche, a clear frosty day." (Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum of Waseda University)

Just A Minute!
Shibaraku

Original Version Attributed to Ichikawa Danjūrō I (Mimasuwa Hyōgo)
TRANSLATED BY KATHERINE SALTZMAN-LI

TSURUGAOKA SHRINE PRECINCTS
Tsurugaoka Shato no Ba



Just A Minute!

INTRODUCTION

The Tokugawa-period kabuki year began in the eleventh calendar month with the "face-showing" (*kaomise*) production. As the opening program for the year ahead, it aimed not only at immediate production success but also to announce and advertise the artistic and entertainment possibilities of a troupe with continuing and newly contracted stars. The Edo *kaomise*, in particular, were always grand and showy presentations. Troupe leaders (*zagashira*) carefully planned them to be spectacularly attractive and to show off the coming year's stars to their greatest advantage.

Just a Minute! became a regular feature of the season's opening production (as its first main act) from the time of actor Ichikawa Danjūrō II (1688–1758). Performed annually throughout most of the Tokugawa period, it provided one of the most popular and representative opportunities for the display of Edo-style kabuki. Its connection to the bravura-style (*aragoto*) traditions of the Danjūrō acting line and its placement in the opening production put it at the center of Edo kabuki practices. Successive generations in the Danjūrō line followed in the footsteps of their founder, whose religious beliefs were deeply enmeshed in his art. His roles included deities, particularly the Buddhist god Fudō, and his acting was considered to have a religious, protective effect. *Just a Minute!* is one of the finest examples of the Danjūrō family style (*ie no gei*), its hero powered by godlike qualities of magnificence, might, and the ability to save weak victims from oppression. As the most eagerly awaited act of the Edo *kaomise* production, *Just a Minute!* not only offered brilliance and theatricality but also contained roles of every type (*yakugara*), thus effectively presenting the members of the new troupe through the display of their varied talents.

There was no fixed text for *Just a Minute!* during the Tokugawa period. Pre-Meiji versions of the play can be summarized better by their general idea than by their plot: evil designs and their perpetrators are undone by the sudden appearance of a brash *aragoto* hero of about eighteen years of age. He exposes the villains and puts an end to both their plans and their power. Over time, this situation was worked into a large number of often very complex plots. Major acting features shared among versions include the overpowering, larger-than-life hero, his grand entrance, his characteristic elocutionary and gestural styles, and his speech of self-

introduction (*tsurune*). Common plot devices involved a ledger and the explanation of its meaning or etymology, and lost and recovered objects (typically, governance seals and a famous sword). Each year, the setting and characters making up the play's world (*sekai*) would be newly determined, incorporating both the elements just listed and new plot and production elements (*shukō*).

The earliest play containing elements of *Just a Minute!* was *The Great Ledger Book and Asahina's Hundred Stories* (Dafukuchō Asahina Hyaku Monogatari), in which the meaning of a certain ledger is explained. Written by Danjūrō I (1660–1704)—using the penname Minamaya Hyōgo—for Edo's Morita-za in 1692, the author also played the major role of Asahina. Five years later, in 1697, Danjūrō performed *Just a Minute!* in *Meeting with Nagoya* (Sankai Nagoya) at the Nakamura-za. Both this history play (*jidamono*), which is considered the first actual version of *Just a Minute!*, and the 1692 play were performed in New Year's productions. However, the play that became the basis for later performances was performed in the eleventh lunar month, thus initiating the *kaomise* connection. In Danjūrō II's 1714 Nakamura-za production of *The Nation's Great Ledger* (Bannin Dafukuchō), the hero was, for the first time, called Kamakura no Gongorō Kagemasa, his most usual name in subsequent versions.

In 1840, *Just a Minute!* became an independent play with its now familiar title when Danjūrō VII (1791–1859) included it in the "Eighteen Famous Kabuki Plays" (*Kabuki Jūhachihon*) collection, the most popular pieces of the Danjūrō line of actors, most of them in *angoto* style. The one-word Japanese title is taken from the hero's offstage call to the onstage villains just before his entrance on the *hanamichi*. A famous anecdote from Danjūrō II's early acting days accounts for the title: rivalry with Yamanaoka Heikurō I (1642–1724), the actor playing the role of the chief villain, Takehira, resulted in Danjūrō's delayed entrance and the repetition of his line, "Just a minute!" The effect of his entrance was inadvertently enhanced, and the line's repetition worked its way permanently into scripts. (Interestingly, the *hanamichi* was still just a provisional part of theatre architecture at the time, not becoming permanent until, perhaps, the 1730s. Thus the story, if true, demonstrates an early example of *kabuki*'s discovery of the runway's latent dramatic possibilities.) *Just a Minute!* also serves as an appropriate title because of the line's importance in the play. It is delivered at a pivotal moment: with his call of "Just a minute!" the hero effects both a halt to further villainy and a switch to the ascendency of good over evil.

The hero's entrance in *Just a Minute!* remains one of the great moments in

which we may share the pleasure experienced by Edo spectators. As he enters on the *hanamichi*, wearing one of kabuki's most memorable costumes and wigs (described in the translation), all eyes are riveted with excited anticipation on his awesome presence. Countless portraits of actors in this guise effectively captured and represented the excitement and pleasure of Edo kabuki.

Having entered on the *hanamichi*, Kagemasa takes a seat at *shichisan*, where he is aided by a stage assistant (*kōken*) dressed formally in the standard Danjūrō colors of persimmon and black. Kagemasa introduces himself in a formal, lengthy speech (*tsurane*), a moment of both literary importance and heightened theatricality. Usually written in poetic meter of alternating seven and five syllables (*shichigochō*) and often composed with the literary techniques of extensive wordplay and exhaustive lists, this rhetorical highlight calls on the actor's elocutionary skill and ability to hold an audience. Many Tokugawa-period *tsurane* for this play were written by the actors themselves, who, with topical references and current locutions, would update the traditional model. When Danjūrō XII (b. 1946) spoke the *tsurane* at the performance celebrating the assumption of his name, he added many topical references regarding the significance of the occasion, such as, "Today I present myself as the twelfth in succession." In fact, although the *tsurane* translated here is the standard one given in most contemporary published versions of the play, the one spoken by Danjūrō XII when he took that name in 1985 demonstrates that these speeches are still subject to considerable revision, although certain traditional phrases may be retained.

Tsurane were the only published parts of *Just a Minute!* and other scripts, and fans collected them as part of their adoration of specific actors. Thus, the *tsurane* is a chief point of attention for both the actor and audience. Because of the elocutionary style employed, it is far more impressive in performance than on the page, especially in English, where its rhetorical devices and auditory flamboyance can barely be suggested.

The play contains other distinctive characters in addition to Kagemasa. Chief among them are the arch-villain Takehira, with his blue-lined face (*ai guma*) and his coolly elegant evil nature; the comical Priest Shinsai, who wears the strange *namazu guma*, a makeup suggestive of a catfish; and the highly exaggerated "belly-thrusters" (*haradashi*), Takehira's red-faced henchmen, whose large, exposed red bellies have their musculature painted on them.

An alternate version of the play called *Female Just a Minute!* (Onna Shibaraku, 1745 or 1746), features a powerful heroine, and a version written as a

domestic play (*sewamono*), *Domestic Just a Minute!* (Sewa Shibaraku), was created in 1818 by Tsuruya Nanboku IV (1755-1829) for Danjūrō VII. The script most often used today is based on that prepared in 1895 by Fukuchi Ōchi (1841-1906) for Danjūrō IX (1838-1903) for a Kabuki-za production. I have used the version published in Hatton Yukio, ed., *Kabuki On-Site*, Vol. 10, together with a video of a 1985 production starring Danjūrō XII.

CHARACTERS

KIYOHARA NO TAKEHIRA, an evil lord

KASHIMA PRIEST SHINSAI, comic priest used by TAKEHIRA

BELLY-THRUSTERS, large-bellied samurai in service to TAKEHIRA:

TOGANE TARŌ YOSHINARI

ASHIGARA ZAEMON TAKAMUNE

EBARA HACHIRŌ KUNITSURA

HANYŪ GORŌ SUKENARI

MUSASHI KURŌ UJIKIYO

NARITA GORŌ YOSHIDE

TOYOSHIMA HEIDA, samurai on the side of TAKEHIRA

TAGATA UNPACHI, samurai on the side of TAKEHIRA

UNAGAMI TONAI, samurai on the side of TAKEHIRA

OSUMI HYŌJI, samurai on the side of TAKEHIRA

KAMAKURA NO GONGORŌ KAGEMASA, the powerful young hero

KAMO NO JIRŌ YOSHITSUNA, son of an important governor

KAMO NO SABURŌ YOSHISATO, brother of YOSHITSUNA

TAKARAGI KURANDO SADATOSHI, samurai on the side of YOSHITSUNA

WATANABE KOGANEMARU YUKITSUNA, samurai on the side of YOSHITSUNA

TERUHA, in disguise as an attendant of TAKEHIRA, in reality KAGEMASA's cousin

KATSURA NO MAE, YOSHITSUNA's fiancée

KURETAKE, lady-in-waiting to KATSURA NO MAE

EIGHT FOOTMEN, in service to TAKEHIRA

FOUR FEMALE ATTENDANTS, in service to KATSURA NO MAE

TWELVE MALE SHRINE ATTENDANTS

STAGE ASSISTANTS, formally dressed kōken and black-garbed kurogo

ŌZATSUMA, two chanters and two shamisen players used in aragoto plays

Tsurugaoka Shrine Precincts

(The curtain opens to offer a view of the Hachiman Tsurugaoka Shrine precinct, which is set back and raised by several steps, leaving the front of the stage for arrivals, departures, parading, and seating. The action occurs on the forestage before a painted flat depicting the shrine's outer wall of stone and red lacquered wood. The stage and hanamichi floor are covered with dance platforms [shosabutai]. A border of plum blossoms [tsurieda] runs overhead at the front of the stage. The curtain opens to haya kagura music, traditional for the opening of the kaomise program. Two ŌZATSUMA chanters and two ŌZATSUMA shamisen players sit in full view, stage left, on a side extension to the stage. They wear the traditional persimmon-colored formal garb associated with the Danjūrō line. Offstage, lively music [watari byōshi] accompanies the procession. EIGHT FOOTMEN [yakko] parade in along the hanamichi with high and noisy steps. The outer garments of their matching costumes are tucked up behind them and they wear fringed aprons. All carry feathered lances with black-and-white-striped handles. The feathers alternate in color, four red and four white. The FOOTMEN stop, spread out along the hanamichi, lean on their left knees, and face the main part of the audience. Right arms are outstretched; left arms hold the lances vertically. They speak rapidly and in order, starting with the FOOTMAN closest to the stage.)

ALL FOOTMEN: At last!

(Music stops.)

FIRST FOOTMAN: It is here! The month of the "face-showing," the auspicious tradition of Edo kabuki when the year's lineup of actors first appears.

SECOND FOOTMAN: At the first beat of the announcing drum, the feathered adornments of secondary attendants rush in.

THIRD FOOTMAN: Flurrying, is it snow or a hail of sweet warming sake that falls in this year-end cold? With the wrap-up of the final month . . .

FOURTH FOOTMAN: We share the measured wine of drinking companions at the familiar site of the dismount.

FIFTH FOOTMAN: We toss off a full half-pint, and it penetrates like an extractor.

SIXTH FOOTMAN: We discard our sandals at the entrance, the entrance of groveling sycophants.

SEVENTH FOOTMAN: For the lucky gallant, fame and adornments are the glamorous props on the stage of the day.

EIGHTH FOOTMAN: To the accompaniment of rousing music, we must, as always at this time of celebration . . .

FIRST FOOTMAN *(Raising spears)*: Be stirred by valor . . .

ALL FOOTMEN *(Standing straight)*: Our spirits high!

(They run onstage, holding the lances ahead of them, cross the stage, and exit left.)

ÔZATSUMA:

Like the profusion of flowers surrounding the Ch'in emperor's palace of old, / there is nothing more glorious than the power of those on high. / With the progression of time, / his lordship's influence has surpassed that of all rivals.

(Three ki beats mark the opening of the painted wall flat. It opens out from the center, revealing a full panoply of characters. Lower stage characters move out to sit where the flat was. The setting now reveals the full shrine. The covered vestibule, which encircles the open space of the precincts, is painted red. Metal lanterns hang from the eaves. On either side of the stage are plum trees. Haya sagartha music plays. Kiyohara no Takehira sits upper stage center on a raised platform with an open umbrella over his head. His blue makeup [aiguma] indicates his evil nature. He is dressed in white and holds a closed fan upright in his right hand. He wears a large black wig parted in the middle with a gold crown. The musculature on his padded belly is outlined with black lines. The ledger is displayed to his right and the sword to his left. Toyoshima Heida, Tagata Unpachi, Unagami

TONAI, and Osumi Hyôji—in that order, with Heida closest to center—sit lower left, each dressed in elegant formal attire [kamishimo] and bearing the two swords—one long, one short—of the samurai. Upper left are the Kashima Priest Shinsai—the so-called Caulfish Priest—and Teruha, pretending to be the younger sister of Nasu no Kuro and thus attending on Takehira. Shinsai has foot-length sideburns hanging from his ears; an oversized red lacquer sake cup rests on a small stand of plain wood in front of him. Teruha is dressed in a bright red long-sleeved kimono [funisode] and holds a plum branch. Shrine attendants sit behind them. The five belly-thrusters sit on stools upper right, with shrine attendants behind them. They wear black-and-white-sleeved jackets under stiff, sleeveless, red-lined black jackets with Danjuro box crests [mimasu] on the shoulders. Large padded red bellies, on which the musculature is outlined with darker red, show through their open jackets. Their red legs are similarly outlined, and they wear white sandals and white kneepads. They have distinctive black wigs, with ax blade-like top knots and a white forehead and pate. They sit in the order in which they most often speak: closest to Takehira is Togane, followed by Ashigara, Ebara, Hanyû, and Musashi. Yoshitsuna, Katsura no Mae, Yoshisato, Kurando, Kuretake, and the four female attendants—with

Yoshitsuna closest to center—sit lower right. Their faces are white and they are all beautifully aligned. The eight footmen file in to sit behind them soon after the wall flat opens.)

Heida: Today, after many trials, our lord, Kiyohara no Takehira . . .

Unpachi: Comes here to the Tsunigaoka Shrine to obtain imperial appointment as

leader of the land.

TONAI: From today, we four will fulfill our wishes for success.

HYŌJI: This is truly . . .

ALL FOUR: A joyous occasion!

TAKEHIRA: My time has arrived. I, Counselor Kiyohara no Takehira, have subjugated the Eastern provinces, an excellent omen that I will soon grasp the power of the land in my hands. Here at this shrine, I come attired to take myself to the heights.

(The BELLY-THRUSTERS aligned to TAKEHIRA's right speak without moving.)

TOGANE: Indeed, our lord graciously commands. He stands first among the blooms of court, his face the hue of the winter red-blossomed plum.

ASHIGARA: The aligned faces are all red. Not caused by wine, this red is our custom.

SHINSAI *(Stiffly)*: I don't know anything about customs. To my half-tutored mind, the color of white blossoms wouldn't be surprising.

TERUHA: There is no one who would defy your authority, my lord. We are all ready for your commands. Even I, incompetent though I am, await your pleasure.

TAKEHIRA: Investigate the misconduct of these men who cross me, and we will punish them. That done, we'll shout "Hurrah!"

EBARA: We honor you in every way!

HEIDA: We offer . . .

ALL BELLY-THRUSTERS: Our congratulations!

YOSHITSUNA: Although you have distinguished yourself slightly during these three years of strife, this display is overblown.

KATSURA: To have taken down the ledger offered by Yoshitsuna!

YOSHISATO: And it is by your own command that you have donned the attire and accoutrements of a high official.

KURANDO: Your seizing political power could not be more arrogant or offensive.

KURETAKE: Your actions . . .

YOSHITSUNA: Are just too much.

TAKEHIRA: All these insults you hurl at me, you, whose father, Yoriyoshi, already bore me, Takehira, great ill will! But Katsura no Mae fascinates me, and I want her to be my attendant. Stand in my way and I'll deal with you!

YOSHITSUNA: You defy the laws of nature, Takehira! Why would she go with you?

KATSURA: As I have a man of my own choosing, why should I be unfaithful to him?

KURETAKE: No matter what, you must both flee this place to ensure your safety.

FIRST FEMALE ATTENDANT: Oh, please leave them alone!

SECOND FEMALE ATTENDANT: And kindly leave the ledger as it was. There is more than enough room in the votive hall . . .

THIRD FEMALE ATTENDANT: To hang your plaque elsewhere.

FOURTH FEMALE ATTENDANT: With prayers for peace . . .

FIRST FEMALE ATTENDANT: Please grant our wish . . .

FOUR FEMALE ATTENDANTS: Our earnest wish.

KURANDO: No, they must go to the capital and report everything to the emperor.

YOSHITSUNA: Yes, indeed we must. Brother come, let's go.

(He tries to stand up to go.)

TOGANE: So, you not only go against the emperor's wishes, but you would also go to

the capital to make your own report. You are completely contemptible!

ASHIGARA: What do you expect from men with no one to serve?

EBARA: I'll strike them down, don't worry!

HANYU: Yes, do, and I'll help!

MUSASHI: I will too!

TERUHA *(Quickly)*: Please wait. What you say has reason, but if blood should flow at the

shrine, it will anger the gods. Please forgo this matter for now.

SHINSAI: Sister Teruha here speaks as an ally, not from faintheartedness.

TOGANE: No, let's arrange to bring them to justice now! *(Blongating his vowels.)* Call

for Narita Goro.

(ASHIGARA, upstage right, stands, walks past the other BELLY-THRUSTERS

and descends the stairs.)

ASHIGARA: Yes! *(He now stands at the stage end of the hanamichi, looking down it.)* Your

devoted retainer, Narita Goro, has been waiting at the vehicle outbuilding.

(Vowels stretched.) At your request, he is hurrying here.

NARITA *(Offstage and powerfully)*: At your service!

(Onstage villains call out "Yo!" ASHIGARA goes back to his seat. NARITA

GORO, dressed in kamishimo, approaches down the hanamichi. He is dressed in

the same way as are the other BELLY-THRUSTERS. Flute and drums accompany his

passage down the hanamichi. He stops at shichisan and faces out to the audience.)

ASHIGARA: Narita Goro!

ALL BELLY-THRUSTERS: He has come!

NARITA *(Spoken toward audience)*: As I heard the summoning voice, the winter-red

plum blossoms burst open, displaying the red of my face. On this day of

kaomise revival, I, Narita Goro Yoshihide, once again make my entrance and

am here to serve you.

(He strikes his belly with both hands and then ends with a pose, leaning toward the

stage on bended knee, elongating his last words.)

TAKEHIRA: We're all here for the same reason. Now, let's punish these men, one

and all!

NARITA: Men who defy you should lose their heads. It won't take long to sharpen my

sword. I've been waiting a long time for this!

TAKEHIRA: All right then, get ready!

ALL BELLY-THRUSTERS: Here we go!

(“Shrine music” [miokagura] of drum and flute. The five onstage BELLY-

THRUSTERS move down the steps and spread out along the stage. Once in place,

formally dressed STAGE ASSISTANTS [kōken] come out from stage left, one for each man. NARITA remains at shichisan and a STAGE ASSISTANT comes out behind him as well. The six men hold their right arms out from their sides and stamp their left feet forward; then they thrust their left arms out and stamp their right feet forward. Then the STAGE ASSISTANTS help them strip their outer costumes to the waist, one arm at a time. A unison "Yo!" is followed by the BELLY-THRUSTERS moving their left arms to their sides and having their sleeves pulled off and down by the STAGE ASSISTANTS. They do the same for their right arms. Red upper costumes are revealed underneath. After making adjustments, the STAGE ASSISTANTS exit in the direction from which they entered. All BELLY-THRUSTERS stamp with their left feet, shouting the rhythmic aragoto nonsense syllables, "Yattoko tottchaa, untoko na," pause, and then do the same with their right feet, striking a simultaneous mie.)

TAKEHIRA (*Still sitting formally and stiffly*): Turn them into side dishes and we'll have them with wine! Ha-ha-ha!

SHINSAI: In that case Madame Teruha, you'll have to serve.

TERUHA: Oh?!

(Flute and drums. SHINSAI and TERUHA get up, and the five BELLY-THRUSTERS turn around to face TAKEHIRA. TERUHA turns around and hands her plum branch to a black-garbed STAGE ASSISTANT [kurogo] and receives a golden sake dipper. SHINSAI carries the oversized sake cup on its stand over to TAKEHIRA. TAKEHIRA picks up the cup in both hands. SHINSAI bows, turns, and walks down the stairs as TERUHA walks over and mimes pouring sake from the dipper into the cup. Then she, too, walks down the stairs and over to SHINSAI, both she and he now taking their places with the men at lower left. The original five BELLY-THRUSTERS return to stand at their earlier upstage left spots while the platform on which TAKEHIRA is seated moves from center to left. NARITA walks from the hanamichi up the stairs to join the other BELLY-THRUSTERS and stands closest to TAKEHIRA.)

NARITA: Okay, let their heads roll!

TOGANE: Prepare to meet your ends!

ALL SIX: Resign yourselves.

(TAKEHIRA begins to drink sake from the large cup. The six BELLY-THRUSTERS, each with a white-clothed attendant sitting behind, growl, stamp their right feet, half unsheathe their exaggeratedly large swords, and hold them overhead with both arms, like rainbows, as they complete this group mie. As they hold the pose, the voice of KAMAKURA NO GONGORŌ KAGEMASA is heard coming from behind the hanamichi entrance.)

KAGEMASA (*Elongated*): Just a minute!

(The BELLY-THRUSTERS sheath their swords.)

ASHIGARA (Surprised): Huh?

TAKEHIRA (Still holding the cup): Hold it, hold it, hold it. Why this interruption, just as we're about to punish these transgressors for their crime, just as I turn this cup in my hands?

NARITA: Hearing the sound of that voice, the voice which called out "just a minute!" gives me the chills. I hope it's just the flu coming on.

TOGANE: Me too, me too.

ASHIGARA: Yes, indeed, I feel thoroughly uneasy, down to the soles of my feet. I have a bad feeling about this.

EBARA: If only we had tried out for a winning role!

HANYU: My heart's throbbing!

MUSASHI: Me too, me too. We're all like that from hearing that "just a minute!" voice. TERUHA: Isn't that so? When I heard that voice, I shuddered. (She puts her hands up to cover her ears as if to protect them.) It was louder than thunder!

SHINSAI: It's frightening, yes, but I'm brave. No one can scare me.

TOGANE: Whoever just yelled out "just a minute! . . ."

ALL BELLY-THRUSTERS: Who are you?

KAGEMASA (Still offstage, with great force): Just a minute!

ALL BELLY-THRUSTERS: What do you mean?

KAGEMASA (Increasingly powerful): Just a minute! Just a minute! Just a minute!

(TAKEHIRA puts the cup to his side. The hanamichi lights come on as the curtain is pulled open for KAGEMASA's entrance. He is costumed in the most famous of kabuki gishu: a hugely oversized, persimmon-colored outer garment [suo] whose square, winglike sleeves are decorated with the Danyuwa crest of three squares of graduated size, three measuring boxes [mimasu] one inside the other, long, trailing hakama [nagabakama], which hide tall clogs [takageta] worn to give the actor intimidating height; a "five-spoked" [gohon kuruma bin] wig topped with a court hat [eboshi] and large pieces of stiff hair paper [chikaragami] containing ritualistic implications; a pair of huge swords, the longer of which is over seven feet long; and masklike makeup [sujiguma] of red lines on a white background, designed to create a fiercely heroic appearance. He moves down the hanamichi, at first concealing his face with his large sleeve wings. About midway down the hanamichi, he turns and opens his arms, bends down incrementally, and strikes a mie. From before his entrance and as he proceeds to shichisan, the following is chanted.)

OZATSUMA:

The sleeves of his costume speak of prosperity. / Today we return to the past, / the flower of Edo performing for this month of the face-showing. / What a spectacular occasion!

(A beat of the tsuke accentuates each step until his arrival at shichisan. He swings the sleeve wings, stops, turns to the audience, closes the wings in front of him, and then swings them out to the sides as he sits on a stool [aibiki] provided by a formally dressed STAGE ASSISTANT. His sleeve wings are carefully arranged at his sides. He strikes a mie.)

NARITA: Today, we are under strict orders to deal with anyone who transgresses.

TOGANE: Imagine yelling out, "Just a minute," you unwieldy brat!

ASHIGARA: While it would be a direct insult even to listen to him, still, well, let's hear what he has to say.

EBARA: You wretch . . .

ALL BELLY-THRUSTERS *(Elongating their words as they lean challengingly in KAGEMASA's direction)*: Who are you?

(KAGEMASA turns his head to the left and then to the right.)

NARITA *(Stepping forward on his right leg, challengingly)*: Well, who are you?
(He steps back to align himself with the others.)

ALL BELLY-THRUSTERS: *(Nastily, as if daring him)*: Well?

(KAGEMASA speaks his tsurane, which takes about five minutes, with great physical and oral intensity. He sits stock still, facing the audience to the stage left side of the hanamichi and delivering his lines in a booming bass, his words soaring into a series of rhythmically prepared exclamation points, vowels extended, as he moves from one swooping, operatic phrase to the next. Most powerful is the final phrase, after which the audience applauds.)

KAGEMASA: We learn from the Chinese Han scholar Enanji that heaven bestows its blessings impartially, no matter what the amount, no matter what the purpose. The Genji samurai of the East have always purified and emboldened themselves in the dewdrops of the Tama River, that same river where I, Mimasu of the ninth generation, hail from. Called Kamakura no Gongorō Kagemasa by most, I am here this year in the winter-peony makeup, which recalls the many *kaomise* of old. Ready to appear again in this play for which my forebears have been famous, my coat is the color of the persimmon, its puckery flavor the refinement of the technique that has been transmitted to me. I take my turn and clumsily display my skills as an *aragoto* specialist. *Aragoto* is the height of Edo acting and the fame of my family. Permit me to show you. I speak with all due respect.

(Just after the completion of the tsurane, as the others continue to speak, the importance of the moment is accentuated when a STAGE ASSISTANT, formally dressed in the colors of the Danjūrō line, walks down the hanamichi with a cup of tea and holds it up for KAGEMASA to drink. He looks the actor's costume over to make sure everything is perfect, takes a slight bow, and exits back up the hanamichi.)

EIGHT FOOTMEN: Wow!

NARITA: Well, well. So this is Mr. "Just-a-minute." Since the beginning of kabuki, he's been the main branch of the Edo "Just-a-minute" specialty shop, always ready with a guarded witicism.

ALL BELLY-THRUSTERS: Yes!

TAKEHIRA: I heard that voice and then carefully looked him over after he made his appearance. I recognize him as that lad of the *aragoto* family of unmatched skill. Gongoro no Kagemasa, why have you detained us with your "just a minute?"

KAGEMASA: Why did you remove the ledger? Or if it wasn't you, then who did it?

(*The following exchange regarding the ledger is often omitted in performance.*)

TAKEHIRA: Do you even know the meaning of the word "ledger"?

KAGEMASA: What an absurd question! It is written with three characters. The first is

dai, meaning "big" or "great." *Dai* stands on top of all. It is read simply as "*dai*" and written by adding the character for "people" to the character for the

number "one." It contains within it the universe and the earth.

TAKEHIRA: What about *fuku*, the second character used to write "ledger"?

KAGEMASA: *Fuku* means "good fortune." The various components with which it is

written remind us that blessings from above are directed below. In old writings, the people were considered the jewel of the country. The influence of

a lord such as you truly cannot be described: it reaches past Japan as far as China and India, in a word, it is all-encompassing in its power of bestowal.

TAKEHIRA: And then *cho*, how do you explain this third character of the word "ledger"? KAGEMASA: Inquiring into what we do not know, we find that the character for *cho*

contains the idea of endurance, in the sense of everyone—the emperor and his entire nation—serving their offices as long as they are able. It also contains the idea of width, or breadth, with the understanding that when all necessities are provided, the country is at peace and the people are able to live in abundance. When the country is at peace, we can care for the people through civil administration; when disorder reigns, we must crush the enemy through military power. Upon consideration, we understand that military troops are a

powerful weapon that must inevitably be used in order to keep control, just as the ancient Chinese leaders—Kiyomo, Choryo, Kobu, and Taiso—understood in their administration of the realm. An ancient poem goes: "As with the

moats and walls of a castle, the more firmly we establish ourselves, the greater the possibility for security; compassion destroys distinctions between friend and foe." With single intention in our relations with heaven, earth, and man, households will flourish and the country will prosper when conditions for peace obtain in the realm; wisdom, benevolence, and courage guide us at home and the Three Treasures bestowed on mankind are revered at home. This is the full meaning of the three characters used to write "ledger". Now, on

an auspicious day of this most marvelous sixtieth year of Shōwa (*the current year is named*), isn't it wrong to have offered up your plaque secretly? Whisper your reason to me.

(The ledger explanation ends here.)

TAKEHIRA: Your overly presumptuous words grate on my ears. Someone get rid of him!

ASHIGARA: Yes! It must be someone special for this job. Master Priest, I think it should be you.

SHINSAI: Yes, sir. It doesn't seem right, but I guess I've been chosen for the role. I'm not sure of how to go about this, but let's give it a try.

(He unties his outer robe with the help of a black-garbed STAGE ASSISTANT.)

ALL BELLY-THRUSTERS: Let's see how well he can pull this off. Let's see!

(SHINSAI turns his back to the audience and a STAGE ASSISTANT helps him off with his sandals. Stamps energetically to stage right and pauses midstage.)

SHINSAI: Hey, hold on. It's fine with me to take on the task, but it's tough not knowing what to do. I shouldn't have entered into it for nothing, but there's no turning back now. *(Sings a couple of bars of comic-sounding music, holding one hand open before the right side of his face and the other open before his chest.)* Ahh, ahh. Ohh, Ohh. Oh, my voice is awful. *(Hits himself on the top of his head.)* My, my, my. . . *(Stamps one foot forward with each "my." He approaches the hanamichi. Sharply.)* Hey brat, stand there! *(He poses defiantly, staring at KAGEMASA.)*

KAGEMASA *(Watching SHINSAI)*: What's this? A catfish monster?

SHINSAI *(Holding his long, pigtaillike whiskers and gesturing with them)*: Could be worse! I hail from the province of Hitachi. I'm known as Shinsai the Kashima priest. Nothing scares me, not even uncontrollable acts of nature. *(Sharply.)* Now, stand there at once! *(His manner changes and he moves closer to KAGEMASA.)* That is to say, if you would please be so kind, young man, as to stand there as I have requested.

KAGEMASA: Where is it you'd like me to stand?

SHINSAI *(Gesturing to curtain at hanamichi entrance)*: Over near the curtain.

KAGEMASA *(With a fearsome expression and increasing speed and ferocity of delivery)*: I would, but it might be the end of me. I could be finished off quickly, or if they weren't quite fast enough for me, it would be like being salted and nibbled.

SHINSAI: Oh my, oh dear, oh gosh!

(In consternation and fear, one hand held up over his head protectively, he crosses center. Meanwhile, TERUHA moves toward him and they meet.)

TERUHA: What's the matter, Shinsai?

SHINSAI: Oh geez, what a moment to be caught by a woman. *(Pointing behind him to KAGEMASA.)* Please go over and escort him away.

TERUHA: Now, why would you want me to do a thing like that?

SHINSAI: Well, how about we go together? Well, anyhow, come on.

(SHINSAI moves behind TERUHA and puts his hands on her shoulders. She spreads her arms out and shifts her weight from side to side as SHINSAI stamps the matching foot on each side, yelling out, "Come on now, come on now." He pushes her forward. She runs halfway to KAGEMASA, then, in fear, turns and runs back to SHINSAI. He gestures her back. She turns front and back, front and back, gestures her quaguary with a thoughtful pose, and moves decisively toward KAGEMASA, speaking as she goes.)

TERUHA: Excuse me Master Narita-ya! (TERUHA uses the actor's yagô, a kind of nickname—Narita-ya in the case of Danyurô—which gets a laugh from the audience.) Would you mind very much, in spite of the bitter cold, coming over here for just a minute? I have a little something I would like to ask you. (Kneeling at the stage end of the hanamichi.) Would you kindly listen?

KAGEMASA: Well, who could this be? Why if it isn't (he mentions the actor's yagô, in this case that of Onoe Baka.) Sister Otowaya. It's so unladylike of you to deal with me like this. How about helping me restrain this joke of a priest? But what is it you want with me?

TERUHA: It's nothing really, but could you please move just a little over this way? (Louder and louder): Okay, I'll let you make your precious request just to help you out, but this is really getting annoying. If you take too long about it, I'll glare you down. (Strikes a mic.)

TERUHA (In fear): Oh! (Runs back to SHINSAI.)

SHINSAI: You! What happened?

TERUHA: I couldn't get him to move.

(SHINSAI switches places with TERUHA and shouts as he punches out with clenched fists. He strikes a threatening mic with hands overhead.)

KAGEMASA (Fiercely): What's that?

(Enlightened, SHINSAI pretends he was just moving his hands as accompanying gestures to a children's song, such as "This Old Man," and sings "This old man, he played one, . . ."—or an equivalent—timing his movements to cover up his attempted aggression. Instrumentalists provide background accompaniment. TERUHA goes along with his cover-up and lightly "plays knock-knock" on SHINSAI's head until he falls flat on his rear end, legs out before him.)

ALL BELLY-THRUSTERS: Cut it out!

NARITA: Stop this nonsense! (To HEIDA, UNPACHI, TONAI, and HYÔJI.) You four samurai, take care of him!

(The samurai HEIDA, UNPACHI, TONAI, and HYÔJI rise from their positions at left and walk to center, as SHINSAI and TERUHA cross left to their places.)

HEIDA: Must he go? What a burdensome responsibility.

UNPACHI: Yes, but when we succeed in getting rid of him, we'll be rewarded.

TONAI: That may be so, but this is awful. How about we four leave instead?

HYŌJI: You know the deal, we toil and the master benefits.

HEIDA: Well then,

ALL FOUR SAMURAI: If we must. *(They progress to the hanamichi with bold "six directions"—style [roppō] stamping movements, yelling.)* Here we come! Here we come!

HEIDA: Hey creep, come here!

(The four stamp their right feet out and turn their heads sharply toward

KAGEMASA. *Sharply.)*

ALL FOUR SAMURAI: Right here! *(They strike a group pose.)*

KAGEMASA: This is absurd! Get near me and you'll end up six feet under.

HEIDA *(As they straighten up):* What a man, with his abusive insults. We're not animals, you know.

UNPACHI *(Proudly):* We are Lord Takehira's Four Almighty.

TONAI: Oh, Lordie, who art in heaven, trouble be thy name.

HYŌJI: We Almighty like to stir up trouble.

HEIDA: So, we'll get right to it.

(The four comically swing their bodies from side to side and jump up and down between phrases.)

ALL FOUR SAMURAI: Loudly bantering, boisterously clamoring. Loudly bantering, boisterously clamoring.

KAGEMASA *(Sharply):* Hey, it's too noisy around here.

ALL FOUR SAMURAI: Hey brat, stand there!

(KAGEMASA looks to one side, then back. He seems thoroughly disgusted and angry.)

ALL FOUR SAMURAI *(Threatened):* Oh!

(Alarmed, they flee back to their old positions left, behind SHINSAI and

TERUHA. *As they go, the EIGHT FOOTMEN move out from their places behind YOSHITSUNA et al. and align themselves from center toward KAGEMASA.)*

FIRST FOOTMAN: From now on, we need a footman's guard. *(Imitating the voice of a guard.)* Who offers to keep watch?

SECOND FOOTMAN: Let's take him away!

(They make the same movements and calls as did HEIDA et al. when they tried to approach KAGEMASA.)

ALL EIGHT FOOTMEN *(With each stamp and swing of their arms):* Here we come! Here we come! *(Repeated until stamping is done.)*

FIRST FOOTMAN *(to KAGEMASA):* Hey, thug . . .

(They all take another step forward.)

ALL EIGHT FOOTMEN *(Pointing):* Stand there!

(KAGEMASA disdainfully turns his fierce face one way and then the other. The

EIGHT FOOTMEN *stamp and clap hands twice, once to each side.)*



Kamakura no Gongorō Kagemasa (Ichikawa Danjūrō XII) stands protectively at center stage shielding the virtuous characters, Yoshitsuna, Katsura, and Kuretake, left, from their evil opponents, rear and right. (Umemura Yutaka, Engeki Shuppansha)

ALL EIGHT FOOTMEN: Are you ready?

(KAGEMASA makes a ferocious growl in their direction.)

ALL EIGHT FOOTMEN: Yikes!

(Terrified, they rush back to their seated positions, spinning and miming their fear humorously.)

NARITA (Scolding): Oh, cut it out! (Referring to the BELLY-THRUSTERS.) We have all been treated well. Therefore, let us do as our lord commands.

TOGANE: That rude and hateful fellow!

NARITA (Introducing themselves in quick succession): I am Narita Goro Yoshihide.

TOGANE: Togane Taro Yoshinari.

ASHIGARA: Ashigara Zaemon Takamune.

EBARA: Ebara Hachirō Kunitsuma.

HANYŪ: Hanyū Goro Sukenari.

MUSASHI: Musashi Kuro Ujikyo.

(The six BELLY-THRUSTERS stand.)

NARITA (Stamping with his right foot): Come over here . . .

ALL BELLY-THRUSTERS: Or we'll have to get you!

(They tilt their heads in unison and strike a pose. Their attendants remove stools behind them.)

KAGEMASA *(Strongly)*: Don't get near me.

ALL BELLY-THRUSTERS *(Worried, their expressions exaggerated)*: Oh, gosh!

KAGEMASA: Just send someone to the family temple . . .

ALL BELLY-THRUSTERS: Oh, gosh!

KAGEMASA: To prepare your coffins!

ALL BELLY-THRUSTERS: Oh, gosh!

KAGEMASA: Well *(stands with a jump)*, here I come!

(KAGEMASA moves onto the stage. As he proceeds, a repeated "Here he comes" is heard in unison from the group, accompanied by drums and a flute. After he arrives center, three formally dressed STAGE ASSISTANTS help rearrange his costume, removing the wings and sleeves of his outer robes from his shoulders and revealing an immense, blue bow knotted at his back and made from the ropes holding back his sleeves for action. While this is happening, all others parade around the stage and reposition themselves. The STAGE ASSISTANTS finish and align themselves upstage, behind KAGEMASA. The music and unison calling stop as KAGEMASA, with half-opened fan in one hand, turns and moves forward. He strikes one of kabuki's most grandiose mie, the genroku mie, named for the Genroku period [1688–1704]. It concludes with his sleeves held out by STAGE ASSISTANTS to either side in giant squares, his weight on his right leg, his right hand in a raised fist, his great sword held against him in his left hand with its handle near the floor and its sheath tip forming an arc above him to the left, and his glaring gaze directed downward to the left. At its completion, the BELLY-THRUSTERS sit, the STAGE ASSISTANTS relax and fold up the sleeves, then exit. YOSHITSUNA and KATSURA come forward a bit.)

YOSHITSUNA: Oh, Kagemasa, you're here!

KATSURA: We've been waiting for you!

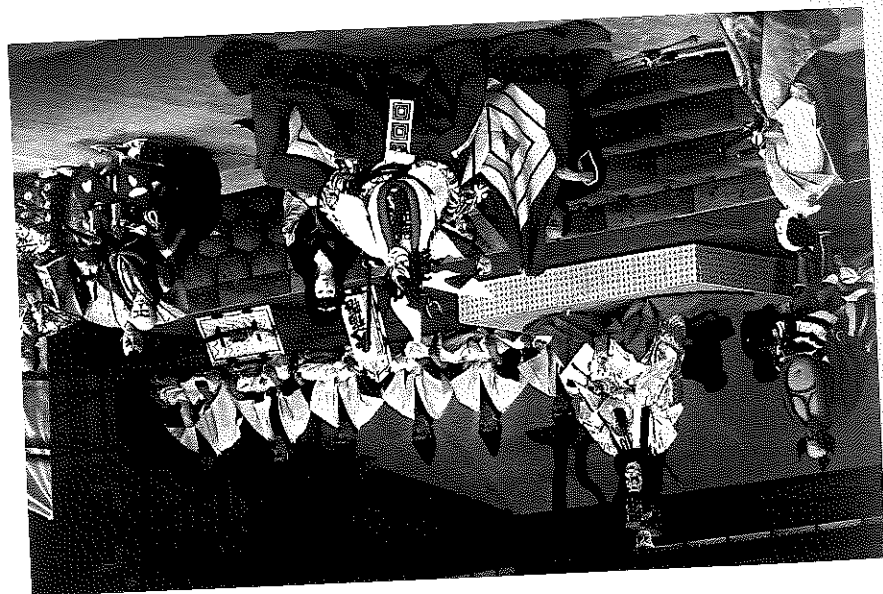
KAGEMASA *(Spoken in their direction)*: Since I am here, please rest assured and relax now. *(Turning his head slightly toward TAKEHIRA, behind him to his left, he speaks with great ferocity.)* I'd like to know why you were going to slay them.

TAKEHIRA: Kagemasa, you overly meddlesome brat, you youthful nobody. You're too much! You're a huge pain!

KAGEMASA: Start from the beginning. Where did you receive permission to proceed with your plan?

(There follows a kuriage section of rising intensity and pace, leading to a climactic outburst.)

TAKEHIRA: Well, uh . . .



Formally dressed stage assistants stretch out the huge sleeves of the exaggerated costume worn by the superhuman hero Kamakura no Gongoro Kagemasa (Ichikawa Somegoro VI, later Matsumoto Kōshirō IX), center. He poses aggressively, protecting young lord Yoshitsuna (Ichikawa Komazō XI), left, and Yoshitsuna's fiancée, Katsura no Mae (Matsumoto Kōjaku I), right. Kiyohara no Takehira (Matsumoto Kōshirō VIII, later Matsumoto Hakuō), seated on the platform, is marked as an aristocratic villain by his bold grey and blue makeup. (Umemura Yutaka, Engeki Shuppansha)

KAGEMASA: Did you grant it to yourself?

TAKEHIRA: Well...

KAGEMASA: Well?

BOTH MEN: Well, well, well.

KAGEMASA (*Threateningly*): One might wonder. *(He stamps and, with a conventional aragoto throat-clearing and snorting noise, moves his closed fan steadily and jerkily toward his chest, ending with a shout.)* Idiot! *(He straightens and speaks faster.)* This sword that you offer on behalf of the court, what a deception to call it Ikazuchimaru. Instead, it's a sword that could bring misfortune to His Imperial Majesty.

TAKEHIRA: What absurdities are you uttering? The famous Ikazuchimaru sword was given its name due to a gracious duel during which it protected the court, a duel with a thunderbolt that threatened the Imperial Palace.
KAGEMASA: Did it battle the thunder of stormy weather or the thunder of dry weather, which gives rise to fires? If it was storm thunder, the sword can cut down any-

thing, formed or formless. If it was fire thunder, it would inflame the sword and weaken the blade, most likely rendering it useless. *(He gestures with his closed fan as he speaks to the others.)* Now, you big boys be good and hand over the governor's seals, which are probably hidden in one of your little kimono.

(He stamps as he screams the last elongated words.)

NARITA: What?!

ALL BELLY-THRUSTERS *(Punctuating words with head movements)*: What makes you think that?

KAGEMASA: Well, if none of you know anything, then your leader and master Takehira must have them. *(He throws his fan behind him, then stamps toward TAKEHIRA. He elongates vowels and yells.)* Produce them!

(KAGEMASA strikes a powerful mie. At this point, TERUHA hurries over to him. Taking out of her kimono the governor's seals, which are wrapped in a purple cloth, she kneels in front of KAGEMASA, all the while explaining.)

TERUHA: Excuse me, the lost seals, which caused Master Yoshitsuna's disinheritance, have found their way back into my possession. *(She hands them to KAGEMASA. As she gets up, KAGEMASA gives the seals to YOSHITSUNA, who kneels at his side. TERUHA hurries to the hanamichi, standing at its stage juncture.)* Furthermore, Koganemaru Yukitsuna, who attends here, will quickly bring the irreplaceable sword, the famous Ikazuchimaru.

KOGANEMARU *(Offstage)*: Right away! *(WATANABE KOGANEMARU, dressed as a boyish shrine attendant, and carrying the sword, runs noisily down the hanamichi to batabata beating of tsuke to offer KAGEMASA the sword, wrapped in brocade cloth. He rushes onstage and seats himself next to TERUHA, who has just sat down near the YOSHITSUNA group.)* As requested, here is the master's family treasure.

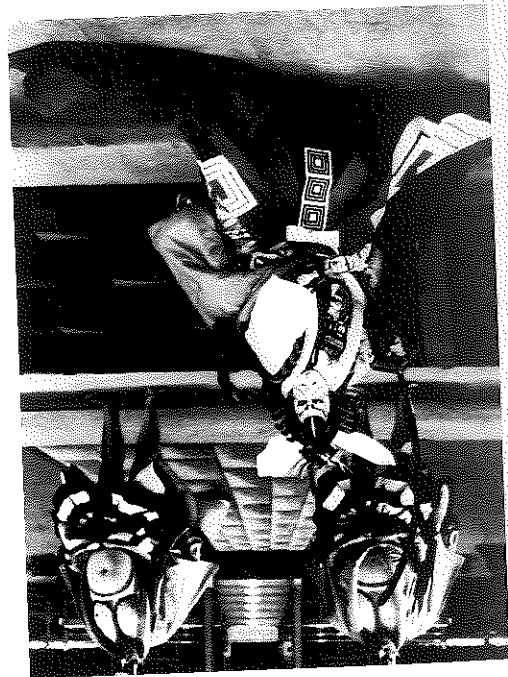
(He walks over and hands the sword to KAGEMASA. KOGANEMARU goes back to his seat. KAGEMASA unwraps and partly unsheathes the sword, turning it over twice to examine it. He then resheathes and rewraps it, speaking as he wraps.)

KAGEMASA: With this, Yoshitsuna may be reinstated in his family and properly carry through with his engagement to Katsura no Mae. *(He acknowledges the sword's authenticity by holding it up and striking a fierce mie. He turns toward YOSHITSUNA.)* And now I must turn this over to you.

(YOSHITSUNA gives the seals to KATSURA NO MAE to examine, and KAGEMASA gives the sword to YOSHITSUNA.)

YOSHITSUNA *(Facing KATSURA)*: I am so grateful to have the governor's seals back.

KAGEMASA: Let us give a congratulatory round of applause! *(As villains observe, all nonvillains—except for YOSHITSUNA, KATSURA, and TERUHA, who sit quietly—clap hands rhythmically with KAGEMASA. KAGEMASA energetically*



Kamakura no Gongoro Kagemasa (Onoe Shoroku II) strikes a defiant mie before masas face and on the Belly-Thrusters' bodies as well as the extremely long sword, halo-like wig with protruding paper decorations, and oversized costume crests are typical exaggerations of *aragoto* style. (Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum of Vasoda University)

and verbally punctuates the clapping. Yes, yes, yes! Con-grat-u-lations! *(Bows in YOSHITSUNA's direction.)*

NARITA: We'll clap too.

ALL BELLY-THRUSTERS *(With feigned disinterest and mocking synchronized applause):*

Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeeeahhh.

SHINSAI *(Hand raised):* Let's hear it for them!

ALL BELLY-THRUSTERS *(All put a hand on their heads as they mock a bow):* Yo!

TAKEHIRA *(With an intense gaze, to TERUHA):* You accompanied us pretending to be

the younger sister of Nasu no Kuro, but you're a spy!

TERUHA: In order to be entrusted with such an important task, so unsuitable for a

woman, I carried out my deception as Nasu no Kuro's younger sister.

NARITA *(Angry):* How sneaky!

ALL BELLY-THRUSTERS *(Slowly, measured):* Yes, yes, yes, yes!

KOGANEMARU: And I am Koganemaru Yukitsuna, retainer to Lord Yoshiie and one of those who passes his evenings with Watanabe Kingo. You Takehira fools . . .

ALL BELLY-THRUSTERS: Eh?

KOGANEMARU (*Shouted and elongated*): Are you shocked?

ALL BELLY-THRUSTERS: Yes!

KAGEMASA: Thanks to Teruha's reports, your treasonous plan was fully discovered. Wait until we deal with you! (*Turns slightly in seated YOSHITSUNA's direction.*) But first, arrangements for Yoshitsuna's return must now be made.

YOSHITSUNA (*To KAGEMASA*): My gratitude is beyond words.

KATSURA (*Anxious to leave, to YOSHITSUNA*): We mustn't linger. Please, it is time to hurry.

YOSHITSUNA: Yes, let us go.

TAKEHIRA: This gets worse and worse.

KAGEMASA (*Turning slightly back toward TAKEHIRA and getting angry*): Hey, if you've got any complaints, let's hear them.

ALL BELLY-THRUSTERS (*Showing fear*): As for complaints . . .

KAGEMASA (*Angry and yelling*): Yes?

ALL BELLY-THRUSTERS: We have . . . (*pause, then a quick bow of the head*) none!

KAGEMASA: Good, otherwise there might have been trouble. And now, let's leave.

ÔZATSUMA:

In parting, / the vigor and courageousness of a hero heading off alone, / here in the Land of the Rising Sun.

(*During the chanting, YOSHITSUNA, YOSHISATO, KURANDO, KATSURA, KURETAKE, the FOUR FEMALE ATTENDANTS, and TERUHA stand, facing upstage, and are prepared for exiting by black-garbed STAGE ASSISTANTS [kurogo]. As YOSHITSUNA begins to go, KAGEMASA bows to him, and YOSHITSUNA gives a slight bow back. After a brief pause at the beginning of the hanamichi, he leads the others off down the hanamichi. KATSURA NO MAE follows, also taking a slight pause before starting down the hanamichi. The others follow, including the FEMALE ATTENDANTS and, finally, KOGANEMARU. TERUHA, shouldering her plum branch again, has waited behind and takes her exit alone, moving with quick, fluid steps. The music and chanting stop. A STAGE ASSISTANT has been helping prepare KAGEMASA for the next encounter.*)

NARITA: Get him!

ALL BELLY-THRUSTERS: Yes!

(*SHRINE ATTENDANTS rush over to KAGEMASA, their hurried movements heightened by loud, fast tsuke beats.*)

SHRINE ATTENDANTS: Don't move!

(They surround KAGEMASA in a line, bending upstage toward him with their backs to the audience. KAGEMASA, also facing upstage, unsheathes his gigantic sword. Turning, he lops off their heads with one sweeping slice. To represent this, each "headless" man pulls a red cloth over his head and runs offstage while red cotton head props are flung down by STAGE ASSISTANTS. KAGEMASA strikes another mie, with his sword held vertically to his right like a baseball bat, as STAGE ASSISTANTS clear away the heads.)

TAKEHIRA: Kamakura no Gongoro . . .

ALL BELLY-THRUSTERS: Kagemasa!

KAGEMASA (With great force as he grandly brandishes his sword): In-sectsi!

(KAGEMASA holds the sword to his right side and glares out toward the audience.)

ALL BELLY-THRUSTERS (Elongated): And Now We Take Our Leave!

(KAGEMASA glares several seconds longer. Drum and flute music accompany a group mie. KAGEMASA moves toward the hanamichi, sword overhead, as he

makes his way around the EIGHT FOOTMEN coming at him one by one, or two by two. When he arrives at the hanamichi juncture, he and TAKEHIRA, who is now standing center at the front of the platform, glare at each other. KAGEMASA holds the sword vertically. All remaining characters—who have arranged themselves standing across the stage with the BELLY-THRUSTERS in front—strike mie. The curtain is drawn closed in preparation for an "outside-the-curtain exit" [maku soto no hikikom]. The drum and flute music stops. With his huge sword over his shoulder, KAGEMASA snorts and, to the rapid beating of the tsuke, performs a final grand mie before the curtain, leaning in the direction of the hanamichi curtain. Drum and flute exit music, gradually increasing in intensity, together with the repeated aragoto verbal call, "Yatoko totchaa, untoko na," accompany KAGEMASA's

grand and triumphant roppo departure down the hanamichi. Music continues for several moments after his exit.