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## *Shuten Dōji* “Drunken Demon”

### **Abstract**

The story of Shuten Dōji is one of Japan’s most famous *oni* (demon/ogre) legends. By imperial command, the warrior-hero Minamoto no Raikō (948–1021) and his men conquer the cannibalistic demons, Shuten Dōji and his diabolical cohorts, who have abducted and eaten young maidens from in and around the capital. “Shuten dōji” belongs to a literary genre called *otogi zōshi* or “companion tales,” short stories written from the fourteenth to seventeenth centuries for the purpose of entertainment and moral/religious edification. Despite the legend’s longevity, popularity, and literary significance, to date, there has only been one English translation of the *otogi zōshi* “Shuten dōji.” Rendered more than one century ago, that translation was intended for young readers and is much abbreviated. The present translation is the first full-length annotated translation of the *otogi zōshi* “Shuten dōji.”

**Keywords:** *oni* – Japanese ogre – demon – warrior-hero – legend – *otogi zōshi*

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IN ONE OF Japan's most renown and gruesome *oni* 鬼 (demon/ogre) legends, Shuten Dōji 酒頭童子, a demon, kidnaps, enslaves, and cannibalizes young Kyoto maidens. Transcending time and place, the story has enjoyed great popularity in Japan over the ages, in part because of the conniving heroics of Minamoto no Raikō (or Yorimitsu) 源頼光 (948–1021). Minamoto no Raikō was a general of the mid-Heian period known for his valor. He served five emperors and became the governor of several important provinces. During the Edo period (1603–1867), the creation of *Kan'ei shoke kakeizu den* 寛永諸家系図伝 (Genealogy of the Feudal Lords of the Kan'ei Period, 1643), which linked the Tokugawa genealogy to that of the Minamoto clan, greatly helped to heighten interest in the ancestors of that clan (ITAGAKI 1988, 439).<sup>1</sup> Raikō's bravery spawned not only the legend of his conquering *oni* but also the story of killing such supernatural creatures as the earth spider (*tsuchigumo* 土蜘蛛). In the story of "Shuten Dōji," Raikō and his lieutenants are charged by imperial command to rescue the captives and to engage and eliminate the evil *oni*, a mission they ultimately fulfill through cunning and with the help of several obliging deities.

"Shuten Dōji" belongs to a literary genre called *otogi zōshi* 御伽草子 or "companion tales," which are short stories written from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century for the purpose of entertainment and moral/religious edification.<sup>2</sup> Befitting the *otogi zōshi* genre, the "Shuten Dōji" story reveals how warriors faithful to Buddhas and Shinto deities can defeat even the most monstrous of villains. By combining one of the most famous heroic legends in Japan with uncanny grotesqueness, Nomura Hachiryō asserts "Shuten Dōji" is a most interesting representative of *otogi zōshi* stories (NOMURA 2003, 72).

Ostensibly, the "Shuten Dōji" story has a relatively simple plot, pinning the forces of good, represented by Raikō, his men and the Emperor, against the forces of evil, Shuten Dōji and his demonic minions. Despite this apparent thematic simplicity however, closer investigation reveals that the Shuten Dōji legend may contain a significantly complex socio-historical dichotomy. Baba Akiko asserts that *oni* were often used as a literary device to represent suppressed people and/or those who were not a part of the Fujiwara Regency

(from the tenth through eleventh centuries). The Fujiwara Regency reached its peak with Fujiwara Michinaga 藤原道長 (966–1027), and Baba observed that *oni* reached their zenith during Emperor Ichijō's 一条 reign (980–1011). She considers the legend “Shuten Dōji,” set during the reign of Emperor Ichijō, as one of the best examples of a story representing those who were pushed to the edges of society (BABA 1988, 140–50). Thus, no full appreciation of the Shuten Dōji legend is complete without the consideration of *oni* as societal outcasts, the disenfranchised, the indigent, and the uninitiated.

In the Edo period, “Shuten Dōji” was popularly employed in *jōruri* 浄瑠璃 and Kabuki. Torii Fumiko writes that “Shuten Dōji” was recited as *jōruri* from the beginning of the Edo period when the *jōruri* repertoire was still in its infancy. The entry of 1638 of the *Kabuki nenpyō* 歌舞伎年表 [Kabuki annals] notes that “Shuten Dōji” is popular among Edo people as an auspicious piece (TORII 1993, 49–52). Although “Shuten Dōji” stories of the medieval period describe Raikō as the chief of warriors, in the *jōruri* piece of the Edo period, Raikō is credited as the “protector of the land” and “chief of police and justice” (MUROKI 1966, 429). This change in Raikō's title to a more enhanced one most likely reflects the authors' desire to please, or at least acquiesce with, the newly established Tokugawa shogunate. It would have been politically desirable for the authors and publishers to superimpose the Tokugawa shogunate onto the Raikō legend so that admiration for Raikō implied admiration for the Tokugawa shogunate (MUROKI 1970, 442–43). The primary theme of “Shuten Dōji,” that is, of courageous good conquering evil, played into the shogunate agenda quite fortuitously: Like Raikō, the shogunate would auspiciously and by divine mandate protect the land and slay all enemies of the government.

Yet, despite the legend's longevity, popularity, and literary significance, to date there remains but one published English translation of “Shuten Dōji” (T. H. JAMES 1889). Unfortunately, James's translation is not annotated and, as Fanny Hagin Mayer later noted, it “was intended for juvenile readers” (MAYER 1984, x) and thus, much abbreviated. More importantly, the book is out of print and is very difficult to access.<sup>3</sup> The “Shuten Dōji” legend deserves a reintroduction to an English speaking audience.

The story of Shuten Dōji exists in a variety of textual versions, each interpreted and presented differently. Essentially, however, there are two versions: the Ōeyama 大江山 (Mt. Ōe) version and that of Ibukiyama 伊吹山 (Mt. Ibuki). It is now generally accepted that the Ōeyama version came first. Satake Akihiro notes that the Ibukiyama version was wrought out of an historical incident—the bloody murder of a now famous bandit, Kashiwabara Yasaburō of Mt. Ibuki in 1201. The Ibukiyama version of the story is thus a variant of the earlier Ōeyama version (SATAKE 1977, 119). The major differences between the two versions are twofold. The first is the location of the *oni*'s fortress. In the Ōeyama version, it is

located on Mt. Ōe, whereas the Ibukiyama version situates it on Mt. Ibuki. The second major difference is that the Ibukiyama version includes a section of the explanation of Shuten Dōji's *honji* 本地 (true nature or original form) as the arch enemy of Buddha, the Evil King of the Sixth Heaven (or Celestial Realm) 第六天の魔王;<sup>4</sup> Raikō's *honji* as Bishamon-ten 毘沙門天 (Vaiśravaṇa), and Emperor Ichijō as Miroku 弥勒 (Maitreya). The Ōeyama version does not contain this section, with an exception for the oldest text of this type entitled *Ōeyama ekotoba* 大江山絵詞 [Picture scroll of Mt. Ōe].<sup>5</sup> The earliest extant text of the legend is the abovementioned picture scroll *Ōeyama ekotoba*, made during the fourteenth century, which is kept in the Itsuō Museum of Art in Osaka.<sup>6</sup> As the name implies, this belongs to the Ōeyama version. Another picture scroll, *Shuten Dōji emaki* 酒伝童子絵巻 [Picture scroll of Shuten Dōji] is owned by the Suntory Museum of Art, Tokyo. This picture scroll is representative of the Ibukiyama version and dates back to the early sixteenth century.<sup>7</sup>

Among the numerous copies and versions of the legend, it was the eighteenth-century printed version of the “Shuten Dōji” story that reached a markedly broad audience, thanks largely to a bookseller by the name of Shibukawa Seiemon 渋川清右衛門.<sup>8</sup> The Shibukawa edition also put an end to the flood of various *otogi zōshi* texts (AMANO 1979, 16). The location of the *oni* fortress in the Shibukawa edition is Mt. Ōe. Shibukawa published the “Shuten Dōji” story in an anthology of twenty-three short stories under the title of *Goshūgen otogi bunko* 御祝言御伽文庫 [Auspicious companion library] or *Otogi zōshi* 御伽草子 [Companion tales] depending upon the edition. The following translation is of the Shibukawa text (ICHIKO 1958, 361–84).<sup>9</sup>

## NOTES

1. Minamoto Mitsunaka (912–997), Raikō's father, who had built the base for Minamoto power, was so idealized that it is said Tokugawa Yorinobu (1602–1671), the founder of the Kii branch of the Tokugawa, ordered in his will that his tombstone be placed beside that of Mitsunaka in the inner sanctuary of Mt. Kōya (ITAGAKI 1988, 422).

2. The definition of *otogi zōshi* as a genre is still controversial among literary scholars. For studies of *otogi zōshi* in English, see MULHERN 1974; STEVEN 1977; ARAKI 1981.

3. There is “The Goblin Mountain,” translated in 1914 by Hannah Riddell as part of Iwaya's *Fairy Tales of Old Japan*. But as the title reveals, this is a translation of Iwaya Sazanami's 巖谷小波 (1870–1933) *Nippon mukashi banashi* 日本昔噺. It is not a translation of the *otogi zōshi* “Shuten Dōji.” James's work is short (leaving out all mention of blood wine and human legs), and the intended audience is children. See IWAYA 1914.

4. He resides in the sixth heaven (or celestial realm?) *dairokuten* 第六天, also known as *takejizaiten* 他化自在天, and rules *yokkai* 欲界 (the world of desire) where human beings belong (MOCHIZUKI, TSUKAMOTO 1973, 3467).

5. A portion of this version, which is presumed to have been written in the middle of the Muromachi period, is believed to be the copy of the *Ōeyama ekotoba* with the *honji* sec-

tion. In this version, Raikō is a reincarnation of Daitokui 大徳威 (Yamantaka, Great Awe-Inspiring Power). Satake Akihiko assumes that the *honji* section of the Ōeyama version(s) may have been eliminated, as exposure to the audience was more frequent (SATAKE 1977, 152).

6. The scroll is also referred to as *Katori-bon* 香取本 because the work was formerly in the possession of the high Shinto priest of the Katori Shrine in Shimofusa province. It is reprinted in YOKOYAMA, MATSUMOTO (1975, 122–40) and KOMATSU (1984, 75–103, 144–60, 171–78).

7. For various *Ibuki* versions of texts, see YOKOYAMA, MATSUMOTO (1974, 357–426, and MATSUMOTO (1987).

8. The Shibukawa edition is almost identical to a *tanroku-bon* 丹緑本 (a picture booklet illustrated in green and orange) published during the Kan'ei era 寛永 (1624–1643). Hence, it is considered to be a reprint of a *tanroku-bon* (MATSUMOTO 1963, 172).

9. I have also cross-referenced the Shōgakukan edition (ŌSHIMA 1974, 444–74).

*Translation*

## Shuten Dōji

**A** LONG TIME AGO in Japan, a divine country from the time heaven and earth were divided, and where Buddhism thrived, imperial rule from the time of the first emperor<sup>1</sup> to the Engi era (901–923)<sup>2</sup> was endowed with righteous authority, sincere honesty, and compassion for the people in ways unsurpassed by the Chinese emperors, Yao and Shun.<sup>3</sup>

Then, strange events began to take place.<sup>4</sup> Demons living on Mt. Ōe of Tanba province<sup>5</sup> began to abduct numerous people at night from throughout the land. In the capital, many people, particularly comely maidens of seventeen or eighteen years of age, were kidnapped.

Of all the recorded tales of demonic abduction, the one that affected the retired emperor's middle counselor Ikeda Kunitaka was especially heart-wrenching. Kunitaka enjoyed the retired emperor's favor, and had a home filled with treasures. He also had a daughter of divine beauty.<sup>6</sup> It was said that anyone who encountered this girl's charms, either in person or through another's account, fell in love with her. The parents' love for the princess was most extraordinary. One evening, the graceful princess disappeared. Kunitaka's anguish, not to mention the grief of his wife, was indescribable<sup>7</sup>—nurses, maids, and all who happened to be in the dwelling were thrown into calamitous pandemonium.

Overcome with grief, Kunitaka summoned his servant Sakon and said, "I have heard recently that there is a reputable diviner named Muraoka no Masatoki<sup>8</sup> in the capital. Bring him here." Sakon at once went to fetch Masatoki to bring him to Kunitaka's mansion. Pitiably and without concern for his reputation, Kunitaka and his wife received Masatoki immediately.<sup>9</sup> "Hear me Masatoki," Kunitaka spoke, "Parents with even five or ten children would not neglect any one of them [let alone me with only one child]. Last night, my only child was abducted and we know nothing of her whereabouts. She is thirteen years old this year and since she was born, my wife and I have doted on her. We even have nurse chaperones standing guard when she descends from her veranda to protect her from strong winds. If this is an act of a demon, why did the demon not take me, too?" Kunitaka pressed his face to his sleeve [to catch his tears]. Kunitaka piled up tens of thousands of coins in front of the fortune teller, pleading with him, "Seer of fortunes, please tell me where my daughter is and I'll reward you with great treasures. Please divine carefully." The masterly Masatoki took out a scroll. After consulting the text, the seer triumphantly clapped his hands together, certain he had ascertained the princess's whereabouts. "Your princess'

disappearance is the work of demons living on Mt. Ōe of Tanba province. Her life is safe. In proper measure, I will pray for her safety, so please rest assured. After careful examination, the divination indicates to me that this abduction occurred because you failed to keep a promise to Kannon when you sought her blessing for the birth of the child. If you appeal to Kannon now with the appropriate prayers, your daughter will return to the capital soon,” and with that clairvoyant revelation, Masatoki took his leave from the Kunitaka mansion.

Kunitaka and his wife were overcome with woe after hearing Masatoki’s prognostications. Still in tears, Kunitaka went to the imperial palace to report to the Throne. In the assembly of the emperor, with court nobles and ministers gathered, palace officials discussed Kunitaka’s plight, but could offer no definitive consensus on a course of action. Among them, the Chief imperial Advisor

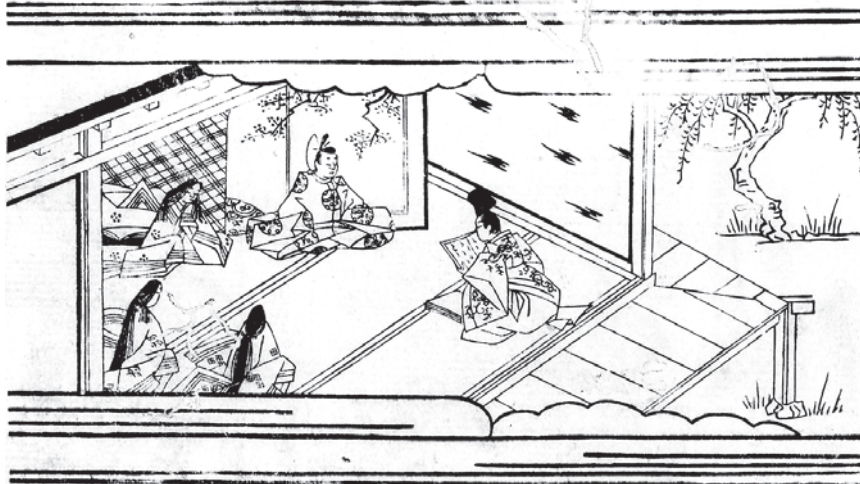


FIGURE 1: Masatoki reads the divination to Kunitaka and his wife. (All figures are courtesy of The University of Tokyo)

reminded the gathered that, “during the reign of Emperor Saga (r. 809–823), a similar incident happened. The Great Priest Kōbō<sup>10</sup> subdued the demon with his magical powers, expelling the demon from our land. If your majesty would summon Minamoto no Raikō to the palace and command him to subjugate the demon, the demon will surely be frightened of Raikō and his lieutenants, Sadamitsu,<sup>11</sup> Suetake,<sup>12</sup> Tsuna,<sup>13</sup> Kintoki,<sup>14</sup> and Hōshō.”<sup>15</sup> The emperor agreed, issuing an imperial proclamation charging Raikō with the task of defeating the evil demons. Raikō immediately came to the palace and was granted an audience. “Hear ye Raikō, demons dwell on Mt. Ōe of Tanba province. They are doing wrong. In my divine country it is inconceivable that demons would inhabit even

the most remote region to cause distress, let alone in the vicinity of the capital. Crush them.”

The warrior Raikō was very moved to receive the imperial command, reasoning, “Demons are transformers—if they learn that some punitive force is coming, they will turn into dust and leaves, and it will be hard for us ordinary humans to find them. Yet, how can I disobey an imperial order?” Hurrying home, Raikō called his men to his house. At their gathering Raikō warned them all, “We won’t be a match for the mighty demons. Let us pray to the deities and Buddhas for their help. That will be the best.” And with that suggestion, Raikō and Hōshō proceeded to Yahata Shrine,<sup>16</sup> Tsuna and Kintoki went to Sumiyoshi Shrine,<sup>17</sup> while Sadamitsu and Suetake prayed at the Kumano Shrine.<sup>18</sup> All offered fervent prayers and since Japan was a divine country where Buddhism thrived, each deity listened to their prayers. Nothing can be more joyous than the reception of their prayers, they thought, and they all went home content. Later Raikō and his lieutenants gathered to discuss plans for dealing with the Mt. Oe demons, but the discussion ended without a solution.

Raikō took charge of the mission’s tactical planning, recommending that the six warriors disguise themselves as mountain ascetics and pretend to be lost. He reasoned if only they could locate the demon’s base in Tanba province, defeating the demons would be easy, whatever military strategy they would employ. To that end, Raikō suggested, “Each of us must fabricate an ascetic’s pannier in which to conceal our armor. What do you think?” With his men in agreement, the warriors set out to make their panniers. Concealed within Raikō’s pannier was his vermilion armor called *randen gusari*, a helmet of the same vermilion thread named Lion King and his splendid sword Chisui, which was two-foot-one in length. Hidden in Hōshō’s pannier was his purple armor, a helmet of the same

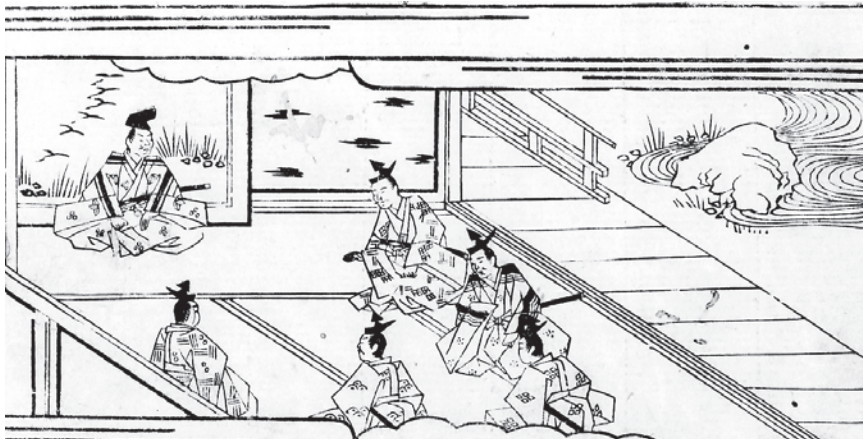


FIGURE 2: Raikō and his lieutenants gather to discuss their plan.



color, and his two-foot-long halberd, dubbed Cutting Rocks. Tsuna’s pannier held his yellow-green armor with matching helmet and a sword called Cutting Demon.<sup>19</sup> Likewise, Sadamitsu, Suetake, and Kintoki used their panniers to hide their battle armor that was identifiable by color, helmets, and swords. In each pannier, sake, flint, and oilpaper were put atop the battle vestments.<sup>20</sup> Accordingly, each of the men donned the attire of a mountain ascetic: each had a round cap [*tokin* 頭巾], and dressed in humble linen cloths, each carried a conch shell, a stick, and a striking sword.<sup>21</sup> While in concentrated prayer to the deities and Buddhas of Japan, the party left the capital for Tanba province. The warriors’ resolve would terrify any dark force.<sup>22</sup>

Raikō’s party hurriedly pressed onward, soon arriving at the foot of Mt. Ōe, in Tanba province. There they encountered a woodcutter. “Excuse me, woodcutter,” asked Raikō, “Where is the mountain Senjōdake [千丈嶽] in this province? And, please tell us in detail where the demons dwell.” The woodcutter replied, “Pass this peak and the valleys, and peaks that lay beyond, then you will reach the demons’ lair, where humans never approach.” “I see,” said Raikō and to his men enjoined, “Let’s pass beyond this peak,” and in so saying, Raikō and his followers proceeded to cross the valleys and climb the peaks. While on the trail, Raikō and his men came upon three old men in a brushwood hut concealed inside a cavern. Peering into the makeshift dwelling, Raikō asked the occupants, “What sort of strange beings could you be?” One of the old men replied back, “We are not strange creatures. One is from Kakenokōri of Tsu province,<sup>23</sup> another is from Otonashisato of Ki province,<sup>24</sup> and the other is from Yamashiro,<sup>25</sup> close to the capital. Our wives and children have been stolen by the demon named Shuten Dōji who lives over this mountain. We recently arrived ourselves, seeking revenge for our wives and children being taken away, but in looking at you closely, you don’t appear to be ordinary priests. I understand that you are here by imperial command to subjugate Shuten Dōji. By all means, we three old men will show you the way. Put down your panniers, relax, and rest from your journey.”

Raikō accepted the old men’s welcome. “As you said, we are lost in the mountain and are quite fatigued. We shall then take a rest.” Raikō and his party put down their satchels, unpacked the sake and presented it to the three men. One of the old men then advised Raikō, “You must enter the demons dwelling stealthily, by any means possible. The chief demon always drinks sake, and so he is called Shuten Dōji [Drunken Demon]. After he becomes intoxicated and lies down, he becomes oblivious to the goings-on around him. We have in our possession a special kind of sake known as *jinben kidoku* [神便鬼毒] (a divine elixir, poisonous to demons).<sup>26</sup> If demons drink this sake, they lose their supernatural flying powers and become disoriented. But if you drink this sake, it is medicinal. That is why for generations it has been recognized as a divine elixir, poisonous

to demons. Now this sake will prove its wonders again.” Then, the old men produced a hobnailed helmet and handed it to Raikō, “Please put on this helmet when you decapitate the demon. It will protect you.” Assessing the situation, Raikō’s troop was convinced that the three old men were deities representing the three shrines they had visited before embarking on their mission. Overwhelmed, the six men shed tears of gratitude, their appreciation being beyond words.

Emerging from the cave, the deities invited the warriors to follow them, “We shall show you the way.” The group proceeded to climb the treacherous mountain Senjōdake. The deities then guided Raikō and his men through a thirty-meter-long dark cave, which opened up into a free-flowing mountain brook. They then directed the warriors, “Follow this waterway upstream and you will encounter a lady of seventeen or eighteen years of age, she can tell you more. When you are ready to strike, we, the deities of Sumiyoshi, Yahata, and Kumano, will again help you.” With that promise to return, the elders vanished into thin air.

The six warriors fell to their knees humbled and honored by the deities presence. Then they pressed upstream as instructed. Just as the deities had foretold, the group came upon a maiden of seventeen or eighteen years of age. The young girl seemed to be crying while washing what appeared to be blood-stained garments. Approaching her, Raikō inquired, “May I ask who you are?”<sup>27</sup> The young lady replied, “I am from the capital. One night, the demon took me away and brought me here. I can see neither my dear parents nor my nurses. Please pity me for I am in such a miserable state,” she cried bitterly. Trying to hold back her tears, she sobbed, “Alas, how terrible! This place is called Demon’s Cavern, and no human can approach. How could you priests have come here?”



FIGURE 3: The elders guide Raikō and his lieutenants through the mountain.

Please let me return to the capital any way possible." And no sooner had she finished talking than the young maiden burst into tears again. Having heard the girl's plea, Raikō asked, "Who are your parents in the capital?" "I am the only daughter of the Middle Counselor Hanazono," she replied. "But I am not the only captive here. There are more than ten of us. Recently the princess of the Middle Counselor Ikeda Kunitaka was abducted and brought here. After taking good care of us, the demons wring the blood from our bodies, which they then consume as their sake. They consume our flesh as banquet condiments. It is so pitiable to look at the sight nearby of the blood-drained captives. This morning, the demons drank the blood of the princess of the Middle Counselor Horikawa. It's so sad that I now wash her blood-stained garments, indeed, it is pathetic," she lamented. The hardened warriors were so moved by the young maiden's distress, they broke into tears alongside her.

"We are here to dispatch the demons and return you all to the capital. Please, tell us about the demons' dwelling in detail." "Is this dream or reality?" she queried. "I shall tell you about the demons' place. You must follow this river upstream. There, you will see the iron gate, guarded by Shuten Dōji's dotting demons. Use stealth to enter through the gate, by any means possible. Once you are inside, you will see an imposing azure palace with rows of roofs and bejeweled screens. The living quarters of the palace are adorned to represent the four seasons. They are built of iron, hence the name, the Iron Palace. At night, we are summoned to the demons' living quarters where we perform menial duties,



FIGURE 4: The six warriors meet upon a distraught maiden of seventeen or eighteen years of age.

including massaging their bodies. Shuten Dōji has four lieutenants who guard the entrance of the living quarters: Hoshikuma Dōji [Star-Bear Demon], Kuma Dōji [Bear Demon], Torakuma Dōji [Tiger-Bear Demon], and Kane Dōji [Iron Demon]. I have heard that the four demons are powerful beyond mortal comprehension. As for the appearance of Shuten Dōji, he has light-red skin and is tall with disheveled short hair. He has a human appearance during the day but at night he transforms into a ten-feet high demon whose countenance is truly horrible. He always drinks sake. Once he becomes intoxicated, he forgets everything. So please enter the palace—by any means possible—and serve him sake. When he lies down intoxicated, strike him with a vengeance. The devil's luck will have run out for Shuten Dōji. And he will finally be conquered. Please plan carefully, priests.”

The warriors pressed on upstream, towards the Iron Palace. Seeing Raikō and his men approaching, the demons at the gate wondered amongst themselves, “Who are these men? This is indeed rare!” Not having eaten humans for a while the demons at the gate had come to miss the taste. “Like ‘moths to a flame’ they’ve delivered themselves to their death. Let’s tear them into morsels.” Vying to be the first to reach Raikō and his men, the demons were about to sprint forward. Raikō and his men would surely have been eaten had there not been one among this overzealous band of flesh-hungry demons who warned, “Haste makes waste! We should not hasten forward for our own personal gratification. We should first check with our master and at his instruction, then we’ll tear them apart.” The rest of the demons agreed and proceeded to the inner palace to report to Shuten Dōji. Upon hearing the report of the priests arrival, Shuten Dōji declared, “That’s strange. At any rate I shall meet with them. Bring them here!” Compliantly, the demons showed the disguised priests to a veranda within the palace complex where they would meet with the *oni* leader Shuten Dōji. Suddenly, an odor of rotting fish seemed to be carried in by the wind, and thunder and lightning began to strike. In the mayhem of these supernatural calamities, Shuten Dōji appeared. A towering form adorned in a checkered kimono with a crimson hakama; a human form, with pale red skin, dishevelled short hair, clenching an iron staff, looked down on Raikō and his men.

Then, a voice challenged Raikō and his band: “The mountain I live on is no ordinary mountain—the boulders and rocks are towering and the gorges are deep with no passage. Neither birds of flight nor beasts that run on earth can approach this summit, for there is no passageway for them, let alone humans. Did you, despite being human, fly here? Speak. I will listen.”

Raikō responded, “This is normal in our training. Long ago, when an ascetic named En no Gyōja [役の行者]<sup>28</sup> pushed his way through impassable terrains, he encountered three demons that called themselves Goki, Zenki, and Akki. En no Gyōja gave them food and incantations. Since then, every year En has con-

tinuously given these demons food and compassion. We priests follow in En no Gyōja’s wake, and we are from Mt. Haguro of Dewa province.<sup>29</sup> We confined ourselves to Mt. Ōmine<sup>30</sup> during the New Year [from New Year’s Eve to New Year’s Day], and now, since spring has arrived, we set out from Mt. Ōmine late



FIGURE 5: Shuten Dōji looks down on Raikō and his men.

last night for sightseeing in Kyoto. But along Sen’non dō [山陰道],<sup>31</sup> we became lost and arrived here in search of passage. It must be En’s guidance that has led to our fortuitous meeting here and now. There is no other joy than this. It is said that to stay a night under the same tree and to drink from the same river is predestined from a previous life. Please give us lodging tonight. Because I carry sake, we humbly offer to share it with you. We, too, would like to enjoy sake and revel here this night.”

Hearing Raikō’s explanations, Shuten Dōji judged the priests to be of no immediate threat, and so invited them to his inner sanctum to learn more of their journey and their intentions. Once there, the suspicious demon further tested Raikō’s sincerity by offering him some of the demon’s sake, “You brought sake, I heard. We, too, want to offer sake to you, priests.” Shuten Dōji gestured the *oni* to bring forth the sake. The demons hurried off to obtain the maiden’s blood to put into the sake container, placing it in front of Shuten Dōji, alongside his cup. Shuten Dōji then passed the chalice to Raikō and poured him some of the demon’s blood sake. Raikō drank his entire portion with apparent zeal and upon seeing this, Shuten Dōji commanded: “Pass it on to the next person.” The demon then poured sake for Tsuna. Tsuna received the cup and likewise, drank it all. Shuten Dōji asked his servants, “Are there not condiments?” In response, the demons immediately brought forth human arms and legs that appeared to have been recently severed. The dismembered body parts were carefully put in front

of Shuten Dōji. “Prepare them for the priests,” he ordered one of his subjects, but before the demon could comply, Raikō volunteered, “I shall do it.” He then unsheathed his small sword, cutting the human flesh into five-inch pieces, once again, consuming them with apparent gusto. Looking on, Tsuna quickly followed suit, declaring, “I’m much obliged for your consideration, I will have some, too,” and after similarly cutting the flesh into five-inch long pieces, he joined in the feast. Looking at them, Shuten Dōji asked, “What kind of mountains do you live among? It is strange to consume this kind of rare sake and condiments.” Raikō replied, “Your suspicion is reasonable. According to our discipline, we do not reject anything if it is given in compassion—even if we do not desire it from our hearts. While I was relishing this sake and these condiments, something came to mind. To defeat or be defeated is but a dream. I am not, and yet I am, and there are no two tastes in eating. We all attain Buddhahood. Praise be to Buddha,” and Raikō prayed. It is said that the world of demons is without deception. In veneration of Raikō’s words, Shuten Dōji expressed his admiration for him, opening his heart and saying, “It’s sad that we offered something disagreeable to you. It is not necessary for the rest of you to eat it.”

In the spirit of this camaraderie, Raikō then took out his own sake, “I have brought this sake from the capital. Most humbly, I would like to offer it to you. I shall taste it first to make sure it is not poisonous.” Raikō drank first, before giving the cup to Shuten Dōji who was all too eager to drink. The divine sake was indeed exceptional. It tasted like honeydew—simply beyond description. Delighted, Shuten Dōji then announced, “I have two women who are very dear to me. I shall summon them to have them taste this sake.” With that, he called Kunitaka’s daughter and Hanazono’s daughter to his drawing room. “I shall pour sake for the ladies from the capital,” announced Raikō as he stood up.

Nearing a state of intoxicated bliss, Shuten Dōji confessed to Raikō, “I will tell you about my past: I was born in Echigo province,<sup>32</sup> and brought up in a mountain temple. But since I bore a grudge against the priests, I stabbed many of them to death and in flight, arrived at Mt. Hie, thinking that the mountain would become my home. But the Priest Dengyō,<sup>33</sup> in league with the Buddhas, expelled me from there by reciting a holy “blessing on the mountain.”<sup>34</sup> Overpowered, I left Mt. Hie for this Mt. Ōe. Later, an impostor named Priest Kōbō<sup>35</sup> overpowered me with his magic, and it was beyond me. But now there is no such priest. Priest Kōbō is dead on Mt. Kōya. I returned to this mountain and have had no problems. I abduct ladies of my liking from the capital to use and enjoy as I wish. Look at this place. My azure palace with bejeweled screens has many rows of roofs and before me are trees and grasses in the tens of thousands, representing the four seasons. Within this palace is a living quarter made of iron called the Iron Palace. At night, I summon my maidens within and have them massage my arms and legs. How could any heavenly guardians surpass this? Yet,

there is a man who concerns me—his name is Raikō, a great villain. His renown as a mighty warrior is well known in the capital and his power is without rival in all of Japan. Raikō’s vassals—Sadamitsu, Suetake, Kintoki, Tsuna, and Hōshō—are all accomplished masters in the arts of pen and sword. It is these six warriors who bother me. The reason for my concern is that on an errand to the capital this past spring, my man, Ibaraki Dōji, met and fought with Tsuna at the crossing of Horikawa and Seventh Avenue. Without compunction, Ibaraki Dōji wisely changed into a woman with the intent of gaining access to Tsuna. His plan was to abduct Tsuna and bring him here, but just as Ibaraki Dōji grabbed Tsuna’s topknot, Tsuna unsheathed his sword and cut off Ibaraki Dōji’s arm in one swift and seamless stroke. It was only later that Ibaraki Dōji successfully retrieved his severed arm. But I no longer go to the capital myself because Raikō and his men are troublesome.”

Shuten Dōji glared at Raikō with a penetrating gaze. “Nevertheless, what strange people you are! When I look at your eyes well, you are Raikō and with you is Tsuna who severed Ibaraki Dōji’s arm. And the men that accompany you appear to be Sadamitsu, Suetake, Kintoki and Hōshō. There is no mistake in my eyes. How hateful. Leave, priests! Demons, be alert, don’t get injured. We shall also leave here.” Shuten Dōji became enraged and the color of his face changed. Raikō quickly surveyed the situation and knew it would have been a grave affair if he failed to construct a viable explanation immediately. Distinguished in both the literary and martial arts, Raikō’s first instinct was to remain calm in the wake of Shuten Dōji’s challenge. Raikō erupted into fits of laughter. “What compli-

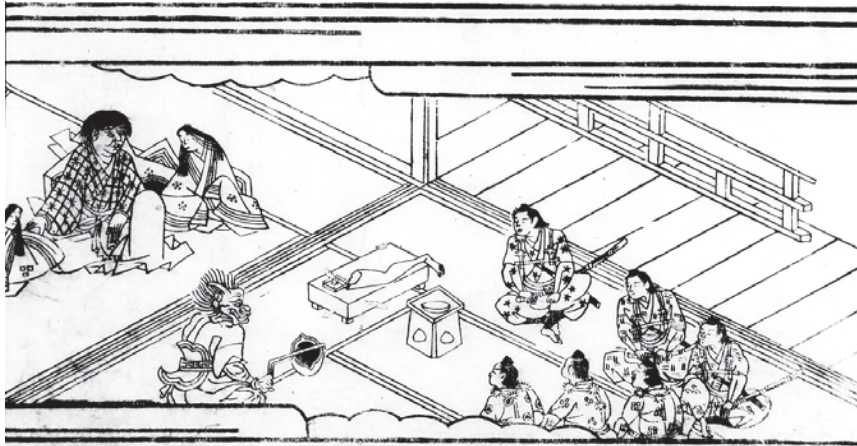


FIGURE 6: Shuten Dōji entertains Raikō and his vassals with human flesh.

ments you give me! We, mountain priests, resemble the most powerful warriors in Japan? I have never heard of Raikō or Suetake, let alone seen them. Listening to your story, I understand that they are atrocious. How awful, how wretched!

It is disgusting that we even resemble such creatures. It is our custom that in our training we make our lodging in a mountain pass where sometimes we give our lives to tigers and wolves to save the lives of both sentient and non-sentient beings. Shakyamuni,<sup>36</sup> whose name was Shiufū in his previous life, set out to undertake an ascetic life. One day while making his way through a mountain pass, he heard the voice of an unidentified being call out in verse from somewhere deep in the valley, "All things are transient."<sup>36</sup> Shiufū then descended into the valley only to discover a frightening-looking demon with eight heads and nine legs. Shiufū approached the demon and asked, "Please teach me the rest of the verse." The demon replied, "It would be easy to tell you but I am overwhelmed with hunger. I might be persuaded to recite it for you, if I could sate my hunger with human flesh." Hearing this, Shiufū stated, "That is extremely easy. If you can recite the rest of the verse, I shall be your food."<sup>38</sup> The demon was delighted to hear Shiufū's offer and proceeded to recite the rest of the verse: "Transition is the law of birth and extinction, all things alive are destined to expire, detach yourself from the transient world and you will attain the joy of Nirvana."<sup>39</sup> After receiving the verse, Shiufū thanked the demon. No sooner had Shiufū entered the demon's mouth than the demon transformed into Vairocana<sup>40</sup> and Shiufū became Shakyamuni.<sup>41</sup> On another occasion, Buddha saved the life of a pigeon by cutting off from his own thigh a piece of flesh.<sup>42</sup> The mountain priests here practice the same principles. So please make an incantation and take our lives. Our lives mean nothing to us."

Deceived by Raikō's story, Shuten Dōji's hospitable demeanor gradually restored. "Hearing your stories, I am very grateful. Surely those rogues won't dare come here, but as they are always in mind, it is true to my nature to be on guard, even when I'm intoxicated." He continued, "Please consider it simply my idle complaint under the influence of your sake. My face is red because I'm drunk. Don't think of me as a demon. To me, your appearance looks frightening at a glance, but once one gets used to it, a mountain priest looks quite cute." Singing, dancing, and drinking, he grew increasingly more at ease with Raikō and his men. As the sake was a divine elixir, its poison saturated Shuten Dōji's body, clouding his mind and further disheveling his appearance. Overcome with drunkenness, Shuten Dōji commanded his demonic minions, "Attention all demons present, drink a cup of this most rare sake before our guests and entertain them. Dance!" The demons complied with the wishes of their master, and as they were about to rise to dance, Raikō offered to fill their cups with the special sake, "First, let me pour some sake for you," and he disseminated the sake to all the demons around him. The sake infused the bodies of the demons quickly, rendering them all disoriented. Amidst this drunken delirium, the demon named Ishikuma Dōji rose to sing out, "From the capital what kind of people lost their way to become condiments of sake. How interesting," for a couple of times. With



careful attention, Ishikuma Dōji’s song is understood to suggest that the demons should make condiments and sake out of the mountain priests.

Soon, Raikō stood to serve up more of the intoxicating sake to Shuten Dōji. Making certain Shuten Dōji received the cup, Tsuna rose to dance, singing: “After a passage of time, spring came to the demon’s cavern. Wind invites the flowers to fall. How interesting,” for a couple of times. This song was foreshadowing how the priests would cut down the demons like the strewn petals of a flower cut down by a storm. But the demons did not catch on to the song’s hidden message. Rejoicing in drink and entertainment, the demons continued sinking deeper into their drunken stupors. Shuten Dōji then rose, commanding his demon servants, “Entertain these guest priests well! In my place, I will leave these two princesses. Priests, please rest here for a while. I will see you tomorrow,” and with

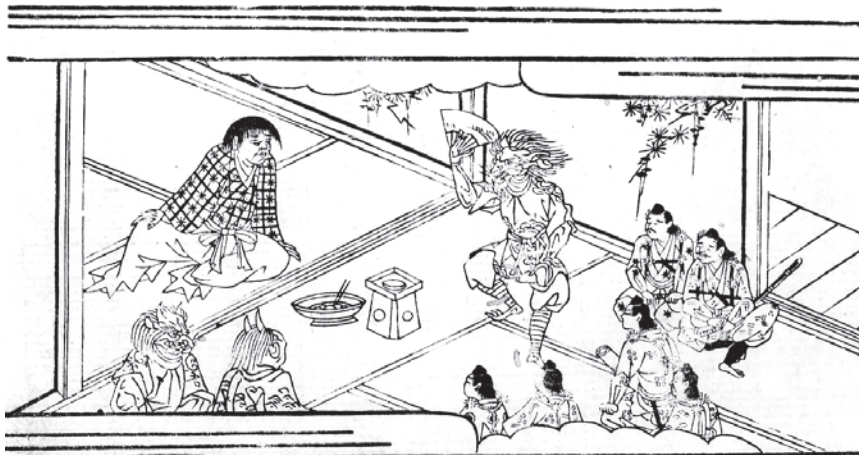


FIGURE 7: Commanded by Shuten Dōji, Ishikuma Dōji rises to sing and dance.

that, Shuten Dōji retired to his bedchamber. After seeing Shuten Dōji leave, the remaining demons lay down in disarray, overcome in drunken slumber.

Raikō beckoned the two princesses, asking them, “In the capital, whose daughters are you?” One of the two maidens responded, crying: “I am the only daughter of the Middle Counselor Ikeda Kunitaka. Recently I was abducted here and I can see neither my dear parents nor my nurses. Please pity me for I am in such a miserable state.” “And you, Lady?” Raikō asked of the other princess. “I am the younger daughter of Yoshida, a state councilor. How hateful that I am still alive,” and both princesses cried with such emotion that it appeared both might faint. “Indeed, your sadness is reasonable,” Raikō said, “However, I shall conquer the demons tonight, accompany you on your return to the capital and

re-unite you with your dear parents. So, please, show us the way to Shuten Dōji's bedroom." Hearing this, "Is this a dream or reality?" the princesses inquired. "If this is true, we shall show you the way to the demon's bedroom." And the maidens led the way. Raikō was delighted and turned to his lieutenants ordering them, "Take up your arms" and the men moved into the shadows to don their arms. Then, Raikō advanced in his vermilion armor called *randen-gusari* with the hobnailed helmet given to him by the three deities and another helmet called Lion King of the same vermilion thread on top of the first helmet. He was carrying his splendid sword, Chisui,<sup>43</sup> and recited in mind, "Hail, Great Bodhisattva Hachiman." The rest of his band wore their armor and carried their swords, and led by the ladies, all proceeded in stealth. Passing through large rooms and crossing a stone bridge, they peered inside a huge room where they saw more demons lying in drunken stupors. Not one challenged the warriors by asking, "Who are you?" Walking over the bodies of the demons, the warriors came upon an iron room encased in a large room, the door, also iron, was bolted shut. It appeared very difficult for humans to gain entry. Peering through a crevice, the men could see lights held high in the four corners with iron bars and upside-down halberds against the wall. Inside, Shuten Dōji lay, looking quite different from the figure the warriors had seen earlier. He was now over twenty-feet tall,<sup>44</sup> his horns were now protruding through the spiked red bristles on his scalp, his beard had become wildly shaggy, and his eyebrows were overgrown. His limbs had become heavy and thick like those of a bear. He lay sprawled out, his arms and legs spread in all directions. [Unable to enter the demon's bedchamber, the warriors seemed hopeless.] At that moment, the three deities reappeared to help the warriors once more. "You have done well to have come this far. Now you can rest assured. We have chained the demon's limbs to pillars so that he will not move. Raikō, you cut off his head. The rest of you position yourselves to dismember him, it should not be difficult." Upon dispensing these instructions, the deities pushed open the iron door, then once again vanished into thin air. The warriors were moved to tears, knowing that the three deities had appeared to help them. As instructed, Raikō positioned himself at Shuten Dōji's side, smoothly unsheathing his Chisui in preparation for the final act. After praying three times, "Hail the Deities of the three shrines, please give me your helping hands," Raikō stood ready to slaughter Shuten Dōji with his Chisui, when the drunken demon opened his eyes widely, crying out, "How sad, you priests! You said you do not lie. There is nothing false in the words of demons." The bound Shuten Dōji tried in vain to escape from his chains. Then, as if tapping a colossal inner reservoir of strength, Shuten Dōji let out a final reverberating roar causing both heaven and earth to rumble in an unrelenting, thunderous quake.

With blows from the warriors' swords, Shuten Dōji's severed head hurled through the air. But the demon's life force took a few seconds to extinguish and

the flying cranium lunged directly at Raikō in one final effort to kill him. Were it not for the hobnailed helmet provided him by the deities, Raikō would have surely perished.

After dismembering Shuten Dōji, the six warriors headed toward the main courtyard. Once outside, they encountered several of Shuten Dōji’s demon guards. One demon in particular, Ibaraki Dōji, ferociously moved to attack the six men crying out, “I will let you know my power, enemies of my master!” Tsuna countered Ibaraki Dōji as he charged, “You should know my strength. You will have to pay for this!” For a while, the ensuing battle seemed to be yielding no victor because as they grappled, Ibaraki Dōji at times had the advantage while at other times, Tsuna was dominant. Tsuna’s power was said to be



FIGURE 8: Shuten Dōji’s severed head lunges at Raikō.

equivalent to that of three hundred men combined, but Ibaraki Dōji’s strength may have even been stronger for as time passed, he was able to wrestle Tsuna down to the ground. At that moment, Raikō intervened [entering the fray] and decapitated Ibaraki Dōji. Ishikuma Dōji, Kane Dōji, and about ten more demons guarding the gate, then engaged the warriors yelling, “Now that Dōji is gone, we have no place to call home. We will go down fighting!” The six warriors responded, “How praiseworthy of these demons. We shall now demonstrate our skill.” Summoning and employing every possible technique of military art they had long practiced, the warriors drove the demons to a position of no escape, before cutting them all down with their swords and mettle. After a brief respite from the killing, Raikō announced, “Now ladies, please come out quickly. You won’t have to worry now.” No sooner they heard his voice than the captive ladies ran from their confinement, one after another. The maidens cried, “Is this a dream or reality? Please help me, too.” In so saying, the captives all folded their hands

together in prayer. The sight of the maidens' grief would be indeed likened to that of the sinful criminals who were saved from Hell<sup>45</sup> by the Bodhisattva Jizō<sup>46</sup> with his staff<sup>47</sup> and recitation of "onkaakamisensaisowaka."<sup>48</sup>

Then, led by the ladies, the six warriors pressed deeper into the interior of the complex to find a magnificent palace with rows of roofs and bejeweled screens—the quarters were adorned to represent the four seasons. It was beyond imagination, beyond description. Yet, turning their eyes to the other side, the scene—skeletons and bodies of the dead and dying, and human flesh pickled with vinegar—was too miserable to witness. Amidst the carnage, a young lady of seventeen or eighteen years of age, half-dead and missing an arm and half-a-leg below the thigh shed tears of grief. Raikō asked the princesses, "Whose princess is she in the capital?" The ladies replied, "Yes, that is the daughter of the Middle Counselor, Horikawa," and they ran to her. "How pitiful, princess. The priests eliminated all the demons and are going to take us back to the capital. But how can we return leaving you behind. How sad. Even in this horrible hell, we feel reluctant to go because of you," the ladies stroked her hair soothingly. "If you have something on your mind, whatever it is, please tell us. When

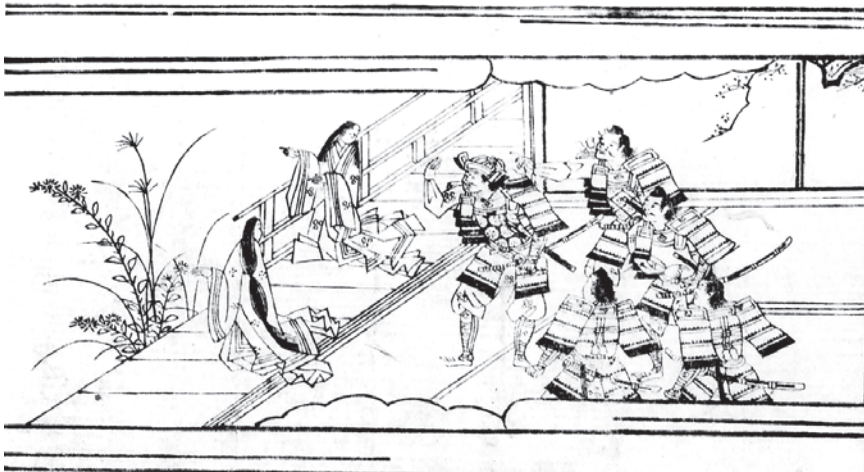


FIGURE 9: Led by the ladies, the six warriors went deeper into the interior of the Palace.

we return to the capital, we shall relay your message to your father and mother, princess." Hearing this, Horikawa's daughter sobbed bitterly, "How envious I am. My condition—short-lived, like a dew drop—is so miserable, yet I still linger in this world. I am so ashamed. When you return to the capital and my parents learn about me, it makes me sad to think that they will lament all the worse for me. Though a keepsake may distress my father and mother, please cut a lock of my hair and give it to them in my remembrance. And this robe, please tell my mother that I was wearing it up until the end. Wrap the hair in this robe and

please give them to my mother. Make sure, would you please, to ask her to pray for me in the afterlife. The priests over there, please put a quick end to my life before you return." Hearing her, Raikō said, "Indeed it is reasonable for you to ask. However, when I return to the capital, I shall report to your parents appropriately and will send people back for you. But in the meantime, I bid farewell to you." Raikō and his troupe of warriors and liberated captives left the repugnant grotto. They hurried through the mountains and valleys and before long they arrived at the country village of Shimomura at the foot of Mt. Ōe.

Upon entering the village, Raikō commanded, "Now, villagers, send a swift horse to the capital to announce our return and send the ladies back to the capital. What do you think?" Raikō's request was put into motion immediately. The governor of Tanba province, also known as the Minister of Ōmiya, heard the auspicious news and quickly brought food and wine to Raikō and his men, while the freed captives were safely en route back to the capital, via horse and palanquin.

In the capital, the anticipation of Raikō's arrival induced a commotion from the jubilant inhabitants. Among those waiting in the crowd were the Middle Counselor Ikeda and his wife, who came out in person to greet their daughter. Finding Raikō, Kunitaka beckoned, "Hey, here!" The princess caught glimpse of this brief exchange and cried out, "Mother!" Hearing the voice of her daughter, the mother ran to her and embraced her in tears. Kunitaka said, "We are so happy that we could again see our daughter, who was separated from us," and they hurried home. Raikō proceeded on to the palace for an audience with the emperor. The emperor was so impressed with the warrior's report that he bestowed on Raikō and his men tremendous rewards. From that day forward,



FIGURE 10: The arrival of the princesses in the capital.

the land remained safe and the emperor's reign remained peaceful. Raikō's feat and reputation as an invaluable warrior impressed all, from the emperor down to the commoner.

## NOTES

1. Emperor Jinmu. The first emperor of Japan who is, according to the ancient literatures, purported to have been enthroned in 660 BCE.
2. The sixtieth emperor, Daigo, reigned during the Engi era (901–923).
3. The reigns of the ancient Chinese emperors Yao and Shun were regarded by the Chinese as ideal.
4. The legend does not specify the time frame/historical context. However, the appearance of well-known characters in the story suggests the late tenth or early eleventh century.
5. Present-day Kyoto.
6. *Sanjū-ni sō no katachi o uke* 三十二相のかたちをうけ. These are the thirty-two attributes of Buddha that are used to judge beautiful women.
7. Kunitaka's reaction is not detailed, other than to confirm it was indescribable.
8. In some versions the diviner is Seimei 清明. Abe no Seimei 安倍晴明 (?–1005?) was a famed specialist of *onmyō-dō* (Way of yin-yang) during the middle of the Heian period.
9. According to the custom of the time, it was not considered suitable that a person of a higher social rank would give an immediate audience to a person of lower rank, in this case, the diviner.
10. Kūkai 空海 (774–835). The founder of the Shingon 真言 sect of Buddhism. He founded Kongōbu-ji 金剛峰寺 on Mt. Kōya 高野 in present-day Wakayama prefecture.
11. Usui Sadamitsu 碓井貞光 (954–1021). A warrior of the mid-Heian period (794–1185), and one of the *shitennō* (the four heavenly guardians/ lieutenants) of Minamoto no Raikō.
12. Urabe Suetake 卜部季武 (?–1022). A warrior of the mid-Heian period and one of the *shitennō* of Minamoto no Raikō.
13. Watanabe Tsuna 渡辺綱 (953–1025). A warrior of the mid-Heian period and one of the *shitennō* of Minamoto no Raikō. According to the *Heike monogatari*, Watanabe no Tsuna encountered a beautiful woman of about twenty-years of age at Modori Bridge on Kyoto's First Avenue. Her (or probably his) real identity turned out to be an *oni*. Tsuna managed to cut off one of the *oni*'s arms causing it to fly off leaving his severed arm behind. (See ASAHARA, HARUTA, MATSUO 1990, 518–22). This *oni* appears as Ibaraki Dōji in the story of “Shuten Dōji.”
14. Sakata Kintoki 坂田公時 (ca. tenth century). A warrior of the mid-Heian period and one of the *shitennō* of Minamoto no Raikō. As a child his name was Kintarō. According to legends from the early modern period, his mother was a *yamauba* (mountain ogre) and he was raised in the mountains.
15. Fujiwara Yasumasa 藤原保昌 (957–1036). A warrior who was good at both literary and martial arts. He became the governor of several provinces. His wife was Izumi Shikibu, a famous poetess of the Heian period.
16. Iwashimizu Hachimangū 石清水八幡宮. Located in present-day Kyoto, the god of battle and/or the deity for the Minamoto family was worshipped at this shrine by samurai warriors.
17. Sumiyoshi Myōjin 住吉明神, the god of navigation as well as the god of battle.
18. Kumano Gongen 熊野権現, one of the strongholds of mountain asceticism (*shugendō* 修験道).

19. The origins of the names of the battle equipment are not known. However, other literature, such as the *Taiheiki* 太平記 (Record of Great Pacification), indicates that the name Cutting Demon was given to the sword for it had been used to cut an *oni*'s arm in times past.
20. Flint is used to spark a fire; oilpaper is used as a waterproof cover.
21. A sword with a blade primarily designed to cut as it strikes as opposed to a blade chiefly intended to pierce or puncture.
22. Tenmahajun 天魔波旬. A force bent on undermining the Buddhist Way and its universal wisdom.
23. Present-day Osaka, near Sumiyoshi.
24. Present-day Wakayama prefecture, where Kumano Gongen is located. See note 18.
25. Southeast area of present-day Kyoto.
26. This is a play on the words *jinben kidoku* 神変奇特, which mean “unfathomable change.”
27. Even though the deities suggested that there would be a maiden, the query is reasonable because a lone maiden high on Mt. Ōe would be highly unusual.
28. En no Gyōja was born on Mt. Katsuragi in present-day Nara prefecture. He was a devotee Buddhist and a skilled magician. During the reign of Emperor Mommu (697–707) he was exiled to Izu, present-day Shizuoka prefecture, for the crime of misguiding the public with magic. He was later pardoned. He is considered to be the father of mountain asceticism.
29. Mt. Haguro of Dewa province, present-day Yamagata prefecture, is renowned as a center for mountain asceticism.
30. A main training field of mountain asceticism.
31. Present-day Kyoto, Hyōgo prefecture, Tottori prefecture, and Shimane prefecture all face the Japan Sea.
32. Present-day Niigata prefecture.
33. Saichō (d. 822). The founder of Tendai sect of Buddhism. He founded Enryakuji on Mt. Hiei in present-day Kyoto.
34. In Book 20 of *Shin kokin wakashū* 新古今和歌集, an ancient imperial anthology (ca. 905), Dengyō's poem is recorded as *Anokutara sanmiyaku sanbodai no hotoketachi waga tatsu soma ni myōga arase tamae* 阿耨多羅三藐三菩提の仏たちわが立つ袖に冥加あらせたまへ (The omniscient Buddhas, please bless this mountain, and the temple I am about to build.)
35. See note 10.
36. Gotama Buddha (ca. 566 BCE–485 BCE). The founder of Buddhism. He was born to a noble family of the ruling class in Lumbini, present-day Nepal. He abandoned material life in pursuit of spiritual tranquility. When he was awakened to the truth about life, he became the Buddha, the enlightened one, and shared his teaching with others.
37. *Shogyō mujō* 諸行無常.
38. These are stories of Buddha's previous lives. They are recorded in such collections of prose narrative as *Sanpō e* 三宝絵 (ca. tenth century) and *Hōbutsu shū* 宝物集 (ca. thirteenth century).
39. *Zeshō meppō* 是生滅法, *shōmetsu metsui* 生滅滅已, *jakumetsu iraku* 寂滅為樂. This verse appears in the *Nirvana sūtra* (*Nehankyō* 涅槃經).
40. A Buddha who sheds light all over the universe. In esoteric Buddhism, Vairocana is most revered.
41. See note 36.
42. When Shakyamuni was incarnated as King Sivi, Visvakarman, disguised as a pigeon,

flew under his armpit. Taishakuten 帝釈天 (Sakra), trying to measure the wisdom of Shakyamuni, changed himself into a hawk and demanded the king to give him the pigeon. In order to save the life of the pigeon, the king cut off his flesh from his thigh, measured it out on a scale to weigh the same as the pigeon, and gave it to the hawk.

43. The origin of the name of this sword is unknown.

44. Previously Shuten Dōji was described as being ten feet high.

45. Avīci hell, *mugen jigoku* 無間地獄. The worst hell in which beings suffer incessantly.

46. Bodhisattva Kṣitigarbha. A bodhisattva who vowed to deliver all people from this world of suffering. He enters hell to save the sinful criminals. His image is like that of a monk.

47. Shakujō 錫杖. One of the eighteen possessions of a monk.

48. This is probably an incantation.

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