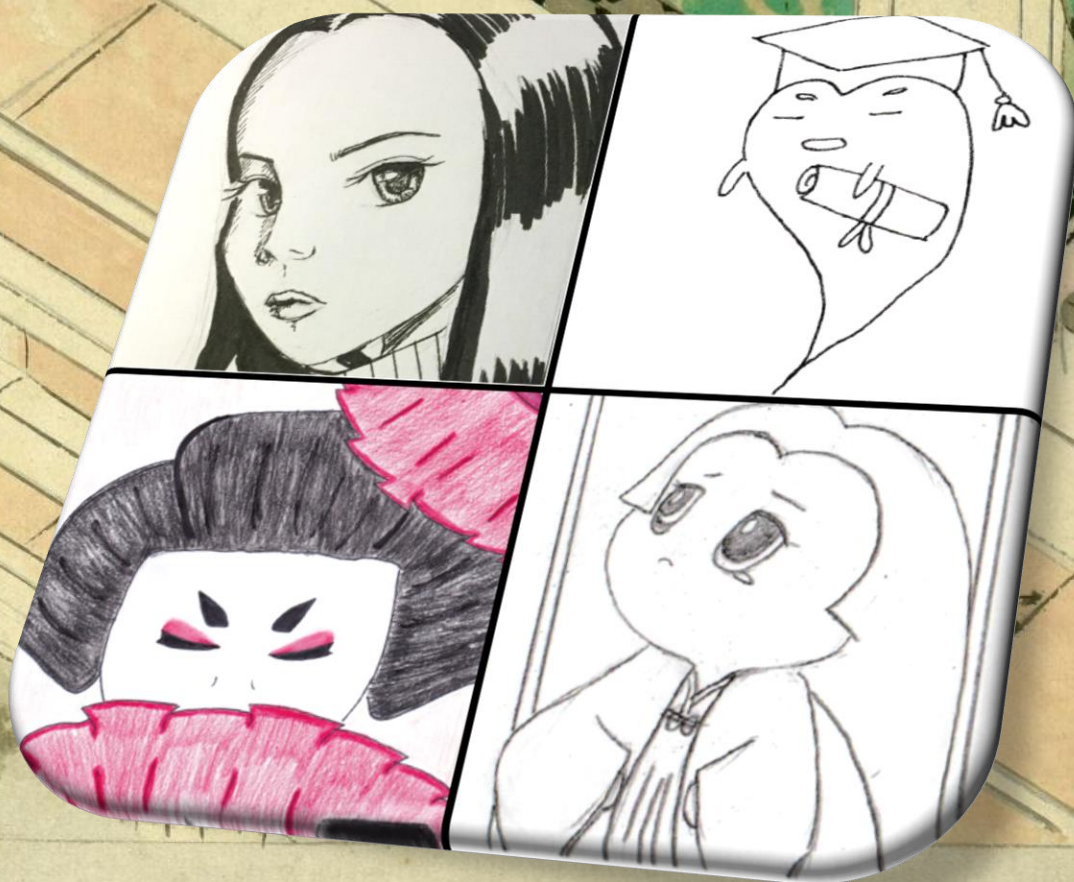


Old Japan Redux 5



Edited by X. Jie YANG
February 2019

The cover painting is a section from 模写・源氏物語絵巻
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This is a collection of poem, stories and manga comics from the final reports submitted to Japanese Civilization, fall 2018. Please enjoy the young creativity and imagination!

The Start of Unification

Polo Cheng

My lord! The scouts have reported at least 25,000 soldiers are marching in our province led by Imagawa Yoshimoto himself.” A soldier no older than twenty kneeled before the court, said with fear in his trampling voice. Silence filled the air, then suddenly the court started bickering at one and other, trying to come up with a feasible plan that would give us the best chance of survival.

“Lord Oda, we must stand a siege at Kiyosu! With food and supplies, we can dwindle their numbers down.” The advisor murmured his poisonous words softly into my ear. I know what they think of me, they called me “The Big Fool of Owari”. They thought of me as an oddity since the day I was born. They wished it was Nobuyuki who was ruling instead of me, but he was weak. If anyone had asked me, it was Nobuyuki who was the foolish one to conspire with the Hayashi Clan. Father had me succeed him because he knew deep in his heart I would carry on his legacy. Imagawa is a formidable opponent, one must not underestimate his power and the number has with him. These advisors have only their own safety in mind, no doubt that if Imagawa breaks through, they’d be the first to run or turn me over as a prisoner. No, I must not allow this to happen, I will conquer Nippon starting with the defeat of Imagawa Yoshimoto! However, a frontal assault would be futile against their numbers.

“No, we will ride out to Zensho-ji. We will make camp there. Gather all men, we leave at dawn!” Confidence were brimming from my voice, I can see the confusion and disbelief in the eyes of my advisors, but simpleton like them would not understand my plan at all, so there is no need to consort with them.

“But my Lord, they outnumber us ten to one, how could you believe this is a battle we can fight in the open? I beg of you, please reconsider!” Another advisor said with urge and immense concern written across his face. However, I simply ignored him and told everyone to rest up for the battle that is to come.

The morning came by, I recited my favorite passage from Atsumori, “Man has but 50 years, and life is but a dream.” Ah, what a beautiful verse. Will I have conquered all of Nippon when I reach 50? These thoughts raced through my head as I donned in my family armor and marched towards Zensho-ji. With fewer than 3000 men, we reached Atsuta Shrine; this is where we will pray for our victory. I can sense the doubts and unrest in the troops, I even overheard some of the soldiers

calling this a suicide attack. To lift the morale and give hope to my troops, I called out to my men, "If Buddha is with me. With us! The heads of these coins will show up!" The dreadful silence in the air and the suspense is only surpassed by the faint humming of the coins flipping in midair then the quietness was suddenly broken by the landing of the coins. No one dared to speak a word, all of their attentions were on the coins. One of the superstitious men shouted, "What does the Gods say, my Lord!" I stared at the faces of my men, I slowly bent down and took a long paused to look, "The Gods are with us! All five of these coins are heads!" I clamored with excitement and assurance. With the men seeing and believing in this auspicious omen, the hesitation and suspicion were quelled.

We soon arrived at Zensho-ji, a fortified temple overlooking at Imagawa force. Even if we were to hold our ground here, we would not last more than few days. I told my men to set up war banners around the temple. We will give them the illusion of a much bigger army, this will lead them to believe our main force is here and perhaps he wouldn't dare to attack us carelessly, but Imagawa is no buffoon; we must proceed with caution.

"When the time is right, I shall give the signal for the rest of the troops to attack. We will move under the cover of the windstorm today." I said with authority and decisiveness. It was three past noon, and the day was getting scorching hot; we moved with the passing showers and thunderstorm. We arrived at Kamagatani valley, and I couldn't believe what I saw with my own eyes. Imagawa's forces were celebrating with sake and dances; these men weren't even wearing armor. Imagawa, I thought of you a better man than this, they called me a fool. But this, what is this? You are the biggest fool of them all, Imagawa. This shall cost you your life!

"FOR VICTORY!" I chanted loudly, signaling the attack.

I rode down the valley with my horse, galloping through the camp. Slaughtering all these drunken and unprepared men, foolishly celebrating in front of their enemies. I had no sympathy for them, if they had followed someone like me from the start, their fate would have been different. For I am the one who will conquer all of Nippon. This wasn't even a battle, they was a child's play. Their troops had lost all forms of discipline, some aren't even fighting anymore. I arrived in front of Imagawa's tent. I saw him coming out unarmed and shocked. I pointed my blade at him. I would've given him a warrior's death if he had stay and fought, but that bore fled from me. He would abandon his own troops and run, there were no honor and loyalty in his action.

"Kazutada and Yoshikatsu, bring me the head of Imagawa." I sheathed my blade, gave this order with disgust. Imagawa wasn't able to get far before my two generals caught up to him. Imagawa's display of pathetic cowardice further disarrayed his troops. After the battle raged for a short while longer, many immediately surrendered while some fled like their cowardly master.

“I am Oda Nobunaga! Imagawa is no more! Join me, and I promise you prosperity and good fortune, I will rule all of Nippon! Imagawa was weak and a coward, he fled in front of his enemy. He doesn’t deserve your loyalty! I shall lead you all to one unified land of Nippon!” Sat on the back my horse, I pointed my blade at the sky, with the sun shining brightly over me. My men cheered loudly, “Oda! Oda! Oda!” echoing throughout what is remained of Imagawa’s camp, this was my first victory but there will be many more to come.

On our way back to Kiyosu, we stopped at Atsuta Shrine again, my men had all earned a good night of rest. My sandal-bearer, Toyotomi Hideyoshi said proudly to me, “My Lord! The Gods have spoken! It was really the Gods’ will that we should win this battle! No one imagined it to be possible! The coins were truly auspicious omen!” Hideyoshi was a young men around my age, he offered me his service two years ago, but I have a good feeling about this guy. Perhaps I see something in him that I saw in myself.

“Gods? There were no Gods.” I shot a smirk at Hidesada, then proceed to take out the coins from my pouch. “It was all part of my plan.” I then showed him the coins, both side of the coins were made of heads with the inscription Ware Tada Shiru Taru. “We make our own luck, Hideyoshi. Come, tonight is a celebration. We have more to plan for the future ahead!”

—Months Later—

“Lord Nobunaga! Someone with the name of Matsudaira Kurandonosuke Motoyasu seeks to have an audience with you!” A soldier ran into the court with an urgent message. “He said he wants to form an alliance with you, he also said he was a hostage under Imagawa Yoshimoto and would like to thank you for his freedom!”

“An alliance?” I said with one brow raised, “Send him in!”



Polo Cheng is in his final year of Bachelor of Fine Arts majoring in Visual Studies. He has always had a huge passion for history and Japanese history is one of the few things that Polo has tons of interest in due to anime, manga and games. David hopes to one day travel to Japan and explore and sight see, perhaps also pick up the Japanese language as well.

Excerpts from Akechi Mitsuhide's Diary

David Yuan

June 15, 1566

It has been many years since I have served Ashikaga Yoshiaki, but now, today turns a new leaf in my life as I look to my new lord: Oda Nobunaga. Today was the first time I met the lord Oda Nobunaga. Contrary to all the rumors surrounding this man, I found him to be honest and straight to the point. At the same time, this man commands a heavy presence and it was as if time stopped as he and I spoke. Nobunaga expects much of me, and I will do my best not to disappoint him, nor my family's honor.

Akechi Mitsuhide

August 3, 1570

It has now been four years since I have started serving Oda Nobunaga. Over the years, I have risen through the ranks and I am now a general. My dearest mother was very pleased once news of my promotion reached her ears. My retainers and I celebrated greatly. A wandering scholar once told me that I should cherish any happiness I can experience, for it may unexpectedly disappear. Today, a messenger from my lord's camp arrived bearing my next orders. We are to embark on a campaign against the Ikko-Ikki immediately. This time, I do not know when I can go home. It seems that Nobunaga expects this campaign to last for quite some time. Regardless of how long it takes, for my lord, and for my dearest mother, I will defeat any enemy no matter how strong they are.

Akechi Mitsuhide

September 28, 1571

The attack shall commence tomorrow. Nobunaga has ordered my men and I to get ready in the early morning hours. Our forces are to aid Nobunaga's forces in attacking the town of Sakamoto before making our way up Mount Hiei to the temples. Meanwhile, the rest of army will encircle the mountain and ensure nobody will escape as they make their way upwards. I asked Nobunaga what would happen to the civilians, but he has told me not to worry about them. However, I cannot help but worry for them. War is cruel. But I have my orders, and I must obey them.

Akechi Mitsuhide

October 14, 1571

Today is a glorious day. For my efforts since the beginning of my service and up to the Siege of Mount Hiei, I have been rewarded my very own castle, Sakamoto Castle. Words cannot describe how I feel right now. It has been two weeks since the terrible battle at Mount Hiei. My troops and I were on standby about half a day's journey from Nobunaga's camps. In the morning, a messenger from my lord's camp arrived calling for me. As I sat down, my lord graciously poured me some sake and spoke frankly; that I was to be rewarded. With a fresh horse, I quickly rode back to my camp and informed my soldiers of what had happened. More than a home for my retainers and my family, Sakamoto Castle will be where my mother can live out the rest of her days in comfort and safety with plenty of warmth and food.

Akechi Mitsuhide

May 23, 1579

Although I have overcome many obstacles, this has proved to be the most challenging yet. My lord has commanded me to capture Yakami Castle, held by the Hatano clan in Tamba. No matter what I do, they were able to defeat my strategies. Logistics are starting to become an issue and I fear morale is at an all time low. From what my scouts have gathered, they cannot hold out forever. From our estimates, they should be running out of food when winter arrives. If possible, I do not want our siege to last that long as I fear our other enemies may strike. However, I do not intend to retreat in shame. I have sent Okabe, my loyal servant, to gather all my advisors. We must come up with more strategies to achieve victory as soon as possible.

Akechi Mitsuhide

May 24, 1579

Something came up from last night's meeting that has kept me up all night. One of my advisors, who has been with my lord since he was a child, told me of an event that happened years ago. My lord's sister, Oichi, was once sent to the Azai clan as a "hostage", marrying Azai Nagamasa as a political mean to strengthen their alliance. However, a few years later, the Azai and Asakura clans would be at war with the Oda clan with Oichi still remaining with the Azai. Prior to the final battle, my lord had apparently asked for his sister to be returned to his side unharmed, and the Azai agreed. Perhaps I can use this strategy as well. It is obvious my lord was concerned for Oichi's wellbeing all those years despite being on opposite sides. I have absolute faith he feels the same for his vassals. Although my advisors tried to talk me out of it, I sincerely believe this is the only way to prevent any more bloodshed and time wasted.

Akechi Mitsuhide

June 6, 1579

After much effort, I have finally convinced the Lord of Tamba, Hatano Hideharu, to step down. It took many days of discussion; however, it was worth it in the end as no more blood has been shed. Hideharu is quite a brilliant leader, understanding that his army can not hold out forever. I offered him a chance to surrender with dignity: he will return with me to Azuchi Castle to formally surrender and to offer Yakami Castle to my lord on condition of not being harmed. In exchange, until he returns, I have offered my mother to be a hostage. Although it pains me dearly to do this, I see no other way to end this without any more bloodshed. When I first told my mother of this, she simply smiled and said she trusted me and my lord. I have sent Okabe to fetch fresh horses, we leave tomorrow at the break of dawn for Azuchi Castle. My dearest mother, I must ask that you wait just a little bit. I will return soon.

Akechi Mitsuhide

June 20, 1579

I have arrived at Azuchi Castle this morning and promptly met with my lord. My heart swelled with pride as Nobunaga congratulated me with full honors and will throw a great feast tonight to celebrate. I told him of my plan, and he has assured me that nothing will happen to Hideharu, who has been sent to a heavily guarded room. My lord will meet with Hideharu later in the evening to discuss the formalities. My dearest mother, please wait a little longer.

Akechi Mitsuhide

June 21, 1579

I have been ordered to head East to settle a few rising disputes in our territory. I will head out soon to retrieve my army. Nobunaga has assured me that no harm will come to Hideharu and that he will take over the matters concerning Yakami Castle. He has told me that he will retrieve my mother once Hideharu returns safely and will send her back to Sakamoto Castle. I have no reason to not believe my lord, for he is my master, the one who will unite all of Japan.

Akechi Mitsuhide

June 26, 1579

Something terrible has happened. Okabe has just sent word that Hideharu had been executed last night. I do not understand what happened. I wanted to grab my horse and ride back to Azuchi Castle, however my retainers reminded me of my orders. I cannot disobey, but I wish I could simply drop everything and ride back to my mother. On that night, my lord reassured me that my mother would be safe. I must trust Nobunaga.

Akechi Mitsuhide

July 3, 1579

I have received word from my lord that my mother has been killed in Yakami Castle by the Hatano. I do not understand. Why? Why did my lord lie to me? Why did he execute Hideharu? He promised to keep my mother safe. My dear mother, I am so sorry...

Akechi Mitsuhide

June 20, 1582

Nobunaga has ordered me to head West to reinforce Hashiba Hideyoshi's troops, who are having trouble with the Mori clan. However, this will be the last order he will ever make. Over the last few years, I have battled my inner demons. Despite all my years of service and undying loyalty, my lord has betrayed me. He saves his own sister but leaves his general's mother. I have decided. Tomorrow will be the day. Nobunaga will be staying at the Honno-ji Temple for leisure, while the rest of his armies are split throughout the country. He will be undefended, with only a few guards and the rest of the occupants being merchants and other citizens. The time to strike is now. I have kept this a secret from my own soldiers. Despite this, they are loyal and will follow any order I give them. Tomorrow will be the day Nobunaga dies. Tomorrow, I will give the order to my soldiers: "the enemy is in Honno-ji Temple". My dearest mother, I will soon avenge your death.

Akechi Mitsuhide



David Yuan is a 2nd year business student majoring in Finance at the University of Calgary. As a food enthusiast, David traveled to Japan in the Christmas week of 2014 to visit friends and to sample fine foods in Tokyo and Kyoto. During his time there, he also visited a few temples and museums, igniting an interest in the history of Japan and its culture beyond cuisine. His current interest in Japanese history relates to the evolution of military strategies during the Sengoku period. In the future, David would like to visit Sapporo to see the famous Sapporo Snow Festival.

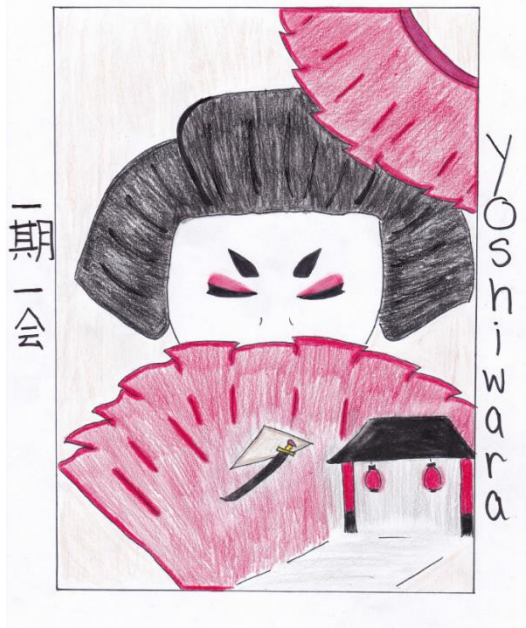
Ichi-go Ichi-e

Amy He

The lamp posts on the street slowly lights up one by one as the night begin to settle in. The lights from inside the teahouses illuminate a gentle glow through the windows, welcoming guests to come in. The street begin to quickly fill with leisurely men gossiping with geishas for either light conversations to overnight entertainments. While tonight was busy and lively, this was a normal nightly routine that I have gone through many of times.

The men and women quickly scatter from the break of dawn while hiding their face away from anyone who was curious what was behind their sleeves. By day, they assume the mask of a loyal and honest man. After my shift my yarite came up to tell me that I should be preparing for the next night for a guest who specifically requested for private service. My heart skipped as this will be my first time alone with a request. I quietly comply with the request, as the yarite was acting mother to me and I owe her much. I took a step out in the alley to smoke, I was hit with a gentle morning autumn breeze brushing against my cheek. The breeze was blowing into the warmth emitting from my body and it felt so comfortable that I closed my eyes and began to drift into a memory that was so vivid to me.

I was brought back to the sounds of laughter hiding behind the door, it was my two older brothers playing with their best friend in the garden. It was their day off from Shoheiko and the sky was bright, the boys were running around chasing a rabbit. Their freedom made me envious as I was exhausted inside learning proper etiquette. I eventually washed up and headed to the garden to take a break. Beside me sat a woman of class, she was beautiful and elegant. Her eyes twinkled as she watched the boys



played. As she smiled, my fatigue faded and the room started to become lively. My eyes were then followed to the boy, he reminded me of a daifuku, a short and chubby stature with a warm heart filled with love, a form of that a future strong samurai warrior. When he waved at me, a long deep scar became visible. Earlier, his attempt to grab flowers for me failed as he tripped when he ran back to me. His arm was cut and bleeding, as he cried from the pain he said, “these flowers are for you and you only because you will be my wife”. Foolish talk for an immature boy, yet, I regret not telling him the same thing too. The laughter stopped as marching heavy footsteps drew closer, rows of samurai warriors marched toward our way. One man stood out, he was particularly muscular with an aura giving off a death and fear, cold sweat ran through my body. My mother wrapped her arms around me tightly, my brothers and their friend stood blankly. My father stopped behind my mother and he signaled something towards the warriors behind him. A warrior walked forward carrying a headless body that was still dripping of fresh blood, his size and outfit resembled to our youngest brother. I stared at it for a while. The two warriors walked towards the middle son, one man grabbed him and the other man pulled out his sword. My brother’s face turned stone cold and his eyes grew wider. His mouth made movements but no sound came out. The sword raised and my vision went dark. My mother’s warm hands covered my young eyes from the horrific act which fell upon my brother. As I quickly moved her hands away from me, my mother’s face was turned and her eyes were closed shedding a tear. My father’s face was emotionless. I looked forward to seeing a pool of blood spilling from another headless body, laid aside my brother’s head as his eyes stared lifeless towards me. My father’s back turned, the other warriors grabbed the two remaining boys and took them away, their face numb and pale from witnessing something unclean and unjust. My mother’s grip weakened and trembled as she said and kissed her goodbye, “Stay strong no matter what comes your way and treasure every moment your given”. I stared at her as she joined up with my father and the group of warriors. I never saw them ever again from that fateful day. The memory faded and I was drawn back into reality, as my mind beckon for another smoke.

As I head back towards the front there was a man heading towards me. Quick glimpse I recognize the sheath of his sword show that he came from a wealthy background. I couldn’t see his face clearly as it was covered by the edge of the bamboo hat. As he graze past me his steadiness was of a samurai. A fragrance of sweetness filled the air of daifuku. His presence felt alluring that it was mysterious and alarmingly dangerous. A ronin? He gave off a vibe different from any men. “Notice me senpai” was the only thought that ran through my mind, I quickly turn around and he disappeared into the dark alley. Adrenaline was running through me but I need to stay compose and let nothing distract me today, it took 12 years to plot and avenge for my two older brothers, mother, and my best friend. The leads I got from chatting with drunk officials allowed me to find my father who was living

comfortably as a commoner and enough information gathered to piece out what had happened that day. I hope to find peace in this.

The smell of iron-rich fill the room, blood smear all over the floor and blood splatter everywhere. My palms were covered in blood, once again. This brought me back to the very day after etiquette training that I found my younger brother alone in another room, it was the perfect opportunity to kill him. I sneaked up behind him, pulled out my hidden daisho from my kimono and place it against his neck with one quick slice through, he was gone and I felt my fear lifted. That moment you turned your youngest son into a cold-hearted killer, that was the day I despised you. Letting your young son to kill baby rabbits without remorse but for pleasure just for your gains, sickens me. You then conspired to kill your two older sons because they were not driven like you for power and were more like our mother. My dearest little brother yet you look so young and naïve, you also had the look for blood every time you pass by my room, it pains me to see you like this. I had decided that day was the day to your enslavement of my young brother and put him out of his misery. I could've been caught if I acted any slower. I miscalculated and you took that opportunity after the death of your puppet son to make him into your scapegoat to dispose your middle son in front of the family, and later mother, elder brother, and my dear friend. Stripped away their dignity and as soon to be samurais. I observed a lot of their practices so, I too, practiced in secrecy. You soon remarried again and started another family as if nothing ever happen, and the memories of us soon disappeared. I will make sure you disappear now too.

The next night, I got ready for my guest and knocked on his door. I gently slid the door and notice the lightly dim room, there sat the man in a firmly position. A cup of sake in one hand and his sword in the other. A bamboo hat sat aside on the floor. My heart skipped. I took a seat beside him and pour sake into his cup. He remain in that posture without the slightest movement and unspoken. I too, was speechless. I glance over to the table and daifuku caught my eyes. He must of saw me glance over, he rolled up his sleeves and reached out his arm to the plate, picked one up and directed it towards me and I opened my mouth. I notice as I was chewing that there was a long scar on his arm. A rush of questions came through my head, and I started to ask him about his scar. He told me his story; after seeing his best friend died in front of him, he and the other boy were taken into slavery for the next five years until his friend perish from malnutrition. He was only able to survive as he disguised himself as his friend's corpse and was later hauled into a body cart. He was able to find his former lord and wife and thought he was able to live his day freely as a samurai, until they were blamed for committing corruption and treason, and were later sentence to death. Afterwards he was left lordless; a Ronin. Wander aimlessly without a master but his duty was to find the girl that he sincerely declared his love for.

I was now left with the man who I thought I would never see again, well alive and breathing in front of me. My heart beating out of my chest, I cried and quietly said the word “daifuku” and he looks at me with great surprise. He reach out his hand to brush away my tears. When I glanced over at him, tears were rolling down and he had a sly smile. He was going to say something but no words came out. Rather, his hands slowly trace down my body and relaxed his hand on my hips. He pulled us closer as our eyes lock and slowly our lips touched. His lips were soft and warm, it had a hint of bitterness from the sake. In the heat of the moment with tears still in our eyes, slowly one by one our garments were off and our bodies expose to the cold air. Our bodies melt into one as he gently laid me down over the cold tatami mat and my breast caressed against his rough chest. His body was warm and his movement was strong, but his skin was rough expose in scars. As he kissed gently around my neck I lightly touch over his scars tracing my fingers along them, emotions ran through me. They were reminders of the pain and sorrow we both had face and maybe our reunion could ease us through from the past pains and open for a brighter tomorrow. As I was concentrating over the past and future, I felt a sharp pain in my lower stomach. I reach my hand over the pain to only glance over to see blood on my fingertips.

I look towards the man motionless with pain in my eyes and he looked at mine. He said, “Farewell my love, it saddens me to see you like this. You should have stay quiet like a proper lady would”. He proceed with telling me how weak I was and that I would be at my most vulnerable when I’m a geisha. I quickly realize his flawed story about my parents as I killed my father the other day. Just before he was about to leave the room he crook his head back to me with a stone-cold emotion and continue to explain he was my step brother who came to avenge his father’s death after hearing there was an assassin after him. He was able to assume the role as ‘daifuku’ when his return lead to past stories about me. He eventually killed him to secure a position. The frames shut close, a rush of tears flow through me as tears and blood start to mix into the tatami. My eyes were heavy and slowly my world went dark, but I could hear sounds form the distance. I can once again reunite with my family and my dear ‘daifuku’.

~The End~



Amy He is a 3rd year East Asian Studies major with a minor in History. Surrounded by Asian culture, fluent in English and Cantonese, and currently studying Mandarin, Amy holds a strong interest in Asian culture and their histories. That, along with her travels to China, has allowed her to discover her passions and seeks for more. In pursuit of her passions, she will finally be fulfilling her dream of going to Japan in May of 2019. She hopes to utilize her experience and passion within the fields of immigration or the international industry.

Concession

Stan Levkovski

My goal is not to earn your sympathy or empathy, or plead for forgiveness under the guise of a sad and dying man. The last few years have been tumultuous, intense, and emotional, not only for myself but for my countrymen, for those who sided with me and for those who opposed me, and for all who have had to witness these changes. My only wish is for you to understand that even the most powerful of us who are charged with deciding our fate still feel, despite not being allowed to show it. This is a record, partially of my actions, but mainly of my emotions. Perhaps through my tone I will be able to convey to you what these few years have done to me. To those of you who think I betrayed you, I can only apologize, and to those who supported me, I thank you sincerely and hope one day the world repays you for your service, but I digress.

I could no longer participate in government.

I do not think that anyone around me knew what it was like to be handed control of our ancient nation with ways of old, without dreadnoughts and battlecruisers, without so much as a united army to defend ourselves, to stand against the Ships and protect what holds our nation together. I am only one man, being screamed at and threatened, not only by the foreign invaders at our borders baring their teeth and putting their boots to our throats, but by my own people. I understand the fiery passion to protect what is ours, the raging desire to resist evil and secure our future, for the Yamato people who have existed on this island for thousands of years, said by legend to have been bestowed this soil by the Sun Goddess herself. However, after the over two hundred years of relative peace and security that we have enjoyed, we are just not a force to be reckoned with. We surrendered our weapons; our nation has been unified and the wars within subdued. Economic struggles have made prosperity impossible, and our efforts at bolstering our economy have proven unfruitful and our way of simplicity unfortunately also remains a way of poverty.

I had to undermine my own power and poll the daimyo for their thoughts as to how we proceed, and unfortunately nothing was made any clearer in the process. Sixty-one responses were gathered, nineteen of which supported defense against the Americans, another nineteen were in favour of concessions, and the rest of which were so vague I wondered whether they even understood the gravity of these

events. Do they not see that it is their very indecision and ineptitude that makes it so difficult for me to act, yet I am accused of making the shogunate look weak by opening up debate to the public? Why must I risk our safety as a nation, our capital, for men whose interests do not seem to extend beyond their han?

In the time it took for us to convene and discuss, the Ships had decided to return for a second time. This time, there were 8, and we were told that if we do not surrender to their demands, our capital would be razed to the ground. I had no reason to doubt their words. My concessions were refused, Nagasaki was no longer enough for the enraged Commodore, who demanded that we open ports, that we grant his people the right to exist here, to trade here, to work here, without being subject to our laws. Driving the foreigners away even for a short time was now impossible and our mission had become one of cutting losses. Western diplomacy dictates that we negotiate, so we decided to do exactly that. In Kaei 6, we spent several weeks in Kanagawa, deliberating with the invaders, sparing no effort in an attempt to ensure that we do not concede for nothing. Unfortunately, I can only say that Akira came back with news of almost a tragic sense. We had no choice but to give in to all demands.

What happened next was nothing short of a full-scale dissolution of the sakoku. Shimoda and Hakodate were opened for trade, and not only were we forced to conduct trade, we were also forced to give our word that any Americans who suffer shipwreck must without failure be assisted. Though in the past we had control over our land, foreigners who cross our borders were now to be granted free movement throughout. Shadows cast over our future as we lose control over our own sovereignty. I can however say that for some brief moment we secured a chance for us to breathe without the fear of military conflict weighing down on us.

The Russians followed suit. Though our builders helped them rebuild their ships, ultimately, we had no better turnout in Shimoda. Once again, we were to favour the Russians, grant them more privileges, to grant our assistance.

I had incurred the enmity of the Tozama who insist that I have betrayed us and the Imperial Court agreed. In Kaei 8, I felt once again the pain of our nation when I was forced by my countrymen to resign my post, and I was no longer a roju shuza. I was deposed by those who believed they had a chance at banishing the foreigners and protecting the land of the emperor for years to come.

I believe, with a heavy heart, that for us to remain a people with a land to call home, we have no choice but to adapt and move forward with the raging waters of time. The Western forces are a product of their sciences, knowledge, training and wisdom, and if we are to join their ranks in the world powers, we must emulate them. Japan needn't restrict itself to the ways of a sword. Undoubtedly even the ancestors of the Americans and the British once settled their disputes and drew blood with swords but out of the desire to grow and improve themselves have fashioned ships which could bring ruin to entire nations, and have entrusted their

control to ruthless men of courage and boldness who will fight for the fate of their homelands. I believe that Japan can and will do the same.

My last few years have been productive. We are teaching the Western sciences to our youth in Fukuyama and the Nagasaki school will be producing a fleet which something tells me will one day prove to the world that we are more than swordsmen. Perhaps the heavens look favourably upon us.

My *bannen* has come, I must admit. I am not in the shape I once was, and my days are mostly spent looking back on my life and ruminating on my past, and how I have helped shaped the road which Japan will walk. Perhaps... it is time to admit that my greatest mistake was not conceding to the foreign powers, but rather how I conceded to them. Bestowed in me was the power to choose our destiny, and I spent time drifting in a vicious whirlpool of opinions rather than guiding the ship of my own volition. I could have silenced the critics and done to my liking, purged the advisors of a fifteen-year-old emperor whose authority was temporarily in my grasp, and done what I knew was right. Inaction was the path I walked, and now the future of Japan remains in the air, from whence I could have snatched it and forged my own. Ultimately – and ashamedly – I can only hope for a brighter future.

Masahiro Abe

阿
部
正
弘

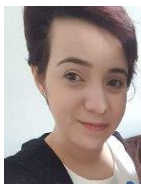
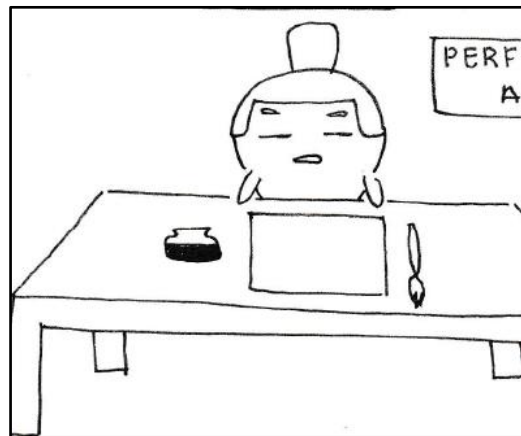


August 2018.

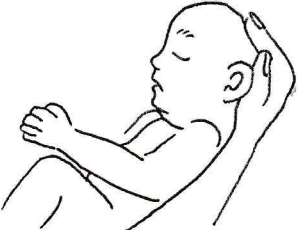
Stan Levkovski is a fourth year student at the University of Calgary majoring in EALS (Japanese). His goals are to work in Japan after graduation and continue to study Japanese and eventually master Classical forms of Japanese, to read and study Japanese and Chinese texts from the past. He studied in Kyoto from September 2017 to

Sugawara no Michizane

Carlie Gillis



Carlie Gillis is a 2nd year East Asian Language Studies Major. Learning a foreign language was always one of her goals and Japanese and Chinese stood out because of the beautiful writing systems. She hopes to one day do an international exchange to Japan or China to visit historical landmarks and be immersed in the language. This will further her goal of becoming a translator.



SUGAWARA NO
MICHIZANE
WAS BORN INTO A
HIGH-RANKED
FAMILY IN
845 AD

1



Kanbun

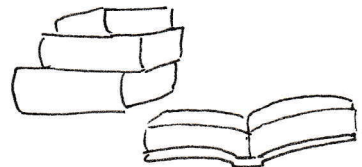
SERIOUSLY?

BUT AS HE GREW
OLDER, HIS
INVESTMENT IN
LITERATURE AND
POETRY GREW

HE BEGAN STUDYING
CHINESE LITERATURE
AT A YOUNG AGE



Kanbun
2



HE WENT ON TO
BE A GREAT
SCHOLAR AND
EARN MANY
TITLES



MINISTER

AMBASSADOR

GOVERNOR

PhD

UNTIL...



EMPEROR
DAIGO

THERE HAVE
BEEN
DISCUSSIONS
THAT LEAD
ME TO BELIEVE
THERE IS A TRAITOR IN
OUR PRESENCE




SUGAWARA NO
MICHIZANE

VS



FUJIWARA
TOKIHARA



WITH A CHANCE OF
FINALLY UNDERMINING
HIS OPPONENT SUGAWARA
NO MICHIZANE, TOKIHARA
WRONGLY ACCUSED HIM.

YOUR ROYAL
HIGHNESS, THIS TRAITOR
IS NONE OTHER THAN
MICHIZANE.

ONE OF MY OWN
ADVISORS? DO YOU
HAVE PROOF OF SUCH
ACCUSATIONS?

UNFORTUNATELY SUCH
EVIDENCE HAS GONE
MISSING. SO AS A
TRUSTED MEMBER OF
YOUR COURT I DO HOPE
YOU TRUST IN MY WORDS
AND DEAL WITH HIM
ACCORDINGLY.

BEING CLOSE TO THE FUJIWARAS, EMPEROR DAIGO DID AS
TOKIHARA SUGGESTED...



AND SO, MICHIZANE
LOST HIS RANKING CLOSE
TO THE EMPEROR AND
WAS BANISHED FROM
KYOTO TO KYUSHU.




BUT THROUGH
HIS BANISHMENT,
CAME INSPIRATION
FOR HIS POETRY



when the east wind blows
let it send your fragrance
oh, plum blossoms,
although your master is gone
do not forget the spring.





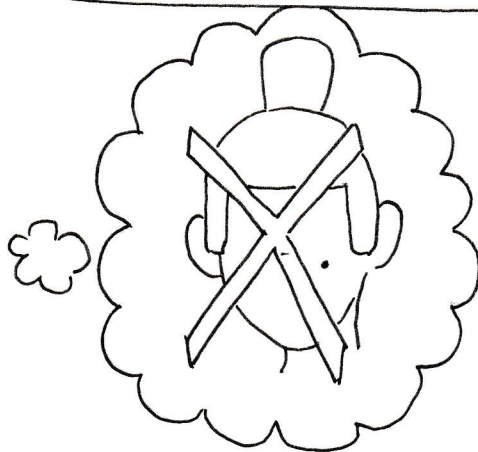
HE DIED
WITHOUT
EVER REGAINING
HIS POSITION

OR SO PEOPLE THOUGHT
...

SUGAWARA
NO
MICHIZANE
845 - 903

HE HAD RETURNED IN
SPIRIT TO WRECK HAVOC
ON THOSE WHO HAD WRONGED
HIM

BEGINNING WITH THE
ONE WHO HAD WRONGED
HIM THE MOST.





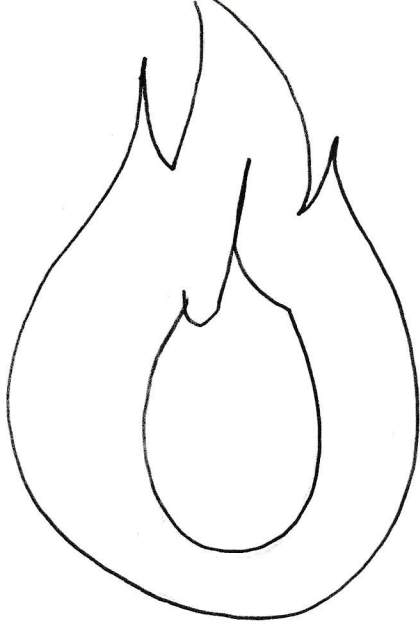
TOKIHARA DIED "SUDDENLY"
AND UNEXPECTEDLY

SLEEP FOREVER!

SOME OF HIS OTHER ENCOUNTERS INCLUDE...



I SHALL CAST LIGHTNING
UPON THIS PALACE
WHERE MY ENEMIES
RESIDE!!

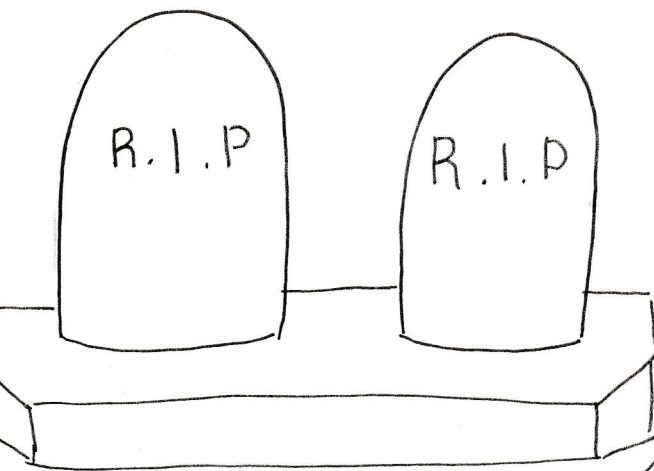


THE PALACE LIT ON FIRE...
SPARING NO MERCY TO THOSE
WHO WERE INSIDE...



THIS RARE STRIKE
OF LIGHTNING
CAUSED THE DEATH
OF MANY...
BUT IT WAS TIME FOR
HIS NEXT AND FINAL
VICTIM

I GUESS THIS
IS THE END
...



Hmph...
SERVED THEM
RIGHT

THEN...

IT WAS THE EMPEROR'S TURN



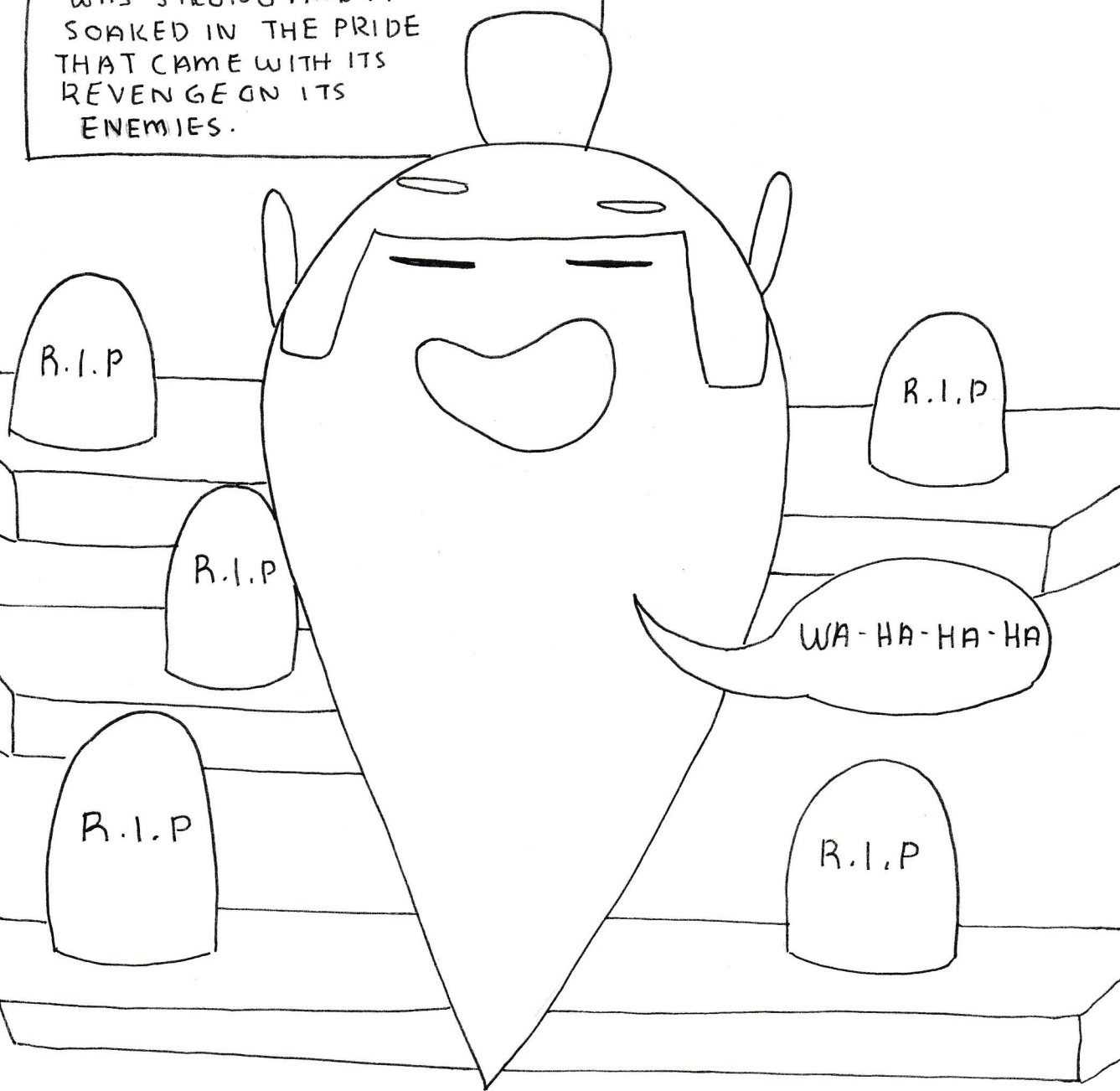
EMPEROR
DAIGO

THE EMPEROR DID INDEED BECOME ILL AND BECAME A MONK...
HE HAD SPENT HIS LAST MOMENTS IN THE MONASTARY
BEFORE THE ILLNESS TOOK HIS LIFE AS WELL.



IN MEMORY OF
HŌ-KONGŌ OR
EMPEROR DAIGO

SUGAWARA NO MICHIZANE'S SPIRIT
WAS STRONG AND IT
SOAKED IN THE PRIDE
THAT CAME WITH ITS
REVENGE ON ITS
ENEMIES.



BUT WITH THIS NEW-FOUND POWER, CAME FEAR AMONG
THE HUMANS WHO KNEW OF HIS UNJUSTIFIED END.
IN ORDER TO MAKE THE ANGERED SPIRIT CALM
ONCE MORE, THEY DEEMED SUGAWARA NO MICHIZANE
A GOD

AND NOT JUST ANY GOD... A GOD OF:

HONESTY



AGRICULTURE

I SWEAR THAT
I WILL TELL
THE TRUTH, THE
WHOLE TRUTH AND
NOTHING BUT THE
TRUTH



INJUSTICE

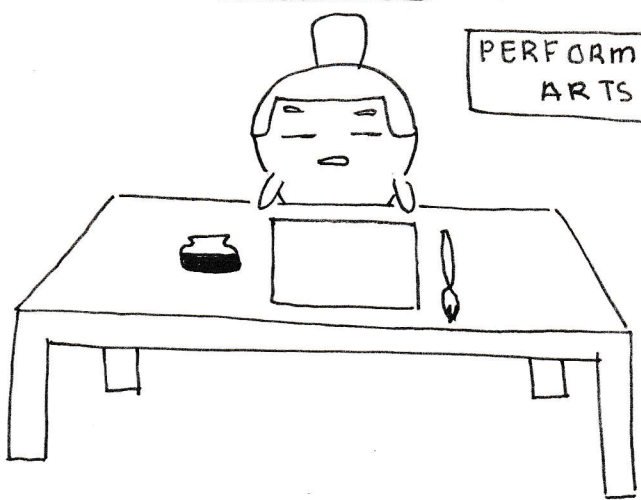


HOLY
SALT

?

NOTHING IS
HAPPENING

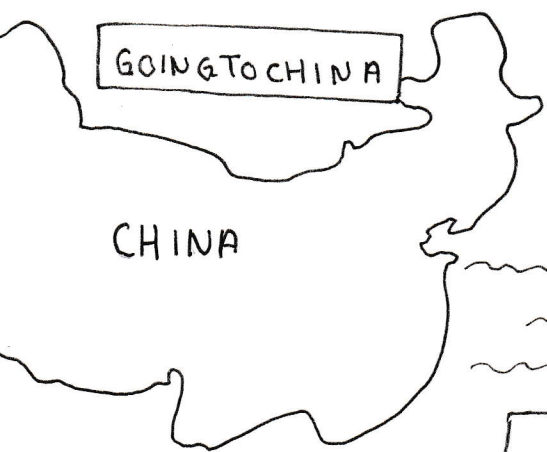
EXERCISING



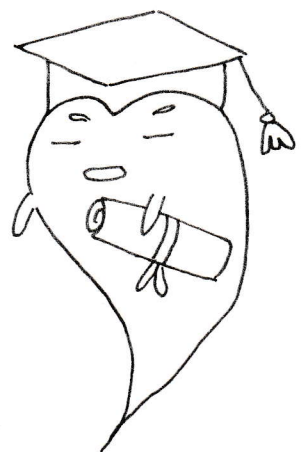
PERFORMING
ARTS



CALLIGRAPHY



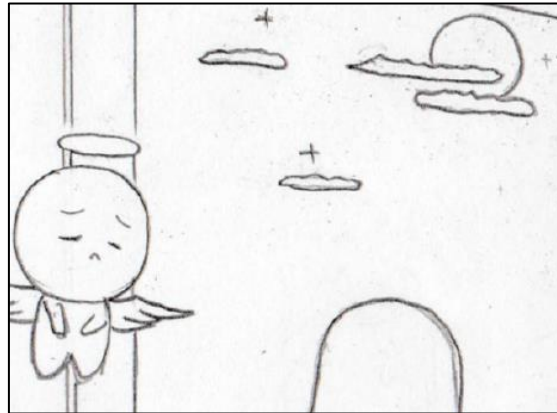
CHINA



AND LAST BUT NOT LEAST... SCHOLAR

The Tale of Genji: Lady Rokujo

Xiaoran Yang



Xiaoran Yang is an Applied Math major and Actuarial Science minor in her last year of undergraduate study. Her hobby is watching Japanese anime and videos about Japanese culture. She hopes to travel to Japan and try the real Japanese bathing culture.

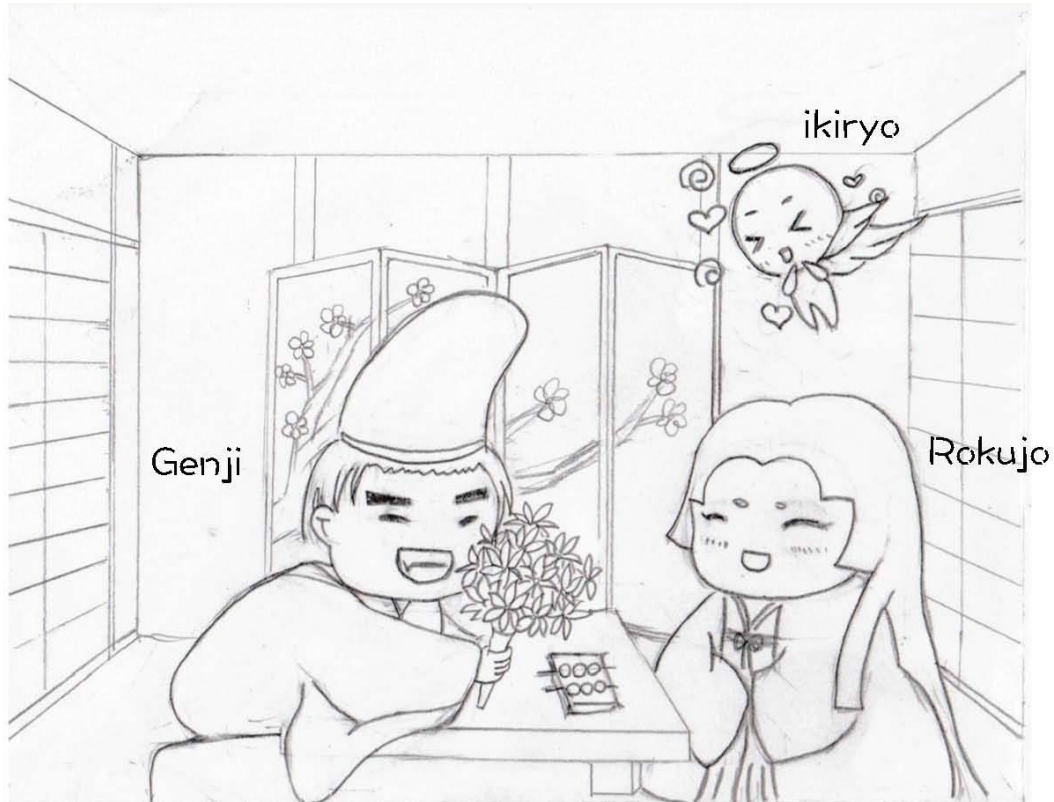
The Tale of Genji : Lady Rokujo

Xiaoran Yang

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2018.11

Rokujo: My name is Rokujo, and I have an ikiryo since I was young. He is my best friend and takes care of me all the time. Since I am noble and beautiful, I became a crown prince when I was 16, and I had my daughter afterwards. Unfortunately, my husband died when I was 20. The god must know my infortune, he let a handsome man named Genji to pursue me. I couldn't resist his enthusiasm, and I fell in love with him.



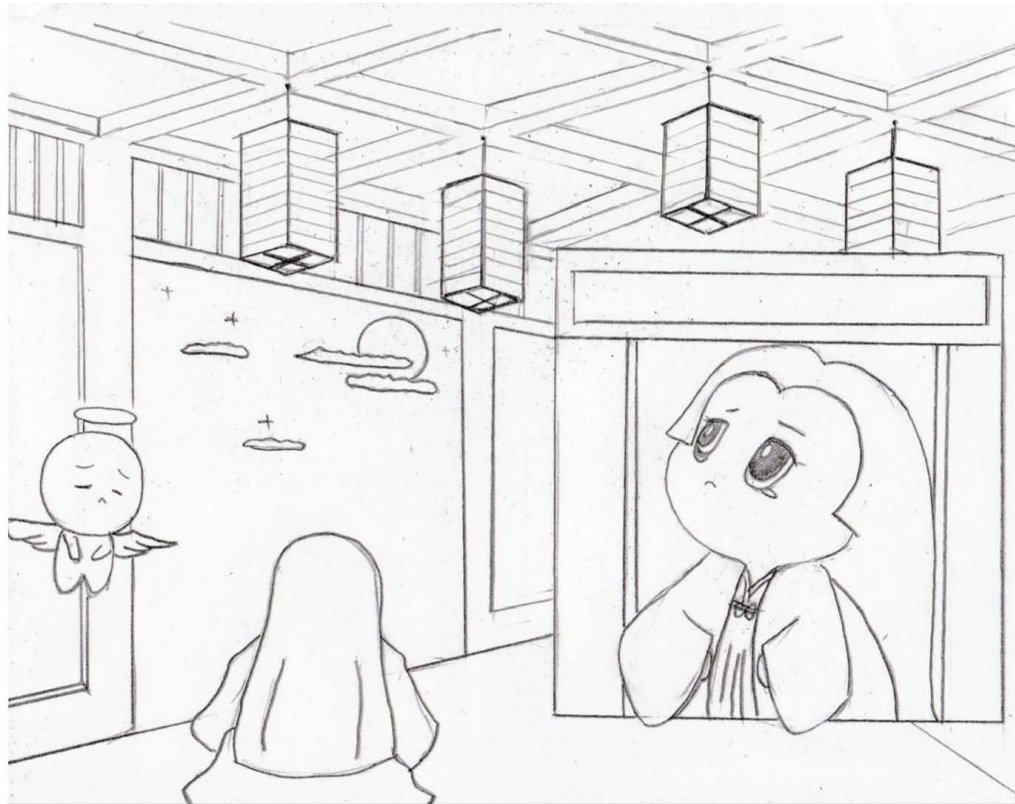
Rokujo: He treats me and my daughter very well, and he often come to my house to visit me. Although I know that he is married with a wife, so what? It is just a political marriage, which was simply not comparable to the vows he had promised to me, promising that he would take me to see all the beautiful scenery. I firmly believe that my happy days will continue.



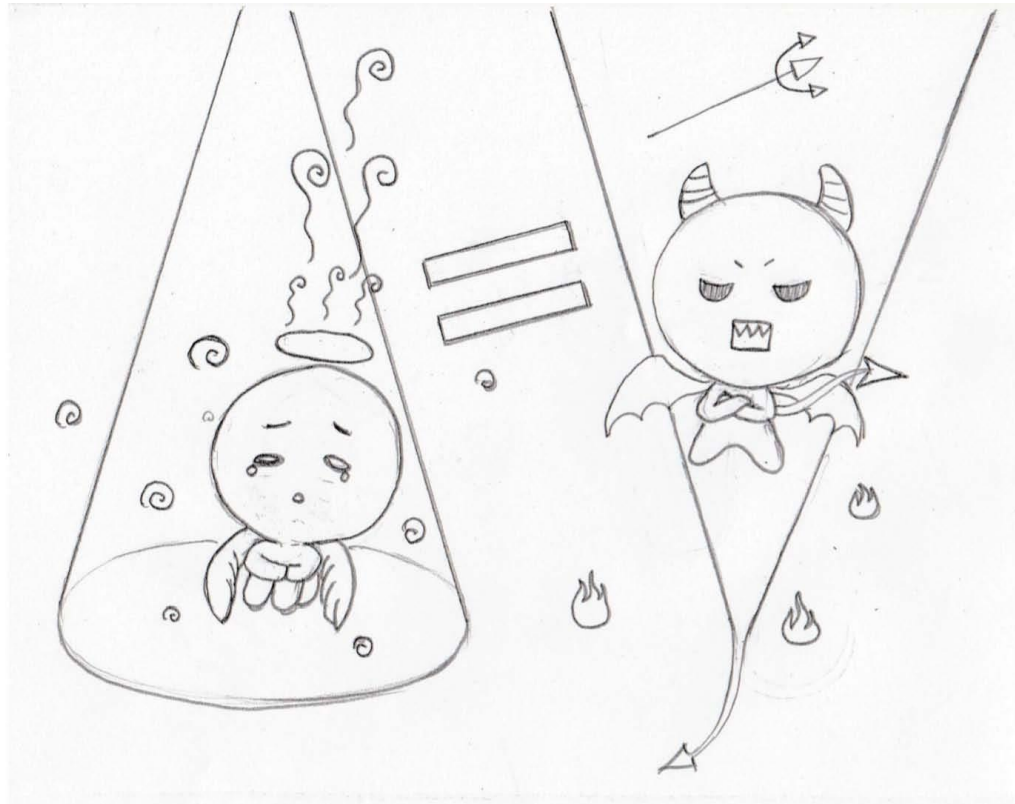
Rokujo: However, as time went by, I found that his visits to me became less frequent. Every time I watched his back disappeared out of my sight, I felt as if a knife were piercing my heart. My ikiryo advised me not to love too much, so as not to hurt myself. But I know that I can't get out of it.



Rokujo: I am ill because I have lovesickness. I often recall those happy days with him at night, his firm eyes, his burning sights, his handsome face, and his pledges, the vows he made, and the beautiful scenery he promised.



Ikiryō: Hello, everyone, I am ikiryō, and the meaning of ikiryō is soul, yes, I am the soul of Rokujo. How do I describe my master Rokujo? I am afraid that only the words ,like noble, beautiful, intelligent, and excellent, can describe her, because in my opinion, there is no woman in the world can match her. However, recently she seems to have become another person, becoming anxious and unconfident, all of which is caused by a man named Genji. I have long known that this man is not reliable who is full of lies, but my master loves the man and even lose herself. So I want to expose the fact to my master and let her find herself.



Ikiryō: I found Genji. who was with another woman as expected. I know this woman is Yogen, who is a innocent and kind girl. She must have been deceived by Genji, so I want to take her to Rokujo, and expose the fact that Genji is a hypocrite!

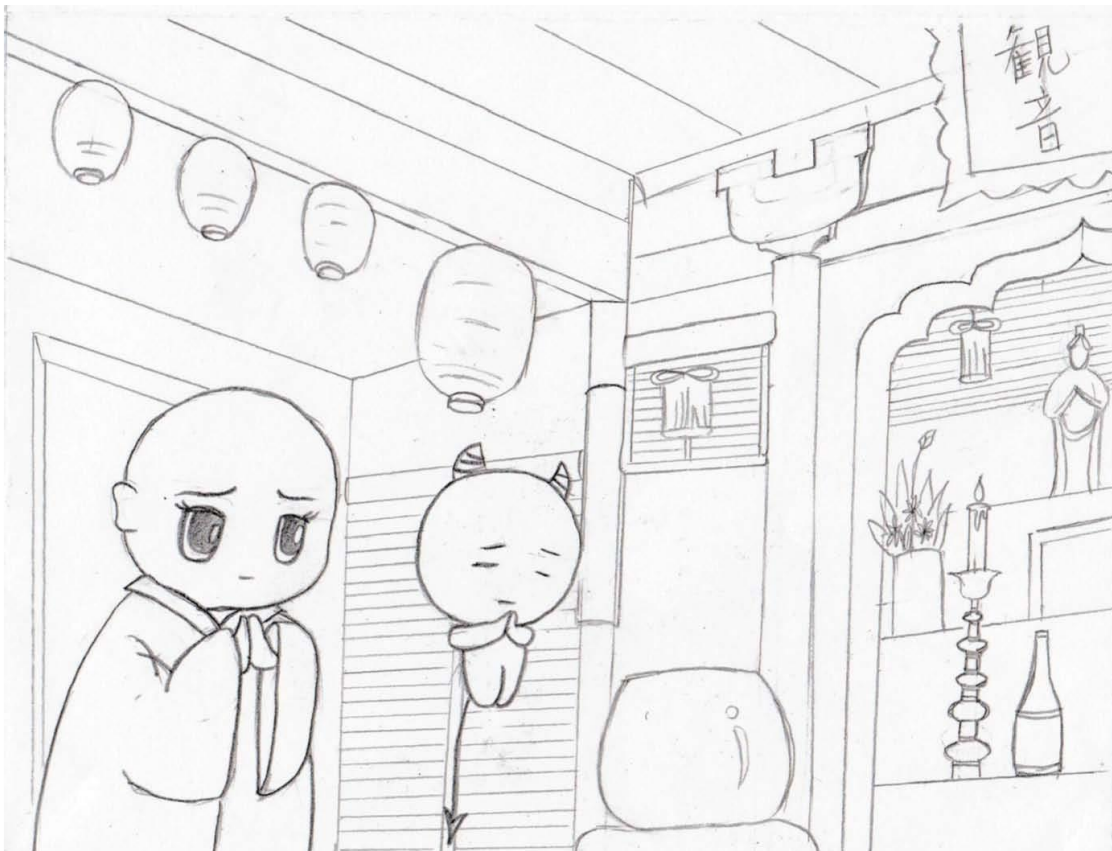


Ikiryō wanted to grab Yogen, but grabbed the soul of Yogen from her body because Ikiryō grabbed too hard, and then the poor little girl died.

Ikiryō: Rokujo knew that I killed Yogen, and she was so angry that she locked herself in the room and didn't see anyone. I know that I am doing something wrong, but I just want to reveal Genji's lies.

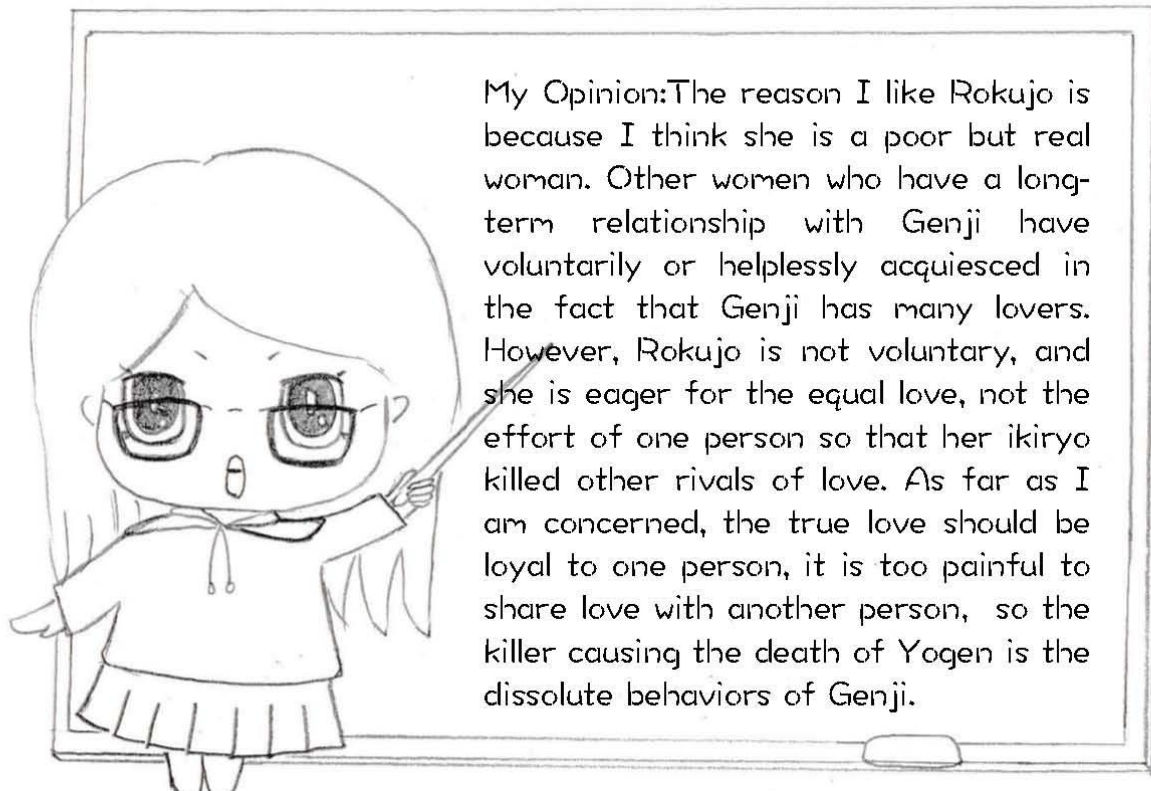


Ikiryō: Rokujo always thought that she had killed Yogen, and she was very embarrassed, so she converted to Buddhism to atone for her sin.



Rokujo: The reason why I converted to Buddhism was to forget the world. Now I am dying but my heart is calm. I want to see the person who I used to love most. When he saw me, he would recall the happy time we had spent together, then he cried, but I laughed. I am very grateful to him for remembering the happiness I brought to him, and finally I entrusted my daughter to him.





Reference:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lady_Rokuj%C5%8D

The Tale of Lady Aoi

Sydney Foo



Sydney Foo is a fourth-year Political Science and Visual Studies student. Japanese manga is initially what inspired her to start drawing when she was a child, and she now plans to pursue a career in animation. Sydney often travels and hopes to return to Japan for a visit soon.

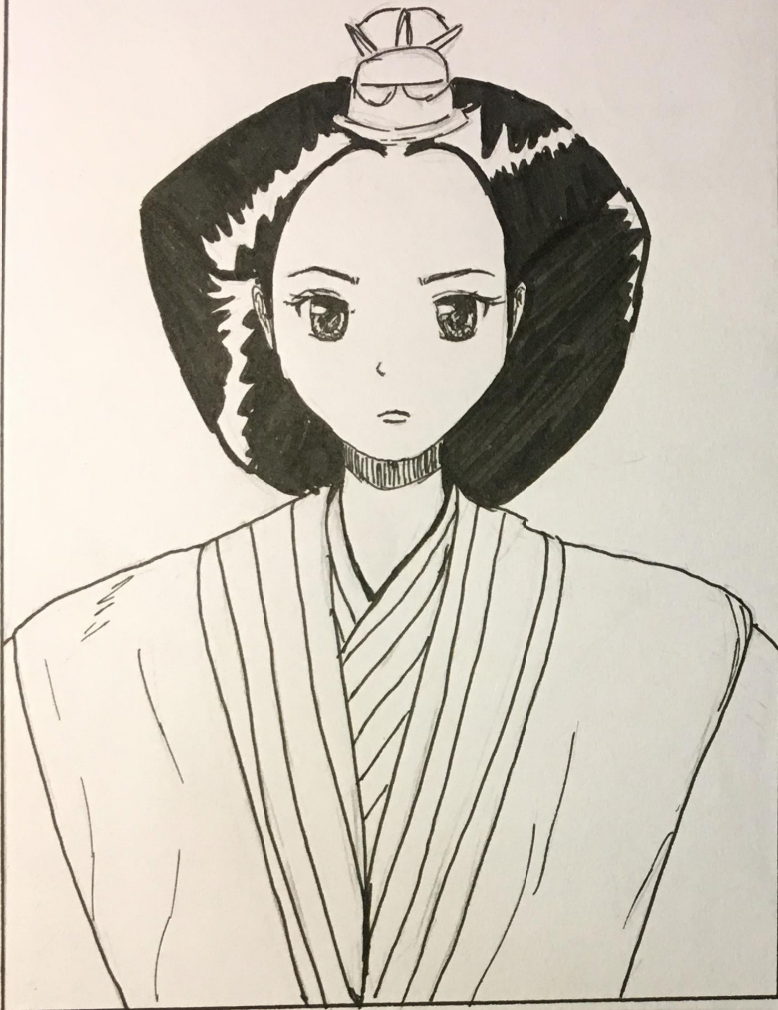
GENJI MONOGATARI

CHAPTER 9 AND THE TALE OF LADY AOI



30002965
SYDNEY FOO
JPNS37.01
FINAL PROJECT

I AM
LADY AOI

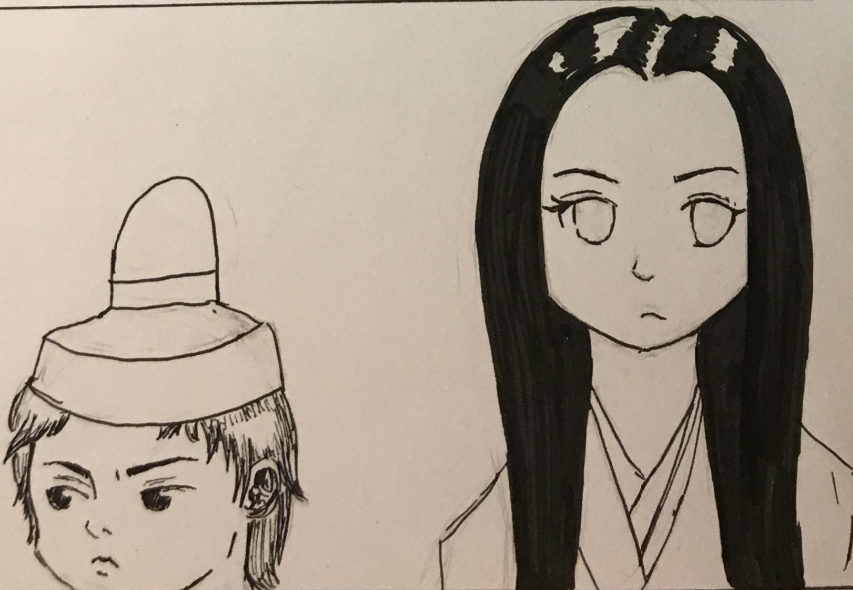


NIECE TO THE EMPEROR
AND WIFE TO HIS SON...

PRINCE
GENJI



WE MARRIED WHEN HE WAS BUT 12,
AND I, 16



THERE HAS NEVER
BEEN ANY LOVE IN
OUR MARRIAGE

I HAVE ALWAYS FOUND
OUR AGE GAP TO BE
UNSUITABLE

HE IGNORES ME AND
INSULTS ME BY HAVING
AFFAIRS WITH WOMEN
BOTH YOUNG AND OLD...

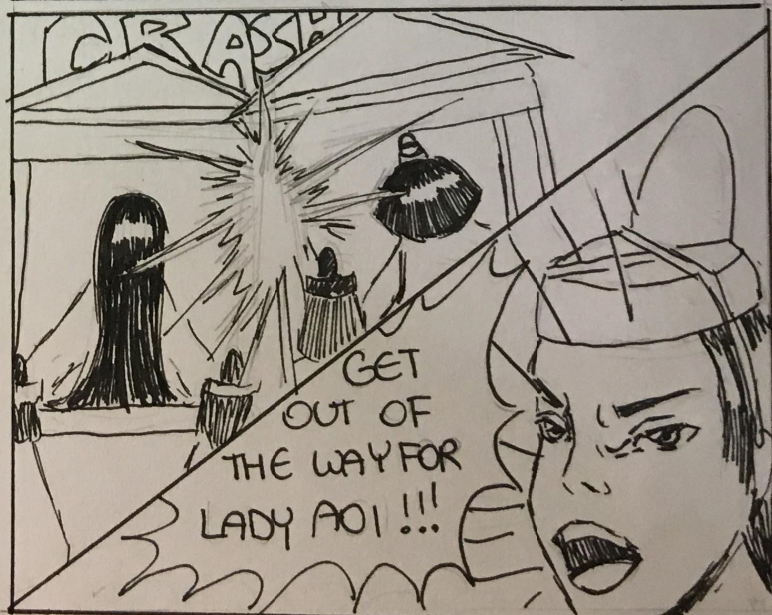
HOW CAN I HELP BUT BE COLD
TO HIM? AND AFTER ALMOST
TEN YEARS OF MARRIAGE I
AM ONLY NOW PREGNANT
WITH OUR FIRST CHILD...

BUT HE STILL
DOESN'T GIVE ME
THE ATTENTION
I DESIRE...

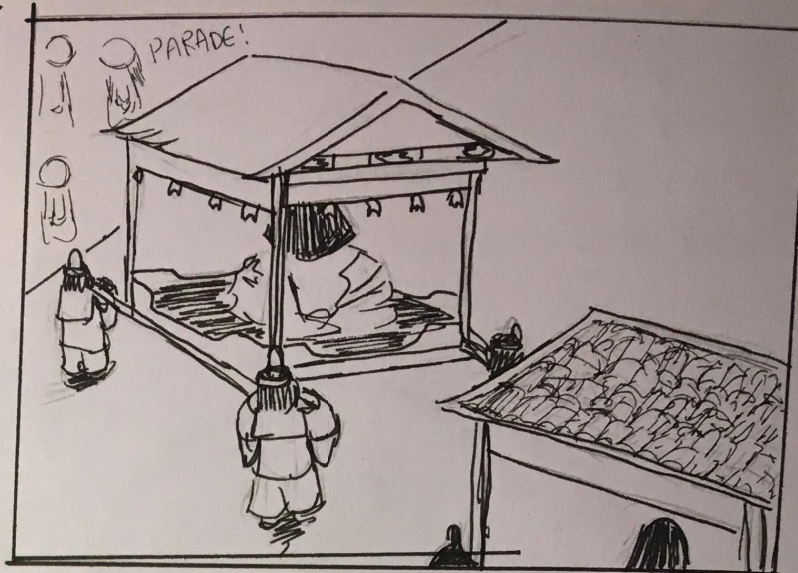


TODAY MY ATTENDANTS
HAVE CONVINCED ME TO
GET SOME FRESH AIR &
ATTEND A MATSURI

MAKE
WAY! MAKE
WAY FOR
LADY
AOI!



THESE CARRIAGES DO NOT BELONG TO PEOPLE WHO OUGHT TO BE SO ABRUPTLY FORCED AWAY!



WHO IS BLOCKING US?!

LADY ROKUJŌ, ONE OF GENJI'S LOVERS

NOW PRINCE GENJI CANNOT SEE ME!!



HE HAS BEEN DISTANT FROM ME AS OF LATE... AND NOW HIS WIFE PUBLICLY INSULTS ME AND PREVENTS THE PRINCE FROM ACKNOWLEDGING ME AT THIS MATSURI! HOW DARE SHE...

SHOULD HAVE STAYED HOME...



MEANWHILE...

THAT NIGHT I
BEGAN TO HAVE
STRANGE DREAMS...

I FELT SICK AND
EXORCISMS WERE
PERFORMED...



APPARENTLY, OF THE MANY
SPIRITS PLAQUEING ME, ONE
WAS A 'LIVING SPIRIT' AND
REFUSED TO GO AWAY...

A 'LIVING SPIRIT' IS THE SPIRIT OF A LIVING PERSON, RATHER THAN A
DEMON OR GHOST FROM SOMEONE WHO HAS DIED... THE LIVING PERSON
IS SO JEALOUS THEIR SPIRIT COMES OUT AND ATTACKS... WHO COULD IT
BE? PEOPLE BEGAN TO WHISPER OF GENJI'S LOVERS...

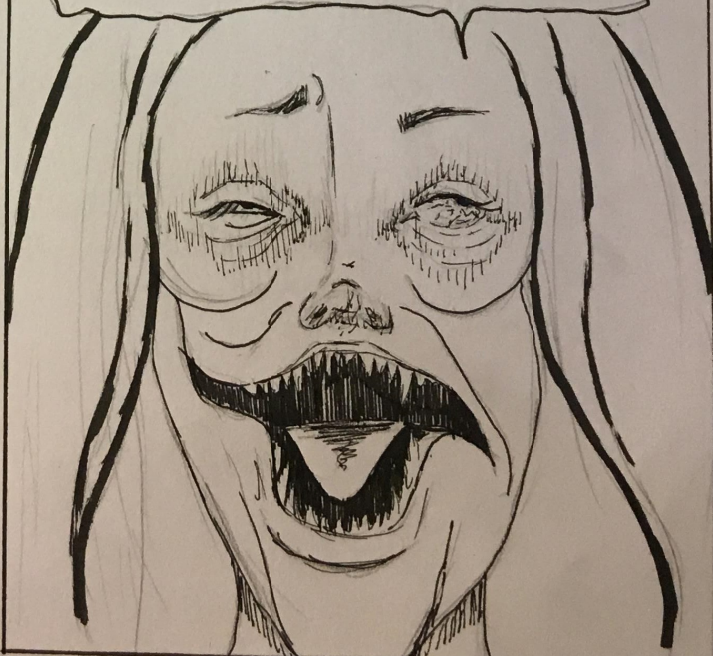
LADY ROKUJO! APPARENTLY LADY AOI IS BEING
HAUNTED BY A LIVING SPIRIT! THERE ARE
RUMOURS IT'S YOU...



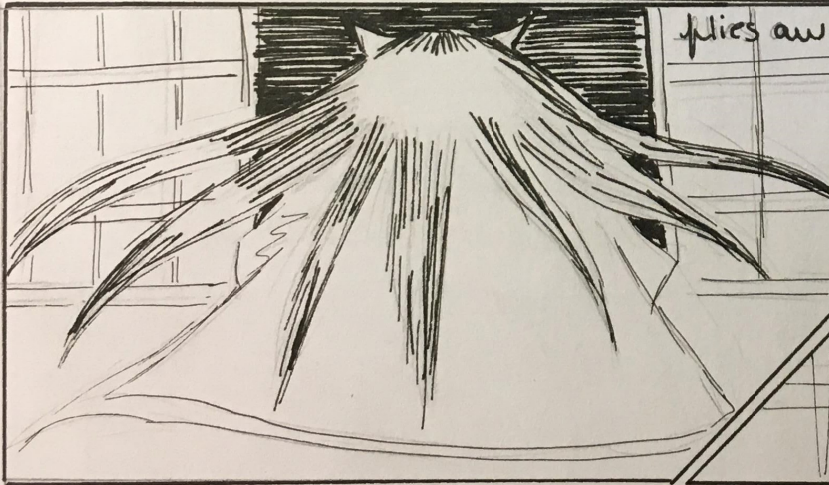
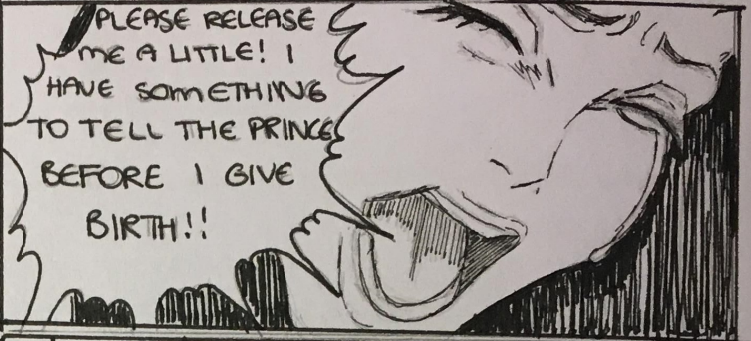
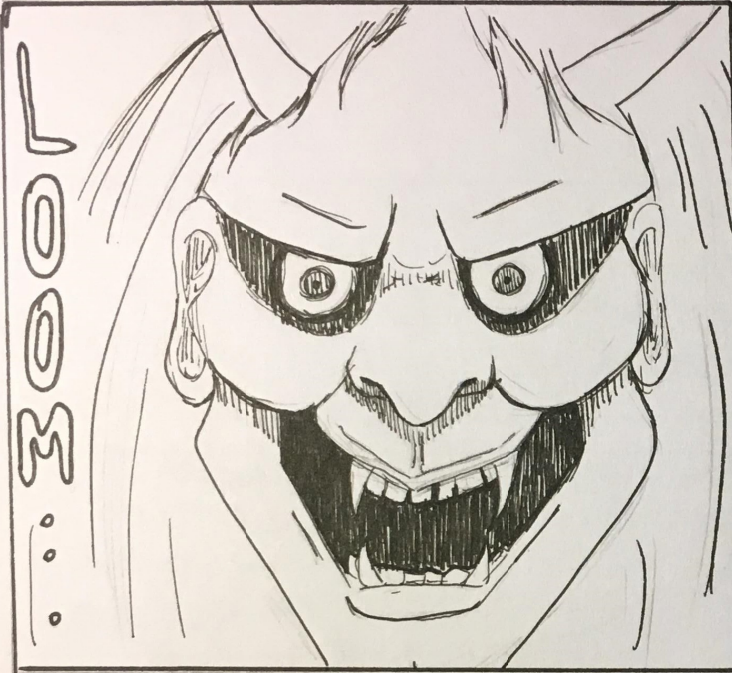
OH DEAR, POOR THING. AH, BUT HOW BAD FOR MY
REPUTATION! SURELY IT COULD NOT BE ME?
ALTHOUGH, I HAVE BEEN HAVING STRANGE
DREAMS...



IN FACT, EVEN THINKING ABOUT IT
MAKES ME SO... ANGRY...



AT AOI'S CASTLE



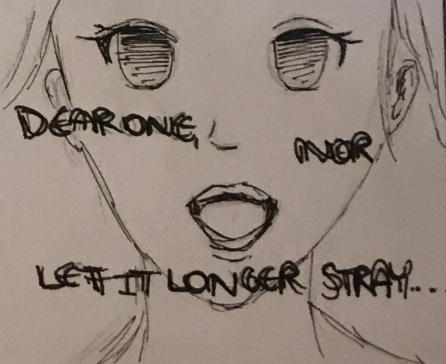
LADY AOI:
YOU CALLED
FOR ME? ARE
YOU OK? WHAT
SAD AFFLICTION
YOU CAUSE US



— Silence —

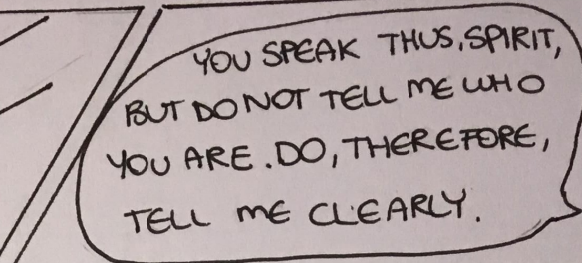


OH, BIND MY WANDERING
SPIRIT, PRAY

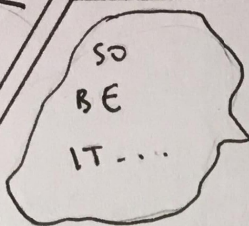




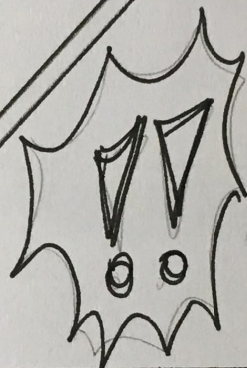
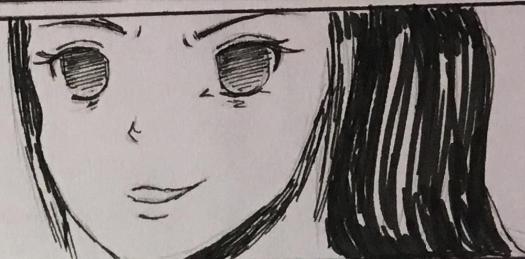
THAT VOICE! IT IS
MYLADY ROKUJŌ'S...



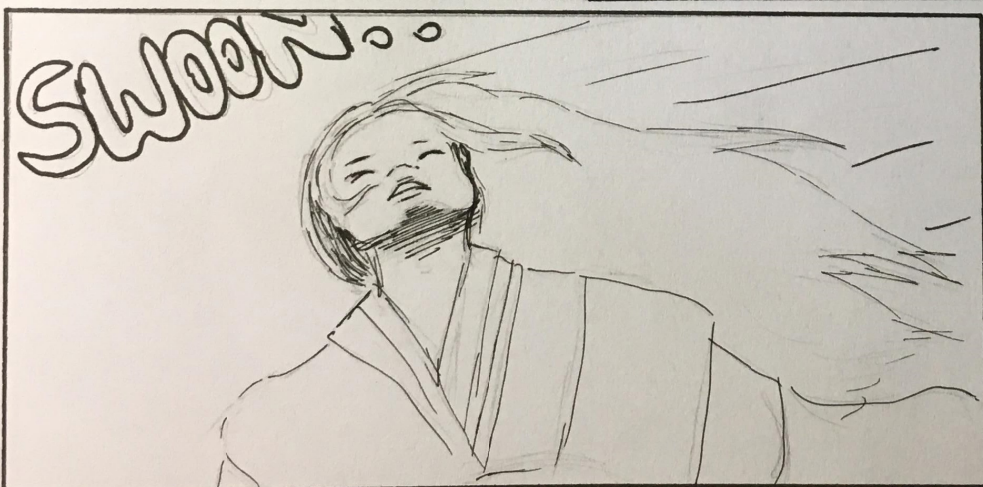
YOU SPEAK THUS, SPIRIT,
BUT DO NOT TELL ME WHO
YOU ARE. DO, THEREFORE,
TELL ME CLEARLY.



SO
BE
IT...



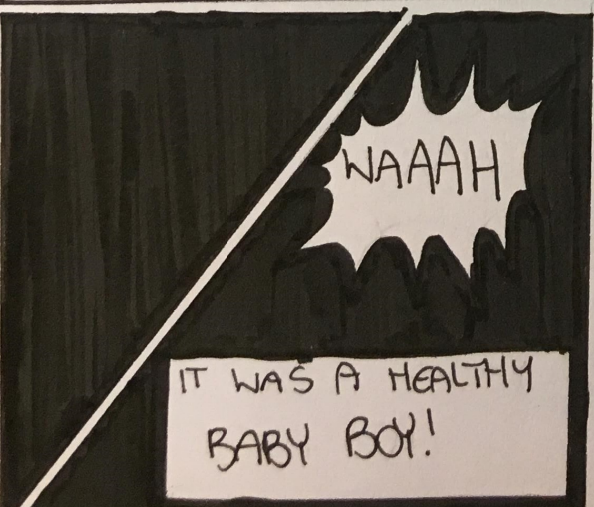
SO IT IS
TRUE!



Swooooo



AH! GENJI! LEAVE ME
AND GET MY ATTENDANTS
I'M ABOUT TO
GIVE BIRTH



WAAAH

IT WAS A HEALTHY
BABY BOY!



HMM, SO ALL
WENT WELL THEN...

MEANWHILE...

AND WHY DO I SMELL SO STRANGE? OF A PERFUME
I CANNOT WASH OFF? IT ALMOST SMELLS
LIKE AN EXORCISM...

BACK AT GENTI & AOI'S CASTLE

I AM GLAD YOU ARE
GETTING HEALTHY AGAIN.
IT'S NOW TIME FOR ME
TO GO BACK TO COURT

IF YOU REALLY
MUST...

-HUG-

GOODBYE
GENTI...

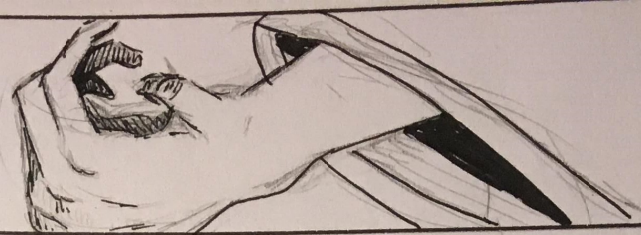
LATER THAT DAY...

CREAK...

AHHH

AAAH

THUD

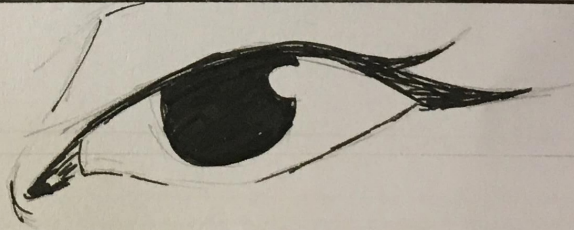


BECAUSE LADY AOI'S DEATH WAS CAUSED BY A MALIGNANT SPIRITUAL INFLUENCE,
HER BODY WAS LEFT UNTOUCHED FOR THREE DAYS IN HOPES SHE WOULD
REVIVE...

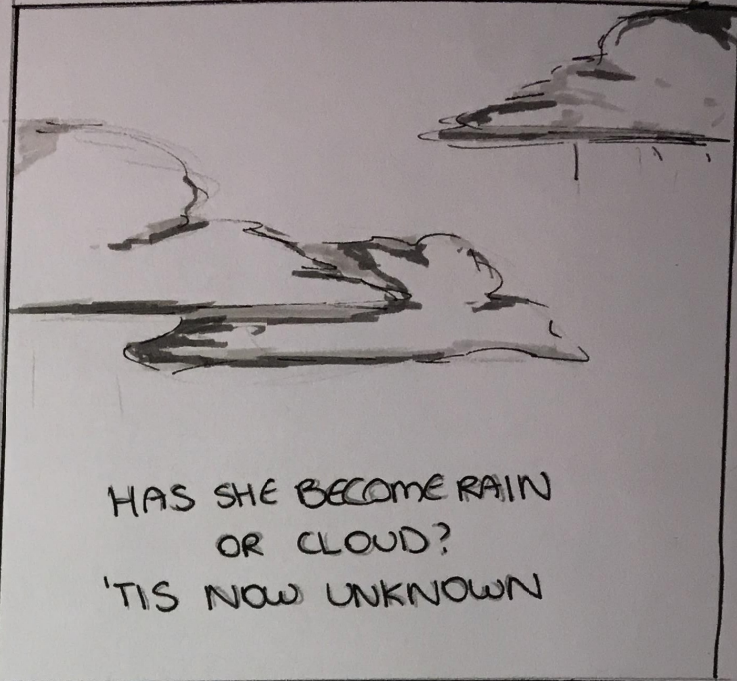
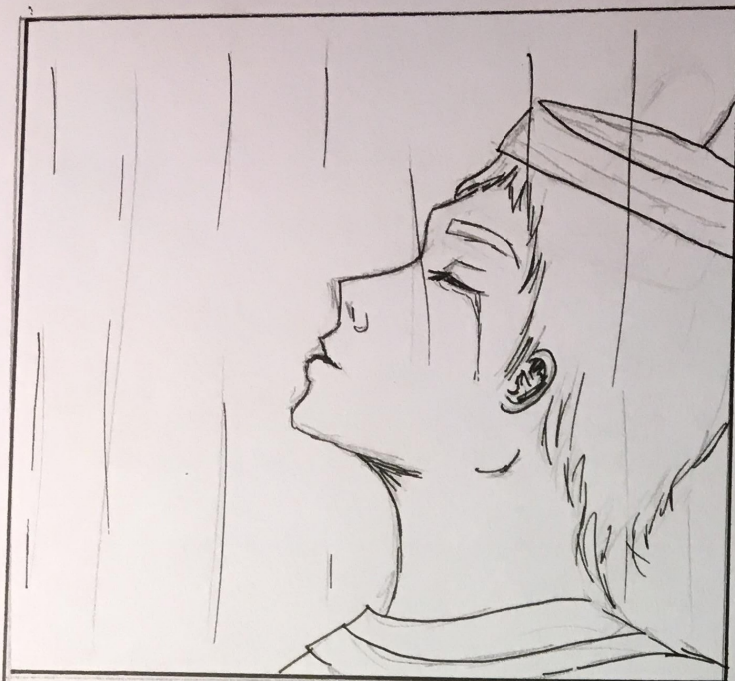


BUT SADLY NO SUCH THING OCCURRED...

AND SO THE MOST VIRTUOUS LADY AOI PASSED
AWAY FOREVER...



AND PRINCE GENTI NOW MOURNED
FOR HIS PRINCIPAL WIFE AND HER
UNTIMELY DEATH...



HAS SHE BECOME RAIN
OR CLOUD?
'TIS NOW UNKNOWN

THAT CLOUDY SHRINE WE VIEW ON HIGH,
WHERE MY LOST LOVE MAY DWELL UNSEEN,
LOOKS GLOOMY NOW TO THIS SAD EYE
THAT LOOKS WITH TEARS ON WHAT HAS BEEN.

THE END

Bushido: The Way of the Samurai

Saania Jamal



My name's **Saania Jamal** and I'm a 2nd year undergrad student at the time of writing this; I'm currently in the process of transferring from my Communications and English degree to Marketing, because I'm still figuring out what I want to do with my life. But one thing I'm certain about is my passion for graphic design, film, food, and Japanese culture. I've always enjoyed learning about the history of various countries and cultures, but Japan has always been one of my favourites to study and I'd say my interest first stemmed from seeing my cousin's gorgeous pictures of her trip to Kyoto when I was quite young. I'm also an avid reader of manga, watcher of anime, listener of Japanese music, and eater of ramen (I am a university student, after all aha). I hope you enjoy my take on a creative magazine about the history of the samurai!

A
BRIEF
HISTORY
OF JAPAN

武士道

BUSHIDO

THE WAY OF THE SAMURAI



ISSUE 3 | DEC 2018

KEY WORDS TO KNOW

bushido : the code of honor and morals developed by the Japanese samurai.

daimyo : powerful feudal lords of Japan who owned domains of land

kabuki : classical form of Japanese theatre known for its elaborate and stylized performance by men

kirisute gomen : the right of samurai to kill commoners who hurt their honor

ronin : a samurai with no master

sankin-kotai : a system of alternate attendance that required daimyo to spend periods of time living in the shogun's residence as hostages

seppuku : ritual suicide by disembowelment practiced by the samurai

A BRIEF HISTORY OF JAPAN

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Saania Zehra Jamal
editor-in-chief

i. ORIGINS

WHO WERE THE SAMURAI?

Masters of warfare, symbols of honour, knights of the east - these are the images that come to mind when one thinks of a samurai (侍). But in reality, these infamous figures of Japan were more than just the katanawielding swordsmen we see in films. Dating back to AD 646, the first samurai or “bushi” arose when the feudal lords of the Early Heian period needed someone to defend their land and riches. Through the ages, the central government of modern day Kyoto grew less & less interested in running the country, which eventually led to the transition of the samurai from a warrior class to a political, military force.

WHO DID THEY BECOME?

After a series of revolts in the 12th century, the samurai class successfully took control of Japan & established the first ever Kamakura Shogunate. During this era, and until the end of the Edo Period, the emperor was a mere figurehead, with the real power held in the hands of the samurai or feudal lords known as the daimyo. By the time of the final Tokugawa Shogunate, the samurai had become associated more with bureaucracy than warfare due to a long period of peace. But after the 1868 Meiji Restoration, samurai had slowly become a part of history.



ii. BUSHIDO: WAY OF THE WARRIOR

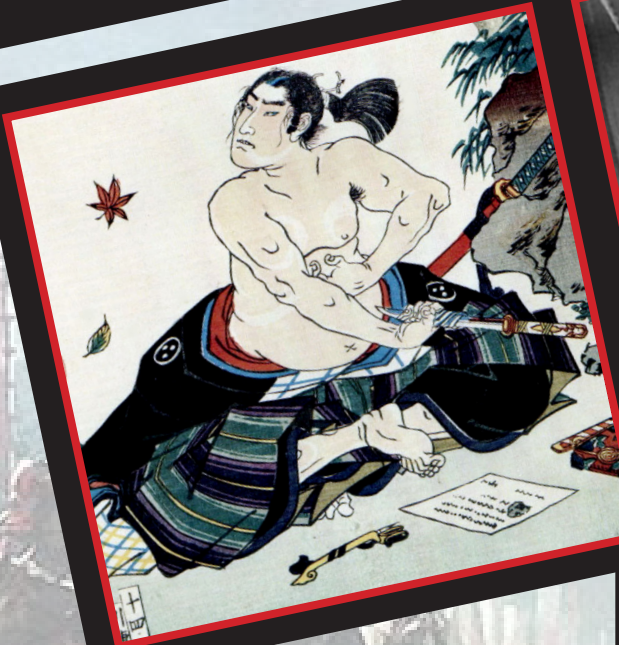
武士道

bu·shi·do

/ 'bōōSHē, dō/

the unwritten code of honor and morals developed by the Japanese samurai.

The word comes from the Japanese roots "bushi" meaning warrior and "do" meaning "way." Thus, Bushido came to be known as the way of the warrior; a set of values followed by the samurai of feudal Japan and much of Central Asia. These principles varied historically as the nation came under different influences, such



as Shintoism, Zen Buddhism & Confucianism. But perhaps, its most significant ideals consisted of martial spirit, frugality, deep loyalty to their lords and finally, honour until death. That last principle gave rise to the ritualistic suicide called "seppuku," where one would slit their own belly out of honor than live a shamed life.

In exchange for their privileged status in the hierarchy of society, a samurai was required to serve as a model and leader for the merchants and farmers

of the lower classes; that is, to essentially live by Bushido.

The first ever mention of the term can be linked to the *Kōyō Gunkan*, a record of the military exploits of the Takeda family. But in a post-samurai world, this code of conduct only became popularized by Japanese author, Inazo Nitobe's book, *Bushido: The Soul of Japan* (1900). In his work, he lays out a list of eight virtues (often generalized to seven) that encapsulate the basis of Bushido: justice, compassion, politeness, honor, courage, honesty, loyalty and

THE SEVEN VIRTUES OF BUSHIDO



義

GI
integrity

礼

REI
respect

勇

YU
courage

名誉

MEIYO
honor

仁

JIN
compassion

真

MAKOTO
honesty

忠義

CHU
loyalty

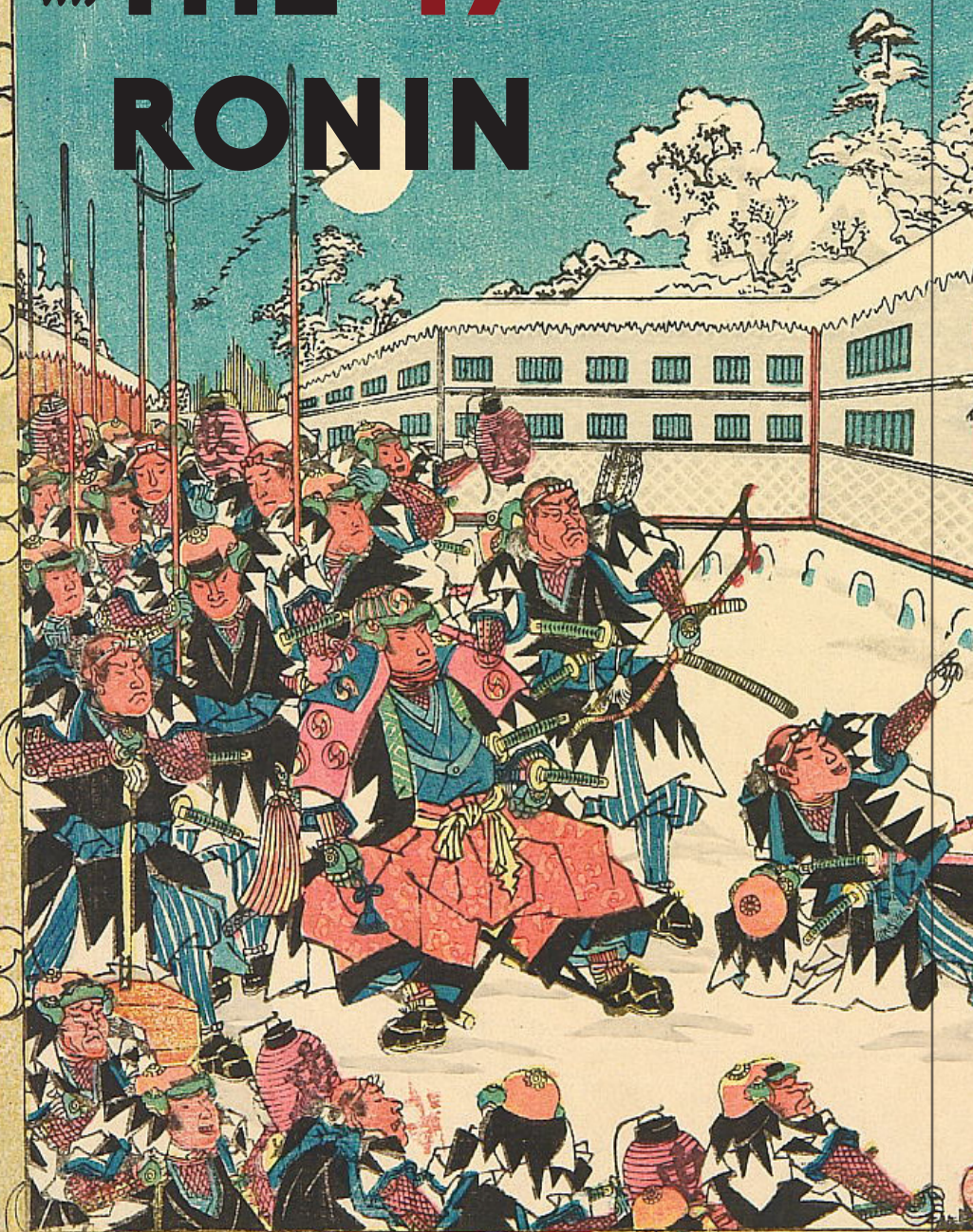
self-control. However, it is worth noting that Nitobe has also been criticized for romanticizing a non-existent age of chivalry in Japan, akin to that of the medieval knights of Europe, with many scholars claiming that the usage of Bushido was not even recognized until long after the ousting of the samurai class.

Whether or not the legends of Bushido all ring true, there's no question that the stories we hear of today originated from the behavior of some,

if not all, samurai. The most prominent figures that are associated with the etiquette in today's day and age include:

Tokugawa Ieyasu, the person responsible for establishing the Tokugawa Shogunate; Miyamoto Musashi, a swordsman and philosopher who wrote the *Go Rin No Sho* or The Book of Five Rings; and Asano Naganori, daimyo of the Ako Domain whose life and death set the trail for one of the greatest tales in Japanese folklore — the story of the 47 Ronin.

iii. THE 47 RONIN



30th of January, 1703. The silence of the night pierces through with a cracking of wood. 47 Ronin crash through the doors of Kira Yoshinaka's mansion.

A legend is created.

It all began in 1701 with a daimyo by the name of Asano Naganori. Invited to attend a gift giving ceremony in Edo while serving his Sankin-kotai, he bumps heads with Kira Yoshinaka, the greedy master of ceremony. After repeatedly getting provoked and humiliated by him, Asano lost his temper and attacked Kira with a dagger in the castle hallways.

Although Kira survived, Asano had broken the rules of the shogun residence and was ordered to commit seppuku. When news of Asano's death reached his samurais, who were now leaderless & considered ronin, 47 of them planned to avenge their old master.

And so, two years later, they hunted Kira down in his own home and beheaded him with Asano's same dagger. It was their leader, Oishi, who had delivered the final kill. In the aftermath of the incident, 46 of the ronin honorably ended their lives by committing seppuku. The 47th ronin, away for a mission during the sentence, was pardoned by the shogun when he returned and eventually lived to 87, buried beside his comrades.

Thus, the most famous samurai story was born.

忠雄義臣傳卷上

陽齋豐國筆

橋中山庄版

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