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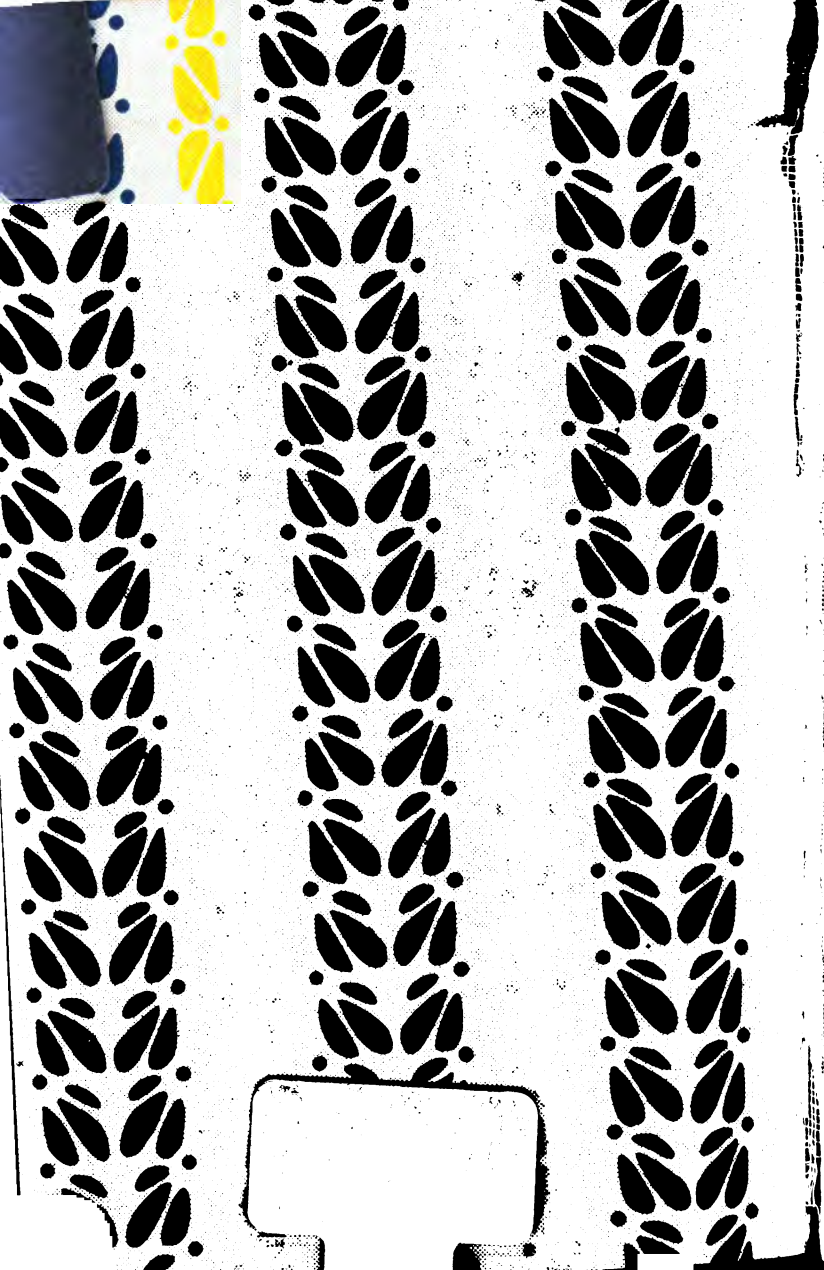
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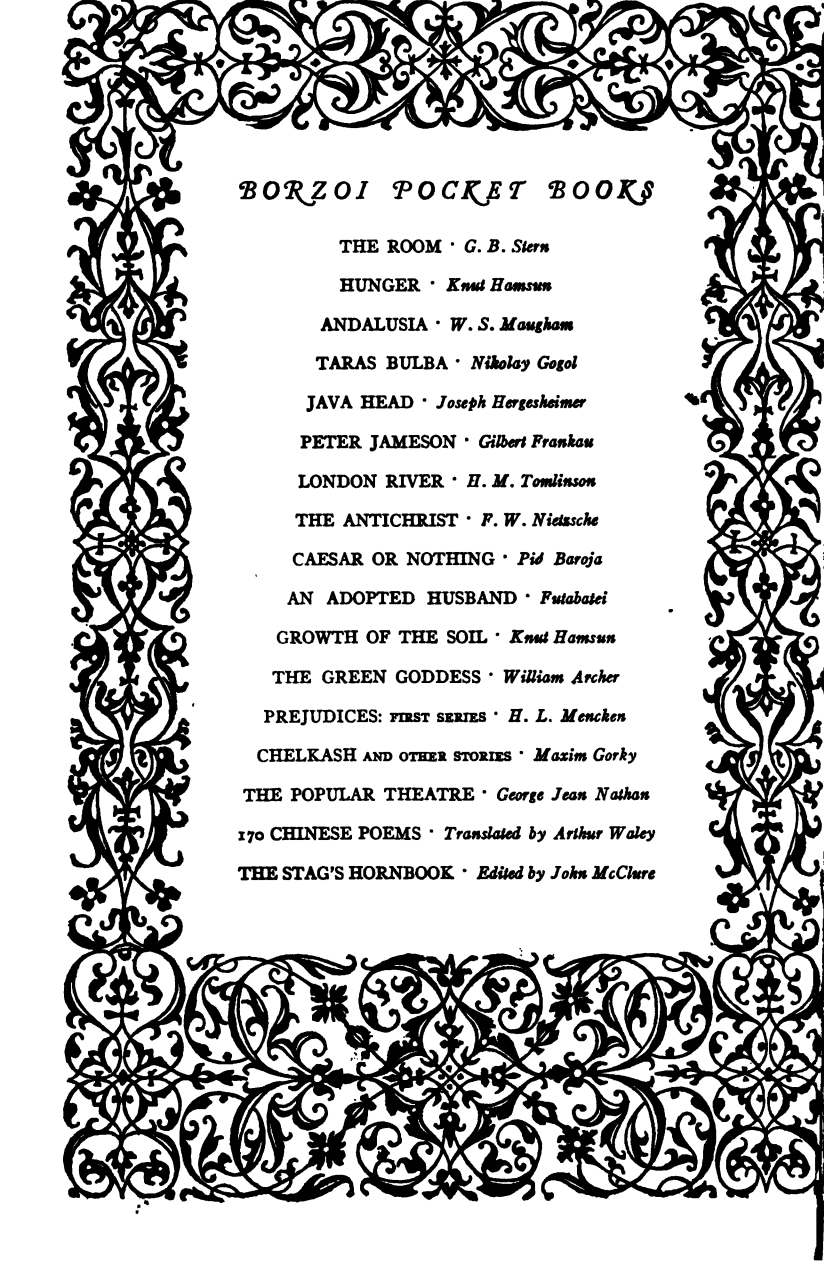
Reginald Kahn

AN ADOPTED HUSBAND

[SONO OMOKAGE]

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AN ADOPTED
HUSBAND

[SONO OMOKAGE]

Translated from the Japanese of

FUTABATEI

*by Buhachiro Mitsui and
Gregg M. Sinclair*

HASEGAWA,
TATSUNOSUKE



New York

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INTRODUCTION

In 1854, when through Commodore Perry's treaty with the Shogun, America induced Japan to forsake her policy of national seclusion, the novels of that country consisted mainly of a few court romances, some historical stories filled with impossible and improbable incidents, and some books of humour and satire. Mr. Aston, in his *History of Japanese Literature*, describes the court romance, *Genji Monogatari*,—written by a woman in the tenth or eleventh century—as “realistic.” He characterizes *Hak-kenden*, the masterpiece of Bakin (the foremost novelist of old Japan), as “full of physical and moral impossibilities, and often pedantic and wearisome.” And of Ikku's *Hizakurige*,—which has been compared to the inimitable *Pickwick Papers*—he writes, “It is hopeless by translation to give any idea of the copious flow of rollicking humour which pervades every page of this really wonderful book. It is a picture of real life, for every detail of which Ikku has drawn on his own observation.” These illustrations are suggested as representative only of the best literature—exclusive of dramatic, poetic and philosophical writings—of the pre-modern period. And as the sun was setting on the Shogunate government, the writers of the Bakin “school” were the most important. Bakin himself was a voluminous writer, an inventor of marvellous plots, a moralist of a certain static kind; and he unquestionably gave standing to the novel. However, as serious

literature his work is distinct from the novels of today, in Japan and in other countries, by the calm realistic manner in which he introduced the supernatural, and the impossible feats which he sometimes demanded of his characters. Bakin's followers were fairly proficient as artificers of the extravagant and the fantastic, but they lacked the genius and the technique to create enduring literature.

The collapse of the Shogunate government and the Restoration in 1867-8, followed by the arrival of Europeans and Americans in the character of technical advisers to the young government, and as teachers and missionaries, brought about great changes in the life of the people. Japan was started on her inexhaustible quest for Western knowledge and Western efficiency. The new spirit of the awakened people, and their struggles with the conservatives of the day, has been admirably recorded by Stevenson in his article on Yoshida.¹ Japan was eager to learn Occidental methods in education, in business, in religion, in the military. Newspapers were established; private schools and colleges were founded; the new leaders in a multitude of ways tried to prepare the people for a changed society. In contrast to her previous myopia, Japan now had her eyes on the widest horizon. Europe and America succeeded to the position of importance that China formerly had occupied.

It is to be expected that Japan in her cravings for outside knowledge would take advantage of the writings of the European and American masters. The period of the eighties was one of translation and transition for Japanese literature. Japan became acquainted with Rousseau, Montesquieu, Darwin, Mill, Smiles; and in the late eighties and nineties was introduced to Hugo, Longfellow, Campbell,

¹ Robert Louis Stevenson: *Familiar Studies of Men and Books*.

Dostoievsky, Turgeniev, de Maupassant, and many others. The impact of these minds upon the Japanese was most important, for, as Dr. Miyagi Setsurei writes in an article on *Translation* in *Chuo Koron*, "Taking a somewhat broader view of the subject it is true to say that we owe much of the rapid progress which has marked the Meiji era to the fact that it has been an age of translations. If we compare it with the 700 years of feudal rule and stagnancy that preceded it, we see what the importation of foreign ideas has meant to us as a nation."¹

And Prof. Yaichi Haga is more specific in his article on the "*Literature of the Meiji Era*": "Takusuke Nakae, who had been in France, translated Rousseau's *Contrat Social* under the title of *Manyaku-Rori*, and its reception was so great that the Imperial Rescript issued in 1881, promising the inauguration of constitutional administration within ten years was said to be due to the idea of popular rights widely diffused through that book."²

And this was a period of transition, too; transition from the Bakin grotesques to the beginnings of present-day naturalism. Dr. Tsubouchi struck the first blow for the new form in his *Essence of Novel-writing*, published in 1886. He urged novelists to write about real people, to reveal their minds and characters, and to forsake the fantastic method of old. The history of the struggle is an interesting one, but it is too long to be given in detail here. Dr. Tsubouchi himself has indicated the first advance in his admirable preface to the Japanese edition of this translation. ". . . The writer who contributed most to the correction of this erroneous tendency in Japanese literature

¹ A transcript of this article may be found in *The Japan Weekly Mail*, June 12, 1909.

² Okuma: *Fifty Years of New Japan*.

was the author of *Sono Omokage* [translated as *An Adopted Husband*].

"True, before Futabatei, some writers had argued for the reform of literature and some had even attempted the production of new works based on new ideals; yet not one of them had been able to bring about such a transformation. At this juncture Futabatei appeared. The publication of his first work, *Ukikumo*, gave a new turn to the general taste for reading. His next productions, translations of Turgeniev and some other Russian masters, the technique of which was entirely new in his day, encouraged this new tendency in Japanese literature. His last works, *Sono Omokage* and *Heibon*—his masterpieces—will remain as testaments to his short but fruitful life."

Prof. Soma, of the Department of Literature, Waseda University, confirms this high praise. "This principle [Dr. Tsubouchi's] was very clearly shown in Futabatei's *Ukikumo*. He avoided creating characters from fancy, but he drew from living models . . . out of practical life. He showed clearly . . . that we must look beneath the surface . . . that we must look at life psychologically in order to understand it. . . . Indeed, *Ukikumo* is an earnest study of life itself, and a serious work in which the author tried to catch the inner life of human beings."¹

The life of Tatsunosuke Hasegawa, who assumed the pseudonym Futabatei Shimei, resembles in many respects the progress of Japan during the Meiji era [1868–1912]. He was born but a year or so before Meiji Tenno was established on the throne, and he died three years before the great Mikado was laid to rest at Momoyama. The

¹ Prof. Gyofu Soma: *The New Literature of Japan*. Published in Japanese, May, 1914.

author's boyhood, the great period of mental expansion, may be likened to Japan in those early years when she sought wisdom and guidance from all the world. Hasegawa, too, was not the man to be satisfied with the past; he demanded progress in literature as his country demanded the utilization of new methods and inventions. And while Japan was bringing in these improvements, Hasegawa purchased by hard work the gems of Russian literature and gave them to the people. He became a factor in the literature of his country as Japan became a factor in world affairs. It is a far cry from the old isolated feudal Japan of the Tokugawa Shogunate to the position of world influence and power Japan has held since the Russo-Japanese war; and yet the difference is not more pronounced than the change in native literature from the fantastic writings of Bakin and his successors to the productions of the writers of the later Meiji era. And this transformation of literary outlook and technique may be attributed in no small degree to Futabatei.

Prof. Paul S. Reinsch summed up the literary tendency of Japan a few years ago, as follows: "The school which is at the present time clearly in the ascendant is that known as naturalism. It draws its inspiration chiefly from Russian and French writers. Kunikida introduced through translations the novels of Turgeniev, Dostoievski and Gorki into Japan; Flaubert and Maupassant are also prominent among the models of this school. Perhaps the most noted author of this group is Hasegawa [Futabatei], who died in 1909. He also translated Russian books, but is of greater importance through the manner in which he introduced the colloquial *gembum itchi* into literature.

"It is natural that these writers should have attempted to

elevate the colloquial dialect to literary uses, but Hasegawa first showed the way in which this could be done in an effective and dignified manner.”¹

Futabatei never possessed that complacent mental attitude which sometimes characterizes the successful man; his great hopes expressed themselves in a certain restlessness, a feeling of wonder whether after all there was not something profoundly deeper in life than literature. He sometimes questioned the wisdom of a man trying to link the pursuit of literature with the facts of life. As Prof. Soma remarks, “There never was a man who struggled so hard between flesh and spirit, and also between the real and the ideal.” Futabatei’s dissatisfaction with the literature of his own country and with the work he had done, together with his yearning for more light, caused him to take up the study of the Russian language. And, too, his pseudonym, Futabatei Shimei, indicates in a way his profound mental struggle. The story is told that his father had occasion to reprimand him in his boyhood, probably because of the boy’s indolence or reticence. “Kutabate shimaē,” were the words the father used, and may be translated, “You may as well perish,” or “You might as well be dead.” Hasegawa is said to have assumed the pen-name, Futabatei Shimei, because of its similarity in sound to the remark of his father.

Futabatei’s translations of Turgenev’s writings made him widely known in Japan; and they introduced him to a technique quite unlike the technique of native novels. There can be no doubt of the fact that because of his work as a translator he improved as a novelist. *Sono Omokage* is the work of his mature years, when his observations were keen-

¹ Paul S. Reinsch: *Intellectual and Political Currents in the Far East*, pp. 323-4.

est, and his character delineations most profound. As Prof. Soma writes, "After he wrote *Ukikumo* and gave a new impulse to Meiji literature, he became important as a translator. At this time the tendency toward Naturalism was rising, and he wrote his long novel, *Sono Omokage*, and showed in it his ripened skilfulness. . . . His method was to study his characters intimately, in every phase of their beings; then he would draw back to get a proper perspective. In this, no younger writer can be compared to him."

Prof. Soma quotes the criticism of *Sono Omokage* made by Prof. Shimomura, ". . . Briefly, the chief characteristic of this work is the harmonious combination of the author's warm attitude toward life and his cold analysis of character."

An Adopted Husband deals with an institution—the family—which is not very well understood by many Occidentals, and which is regarded by others as anachronistic in the present progress of Japanese society. It tells the story of a modern family, the Ono family. Mr. Reizo Ono has the misfortune not to be possessed of a son; his daughter, therefore, cannot be given away in marriage, because then the family would die out; instead, a husband must be adopted for her. The young man's school and University expenses will be defrayed; he will take the name, Ono; and eventually he will marry the daughter. This is a common practice in Japan, although the experiences of many such adopted husbands have given rise to the aphorism, "Do not become an *irimuko* [adopted husband] if you have one measure of rice."

Our story commences several years after the adoption and marriage of the young student. The reader is not troubled by a long preamble, but is introduced immediately

to the five main characters: Tetsuya, the adopted husband; Toki-ko, his extravagant and unsympathetic wife; Taki-ko, the old mother-in-law; Sayo-ko, the illegitimate daughter of Reizo Ono; and Hamura, the rising young business man and old friend of the family. Futabatei manages to give us a glimpse of modern life in Japan through his delineation of the character of each of these people. We see them affected by the play of external forces on internal emotions; we view their joys, sorrows, passions, ambitions; we witness the clash of ideas of materialism and ideals of altruism. And we feel as we conclude our reading that we have seen them not in their dress-clothes in their beautiful gardens or enjoying the fragrance of the cherry tree, but in their everyday garments—sleeves rolled up—tackling hard life; we have a more accurate knowledge of their mental processes; we recognize more clearly the problems they must solve, problems with roots bound up in the past; and we are filled with greater sympathy for these people who have travelled so great a distance in so short a time.

G. M. S.

AN ADOPTED HUSBAND

[SONO OMOKAGE]

CHAPTER I

ONE evening in late autumn, when the sun had already set and the afterglow crimsoned the western sky, two men in foreign clothes walked slowly up the incline of Kudan. One of them was slender, the other stout; and they were opposites in many other ways. The shabbiness of the slender man showed clearly in the smeary pepper-and-salt sack-coat, and the trousers threadbare at the knees, and especially in his worn-out broad-brimmed hat that had once been black, but which one now would hardly dare to wear in the sunlight. His gold-rimmed spectacles alone seemed to belie his humble appearance. His face was long; cheeks hollow; and moustache disproportionately thin compared with his thick eyebrows. He appeared seedy and poverty-stricken, and, at first glance, might have been taken for a scholar out of employment. Under his arm he carried a bulging, soiled and greasy leather portfolio. The stout man had thin eyebrows and shifty eyes; and his nose and mouth were unusually close together; his features seemed to be one on top of another, thus giving him a look of vulgarity. To counterbalance these shortcomings, his clothes were laboriously neat. He wore a gay sack-coat of a fashionable pattern, and a gold chain shone brilliantly across his waistcoat.

In short, from the medium-sized felt hat to the tan lace-shoes, everything he had on was vulgarly new. He carried a thin, delicately designed bamboo cane, probably made of *kanchiku*.¹

On closer examination, the slender one might have been identified as that man who, every autumn in the same suit and carrying the same portfolio, walked, with eyes downcast, through the red brick gateway of a certain private university in Kanda at about eight o'clock in the morning. He was Mr. Tetsuya Ono, Professor of Economics and Finance there, chief editor of the lecture books of the extension department, and also a member of the staff of the school club. He was now a rather antiquated Bachelor of Laws of thirty-four or -five, as he had been graduated from the Imperial University seven or eight years before at the age of twenty-seven. According to the gossip of his pupils, though his lectures were dry and invited yawns, his reasoning was clear-cut and left no point in doubt. Yet the students did not like him, because he graded them so severely.

The stout gentleman was Mr. Kōzaburo Hamura, clerk of a certain company. He might often have been seen playing billiards in a down-stairs room of a certain club in Nihombashi. A few years previously he had gone on a tour of inspection through Europe and America with the president of his company, and

¹ A variety of bamboo.

had ever since flaunted his familiarity with Europe, speaking of London and Paris day and night, so that he was nicknamed "Guide" behind his back. He was a graduate of the Higher Commercial School, but he had come from the same town as Tetsuya and, though younger by a year or more, had been his chum till he finished the Middle School.

They silently climbed to the top of the slope and entered the former race-course attached to the premises of Yasukuni Shrine, before Hamura, knocking the ashes from his half-smoked cigar, said:

"Then the proposition is hopeless?"

"Well—not exactly hopeless, but—" Tetsuya replied rather falteringly.

"But Sayo-san depends on you, doesn't she? She depends on you, and if you object, there is no hope for it."

"Oh, I have no particular objection, but—"

"This is indeed surprising. I thought you would snatch at the proposal—indeed surprising."

"I say I have no objection."

"Then, why do you hesitate so? I can't understand you at all. It's one thing to serve as a maid; it's quite another thing to be a governess, who would be treated as a guest everywhere, you understand, who would have the standing of a teacher. There's no cause for being ashamed, is there, whoever may hear of it? What do you object to?"

"I do not object to that—"

"Then, what is your objection?" the other demanded.

"But that home, Mr. Shibuya's," Tetsuya said hesitatingly, "is, according to rumour, rather—well, rather immoral, isn't it?" He uttered this with a decided effort and then stole a look at his companion.

Hamura answered indifferently, "Well, of course, an able, self-made man like him can't be expected to be perfect morally. What difference can that make?"

"And he—well—often has trouble with his housemaids and must pay them more than their wages when they leave. Isn't that so?"

"Hum, hum," Hamura laughed through his nose. "I see. You're afraid of that, eh? Then I won't urge you to consent. Sayo-san is so *très charmante*" (pronouncing the words with an affected nasal twang) "and the other is imprudent with women. So, in the course of a long time, there's no knowing what the old man will dare to do. I can't guarantee anything."

"No, such a thing—I don't—"

"But," said the other, without allowing his companion to finish, "you're a very queer man, I see. You fear a thing like that and yet expect to make a success in business. He, he! Take my advice; you'd better be satisfied with teaching for the rest of your life and be good-natured."

"Why?"

“Why? You wish to succeed without doing anything dishonourable, don’t you?”

“I do not necessarily wish that, but then I do not wish to succeed by disgracing any member of my family.”

“So you wish to succeed cleanly. You wish to succeed and you hate to forsake people; such a vacillating—” He broke off abruptly from these disparaging remarks.

“Then you mean one cannot succeed in business unless he abandons humanity, do you?”

“Of course. A man of ordinary endowments must, of course. However, you were born superior, weren’t you?”

Tetsuya smiled bitterly. “That I myself do not know, but your ideas seem pretty extreme.”

“How can you succeed without extreme ideas? What can you do by vacillating?”

“Well, that may be true, yet—”

“Therefore, you see,” taking advantage of the other’s indecision, “if you wish to grab the coin,” (he had a way of using such coarse expressions occasionally) “you see, if you wish to grab the coin, you must forsake humanity resolutely and decisively.” He spoke this loudly and then abruptly lowered his voice. “So make up your mind first, and in order that your decision may not become known, pick up the ‘humanity’ you forsook and wear it as a mask.

Of course, you mustn't wear it all the time; take it off from time to time as occasion and convenience suit you. But this requires tact and is too difficult for a scholar to practise."

The speaker was foolishly proud.

Tetsuya only nodded silently. Whether he admired the opinion or merely listened to it, was uncertain. Hamura in his enthusiasm did not care.

"Understand?" He continued more zealously. "The secret of making money is, first, to forsake humanity; and second, to forsake ideals and all such nonsense. If one for ever has ideals to live up to, as you have, he's got no chance of making money. He must resolutely abandon his ideals and become personified selfishness, or he has no chance of succeeding."

"Isn't that also a kind of ideal?"

"Ho, ho! Be careful. If you think I'm speaking of an ideal, you must have a pretty perverted mind. I'm talking facts. Yes, these are facts. I beg your pardon, I'm a man of action. I've got no time for such curios as ideals or anything of that sort." The speaker seemed to be in very high spirits. "Though you talk that way, just think about it for a moment. What are your ideals? Aren't they taken from dusty books?—Oh, you don't need to look so surprised. It's true. Ideals are gleaned from old books. As you're influenced by such nonsense and are dreaming

with your eyes open all the time, you're practically dead, I'm sorry to say. Ideals kill men alive. Nothing in this world is half so depressing as an ideal. Men who wish to do real work are hopeless if they're so dead. Give up your ideals now. Ah, I say it for your good. Give them up."

"I understand."

"No, you don't understand. You're not greedy enough. What can you do without being greedy? What do you think greed is? Greed, you see, is an extract obtained by distilling men. So in greed lies assuredly the best part of man. It's different from what you get from old books. Now, when this spirit of greed permeates a man, he'll leave no weak point in his armour—ah, that's wonderful! A man influenced by old books when enthusiastic becomes mad, or else is as useless as a senile man. Whereas a person permeated by greed, the essence of man, is astute and active, and when he gets into society, will soon succeed, because he's the fittest to survive. Those who stick to ideals and principles and such things, lack versatility and can't do valuable work. I'm sorry to say it, but, well—somehow you belong to the good-for-nothing class."

"I see."

"For instance, in this matter, if I were you, not being hampered by any sticky ideals, or humanitarian desires, or such retarding agents, I'd gladly send

Sayo-san. Yes, what else could I do? Though you're anxious lest she should be tempted by the old man—"

"I do not fear that."

"Well—just suppose Sayo-san should be tempted and should consent, why, so much the better, for his present wife is seriously ill with consumption, and after her death, Sayo-san will take her place, no doubt. A sister of a poor Bachelor of Laws to be Madame Shibuya at one bound! Even Sayo-san herself won't say no to this."

"I do not care about that," responded Tetsuya, rather irritated. "She is not fitted for a gay home, so I am not sure that she will agree to go. Still—anyhow, I will go home first and find out what she wishes to do."

"If you don't find her willing, do you intend to drop the matter?"

"Well—" he hesitated.

"I'm sorry you're—"

"All right. I will endeavour to persuade and send her."

"That's it. It would be folly not to. In fact, as she's a woman, you can persuade her into doing anything."

"Yes."

"And this won't make your sister unhappy, you understand."

“No.”

“As for you, too, do your best to stop teaching.
Wash your hands of it as soon as you can.”

“Yes—then I will say good-bye here.”

“Why, I thought you were coming to my house—”

CHAPTER II

TETSUYA left Hamura and now walked wearily down the slope of Kudan. In the streets just below, the scattered oil and electric lights twinkled like stars; and beyond, Surugadai stood tranquilly silhouetted against the clear evening sky. The scene was well worth looking at, however often one might have viewed it before. Tetsuya did not even glance up, but trudged on, his troubled eyes cast pensively on the ground.

He had always been cudgelling his brains for some means of disposing of poor Sayo-ko, and this offer from Hamura should have been most welcome. Upon reflection, however, he did not feel at all like sending her even as governess to the residence of that "incontinent baboon," Shibuya. How much more horrible and disgusting this would seem to the girl! Yet he could not peremptorily reject the proposal. On the other hand, if he spoke of it frankly to his family, Sayo-ko would be sent there willy-nilly; nevertheless, there was a painful reason which forced him to tell them: though nominally master of his house, he could not manage his household affairs as he wished. Burning, as it were, with chagrin, he could only lament his fate: that he had been adopted into the Ono family to be the daughter's husband.

His adoptive father, Reizo Ono, had died before Tetsuya's marriage, so that now his only superior at home was the widowed Taki-ko. The other members of the household were Toki-ko, Taki-ko's daughter and the heiress of the family, whom Tetsuya had married; and Sayo-ko, an illegitimate child, whom Reizo had begot by one of the housemaids. Tetsuya, the only man of the family, was certainly master of the house; and yet, humiliating as it was to him, he could not have his own way. Of course, he could if he dared; but the subsequent complaints behind his back, the implied censure to his face, the ominous looks and the snarling retorts to everybody, these were what he could not bear. Unknowingly he had permitted his domestic authority to weaken, and now his wife and her mother did just as they pleased. This deplorable state of things, confirmed by time, could not be changed.

Sayo-ko was indeed an unfortunate girl. At her birth she had been separated from her mother and put out to be nursed, and only afterwards was she brought home. In those days, probably because of her father's prosperous condition as a high-class civil officer, she was sent to school, and nothing interfered with her education until she had finished the second year of the Girls' High School. But discord in the family became more noticeable as she grew into womanhood. Finally, in a fit of passion, her father

sent her to the dormitory of the school; another quarrel broke out shortly after over the expense of keeping her there; and within a year she had to leave. Next, they put her in a mission school somewhere in Akasaka. This turned out to be a fortunate move for her, for, while there, she made remarkable progress in English. She was full of hope and was studying hard when her father died. The property allotted to her before his death had disappeared by the time his finances were adjusted, and this forced her to leave school. At the time of Tetsuya's marriage, Sayo-ko was joined in wedlock to a man in the country. Unfortunately, soon after this her husband died; and now, as a young widow with no other place to go, she had to seek shelter in her sister's home, though badly treated there. Tetsuya heartily sympathized with the miserable girl. Kindness, as they say, is often unkind. The more he shielded Sayo-ko, the more cruelly the other members of the family treated her. And the more Tetsuya pitied her.

CHAPTER III

“**A**H, poor girl.” Tetsuya was still thinking of Sayo-ko as he plodded up the slope of Iki.

The news from Hamura would be sure to sound horrible to poor Sayo-ko herself. How disgusting that he should have to disclose the whole indecent proposition to them at home! He could only deplore his lot as an adopted husband each time he thought of it. Sighing at each step, he continued climbing until he suddenly became aware that he had gone too far; whereupon he retraced his steps three or four yards, turned into an alley to the left, and disappeared in the darkness. When he emerged, the light of the gate-lamp of his house on a certain by-street revealed an indescribable look of pain on his face. He grasped the handle of the side-gate and hesitated a moment, for he felt as if he were falling into the depths of hell. Then he spat bitterly and jerked the gate open. Simultaneously the bell rang irritatingly.

It was answered by Sayo-ko, who came with quick steps to the porch, dressed in a cotton *kimono*, clean but showing evident signs of wear, and in a cotton *haori* [over-garment], of conventional pattern, which

had probably been turned. She was twenty-two, yet so slender that she looked two or three years younger. No wonder the fault-finding Hamura himself acknowledged her to be *très charmante*. In spite of her plain dress and careworn look, her clear complexion and her oval face were fair to look upon; in her soft eyes and about her mouth a dreamlike shadow of beauty flickered; and when she cast her eyes, the soul of her features, pensively on an object, there came into them something ineffably beautiful.

She caught sight of him, put her lamp by her side, placed her delicate hands on the floor, the *muslin-de-laine* sleeves hugging her forearms, and bowed her head; a ribbon of some colour undistinguishable at night fluttered; and her decidedly fair neck appeared through the screen of some stray back hair. She said, "I am glad to have you home again."

It being customary for his wife not to come to meet him at the porch, Tetsuya paid no particular attention to her absence. He answered Sayo-ko's greeting hastily, mounted the porch, and passed noiselessly by the dining-room, on the left-hand side, to his own room, a six-mat one [nine feet by twelve] at the farther end of the house. The room was dark, and he stood while waiting for a light. Soon Sayo-ko, holding in one hand his *kimono* and in the other the miserable paper-shade lamp which had been allotted to him, entered in haste. She quietly placed the lamp

on the table on its doily, a present she had knit for him, and looked at Tetsuya. Finding him standing silent, she asked:

“Is there anything the matter?”

“It was quiet in the dining-room. Have they gone out to the bath?”

“Well, no—to—to the same place as last night.”

“To the theatre again?” Surprised, he stopped taking off his coat. “How often they go!” And resuming his ordinary tone of speech, “And Sayo-san keeps house as usual. How clever! Ha, ha!”

“But I—” she began to talk, but seeing Tetsuya struggle to remove his white shirt, bent over like a suspended tortoise trying to escape, she helped him by pulling the sleeves. “I did not wish to go.”

“No, you do not seem to like such places much—thank you.” He thrust his arms into the sleeves of his lounging *kimono*, which she gently put on his back from behind. “So much the better for their absence. I have something to say to you, but—please let me have some tea first.”

“Your supper?”

“I have eaten. Please, the tea, quickly—” And he threw himself down heavily beside his desk.

“All right.” She took up the clothes which he had left in a heap on the floor, and turned to go out of the room. She looked back from the door, and her eyes met those of Tetsuya, who had been looking at her.

She smiled and gave an exquisite turn to the poise of her neck. "You have taken some *saké*, brother?"¹

Tetsuya, his mouth hanging open, only laughed, "Heh-heh-heh!"

With his back to the door, he was bending over to adjust the wick of the lamp, when he heard some one come in. Concluding at once that it must be Sayo-ko with his tea, he remarked, "Oh, how quick you are!"

He turned to look at her, and lo! he saw only Fuku, the servant, who had brought some charcoal-fire on a fire-shovel. She plumped her fat knees down on the floor and said, "I'm glad to see you back, sir."

He turned to his desk sharply, as if remarking to himself, "What a joke!" He could not help thinking that this servant had been ordered to spy upon him; that she perhaps received a *ten-sen* piece for this extra work. He pretended to look indifferent. Fuku, feeling ill at ease, hastily removed the fire from the shovel; as soon as she had left the room, she stuck out her dirty tongue; then whom should she see but Sayo-ko standing right in front of her! Fuku blushed to her ears and slipped past like a guilty thing.

Sayo-ko gazed with mournful eyes at the servant's back, and then silently entered the room. "We have

¹ Japanese do not call their elder brother or sister by their given name.

no good tea now. We have only coarse tea. Do you mind?"

"Coarse tea? It's all right." As he said this, he turned to Sayo-ko and, as usual, felt cheered.

Kneeling with easy grace, she quietly turned up the cup and filled it with tea, from which thick volumes of steam immediately rose. She held it out to Tetsuya, who had been looking at her admiringly all the while.

"I wonder how you will like it?"

"Oh, thank you," he said, coming out of his reverie. He took the cup and drank two or three swallows rapidly. "Fine! Revived at last." And again after swallowing two more gulps, "Very fine." He put his cup to his nose and smelled the aroma. "You roasted it?"

"Yes, I roasted it. You don't like it that way?"

"Yes, I like it. Coarse tea should always be roasted." And after another swallow, he remarked, "You are not a bit like the others."

"I beg your pardon?" She did not seem to understand him.

"Not a bit like them," he murmured in great admiration. "In merely making tea, you show your kindness. Your sister would not do this for me."

"Oh—" she smiled bashfully.

"That's true. So I always think with deep sym-

pathy that your misfortune, though sad, has given me a great deal of happiness."

Wondering at this, Sayo-ko looked up and their eyes met; whereupon each quickly looked away.

Tetsuya gazed at the lamp and said, "This may sound strange to you, but I understood for the first time the real pleasure of a home after you returned and began to care for me like this every day. For many years since I came to this house—" he hesitated a moment, "I never received such treatment as this." He spoke thoughtfully and the last sentence tremulously. Womanlike, Sayo-ko had tears in her eyes; she could not raise her drooping head.

The two sat silent. All of a sudden, though the autumn was advanced, an old cricket began to chirp dolefully. A slight interval elapsed before Tetsuya aroused himself, saying:

"Oh, I remember. I have a lot more to say to you. Please sit closer."

He insisted on her sitting near the *hibachi* [brazier], and then began, "Now, what I have to say is this: I dined today with Hamura, who informed me that Shibuya, the president of his company—you know the one the newspapers condemned so severely some time ago—oh, I remember that happened when you were still in the country, and you may not know about it."

"No, I—"

"Well, that can't be helped now. This Shibuya,

Hamura says, is looking for a governess. Hamura is anxious to secure you for the position; still, this is not a very promising offer, so I spoke to him indecisively. Of course, the pay and the treatment might be satisfactory, but his house is notorious.”

“Notorious? For what?”

“You perhaps do not know, because you did not read the papers. But he is too indecent to talk about.”

He told her what he remembered of the newspaper stories, in effect that this man, Shibuya, had begun his career as a miserable roadside pedlar ‘without even a shadow worth looking at’¹ and had finally accumulated millions of *yen*; though a great man in the business world, he was incontinent as men of his kind are apt to be. If he had gone with women of the town who make it their business to go with dissipated men; or if he had kept mistresses, his weakness might have been connived at as being nothing unusual with rich merchants of low character of the day; but if a fairly pretty girl came to serve in his house, whether as chambermaid or as kitchen servant, he would certainly debauch her; and after a time, tiring of her, would leave her to her fate; yet in his first attempts to seduce her, he used every means in his power—some of his methods were brutal—he would use force; once it was said he had drugged his victim.

¹ A Japanese figure signifying shabbiness.

Throughout the year trouble always existed between him and the parents of his servants. Rumour had it that he kept a lawyer who enable him to escape public condemnation by paying out a paltry sum of silence money; and that, notwithstanding the commission of such crimes, he had never been tried in court. Thus Tetsuya told in full the rumours that had been current in town; rumours so barbarous that a person could hardly believe them possible in the world today.

He concluded with, "Of course, the statements in the newspapers may have been exaggerated, but even if they were only half true, they would be horrible enough. What do you think about it, Sayo-san?" And with a smile he added, "Do you think you would care to go?"

She meditated and did not answer.

"I don't mean it, I don't mean it. It is only a joke," he withdrew his question hurriedly. "I know you hate it; there is no need of asking your opinion. I thought I would decline the offer on the spot, yet Hamura was so earnest and desired so importunately to introduce you that I suspect he stands to gain something by it. Very likely he has some base ambition and intends to do some trick, but we can't afford to be made his cat's-paws. If I had refused outright and disappointed him, and then asked him not to mention it to the family, he would be sure to come in my absence and tell about it. Then—" looking at Sayo-ko

and meeting her eyes, "we would be in a predicament, you see. I don't mind for myself; I am always in trouble, ha-ha-ha! I don't mind. I should be sorry for you, though. I gave Hamura a temporary promise, which makes the situation rather awkward. On my way here, I pondered and pondered over this, and I could not come to any conclusion. We can't keep this proposal away from them for ever, and if they knew of it, they would be sure to urge you to go. If you refuse to go and I uphold you, misunderstanding after misunderstanding will arise, until we shall have a cataclasm here. Then you will be cruelly treated by them both, and you will hardly be able to bear it. However, this is the turning point of your life; you must be determined and persist—"

Here he was interrupted by Sayo-ko. "Just a minute." She listened.

Tetsuya looked at her inquiringly and asked, "What is it?"

"There seems to be some one—"

No sooner did he think of it than he sprang to his feet, ran to the paper-slide, and threw it open. Instantly they heard a thump against the screen of the next room and the pattering of hurried footsteps through the dining-room and evidently into the kitchen.

Tetsuya left the slide open and returned to his seat, glumly remarking, "It is always like that. I am

under surveillance all the time. Nothing they could do would humiliate me more. It would be quite easy to catch her and scold her, but if she said she was merely obeying her mistress's orders, I should be the only one to blush. They wish to go pleasure-hunting, and they fear something during their absence. Oh, disgusting people!" He seemed very angry. Soon he resumed his quiet manner and continued as though he were ridiculing himself, "Well, it is my fate to be humiliated like this and yet to stay here patiently. There is nothing in this world so painful as obligation, is there, Sayo-san?" He closed his eyes reflectively and folded his arms.

Distressed by the sight of him in this condition, Sayo-ko began, "I feel very sorry for you, brother. I am, indeed—I wonder why my sister treats you so. Formerly she was not like this." She ended apologetically.

Tetsuya remained in deep thought and did not seem to hear her. After a time he opened his eyes and said resolutely, "All right. I once decided to endure this, and I will endure it for better or for worse. I will stay till I have suffered the very extremes of human pain. However, you have no obligation to live in such a house; and, rather than stay here and receive such ignominious treatment, it would be better to accept Hamura's offer. Will you go to Shibuya's house?" This he spoke vigorously, soon adding dejectedly,

"Yet you would not like to go to a devil's cave. And I would not let you go. Still it would be cruel to urge you to stay here. If I had some money, I would send you to some boarding-school, but I have none. Oh, what can I do?" By this time his face which had been pale and lustreless was flushed, and his eyes shone with a strange light. A threatening look overspread his countenance; he grinned. "My head is confused. Everything is out of order."

Sayo-ko looked as though she could not bear to see him in distress. "Please do not worry so much, brother. I would rather—let me go to Mr. Shibuya's—I have made up my mind."

"Well," he meditated.

"Please let me go. I cannot bear causing you so much trouble."

"No, my trouble is nothing," said Tetsuya, looking up with a lonely smile. "If you went there, I should feel distressed myself." He hung his head again.

"If you talk that way, I shall not know what to do." She seemed on the point of complete dejection.

The two lonely figures sat side by side in spiritless desolation. Suddenly the gate-bell burst into a jarring clang. At this Sayo-ko changed colour and exclaimed, "Oh, there is sister!" She made ready to stand up and hesitated. Tetsuya gazed sadly at her as she jumped to her feet and scampered away in a manner most unusual with her. Soon the dining-

room, which had been very quiet, became quite noisy. Presently he heard the steps of some one evidently separated from the rest, coming toward him. No sooner did he become convinced of the identity of the person than very unpleasant feelings filled his heart; and he felt that he could not endure his position.

Into his room arrogantly marched the person whom he detested so much, Toki-ko, his wife. Her complexion was rather dark, her features sharp, her gaze steady; though she lacked grace, she had so much of the coquettish about her that one who esteemed get-up might have preferred her to her younger sister. She was dressed rather seriously for her age of twenty-six; yet her attire was so luxurious that one could hardly believe it to be a theatre dress. She deftly spread her gay skirts and sat down beside the *hibachi*. A sweet-smelling perfume scented the air.

"I have come home. Where have you been?"

Tetsuya replied coolly, "Hamura came to the school and we dined together."

"What time did you return?"

"Well—let me see—not long after dark."

"What have you been doing with Sayo all this time?" She asked her question abruptly, looking straight into her husband's face.

Tetsuya boldly returned her gaze and answered, "We have been talking."

"You talked a long time." And haughtily she averted her eyes.

CHAPTER IV

“WHAT did you have to talk about so long?” she demanded, staring again at her husband. “Seven o’clock, eight, nine, ten, eleven,” counting on her fingers, “doesn’t that make four hours?” She glared searchingly into his face, and became vexed when Tetsuya pretended indifference and merely looked away.

“Keeping her beside you for four hours—I can’t imagine what you had to talk about for so long. You know some reserve is necessary before the servant.”

“Some reserve before the servant?” Tetsuya stared piercingly at his wife. “You speak strangely. Isn’t Sayo-san your sister? If she is your sister, she ought to be my sister too. It is a strange idea that brother and sister should heed the presence of the servant when they talk together!”

“No one said you mustn’t talk.” The blue veins on her forehead betrayed her anger, but she continued with studied politeness, “Everything has a certain propriety, sir. When we’re all away from home and you keep a lady, even your sister-in-law, beside you for four or five hours, and weep, and laugh, and caress, and hug—”

“Who said we did?” the insulted Tetsuya demanded.

“Who said you did? Does that make any difference?” Her eyes flashed with anger; she looked ready to ‘buy a quarrel if any one offered to sell it to her.’ As Tetsuya controlled himself and would not speak, she resumed her sneeringly polite tone. “Of course there will be some misunderstanding. A man highly educated as you are and with the title of Bachelor of Laws as you have, doesn’t make such mistakes, but everybody in the world isn’t wise enough to disbelieve scandal even if it concerns only you and your sister-in-law, when you love her too much and the reserve between you gradually gives way; some strange intimacy might be established—of course, there will be no such thing, but the world will believe there is. I’m certain you’re not satisfied with your present status in society. A man who wishes to achieve great results in the future might be hampered if a servant should give him a bad name by spreading such a story. I fear such a thing for you, though it may be feminine shallowness to do so.”

“Is that so?” Tetsuya displayed composure. “Do not alarm yourself. Everybody in the world is not so foolish. If there are any people so silly as to believe what a servant says and suspect a person’s innocence and purity, let them suspect. If we must heed such people, then your going pleasure-seeking to a theatre every evening might—”

"Excuse me for interrupting you, I've never been pleasure-seeking to a theatre."

"Why do you go out every evening, then?"

"Mother likes to go, and I cannot allow a woman of her age to go alone, so I accompany her. Is that wrong?" She shamelessly told an obvious lie.

Tetsuya glared hatefully at her for some time, as much as to say, "You despicable thing!" Soon he smiled coolly, and was about to speak when Fuku, almost before they were conscious of her, knelt at the door.

"Madam, what'll I do with this letter?"

"Oh, I see. Hand it to me."

She took it.

"Your room's ready now."

"Is it? Then you may go to bed."

Fuku bowed and withdrew, gazing significantly out of the corner of her eye at her master's face.

"This came some time ago," Toki-ko still continued her formal tone as she placed the letter before her husband, "but when Fuku was bringing it to you, you were greatly surprised, she didn't know why, and you cried out abruptly, 'Who is it?' She says she was frightened and ran off. That's the reason why you didn't receive it before." She thus maliciously complicated the situation.

"Is that so?" He continued more composedly,

"Fuku is an odd being. There was no need of a stealthy approach to bring a letter. I thought she had purposely come eavesdropping, because she came like a sneak. Wasn't that the way it was?" He darted a searching glance at his wife's face.

"Wasn't that the way it was?" she repeated with a grating smile. "I don't know anything about it; why should I?"

"Is that so?" Tetsuya retorted sarcastically. He opened the letter and looked at it; but he could not see whom it was from or what it was about.

He examined it for a long time and paid no attention to Toki-ko, who finally lost her patience and, offended, stalked out of the room. When she passed in front of the dining-room, she noticed that it was still lighted; she unceremoniously opened the slide and saw Sayo-ko stooping over the fireless *hibachi* as if she were covering it.

"What are you doing?" There was no answer. Toki-ko stood looking at the neck of her sister who was bent over so silently. "Funny. She's crying. She is." With this remark she turned and entered her own bedroom.

CHAPTER V

IT was a chilly night. Tetsuya curled himself up under his quilt, closed his eyes, and tried to sleep. The still unsettled problem of Sayo-ko's welfare oppressed him; and although he usually had to lie long in bed before dozing off, he did not seem able to sleep at all that night. He tried to put the dilemma from his mind, but it would not leave him. Reaching no decision, he would turn over, look at the wall, and sigh. Towards dawn he did doze. Immediately a nightmare attacked him, and he awoke. How distasteful it was for him to have his body all sweaty and his neck and chest greasy! He propped up his head to look at the paper-slide and perceived that the shadows were low; without looking at his watch beside the pillow, he knew that he had been in bed longer than was his habit. His wife, who slept beside him, appeared as covetous of sleep as usual and evidently had not awakened yet. As he looked at her, turned away from him, and at the paucity of her back hair arranged artificially to give the impression of abundance, he could not help recalling the night before, and he felt indescribable disgust.

Suppressing this disgust, he got up, hurriedly washed his face, and went to the dining-room. There he found his mother-in-law, who had apparently fin-

ished her breakfast, sitting hunched over in front of the oblong *hibachi*¹ and with the aid of her spectacles spelling out the characters of a newspaper. When Tetsuya greeted her, she cast a contumelious glance over her glasses and murmured something indistinctly. Her eyes had their accustomed expression and did not seem especially cross. Whenever Tetsuya met them, he would feel so unpleasant that a fine day would be clouded for him. Nevertheless, since he first entered the house, he had never openly quarrelled with her. Their relationship was superficially a nice one between "dear" mother and "dear" Tetsuya. From the time of his adoption a strange barrier intervened between them, which made her bitter smiles even less bearable to him than his wife's formal pungent rebukes. The mother's smiles had become more intolerable recently now that his position in society had been practically determined; it pained him to look at her. His inability to manage his family affairs was due, he sometimes thought, not so much to his wife's selfishness as to the resistance of this obstinate old mother.

He felt that he had the wrongs of a hundred years against her. He did not know why. When he reflected calmly about the matter, he decided that this point of view was untenable; that the chief cause of the discord in his family might be in his imagining

¹ A *hibachi* placed in a Japanese dining-room for the purpose of keeping water hot.

the existence of such a barrier. Yes, Tetsuya occasionally thought thus. But when he looked at her wrinkled, freckled face with its sharp features, unpleasant thoughts would fill his mind, and he could not bear to sit long with her.

Although Tetsuya was particularly out of sorts, he simulated composure and sat down before the table which had been laid for him. Sayo-ko, removing the cord used to tie up her sleeves, entered hurriedly and waited on him. He washed down the tasteless rice with tea and, considering it awkward to keep silent all the time, said, addressing no one in particular, "How sleepy I am! I sat up too late last night."

He spoke thoughtlessly, but soon realized that some one might draw a queer conclusion from his statement. Sayo-ko started and at once looked askance at her mother.

The old woman kept her eyes on the paper as though she had heard nothing. When Tetsuya laid down his chopsticks and got up to go to change his clothes, Sayo-ko, who always took care of everything about him, feeling that she could not remain indifferently behind that day, arose and followed him; the old woman turned and eyed her steadily, and immediately became all attention as the girl disappeared behind the screen. The conversation in the dressing-room was carried on in whispers, and while the mother could hear some sounds, she could not distinguish the

words. It soon ended, and she heard the steps of the two coming toward her. She snatched up the newspaper from her lap and pretended to be reading attentively. When Tetsuya, looking her in the face, spoke his parting words, she pretended to take her eyes from the paper for the first time, and, looking over her spectacles with her customary scrutiny, said, "I appreciate your trouble for us." She returned to her paper, but when Sayo-ko, who went to the porch to see him off, after saying "Good-bye" once, called him back and seemed to be whispering something in his ear, the old lady suddenly looked up again. The conversation ended quickly, and she only heard Sayo-ko say aloud, "I hope you will be back soon." At this, the old woman twisted her thin lips into a sneer and laughed through her nose.

"Fuku! Fuku!" Irritable calls came from the farther room.

Sayo-ko ran to it and said, "Fuku is busy—"

"If she is so busy you should have told me so before, without letting me call and call!"

"Only because I could not hear you. Do you wish anything?"

"Fire for tobacco, please," Toki-ko ordered haughtily. She mumbled something and concluded with ". . . as if that were not in the routine."

"All right." Sayo-ko quietly disappeared into the dining-room.

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The students were surprised. Tetsuya, whose lectures were carefully, even tediously, repeated over and over again in a subdued, even tone of voice, discoursed that day very roughly. At times his meaning was obscure. At the conclusion of his lectures the students looked at one another and suspected that something must be wrong with "Tetchan." And what added to the common wonder was the fact that each time he left the class-room, he straightway hurried out to use the telephone.

Tetsuya had a clear head; he had even surprised his professors with his graduation essay on Wages. But how could he save Sayo-ko? Alas! he had pondered over it the whole preceding night and had come to no conclusion. He could think of but one way to solve the painful problem: he resolved to prevent Hamura from coming to his house and descanting on the proposal. If he succeeded in that, what should he do next? He was uncertain. He had no definite plan; he could think of nothing else to do. To accomplish that much, he decided that he ought to call on Hamura; and because he wished to tell him in a few words that he was coming to see him after school, he hurried to the telephone a number of times, and as a result people began to have suspicions. Each time he went to the telephone, he found it in use, busy either at one end or at the other. He determined to give his message in writing to the office boy during the fol-

lowing recess and have him telephone for him; but he could not find the boy. Everything went contrary to Tetsuya's wishes. He was so harassed that he almost stamped the floor, but there was no way to help it.

In the afternoon when at last he got the company on the wire he learned that Hamura was not there. He asked whether he would be in again; they replied they were not certain. They mumbled something more and hung up the receiver before Tetsuya could catch their words. He appeared on the verge of tears as he left the telephone and returned to the teachers' room. Seeing an empty chair, he flung himself into it, legs wide apart and arms folded. He stretched himself and heaved a deep sigh of disappointment. One of his colleagues near him noticed this and asked:

"Is there anything the matter with you, Mr. Ono?"

"No, nothing." Tetsuya answered shortly, then sprang to his feet, grasped his broad-brimmed hat, and marched out of doors. Though he had finished his work and was free to go home, he had not planned to leave in this manner. His excessive vexation made sitting at ease impossible. He could not return after leaving in such a way. He felt uneasy, yet as if pulled by something invisible, he walked four or five blocks towards his home when he happened to notice an automatic telephone on the corner. He stopped and considered for some time, and he looked a little

more cheerful as he disappeared into the booth. Soon his voice might have been heard asking once more for Hamura, who was still absent. Tetsuya asked them to tell the latter, when he returned, that Tetsuya Ono would call on him that evening; he repeated the words over and over again until the listener became annoyed. Tetsuya called at Hamura's house on Samban-cho and left the same message, repeating it over and over again. He heaved a sigh of relief as he went out.

His feeling of inquietude now left him. He thought he had made his outer defence invulnerable; then fears surged into his brain about his home; perhaps the members of his family were abusing Sayo-san there. When this thought came to him, he felt he had to hurry and so he hired a jinrikisha, which very shortly carried him to the bottom of the Iki slope. He jumped out, ran up the incline, and came panting to the gate of his house. There he found a well-polished black jinrikisha which looked like a private one. The runner in black uniform had evidently tired of waiting, for he lay sprawled over the bottom of the carriage, fast asleep.

Tetsuya did not know who had come; he vaguely wondered. He entered the yard, and sat down with a thump, as though he were very much fatigued, although he had not walked far. Sayo-ko, who had evidently been working in the kitchen, heard the

sound and came running out, wiping her hands as she ran. Poor girl! she must have been tired of waiting for him. She forgot her greeting which she had never before omitted, and said, "Brother, Hamurasan has come."

"Hamura!" Tetsuya stared at her for some time. After a pause he added in a rather low voice, "I have failed!" His face showed surprise, regret, disappointment, mortification. "Then the proposal is known?" He wished to know immediately.

"Oh, yes, it is known. I really did not know what to do."

"And what is the decision?"

"They have decided to make me go." Her head drooped despondently.

A glance at her dejection made Tetsuya burst out, "Who decided it? What presumption! How overbearing of them to decide without consulting me!"

Sayo-ko added something hurriedly, but he did not seem to hear. He rushed fiercely into the inmost room.

His eyes blazed with anger as he jerked the screen open and darted a look at each person in the room. Hamura sat in the best seat, and mother and wife were entertaining him. Cups and dishes in great disorder lay around them. All three looked toward him at once. Tetsuya especially noticed Hamura, trying

to make his small body look big, sitting in front of the *tokonoma* pompously ensconced on a thick yellow cushion of *hachijo* silk, one reserved for the use of a rare visitor. He had evidently drunk too much, for a gay smile lingered in his inebriated eyes which he opened into narrow slits. He stared pleasantly at Tetsuya and called out in a loud unceremonious tone, "Hello! Welcome home, you champion prevaricator." After greeting him thus, he offered the cup he happened to have to Tetsuya, who now sat down looking very ill-humoured. "Here's a punishment cup."

"Why?"

"Why? No one is more unreliable. You promised me yesterday, and you haven't told Sayo-san yet. It's surprising."

"That's not true," Toki-ko interrupted. "Last night they discussed the whole matter."

"But Sayo-san said just now—"

"You're too gullible," she broke in disparagingly. "She's only pretending ignorance. 'I have not heard of it yet.' How can it be possible? She heard of it last night and—I know all about it." She glared at Tetsuya out of the corner of her eye as she said this; but she did not look so fierce as the night before.

"Is that true?" Hamura looked into Tetsuya's face.

Tetsuya did not reply.

The old woman, who had been smoking, her elbows resting on her knees and her back arched, now smiled bitterly and disagreeably and said, "Surely it can't be exactly as she says. Tetsuya-san may have deep reasons for not telling us, and so he hasn't done—"

"Yes, it's just as I said," Toki-ko interrupted, still addressing Hamura. "It's always that way. They talk over everything in private and leave us uninformed. Sometimes we are told afterwards, sometimes not. He's a man of secrets just as you are."

"Oh, just a minute, wait a minute, please," said Hamura, holding out his hands as if to keep off the 'splash' of the attack. "'Just as you are' is too much. You shouldn't say that. Those who don't know the truth might believe you."

"Ho, ho," she laughed light-heartedly. "Though you talk that way, you're not the type of man who has no secrets, are you?" She ended with a peculiar rising inflexion.

"On the contrary, I'm always frank and open. So naturally my wife and I are on good terms. Every Sunday we take the money we both contribute in one purse, and go hand in hand to the Asakusa temple to worship Kwannon."

"Yes, that must be true. Therefore, the other day at Shimbashi—" She resumed sarcastically, "When that incident was divulged, you had to apologize most humiliatingly to your wife, and moreover you were

compelled to buy her an *obi*¹ and take her to the theatre and do a lot more."

"I'm beaten," he conceded in an abrupt loud voice. He held his head in his hands and bent over, saying softly, "If you bring up such evidence, I've no answer."

"Ha, ha, ha," the old lady laughed raucously like a man. "A man who lives a fast life can't hold his head high, no matter where he goes."

"Why, auntie, you too—" he stared with bulging eyes; "when I'm assailed by two, young and old, I can't stand the attack." He shook his head indolently.

Again there was a loud laugh. After it had subsided, the old lady said, "I can't stay here any longer. I must go." And she arose laboriously.

"Oh, yes, you can. Here, take another cup." Hamura picked up one of the cups in front of him and drained it at a gulp. Then with a funny face he offered it to her. She shook her hand, saying:

"I can take no more. I leave that with you."

Toki-ko without a word held out a bottle and quickly filled the cup to the brim.

"Oh, dear," ejaculated Hamura, as he stared, now at the cup and now at Toki-ko's face. "This is a surprise. That's the reason why I don't like a middle-aged woman or a Chinese pedlar."

¹ Broad sash worn round waist.

"Why?" Toki-ko smilingly asked.

"Because they sometimes force one to take—" He shrugged his shoulders, his mouth still wide open.

"You shouldn't say that. It's impolite—"

The two laughed merrily together.

"Ha, ha, ha."

"Ho, ho, ho."

Tetsuya was provoked. When he first took his seat, Hamura handed him a cup; he enjoyed no further attention; they did not even glance at him thereafter. This he might have overlooked; but the two delighted in talking inanely together; they seemed to have forgotten the problem of Sayo-ko, for they did not even hint at it. When he came in, they should have acquainted him at once with all that had taken place, and asked for his opinion. At this presumptuous neglect Tetsuya, less reserved now that his mother-in-law had taken herself from the room, showed his displeasure as he glared severely at his wife, and abruptly demanded:

"And what has become of Sayo-san?"

This question cut short a conversation which had grown very interesting to them. Toki-ko, turning her haughty face to him, said, "Of Sayo? As they are in a hurry, we have decided that she should go to Mr. Hamura's house tomorrow morning and ask Fuyu-kosan to accompany her."

"We thought this would be the best plan," Hamura

joined in. "The former governess left without giving due notice, and Mr. Shibuya is in a great hurry."

"Who decided it?" Tetsuya demanded, taking no notice of Hamura and turning angrily to his wife.

Toki-ko's face expressed surprise, not all of which was pretence. "Why! Didn't you and Sayo decide it yourselves?"

"Sayo and I?" Tetsuya repeated, frowning dubiously.

"How you feign ignorance! You first consented, didn't you? And last night—though you didn't tell me—you told Sayo. At that time you decided the matter, didn't you? When I called Sayo and asked her, she said, 'If only brother agrees, I wish to go.' I learned of the matter for the first time today, so I'm not positive, but this much I surmised. Am I wrong?"

"Then Sayo-san said she wished to go, did she?"

"Yes, she said so to me. Didn't she say so to you?"

"I have not yet told her all about it, so I do not know."

"Is that so?" Toki-ko sneered, but less maliciously than on the preceding night.

Hamura looked up at the ceiling and laughed aloud. When he stopped, he said, "I shall die of laughter. Poor man! something must be wrong with him."

"Yes, indeed," agreed Toki-ko, turning her face

from Tetsuya. "Is there any other person who, after deciding a matter himself, would ask who had decided it?"

Assailed so severely, Tetsuya could not say a word; he could only look glum. Feeling more foolish than a man who had mistaken his own shadow for a thief and had drawn his sword against him, he could not find a single word to excuse his stupidity. On reflection, it seemed natural that his wife should have misunderstood; assuredly he had promised Hamura, and Sayo-ko, when asked, probably had said she would go. Certainly she did not care to go; yet when she thought of the trouble her refusal would cause him, situated as she was, she could only consent. There could be no doubt of this; he might infer it from her words of the previous night. If she said she would go, he could do nothing. He had laboured hard all day to guard her from this; now there was no way out of it. He detested the whole situation so much that his blood boiled, though he shut his eyes submissively.

Seeing him in distress, the two looked at each other and chuckled. Presently Hamura spoke loudly, "I say, what's the matter with you? What's the matter? Cheer up, won't you? What makes you so melancholy?"

"Not melancholy, but—" answered Tetsuya, reluct-

antly opening his eyes, "things are so mixed up, I cannot understand." Unconsciously he heaved a sigh.

"Doesn't your logic apply to this?"

"Ha, ha, ha," Tetsuya laughed sardonically. He got up wearily and said, "Well, I will change my clothes. I feel stiff in this foreign suit."

Tetsuya walked away rather clumsily, and the two looked at each other and chuckled.

"Hamura-san," Toki-ko pleaded in a subdued tone of voice, "please sympathize with me. I really feel discouraged. That's the way he usually acts; he looks sulky and never says a thing. When I go and talk to him, he'll turn away petulantly. If I ask what displeases him, he won't even deign to reply. I'm sure he hates me."

"Never mind, that's only his way," said Hamura, paying little attention to her words.

"No, I know. If that were his natural way, he would act the same with everybody. But he doesn't. He's an entirely different person with some people."

"Is that so? He's always like that to me."

"That's because you don't know him. When his pupils come to see him, as they often do, he chatters away amazingly well. He's very light-hearted. Even in the family—" she hesitated a little, "he behaves differently to Sayo."

"He loves her, I see that. I've suspected as much, too. Isn't there some relation between them?" He grinned cynically.

"I'm not certain—" She reflected for a while. "I think this is all very strange. If they love each other, Sayo would refuse to go to Mr. Shibuya's, wouldn't she? It's rather strange she didn't refuse."

"I think it must be one-sided, not reciprocal, love."

"I don't think so. Sayo doesn't speak out, but she does a good many things that prove she esteems him highly. Yes, she does a lot."

"Does she? Then I don't understand them at all. At any rate, one who is a bookworm can't be understood."

"No, he can't. But few could be so incomprehensible as he. He didn't act that way years ago. What has changed him, I wonder?"

"Yes, changed he has," Hamura said, looking as though he were unconsciously recollecting bygone days. "When I lived in this house, he certainly wasn't so moody. We were both obstinate. We often quarrelled and gave you trouble, didn't we?"

"Yes, you did," she answered, smiling. "You were pretty reckless in those days. Do you remember the evening of the Emperor's birthday when you came home drunk and teased me?"

"Do you still remember that?" Hamura smiled too.

"How can I forget it? I shall never forget that evening—because I was so offended," she added, still smiling.

"This is awful, awful. Now I know why I've taken cold so often lately. I'm bewitched." He spoke with mock seriousness, yet in his heart he was ashamed.

Toki-ko looked remarkably collected and repeated pleasantly, "I shall never forget it."

In the meantime, Tetsuya, who had left the parlour rather awkwardly, peeped furtively into the dining-room. He did not see the old mother; perhaps she had gone to the kitchen. Sayo-ko, alone, was busy wiping lacquer trays. She caught sight of him.

"I am sorry your dinner is so late. I will bring it in a moment."

"I would like to change my clothes first. Where are they?"

"Yes," Sayo-ko stood up, "excuse me." And she hurried past him into the dressing-room.

He followed her in, and looked her in the face as she held out his folded *kimono* to him.

"Sayo-san, you said you wished to go, did you?" he asked helplessly.

She lowered her eyes at once and replied, "I am very sorry, brother, but if I continue to stay here, your troubles will never cease, so—"

"Oh, I understand. I understand you perfectly," nodding repeatedly, "you may feel that way, but if I forsake you to ease my troubles, I shall never be able to excuse myself to your deceased father—now I cannot help it. I cannot help it," he repeated, his voice trembling with emotion. "There is no help for it; just go and see; and if you find anything unpleasant, please come back at once."

"Yes," she said, hanging her head.

"This is your house, so you need not be backward about returning. If anything unpleasant takes place, please come back immediately. Then if they blame you, they are to blame. I will stand by you to the end. If anything unpleasant occurs, come back at once."

"Yes," and she again looked down.

"You must be very unhappy, though. It is all my fault. I should have rejected this in the beginning. I hesitated, and because I did, things have come to this, making you unhappy and—" He sighed and did not finish his sentence.

"No, I do not think it so very unpleasant—"

Tetsuya shook his head, "Yes, I know you do."

"No, not so unpleasant—if I keep myself pure, I think I shall always be able to do my duty, no matter what the environment may be."

"Yes, that is quite true, but it will be unpleasant, nevertheless. It goes without saying—well, I am not

going to let you stay long at such a place. I will somehow contrive to send for you before long, so just consider this a temporary arrangement to last only a month or two; agree to go."

"Yes," she assented, but she did not look as if she wholly agreed with him. After some meditation, she spoke, "I think it would be too much to go without saying this, so I will confess it. Brother," she raised her eyes, which shone with feelings deep beyond description, "I have one and only one favour I wish to ask of you. Will you grant it?"

"Only one favour? What is it? Speak freely, please. If I can, I will do anything, anything for you." He was very much in earnest.

Sayo-ko again lowered her eyes. "I have thought it over, and I think all this discord in our house is due to me. So if I go away now, I will endure anything, however painful it may be; and stay there so long as they will let me stay. Brother—" hesitating a moment, "please do not worry about me any more, and—" her voice trembled; finally she asked resolutely, "please love—please love my sister."

She could say no more, but turning away, covered her face with her sleeve. When he looked at her fragile and care-worn figure, he noticed on her hair, of her own dressing, in place of a bodkin, unfortunate girl! a white chrysanthemum picked from the garden, the flower and the leaves of which were shivering.

She was sobbing. She wept softly, so as not to be overheard by those in the parlour.

When he saw this, sad thoughts surged into his heart and unknowingly he himself shed tears.

CHAPTER VI

AFTER Sayo-ko went to live with Mr. Shibuya's family, Tetsuya had very lonesome mornings and evenings, hours when the essence of life seemed to have faded away. He taught in three schools, including his extra work, and several days a week did not return home before dark. When he arrived, weary and exhausted, no one greeted him with a smile; nor would any one attend to his comforts. Sometimes when he called for tea or fire, Fuku did not even respond. Something always reminded him of the tender-hearted Sayo. Ah, poor girl! how was she getting along now? Thoughts of her occupied his mind when he awoke in the morning, and they had not left him when he retired at night.

The third day after Sayo-ko's departure he returned from school as usual. He did not see his wife. Whether she absented herself or remained at home made no difference to him; he never asked for her. But his mother-in-law began to talk about her. She informed him that Sayo-ko had returned that morning to get her belongings; and that Toki-ko and Sayo-ko, after hiring a man to transfer the baggage, took advantage of the opportunity to call and thank Hamura. At the mention of Sayo-ko, Tetsuya felt his heart throb strangely. He concealed his feelings and pretended

indifference, but as he wished to hear more about her, discreetly listened. He learned no more; the rest of the conversation contained only her good wishes to him. He was unsatisfied. Though he felt sure that Mr. Shibuya's home had been referred to, he could not ask about it, for he would arouse absurd suspicions if he seemed curious. Such a possibility restrained him from questioning her, and he went to his room. Somehow or other he felt vaguely sorrowful. If Toki-ko returned soon, though he was not anxious to see her on her own account, he thought he might contrive in some artful manner to make her tell how Sayo-ko was faring. When he conceived this thought, he awaited her impatiently as he remembered he had never done before; up to that moment the immediacy of her return had not concerned him in the least. He listened attentively each time the gate-door opened.

Toki-ko returned a few minutes before the evening meal. When the family gathered in the dining-room as usual, Tetsuya secretly hoped to hear about the girl. It was a vain hope. On the contrary, Toki-ko prated only of the luxury of Hamura's life; that Hamura's wife, Fuyu-ko, every day wore a silk *haori* of Yonezawa design and clothes made of *itoori* [silk made of large heavy threads]; that her newly made *awasé* [lined garment] was of greyish skyblue crêpe made with a mixture of silk from wild cocoons, and

the lining at the bottom of her skirt was greyish brown crêpe (Toki-ko preferred simple light grey); that her *obi* of the same material inside and out was of Chinese texture and covered with conventional designs (Toki-ko thought it exceedingly fine); that, as she had to go to the theatre three or four times a month because of her social standing, Fuyu-ko often saw the same play twice; that she had two diamond rings and did not desire any more, but as she found a good bargain, she had purchased another, which she showed to Toki-ko; and so on and so on. What seemed all nonsense to Tetsuya was discussed envyingly. The regrets aroused in her by so much luxury so proudly displayed brought her to her usual carping ground. She praised Hamura as a man of ability and envied Fuyu-ko's good luck in being loved so dearly by her husband, though she was not at all beautiful. In this way she aimed her remarks at some one sitting near her. Then her mother, too, recollected the old days and said that, when her husband was alive, their living was not inferior to Hamura's, forgetting the old hardships and repeating only the gay dreams that memory retained. She sighed heavily. Tetsuya had become quite accustomed to such remarks and did not permit any hint to ruffle him; yet as he listened he did not feel very much elated. As soon as he finished his supper he arose and left the room. He had no special reason for leaving so suddenly; his mother and wife

misunderstood his action and presumed that he could not bear to listen to their remarks any longer. He felt intuitively, rather than saw, that they looked sneeringly at him. He was disgusted, and as soon as he reached his room, flopped down with a thump before his desk and thought of Sayo. Ah, poor girl! how was she faring? Thoughts of her would not leave him; he pressed his hands to his heart as though he felt pain there.

In the dining-room mother and daughter whispered together. Occasionally Toki-ko's shrill tones followed by her mother's soothing voice broke the even tenor of the conversation. Before long, sobs might have been heard. When the sobbing had ceased, the whispering recommenced and continued for about two hours. Then the paper-slide was opened, and the figure of Toki-ko protruded half-way onto the veranda. "Just a moment!" The old woman's words caused Toki-ko to stop. "Eh, what?" she asked as she turned. The glare of the lamp fell on her flushed face, and the veins of anger stood out clearly on her forehead; yet her eyes were strangely wet. Her mother called from within admonishingly:

"It all depends on how you act. You must think it over well and—"

Toki-ko refused to listen to the end. "You may think so, but he's not a child—"

After shutting the slide with a great deal of noise,

she walked hesitatingly down the veranda to the front of her husband's room and peeped in.

Tetsuya, who had been absorbed in reading by lamplight a letter which had just reached him, now raised his expressionless eyes. An indescribably unpleasant look shone in them when he perceived his wife peeping in, and he quickly rolled up the very long letter.

Toki-ko looked at it suspiciously out of the corner of her eye and asked with a rising inflexion, as she sat down quickly beside the *hibachi*, "Where is it from?"

"From my home," he answered, turning away as if annoyed.

Toki-ko blushed but asked, trying to control herself, "Are they all well?"

"They say they are well," he replied curtly.

Toki-ko did not take offence, but remarked gently, "That is good news." She lifted the kettle and poked the fire, saying to herself, "What a small fire!" Then turning to him, she said aloud, "Excuse me, please pass the charcoal holder."

She took the holder which he silently handed her, added two or three coals to the fire, and then inquired with a momentary glance at his face, "Do you care for tea?"

"No," was all he answered.

"As Sayo is not here, you must be very uncomfortable," she observed, glancing up at him again.

"No," he denied, whereupon he looked away, as if unable to endure further conversation.

This affront really offended Toki-ko, and she glared at his profile. But she controlled herself and resumed, "I wish I could look after you better, but somehow our home duties are many, though the family is small. I'm sorry to say I can't attend to you well, because I'm much too busy."

"Why, there is not much to—" This time he spoke rather quietly.

"You can't say we haven't much to do. Even for you alone, I know there's plenty to do, but I'm too much occupied to wait on you. We have Fuku, but she's only a servant, and we can't expect her to do everything. My mother is old and of little help. So it devolves upon me to sew clothes, help in the kitchen, go shopping, and answer the door. I'm standing up and sitting down all day, I'm so dazzlingly busy. Something unexpected always has to be done, and I'm never able to catch up with my work. My mother feels sorry for me and tries to help. If I let her, she's sure to get a stiff neck and a sore back. Afterwards she has to be massaged, thus causing more work than ever, so I ask her not to do anything. But she says she can't look on and be idle. Every evening she gets a sore back. Even now Fuku is rubbing her. Briefly, this is the way the matter stands. My mother fears that, if things continue as in the past, I'll not be

able to bear the strain, and that you also will be very uncomfortable, so she told me to ask you to engage one more servant, either an ordinary one or a handy girl. I'm sorry to ask this when you're hard up; still we can't continue as things are at present. So I ask: couldn't you please hire one more servant?"

She watched him intently. When he considered that this request came from Toki-ko who always got up later than he and who called for tobacco-fire from her bed, his lip curled involuntarily.

"I say," she tried to arouse him, but he would not speak. Toki-ko, rather excited, hurried on, "I say, can't you do this? I don't think I'm asking too much. Please think it over. Heretofore, when Sayo lived with us, our domestic duties were divided among three, not counting my mother, Sayo, Fuku, and myself. Now there's only Fuku and I. So it's natural that we're much busier. I'll break down unless you engage another servant." As she concluded, she looked straight into his face.

Tetsuya at last said, "You mean to engage a servant in place of Sayo-san?"

"Yes, I mean something like that, but—" She hesitated.

"You had better recall Sayo-san," he stated, affecting unconcern.

"Sayo!—" Toki-ko rejected the suggestion with a word. She could not conceal her confusion at the

suddenness of his turn. "Sayo! if we call back such a lazy girl, what could she do?" Being offended, she abused her sister, but even this derogatory remark did not satisfy her. "You talk that way, because you don't know her. Sayo talks very well, but just give her some needlework. She can't even sew summer clothes well," she added fretfully.

Tetsuya took umbrage. "I don't know about sewing; in other things I know her well. Sayo-san was kind in everything when she was here. She was not a servant, and therefore not two-faced, and we felt happy to be served by her." He purposely praised Sayo-ko, but probably because he thought it childish, he changed his mood and said, "If you object, we won't ask Sayo-san to come back. How much will this cost? Can you get along with the same amount of money as before?"

"I wish to speak to you about that," Toki-ko responded, mildly this time. "I'll not be able to manage the house on that amount. Make a rough estimate. If we hire a girl who can sew—I wish to get one who can—we must, besides her salary, clothe her twice a year, and from time to time we must tip her. However low we may estimate, I'll need fifteen or twenty *yen* a month more."

"You don't need that much. You shouldn't include her board; Sayo-san ate while she was here."

"Yes, we do need that much more. Sayo didn't eat

much, and her eating expense was inconsiderable, but a servant always has a big appetite. I must ask you for that much. And I wish to ask you for a little more besides."

"Still more!" Tetsuya exclaimed.

"Yes," Toki-ko answered calmly. "The recent increase of prices is—you must know all about it as it's your line of study—the increase is really astonishing. For instance, a cask of soy which cost two and a half *yen* in the spring of last year, now costs three and a half *yen*. How many per cent has it increased, I wonder?" She estimated mentally, but continued as she could not solve the problem easily, "Anyhow, it's a great increase. Soy isn't the only commodity that's gone up; everything's affected in the same way. We can't get along with the old amount of money. So, including the salary of the new servant and everything, I wish to ask you for an increase of fifty *yen* a month. But—it may inconvenience you to pay fifty *yen* more; so I shall be responsible for what is lacking, and I ask you to increase my allowance by at least forty *yen*. Is that impossible?"

She made her request rather lightly as though she did not consider it a big one; she puckered her cheeks, inhaled tobacco smoke, and blew it out, looking quite unconcerned all the time.

A sigh escaped Tetsuya in spite of himself as he silently watched his wife's face. He spoke calmly

and resolutely, notwithstanding his excited appearance, "I am sorry to say it is. I am a teacher who sells learning piecemeal, and I am not in a position to hire two servants to serve three people. Besides the question of position, I could not afford another servant even if I wished. My present income is all I can possibly earn."

"Then," Toki-ko faced her husband, "how about me? Have I got to stand this for ever?"

"I don't know."

"Don't know!" She glared menacingly. "Is that so? Then, under the circumstances, I can't be responsible for the management of the house. I resign today. I'll turn over to you all the money that's left and the account book now." She was about to get up.

"Wait a moment. I shall not insist, if you don't care to be responsible. But what are you going to do?"

"I? I was born in this house, and I have no other place to go. I petition to be allowed to stay here—somewhere in a corner of the kitchen—" Her voice trembled, and her eyes winked rapidly, but no tears were forthcoming.

"You mean you will not attend to your housework any longer?"

"Not any longer, because I'm not clever enough to be a housewife."

Tetsuya folded his arms and closed his eyes meditatively for some time. When he opened them, there was an exceedingly sad expression in them. He unfolded his arms and sighed deeply.

“Toki-san, how cruel you have become! I understand you well. The reason you bring such a troublesome question and annoy me is this: if you act in this way, you think I shall feel distressed and shall begin to fight to add even a single *sen* to my income. You have often urged me to increase my income, and I have been unable to do so, and you imagine I have failed because I have not been zealous enough. You have always misunderstood me. This time you have changed your tactics and definitely stipulated the sum, forty *yen*. You wish to make me earn half of that at least. I can see your motive. This is all because you went to Hamura’s today and were teased by their proud display of luxury. After all, isn’t this treating me as you would treat a beast of burden? Are you not whipping me to exert myself to the utmost that you may squeeze as much money as you can out of me; and all this because you wish to wear fine clothes or buy costly rings; in short, to satisfy a base vanity? Where is the sympathy between husband and wife? As I am not prosperous, though I do not speak of it, I am distressed at heart. If you have any wifely sympathy, you ought to try, if not to console me, at least to avoid giving me unnecessary pain; whereas you want

to add to my pain and seek to make yourself alone comfortable. Isn't that cruel? I owe a great deal to your father. He assisted me from the middle of my high school course, and it is due to him that I was graduated from the University. He defrayed my school expenses, because he wished to entrust me with you after his death. I remember that, and so, out of a sense of obligation, I have endured this life until today, though it has been painful; but if I am teased again as I have been tonight—"

"When did I tease you?"

"Just a minute. Listen—then I shall be unable to endure it any longer. You will compel me to take steps to part—I am obliged to say, but—"

"Oh, I understand you. I know your nature perfectly," she interposed excitedly.

"Please wait and listen—"

"No, I understand you very well now." She would not listen. Her lips were livid. "I've long suspected things would come to this. I'm such a foolish woman, I can't help it if you don't like me, but to think that my sister should supplant me—it grieves me too m-much." She gnashed her teeth and burst into tears.

This astonished Tetsuya. "What do you mean? Sayo-san is out of the question. She is—"

"Yes," Toki-ko had hardly wiped her eyes with the sleeve of her undergarment before she continued, "whatever you say now does no good; I know all about

it. You wish to leave me and live with Sayo—” Again she shed a few tears and went on with voice trembling, “That’s why you talk so coldly.”

“You totally misunderstand. I have no such—”

“You can say what you like, but that’s the truth. You weren’t so cross before Sayo returned; since then you’ve changed entirely. You busy yourself a lot for Sayo, but you act as if you wanted to have nothing to do with me—” She wept aloud. “When I come and speak to you—you look annoyed and turn away and—” again sobbing, “you’ve never spoken a tender word to me—”

She said no more for a time. When her weeping had subsided somewhat, she continued, “After sending her to Mr. Shibuya’s house, I felt more or less at ease. But you think of her all the time and keep so sullen. If I come near you, you look disgruntled. I couldn’t put off home affairs any longer, though I did expect you would think them tiresome because you hate me, so I came to consult you about them. At once you begin to speak coldly, and—” Her voice was quavering. “Now I understand. I thought it strange at the time that Sayo should go so obediently to Mr. Shibuya’s, but I see now everything was prearranged. You are to leave the house separately, and intend to live together somewhere in secret. I know—oh, I’m humiliated to be cheated like that.”

“You overwhelm me! I cannot tell how com-

pletely you misunderstand. If you confuse everything and slander innocent Sayo-san, I will speak out, though I have so far tried not to do so. Sayo-san, you see—Sayo-san went to Shibuya's only because you misunderstood and fretted so much; and because she wished to set your mind at ease. The day before she left she asked me" (the memory of the pitiable girl brought tears to his eyes) "not to worry myself about her, and she asked me weepingly to love her sister."

"The beast!" Toki-ko shrieked, raising her tear-stained face. "Trying to snare you by such pathetic words and assuming the looks of the one good girl! If she acts like that, I'll not think of her as my sister any more. If she ever comes back here, I'll kill her and then myself, too."

When the cries of Toki-ko and the words of Tetsuya, who wished to clarify the situation, became so confused as to be unintelligible, the screen was quickly opened, and their mother, appearing quite worried, came straight into the room.

"Why, Tetsuya-san and Toki-san, what does this mean? Talking so loud! It's most unbecoming," she admonished them as she seated herself.

In answer Toki-ko shouted, "Mother, at last my husband's been snatched from me by Sayo." The sight of her mother seemed suddenly to sadden her, for she fell to the floor weeping loudly, quite unmindful of her surroundings.

Tetsuya was shocked. "She misunderstands, she totally misunderstands. She is so excited, she cannot understand what I say. I don't know what to do."

"I can't understand the cause of all this," the old lady also spoke with a trembling voice, "but it was so noisy, I came to see. You were talking of parting or not parting, and I thought I couldn't enter then, so I waited. While waiting, I gradually understood the meaning of the talk. Tetsuya-san—" she looked thoughtfully at him, "if you leave us now, we, mother and child, shall have to go begging—" she talked in a whining voice, "and this girl is so obstinate, I'm sure you don't like her, but please—" speaking with great earnestness, "for the sake of this old woman, please pardon her—"

Toki-ko threw up her head, "Mother, even though you talk that way, no good will come of it now. He's wholly deceived by Sayo—"

"Be quiet," the other commanded. "I say, Tetsuya-san, you can get along as a good scholar, and you needn't have anything to do with such an old woman and her daughter; but if you, on whom we've spent what money we had in order to be provided for afterwards, if you desert us—we shall become beggars. Though you feel angry, please excuse her for the sake of saving us, mother and child. I ask you like this." With 'this,' she put her partly-bald head,

the hair of which was cut short behind, to the floor. And in a whining voice, she petitioned, "Please excuse—"

Tetsuysa folded his arms, closed his eyes, and meditated silently. He could think of nothing to say.

CHAPTER VII

THE quarrel was made up after a fashion through the most unpleasant mediation of the old lady. The sullen Tetsuya went to school each morning as usual. But the maladjustment naturally left its influence upon the family; and the behaviour of mother and wife provoked him. One became the more insidiously polite; the other, though she grew more prudent and did not become angry so readily as before, yet wore an ominous look. They took advantage of every opportunity to confine themselves in the dining-room; or to hide in the old woman's room; there they put their heads together and spent much time in secret confabulation occasionally broken by sobbing.

Though this was more intense than heretofore, it was the customary aftermath of quarrels and was therefore no rare experience to Tetsuya; yet nothing distressed him so much. At such times he wished he had not been adopted; he never failed to grieve over it.

When he reflected on the circumstances of his adoption, he remembered that there had been some necessity for his act. His aged father was suffering from hemiplegia at his native home in Shidzuoka, and his elder brother grumbled at his misfortune in being op-

pressed by poverty and, in addition, in having to take care of the burdensome patient. Before their house was so run down, however, and because this brother, a rather sickly fellow, wished to let him, Tetsuya, inherit the property, he had been sent to the First High School through the instrumentality of his brother, though it was somewhat embarrassing to his family; the plan being that after he finished his course, he was expected to send for his father and tend him dutifully in his brother's place. About a year after Tetsuya entered the school, an unavoidable circumstance resulted in the stopping of his allowance. He managed to continue his school work for one or two months. When he had no more money, some one casually asked him if he would not like to be adopted. At first he hesitated. If he refused the offer, the alternative, he thought, would be to leave school and return to his native place. Partly because he did not wish to do this, and partly because he did not know the world, although he thought he did, and carelessly reckoned that, if only he succeeded in finishing the University, he might be able to remit some money to his family, he persuaded his hesitating father and brother to agree; and Tetsuya was adopted. This was the family, Ono, which he took so much trouble to join. They were to pay his school expenses until he was graduated from the University.

Everything went smoothly until that time. After

his graduation, however, when he began to seek work, the weak point became visible. The Ono family, though it appeared rich to the outside world, was not so. Tetsuya's father-in-law, Reizo by name, liked luxury and lived well in his best days. He paid the youth's school expenses not merely because he wished to entrust him with his daughter, but also because he considered Tetsuya a more profitable investment than government bonds. When Tetsuya finished his University course, his mother-in-law at once urged him to get as much money as quickly as he could, as though his graduation had been impatiently awaited a long time. His father-in-law had died meanwhile, and Sayo-ko had been married. His mother-in-law and wife made up his family. If they had been ordinary people, Tetsuya would not have had such a hard time to support them. Unfortunately the vanities of both mother and daughter demanded needless display. Hence the monthly expenses amounted to more than he had expected; and he had to do something to offset them. Besides, he had the vain desire (this is a very private story not fit to be divulged to other people) not to disappoint his mother-in-law too much as she thought in the old way and obstinately indulged herself in the dream of being respected as the mother of a high official of a certain grade as soon as he finished the University, and who was rather proud of him. Such being the case, though it was

not his own pleasure, he entered the profession of teaching before he quite knew what he was doing. He thought this kind of work would give him some leisure, of which he expected to avail himself. The salary was small but good for the nature of the work. Of course he did not mean to spend his whole life as a school-teacher. He hoped before long to launch out into the business world and satisfy a cherished ambition. He rested his hopes on the future; yet when he actually began to teach, he found that his salary which at first sustained his family, gradually failed to meet the expenses. This obliged him to teach in a second school. The additional salary made them more comfortable but only for a time; he soon learned that his income was still insufficient. He managed to teach in a third school; in the end the result was the same. Only for a short space did this extra money suffice. Within three months they felt as poor as ever. Thus domestic expenses drove him on each month; and consequently, though his own family petitioned him for help, he could not send them any money.

This he might overlook; but the necessary striving for material things left him no time to pursue his ambition. In his dark future, he could not find one ray of hope. When he considered that he was so driven because of the waste caused by the luxurious habits into which his house had fallen, he felt that he had

been adopted for the sole purpose of gratifying the vanity of mother and daughter. This made him angry and moved him occasionally to complain to his wife, to whom he found it easier to talk than to her mother. Toki-ko, wilful woman that she was, would not submit meekly to him. She returned the attack at once, attributing the situation to the scarcity of income. This was the first cause of the discord in his family. There were several others which might be enumerated as the second, the third, and so on.

The treatment he received from mother and daughter always disgusted Tetsuya; but they, too, were dissatisfied with him. They had investigated his record at the time of the adoption, and learned that he stood near the top of his class. This information pleased them, and they continued to defray his expenses. When he launched out into the world, however, his standing was anywhere but near the top. All who were graduated at the same time—even those whose standings were below his—had now obtained good positions. One was a counsellor; one, a secretary of an embassy; a third, a manager of a bank; another, a superintendent of a company; and so on. Each one occupied a better position than Tetsuya. Though a graduate of another school, Mr. Hamura, too, who, when he stayed in their house, wore cotton clothes and foldless cotton *hakama* [full trousers] and old *geta* [clogs], who, in short did not look fine then, now

shone resplendently. He took his own beautiful jinrikisha wherever he went. No one ever saw him walking wearily in shoes down at the heels with the shabby air of a miser, the way a certain person walked. Both were alike men, but they differed much on account of their capabilities. If they had adopted a man like Mr. Hamura, how happy they should be now! They could go to the theatre as often as they pleased, and they could dress as well as they wished. Thus mother and daughter communed together many a weary night. Later, when they saw the adopted husband's face, which had not been shaved for a week, and looked sallow, dirty, and dull, the sight revolted them so much that they felt they could endure it no longer.

If anything occurred in which the old lady could not have her own way, she immediately recalled the old days. Alas, when her husband was living, things were not like this. There were always three servants at least; a private jinrikisha and a private jinrikisha man. She would discourse monotonously on the old life, and sigh from time to time. Toki-ko did not like this; she felt that she was being scolded, and she would rebuke her mother, although the one criticized was her husband, whom she did not much like. Her mother refused to keep silent. Quarrels between them sometimes resulted in a half-day's sulkiness. Then if Tetsuya happened to come back from school

looking like a sluggard, Toki-ko could keep silent no longer. She would tell him in detail what her mother had said. When he did hear it, though it was a second-hand story, Tetsuya could not help feeling abused and annoyed, and he would be inclined to curse his mother-in-law at heart. Being a reticent man, he would not speak out; he would only look morose and smile bitterly. When Toki-ko told him her mother's opinion, she hoped that, however dull he was, he would feel insulted and resolve to try as hard as he could to earn more money. She meant to stimulate him, and when he forbore answering and only smiled bitterly, she could only feel disappointed. He acted so dully, she thought, he could never improve his position and she regretted that she alone wished to better matters quickly. Then her goodwill, with which she had told him her mother's rebukes, at once changed to vexation, if not to illwill. She would feel inclined to mention some complaints of her own. Tetsuya, who submitted silently to her mother's grievances, would not be so reserved before those of his wife. He could not speak fluently, yet he had become accustomed to lecturing; he spoke fairly well, and showed why her complaints were groundless. His wife was no match for him in reasoning powers. She would get vexed and at last resort to sarcasm. When he returned in kind, another small contention would result.

A quarrel, introduced in this manner, always existed between husband and wife. Neither intended to separate, and for that reason they had never discussed the breach thoroughly. Tetsuya did not feel much indebted to them when he decided that he had been adopted as a substitute for government bonds; yet he knew that mother and daughter, as the former had admitted, would become beggars if he forsook them. He thought them troublesome, but he could not bear to leave them in such distress. Stated this way, it might sound as if he acted from charitable motives; he did not. Being a timid man, he could not do such a cruel deed. Toki-ko considered it foolish to serve such a husband respectfully; but her weak point lay in the fact that she must not be cast off. Thus the altercations were always small, there being a tendency on both sides to avoid a great dispute. Yet the present rupture originated in a different way; it arose from circumstances affecting Sayo-ko and could not like former difficulties be made up after three days without a definite understanding.

Tetsuya deliberately grew disgusted. This time he decided seriously to contemplate obtaining a divorce. To procure one required funds, and he could not raise any money. Ah! what sin had he committed in the preceding world to have to suffer so much in this? His sorrow knew no bounds. He left the

house each morning looking morose, and returned each evening still looking sullen.

One evening about a week after the breach, he came home, after doing his extra work, later than nine o'clock. The old lady was talking away in the dining-room. She stopped abruptly. Tetsuya looked at the person who, with a lamp in one hand, came to greet him.

"Why, aren't you Sayo-san?" This affectionate cry escaped him as though they had not met for ten years.

CHAPTER VIII

TETSUYA quickly changed to his home-clothes and hurried to the dining-room. Toki-ko was not there, but the old lady sat glumly feeding the fire in the *hibachi* with Sayo-ko beside her.

Sayo-ko with drooping head sat behind the lamp; although he could not see her well, he thought she looked like quite another person. She wore a lined dress [*awasé*] with stripes of coarse yellow silk [*meisen*][—]evidently for home-wear; and over it a fine cloak [*haori*] of yellow *hachijo* silk, though not of the best quality, which she probably had thrown over her, thinking that, because it was night, she did not need to have her clothes match. The light blue ribbon of the *haori* showed up conspicuously; and the scarcely visible edge of the muslin collar of her undergarment vied with her arched neck for fairness. She had, however, something incomprehensible about her. Her pompadour hair, overhanging her forehead, had fallen loose; that might be overlooked as being rather stylish. What could not be comprehended lay in the fact that one of her three combs, which made up the set, was missing. If Tetsuya did not notice all this, he did see that the small finger of her left hand was bandaged and that she was pale. He suspected

something had gone wrong. As soon as he sat down beside the *hibachi*, he asked hurriedly and with scarcely a greeting for his mother-in-law:

“What is the matter? At this hour—” and he frowned questioningly.

Sayo-ko only straightened up a little, but did not raise her face; then she collapsed.

“What is the matter?” This time Tetsuya looked anxiously at his mother-in-law, who with her usual cool smile answered:

“I can’t understand well what this girl says. Her master got drunk or something and probably said some joke to her simply because she’s a young woman. She’s so squeamish, she took it seriously and, I understand, has run here helter-skelter. She has exaggerated the incident so much that I’m very sorry for him. So I’m telling her to return at once. She’s taking some time to decide—”

She tried to make the matter look too trivial to be worth consideration; yet a hint of the truth flashed into Tetsuya’s mind.

“Is that so? Really I have been worrying myself lest such a thing might happen—did he only joke?” He emphasized ‘only’ and turned anxiously to Sayo-ko.

“If he was only joking, I wouldn’t care, but—” She shuddered slightly and spoke so faintly that she could scarcely be heard.

“Did he touch you?” Tetsuya started and changed colour angrily.

Sayo-ko crimsoned to her ears and inclined her head even lower. She could say nothing.

“Did he?” Tetsuya could endure doubts no longer. He considered neither appearance nor propriety, but at once turned to his mother-in-law, whom, until that morning, he had considered his enemy. He looked at her beseechingly, as if the ups and downs of life depended solely on her answer to the question.

The old lady, who from time to time had been stealing glances at Tetsuya, again smiled her customary bitter smile. “Why, it can’t be so serious. This girl is exaggerating, you see.”

“I can’t tell whether she is exaggerating or not unless you give me some of the details.” Tetsuya’s anguish showed distinctly in his face. It was really not fit to be seen.

“Then, as it would be hard for this girl to tell, I will relate—”

After thus dallying to vex him, she finally began to retell the story, trying to modify it as much as she could lest it should appear too horrible. This is the substance of what she told:

When Sayo-ko first met Mr. Shibuya, the master of the house, he comported himself with great dignity, seldom even bowing his head. She was treated as a servant in everything. In the evening a maid in-

formed her that her master desired to see her, and she went to his room. There she found him attended by his mistress O-Hama-san, who was feared even by those at his office more than the master himself. His real wife suffered from consumption and took care of her health at their villa in Oiso. The three conversed on a variety of topics. Mr. Shibuya asked Sayo-ko about herself, and she answered him briefly. He pitied her, and subsequently every one treated her better. Her room, which had not been given her, they assigned immediately. They treated her, though perhaps not like one of the family, like one next in honour to a guest. When she thought of her own lack of ability, she felt much indebted.

The following evening, when his daughters whom she had to train had retired, she was called into his room. She found O-Hama-san beside him as on the preceding night. Sayo-ko was offered excellent tea and cake. The daughters were both born of O-Hama-san, and she earnestly asked Sayo-ko to instruct them. She gave Sayo-ko a beautiful silk handkerchief and a ribbon. Then, being insistently requested, Sayo, though very much embarrassed, played on the violin for them. After she had taken her leave and had returned to her room, she thought everything over. She decided that no people were greater liars than newspaper men. She had been informed that they gave him much trouble by spreading horrible rumours,

but she found him kind and good-natured; and O-Hama-san, too, though somewhat uncultured, was not at all ill-mannered. It might be because she was entrusted with their dear daughters that they were both very kind to her. Sayo felt very thankful over her good luck in happening to live with such an excellent family, and being a Christian and so incomprehensible, she prayed, "Our Father in Heaven," or some such nonsense, and dreamed peacefully that night.

On succeeding evenings, when the daughters had gone to sleep, she was regularly called to his room. The fifth evening, when she felt fairly well acquainted and quite at home, she was summoned there as usual. She did not find O-Hama-san. Her master was drinking *saké* alone. She became frightened and hesitated, but he quickly said that, Hama being absent, he felt lonely; and he had invited her to come, for he wished, though it might be rude of him, to drink with her. He told her to come in without hesitation. She attempted to excuse herself by saying that she could not take any liquor; but he would not listen to her. He did not care whether she drank or not; he would be satisfied if she talked with him. When he requested her to sit with him, out of compassion for his old age, she could not refuse and reluctantly entered the room. Dinner was brought to her also. They talked of various things. She persistently declined his invitations

to drink, and at last was allowed simply to talk to him; and even then very likely she remained silent and only listened. However, she felt embarrassed sitting there and doing nothing, and when the maid left the room on some errand, Sayo unwittingly took up the bottle and filled his cup for him. Sayo said she ought not to have done this; on the contrary, it was just the thing to do. It pleased him greatly and he said he would have his cup filled by her, though it might be rude of him to ask her; he dismissed the maid. He became very intimate and, probably as a joke over his cup, asked her how old she was; whether, being so young, she did not miss her deceased husband sometimes; or if he should not act as a go-between to marry her to some one; and so on. His jokes were just such as any man would make when under the influence of liquor, but this girl was so childish she blushed each time she heard him. Whether he wanted to be funny and desired to tease her more, or for some other indefinite reason, he remarked that her fingers were slender and as white as white-bait; and as it was odd for such fingers not to wear rings, he would make her a present of one. He stood up and produced a splendid gold ring out of his bureau. Offering to place it on her finger himself, he drew near and took her hand, or was about to take it—the old lady was not sure. Even then he might not have meant any mischief, but merely have been condescending gra-

ciously to put on the ring. But this girl, if a man, even an old man nearly sixty years of age, were to come near her, thinks she might be contaminated in some way; and so without considering what she was doing, she abruptly pushed aside her master, 'poor man!' and ran back to her room. After that, however often the maid came for her, she would not return to him.

Probably he had no mean intention and only condescended to be familiar with her, or the whole affair was simply a little joke—in either case, Sayo was too punctilious and caused him undeserved humiliation. So whole-heartedly generous was her master that he gave no special sign of anger but summoned her again the following evening. 'Impolite girl!' she feigned sickness in her own room. O-Hama-san very kindly came to inquire after her health. When she perceived that Sayo-ko was not in bed, O-Hama-san asked if she might not as well sit in their room; and she urged her to come, mentioning that she had something to give her that night. The 'ungrateful girl' reluctantly followed the woman. A fine dinner was brought her, and her master seemed to be exceptionally pleased. Probably because of O-Hama-san's presence, he did not make any jokes openly, yet, from time to time, he winked covertly and grinned. He might have flirted in this way because Sayo had acted so childishly. Thereafter, whenever he met her, he delighted

in winking and grinning at her. Sayo 'narrow-minded girl!' grew exceedingly disgusted; but she endured it and retained her position.

Tonight a foreign guest came. Presently she was requested to go into the parlour of his foreign house at the front of the premises to act as interpreter. She suspected the real reason back of the summons, for she had been told that the guest had come with his own interpreter. But it being part of her duty to translate simple matters, she could not refuse; she only changed her *haori* and then timidly went to the appointed place, all the while entertaining a woman-like anxiety lest the conversation should be complicated. The brilliantly decorated foreign parlour was illuminated by many electric lights. She found two or three emptied coffee-cups on the table, but not the shadow of a guest. Her master was lying alone on his couch. When she hesitated distrustfully, her master 'malicious man!' assumed a serious look and told her to come in and wait; that his guest had just stepped out for a moment. She considered it fortunate, because she thought she could ascertain meanwhile the nature of the conversation she was expected to interpret, and ask to be excused if it were too complicated. She politely inclined her head and entered. At once he stood up and moved to the door which she had just closed, and did something to it, his back to her. At the 'click,' she drew a hasty conclusion, al-

though she could not tell what clicked. Scarcely had she concluded that the door was locked when he turned round. She looked at his face; he wore an indescribably fiendish smile. Then she realized her danger, and every hair stood on end. So she said, but it is certainly too exaggerated. Her master smilingly drew nearer. She quickly jumped aside and, with a chair as a guard, looked at him severely and asked what he wanted. He answered that he did not mean anything, and still smiling kept drawing nearer. For some time she dodged between chairs and tables, this way and that; but at last he cornered her. She could see no way of escape. She implored him to let her go; he would not listen to her. He spread his arms and seemed about to embrace her, when she, compelled to defend herself, pushed him away with all her strength. He tottered and fell into an arm-chair, where he made a queer face. Meanwhile, stumbling over chairs and striking against tables, Sayo-ko ran with great difficulty to an opposite window and shoved desperately on the door beyond the curtain. The glass did not break, but swung open. Overjoyed, she climbed on the window-sill. Hearing him cry "Failed" and feeling that he was running after her, she recklessly jumped down. Fortunately, the room being on the first floor, the window was low, and she was not much hurt. Nevertheless, she did tumble, and bruised her little finger on the

pebbles. She did not notice that at the time. Her master stuck his head out of the window and said something, but she could not distinguish the words. She ran around the house and tried to get to her own room, when suddenly she saw him standing at the porch. She could not conceive how he had got there. Looking through the twilight at Sayo, who was standing in the light gleaming from the window, he apologized, "That was all a joke, all a joke. I won't let it happen again. So come here," or something like that. For some inexplicable reason she became frightened when she heard his voice, and turned, and ran through the front gate into the street; without knowing what she was doing, she called to a jinrikisha which happened to be passing, and hired it without fixing the fare. 'Foolish girl!' she admitted she had had to pay thirty-five *sen* from Kioi-cho to this house.

The old lady, in retelling Sayo-ko's story, purposely or accidentally omitted or minimized some of the most important facts. Sayo-ko, though in a difficult position, endeavoured to correct or supplement the report; otherwise, the man would have appeared quite justified. Thus the story often became unintelligibly confused. Tetsuya unravelled it in his mind and arranged it in the order just given.

When the old lady had finished the narration, she went on, "That was how it happened. Yes, it may

be that her master's joke was rather too serious in some respects this evening, but the blame is not altogether on his side; some of the responsibility rests on Sayo. Yes, it does. Why? You see, the other night and tonight, too, doesn't she admit she didn't raise her voice even once? There, you see, if she runs away blushing without a protest, is it any wonder that he misunderstood her? Moreover, is it becoming in her, no longer a girl of fourteen or fifteen, to run away when she's only teased? All women when young will be cared for to some degree by men if they go among them. So if a girl persists in running home because some one winks at her, or because some one pats her on the back, she can't go into another's service in these days. So I've been telling her, that if her master cares for her, she must meet him tactfully 'like a willow meeting the wind'—and behave so cleverly as not to make him ashamed or to incur a silly trouble. This is the weakness of woman, yet it's this pliability that enables her to stand. Though it may be trying to her, I've been urging her to be patient and return to Mr. Shibuya's once more—"

Tetsuya interrupted in unusually decided tones, "That might be well enough with servants; but you know Sayo-san did not go as a servant. Isn't it rude to say or do such a nasty thing to a governess even if it were only a joke?" So inflamed with anger was Tetsuya that he practically lost control of himself.

"After hearing such a story, I would never consent to let her go back, even if she wanted to." He spoke positively, looking the old lady straight in the face.

The latter suddenly changed colour. "Is that so? Then do just as you please. As for me, Toki is worried and nearly crazy—why, this evening, when she saw this girl's face, she immediately got up and went to her own room. She wouldn't come out no matter what I said. So if this girl stays with us, everything will be in a turmoil; and that will be hard for her and for me, too, because I will have to act as a go-between for the two of them, and I don't like to be troubled that way. Besides, when I heard all about this affair, Mr. Shibuya did not seem to me to be so unbearable. So I've been urging her to return tonight, and if she finds after deliberation she can't endure it, then she might consult her brother and ask him to procure her some other good position. I've been telling her so, but if you insist on not allowing her to return, there's no help for it. Do as you like."

In a fit of passion, she struck her pipe with a bang against the edge of the *hibachi*.

Tetsuya softened his expression somewhat. "Is that so? I see some reason in your words, but this is an unusual case. You see, it's a case of risking a woman's purity. I cannot bear to ask Sayo-san to return to such a dangerous place, however much Toki-san may object. If I permit Sayo-san to suffer an-

guish from such a painful cause, I can make no apology to her deceased father."

Tetsuya said this without premeditation. A harsh look suddenly flashed in the old lady's eyes as she glared at him.

"You think I'm partial? To my mind, if I were to favour Sayo simply because she's not my real daughter, then I would be partial and unmotherly to her. Both girls are the same to me. So for the sake of both—"

"Excuse me. I may have stated it awkwardly. I meant that I could not sanction Sayo-san's return just now, even though I should be offending Toki-san somewhat."

The old lady became silent, but soon sighed, "Well, do as you please. However much I may worry, I can't help it."

"Then, let me do as I please," Tetsuya retorted positively, quite unlike himself. Turning to Sayo-ko, he said, "You need not go there any more. Stay here."

"Yes," Sayo-ko answered, her hands on the floor. "I am very sorry," she sobbed, throwing herself on the floor, "to cause you so much trouble—" She could look up no longer.

"Don't mention it," Tetsuya replied, with his eyes on her. "I am sure you suffered a great deal there." He winked his eyes rapidly.

The old lady arose and left the room.

CHAPTER IX

ON his arrival at school the following morning, Tetsuya received a telephone message asking him to stay at home that evening as Hamura wished to call. Though uninformed as to the nature of the visit, Tetsuya felt certain it related to Sayo-ko's recent flight. He went home a little earlier than usual and waited.

About seven o'clock Hamura arrived and was immediately whisked into the old lady's room. Nearly an hour later he came into Tetsuya's chamber with an expression of relief on his face. No sooner had he taken the cushion offered him than he began to talk in a loud unceremonious voice.

"Oh, I've been told everything, more than enough. I couldn't stand the complaints of those two veterans who wailed simultaneously. But you, who look so foolishly serious," gazing at Tetsuya's face as though surprised, "you can't be left unnoticed. I've heard all about it."

"About what?" Tetsuya asked.

"You needn't ask 'what.'" Suddenly he reached out his long arm and tapped Tetsuya on the knee. "Don't look so innocent—as if you couldn't stand the blame."

"Do you mean about Sayo?" Tetsuya frowned. "You will not misunderstand me, so I do not care if they tell you, but they are very disagreeable people. They are the incarnation of prejudice."

"You think so, I believe," Hamura remarked, making fun of him. "Toki-san is in such a fury, she's vomiting flames. I tell you Sayo-san will be burned to death if left with her for half-a-day. I say, dandy, what are you going to do?"

Again Tetsuya frowned. "Please stop making such nasty remarks even in fun. Sayo must be married some day."

"I see, I see. Pardon me. Hum! the mouth is a valuable organ; one may talk so honourably and yet treat a person who is to be married as you do."

"Stop talking nonsense," Tetsuya commanded. "I don't mind if you believe such women's tales and talk that way, but Sayo would be distressed."

"Then, are you really pure?"

"Of course."

"Sure?"

"If you continue to ask such questions, you will continue to be rude."

"Good, very good," Hamura somehow became fervent. "Then I'll ask you a question seriously. You are not going to keep Sayo-san for ever, are you? Will you give her away in marriage, if there is a good chance?"

"Well, if a good offer presents itself, I will give her away."

"Will you? Then, I'll present a good offer to you. What do you say? I say, sir," nodding, "wouldn't you give her to Shibuya at once?"

This offended Tetsuya. "Don't bother me with such senseless talk. I have many objections to Shibuya. If you had not come today, I intended to go to you."

"I expected you to object," answered Hamura, perfectly composed. "Listen to me without prejudice. Here is the situation. This morning the old man sent for me, and when I went to him, he told me about his failure of last night. As I'd heard such stories very often, this one didn't surprise me; but what did surprise me was the fact that he was entirely wrapped up in Sayo-san. After receiving not only bullets but veritable shells from her elbows, isn't it funny to hear him say, 'I feel an interest in her. She has her own excellent qualities'? Fu, fu, fu." He closed his mouth and pretended to repress his laughter with difficulty. "Isn't it funny when he says she has her own excellent qualities? It's precisely like the oral examinations of clerks for positions. He said he must get her, and asked me to consider the matter. This was exactly what I had anticipated; and I blew a big trumpet [exaggerated]. I said it was impossible. Her brother, even if worn thin and dry, was a

Bachelor of Laws. She could not be won so easily. He then explained that he did not mean to make her his mistress; he meant to make her a candidate for his wife. You won't understand what a candidate is. It's this. You know Madame Shibuya's consumption is very serious. She has already reconciled herself to it; we hear she has told her husband that, when she died, she thought he intended to marry Hama immediately (his present mistress; oh, a disgusting woman. I dislike her intensely, though I never show my feelings). She implores him not to marry her, whatever else he may do. She says she isn't jealous; it only concerns him whom she has regarded as the common property of all. She has no regret for her loss of him—doesn't she show a fine spirit?—she has no regret for her loss of him; but when she thinks of the hard work through which they built up such a big estate from a way-side pedlary, she can't bear the thought of the property's being dissipated by such an unworthy woman; and she won't be able to die in peace. So she wishes him to consult her and decide on a fiancée before she dies. Isn't that worthy of Madame Shibuya? She is perfectly sensible. The old man informs me that he's sure Sayo-san would be satisfactory to both. Yet, because he can't introduce her just now to Madame Shibuya to get her consent, he says he intends to have her live for the present in some cozy house somewhere. And as she

seems desirous of getting more education, he intends to let her go to school from that house. Isn't that a good offer? Eh, what do you think about it,—about asking Sayo-san?" He furtively looked into Tetsuya's face.

Tetsuya sneered. "I am sorry, but there is no need of asking Sayo. I refuse the offer for her."

"What?" exclaimed Hamura, staring with eyes wide open. "Why? What is your reason?"

"Why? I think everything you have said is false. Shibuya probably said he wished to make Sayo his mistress, or something like that."

Hamura burst into loud laughter. When he stopped, he said, "Be merciful. That's impossible. Joking aside, you must think it over well," winking his eyes rapidly, "I say, you must think this over carefully."

Tetsuya flatly declined the offer. "Don't trouble me with it. You say I must think it over, but why should I? However distressed I may find myself, I can never give my sister away as a mistress."

Hamura looked as if he wished to confess that he did not know how to deal with such an idiot. "Nobody said she was to be given as a mistress. It's implicitly promised that, when Madame Shibuya dies, Sayo-san shall take her place, you understand. For the time being, we'll let him defray her school expenses, and what they may do beyond that, we don't

care. Isn't that all right? It doesn't stain your reputation."

"Such meanness can never—"

"Why? Why is it mean? The victory is ours when we've placed Sayo-san. The connection with the old man will be established. The only thing left for me to do is to introduce you. I don't know what your relations are, but you can co-operate with each other, one inside the rich man's house, and the other outside; you can do any work. If you can't, you'll be a fool." He noticed Tetsuya grinning bitterly. "Everytime we come to the point of sending Sayo-san away, you look disgruntled. Even when Sayo-san has gone to the old man's you won't have to be so gloomy. She will never love such a dried-up old fellow from the bottom of her heart. As her brother, you can go to her even without permission. You can do just as you please," smiling significantly. "You understand me by this time."

Tetsuya scowled. "You are very suspicious. Haven't I told you often I am not allied in any way? Such an immoral—you ought to realize that if you think at all."

"I see, I see. You talk reasonably—you're a very disingenuous person. When I'm so frank, you should confess. However, that's immaterial. It's none of my business. After all, how about the proposition? Will you consent or won't you?"

"It's out of the question; there's no need to consider it." Tetsuya was obstinate and would not be moved.

"Is that so? Then do as you please. I won't be concerned any longer. I took you for a more sensible man, and so I put myself to a good deal of trouble in this. To be frank, the old man wished to keep Sayo-san as his mistress, but I thought you wouldn't consent, so I talked it over and persuaded him to accede to conditions which I thought should easily satisfy you. I have no ulterior motive, and I'll be sorry if you misunderstand me because I've always been egoistic. This time I haven't been selfish at all. I've got some humanity, and when I see you always distressed for common necessities, I can't help pitying you. Though I haven't heard from you directly, I know your domestic troubles pretty well, because Toki-san and her mother come now and then and tell me about them. This will be hard on you, too. I say, this will be hard on you." Tetsuya was obliged to say, "Yes." "That also, in my opinion, is your own harvest. It's wholly because you're clumsy. As I said the other day, you're for ever sticking to ideals, humanity, and the like. So whatever you do, is retarded; it doesn't get on smoothly. This is because you're obsessed by the spirit of old books. Become yourself and think this over as a living man. The present question will easily be solved. I admit, of course, I admit Sayo-san will probably say she

doesn't like such an old man, for she's a woman and young too, but in this you must help her forsake her youthful wishes. Then she'll think the better of his being old, if he's rich. She'll wish to dispose of him soon and live comfortably afterwards. If she comes to think in that way, she'll be happy, and you also will prosper. If you prosper, the gloomy wrinkles on the foreheads of Toki-san and her mother will naturally disappear. Oh, it's wonderful how everything would work out. If you stick to humanity, reputation, or some such absurdity for ever, your career will end unenviably. This is a living world. To keep alive in it, you mustn't kill the man in you—still that'll be impossible for you not to do."

Quite unlike himself, he grew somewhat sober and sad towards the close. Tetsuya also became sober and sad as he listened to his friend. Now he weakly lifted up his withered face.

"Thank you. When you talk so kindly and so frankly, I do not like to say anything equivocal. I will be frank. Your methods do not suit me at all. Life may be just as you describe, but however satisfactory all may be materially, it is impossible for me—to kill Sayo spiritually."

Hamura burst into loud laughter and looked up at the ceiling. "That won't do, that won't do. That won't do, because you've fallen in love with Sayo-san yourself."

With this, he arose quickly and went out through the paper-slides. Tetsuya thought he had gone to wash his hands, but suspected something when the other did not return, and clapped his hands to call Fuku. She informed him:

“Hamura-san? He’s just gone home.”

CHAPTER X

WE do not know how it was in former days, but now, when electric cars are so noisy, the most bustling place in Hongo every night is the street that runs in front of Sakuragi Shrine, past the police box on the corner of Shichōmé three or four blocks away, to the top of Tomi-zaka. Not only on Yakushi festival nights, which occur three times a month, but towards dusk every evening, venders station their shops on both sides of the street. When the glare of the electric lights against the sky is gay, the stream of traffic is endless and boisterous. Some people merely promenade, others are hurrying on business.

The glass-door of a bath-house, about midway down the street on the right-hand side, was opened with a rattle, and a young woman, holding in one hand a soap-box wrapped up in a wet towel, suddenly appeared. She was Sayo-ko, looking especially handsome after her bath. She did not seem so composed as usual; this evening she appeared to be in a hurry. She took no notice of the four or five college students who passed her, openly admiring her, saying, "Beautiful" and "*Schön.*" Threading her way through the throng, she went some ten yards to the west, hesitated a moment, and looked around timidly. Though the

street passing the wafer-baker's shop a little beyond led to her home, she did not go that way. She hid herself behind a housewife with a baby on her back and a small bundle in her arms, and turned quickly into a by-street on the opposite side. This led to Kikuzaka. Formerly, on the left-hand side, there was a weedy field, Byōin-ga-hara; now, newly-built shops stand in a row from the corner along the lane. Behind these shops is a piece of vacant ground, and the weeds which grow there in patches seem like relics of former days.

Sayo-ko, not seeming to like the glare of the lights, passed the shops with her eyes on the ground. She turned to the left around the corner of a coarse ware shop,¹ and disappeared into the darkness of the vacant ground. She hesitated a moment and looked about, whereupon a black figure which had just left the wall near by approached her. She recognized him and walked up to him joyfully.

"I am sorry to have kept you waiting," she said, bowing slightly. "Have you been here long?"

"No, not long." The voice was Tetsuya's.

"I was in a great hurry, but I happened to meet one of our neighbours, and I felt it would be awkward to leave immediately after entering."

"Our one-eyed neighbour? She must have bored you. Let us walk and talk as we walk."

¹ A shop where straw sandals, ropes, brooms, dusters, etc., are sold.

The shadows of the two moved side by side.

"Now, about what time did you leave home?"

"I? Immediately after seven."

"So? Then—" He stopped, pulled out his watch from his *obi* (he had on Japanese clothes that night), and looked at it by the aid of the starlight. "It is too dark. I cannot make it out. Sayo-san's eye may be able to see it. Just look."

"Yes." She drew near and peered, yet could not tell the time. "Just a moment." She took the watch in her own hands, but found it difficult to handle, for it was chained to his *obi*. She turned it this way and that, and the shadows of the two commingled. The ribbon adorning her pompadour hair fluttered just below Tetsuya's nose. Attracted by the warm, sweet emanation from her, Tetsuya gazed dreamily on her fair cheeks. Although he suspected that she had powdered her face, he could not discern the scent; he perceived that her complexion was of a natural fairness.

"Seven thirty—thirty-two or -three. It is somewhere near that." She quickly drew away from him and remarked as if to herself, "Have I been in the bath so long?"

"It will be all right till eight, will it?"

"Yes."

"Then let us talk at once about our business."

Again they began to walk. They talked of the business for which they had met. It was very simple. He had learned that a girls' school might need a clerk, and he asked her if she felt inclined to take the position as a step toward leaving home. It was not an offer to be refused, and Sayo-ko consented, adding, ". . . if I am capable of filling the position." This was the substance of their talk, and very brief it seems. Such business might just as well have been transacted at home, any one would say; but they, the ones directly concerned, would not agree to this.

After they had finished their business, they became silent for a short time. As they strolled along Masago-cho, Tetsuya, stepping lightly over a puddle, said:

"Doesn't your sister speak to you yet?"

Sayo-ko shook her head, "No."

"She is really hard to live with, isn't she?" With a sigh, he continued, "Mother is not so bad, I hope?"

"No, but she also—"

"Doesn't she speak to you?"

"Yes, she does, yet always ill-naturedly, and—"

"Ah, I expected as much from her—what does she say?" He turned to Sayo-ko, but as she did not reply, he went on, "I think she suspects something between us and says a lot of invidious things, doesn't she?"

"Yes."

She said no more, but on her face appeared an indescribably painful expression, which Tetsuya on account of the darkness did not notice.

"It must make you unhappy to hear such things all the time at home."

"You, more than I—you must feel unhappy, I know."

"Oh, I am a man. I do not mind at all. The situation is different with you, for you have to marry sometime."

"I have made up my mind not to marry anybody—"

"You talk that way—"

The conversation ceased at this point. Each seemed absorbed in thought and walked silently on. When they came to the street leading to the top of Tomi-zaka, they found themselves in a somewhat crowded thoroughfare. As if they had previously consulted, they avoided the crowds on Shin-zaka and began to descend the ancient incline of Tomi-zaka, now almost deserted. Four or five men who looked like carpenters carrying tool-boxes on their shoulders passed them. One of them cleared his throat, and at once a pebble sailed through the air and landed at their feet. Tetsuya looked around to see the men going away laughing noisily.

"Rude men!" he muttered grumblingly, and soon added sadly, "It's only to be expected; we are mis-

understood even by our own family. We, brother and sister, cannot talk freely together at home. It's too disgusting to be talked about."

This was their third meeting away from home, and each time Tetsuya felt the same way. Sayo-ko, unable to endure the feeling, inclined her head silently. Presently she looked up.

"This is all my fault. Would it not be better for me to go to Chiba at once, I wonder?"

"You mean, to accept the position as Bible-woman you mentioned the other day? Don't, don't. It won't pay to go into the country."

"But—"

"Never mind. Don't worry so, but leave everything to me. Of course one cannot stay long in such a home as ours. This I understand very well. If today's position does not materialize, I will make another attempt, and I will surely find something for you by the end of this month; and then I will consider for myself."

"What? Consider what?" she demanded.

"Well," Tetsuya hesitated a little. "I will be frank with you. Even I cannot endure this for ever. Unless something changes in time—"

"Then, brother, you mean you also will leave home?" She thoughtfully looked up at him.

"Well—yes. Unless something changes—" He spoke ambiguously.

So absorbed were they in their conversation that they did not realize they had descended the slope. When they took note of their surroundings, they found themselves on Kasuga Street. On one side was the Military Arsenal; on the other, a row of shops which lighted the street but hazily; despite this, the time being yet early evening, the traffic was incessant. The two began to walk quickly. When they reached the bottom of Iki-zaka, they turned into a street, somewhat like an alley and somewhat like a bystreet. They ascended a steep, almost perpendicular slope to the plateau of Yumi-cho, where on the farther side stood a long building that reminded them of the dwelling of an ancient feudal lord; in the foreground, the plateau ended in a cliff. The Suido bridge could be seen clearly beyond the wavy roof-tiles below. A fine view, but no one would come at this time of evening merely to see it. The pair had looked forward to this as a safe place for conversation and, as of one thought, stopped as soon as they reached it.

"Brother," Sayo-ko was the first to speak. When he faced her she looked quickly away. "As to what you have just said—"

"You mean my leaving home?"

"Yes,—could you not think it over again?"

"Why?"

"If you should do that, my sister would be in too pitiable a condition."

"She will only be reaping her own harvest. There is no way to help it."

"But I am the cause. It is all my fault."

"No, how can that be? You are not connected with the matter in any way."

"If I had not returned, I am sure my sister would not be so suspicious. Then peace in your home might have been possible."

"No, that is only your over-sensitiveness. The cause of the estrangement is the tremendous difference in our dispositions. It is truer to say that you are getting hurt in some other people's quarrel."

"Is that so, I wonder?"

"It must be so."

Sayo-ko sighed. "My sister is really in the wrong; though I fear I might appear immodest, I wonder if I ought not advise her just this once."

"No, no. If you talk to her, and you are not exceedingly circumspect, she will misunderstand you the more."

"What shall I do—"

"Don't worry so. I have not finally made up my mind yet," he answered soothingly. Unable to control his feelings, he added, "Cool and cruel as she is, you regard her as your elder sister and worry so, and what does she do? She hates you like an enemy. Why is there such a difference in character between sisters, I wonder?"

Sayo-ko did not reply to this. After a thoughtful pause, "Brother," she addressed him in a voice, low but so painful that it seemed to hurt her, "may I not go to Chiba after all?"

This surprised him, and he turned on her. "You still think of that? Haven't I told you you are quite guiltless? If you tear yourself from home in that way, you will only hasten the rupture."

"Whichever way I consider it, I find I am to blame."

"I don't know how to deal with you. I will tell you everything. The reason I hesitate to take the decisive step is not that I shall miss your sister; I am not sorry to part with her, yet if I do, I shall cease to be your brother."

Tetsuya obviously spoke without previous thought, but at his words Sayo-ko suddenly paled. In the darkness he perhaps did not notice this.

After an interval of silence, Sayo-ko looked up. "What time is it now, please?"

"Let me see." He pulled out his watch. The place was open, and even he could see easily. "Why, it's half past eight."

"Oh, is it so late?" In a fright, "I must go home, or—"

"Well." He muttered the word as though he were obliged to say something to agree. "Let us go together as far as the next corner."

They were going to the same house, and they re-

gretted that they could not go together. The corner was so near, they reached it before either spoke. They arrived there so soon that another impulse seized them, and they walked to the next corner. There they stopped. Sayo-ko bowed slightly, saying, "Excuse me for going before you."

When she had taken five or six steps, Tetsuya called her back, "Just a minute."

"Yes." She hurried back.

They stood facing each other, and there being no passer-by, Tetsuya drew close to Sayo-ko.

"Tomorrow evening," handling the ribbon of her *haori* unconsciously, "I wonder if we cannot meet again."

She permitted him to play with the ribbon. "We may if we try, but if we meet every evening—"

"Will they suspect us?"

"Yes."

"Then—" He suddenly grasped her hand, shook it once, and said smilingly, "Good-bye."

Sayo-ko smiled and said nothing. She soon disappeared into the darkness of a bystreet.

CHAPTER XI

NEVER before had she been so late in returning from her bath. As this was the first evening she had returned so late, would not her sister suspect her, would not her mother say something to her? Sayo-ko hurried home, her mind wholly occupied with such apprehensions. She found that her mother and sister, whom she so feared, had been talking tête-à-tête in the dining-room about something very serious, but at the opening of the lattice door, they became silent. Sayo-ko felt unusually timid; she almost wished she could run into the servant's room and hide; but she could not do that. She entered the dining-room reluctantly, spoke to them, and was about to retire when the old lady stopped her. Sayo-ko was startled and almost paralysed with fear; her heart suddenly began to beat faster. When she took her seat, as they obliged her to do, the old lady glared at her.

“How long you were! Have you been bathing all this time?”

“Yes—well, I—” she faltered. “I have been taking a walk.”

“All alone?” The old lady's eyes gleamed.

“No—when I went out of the bath house—I met one of my old friends.” She hung her head, because she wished to hide the expression of pain on her face.

"Stop, mother," Toki-ko smiled coldly. "How can you expect this girl to confess frankly? She isn't so artless, you know."

"Do keep still." The old lady made a sign with her pipe, quieting the daughter. Then turning to Sayo-ko again, "By one of your old friends, do you mean a man, or do you mean a woman?"

"Yes."

"'Yes' isn't intelligible, is it? Which?"

"A woman." There was a little tremor in her voice.

"Yes, a woman—but just now you and a strange person—"

"Mother, do stop," Toki-ko insisted angrily as though she could not bear the talk longer. "With whom was she walking? Isn't it clear without asking her? Reputation is nothing to some people. It's quite clear they were walking, linked hand in hand, through the streets." She stood up. "It's really too foolish and can't be listened to." She said this as a soliloquy and left the room.

"It's always like that. She acts like a crazy person and can't be managed," the old lady grumbled, but she did not seem particularly offended. She turned to Sayo-ko again. "Draw a little nearer." Sayo-ko hesitated. The old lady in a fit of passion commanded, "If I say draw near, draw near." Her voice became harsh.

Sayo-ko moved forward a little on her knees, and then hung her head dispiritedly within the shadow of the lamp. The old lady smoked a puff to compose herself.

"If you hide the facts, you won't do yourself any good. Understand me? Tell everything. You've been somewhere with your brother, haven't you?" She looked at Sayo-ko harshly with her sharp eyes.

Oh, how painful it was to have to tell a lie! Though Sayo-ko should have anticipated that, she, who was a Christian, thought nothing so painful. They had not met on any shameful business, and she thought she might as well confess everything; but if she did, her brother, who always thought of her welfare so much, would be troubled. Cause her brother trouble, she could not, however hard it might be for her to conceal the truth. She determined not to confess even if she should die for it; and in a cold perspiration, she lied:

"No."

"No?" The old lady did not seem to believe her, and yet she did not probe further. "It'll be all right then, but you were so long coming home, your sister was very much worried! However much I tried to soothe her, saying such a thing would be impossible, she wouldn't listen to me, but made up her mind that such was the case. She was so irritated, it made me exceedingly miserable to look at her. A quarrel be-

tween sisters might be overlooked sometimes, but you're quarrelling over grabbing your elder sister's husband. Isn't it exactly like a quarrel between dogs or other brutes? Don't you mind it at all when you're talked about like that by your elder sister? Don't you get angry? I say, Sayo, say something." Her voice became harsher towards the end.

Sayo-ko raised her sad face. "I am very sorry to be late and to have worried you so, but—but I have done nothing shameful; and sister—" hanging her head again, "need not talk so cruelly—" Her voice broke.

"Even you must be sorry to be called a dog?" The old lady maliciously questioned her again.

Sayo-ko could not bear this and at last began to weep. The old lady kept her eyes fixed on her.

"If you're so sorry, oughtn't you to behave so your sister couldn't say such a thing? It's only natural for her to talk that way. You're the cause of it all. Just think, when you got a good place and went to serve there, you immediately began to long for home, and you came running back. And since then, have you done your best to find a place to work? Will anybody think you don't wish to stay here? You wish to stay, though there's no reason for so wishing; and as for your brother, whenever you're mentioned, he'll change the look in his eye and make a great ado. Isn't it quite natural for your sister to get suspicious? More-

over, if you've really no intention of remaining here, there's no reason why you should be so puzzled as to where to go. You see, there's an excellent position right at the tip of your nose."

"An excellent position?" Sayo-ko looked up inquiringly.

"Mr. Shibuya's offer, of course."

"But that is—" She hesitated.

"What?" the old lady demanded, straightening herself. Sayo-ko did not speak; the other continued, "You may have an immodest objection to it and call it a low position, but didn't I tell you repeatedly the other day it wasn't such a position? He'll let you study at his own expense for the time being, and in time he'll marry you. You could rarely meet with such an excellent offer, even if you went in search of one in seven-leagued boots. Of course, from your point of view, you may fear that you won't succeed because of O-Hama-san. But that shrewd Hamura-san, who isn't like your brother, will be with you; and he'll help you. There's a great difference in your ages, but a thing satisfactory in every respect is hardly possible. You must put up with that. This is a capital offer, and if I were you, I would consent immediately. Your brother dogmatically declined it from the beginning, and you're hesitating. When this is considered, not only your sister, but everybody will suspect something," she reasoned cleverly; and then added, "so if

you've done nothing to be ashamed of, you've no need to be so perplexed about a position. You'd better ask your brother to arrange matters, so you can be cared for by Mr. Shibuya." Sayo-ko still kept silent. "You see, oughtn't you to do so? If I speak to your brother directly, he'll get terribly angry; but if you, his favourite, mention it, he might change his mind, and you see—if you have done nothing to be ashamed of," she added irritatingly. "You understand the condition of things in our home, for you've been here every day. After you went to Mr. Shibuya's, there was a quarrel here over you, and since that quarrel, your brother and sister, who are husband and wife, haven't, it seems to me, slept in the same room a single night; and you know they seldom talk to each other. If this goes on, there's no telling where things will end. I wish to ask some one to make up their quarrel soon, but Yanasé-san, their go-between, has gone to Nagasaki, and your uncle isn't here now. You don't know how much I worry."

Her voice trembled, and she stopped. Soon she pulled out a carefully folded handkerchief from her sleeve, blew her nose sharply, and wiped her eyes.

"So, you see, please overlook minor objections. Ask your brother as if you yourself desired it, and go to Mr. Shibuya's. Then you will not only succeed in life, but prove your innocence, and your sister, too, will feel at ease; and also your brother, if you're in

such a position, won't fare badly, I'm sure—he won't fare badly, I'm sure," she repeated. "You see, if your brother succeeds because of your influence, your sister won't think ill of you. She'll repent of the words she uttered just now, and she'll ask your pardon. If she doesn't, I'll make her. You see, it all depends on you whether everything will be concluded smoothly and whether everybody can succeed. Please understand this, and go to Mr. Shibuya's. You see—"

She repeated "you see" many times, but Sayo-ko still remained silent. The old lady repeated the same idea over and over again until it became irritatingly monotonous; but Sayo-ko still kept silent; at last the old lady's eye glistened.

"I've spoken plainly and carefully. Don't you understand me yet?"

She glared furiously. That instant the small front door opened with a clatter.

"Sst," she made a smacking noise with her tongue. "Your brother's come home. Well, then, please think it over; I don't need to hear your answer at once."

Sayo-ko said nothing. She kept her head bent over and did not move.

CHAPTER XII

ON the afternoon of a warm autumnal day, just the sort of weather that tempts an elderly person to venture out, the old lady left the house to make a call. Fuku, the servant, had gone out on an errand. Thinking to take advantage of their absence, Sayo-ko peeped into her elder sister's room and saw the back of Toki-ko, who sat near the veranda with the paper-slides open, busily sewing, a task which had not occupied her for a long time. Sayo-ko considered this a rare opportunity and resolved to speak of what she had pondered the whole preceding sleepless night. Hardly was she on the point of carrying out her resolution than her bashful heart began to beat faster and made her hesitate. Compelling herself, she softly entered, shut the door quietly, moved up to her sister, and sat down timidly behind her. She hazarded, "Sister." Toki-ko looked around, a wrinkle of suspicion on her forehead, ran eyes up and down Sayo-ko as if measuring her, and, turning away without a word, began to sew busily.

"Sister, I am sorry to interrupt, but I have a little to say to you." Sayo-ko waited for a response; the other continued to act as though she were oblivious of any interruption; Sayo-ko pleaded, "I say," and, mov-

ing nearer, gazed up into the other's face. "I say, sister."

"What a nuisance! You've no right to call me 'sister' now." Toki-ko went on sewing more busily than before.

"Don't be so harsh; please listen. Last night mother talked to me, and I thought everything over all night without a wink of sleep. I'm really sorry to have caused you so much trouble, and I sincerely ask your pardon for any offence of mine. Please excuse me, sister. You sadly misunderstand me, but the fault is all mine, because I have not been frank with you. Today I wish to tell you everything without reserve. Please listen, sister." While she spoke, the accelerated beating of her heart subsided, and her tone gradually became composed. Her sister did not answer; Sayo-ko repeated, "I say, sister."

"If you wish to chatter, chatter as much as you please." Toki-ko did not even turn to her. "If you sit there and chatter, I can't avoid hearing you, because I've got ears."

Sayo-ko obeyed. "I shall tell you everything, so only listen, and do not be offended." She paused for a little while. "Sister, I am sorry—" She hung her head; tears fell rapidly onto her knees. "With my brother!—oh, can I be such an immoral girl? Aren't you too cruel, sister? Of course, I have been attending to his comforts as much as I could, because

mother told me to and I myself thought I should have to be taken care of by him. And besides, to be frank, I really did not think very well of you, sister; you were—unkind to him, and I felt very sorry, and I tried to keep him from feeling his unfortunate condition so I attended to his comforts in your place. At times I may have intruded upon your privileges. Now I see I did wrong. I should have asked you to do such things for him—” After a thoughtful pause, “I was wrong. Please pardon me, sister. I meddled so much that you and brother naturally became estranged from each other. I cannot find a satisfactory excuse; I was a fool. I did not think of it; and because brother seemed glad to be served by me and because I felt happy to be addressed kindly, I may have taken more care in attending to his comforts—” She reflected. “Yes, I did, I am sure. When you looked at us from the side, you may have thought it strange; but of anything impure such as you suspect me, I am really—”

Toki-ko suddenly stood up and left the room. Sayo-ko, earnestly trying to explain her position, now had the edge of her eagerness blunted; and this disappointed her. She looked sadly at the back of the person leaving the room. She listlessly folded her hands on her knees, and waited. Toki-ko returned after a time with some pieces of cloth for which she had evidently gone, and knelt down on her cush-

ion, her back still turned. Sayo-ko regarded her sister.

"Sister, I am sorry to discuss such things, but unless I do, I shall be under a disgusting suspicion for ever; and you hardly condescend to speak to me. You are the only person lineally related to me, and when I think that we are involved in such a quarrel, I feel miserable—" Her tears fell rapidly. "I am speaking with my whole heart, so—" she hesitated, "you might listen a little more attentively."

"Don't make a fool of me," Toki-ko faced around and glared at Sayo-ko. "Understand that I'm not yet such a fool as to listen seriously to your coquetish story of winning your brother." She stuck out her chin and turned away again. "How far is she going to make me out a fool, I wonder?"

Sayo-ko watched her elder sister's profile sadly. Toki-ko evidently had entangled her thread; she broke it irritably, made it into a ball, and threw it away. She passed a new thread through the eye of the needle and again began to sew, her manner betokening her resolve to ignore the other. Sayo-ko heaved a sigh.

"Sister, won't you please rid yourself of your suspicions?" Toki-ko did not reply. "Then there is no way to help it. This has been my home for a long time, yet I think I shall leave, say, tomorrow. Then you will feel at ease. Sister," she spoke sor-

rowfully, "you may blame me entirely for the trouble between you and brother, but I think you also have done wrong. Unless you sympathize more with him and take care of him, even if I should leave here—"

"Mind your own business," Toki-ko interrupted, and she was provoked. "Whether I take care of him or not, you've got no right to give commands. I'm not so skilful in flattery as you, and I know your brother won't be satisfied with me. What of that? He, he," laughing nasally. "Leave home! That'll serve your purpose better. You can't speak freely to each other at home, but elsewhere you will be able to take him in and spend the whole day in a careless, foolish way, you see."

"Why, when I leave home, I shall not stay in Tokyo, of course. I am going to Chiba."

"One can go from Tokyo to Chiba and return the same day."

"If you want to suspect, there is not limit, sister."

"Unless I'm very careful, I shall be made a fool of, you see. You're so ingenious in deceit."

Sayo-ko sighed again. "There is no way to help it," she soliloquized. "Why do you suspect me so much, I wonder? Have you any solid evidence to justify such suspicions?"

"I don't think you improve your case by asking for evidence."

"Oh, why?"

"When I show you evidence you will blush, no matter how shameless you are."

Sayo-ko hesitated a moment. On reflection, she did not think there could be any evidence.

"No, if there is any, please show it to me. It would be easier for me to clear myself when I have some sort of evidence to explain than when I am vaguely suspected."

"Is that so? If you insist upon seeing it, I'll produce it." And taking out of her spool drawer, a sheet of paper, folded yet much wrinkled, she threw it towards Sayo-ko. "What about this?"

Sayo-ko started! Yes, she did recognize it! It was a letter, you may call it a secret letter if you like, which she had privately handed to her brother the day after she had run home from Mr. Shibuya's. She wrote to thank him for his kindness on the preceding night. She also added that, because of mother's advice, and in order to allay her sister's suspicions, she would not attend to his comforts any more, and that she would avoid speaking to him wherever possible; and she asked him not to take it ill. That was the substance of the letter. Though her sister's suspicions were more or less connected with the letter, it contained nothing that had to be hidden; and Sayo-ko felt more at ease; still, she was at a loss to explain it at the moment.

"Explain that," Toki-ko sneered. "Staying in the

same house and meeting each morning and evening, you do something very unusual when you write letters."

"This is the only letter, and I had mother's advice, too."

"I see. Did she tell you to write to him?"

"No, not that. I could not observe her advice alone unless I told brother, too, what mother had said."

"Couldn't you speak to him about it?"

"Mother had forbidden me to go to his room, and I could not go to say it. And it was such that I could not tell him before mother and you. I could not help writing."

"If I say one thing, you dodge around it—" The blue veins appeared on Toki-ko's forehead. "If you're so obstinate," she produced from the same drawer a strip of a newspaper and immediately threw it to Sayo-ko, "look at this."

At a glance Sayo-ko's face paled. She did not understand how it had been found by Toki-ko. It was a little note appointing the hour of meeting for the preceding night. All it said was, "To the bath about seven."

"Well, are you still stubborn?" Toki-ko demanded angrily.

Glaring fiercely at Sayo-ko, who sat pale and silent, Toki-ko resumed, "Directly at the stroke of seven last

night, you went to bathe. That coincides precisely with the note there. This must be your handwriting, though it's written with a pencil; and how did such a note find its way into your brother's sleeve? Now, if you can say anything to explain it, say it now—say it now." When Sayo-ko did not reply, a sneering smile appeared on Toki-ko's face. "You can't, you see. You're very adept at finding excuses, but you can't explain this, and no wonder! Hem! you met an old friend, did you? Fixing the hour of meeting in the day-time, and leaving the house in the evening, pretending to go to the bath, and meeting somewhere, and going together to some strange house, that's what you did. What! You do such a thing, yet think people don't know it, and you say, 'Sister does wrong in neglecting brother. I have been attending to his comforts in her place.'" She mimicked the other. "Yes, you've helped your sister surprisingly well. I thank you. I am indebted to you for spoiling my husband." She stopped for some time, and then continued vindictively. "What do I care for such a man now? If you're so anxious to have him, I'll give him away. Take him anywhere you like."

Scarcely had Sayo-ko wiped away her tears when she began, "Sister, I was wrong—please pardon me. I did wrong to meet him clandestinely, but such an impure thing I have never—"

“What! Who’ll believe such a story now?” She refused to listen.

“I cannot help your reproof now, because I did wrong; but I only walked with him and consulted him about my own welfare. That was all. Going to some strange house—you are too cruel—”

“If you wish to explain, explain it a little more consistently. What a lie! You talk of consulting him about your own welfare! If you wish to consult him, you should be able to do that honourably at home in front of us all.”

“But if—” Sayo-ko hesitated. If she consulted at home, she knew her own desires would not be considered; mother and sister would decide everything just as they wished. Her brother talked with her away from home out of kindness. Thus she reflected, but she dared not confess it. Ah, what should she say? She could think of nothing.

“You can’t explain, and yet you insist you’re not guilty of any unseemly relations?”

“I am—”

“Not guilty? Running away from public view, and meeting secretly, and yet no unseemly relations—how can you tell such an obvious lie with a straight face?”

She received these many upbraidings one after another; yet so long as she did not explain she could not defend herself. She was sorry for her brother;

she thought she could not avoid confessing everything now, and she almost decided to do so; still, she could not make up her mind. She procrastinated.

"No one will believe such a lie. If you can make a more consistent explanation, do so. If you can't, it's because you're morally guilty with your brother."

Oh, how cruel, Sayo-ko thought!

"Then I will confess everything. If I consulted him at home, my own desires would not be considered, because you misunderstand me and dislike me so much. So for my sake, brother—"

"That's enough," Toki-ko cried, carried away by a fit of passion. "Your brother is always making a big fuss over you. He loves you and he hates me." Suddenly she began to cry; and she added sorrowfully, "Oh, you needn't tell me. I know that."

"Oh, I did not mean that, I only—"

"I won't listen. I won't listen any more. She said she wished to explain, and I listened to her, wondering what she would say, but she speaks as if she were proud of his affection—how foolish!" Toki-ko gnashed her teeth.

Sayo-ko remonstrated faintly: "Oh, sister," unconsciously grasping the other's arm, "please do not get so angry. I never meant such a—"

"The brute!" With a shrill scream like the tearing of silk, the older girl raised up the two-foot rule and brought it down on Sayo-ko's cheek with a "pssh."

Howling in pain, Sayo-ko jerked her hand to her cheek and looked at her sister offendedly and sorrowfully.

"Sister, that's too much—"

"What's too much? Having stolen a sister's husband, what's too much? Ungrateful—d-d-dog! The brute!"

With a sad sobbing scream, Sayo-ko threw herself on the floor, her shoulders heaving like waves.

Precisely at that moment the old lady returned, and hearing the noise in the innermost room, hurried there. She entered, astonished at the sad state of 'flowers knocked off in great confusion'¹ in which she found the sisters. She soothed the one and scolded the other, and incidentally scolded Fuku for her impropriety in stupidly peeping in. After sending her and Sayo-ko away, the old lady began to talk in a low voice to Toki-ko; so for some time all was still.

Quitting the room, Sayo-ko at once entered the dressing-room. Fuku followed and jabbered something; Sayo-ko scolded, seeming to be annoyed with her that day for the first time, and sent her away to the kitchen. Sayo-ko leaned against her chest of drawers, which had been purchased for her at the time of her marriage, and drooped her head dispiritedly. Suddenly she threw up her head, and took

¹ Japanese figure signifying that something very beautiful has been pathetically damaged by an unexpected calamity—usually by a quarrel.

the mirror-stand from the top of the chest, and examined her face in it. The bruise where she had just been struck appeared swollen and black. She quickly covered her face with her sleeve and wept again. By and by, when she ceased, she looked up resolutely and gazed at the carpet-bag on the shelf. She stood on the foot-stool and took it down. She quickly opened the drawers of the chest and the willow trunk, too. She took out her clothes, *obi*, *tabi* [stockings], and everything else of which she might be in immediate need; and then hesitated thoughtfully.

The old lady entered abruptly. No sooner had her eyes met Sayo-ko's than she sat down and expressed her surprise at the girl's conduct. How dared she do such a thing! The old lady would not listen to what Sayo-ko had to say in explanation. After reprimanding her and complaining of her, the old lady demanded to know what she intended to do after perpetrating such a deed. Alas! her mother believed only her sister and would not listen to Sayo-ko; she thought it unfair of her mother, but soon felt that she did not care what happened. She stated that she was going to Chiba; that Katsumi-san had offered her a position, and she wished to be a Bible-woman—something like a nun who went her rounds reading Sutra before family altars. She talked simply, so that the old lady could understand.

Yes, yes. Katsumi-san was the man whom her friend had married, a pastor or something like that who came with his wife to see them the other day; if he was the man, the old lady had met him, and she thought nothing could be more fortunate. She was glad rather than relieved. She appeared to have forgotten that only on the previous night she had urged the girl to go to Shibuya's. When Sayo-ko mentioned that she was going to see her brother at school on her way and tell him briefly about it, the old lady's face clouded. If she saw her brother, he would not allow her to go immediately. A better plan would be to go without telling him, and later the old lady would tell him that Katsumi-san came that day and wished to have her assistance for a few days; and that he had taken her with him. Would it not be better to stay at Chiba and settle there and leave him uncertain as to what she meant to do? Her years had endowed the elderly woman with a good deal of shrewdness. Sayo-ko considered a moment and consented. The other's mood at once improved when the girl obeyed her so readily. Sayo-ko, unlike her elder sister, was obedient. The latter, even as a child, had been quick-tempered and, whenever angry, lost all regard for her parents and sister; she would doubtless continue to cause her mother trouble until her death. Sayo-ko must feel sorry that she had received a blow, but she had better think it was her own fault and forget it.

If she remained there for a time, her mother would find her a good family to marry into and would send for her at once. So the old lady spoke her apparently soothing words, and abruptly lowering her voice, looked at her anxiously and asked if she had money. Sayo-ko had intact the money she received when she left Sekiya, where she had been married. When she mentioned this to the other, the latter at last felt relieved, saying that she would not need any more. She decided on the plan of sending her belongings later. She helped Sayo-ko with the clothes in which she was going, and then went to send for a jinrikisha. Meanwhile Sayo-ko quickly disposed of the things scattered about and finished her toilet. She wished to leave a line at least for her brother, but soon decided not to do so. She entered the dining-room and was talking of something or other, when the jinrikisha came. Sayo-ko rested her hands on the floor, and bowing humbly, said she was now leaving, and thanked her mother for the kindness she had long shown her. She stated that, as her sister was offended, she would not say good-bye to her; and she asked her mother to give her best wishes to her brother. She stood up to leave, and the old lady followed to the porch to see her off. There again Sayo-ko said her parting words. They were both unusually composed; neither shed a tear. Sayo-ko walked to the gate and entered the waiting jinrikisha, which held

her bag. When the runner lifted the shafts to start, Fuku, not knowing what to say, stammered out, "G-good-bye. Come back soon." When Sayo-ko heard this, for some reason she felt her heart suddenly swell, and she was on the verge of tears. In her confusion she covered her face with her handkerchief. She had left the house on Yumi-cho for the last time, alas! before Tetsuya returned.

CHAPTER XIII

WHEN the jinrikisha left Yumi-cho and rolled along Hongo Street, Sayo-ko noticed against the dusky evening sky of early winter crows flying past the electric wires in twos or threes to their nests. She too had a house, yet she had nowhere to stay. She had now left her birth-place and was on her way to seek shelter in the home of an acquaintance; and the thought that most of the passers-by at that hour of the day were going home, made her envy their fortunate lot. Ah! a cottage in the wilderness, if she could call it her home, would be better than a 'golden palace bedecked with jewels' which she could not call her own. She had never really enjoyed that sweetness of home. She had her birth-place; but she could not stay there. When she contemplated her future as one who had to wander alone in this miserable world, Sayo-ko felt deeply conscious of her misfortunes.

She reflected that about half a year ago her husband, upon whom she had completely depended, died. When, as an unfortunate widow, she returned home, her unmotherly mother and her sister, with whom she could not agree, treated her as if she were in the way. Though they always acted as if they wished her to leave, alas! she had no place to go, and she

could only stay patiently on. Each time she felt sad, she keenly missed her real mother, whose face even she did not know; and she hungered after the dreamy memory of her father, who had been so tender; sometimes she would speak to his photograph. Men were as plentiful as pebbles on the beach—they could not be numbered; but they were all strangers to her. She could rely upon none of them. To a friendless and helpless person, living in a great city was no better than living in the remotest part of the mountains.

What Sayo-ko had to rely upon now was God's blessing; and what she had to cling to were the teachings of his Son, Christ; but both of them were lofty, sacred, and divine; for a woman as sinful as she they were beyond reach, even had she wished to receive the blessing, or endeavoured to cling to the teachings. Though she prayed or though she sang hymns, her solitary life was still solitary; sometimes she cried alone over the unbearable loneliness. The strange thing was that she gradually grew intimate with her brother-in-law, Tetsuya, toward whom at first she had felt very reserved. She received his warm and sincere sympathy, and this world which had been pitch dark became as light as a dawning sky. When she thought that even she had a shadow following her, her feeling of solitude became more bearable; sometimes she reflected that, though condemned as a world of misery, it was really not so. Inhumanly treated

as she was by her mother and sister, Sayo-ko did at times smile from the bottom of her heart. When she began to feel more at ease, she felt the more grateful to him for his kindness; and also the more hopeful; she could not dismiss the feeling that pervaded her heart. Though sister was not kind, yet Sayo-ko felt thankful to her, for through her she had gained a good brother. Just at the time when she was rejoicing to think that fortune had begun to smile on her, a groundless jealousy on the part of her sister came between Sayo-ko and her brother; and she could not live near him any longer. Now of her own accord she had to turn her back on his sincere and whole-hearted tenderness and had to begin a hopeless life again. If he should construe her departure from Tokyo without even bidding him good-bye to mean ingratitude, and should grieve over it—this might be simple egotism on her part—if he should despise her, what should she do? When her mother advised her to go without seeing him, she consented, because to see him would make the parting more difficult; but if she did not see him, she would violate a human obligation. Should she turn back her jinrikisha? No, no. Going without seeing him would be for mutual—

“Oh, I wonder if that isn’t brother—”

As she rode along Yanagiwara Street, Sayo-ko unconsciously leaned out of her jinrikisha and

watched a man in foreign clothes walking on her right.

The man resembled Tetsuya both in stature and in gait; when he turned toward her, she was disappointed; he did not look in the least like Tetsuya; on reflection, however, she knew of no reason why he should be in such a place at such a time. She realized her folly, yet was inclined to hope the hopeless. If only she could meet him now! Meanwhile she had passed through Yanagiwara. In spite of her reluctance to leave, her jinrikisha hurried her on and had already taken her across Ryogoku Bridge, when she thought she heard a familiar voice call, "Sayo-san." She looked everywhere, but she could not see anybody like him. The moment she discovered it to be another illusion, her jinrikisha swung around a corner, and the gay glare of the station's electric lights came into view. Now she could only resign herself to fate. No sooner had the jinrikisha man panted up and gently lowered the shafts than the engine whistled shrilly, and the train was off. Ah, she was behind time! On thinking it over, though she had resigned herself, she felt rather glad than otherwise. The runner was sorry and begged her pardon. This made her more or less ashamed; soon she had her baggage carried into the waiting-room; then she dismissed the man with some kind words, and sat down on a near-by bench. She had nothing to do but wait for the next train.

That would leave at six-thirty. More than an hour remained until that time, and consequently there were few people in the station except the porters who were rambling leisurely about. The lights glared dazzlingly in the empty building. Sayo-ko, applying her handkerchief to her cheek, leaned on her bag and reconsidered. Whichever way she thought, she regretted that she had to leave without doing something further. She thought she might say "Good-bye" by telephone. This was only an idea with her; she had not yet made her decision when she inquired of a 'red cap' [porter] who happened to be passing, and was told that there was an automatic telephone in front of the station. Though Sayo-ko had deliberately asked about it, she did not appear much interested; she only answered, "Is that so?" and bent her head in thought. By and by, with a deep sigh, she looked up and glanced at the time. Six o'clock. She should go at once if she meant to telephone. She stood up and sat down. While still hesitating, five, six, and now ten minutes passed. When she saw that only twenty minutes remained, she could not bear to remain inactive any longer. She entrusted her baggage to her neighbour and ran out of the station, almost unbecomingly kicking open her skirts. She at once entered the telephone booth and began to speak.

"Is this brother? This is Sayo . . . Yes . . . I

say, I am disobeying you . . . I say, I am sorry to disobey you, but I must go to Chiba . . . Chiba . . . I say, to Chiba . . . yes, I have to go to Chiba, you see. I am now on my way. Just to say good-bye . . . What? No, I don't mean that, but anyway . . . I say, anyway, for a certain reason, I cannot stay at home any longer. Concerning details, I shall write you from there . . . I beg your pardon? Yes, I am now at Ryogoku Station. I beg your pardon? What?" She could not understand him. "I cannot catch your words somehow, so please speak a little more slowly." At last she understood, "But even if you come, you will not be in time now. The train starts immediately. You mean the last train? The last train leaves a little before nine, but nothing can be changed now by seeing you. I had rather . . . What? What did you say?" Again she could not understand him. "A little lower, please. I beg your pardon? You are going to Chiba, too? Later?" Smiling, "Then I shall wait for you here. No, I will be sure to wait. Yes, depend upon it." And again smiling, "Then please come quickly. Good-bye."

CHAPTER XIV

IN less than half an hour, Tetsuya arrived at Ryogoku Station in a jinrikisha. No sooner had the man lowered the shafts than Tetsuya flung himself out. After fumbling in his pocket, he took out some coins and threw them to the runner. The man was evidently overpaid, for he bobbed his head several times and repeated, "You are very kind." Without even glancing at the fellow, Tetsuya hurried into the station and looked eagerly around. He did not see Sayo-ko; he went to the entrance of a third-class waiting-room and peeped in, when—"Brother"—she quickly rose from a bench on the far side. He tried to hasten to her and trampled on something. "Ouch!" He did not notice who it was, but bore him down with apology after apology; he stepped barely in time over an umbrella; and secretly cursing the people who stood talking and blocking his way, he dodged around them and at last reached Sayo-ko.

"Oh, how I feared," he sighed, "you might say such a thing and then run away—why!" noticing Sayo-ko's face, which she had raised after bowing, "what is that mark on your face?"

"This?" She dropped her eyes and said nothing.

Thinking that something had happened, he suggested, "We cannot talk here. Let us go somewhere near and talk. Is this yours?" touching a bag. "Is this all?" He looked at her.

"Yes, that is all, but—" she hesitated, "I will carry it myself."

"No, no." He lifted it. "Oh, this is pretty heavy. How could you carry it, Sayo-san?"

"I am sorry to trouble you so much."

They left the building. Tetsuya paused in a dimly-lighted section of the grounds.

"Let me see—our conversation will take some time. Sayo-san," glancing back at her, "couldn't you do this: stay here tonight at least, so we can talk everything over leisurely?"

"Stay here?" She repeated irresolutely.

"Yes. We have so many things to talk over, we cannot finish our conversation in a moment."

"But I—if possible—wish to go tonight," she disapproved lightly.

"Is it necessary for you to be in such a hurry?"

"Not especially necessary, but—" she spoke even more evasively.

"Isn't it all right, then? I—" That evening for some reason or other his usual *watashi* [polite form of 'I'] was changed to *boku* [familiar 'I']. "I have a little I wish to speak about after you tell me why you cannot stay at home. I also have something to

ask you to tell me," he added. "And then, if you say you must go to Chiba, I will not detain you longer. I will part from you resolutely." He was very serious.

"But everything is over now." She looked really miserable.

"Over or not, let us talk at our leisure anyway. Let us do so. Let us do so."

Dogmatic and despotic, Tetsuya commenced to walk quickly. Sayo-ko followed him for nearly half a block. Seeing a hotel standing a little apart which, though not very good, did not look like a low-class one for pedlars, he entered, thinking that if they could only talk he would be satisfied. Sayo-ko for some reason felt like running away. When she hesitated for a moment at the door, he turned around and asked, "What is the matter?" So she entered after him without more ado.

He ordered a room as quiet as possible. They were shown into a poor one which would have disgusted any one in the daytime, situated at the farthest end of the second story of the rear building; but Tetsuya put up with it, because the partition was a wall, and their conversation could not be overheard in the next room. He stated that he had dined, and asked whether she had. Sayo-ko did not wish to eat then; they postponed ordering supper; still he thought it might be rather embarrassing not to

order anything, so he asked for some fruit and beer, though he never could drink much.

Tetsuya questioned, as though he had impatiently awaited the departure of the servant, "Now, what is the matter?"

At the sight of him, who knew nothing of what had happened, Sayo-ko felt her heart full, and she could not speak. Suddenly she buried her face in her handkerchief and burst into tears.

Presently drying her eyes, she related in detail her experience after she had left him the preceding night; how she had been teased by her mother, who urged her to go to Shibuya's; and how, feeling this no time to procrastinate, she had ventured to talk frankly to her elder sister.

Tetsuya listened attentively. "I see. Is that so? Now I understand very well," he nodded. "What an unreasonable beast Toki is! However offended she might be, she had no right to hit you in the face with a rule. She certainly is a beast," he added angrily. "All right. I will avenge you before long." His eyes glistened.

This shocked Sayo-ko. "Sister alone is not to blame. When she hit me, I thought she did a great wrong, but after thinking about it," relaxing herself disconsolately, she added in a low voice, "I also am to blame, so—"

"Not a bit of it," Tetsuya earnestly denied.

"Though you often talk like that, you are not in the least to blame. Toki alone is, and anyway, if you left home for such a reason, I cannot allow you to go to Chiba. If I do, I am not a man. If you left home to go to Chiba, let them at home believe it; but for a time won't you live in a boarding-house here? Stay in this hotel tonight, and tomorrow I will find some suitable place, and you can go and live there. Please, won't you do that?"

"Well—" Sayo-ko inclined her head and meditated without continuing.

Tetsuya considered her manner strange. "You mean you won't?"

"I am very sorry for you, brother," hesitatingly, "but to Chiba, I nevertheless—" she stopped short.

"Wish to go?" He stared.

"I do not wish to go at all, yet as I think it over, I think I had—"

"Better go?"

"Yes," she assented faintly.

"Why?" he asked. Sayo-ko did not answer. "My plan is to act in secret, a thing you dislike; besides, when it gets known, you think you will be uncomfortable. So you conclude you had better go?"

"That is one reason, but—"

"That is one reason, but not the only one." He reflected. "You mean you do not wish me to care for you any longer?" He spoke half-jokingly.

"Oh, no. Not wish to be cared for by you? How such a—" Sayo-ko protested solemnly. "If I were not a bother to you, brother, I would wish to be cared for by you all my life; but—" she paused.

"Ah, I see," Tetsuya responded, slapping his knee. "You mean you will be sorry for your sister. Am I right?"

"Yes, but that is not the only reason."

"Strange," he uttered, leaning his head slightly to one side. "There is still another reason, is there?" He considered, yet finally admitted, "I can't understand. I wish you would tell me now and not leave me in this suspense."

"I am very sorry for you, yet this—" She seemed really miserable.

"You cannot tell?"

"No—" Her voice was quavering now.

Tetsuya scanned her face. "Is that so? Then I comprehend in a general sort of a way." He looked very serious. "You fear I might urge you to do something dishonourable?"

"No, I don't fear that, but—" Her tears were falling.

"If that isn't the reason, why don't you tell me what is? We have always been frank to each other, and if you cannot tell, how can I think otherwise?"

"Brother, please pardon me—" Sayo-ko covered her face with her handkerchief and began to weep.

"Then you do mean that, do you?" Tetsuya scowled. "Urge you to do something dishonourable—am I that kind of a man?" He spoke sorrowfully and sighed.

"No, I don't mean that, I don't mean that," Sayo-ko shook her head and cried in dismay, still covering her face with her handkerchief. "If you misunderstand so much—"

"How can I think otherwise?"

"Though you cannot—" She spoke like a spoiled child.

"If not that, is there any other reason for your reticence?"

"It is impossible for me to tell—" She shook her head and refused to speak.

"I don't know how to manage you, either." Tetsuya seemed exhausted. "You mean you cannot tell me the reason and you wish to go away, leaving things just as they are?"

Sayo-ko merely nodded.

"You are really—" A sigh buried the rest of the sentence. "Then there is no way out of it. Though I think it is foolish, yet I cannot help it. We can only part, leaving things just as they are," he repeated regretfully.

The beer he ordered, and which the maid-servant brought in, had been left untouched. Now he reached quickly for it and pouring some into a glass he drained

it at a gulp. He hastily wiped his moustache with his handkerchief and sighed painfully. Soon he refilled his glass and drained it once more at a gulp. Sayo-ko thought he would not drink any more, so when he again touched the bottle, she could not bear it and snatched it from the side.

"Oh, if you wish to have your glass filled, I will fill it for you; but will it be all right for you to drink so much?" She asked him anxiously, for she knew his drinking capacity.

Tetsuya replied with something of despair in his tone, "I can't go away unless I am drunk; it is all so foolish, isn't it?"

"If it were possible, I would tell you frankly, but—oh, I wish I had not seen you," she sighed.

Tetsuya did not listen to her. He took out his watch and muttered as if talking to himself, "It is now ten minutes after eight." Putting it into his pocket, "If you hurry you can still be in time. Are you going by the last train?"

Sayo-ko remained silent.

"It might be better to wait until tomorrow. If you go by the last train, you will arrive there very late." He did not speak for some time. "As to the bills of this hotel, I will pay them now before I go home. You have not had dinner yet; you must be hungry. Please eat something and take a good night's rest." He slowly drew his hat to him. "I

will go home now." Although he spoke thus, he hesitated to move. Presently he decided to act and with a word of good-bye stood up quickly. Sayo-ko rose in dismay; she hurried to him when he was about to open the paper-slide, and clung to his arm.

"Brother," she pleaded, raising a cadaverous, serious face. "Stay a little while, please. I cannot part from you this way."

"You don't wish to separate in this way?"

"No, I—I cannot bear it." She shook her head and pressed her face to his chest. "Rather than part from you with such painful thoughts, I would die at once—" She tightened her grasp, and her hot tears fell rapidly on the back of Tetsuya's hand.

Suddenly Tetsuya felt dizzy. Beside himself, he clasped her in his arms; and whether he pulled her down or whether she pulled him down, both fell together. The voice with which he addressed her was a stifled one, indicative of great agony.

"Sayo-san," he gasped, "you're so unreasonable."

"You're so unreasonable." Tetsuya had quite forgotten to relax his hold of her. Looking in Sayo-ko's tear-stained face, he said calmly, "Probably you fear that if you are cared for by me secretly, sometime I—might propose something; that may be why you wish to rush away from me—"

"Do I not deny that?" Sayo-ko was too much

in earnest to think of withdrawing her grasp. "I never," with all sincerity, "never wish to part from you."

"Then you might accept my offer and stay here?"

Sayo-ko was puzzled for an answer, and her hold naturally loosened. Tetsuya, coming to himself, quickly withdrew his arms, but none the less earnest did he look.

"I say, Sayo-san, can't you think this over again? I would never detain you for such a base motive. I shall—I shall find myself in distress if you leave me." He seemed dejected; looking up again, "Though I fear I may appear unmanly—I don't mind, for you will not laugh at me—I will tell you everything. The fact is—you know what my home is like. I always feel unpleasant and melancholy; I can never have a single thing my own way. My position there is more than miserable—the miserable of the miserable. When a man is successful and is moving, his spirit is high, and little blows glance off; but when a man is a failure and is hopeless, the weaker he is, as the saying is, the severer the attack. Any blow however light will hurt him, and he begins to feel the miseries of life morbidly, if not deeply. Every man seems to him cruel and cold and unbearably disgusting. Though he thinks thus, he cannot sever his connection with the world so long as he does not give up being a man. He must seek his food

among those who are cruel, cold, selfish, and unendurable. Nothing could be more unpleasant than this. Yet if I had a sweet home, I might endure it for the sake of that home. I possess no such thing. When I think of it, life is meaningless; though I live because I have got to live, life is nothing but pain; I live to suffer pain. Nothing could be so foolish as this; still, I cannot bring myself to wish to die. I am very inconsistent. A weak man, such as I am, lacks perseverance and is likely to despair when things are like this. Ah, I would rather learn to drink, though I dislike liquor, and become reckless. I often think this way, but at such times, as soon as I think of you, my agitated mind begins to subside, and again I resolve to persevere. On reflection, I don't clearly understand why this is so. You also are an unlucky person—little better than an orphan. Unless I help you, there is no one upon whom you can rely. It may be from chivalry, or it may be from some other cause, but the life which was meaningless for me, acquires meaning when I am doing something for you. My courage which once left me comes back, and a wish to overcome obstacles possesses me. The more directly my act concerns your welfare, the stronger the courage returns. This is a peculiar thing. If we call it merely sympathy or love, that might be all, yet to me it seems to be more than ordinary sympathy or love. Though I cannot make

out what it is, there must be something—anyway you are my only consolation now, and you alone connect me with life,—well, in short, you are something like a chain. That you, the very link, my comfort, should leave for Chiba without even satisfying me with an excuse. You don't know what will become of me afterwards."

In the eye which he fixed on Sayo-ko's face, there seemed to flicker the 'something' which he had just spoken of, but which, if examined carefully, might have been called merely the flame of ordinary love.

Tetsuya continued, "If I take care of you, I do so partly for my own sake; I have no inclination to take advantage of your indebtedness. To be frank, I am a man, and sometimes I have more than a simple brotherly feeling for you. At such times I wish you were Toki and in her position." Sayo-ko shivered, and Tetsuya resumed with embarrassment, "However, that is impossible, isn't it? So I do not nourish such an unreasonable wish. I am satisfied with you as my sister, and because I am, I would like to continue our present relations for our entire lives. Of course, I do not wish to bind your freedom. If a good offer of marriage presents itself, I will readily consent, but—"

"Brother," Sayo-ko looked vexed, "haven't I told you I am not going to marry any one?"

"That makes me feel that I am interfering with your happiness, and I shall feel uncomfortable."

"But how can I—" Lowering her voice, "How can I leave you and marry any one, when you talk so kindly?"

"I see," he was puzzled for the moment. "But I am only thinking of you as my younger sister, so isn't it all right for you to marry?"

"You have just said that sometimes you have more than a brotherly feeling for me."

"Yes, but if it is only a feeling, isn't that all right?"

"If you have the feeling, you sin."

"Well, that may be, yet—" He did not know what to say.

"Though I am very sorry to leave you," Sayo-ko added earnestly, "I wished to go away without talking in this way and to repent of my sin before God. But you—"

"Repent of your sin?" Tetsuya questioned her. "Then you also have had the same feeling?"

Sayo-ko became silent.

"Is that so?" Tetsuya understood for the first time. "That is the reason you did not reply when I asked you so many times, and you wished to leave. I see." He reconsidered the matter.

Sayo-ko looked unhappy. "I was not aware of it at all, but when I finished speaking to you through the telephone at the station, I knew I had just awak-

ened; and I felt it only natural for my sister to strike me. Though it might be painful, I thought, if I left without doing anything further, I would not harm your reputation; and my sister also—”

“No, don’t worry about me.” Tetsuya grew quite excited. “I don’t care whether my reputation is harmed or not, but—” he sorrowfully added, “as soon as you find anything sinful, I see you are very eager to run away.”

“But,” Sayo-ko rejoined painfully, “this is not an ordinary sin. Though we are brother-in-law and sister-in-law, we are brother and sister all the same. When I think of how I came to have this feeling,” emphatically, “I am miserable.”

“What if we were not brother and sister?” inquired Tetsuya in a sudden flush of zeal.

“If we were not brother and sister?” Sayo-ko looked at him doubtfully.

“If I sever my relations with Toki, then you and I will not be brother and sister any longer. Will our love be all right, then?”

“To me my sister is my sister just the same. I should be sorry for her.”

“Should you? You still feel that way.” Tetsuya looked downcast. “We cannot change it. I will be satisfied with our brother and sister relationship as before. At least, please stay here.”

“But,” Sayo-ko looked even sadder, “there will

be no time for me to forget. I shall be sinning all the while."

"You are a Christian, aren't you?" This he appeared to regret. He silently thought the matter over. At that moment, from the second room to the front, where a number of people had evidently been drinking, came a loud burst of laughter. Tetsuya was irritated when he heard this. "We cannot change it. Let us part."

"What?" Sayo-ko questioned, unable to believe her ears.

"We cannot change it, if you think only of shielding yourself."

"I am not doing that, but—"

"That's enough." He grew still more excited. "I will not go home any more. I will go away. I don't care what happens. The world is only darkness from now on. Ha, ha, ha!" he laughed queerly. "Let us part. But I—even if I part from you," tears fell unexpectedly, "I will never forget you!"

"Brother," Sayo-ko suddenly clung to him, "do you think so much of me?"

"How can I help it?" Tears continued to fall.

"Is that true?" The light of resolution appeared in her eye.

"Is that objectionable to you?" He wiped his tears with the back of his hand.

"Then, now, I—such as I am—" a lump in her

throat impeded her speech, "I don't care what becomes of me, brother." She clung to him tighter and shook nervously.

"What?" Tetsuya turned fiercely and laid his hand on Sayo-ko's shoulder. "You don't care what becomes of you?" He flushed with delight, but she said nothing more, only nodding assent. No sooner had Tetsuya placed his face near her pale face than, alas! his hot lips and her cool lips touched.

At that moment they heard a shrill whistle from the direction of the station. The last train should have left a little while before.

CHAPTER XV

ON Sunday, the third day following Sayo-ko's departure from home, the weather proved to be beautiful, and callers came from early morning. The third visitor dined, and it was after one o'clock when Tetsuya went to the porch to see him off. Tetsuya returned to his room and loitered away some time in aimlessly walking around.

"Fuku, don't spread it in the parlour. More visitors may come. Spread it on the dining-room veranda."

Toki-ko, after thus ordering the servant, opened Tetsuya's door noiselessly and entered, carrying a tray well-filled with peeled persimmons. She placed it on the floor and sat down.

"I was peeling them for the guest, but as he's gone I've brought them here. Take some. They are delicious."

"I have to go out now." He continued to stand.

"Oh, are you going out today, too?" she asked, and glanced quickly at his face. "You can take some and then go. I have gone to the trouble of peeling and bringing them, so please take some."

Tetsuya reluctantly seated himself. Disregarding the toothpicks, he picked up a slice with his fingers and began to nibble silently, yet he did not seem to dislike it.

"You've been very busy lately. The day before yesterday you didn't get home till after one o'clock at night. And last night it was after eleven. Shall you be out late tonight, too?"

"Well, I may be late," he replied equivocally, while busily devouring the persimmons.

"Are you busy on school affairs?"

"Yes," was all his answer. He spat out a seed.

Toki-ko calmly fixed her gaze on the seed. "We've got a number of things to talk over at home, and so I hope you'll come back as soon as your business is over today." She transferred her gaze from the seed to her husband's face.

By this time Tetsuya had picked up his fourth or fifth slice and was about to eat it. When he heard this, he stopped the movement of his hand and cast an idle glance at the other's face. That was all; he said nothing. He forced the slice into his mouth and munched it, spitting out the seeds. When urged by "Why don't you answer?" he swallowed the rest of the slice.

"I always come home as soon as my business is over."

"That may be, but—" Toki-ko was puzzled for the moment as to what she should say and so frowned. "Do you hate talking to me so much?"

Tetsuya appeared to see no necessity for answering such a question and did not reply.

"I think you act so strangely because I went a little too far in talking about Sayo's affairs the other day, and you still remember. Even then did I talk from prejudice only? Since that time, too, there are many things I can't understand, and—"

"I hope you will talk to me some other time concerning them. I have to go out now."

"I don't wish to talk just now; please come home as early as you can today, and be outspoken about everything, so that you may feel serene in your heart. I also have something to say to you, and I'll speak out and apologize for my faults, if I have any. If you continue in such a mood for ever, I shall feel unhappy." There were tears in her eyes.

Tetsuya's state of mind had evidently undergone a change. He said rather tenderly, "I will come back as early as I can. I have to go out now anyway; please bring me some clothes."

"Japanese clothes?"

"Well—"

"What shall it be?"

"Why, just some—anything will do."

When Toki-ko left for the dressing-room, Tetsuya quickly stood up and, searching behind the tablet which hung on the opposite side of the room, took out a purse of crocodile leather which he had concealed there; after examining the contents, he slipped

it into the drawer of his desk and assumed a look of innocence. Toki-ko soon came in with a suit of *kimono*, not even forgetting to bring a new pair of *tabi*. She helped him change his clothes and remarked:

"Oh, I recollect that a postal card has just come from Sayo. She wishes to be remembered to you." She glanced scrutinizingly into her husband's face.

"Is that so?" Tetsuya appeared quite indifferent. While recalling that his mother-in-law had informed him on the morning of the preceding day that Sayo-ko, accompanied by Mr. Katsumi, had gone to Chiba, he took out the something from the drawer of his desk and put it in the bosom of his *kimono*.

He was now ready, and hurried out. Toki-ko followed him as far as the porch to see him off, arranged his clogs, brushed his hat and handed it to him, and then gracefully touching the floor with her hands, wished him to return home early. She had never been so attentive before, and Tetsuya secretly felt uneasy as he went away.

He soon disappeared beyond the gate; Toki-ko, aimlessly gazing in his direction, remained at the porch. She was thinking, yet her thoughts were not concentrated; nevertheless, she was not absent-minded. She had something to think of, but she did not seem able to find anything to give her thoughts direction.

“Madam! Madam!”

The instant Fuku's strident voice fell upon her ears, she appeared to awaken. “What? How noisy!” She walked wearisomely toward the dining-room.

CHAPTER XVI

TETSUYA left home in a hurry and, promptly on arriving at the corner of the street leading to Iki-zaka, ordered a jinrikisha from the jinrikisha-station there; he got in without even fixing the fare. Twitching with impatience, he rode across Ochanomidzu Bridge and diagonally through Surugadai; when he came to the top of the slope leading to Awaji-cho, he dispensed with the jinrikisha. He descended the slope half-way, glanced about him before and behind for an instant, and then darted into a certain coarse ware store which was one of a row of two-story houses on his right.

“Oh, I’m glad to see you.” A stout woman of about forty years of age, apparently the landlady of the house, appeared, wiping her hands on her apron.

Tetsuya smiled on recognizing her. “Has she come?”

“Yes.” The landlady, too, smiled as she knelt down. “She came some time ago and has been waiting for you. Please step in.”

He entered the store, saying, “Pardon me.”

The landlady with good sense called from the bottom of the stairs, “Miss, he’s come.”

She then stepped aside, and Tetsuya began to climb;

it was not an easy task, for the narrow and rickety staircase proved to be exceedingly dangerous to a stranger. Tetsuya took great care and seemed to pick his steps one by one. Still the stairs creaked horribly.

"Please be careful," the landlady warned from below.

"All right."

His posture did not look at all right. He reached the top with great difficulty and found waiting at the entrance of the room—Sayo-ko. They looked at each other and smiled.

"Thank you for coming so early," Sayo-ko said, bowing a little; and stepping to one side to allow him to pass, she gently closed the door behind him.

The room was a small one of six mats. On the north side, a grated window overlooked the street; the window opposite was so low that one might easily step out on the roof. The paper-slides contained perforations here and there; on one slide appeared a dim silhouette of a potted plant. On the third side, a wall divided this room from the upper room of the adjoining fancy goods store; any sound in this might have been heard in the other. The entrance door and heavy sliding-screens concealing the closet made up the fourth side. The lack of space had prevented any better planning; and the wood was of inferior quality like that of all rented houses, yet the

building was new and could not be very uncomfortable to live in.

Tetsuya had seen the room on the preceding day and so knew it, yet he now stood in the middle of it and gazed around as though it were new to him. Meanwhile Sayo-ko arranged his seat. She turned over a rather old, thin, calico cushion, which might have come from a cheap bazaar, and which she had borrowed from the landlady for the time being, and placed it in front of a rough well-notched *hibachi*, made of imitation black persimmon, which presumably had been procured at the same cheap place. Then she withdrew a little, and resting both her hands upon the floor, mumbled something and bowed politely.

Tetsuya also made a brief salutation and took his seat. Sayo-ko had not yet raised her head; he thought her ceremony funny and burst out laughing. "Don't be so particular. Let us not be on our dignity now." And with a loud laugh, he stopped sitting on his legs and assumed a more comfortable position.

This made Sayo-ko feel more or less at ease, yet she still hung her head bashfully, saying, "But—" She gathered up the under openings of her sleeves and drew them over her knees and smiled; Tetsuya was reminded of her as she had been when a girl. A look of blooming freshness made her appear quite

different from the Sayo-ko of the night before last.

Tetsuya smiled continuously. "When did you arrive?"

"Some time after one." She did not raise her head.

"Just as we anticipated. I should have come earlier, but today visitors came very early, and I could not escape," he explained. "Didn't you have difficulty in finding this house? I abbreviated my telegram so much."

"No, I found it without any trouble." She glanced at him just a second, placed her hands on the floor, and said with a bow, "I am very much obliged—"

"Haven't I forbidden such ceremony?" Tetsuya reproved her laughingly. "This room is very poor, but, you see, you were returning today, and I did not have time to be particular about the furnishings; I chose this place only temporarily. You don't mind it for the present, I hope; we will find a better place when we are at leisure."

"No, this is satisfactory, more than satisfactory to me." She surveyed the room, but she avoided Tetsuya for some reason or other.

"Though you may be satisfied with it, I am not. This is a home we both make, and I ought to have some voice in the matter." Tetsuya uttered this characteristically awkward joke and laughed.

"Oh, such talk!" When Sayo-ko raised her eyes

and regarded him, she found herself watched all the time by sparkling eyes full of passionate love; and flushing with embarrassment, she looked down.

At this Tetsuya laughed merrily for some time. Ceasing, he dried his eyes.

"How funny! Does this make you blush so much?"

At this moment the landlady interrupted their conversation by bringing up some newly-made tea; she soon went down after saying some complimentary words.

"When you arrived here," whispered Tetsuya, smiling, "didn't she say something unusual?"

"Yes, she did." Sayo-ko looked up, smiling.

"Did you understand her?" Tetsuya chuckled.

"She talked so queerly, I could not understand her well." And probably because she remembered something ridiculous, she touched her handkerchief to her mouth a moment.

Tetsuya could contain himself no longer and laughed to his satisfaction. "It must have been hard to understand. The fact is, I did not want her to suspect us, so I told her this."

He repeated briefly: Sayo-ko, betrothed to Tetsuya, had come to Tokyo to continue her studies and when she finished her school, they were to be married; until that time they lived apart to avoid comment; and so on. It was an impromptu lie, funny enough

to make any one laugh; Sayo-ko herself could not help smiling. When Tetsuya saw that she comprehended, he guffawed again; yet he very soon became serious.

"By the way, did you go to Chiba on the second train yesterday?"

"Yes."

"How did you get along with Mr. Katsumi? Did he consent?"

"Yes, he did, although not willingly."

"Willingly or not, it's enough if he consented. If people think you are living in Chiba, there is no danger of being discovered here for some time, you see."

"Yes," Sayo-ko nodded; at the same time her face clouded as though she recalled some unpleasant experience.

"Did Mr. Katsumi say anything disagreeable?" he asked.

"No, not especially—" She tried to look unruffled. Her answer disquieted Tetsuya.

"I know you do not like to seek safety in lies as we are doing, but for the time being we cannot do otherwise. As I told you the night before last, I will surely contrive to break off with your sister before long, not arbitrarily, but with mutual agreement. Though I fear you may be distressed, please be patient because it is only for the present."

"Yes," Sayo-ko nodded again, "but," she hesitated for an instant, "then I should be sorry for my sister, and—"

"Do you still feel that way?" Tetsuya interrupted, his face betraying his worryment. "Haven't I told you there is no reason why you should?"

"But—" Sayo-ko shifted her position a little.

"But nothing," Tetsuya broke in positively. "Didn't I say it the night before last? If your sister cared for me at all, I, rather than you, would be the first to be sorry for her. If she cared, I would not do such an inhuman thing. But she regards me as nothing more than a necessary means of subsistence, and she doesn't possess a speck of wifely affection. So even after the divorce she ought to have no cause for complaint if she has enough to keep herself."

"If you were to marry some one else, the case would be different, but with me, I am sure my sister will not like it. I am very sorry when I think of that."

"I know she will feel more or less hurt; we cannot help that. If you object now, I shall not be able to stay with you after all. I shall become desperate—" He was a little excited.

Sayo-ko glanced at him. "Oh, I was wrong," she apologized at once. "I was wrong. I said I did not care what became of me, and now I regret that I

might be thought ill of by my sister—am I not very inconsistent?” She smiled forlornly.

Tetsuya's good humour revived immediately. “When you talk that way, I am almost at a loss to know how to thank you.” He paused a little. “I will ask you to think that way.” He laughed loudly at what did not seem to be funny. “Let us have no more such talk now. It makes one gloomy. Rather let us go out and have dinner.”

“Have dinner?”

“Yes.”

“Isn't that a waste of money?”

“Never mind. You need not be so thrifty yet.” He was now in truly good spirits and laughed a cheery boisterous laugh.

Sayo-ko smiled gaily. “Then I will go with you.” Even her tone had changed.

“Come, let us go.” Tetsuya was now wonderfully merry. He sprang to his feet. “Sayo-san.” He turned around. “Today, let us return to our school-days and have whole-hearted fun.”

Sayo-ko was pinning her plush shawl with a butterfly buckle. She smiled, “All right; I will be a romping girl.”

“Romping?” Tetsuya exclaimed in a sudden flush of joy. “Capital. If you will be a romping girl, I will be—” he could not find a corresponding word, “I will be riotous.”

To Tetsuya this night was a heaven on earth; others might not have seen anything unusual in their enjoyment. When they started out Tetsuya proposed that for the evening they should act in every respect as husband and wife. Sayo-ko, who he feared might decline, consented readily, thus assuring a pleasant outing. Tetsuya quickly handed her his purse.

Almost hand in hand they left the coarse ware store, her lodging-house. After agreeing to take a foreign dinner, they climbed the spiral staircase of a restaurant. They smiled at each other across the snow-white table-cloth under the garish electric light, and their feelings were almost indescribable. Tetsuya tossed Sayo-ko the menu which the boy had placed in front of him, and when she began to examine it calmly, he was greatly elated, for he had feared she might hand it back. Though she ordered an inexpensive table d'hôte, her manner was so surprisingly nonchalant for the bashful Sayo-ko that Tetsuya could not but admire her. When the boy asked if they wished anything to drink, Sayo-ko composedly asked, "Will you take any, *anata*?" and looked at him.

"Well, I might take some wine," he replied deliberately in response to her tone. The word "*anata*" ['dear'] sounded like an ordinary word, but it smacked of something far deeper. When he thought of this he was thrilled with an unbounded de-

light. He concealed the sensation and conversed with her merrily on a variety of innocent topics.

Presently a party of four or five men, apparently merchants, came in noisily and seated themselves at the next table. While they jabbered loudly, not seeming to heed their surroundings, every now and then they stared rudely at the two. This disturbed their fun not a little; though Tetsuya tried to appear unconcerned and talk to her, Sayo-ko had almost ceased speaking. By and by soup was served; and then wine. They began silently. Tetsuya stealthily glanced from the upper corner of his eye to see how Sayo-ko was faring. He secretly admired her skill in the 'use of napkin and spoon'; but on reflection, he concluded that her dexterity was not to be wondered at, for she had been educated in a mission school. Even this fact pleased him. He did not feel satisfied to sit uncommunicative, so while waiting for the next dish, he conceived a plan. He began to move his slippered foot noiselessly under the table; he groped for her foot and pressed it lightly. Instantly it dodged away. He pursued but could not locate it; and was hesitating, when suddenly from somewhere the very foot tapped his own lightly and then quickly vanished. This took place under the table; above they looked as innocent as ever. When their eyes met, they could hardly stifle their laughter; Sayo-ko quickly looked down and restrained herself by biting

her napkin; Tetsuya could not suppress his feelings and finally burst out laughing in spite of himself. The neighbouring party as of one accord turned surprised countenances upon them. This put a stop to their game. At the conclusion of the dinner, Sayo-ko took out some paper money from the purse under the table and paid the bill; and Tetsuya, as he looked silently at her, thought that a right [of spending money] was much more pleasurable when given up than when claimed. When the boy went to the desk, Tetsuya in a low voice advised her to tip him on his return. She asked how much she should give, and he answered, "Thirty *sen*." She replied that thirty *sen* was too much. The boy returned with the change, and she gave him a twenty-*sen* piece. She did not follow Tetsuya's advice. He then reflected that having one's advice rejected was much more pleasurable than having it accepted.

The two left after paying the bill. Sayo-ko had several purchases to make, and she desired to go alone; but Tetsuya thought that on account of the darkness there was no danger of being discovered. They visited shop after shop and bought those articles of which they were in immediate need. What they could not carry they asked to be sent, and what they could carry they took with them. A spectacled man with a moustache, carrying a small table over his shoulder and a lamp in his hand; and beside him a

woman in Chiyoda sandals ¹ who looked like a school girl, in her *haori* covered with arrow-shaped designs, carrying in both hands a heavy-looking *furoshiki* bundle [package done up in a cloth]; this might be a typical picture of the Otsuyé School [of painting]. Certainly they did not look very attractive, but they were going home with household articles, articles for home-making, and they were very happy.

¹ Variety of sandals, worn by women.

CHAPTER XVII

IT was long past ten o'clock that night, in fact, it was nearly eleven, and the coarse ware shop had been locked for some time when Tetsuya opened the door and stepped out. When he came to the middle of the street where the moon shone brightly, he stopped and turned towards the door through which he had just come, and which he had left open. Sayo-ko appeared quickly and, after shutting it behind her, pattered up.

"I am sorry to keep you waiting. Are you going by street-car?"

"Well," he changed his mind, "no, the moon is so fine, I shall stroll through Surugadai."

"Then I will accompany you as far as the mail-box over there."

The traffic of vehicles had not yet ceased on Awajicho. From where they stood, they could see the lanterns crossing each other on the street; yet the by-street on which they were was quiet, with not even a single passer-by. Tetsuya, with Sayo-ko at his side, lingeringly climbed the slope.

"I enjoyed tonight very much, you were so cheerful, though now you have resumed your usual Sayo-san seriousness."

"Please excuse me for romping all the time. This is for tonight only. I will be serious from tomorrow." Her tone still retained some buoyancy.

"No; seriousness is all right, but sometimes a person ought to be gay. Hitherto I thought you were too sedate; now I see you behaved that way because you were tyrannized over by your sister and mother. At home you never acted so pleasantly."

"That may be so. At school I was known as a romping girl," she smiled; "but this evening I—" she faltered, "I was a little beside myself, I am sure."

"Beside yourself? Now that you mention it, I remember you did do some strange things. You occasionally sighed while you were frolicking. Why did you do that?" Sayo-ko as usual was reticent. He repeated, "I say, why did you?"

"Why, for nothing." She assumed indifference.

Tetsuya could not help worrying. "For nothing—why, that's impossible. There must be something the matter. Don't tease me so; speak out."

"I'm afraid you will scold me," she smilingly replied, and stopped walking. They had come to the mail-box.

Tetsuya also stopped. "Oh, don't delay that way; please tell me."

"Then I will. Well, I—no, I will not. I know you will scold me."

"You will not tell? You will not tell for any con-

sideration? Then I will tickle it out of you." He drew near her quickly, smiling.

"Oh, don't." Sayo-ko smiled and drew herself up.

"Please don't tickle me."

"Tell me."

"I will. When you came today, didn't you notice anything strange about my face?"

"No, I didn't notice anything. What of it?"

"I had been weeping until you came."

"Weeping?"

"Yes."

"Why?" Instantly he looked worried.

"Why, when I thought of everything, I somehow felt queer—"

"Everything? What do you mean?"

"Well, let us walk on a little. Now, if I go this way," she pointed with her finger, "and then turn to the left and go straight ahead, I can reach Ochanomidzu Bridge, can't I?"

"Yes."

"Then I will return that way."

"That will be a very roundabout way."

"I don't mind if it is roundabout." She began to walk on.

"Please," Tetsuya walked on with her, "what do you mean by 'everything'?"

Sayo-ko did not tell him what she meant. "Even while I romp about as I did tonight, I sometimes be-

ome very sad, I don't know why, and I feel like crying."

Tetsuya thought lightly of this. "You have worried too much, and your nerves are affected."

"Is that so, I wonder?" She did not seem to agree entirely. "When I talk to you, as I do now, I don't feel that way; but when I am alone, somehow or other I can see my sister's face all the time, and I become exceedingly sad, so I cry."

Tetsuya frowned. "Must you endure such anguish?"

"You get angry as soon as I mention my sister, even by chance." Her voice sounded somewhat sorrowful.

"Do I? I am sorry for you. I am not at all angry, but, to speak truly, when you mention your sister I don't know how to comfort you. So at times I may talk unreasonably without giving the matter due thought."

They said nothing for a time. Presently Tetsuya broke the silence. "The mark on your face is almost gone, isn't it?"

"Yes."

"I always get angry when I look at it; but you, even when you are treated that way, still—" He did not complete the sentence; he only sighed.

"I cannot help it; I was in the wrong," she sighed,

too. "Brother!" She looked up at him. "I have a favour to ask. Will you grant it?"

"A favour? I will grant you any favour. I cause you to suffer such pain, so for your sake I—" He wished to say that he would give even his life for her, but thinking that might sound melodramatic, he changed his mind. "I will grant you anything."

"Then—oh, don't we turn here?"

"Oh, yes."

They were so absorbed in their conversation that they almost forgot to turn the corner of Kōbai-cho.

"Listen," Sayo-ko continued, "I can give myself up if it concerns me only, but I cannot bear to forsake sister—" breaking off for some time, "I am afraid I shall appear immodest if I continue." She looked quite winsome.

"Tell me frankly without faltering that way. I will never take anything ill that you say."

"Then I will speak out, and if I should offend you, please pardon me. I will soon find some means of supporting myself, even if only as a telephone operator, so that I shall not be a burden; and you too, I hope, will not yield to the troubles of the present, but will muster your courage and be very active as soon as possible. And—you once said I was like an orphan, didn't you?"

"Yes."

"In the world there are many people much more unfortunate than I, are there not? I wish you to work for such people. Will you do that? If you do your best, I think there is nothing you cannot accomplish. If you will sympathize with such unfortunates and work for them, though I have done my sister much wrong, I shall be doing indirectly a great charity; and I shall feel that my sin is more or less extenuated. On the other hand, if you should work for me alone, it means that I have only snatched a treasure from my sister, and I shall never feel at ease." In her earnestness she had evidently forgotten her diffidence.

Sayo-ko's words sounded rather childish to Tetsuya, but her seriousness moved him deeply. When he heard all, "Thank you," he bowed to her in appreciation of her priceless sincerity. "I comprehend you. You alone speak to me so kindly, and I thank you." He bowed again. "Of course, I agree with you in general. Truly, unless I do as you advise, no road to life's happiness is open to us, and if I am infatuated with you, you will be disappointed. I understand you thoroughly, and I promise not to disappoint your hopes."

"I have been talking immodestly. Please pardon me." Sayo-ko stopped walking and bowed a little.

"No, not at all." Tetsuya stopped unconsciously. "I thank you with all my heart."

"Then, as it is getting very late, I will say good-bye here."

"Oh!" He glanced about as if he had just awakened from a dream. They had already crossed Ochanomidzu Bridge and now stood on the slope leading from it. He did not know which way they had come. Everything was like a dream.

"We're here before we knew it, but it seems rather lonely. I will go part of the way back with you."

"No, never mind; the street-car is still running."

"So? Well, take good care of yourself."

"Yes, good-bye," she bowed.

Sayo-ko pursued her solitary way along the embankment, her sandals sounding lightly. Tetsuya looked longingly after her, and while he gazed a white face turned toward him. He felt confident, though he could not see, that her lovely lips wore a smile. When she looked back for the third time, he raised his handkerchief high up and waved it. Something white fluttered on the other side. He knew she had responded to his farewell. By and by, when her dear figure had disappeared in the nocturnal haze, he heaved a deep sigh, turned round, and trudged his way home, trampling his own black shadow in the moonlight. It seemed to him that his soul had gone with Sayo to the room in the coarse ware shop on Awaji-cho and that only his body was going home to

Yumi-cho. Of a sudden, the watery feeling of night permeated him, and he felt chilled all over.

Tetsuya rattled open the gate of his house and immediately barred it after him. He expected the porch to be dark as usual and strode carelessly as far as the lattice-door, when to his surprise he found the porch lighted, and, what he wondered at even more, his wife, Toki-ko, instead of wearing a night-gown girded with a thin belt, appeared neatly dressed in her day-*kimono*, waiting to greet him. Nor did her politeness end with her appearance, for when Tetsuya indifferently opened the door and walked up to the porch, she gracefully rested her hands on the floor and bowed; then going down to the step, she locked the door behind him. These were the first of her acts to stimulate his wonder. When he entered his room, where things were usually strewn about in the disorder he left them in the morning; or else Fuku, in a hurry to get to sleep, had prepared his bed too early for him, he found no bed there; everything was in order, the water boiling in the tea-kettle on the *hibachi*, the tea-set placed beside it. All this astonished him. Though he could not comprehend the underlying significance of this unwonted change, he sat down before his desk and waited. Soon Toki-ko came in and seated herself on the other side of the *hibachi*; she removed the tea-kettle and poked the fire.

"You're very late, aren't you? It must be chilly outside."

"Why, not so very."

Though he did not ask her to, Toki-ko hospitably made tea, poured some into her husband's cup and placed it beside him. Tetsuya, with arms folded, paid no attention. "Some tea, dear," she suggested. He picked up the cup, still looking absent-minded, and, after drinking a mouthful, put it down without a word.

"It's so late, don't you want something to eat? If you'd like some cake, here is some." And she touched the lid of the cake-bowl.

"No, I don't care for anything; I prefer to sleep. Is Fuku in bed? My bed is not yet made."

"We made your bed in the other room tonight. Isn't that satisfactory now?"

Since their quarrel, Tetsuya had excused himself as being too busy, and had been indulging himself in the peace of sleeping alone in his own six-mat room. Toki-ko could not complain. Her mother alone worried herself, and although now and then she attempted secretly to bring the two together again, Tetsuya had managed to elude her plans and had had his own way up to now. When he thought he had been outwitted at last, his face betrayed his annoyance.

"No, it is not satisfactory."

"So? We didn't know. You've been late in com-

ing home almost every evening recently, and you don't seem so very busy at home, consequently mother thought your bed had better be made there; I didn't like to worry an old person, and I let her have her own way. If you object to it, I'll bring it here." She meditated for some time. "But," scrutinizing his face, "why do you continue to be offended so long? I can't imagine what hurt your feelings so. We live in the same house, and we meet mornings and evenings, and yet you scarcely say one word to me, and you always look morose; how can I help feeling uncomfortable? What offends you so much? Please tell me frankly, won't you? If you don't say anything, how can a fool like me ever come to know better?" He did not reply. "If what I said about Sayo the other day offended you so much, please tell me frankly. Then I've got several things I can't understand, and I'll ask you about them."

Tetsuya, who had folded his arms, closed his eyes and had remained as silent as a stone image, now looked up and said in a voice low but quivering with suppressed anger:

"I have school tomorrow. I cannot sit up so late to talk to you. Please make my bed quickly."

"Is that so?"

Toki-ko flushed, stood up quickly and went out. She bumped against the thick paper-screen and the thin paper-screen and every obstacle in her immedi-

ate way. Alone she carried his bed and laid it out in his room.

When she finished, she remained standing and, with her eyes wet and sharp, glared at him. "Is this satisfactory?"

Tetsuya glanced at her out of the corner of his eye. "If the bed is ready, it is."

"Is it?"

She tramped out of the room and banged the screen. She buried her face in her sleeves, but she could not suppress the sounds of weeping; she could not leave for some time.

Tetsuya, hearing his wife weep outside his room, started and looked up. He was no longer the former complaining Tetsuya. Whatever his outward appearance might have been, his heart now overflowed with joy and contentment. This fitted him to laugh and unfitted him to be angry; he felt that he could forgive any wrong, and that he could not hate any one. At such a time man is often inclined to forget the wrongs of a hundred years' standing. Though Tetsuya had quarrelled with his wife, he did not entertain at heart thoughts so bitter as those which expressed themselves on his face. Besides, when he reflected on his misalliance with her younger sister he felt rather sorry for Toki-ko; yet when he again considered that he must divorce her sooner or later, he reasoned that he ought not carelessly to turn a tender countenance upon her.

Thus partly from necessity and partly from the course of events, he dealt with her a little more harshly than he desired. Hence, when he heard her weep, he felt rather sorry for her and secretly listened to her sobbing; when she ceased and at last went reluctantly away, he felt at ease and stood up and left the room; . . .; he came back thoughtlessly and lo! his wife, who had gone away, had returned and now leaned lumpishly against the post at the entrance of his room. His spirits fell when he saw her. Yet he could not do otherwise than pass indifferently before her; he was about to enter when Toki-ko, who up to then had not stirred, quickly drew near and impulsively clutched him.

“This is too much, too much—you are too cruel!” Her low voice trembled with grief. Amazed, he tried to shake her off; her hold was too tight. It may not have been impossible for him with his masculine strength to throw her off, but her first cries and her clinging had cowed him, and he could not be cruel any more. He contented himself with speaking roughly.

“What are you trying to do? Let me go.”

“No, I won’t, I won’t—even if you kill me, I won’t let go!”

Feminine power when concentrated should not be underestimated. When she exerted all her strength,

she compelled Tetsuya to totter; he recovered his balance only with difficulty.

"Don't get violent. If you have anything to say to me, can't you make yourself understood by talking quietly? Let go of me anyway. Won't you let go?" He could not stop now that he had started to resist. He attempted to force her to let go her hold, and she struggled the more to hold on; and whether the cloth was torn or the thread broke, his sleeve was ripped nearly off. He could not pay attention to such a thing now. He pulled himself into his room, and Toki-ko entered as if dragged. Both sat down, and, still retaining her clutch on him, she gazed at him sadly.

"Isn't this too much? Aren't you too cruel?" Shaking him, "Do you hate me so much? If you hate me so, I'd rather—" in a crying voice, "be killed at a blow. When I'm dead you'll be able to live with Sayo as you wish to do. Come," pulling herself nearer and crying, "please kill me at a blow."

Although she shook him and shook him, he stolidly kept his arms folded and his eyes closed and would not say a word. Toki-ko appeared sadder than before.

"Say, kill me at a blow. Then live with Sayo or do anything you wish. I prefer to die at your hands rather than live with such painful thoughts." Shak-

ing him, "Say something, please. I say, husband." And she shook him again.

Tetsuya's body shook violently at every jerk; and at times he felt dizzy. Yet he persisted in the silent policy of simply keeping his eyes closed. He had no reason for so doing except that he did not know what else to do. When he had been badly shaken and felt dizzy, he would think of divorcing her; but if he divorced her, he would have to give her immediately at least half the expense of his schooling from the middle of his high school course to his graduation from the University; which in all would total at a rough estimate two thousand *yen*. Tetsuya in his present position, however he might cudgel his brains, could not conceive the means of raising that amount. If he preferred to obtain a divorce without repaying that which he ought to repay, he could adopt no better plan than that of forcing his way out of the house; and towards a weak woman, a man of Tetsuya's character could never do such a dishonourable deed. Under these circumstances, now was not the time for him to mention divorce; and his wife that night did not appear easy to cast aside. Still, he had no inclination to frame a temporary excuse. He had not the slightest idea what to do; nevertheless, he could not endure being so shaken up; and ordered her to let go.

"No, I'll not. I'll never let go until you tell me why you hate me so."

"Then let go, and I will tell you."

"I'll let go if you'll tell me." She freed him and, steadying herself, scrutinized his face.

"Though it is too late to complain now," Tetsuya reluctantly began, "you and I are too different in our dispositions. You are gay, and I am serious. So in thought and in act—"

"When you do talk, you say that I like gaiety, that I like gaiety, but I don't look gay because I like it. I should be sorry if my relatives should say, even over their tea, that Mr. Ono's house was prosperous in my father's days, but that after you became the master its light went out. So I'm thrifty at home, and I keep up appearances outside. Don't I do this simply because I think of your honour?"

"Well, on that point our dispositions are different. I think that is needless trouble."

"You don't care whether you are spoken of as incompetent?"

"Well, if one is really incompetent, and people speak of him as such, he cannot help it. If they condemn a person who is not incompetent, they are wrong. So I care little for gossip."

While the one grew more excited, the other became more composed, and even looked very complacent as he stroked his moustache.

Toki-ko observed him indignantly. "The difference in our dispositions hasn't begun just now, has it? How can we help it, even if you object now?"

"I am not objecting to it, am I?"

"Don't you always look very unpleasant?"

"That is because I feel unpleasant."

Tetsuya did not intend to make a fool of Toki-ko; yet he could not tell the truth, and he did not wish to soothe her with falsehoods; so he unknowingly talked as though he were trying to make a fool of her. Toki-ko felt very serious and evidently thought the situation decidedly disagreeable. Sorrowfully:

"What are you talking about? You look unpleasant because you feel unpleasant. You don't need to prove it. I'm not asking you that. I'm asking you the reason why you feel unpleasant."

"We can't help it now, even if I tell you the reason." Tetsuya appeared very much annoyed.

"I must ask you to tell me, no matter whether we can help it or not. Please tell me."

"If you insist on it," he considered a moment, "I think I may say that the lack of domestic peace is the chief cause of my unhappiness."

Toki-ko suddenly flushed at this. "Who caused the lack of domestic peace? Wasn't that all your doing? If you were a gentleman and did not take up with

Sayo, who would cry or get angry and imitate a lunatic? Isn't this all of your doing?"

Tetsuya became silent when addressed in this chiding manner.

Toki-ko watched him for a time and then added, "You condemn everything I say as spoken out of jealousy, but whatever you say I won't be made a fool of any more."

Her reasons for not being made a fool of included the correspondence not of love letters but of secret messages; and also their meeting away from the house. Besides these, he discovered that numerous suspicions had arisen in her mind; Toki-ko thought it impossible for Sayo-ko not to let Tetsuya know of her intention of leaving; the fact that she missed the train, which Toki-ko learned from the jinrikisha man, and that Tetsuya had returned after one o'clock the same night, made her suspect them and enabled her to scent the truth. The arrival of a postal card from Sayo-ko which bore the Chiba stamp puzzled Toki-ko. She thought Tetsuya had been to Chiba to see Sayo-ko both the preceding day and that day. The coincidence of the time of his coming home with the arrival of the last train at Ryogoku confirmed her guess. What surprised her was the fact that the purse, which she could not find in the drawer of his desk or anywhere else when she cleaned his room in the morning, Te-

tsuya took from the same drawer before he left. She suspected that he had hidden the purse in some place where it could not be discovered. Probing deeper into his reason for so concealing it, she concluded that it contained some money which he had managed to collect for Sayo-ko. In this she was right. Lastly, what disturbed her most, as the suspicion of suspicions, was the fact that he declined to sleep with her; but of this she merely thought; she could not speak to him about it.

After Toki-ko had enumerated her suspicions, nay, almost proved facts, she looked more or less proud. She finished, "I say, do you still call these groundless suspicious? Even you could not feign innocence now, could you?" Crowing over her victory, "Of course, you went with her in the beginning only for some temporary enjoyment, but you can't disentangle yourself, you see. Sayo must have chid you with tears, didn't she? You must be in difficulties. What do you intend to do? Better confess. If you confess, I won't be altogether prejudiced."

Her meaning evidently was that, if he removed his helmet and yielded to her, she would help him solve the difficulty. Tetsuya, however, for some unknown reason kept his eyes closed and remained as silent as a dummy.

"You've really made up your mind to leave home?"

Her face betrayed her utter amazement. Tetsuya

said not a word in answer to her questions; she could not think otherwise than the worst, which was far more than she had apprehended, and which puzzled her for a reply.

Up to this time, though she had often said that Sayo had usurped her place in his affections, that she was forsaken, and so forth, yet at heart she did not altogether believe herself. The idea of improbability lurked in all her apprehensions. When she suffered from jealousy and complained and wept, this was mere acting; at the bottom of her heart she was undisturbed for the reason that she could not conceive such a momentous event in her own life. She firmly believed the fault lay with her husband; and she expected that when she had reasoned the matter thoroughly with him, she could make him acknowledge it; they would then be reconciled to each other. To her astonishment, all her many arguments proved vain: Tetsuya did not even change the expression on his face. As she looked at him, cool and as unmoved as a dry tree or as dead ashes, Toki-ko felt that she stood face to face with the one paramount event in her life; an event which she did not exactly anticipate though she vaguely feared it—divorce. Instantly, strange to say, everything around her shed a peculiar light and, in a twinkling, had changed in appearance. Her sense of the wrongs of the past, her apprehensions for the future, passed away. She forgot her reason

and her pride, and even jealousy and anger touched her not; the feeling of misery permeated her. She clung to her husband in spite of herself. "You are too—too cruel!" Toki-ko fell in his lap weeping, quite unlike the usual Toki-ko; a cleverer Toki would always have acted like this. She became more like her usual self after crying for a time. Over the feeling of sheer misery surged a sense of gain and loss, and this brought with it the feeling of having been wronged. She examined him through tearful eyes. "You're exactly like a devil. I didn't think so until now, for I considered you to be a sincere, helpful husband, though you were always pretty hard to please. Even if you're tired of me, to think that you should forsake me after eight years because our dispositions don't agree and our home lacks harmony and other such pretexts," she wept. "Aren't you too cruel? Yes, after Sayo returned, our home was inharmonious, and you must have felt unpleasant; but I lived relying wholly upon you. I thought of you as my all-in-all, so when I found your relations with her in any way peculiar, I couldn't help worrying, could I? I'm not such a hypocrite as she, and I'll speak frankly. You sympathized with Sayo and were kind to her, and I disliked that ever so much. The more you cared for her, the more I hated Sayo. Of course, she being my only sister, I didn't wish to gain at her expense, yet I couldn't sacrifice you for her. If you'd sympathized

with me at all, you wouldn't have blamed me alone. You were infatuated with her, and her actions only seemed right to you, while you disliked whatever I did; and now you think of leaving home. When I think of it, I can't curse her enough." She threw herself down again weeping.

They were the words of a hated wife, yet they touched Tetsuya deeply, reminding him, as they did, that he had lived with her eight years; and in that time he had not always disliked her. When he reflected on the beginning of their married life, he almost doubted that he was the same man. Toki-ko, though usually too wilful to make him think so, could not have told a lie when she stated that she depended wholly upon him. When he thought how lonely she would be if he forsook her, he did feel sorry for her. Being naturally a proud woman, she was the more pitiable, as she prostrated herself weeping, unmindful of everything. He, about to desert her and leave home, might be a devil as she said. Thus he considered, and was almost inclined to overlook everything and acknowledge his fault.

At exactly the same instant, Toki-ko, having said every word she had to say and having shed every tear she had to shed, with characteristic irascibility suddenly aroused herself at Tetsuya's lack of responsiveness. "When I've reasoned so carefully you oughtn't to keep silent; you ought to say something," she

scolded. Tetsuya hesitated. "Then, very well, I've made up my mind. Understand this, as long as I live, I shall prevent you, I shall never allow you to live with Sayo, no matter how hard you try. Remember."

She arose quickly. Tetsuya's mind veered completely around. He also stood up and, after shutting the screen behind her, began unfastening his belt, meanwhile reciting a poem in a low voice. Soon he changed his clothes for his night-clothes and got into bed. Ten minutes passed, and one might have thought him asleep, but really he was sobbing.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE next morning Tetsuya left home in *kimono* and *hakama* [Japanese divided skirts], an unusual costume for him, and at the corner hired a jinrikisha; he did not go to school, but hurried to Sayo-ko's lodgings on Awaji-cho. He sent the runner away to school with a notice of absence and then asked, looking rather listless:

"Sayo-san, I wish to drink. Will you fetch me some beer?"

Sayo-ko did not know what had happened and was not a little worried over Tetsuya's strange expression. "Do you wish to drink?" she asked, staring at him doubtfully and hesitating to stand up.

"Well, do you object?" His bloodshot eyes shone angrily.

"No; but—what is the matter?" She could restrain her question no longer.

"Will it make any difference what the matter is?" Tetsuya asked petulantly. "Stop talking, and please go after it quickly."

"Yes." Sayo-ko would not disobey him. Reluctantly she left when he handed her a bank-note. She returned presently with the beer and four or five persimmons. She filled the cup which she had borrowed

from the woman downstairs, and, in silent meditation, began to peel the fruit.

Tetsuya said nothing. He took up the cup and drank half the contents at a draught, and then, sighing painfully, set it down and sank into a lax position. Again collecting himself, he took up the cup and drained it at a gulp.

“Sayo-san.”

“Yes?” She stopped peeling and looked up.

“I must now ask you to be prepared for the worst. They have pretty nearly suspected.”

“*Ara!*” She put the persimmon and the knife down at once. “Do they know I live here?”

“No, they haven’t suspected that yet. They still think you have gone to Chiba, but—matters stand like this. Last night when I got home—” He recounted briefly the second quarrel, omitting to mention that Toki-ko had expressed her grievances strikingly, that he was moved, and finally that his wife had declared her intention of preventing them from living together. “It happened just like that. Though I did not admit or deny anything because I did not like to appear conciliatory, and hence false, she may have thought I admitted the truth of her statements. I cannot help it now; I cannot go there any more.” His tone seemed to express regret over the fact. “I have no home now. I must live with you here. I must ask some one to be a go-between and make arrangements for a settlement;

money is the first thing to consider in everything, you see—” He sighed heavily, perplexed with the thought of that two thousand *yen*.

As she heard him, Sayo-ko blushed and then became deathly pale; and by the time he had finished, her head hung very low. Tears fell on her lap.

Tetsuya quickly observed this. “Why, have you any regrets now?” And he looked at her harshly.

“No.” Sayo-ko, still weeping, hung her head.

“Why do you cry then?”

“Because I am very, very sorry for my sister.” And her tears fell fast.

Tetsuya frowned. “I feel the same way regarding her. We have lived together for eight years, and when we do part, I shall not feel much elated. Still it cannot be helped; it’s too late now.”

When Sayo-ko heard this, she ceased weeping and, after thinking a little, looked up. “Is it too late?”

“Of course it is.” He thought the question strange.

“Even if I should go away?”

Tetsuya understood for the first time and incontinently began to worry. “That won’t do. Such an idea! Such—if I should lose you now, I wouldn’t know where to stand.”

“If I should die of some sudden disease or something, what would you do?”

“Such a foolish idea! Oh, such—don’t think of

such a silly thing." His worrying increased. "If you should die, I—how could I continue living?"

"I don't say I shall die, but—"

"Didn't you say such a horrible thing just now? You must never do anything reckless. I have already sacrificed home, honour, and everything for this. So if you do such a thing now, I should feel very foolish." He spoke thus, though he cannot have alluded to his own kindness.

"I did not wish you to sacrifice home—" Sayo-ko had some deep regrets.

"Do you mean I was crazy to sacrifice it?"

"No, I don't mean that, but—"

Tetsuya grew excited. "Nonsense, nonsense! Do stop such talk. Rather let us go somewhere and have a good time and forget everything."

"Go somewhere?" Sayo-ko did not appear to relish the idea.

The gloomy weather was quite unlike that of the preceding day. Tetsuya's proposal, a sudden whim of his, to go out to resuscitate their spirits did not meet with any response from Sayo-ko, and both soon forgot the suggestion. They spent the day looking dismally at each other and occasionally talking about their future. No particularly good idea occurred to them. When they were perplexed, Tetsuya unconsciously would heave a sigh, whereupon Sayo-ko

would weep; so they arrived at no conclusion. At dusk Sayo-ko, who found this state of things unbearable, advised him to return home for that night. Tetsuya, rather depressed on account of leaving home, immediately was annoyed at this advice and became almost desperate when he branded her as cold-hearted, cruel, and as not reciprocating even a tithe of his affection. Sayo-ko wept and let him have his own way. In this mood, they sat down to supper. Though they ate from the same wooden tray, even from the same dish, like a newly married couple, yet they were not so happy as an outsider might think; somehow a hopeless misery had settled upon them.

The next day Tetsuya, though not at all inclined, was obliged to go to school because that was his means of support; nothing especial happened. On the third morning after he left home, he attended school as usual, and when lecturing half-heartedly in his classroom, the office-boy brought him a visitor's card. It was greyish in colour and, although foreign, was of such inferior quality that it might be compared to Asakusa paper. Tetsuya glanced at it and discovered the caller to be his mother-in-law's cousin, "Kyubei," who, in spite of being possessed of a fine family name, was universally called, "Good-natured Kyubei-san." ["Good-natured Bill."] He kept a little store somewhere in Asakusa and was well known for his timorousness. Tetsuya's mother-in-law had

some other relatives at her native place, Mito, where her ancestral home still was, though her people were poor; in Tokyo she had no one except this man. Evidently she had asked him to see Tetsuya. As he thought of this, he felt inclined and yet disinclined to see the man and hear about conditions at home. Tetsuya decided to see him for a moment, and so he walked into the reception room as soon as his lecture was over.

"Kyubei-san," a man possessed of a pate as smooth as a kettle though he was only forty-six years of age, jumped up from his chair diffidently, smiled and bowed bashfully, and mumbled something. Tetsuya had surmised the reason for the visit, but he affected ignorance and demanded to know what the other wanted. The man hesitated for some time, then he spoke falteringly. If listened to carelessly he could not have been understood at all; but half by guessing, Tetsuya gathered that his mother-in-law and Toki-ko were weeping and worrying all the time. Tetsuya understood that; he asked the other pointedly the reason for his coming. The messenger was very shy; he confessed he owed O-Taki-san fifteen *yen*. Tetsuya stated that such information did not concern him; what he wished to know was his object in coming. The old man said he could not refuse her request, though he should have liked to, because he was in her debt; he had come to accompany Tetsuya home; and

he bowed obsequiously. Tetsuya informed him that if that were his object, he himself would ask some one to act as a go-between; and he advised the messenger to go home. This distressed "Kyubei-san," who pleaded that he would be in an awkward position, as his debt was a month overdue. He again bowed servilely, and said he had been told to accompany him home without fail. This perplexed Tetsuya; meanwhile, the class-hour had begun, and this gave him an excuse to break off the interview, though he did feel it was rather cruel, and he stood up. The man arose very reluctantly. He besought Tetsuya repeatedly without stating what he wished; and after bowing three, four, five times in quick succession, he minced away. Tetsuya's eyes followed the fellow's back. This plan must have been conceived by his mother-in-law, yet that Toki-ko should have countenanced such a foolish proposal without protesting surprised him. Proud as she was, Toki-ko was still a woman and could become silly. As Tetsuya thought of this, though he hated them from the bottom of his heart, he felt ashamed when he remembered he had forced his way out of his home and had forsaken a mother and a wife who had no relatives to rely upon except such a man.

He forget this sentiment and everything on returning to their room and seeing Sayo-ko in depressed spirits. "You must have been lonely, all alone.

Have you been weeping again? Haven't I told you not to worry so? I forsook your sister long ago, you see. Come, come, do not weep any more. Here is a nice gift for you. It is your favourite." He took out of his sleeve a paper containing five or six waffles.

As "Kyubei-san" had proved of little use, Hamura was asked to intercede. How he complained because this was a thankless task! And that was natural, for if we may judge from what Hamura told Tetsuya, mother and daughter were in a miserable condition now that Tetsuya had left them. All their relatives lived in remote places. In Tokyo they had no one but "Kyubei-san," and the intimates they had in Tokyo would not help them at such a time. They could think of no way out of the difficulty, and they spent their days in aimless, fruitless talk. The old lady complained, Toki-ko fretted, and they both wept. It was too pitiable a sight to contemplate. Naturally, therefore, they relied on Hamura alone. Toki-ko did not call on him, but the old lady called almost every day. He did not mind her coming, but she did not talk intelligibly; she only complained and wept; and Hamura confessed he hardly knew what to do for them.

Old people are always silly; however, Hamura thought few could be so silly as Tetsuya's mother-in-law. He related everything frankly now. The old

lady disliked Tetsuya, and if he wanted to leave home, so much the better; she thought of allowing him to leave once he repaid all the money that had been spent on him plus some interest. But, she reflected, Toki-ko was now twenty-six; if she desired to remarry at that age, she could not marry any one except an old man or a man with children. To adopt a husband, unless her family were very rich, would be impossible. The old lady would then decide that she ought to contrive to bring Toki-ko and Tetsuya together. Again, the difficulty would seem to lie in her desire to adopt a husband; if she were to give her daughter away, any one would be glad to accept a woman like Toki. The old lady recollected many who had joined fine families in their second marriages. Even if there was a baby in the other family, the old lady would not object because she feared Toki-ko could not bear children. Then the old lady was puzzled to know what to do with herself. She thought this way, and she thought that way, until she was completely confused. She grew silly in spite of herself. When she visited Hamura to ask him to help influence Tetsuya to return, she would enumerate his faults and failings, and conclude she had no desire to be attended on her death-bed by such a man; and then she would weep.

Toki-ko may not have thought in her heart what her words meant, yet with characteristic wilfulness she persistently declared she had no regrets in parting

from such an incompetent, depraved man. If he wanted to leave, he could leave, but in revenge she would never allow him to live with Sayo. Sayo might not be in Chiba; she might have hidden herself somewhere in the city, but wherever she was, Toki-ko meant to locate her, 'even by searching through the bush,' and to bring her back and punish her. Hamura did not learn what punishment she hoped to inflict, but her looks bespoke determination. She bore more resentment toward Sayo-ko than toward Tetsuya, and constantly spoke of her as "the brute." Hamura conjectured that she resolved to bring Sayo-ko home in order to disappoint Tetsuya; that vengeance was her motive; and that even if Tetsuya consented to return, Sayo-ko would not be allowed to come home.

Hamura's statement alone compelled Tetsuya to realize vividly how badly off mother and daughter were. He found no joy in this. He even felt pity for them; and his loathing which had been so great naturally diminished. If he had to part from them, he wished to do so with a clear conscience. The stipulations of the old lady were either vague or impossible, and the negotiations did not progress. Hamura was weary of the whole affair, and he advised Tetsuya that the best thing to do was to leave Sayo-san and go home. Hamura said this because Tetsuya had told him everything; but Tetsuya preferred to die rather than return.

What made this advice especially impracticable for Tetsuya was the fact that, on his return from school, he always found Sayo-ko with eyes swollen from weeping. He told her of the progress of the negotiations with convenient modifications. She generally divined the truth and worried a great deal. She admitted that, with Tetsuya near, she did not feel so troubled; with him away, she would recollect things and would weep. He granted the adequacy of her reason, yet asked her to try not to worry, because, he assured her, the negotiations would come to a satisfactory conclusion in time. He always consoled her with such words, but alas! he himself did not know when matters would be adjusted. He had not expected things would come to this. Finding himself in this quandary, he suffered indescribable pain.

CHAPTER XIX

“**B**ROTHER, this telegram arrived some time ago. What shall I do?”

Sayo-ko anxiously picked up the telegram from the table and handed it to him. Tetsuya, who had just visited Hamura, took it and after glancing at it, became thoughtful.

It was from their home on Yumi-cho and was addressed to Sayo-ko at Chiba, where it had been read-dressed by Katsumi.

“Mother ill. Return at once,” read the message.

While Tetsuya meditated, Sayo-ko became more and more anxious.

“Do you think it is true?”

“No, it’s false. Mother went to see Hamura only last night. It’s false, of course, but—” he still considered; and then, “I understand!” With a slap on his knee, he threw away the paper. “I understand everything. Just now I learned from Hamura—”

He told her what he had heard. According to Hamura, the old lady visited him on the preceding night and seemed very anxious to find out where Tetsuya lived. At first he refused to tell her, stating that it would be useless to try to see Tetsuya before a meet-

ing had been arranged for; she persisted, remarking that she did not wish to know where he lived in order to see him but only for convenience in the future. Hamura felt certain that if he continued to refuse her, she would complain that he always sided with Tetsuya, and would give vent to her usual silliness and weep. So, though he considered it a poor excuse, he mumbled that Tetsuya lived somewhere near the school, and pretended to search for the address, which he failed to find. He escaped from the difficulty only by promising her that the next time he met Tetsuya, he would again ascertain the address. He thought she might come weeping to the school if he did not give her the information. Hamura advised him to let them know his address by way of providing a 'safety-valve.' Tetsuya agreed with this. But if he let them have this information, he could no longer live with Sayo-ko, and he asked Hamura not to divulge anything before he had moved, which he purposed to do on the following day if possible. This was the result of their conference.

"Now I see that mother did not wish to know our address to invade us with tears. I am sure your sister is searching for you. Very likely they suspect you are not in Chiba but live with me, and they sent this telegram to find out, and to land you safely home in case you were there. He, he! This is just the sort of thing Toki would scheme."

Sayo had not yet been told about her sister's determination to catch and punish her, and she still looked dubious.

"And what will they do after finding me, I wonder?"

"Their plan is to bring you back and disappoint me," he answered thoughtlessly. Sayo-ko started.

"Then, sister too—" She became silent.

"What about sister?" he questioned.

"She, too, thinks if I had not lived there, things would not have come to this, doesn't she?"

"Well, she may have that misapprehension—"

"Can it be a misapprehension?"

"It is a misapprehension." It puzzled Tetsuya that she should ask such a question now; he scanned her face. "Why?"

Sayo-ko did not reply. "Misapprehension or not, I must do something to answer this telegram—what shall I do?"

"We can do nothing. Let it alone."

The conversation turned. They decided that Sayo-ko would have to conceal her whereabouts; whereas Tetsuya would have to let his be known. Talk of this made Tetsuya forget to inquire the meaning of her "Can it be a misapprehension?"

Tetsuya felt particularly indisposed the following day, but, not having the good fortune to be possessed

of an independent income, he reluctantly betook himself to school. This day, as well as on some others recently, his work proved indescribably distasteful to him. He tried to compose his troubled mind; yet as he possessed neither hope nor spirit, he could not repress the sullen look that overspread his face; and while lecturing unwillingly, he constantly pulled out his watch from his vest-pocket and inwardly complained of the slowness of time. Somehow or other the noon recess, for which he had waited impatiently, arrived. As he rested after eating his lunch, he was summoned to the principal's room, whither he went perforce, his slippers scraping as he walked.

The principal, a Doctor of Laws, had taught Tetsuya in college and had been a kind friend to him ever since; still, though he did not overlook his indebtedness to him, Tetsuya could only look coldly that day. He bowed indifferently and accepted the chair offered him. The doctor knew his idiosyncrasies and paid no particular attention to his manner, but asked bluntly whether 'Mr. Ono' would not like to go to China. Tetsuya knit his eyebrows questioningly. The doctor continued in an even tone, stating that a certain local government in Chih-li ¹ expected to establish a college, and that the newly-appointed principal, 'Mr. T'i Tiaochi,' had come over to engage teachers, and had asked him to recommend some candidates.

¹ The metropolitan province of China.

He mentioned the terms, which were, of course, not at all bad.

As he listened, Tetsuya's brows gradually unknit, and he could not keep the smile from his lips. He had grown weary of this narrow country of Japan, and had been indulging in day-dreams of taking Sayo-ko to Brazil or Peru and spending the rest of his life in raising apples or some such work in some unknown place abroad. Sayo-ko also felt the same way. Sometimes they discussed such dream-like plans to forget the painful reality. Now the opportunity, which they could not have anticipated, had come. If they took advantage of it, though the destination was antipodal to their dream-place, and though the distasteful work of a teacher could not compare with the tranquillity of a farmer's life, Tetsuya thought he might rid himself of all his entanglements, and thus enable himself to enjoy a new life of liberty. Ah! at last fortune had begun to smile on him. He felt so happy that his heart danced; despite his happiness, he did not disclose his feelings except by smiling. Tetsuya was no less successful in masking his feelings than Toki-ko. He could control the expression on his face; he had no power over the delight that overflowed his heart. He disregarded appearances in not requesting the principal to wait until the next day for a reply, and, though he feared he might appear hasty, he asked impulsively to be recommended.

At the conclusion of his work he would recover from his worn-out spirits and start for home cheerfully; that day he felt especially elated and from time to time revealed his happiness by smiling. He completely forgot his intention of obtaining a new lodging to which he had planned to remove immediately, but looking straight ahead of him like a man bent on urgent business, he hurried back to the coarse ware shop on Awaji-cho. Usually on nearing the shop, he would first look ahead and then behind, and after cautiously satisfying himself that no one followed, he would run into the house. That day he neglected these precautions and entered carelessly, because he wished to make Sayo-ko glad as soon as possible by telling her of his new position.

As Tetsuya walked out of the school gate, a man who might have been taken to be a petty merchant of about fifty years of age, clothed in a hunting cap and cotton garments, waited at a corner some distance away. When he espied Tetsuya he turned quickly and followed him, now in full view and now in hiding; after he had satisfied himself that Tetsuya had entered the coarse ware store, he approached cautiously and peeped in with such a suspicious manner that the landlady mistook him for a sneak-thief and hurried to the front. The man instantly turned and hurried up the slope with quick steps and disappeared in the direction of Surugadai.

This Tetsuya learned afterwards. He noticed nothing at the time. As soon as he stepped into the store, he did not even heed the rickety stairs, with which he was now familiar, but climbed them with such thumping steps that the whole house resounded. He rapidly slid open the screen, and a smile spread over his face. "Sayo-san, Sayo-san, I have good news, good news—" he cried. But catching sight of Sayo, fallen face downward on the floor, he stared with surprise. "What is the matter? Eh, do you feel ill?"

"Oh, you look ill." Tetsuya scanned her face as she reluctantly sat up and bowed. "If you feel ill, you must not overstrain yourself. Better make up your bed and lie down," he advised, divesting himself of his *hakama*.

"No, there is nothing the matter with me." She tried to look as usual; she reached for the *hakama* which he had just removed and began to fold them, but her manner of handling them appeared languid to Tetsuya. When she finished the folding she sighed:

"Did you get your room?"

"No, I did not try today."

"Oh." She said no more, not even asking his reason. She put away the *hakama* in the closet and, seating herself on the side of *hibachi* opposite Tetsuya, picked up her knitting which lay beside her and began to knit quietly.

Usually she did not act thus. Having waited impa-

tiently for his return, she would be filled with delight as soon as she saw him. Today she behaved so strangely indifferent that Tetsuya studied her lassitude for some time without speaking.

"Sayo-san, you are worrying again, aren't you?" She did not reply; he continued, "I don't know what makes you worry so, but if it is because you dislike parting even for a short time, we may live together, provided we have separate rooms."

"No, it is not that—"

"What do you think about so much? Instead of worrying by yourself, wouldn't it be better for you to tell me and let me help you?"

He spoke complainingly; therefore she replied, "I will tell you then. Toshi-ko-san came this morning immediately after you left."

"Mrs. Katsumi?"

"Yes."

Toshi-ko was Katsumi's wife and Sayo-ko's best friend. Tetsuya had met her two or three times, and he could now guess how matters stood.

"Did she come because she was anxious about you on account of that telegram?"

"Yes, but she said she also had business at her father's house in Ushigomé. She is to stay there to-night and come again tomorrow."

"She said something to you, didn't she?" He smiled for some reason.

"Yes," she smiled forlornly. "I mentioned nothing of our affairs the day I went there, but forced her to grant my request, you see. She worried greatly, she said; and she pressed me so urgently;" shyly, "that I confessed at last."

"We can't help it now. We can't conceal this for ever, can we? And then?"

"She rebuked me severely."

"What? Eh, what did she say?" He began to feel uneasy, knowing, as he did, that Sayo-ko looked upon Toshi-ko as an elder sister and was greatly influenced by her.

"She maintains that my body has conquered my soul."

"Conquered your soul?"

"When I argued that, if my brother could only be happy, I did not care what might happen to me, she said that was only a subterfuge; that with the pretext of making him happy I degraded myself and him too."

"That is cruel, too cruel," Tetsuya frowned with embarrassment. "Toshi-ko-san talks that way because she knows nothing of our affairs."

"I also think that what she says is true."

"Why? It cannot be." He grew excited. "Of course, we cannot help what people say about us, because we have entered into this relation while I am

still connected with your sister; but a long time before you and I met this way, I really had forsaken your sister. Besides, if this were only a temporary infatuation, it might be a degrading affair. You promised that if I were happy, you would be satisfied; and so with me; a true affection has thrown us into this relationship, so it is not right to regard ours as a demoralizing infatuation."

"I pleaded just that way, and she claimed I was mistaken because, even if you had parted from sister, the separation could never really take place until sister consented. When she said this I realized the truth."

Tetsuya did not know what to say, so he looked vexed and said nothing. Presently he asked, "Well, what did Toshi-ko-san advise you to do?"

"It was impossible for her to countenance such a sin. She advised me to repent and ask you to return home; and she told me to come to Chiba. She spoke kindly, actually shedding tears." Sorrow seemed to possess Sayo-ko.

"And do you wish to?" Tetsuya looked quite disturbed as he watched Sayo-ko's face.

"Eh, Sayo-san? Do you wish to part because she advised you to?" Tetsuya became impatient at Sayo-ko's reticence and demanded an answer.

He had asked the same question twice; Sayo-ko

could not remain silent longer. "I don't know what to do—" She leaned forward appealingly, looking all the lovelier for her perplexity.

"I don't see what is going to happen," he sighed. "If you vacillate for ever and are unable to decide, you will not get very far."

"But, brother," she observed, glancing sideways at Tetsuya's face, "you are vacillating, too."

"About what?"

"About your old home."

"I am not vacillating; I am only perplexed, because they are such silly people," he replied chidingly.

"That is, I think, because it would be very unreasonable to part from one with whom you lived for eight years." She spoke hurriedly, blushing, with her head bowed as if this thought had long oppressed her mind and she wished to speak it out whether for good or ill.

Tetsuya looked more or less desperate. "Whether it is unreasonable or not, when matters have gone so far, I cannot withdraw, can I?"

"Then it means you are doing everything simply because you are so placed that it is difficult for you to do otherwise, and—" She sighed and hung her head.

Tetsuya appeared dissatisfied. "Of course, everything man does may in part be due to the force of

circumstances. Whether that or not, we are doing nothing against our own will, so isn't it all right?"

"It is awful; I don't like it," Sayo-ko explained, unusually aroused. "If you leave sister even partly because of the force of circumstances or for any such reason, I cannot stay here like this."

Tetsuya wanted to refute her argument, but at the moment he could not think of anything to say; he contented himself with flashing his eyes.

Sayo-ko, still hanging her head, continued rapidly: "Toshi-ko-san, too, admitted that after living with sister as husband and wife for eight years, your regret to separate from her will be—"

"I have no regrets. Who would, with such a woman?"

"Didn't you say the other day that when you came to part from her you would feel sorry?" She darted a glance at his face.

"I may have said such a thing, but—" he was embarrassed, "that is not regret."

"What is it if it is not regret?"

"It is not regret, I say."

Tetsuya spoke harshly yet with apprehensive emotions, being unable to express his feelings satisfactorily.

"Then, I don't know what to call it. Anyway, when you do part, you will feel sorry, won't you? Toshi-ko-san says it is human nature, and that it

would be wrong to transgress it. She earnestly advised me to go away, so that you could more easily obey your natural inclinations."

"You speak of regret," Tetsuya appeared not to have heard what Sayo-ko had just said; he cared only for this. "It is human nature to be sorry even for a convict, when the time of his execution arrives. For the same reason, when a person leaves what he has reason to leave, he is more or less sorry. Isn't that human nature?"

"Didn't I just say so?"

"Then you need not say such annoying things, need you?"

"I am not saying any annoying things. I agree with Toshi-ko-san and believe it is human nature, and that it would be better for you to go home without transgressing it."

"After thus driving me away, what do you mean to do?"

"I?"

"Do you intend to find a good man and marry him?"

"How cruel, brother!" She looked cross.

"But you see—what do you intend to do after we part? I don't understand you at all."

"Then I—I will resign myself to fate—" She covered her face with her hands and shook her head despairingly.

"Sayo-san, rather than for you alone to yield to fate, would it not be better for us both to go to China and resign ourselves to fate there?"

Then for the first time Tetsuya told Sayo-ko about the position in China which had been offered to him at school that day. If he forced divorce at once on the mother and daughter against their will, he would require no small sum of money; this he did not have; so he considered he and Sayo-ko could not do better than go to China immediately, leave affairs as they were, remit home generously each month, and wait patiently for the time when mother and daughter would be appeased. Introducing even his day-dreams into his talk as if their future were very bright and full of hope and all the happiness in the world were their own, he discoursed earnestly and with great enthusiasm. His eyes flashed, and he gesticulated with his fist. Tetsuya felt certain that at such news Sayo-ko would dance for joy. She merely looked indifferent.

"After all, you urge an honourable escape?"

Tetsuya's rare spirits were chilled by these cruel words. "Well," he was perplexed, "to call it an escape sounds bad; it is an honourable separation."

"And after the honourable separation, sister continues to think of you all the time, and you also—I should feel out of place!" She hung her head.

"Again!" he ejaculated chidingly and glared at her

a moment. Yet at heart he was glad. Immediately he seized her hand and pulled her to his side. "You say such silly things still. Haven't I told you repeatedly I never think of your sister at all?"

The pulling unbalanced Sayo-ko; she barely succeeded in recovering herself by leaning on her right hand. She looked up into Tetsuya's face. "It is false; you are thinking of her."

"Haven't I assured you I am not?"

"It is false."

Thinking argument of little use now, Tetsuya drew Sayo-ko closer and tried to kiss her. She turned away and refused him.

"I don't like you, brother, when you speak such falsehoods."

"This is indeed puzzling!" With his characteristic look of confusion, "True, when I left home, I felt uneasy for a time; now I don't think of it at all, I assure you. I may have unwittingly said I did, and you may have felt annoyed. Please pardon me, will you, Sayo-san?"

Sayo-ko did not heed this petition. "As you feel that way, and as sister does not think of parting," she spoke with emphasis, "there is no hope."

"No hope for what?"

"No hope of our living together."

"You need not despair in the least. Though your sister is revengefully obstinate at present, and nego-

tiations do not progress, yet if we go to China and wait patiently, she is certain to give up and consent to the divorce."

"That is hopeless. If sister becomes vindictive, she will give us no hope."

"That may be true, but how can we help it? You know we can't part now—"

"So, without being over-scrupulous, would it not be better to part at once?"

Tetsuya retorted sharply. "I object to parting."

Sayo-ko asked sharply, "Under any circumstances?"

"I object to parting."

"Then you do not repent having entered into such relations with me?"

"Of course not. Who would? Do you?"

Sayo-ko shook her head. "No, I do not. Still there is no other way out of it except by parting, is there?"

"I object," he cried wrathfully this time.

"Then, I—" She rested both her hands on Tetsuya's knees, looked up sadly into his face with tearful eyes, and continued in a broken voice, "I have made up my mind."

"To do what?" he inquired, staring at her.

"Brother, is there anything left for me to do but to die?" she replied in a voice shaken with emotion, and fell weeping over his knees.

Tetsuya collapsed when he heard this. He thought her conclusion quite reasonable for a woman. He had no assurances for the future; he merely lived on trusting to fate. How much more lonely a woman must feel, who subsisted solely on love! He was overwhelmed with pity as he reflected thus.

Nevertheless, he could not think of dying with her. Some people regard lovers dying together as foolish, and such people are generally too fickle so to die. If love were a mere passion, a lover's suicide would be the end of it; and the would-be wise could not make away with themselves; but Tetsuya did not belong to this class of people; he did not absolutely condemn lovers' suicides, though of course he did not unqualifiedly approve. There is no one who does not value his life; and those who sacrifice this valuable possession to an emotion must be influenced by circumstances of which cool-hearted outsiders have no knowledge. This was Tetsuya's belief, and each time he heard of lovers dying together, he felt sorry for them; so now he had no thought of despising Sayo-ko as foolish because she had come to her conclusion. Their present relations, viewed either from the point of view of morality or from that of materialistic interests, were untenable, and if they could not part, Sayo-ko, who would not consider either the question of morality or that of material gain, and who would die for her love, appeared rather

respectable to Tetsuya. When he cogitated thus, he feared he was frivolous, that he lacked her wholeheartedness and enthusiasm; and he almost despised himself. Sayo-ko's words stirred him deeply, yet for some reason he could not bring himself to a similar conclusion. He felt that he would rather side with the wiseacres and conclude that it was foolish to die.

At the moment he could think of nothing except to dissuade her from the idea; and this he tried to do. His reasonings, he admitted to himself, were very awkward. He argued that she lacked patience; that she ought to persevere; that she should pass through this difficulty like one who had no fear of death; that she must have a magnanimous mind; that she ought to muster her courage; and so on. The words that came to his lips were just the commonplace words that come to every person on such occasions. When the thought came to his mind that there were people in the world who did not possess sufficient courage to kill themselves, yet who concealed their cowardice behind such speciousness, he felt totally disgusted with himself; however wily he managed his argument, each word betrayed his absolute fear of death; and logic, if there was any, seemed to have been tacked on afterwards.

Though Tetsuya did not know how his thoughts struck Sayo-ko, they were very likely ineffectual with

her. After a while she stopped weeping and raised herself. She dried her tears, but she did not look up. Whether she listened or simply turned her ears to him, he was uncertain; she only nodded and spoke no word of approval or disapproval.

Tetsuya reflected that there was no reason why the logic which did not convince him should convince other people; he wished to recover his poise by some appropriate words; but the more he struggled, the poorer his words became. He changed his method and thanked Sayo-ko for her hearty love of him; and this reminded him of giving thanks for a gift delivered after the ceremony held to the memory of some deceased, and equally out of place; he grew so disgusted with himself that he became wholly silent. They sat mute for some time; somehow the thought weighed on him that thousands of miles already separated them; once they had been so closely attached that 'even water could not drip between them,' so now he was the more perturbed. However, if he discussed matters clumsily on such an occasion, affairs would become still more confused. He thought of a plan to conceal his clumsiness; he smiled without cause and tried to pull her nearer and kiss her; Sayo-ko resisted with all her might and kept him off. At the first opportunity she arose quickly; he, embarrassed, seized her skirt and asked if she were offended; she answered, "No." He asked her

to sit down again, but she claimed she had to prepare their supper. Her words were curt and prosaic, and Tetsuya felt displeased and almost insulted; and he let go of her skirt. Poor Tetsuya! Never before had he failed as he did that day.

CHAPTER XX

“**W**HY, sister, you are here rather early, aren’t you?” Sayo-ko went to the door to welcome a caller.

The pale-faced person who had just mounted the rickety stairs wore a plain dress over her thin body. In appearance she was not half so prepossessing as Sayo-ko. The visitor had dressed her hair in coils, and looked to be about twenty-six or -seven years old.

“Yes, and for good reasons.”

She smiled and entered the room. After putting down her satchel and removing her lace gloves leisurely, she seated herself on the cushion which Sayo-ko offered her.

“Pardon me for interrupting you yesterday,” she said, bowing for the first time but that only slightly.

“I am, sorry I had nothing to offer you,” Sayo-ko bowed her acknowledgment. “Did you go *there* after you left me?”

“No, I went directly to my father’s house, because I stayed here so long, and it was so late,” she smiled. As may be inferred from this conversation, the visitor was Toshi-ko Katsumi.

“Oh, so?” Sayo-ko began to make tea.

“Tea? No, thank you,” the other made a move-

ment to stop her. "I drank quite enough at your home just now."

"What?"

"I have been to Yumicho."

"Oh!" Sayo-ko exclaimed, surprised. "Why?"

"You are surprised, no doubt," she smiled again.

"I have many things to tell you today that will surprise you. To speak plainly, yesterday, after I had left my house, this postcard from your old home reached there, I am told." She picked out a return card from her satchel. "Just read it." She was calm in speech and leisurely in manner.

Sayo-ko took the card and read it. It was from her sister to Toshi-ko. The card stated that her mother's illness had compelled her to telegraph to Sayo-ko, who had neither returned nor answered the message. She had left home on such and such a day of that month, professing her intention to go to Toshiko's house. Had she gone or had she not, and if not, where was she? Toki-ko concluded from the fact that the telegram had not been returned that Toshi-ko knew where Sayo-ko was, and she wished Toshi-ko to inform her of Sayo-ko's whereabouts immediately. The card showed clearly that the writer knew she had seized upon the most important clue to the situation, and also that she would never give up.

"That is the card, you see. We were guilty of

forwarding the telegram to you, so we couldn't deny all knowledge. My husband was much perturbed and sent me a long message; but, as you know, he isn't well-informed, so what he says in this is entirely inappropriate and not practicable. Ho, ho," laughing softly, "I was quite worried and didn't know what to do; and to be frank I consulted my father. On his advice I went to your home in Yumi-cho. It was lucky I did. If I hadn't, I don't know what might have happened, for your sister was about to come here."

"Oh!" Sayo-ko stared. "How did she know I was here, I wonder?"

"This is the way—so a person shouldn't try to conceal anything."

Toshi-ko related to Sayo-ko all she had learned at Yumi-cho. The story roughly follows:

Toki-ko had an extraordinary hard task to discover Sayo-ko's hiding-place. She first forced her mother to importune Hamura for information, but, finding him singularly uncommunicative, veered her attack and worked upon his wife, Fuyu-ko; she learned from her with the greatest difficulty that Sayo-ko lived over a coarse ware shop on Awaji-cho. Awaji-cho, being a pretty large district, had many coarse ware shops. Finally, growing impatient at the stupidity of Fuku, who could not locate the house, Toki-ko wired to Chiba simply as an experiment, feeling certain, as

she did, that Sayo-ko was not there. She realized that her methods had effected little. Next, she sent an urgent summons to a man who had once been her family's jinrikisha man, and who now kept a small store at Kanasugi, Shiba, and had him follow Tetsuya at a distance. Finally, on the preceding day, the third of the pursuit, the man succeeded in discovering the shop. He was the man whom the landlady suspected. Now that she knew the place, Toki-ko wished to go and take her sister home at once, but, on thinking it over, she feared Tetsuya, if there, would refuse to let Sayo-ko go. Toki-ko controlled herself with set teeth, intending to take advantage of Tetsuya's absence in the morning and seize her; she had been waiting impatiently for the coming of the man from Kanasugi, when fortunately Toshi-ko called. Then ensued a catechism between the hot-tempered Toki-ko and the leisurely Toshi-ko. The latter, as a feeler, asked what she expected to do with Sayo-ko after fetching her home. Toki-ko replied that her uncle lived in Formosa, and she would send her there to be given away to any one, even as mistress to a Chinaman; her attitude was ferocious as she said this. Toshi-ko calmed Toki-ko's passions with great difficulty by guaranteeing that she would separate Sayo-ko from Tetsuya and take her to Chiba.

"But," Toshi-ko continued, "this is only a temporary solution. If you submit only under compul-

sion, you really do not submit. You must yield from the bottom of your heart," with a peaceful smile quite characteristic of her. "Were you kind enough to think over what I told you yesterday? You haven't been able to make up your mind?"

Sayo-ko hung her head and did not speak; Toshi-ko continued:

"That's bad," smiling again. "You are more weak-hearted than I thought. Summon up your courage."

Sayo-ko protested painfully, "But he does not consent."

"That's because you do not consent. If you say, 'Shall we part, though I don't like to?' no one would consent." She laughed aloud this time. "You must be the first to resolve. Don't you think he would be benefited if you parted?"

"Yes, I think so, but—"

"Then you need not hesitate so, need you?"

"But—" she thought a while.

"Worrying again," the other smiled. "You are really a coward. If you are so cowardly, I will compel you. Come, get ready. We leave for Chiba immediately. Come."

"Do please wait until tomorrow, and I will talk to him once more this evening."

"If you talk once more, do you hope to persuade him?" Toshi-ko continued when Sayo-ko did not

reply, "There, you see. You can't persuade him however often you talk."

"I don't think I ought to leave without speaking to him—"

"Leave a letter—you may do that if only you don't mention you're going to Chiba with me."

"Leave a letter?"

"Yes."

Sayo-ko became silent. Toshi-ko brought some paper and a writing brush from the desk and urged them upon Sayo-ko.

"Now, write quickly, and in the meantime I'll ask the landlady to get jinrikishas." She stood up and started to leave the room.

Sayo-ko, flurried, jumped up and clutched Toshi-ko. "Please wait." She gazed sadly at her friend's face. "You are very cruel, sister—"

Toshi-ko instantly became serious. "Yes, I am cruel. I love Sayo-ko-san's soul, and I am cruel to Sayo-ko-san's body. For you, Sayo-ko-san, who are so selfish as to compete with your own sister for him who is a brother to you, and also for you who think that parting would be beneficial to him and yet who won't part simply because of selfishness, for you I don't care at all."

Sayo-ko still clung to her friend and hung her head thoughtfully. Presently lifting her wan, colourless face, she said faintly in a hoarse voice, "I was wrong.

Please pardon me, sister. You speak truly; he will be happy if only I decided."

"Oh, yes."

"And sister will feel at ease, too."

"Oh, yes."

"Then, I—I have decided now—" She suddenly put her face on her friend's shoulder, and in smothered tones began to weep.

Toshi-ko closed her eyes and shut her mouth resolutely; finally, however, she could not bear the ordeal and began to cry, too. They wept for some time in each other's arms; presently Toshi-ko ceased.

"I sincerely sympathize with you. If you think so much of him, I would like to help you if I could, but such a thing would be good neither for your brother nor sister nor for you. Though this will be very hard on you, be patient; and come with me to Chiba, will you?"

Sayo-ko nodded silently, still sobbing.

CHAPTER XXI

ABOUT three o'clock Tetsuya, not knowing what had taken place, returned to his lodging-house in very high spirits; but he did not find Sayo-ko. This was unusual, something unprecedented. Happening to notice on the desk a letter inserted in a magazine he had not finished reading, he pulled it out doubtfully and started: the address "For my Lord" was in Sayo-ko's handwriting! When he realized that it was a final letter, his heart began to beat like a fire-bell. With trembling fingers, he tore open the envelope and began to read.

"My Lord whom I love and hate:

"In haste I write a few lines. Though I fear you will be offended at my rudeness in leaving without your permission, yet I cannot bear to hang upon your sympathy and give you trouble all the time because of our impossible relationship. Though I regret to part from you very very much, I petrify my heart and leave you now for ever. I shall pray that you will go home as soon as possible and live peacefully with my sister for a long long time. I shall never forget your tenderness during these days even if I die; I only regret that you were too kind to a foolish person like me. I regret this only. With best wishes,

"SAYO" (Date)

“P. S. Sayo will never do a reckless deed to stain your reputation, but imagine that she is no more in this world, and please do not, for mercy’s sake, seek to know her whereabouts. If you do, she will think ill of you her whole life.”

The postscript seemed to have been added in great haste.

When he had finished reading the note, Tetsuya changed colour and sprang up. What did she mean by ‘whom I love and hate’? Though she entreated him not to seek, how could he live without seeking? He determined to ‘search through the bush,’ if necessary. He ran downstairs, seized the landlady and questioned her. She informed him that the lady who had called the preceding day had come again that morning; that they both went out about noon; that his ‘wife’ returned alone soon and almost immediately left again in a jinrikisha, this time carrying her bag with her. Tetsuya had suspected from the first, and now he felt certain that Toshi-ko was the cause. He made his preparations hurriedly, left his lodgings, took a train from Ryogoku, and reached Chiba about the time lamps were lighted. He found Katsumi’s house easily. He met Toshi-ko and questioned her. She had taken dinner with Sayo-ko, she said, and had parted from her. The ‘old fox,’ feigning surprise and ignorance, did not tell all the truth.

Tetsuya's failure chagrined him. He realized now that he should have investigated secretly, but, as is usual with a fool, his wits came to his assistance too late. He determined to defeat Toshi-ko on her own ground; he said he was convinced that Sayo-ko must be in Tokyo still; he would go back immediately to search where he thought she might be; and pretending great disappointment, he went out of the gate and directly engaged a room close by. He began spying at once. He spent the whole of the next day in careful investigation, but could not get even a clue. Utterly discouraged, he returned to his lodgings at dusk. After his evening meal he deliberated and concluded it to be impossible that Sayo should be here: it would be evident to anybody that Tetsuya would come to Chiba to search; Toshi-ko had outwitted him by hiding Sayo-ko somewhere in Tokyo. He virtually drew this conclusion but, to satisfy himself, decided to stay one more night, and he went out to reconnoitre again. At that moment he perceived two jinrikishas leaving Katsumi's gate. Was she in Chiba despite everything? How could he afford to let her escape? He pursued the jinrikishas, but the men ran with the speed of professionals; and he, unused to running, could not catch up in spite of all his struggling. They were soon out of sight. He stamped and cursed; yet that road led to the station, which he decided must be their destination. He glanced about

him in search of a jinrikisha; as ill luck would have it, none was in sight. Wet all over with perspiration, he ran up to the station and found the seven o'clock train about to start. The shriek of the engine pierced his ears. He could see the train begin to move slowly. A lady, her hair in coils, who stood at the gate looking toward it, now waved her handkerchief. Immediately it was answered by the waving of one from a car-window a few yards off, by a woman perhaps; yes, she must have been a woman, the face appeared so white. The woman in the train withdrew abruptly from sight, and her sudden movement made Tetsuya think she wished to conceal herself. If it had been daylight, or if he had not been short-sighted, he might have discerned the woman's face; but it was night, and his eyes were weak, and he could see no more. Even with this, Tetsuya cried out in spite of himself, "Ah, Sayo-san—?" And as he spoke he felt the blood of his whole body rush boiling into his head; he tottered from dizziness and, though he could scarcely keep himself from falling, he strained his eyes, but the car-window was out of sight. It was behind the bridge.

Tetsuya, feeling conscious of some one stealing away, turned round carelessly.

"Aren't you Mrs. Katsumi?"

"Hello!" Toshi-ko stopped, either noticing him now or pretending to notice him for the first time.

"Are you Mr. Ono? Thank you for calling yesterday," she bowed to him. "You are still staying here?"

Tetsuya took off his hat and made a quick bow.

"Yes, I had some other business." He was unusually excited. "She—who was she?"

"Eh?" Toshi-ko frowned.

"The lady you were waving your handkerchief to?"

"Oh, do you mean her?" she smiled. "She is my younger sister."

"Your younger sister?" Tetsuya stared. "She looks remarkably like Sayo, doesn't she? I mistook her for Sayo."

He scrutinized her countenance. She looked quite serene.

"No, she doesn't resemble her at all."

"Did she go to Tokyo?"

"Yes, she is going home. She came up with me yesterday and stayed last night."

"Then—" he fixed his eyes on her absorbedly, "where is her home in Tokyo? Still at your father's?"

"Ho, ho," she smiled queerly. "No, my sister is married. She came with her husband from Nagoya, and they are staying at a hotel. She is going to that hotel, you see. Ho, ho," she laughed again.

"Oh, is that so?" Her manner somewhat abashed

him, and he thought of giving up the inquiry; still he realized that if he let this chance slip, he would lose his only clue; he asked indifferently, "Where is your father's home in Ushigomé, I wonder?"

"His home is on Yamabushi-cho." Toshi-ko looked nettled now and became restless. "Pardon me, I am in a little hurry. I must go now. Please come and see us sometime during your stay here." She bowed and started to leave the station.

Tetsuya, growing impatient, called after her, "What is your father's family name?"

"Eh?" She turned round.

"Your father's family name?"

"My father's family name?" She stepped into the jinrikisha which had waited for her. "I say, go through the city—I wish to buy some things," she ordered the runner. "It is Shino, Mr. Ono. Good-bye."

And the jinrikisha rattled off.

Tetsuya stood glaring after her. "Hum, hum! Do sisters wave their handkerchiefs when they part?"

He searched for the other one of the two jinrikishas but could not find it; disappointed, he went back to his hotel, and returned to Tokyo by the next train. Probably he drank at his hotel before he started, for in the car he was drunk; he scowled at the other passengers, and altogether behaved very rudely.

Occasionally, however, he made queer sounds through his nostrils, "hu, hu," perhaps chuckling, perhaps weeping; and he tried to conceal his embarrassment by coughing. All the travellers stared at him.

CHAPTER XXII

EVERY day thereafter when he had some spare time, Tetsuya hastened to Yamabushi-cho, Ushigomé, and inquired for "Shino," a proceeding so vague and indefinite that it should have shamed the doer. Finally, he learned that "Shino" was incorrect; that "Shiino" was the name; yet, though he surreptitiously sought in the neighbourhood, he could not learn of anybody resembling Sayo-ko entering or leaving any house. To make his investigation thorough, he called at the mission school in Akasaka where Sayo-ko had once been a boarder. There he chanced to meet a person who said she knew Sayo-ko's present address, and joyfully he asked her for it; but the address she gave him was in care of Tetsuya Ono, number so and so, street so and so, Yumi-cho, Hongo.

All hopes of finding her were gone now. Not knowing what to do, Tetsuya began to drink, and he drank morning and night, whereas formerly he had scarcely touched liquor. His character, too, gradually changed. Heretofore scrupulously careful and prudent, he grew so careless and rude that he could not be taken for the same man. The arrangements for his position in China had been made long before, yet Tetsuya showed little interest. While the men

who were going with him had bloodshot eyes on account of their activity in making preparations, Tetsuya alone seemed wholly indifferent and apparently had not ordered a single new suit. Once, he made a great ado over the question of going back to his Yumi-cho home; now, he returned leaving everything unsettled simply because the old mother came and implored him with tears in her eyes. He did not care what happened; he abandoned himself utterly. Nevertheless, trivialities sometimes aroused him to fury, and he behaved more violently than ever before. Farewell banquets were held almost every day. The Shidzuoka men gave a dinner in honour of Tetsuya, and it behooved him to act most seemly on account of their special kindness. Alas, no! He took offence at the toast-master's speech and struck him; this was very rude of Tetsuya, though it did happen when he was drunk; later, he had to send a note of apology. He had become reckless, and yet he could not efface Sayo-ko from his mind. Almost every other day he called at the coarse ware shop on Awaji-cho under the pretext of inquiring after the people there, but really with the hopeless hope that a letter might have come from Sayo-ko. Each call only brought him additional disappointment; he could not find out where she lived.

Because the old mother in tears had begged him to, Tetsuya consented to return home. Toki-ko re-

garded her mother's act as humiliating, yet she knew from Katsumi's letter that Tetsuya's relations with Sayo-ko had been broken, and she did not feel displeased when his return was finally arranged for. She had, however, many things to complain of; and, though her mother forbade her to mention them, how could she leave them unsaid? She remained firm in her resolution. Yet, when he did return accompanied by Hamura, he did not look like the old Tetsuya; he had taken liquor somewhere and was drunk, nevertheless as soon as he neared the house he called loudly for "*saké*." Of course they intended to offer some; at his order it was brought at once. Then, neglecting even to greet his family, he began to drink like an ox, until finally he was inebriate. Toki-ko felt disappointed that she had to hear from Hamura what she should have heard directly from her husband; still, attributing this to a sense of shame on his part, and controlling her temper, she did not look dissatisfied. The family retired that night, leaving matters as they were. The next morning, no longer under the influence of drink, he acted as indifferent as if he had returned from some little trip. He left as soon as he finished his breakfast. Toki-ko waited until he returned in the evening; but he returned very late and very drunk and unfit to talk to. Thus she had no opportunity to speak to him seriously. She remained nervous with suspense. Meanwhile,

he had evidently acquired a good sum of money, for he took his family to dine one evening; the next day he invited Hamura and his wife to a theatre; the third day he gave a farewell banquet at home to some particular friends of his family. Her home thus made gay, Toki-ko, who had a natural propensity for the frivolous life, was not altogether unhappy. When they sat side by side entertaining their guests, they could not appear cold to each other; and when he tenderly called, "Toki-san?" she would murmur, "Yes?" delightedly; she almost felt that they had returned to the old, happy relationship of husband and wife. Nevertheless, on one point, which she could not discuss with others, she was wholly dissatisfied. As she thought of this, she could only grieve over her husband's cold-heartedness and curse Sayo-ko.

CHAPTER XXIII

TETSUYA was to start for China the following evening. Toki-ko begged him repeatedly, before he left in the morning, to return home early that evening at least; but at ten o'clock Tetsuya had not returned. At eleven he had not yet appeared. Fuku had been allowed to go to bed long since. Toki-ko's mother, wearied by waiting, had retired. Toki-ko alone sat up forlornly and impatiently for his return. She deliberated and began to suspect Toshi-ko; though the latter had given her promise, still, if she were 'a fox of the same hole' [if she sided with Tetsuya and Sayo-ko], no one could believe what she might say. She might make Toki-ko believe she had compelled them to break off relations, and really in secret be acting as a go-between to bring them together. If Toki-ko allowed herself to feel at ease simply because her husband had returned compliantly, she might be sadly fooled. If this conclusion were not correct, there was no reason why he should continue to hate her so much. Her doubts engendered the worse demons of morose suspicions; everything was beyond her comprehension. She thought of this and of that, until finally she came to suspect that Tetsuya and Sayo-ko were going to China together clandestinely. If they did, what should she

do? This painful fear distracted her; and she could not keep back the tears of sorrow and resentment. Probably some twenty minutes had passed after the clock in the dining-room struck twelve, when the rattle of a jinrikisha stopped in front of the gate, and the runner's cry "Master's honourable return!" broke the serene silence of the advanced night.

Toki-ko sprang up and hurried to the porch to greet him. Tetsuya looked pale as usual, and his drunken eyes were heavy and fixed. He collapsed as soon as he staggered in, and sat down with a thump, exhaling the while a liquor-scented breath. The runner who escorted him into the house now started to remove Tetsuya's shoes, when Toki-ko stopped him with the statement that she would attend to that; and she dismissed him with some kind words. Quite unlike the lady who had just been weeping, she willingly descended to the stone-step and began to take off her husband's shoes, when Tetsuya suddenly raised his face.

"Never mind. I'll take them off myself. I'm not so drunk."

He had forced himself to drink; his body was drunk, but his mind was unexpectedly accurate. His suffering was indescribably intense: his head throbbed as if on the point of breaking; and when he lay quiescent for five minutes the liquor coursing through his body made him dizzy and faint.

"Oh, you are very drunk." She persisted in trying to remove his shoes. "Do be quiet, and I'll take them off for you."

Tetsuya, his head swimming, withdrew his feet.

"Never mind. If I let you do such a thing, Toki-san—"

"Oh, nonsense! Don't be as formal as a stranger, even though you do dislike me."

"No, that's not the reason, but—"

"Yes, I know."

Meanwhile, the shoes had been removed between the two. Tetsuya stood up staggering.

"Oh, look out," Toki-ko warned, steadying him from behind. "Come, lean on me."

"I'm all right."

He did not look all right. He staggered on and presently bumped against a screen.

"There, see now, you've hit it!" She assisted from behind and accompanied him into their room with no little difficulty.

"Please wait. After I lock the doors, I'll help you undress."

She ran off to lock the gate and the inner lattice door. She hurried back to find Tetsuya lying stretched out and already snoring with his overcoat still on.

"Oh, you mustn't sleep here. Take off your clothes." She knelt. "I say, dear, I say." She

shook him two or three times, and frowned a little when he did not awaken. "I don't know what to do." Strange to say, Toki-ko did not seem disinclined to take care of her drunken husband.

She shook him many times, but he did not awaken; so Toki-ko put her arms around his neck and lifted him up, smiling as she did so. Tetsuya now opened his eyes into narrow slits, sat up unwillingly, and changed his clothes. Without a word he crept into bed and fell asleep, his back to her. When she saw him do this, Toki-ko ceased folding his day-clothes and hastened to his pillow.

"I'm sorry to keep you awake when you're so sleepy, but have a little patience and keep awake, because I've got many things to talk to you about."

"I hope you'll do that tomorrow. I'm so sleepy."

"But," with a voice almost sobbing, "tomorrow I'm sure visitors will come from early morning, and we won't be able to talk. Isn't this the last night for us to be together like this?" Her voice now broke.

"I see." Tetsuya reluctantly sat up and wrapped himself in his quilt. "Then I will sit like this, for when I lie down I go to sleep immediately. Please be as brief as possible." He folded his arms and assumed a displeased look.

Toki-ko glanced at his face. "Brief? It's impossible for me to be brief. If you feel that way,

I'd rather not talk at all." Her usual temper overcame her in spite of herself.

Tetsuya's eyes glistened. "Would you? Then, please don't talk. I'm not so anxious to hear."

He made a movement preparatory to lying down again. This embarrassed Toki-ko.

"Wait, please wait." She scrutinized her husband's face. "You can't forget Sayo, I see. The reason you hate me is because I was in your way, and you couldn't carry out your plans, isn't it, eh? If that's the reason, please divorce me at once rather than leave me in this suspense." Tetsuya said not a word; Toki-ko continued, "Eh? You'd better divorce me and take her with you. If you searched for her, you mightn't be able to find her; but I could find her for you. So, divorce me. I've made up my mind. If you love her so much, I can do nothing to change it. Though we're nominally husband and wife, really our relations are worse than inimical. I'd rather be divorced." She sighed and did not speak for some time. "People don't know the truth, and all, my mother included, congratulate us on your better position. Even though we lived in poverty, if we loved each other—"

Tetsuya swayed, just saved himself from falling, and sat erect. The eyelids he forced apart again closed to mere slits.

"Oh," Toki-ko exclaimed, surprised. "You were

asleep. While I talked to you so very seriously, you, oh," she began to cry, "what a cruel man!—"

Tetsuya was astonished when he heard her crying, and awakening, curiously watched her weep.

"Oh, I've been dozing. Excuse me." He hung his head, but soon looked up resolutely. "There's no hope, no hope for me now!—for me who could not die when asked to die, and yet who would for ever—" Breaking off, he gnashed his teeth and drew his eyes and nose together; hot tears rolled down his cheeks rapidly. Wiping them off roughly with the back of his hand, he continued, "What of it!" hot with excitement, "I *am* a man, and I'll surely give her up. In the summer vacation next year I won't fail to come home a different man; so please don't say anything more now. I know you must feel unhappy. It's all my fault. Please excuse me. See this." He put both his hands on the floor and prostrated himself. "How have I become so degraded, I wonder?" He began to weep, man though he was.

Toki-ko had not anticipated so frank a statement, yet when she heard him she felt it more satisfactory than any words of temporary consolation. Instead of anger or resentment she now felt sorrow; and she also began to weep. Neither husband nor wife uttered a single word for a time; they sobbed: she, her face covered with her sleeves, and he, prostrate before

her. Toki-ko was the first to cease weeping. "If you're so frank, I've nothing further to say. I shall think of this as a visitation for some unknown sin, and I shall look forward to seeing your happy face when you return in the next summer vacation." She wiped away her swiftly-flowing tears with her sleeve. Suddenly she changed her manner. "Now, we can talk the rest in bed. If you lie long so thinly clad, I fear you'll take cold. I say—dear."

She looked into his face. Tetsuya had been weeping and still had tears in the corners of his eyes; his face wore a painful look, but he had already cried himself to sleep.

CHAPTER XXIV

IT was the day on which Tetsuya was to depart. The old lady wished to see him off, but he firmly declined to allow her. Toki-ko, "Kyu-bei-san," and a few intimate friends accompanied him to Shimbashi [Tokyo Station], where they arrived a few minutes before six o'clock in the evening. Five men were going to leave on the same train, and the waiting-room was entirely filled up, leaving not enough space 'for even an apple to be dropped,'¹ with the friends who came to see them off. Moreover, as they were to take the express for Kobe, how great the bustle and stir was, need not be mentioned. Tetsuya's fellow travellers all looked unbecomingly busy, standing up and sitting down and fidgeting about. Was Tetsuya alone leisurely and composed? No, he was melancholy and sorrowful, looking as though he had lost something—as though he had something to regret; he was so despondent that he looked ludicrous. Toki-ko, who sat beside him, did not appear serene, nor was she willing to talk. Each time his friends came forward and greeted him, Tetsuya reluctantly stood up and returned their greetings; when they became silent, he also said nothing. So they all felt awkward and withdrew. Things

¹ So crowded that there was not a square inch of room left.

were gay and bustling all around him; in his immediate vicinity, everything was lonely and quiet; to be with him seemed like being with one about to start on a journey in charge of a coffin.

A call, "Kobe, Kobe!" Tetsuya's fellow passengers and the friends who came to see them off, were all in high spirits as they crowded out of the waiting-room. Tetsuya reluctantly followed, between the rows of people. When he approached the entrance of the platform, he caught sight of something and abruptly stopped, staring with surprised eyes; he did not move but intently searched the crowd on his right. When his friends behind him asked the cause of the delay, he again walked on without a word. After reaching the platform he turned round two or three times, as if he bitterly regretted having lost sight of something. His fellow travellers called to him to come to them; he entered the second-class car with evident aversion.

Hamura, busy as usual, ran up late. He shook hands with Tetsuya, and being asked to lend his ear a moment, put his head close to Tetsuya's mouth.

"Didn't you notice a woman like Sayo on your way here just now? Didn't you notice her?"

"No, I didn't notice her. Why?"

"I saw a face like hers just outside the entrance, and I wished to see it again, but it disappeared into the crowd, so I couldn't. Something makes me think

it was her face, but—" He looked very sad. Hamura detected tears in his eyes.

"That's impossible. She doesn't live here, you see."

"Eh?" Tetsuya stared. "Where does she live? Do you know?"

Hamura betrayed embarrassment over his blunder. "Doesn't she, well—she lives in Chiba, doesn't she?"

Tetsuya looked queer and became silent. Hamura chattered to conceal his slip, but Tetsuya did not listen to him but turned constantly toward the entrance. Toki-ko, who up to that time had not appeared, now stood directly outside the window; he turned away bashfully when his eyes happened to meet hers. Presently he took out of his pocket a small whiskey flask, and in front of the whole crowd put his lips to it and drank a mouthful; then he scowled.

"Hello, Mr. Ono, that's fine. Have you begun already?" A friend who had observed him shouted laughingly from outside the train; Tetsuya only sneered in answer.

In less than five minutes he became absurdly light-hearted. He left the car and walked about among his friends, talking to them and sometimes uttering heavy jokes. But when the train started, and all the people cheered simultaneously, Tetsuya thrust his face, not at all the sort one would want to cheer, out

of the window and absent-mindedly forgot to bow a silent good-bye.

Before the train had passed the platform, the people who were present merely from a sense of obligation had already turned their backs and begun to leave. Toki-ko stayed and looked dispiritedly at the gradually diminishing train.

Hamura came up to her and said, laughing, "Are you sorry to have him go?"

She only smiled and did not reply to his question.

"Say, Hamura-san, I saw something strange at the entrance over there just now."

"Something strange?"

"I suspect it was Sayo."

"Did you see her, too?"

"Too?"

"Why, Mr. Ono mentioned something of the kind, but didn't Sayo-san go to Nagoya?"

"Yes, we thought she did, but I don't know whether she has or not. We can't believe them. She may profess to be in Nagoya and yet be here. If he said so too, she must have been Sayo."

"This is the scene where the girl sees her lover off from a safe distance. It makes you jealous, I see."

"Nonsense! I'm not jealous, but isn't it disgusting?"

"Why?"

"Because they are too loving," she frowned.

CHAPTER XXV

FOR some time after going to China Tetsuya did not fail to remit a certain sum of money each month, and the old mother of the Ono family looked happy during this time; but half a year had hardly passed before the remittances suddenly stopped. The smile of yesterday now changed to the sob of today. They wrote to him entreatingly two or three times, but got no reply. When they despaired as to what to do, the letter for which they had impatiently waited arrived from Tientsin. According to it, for some reason Tetsuya had resigned his position and had recently left the place. He did not have the means now to continue to send them money, and asked them to divorce him as the best solution of their troubles. He wrote in detail about the necessary judicial steps, of which they had no desire to read, and enclosed a postal order for two hundred *yen* as a temporary support and a promissory note for three thousand *yen*, the amount at which he estimated his expenses until his graduation from the University. The mother and daughter felt themselves insulted and complained and cried, but a quarrel 'with a river between' breaks no bones. They had saved nothing, having lived extravagantly, and they could not sub-

sist very long on two hundred *yen*. Poor mother and daughter! there seemed to be no hope for them, when, fortunately, Hamura had to go to Tientsin on business for his company. They recovered their normal breath with relief, and asked him with tears to be sure to find Tetsuya and drag him back with a rope around his neck if necessary.

Hamura thought it a bother, yet, unable to refuse, he consented, went to Tientsin, and searched for Tetsuya. Some told him that Tetsuya had gone to Chefoo about a month before; others said they had seen him at Shanhai-kuan; still others declared they had seen him walking in rags at Ying-k'ou. Hamura did not know whom he should believe.

Meanwhile, he finished his company's business and, not finding a clue to help him locate Tetsuya, gave up the search and resolved to return by a boat leaving T'ai-ku in two days. That night he attended a banquet and had just returned to his room in the Astor House, where he was leisurely smoking a cigar in an easy chair, when a boy entered and asked if he would see a Mr. Ono who wished to talk to him. Hamura said he would be very glad, because he had been wanting to see Mr. Ono; and he asked the boy to show him in. The boy reassured himself by asking if he really cared to see the man. Hamura thought this an odd question and replied that he did not mind at all; whereupon the boy looked a little dubious.

Hamura was soon surprised to see who was shown in.

The visitor's hair fell over his ears, and no one could even surmise when it had been cut last. Thin tufts grew untidily over his cheeks and chin. That he walked without an umbrella was evident, for, though his face and hands were sunburnt an unhealthy yellow, that strip of brow sheltered by his hat showed distinctly fair. His thin cheeks were thinner now, and the bones more prominent; from deep-sunken sockets, his bloodshot eyes shone dimly, displaying neither spirit nor strength; yet a lonely smile flickered in them somewhere, suggesting that even in his thin and worn body a shadow of life still remained; and this made him look even more pitiable. Besides the change in his person, his clothes were in rags. The autumn of North China is short, and no one should venture out in the morning or in the evening without an overcoat; but Tetsuya wore only a summer grease-stained uniform; and still worse, the opening made by the absence of two coat-buttons in front disclosed his originally white cotton shirt to be as brown as if it had been boiled in coffee. His coat and trousers were wrinkled, and baggy at the elbows and knees; and his bare feet could be seen through the holes in the sides of his dust-covered shoes.

He entered the room preceded by a bad odour, and bowed bashfully, not even looking up.

"Hello," was all Hamura said, was all he could

say. He was so surprised at Tetsuya's miserable condition that he only stared at him for some time. "It's you all the same. You're so changed I thought you might be another Ono."

"I'm very much ashamed." Tetsuya bowed again.

"You needn't apologize, but you are quite changed, aren't you? Sit down anyway."

He offered a chair. After declining two or three times, Tetsuya timidly sat down on the edge and, bringing his knees together, huddled himself up. He was too pitiable to look at.

Hamura surveyed Tetsuya. "Why did you resign? Some one here told me you struck your head-teacher or did something of the kind. Is that true?"

"I'm very much ashamed." Tetsuya scratched his head, from which dandruff could be seen flying in all directions, though the hour was late.

"This is astonishing. It's due solely to self-abandonment. Where do you live, and what are you doing now?"

Tetsuya hesitated and said, instead of answering, "I'm afraid I'm asking too much of you, sir, but—will you kindly treat me to a glass of *saké*?" He smiled bashfully and studied Hamura's manner slyly. "I can't talk unless I get drunk."

"I'll treat you if you wish, but people have told me that lately you act very badly when you're drunk. You mustn't be obstreperous, though."

"No, depend upon it. To you I shall not be—eh, he, heh," he laughed loudly.

"Are you sure?" Hamura made certain.

"Depend upon it." Tetsuya still chuckled.

"Though we can't order meat, as it isn't a meal hour—" He pushed the bell, called the boy, and was ordering some beer and fruit when Tetsuya interposed hurriedly:

"If you treat me at all, please let me have some cognac."

"Cognac?" Hamura turned round in surprise.

"Beer and the like are too weak." Tetsuya dropped his eyes shamefacedly.

"You talk big."

He ordered some cognac and, after the boy had nodded and withdrawn, asked again, "Where do you live now? I wish you'd tell me how you've been getting along lately."

Tetsuya still did not look up. "I don't live at any definite place, but, according to temporary convenience, now I'm at Chefoo, and now at Ying-k'ou; at present I'm staying at San-shan-kuan."

"What are you doing?"

"I've got no definite work—I do odd jobs."

"And if you continue to do such work, have you any hope for the future?"

"No, I haven't."

"Then, isn't it foolish?"

“Yes, it’s foolish.”

The boy brought what had been ordered, and set it on the table. When he had filled the glasses and retired, Tetsuya snatched up his glass as if he had waited most impatiently; evidently alcohol had poisoned him—his hand trembled badly; he spilled the liquor and caught it nervously in the palm of his left hand.

“Let me drink to your health.”

He emptied the glass at a gulp and lapped up the little spilled in his left palm.

Hamura frowned and turned away at this exhibition. Soon he said, “If you’re like that, I don’t think it’s worth while for me to speak to you.” Presently he continued, “The fact is that when I decided to come here, your family requested me to do several things.”

“I see.” Tetsuya appeared to be thinking of something else; he did not listen attentively. He quickly refilled his own glass.

“Say, won’t you come back with me? Both Tokisan and auntie told me to bring you back by all means—”

“Well.” Tetsuya considered a little, but soon said, “It’s all over with me now.” He hastily emptied the glass which he had just filled, and wiped the corners of his mouth with his open hand. “It’s all over with me now.” He shook his head.

"Why, what's all over with you? If you give up, Toki-san and auntie will have no one to rely on, will they?"

Hamura in his usual manner did his best to make the other realize his folly; Tetsuya meanwhile pulled the bottle of cognac to him and filled his glass and drank continually, listening without replying. When Hamura stopped talking, however, Tetsuya, who had now become quite drunk, began to talk in a lively tone quite unlike the sober Tetsuya.

"Everything you say is true. I'm degraded, yet I confess I sometimes remember them at home, and I can't help being anxious. I learned some time ago through a newspaper that you were here, and I wished to come at once and ask you about matters at home; and I also wished to ask you to arrange a settlement. Evidently the man in me hasn't yet disappeared, ha, ha, for I felt rather ashamed, so I didn't call until today."

"Is that so? You're not so far gone as I thought. What about a settlement?"

"Well, this. I understand from your talk that Toki hasn't yet given me up. I feared that might be the case, but now I'm hopeless; please persuade her to divorce me in good time and marry again as soon as possible."

By this time he was noticeably under the influence of drink: his body swayed.

"Yes, if you're really hopeless, then there's no other way, but you're not hopeless, are you? You're healthy; I've watched you, and I notice you can imbibe a good deal."

"Well, I inject alcohol into me all the time, ha, ha," he laughed offensively. "It's alcohol that supports my body."

As Hamura compared him now with the man who had first entered the room, these words did not appear untrue.

"If you drink all the time, what do you intend to do from now on?"

"I haven't anything definite in mind; after all, I live while I have breath, and I die when I haven't. That's all. Ha, ha." He again laughed unpleasantly.

"This is self-abandonment, isn't it?"

"Well, you may be right."

"I see now for the first time. Is this the result of what people call a 'broken heart'?" Hamura sneered coldly; and suddenly, "Isn't that foolish?" he scolded. "Even if you couldn't have your own way with a woman, how can you afford to throw away your whole life! It's too foolish to be discussed, isn't it?"

"Yes, it is. I also think so, but," he looked dejected, "I fell to this before I realized it; I can't

change things now. Ha, ha, ha. Can I help myself, sir?"

His drunkenness became more and more noticeable.

"That is because you lack will-power."

"That's it," he slapped his knee with his hand. "That must be it. I really lack will-power." Again becoming dispirited, he shook his head, then abruptly looked up. "The proof is, you see, I can never do anything desperate. It's most astonishing. For instance, when I get drunk and quarrel, my Kōdōkwan¹ training stands by me; and if the other man doesn't know *ju-jutsu*, I can easily throw him down; but all I can do is squeeze his throat. I can't strangle him. Now that I'm growing more and more hard-up, I can't always be so gentle. Even then I won't murder or rob. You've often criticized me as vacillating. Yes, I've always felt I had two centres within me, and I wandered between them. Whenever anything happens, I doubt, I hesitate, I can never decide. Toki is obstinate, yet in a crisis she is weaker than one expects; but Sayo is admirable. She's what people call 'soft on the outside and hard underneath.' Her mind is firm, although externally she looks soft. Whenever she does make up her mind, she will go to extremes." Perhaps he reflected on the past; he gazed into the air gloomily and did not speak for

¹ A gymnasium in Tokyo, where *ju-jutsu* is taught.

some time. Presently, as if afraid of being overheard, he whispered, "What is Sayo doing now?"

"Sayo-san?" Hamura, who had been peeling a pear, dropped his knife on the plate with a clatter. "I don't know exactly, but she's looking after the children in a certain orphanage somewhere in West Japan, I hear."

"Is it Okayama?" Tetsuya asked inquisitively.

"I don't know." Hamura feigned ignorance.

"Don't you know?" The other looked dissatisfied. "Yes, that's like her. Perhaps she has resolved to spend her whole life in that work. She's far better than a person like me can aspire to be." Though he was drunk, his innermost mind had not changed. He sighed deeply as though unable to bear up under his pressing emotions.

Hamura glanced at him out of the corner of his eye. "What do you say to going back and making a new start?"

"Making a new start?"

"That is, to marry Sayo-san. Toki-san will consent now. I can guarantee that, because I've discovered something that enables me to do so."

"But—" Tetsuya meditated, "it's no use. Sayo won't consent—"

"Yes, if Toki-san consents, Sayo-san will consent, because it's a question of saving or losing you."

"Do you think so?" No more. He hung his head

•

in thought for a while. Presently looking up, he cried despairingly, "It's no use, I'm no good now. I can never love any one seriously again—when I think of it—" He burst out crying loudly like a child, quite unmindful of his surroundings.

Hamura turned away with a frown and did not speak for a time, but said, when Tetsuya had stopped weeping, "You're drunk now, I see. And as you are, I can't discuss anything serious with you. Go somewhere and sleep tonight, and come again tomorrow morning at about ten o'clock."

"Yes." Tetsuya wiped away his tears with his coat-sleeve, and stood up swaying after emptying another glass. "Then I'll say good-bye."

Hamura also stood up. "Please change your clothes tomorrow morning before you come, will you? In those clothes—" he contracted his brows, "I feel rather embarrassed."

"Yes." Tetsuya considered and suddenly began to smile. "I've got no clothes except these."

"Borrow some, and wear them."

"No one will lend me any, because I didn't return the ones I borrowed, ha, ha."

"That's annoying."

"At Tang-p'u here, however—at the pawnbroker's, I've got two or three winter suits—"

"Then, get them out."

"I have no money—" he again smiled.

"I'll give you some. How much do you need?"

"Well," he considered. "Twenty dollars will do, I think."

Hamura gave him the money.

"I'm very sorry to give you so much trouble, thank you." He lifted the money to his brow in acknowledgment; and again in a great hurry he emptied another glass while standing. "I'll say good-bye now."

How pitiable it was to see him stagger out!

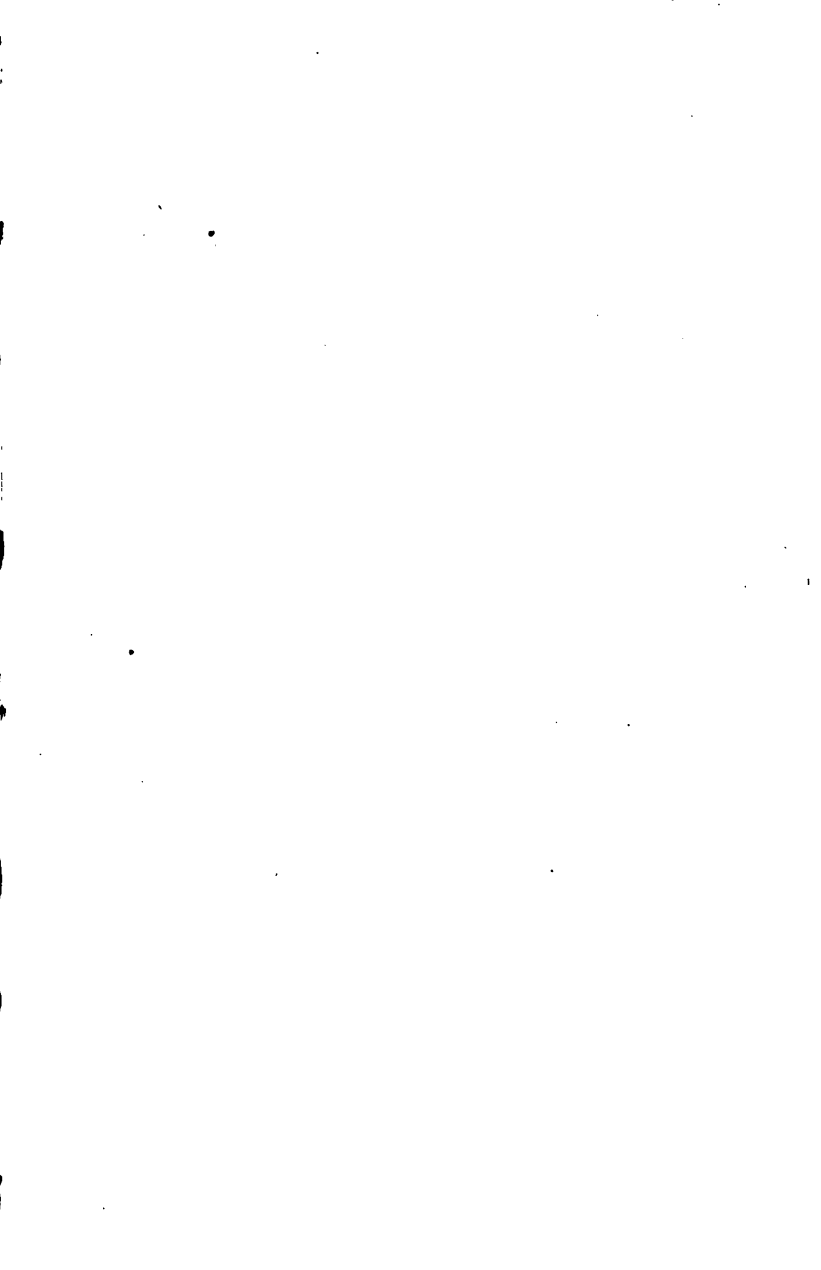
Hamura looked out of the window at the streets of the concession lighted by a bright moon. Tetsuya, swaying from side to side, soon disappeared. When he remembered that this was the same Tetsuya Ono, Bachelor of Laws, whose graduation essay procured him the reputation of being a genius and made many people speculate on what great success would be his in the future, even Hamura felt depressed. He hastened to pick up the bottle of cognac; to his astonishment he found hardly an inch of liquor left.

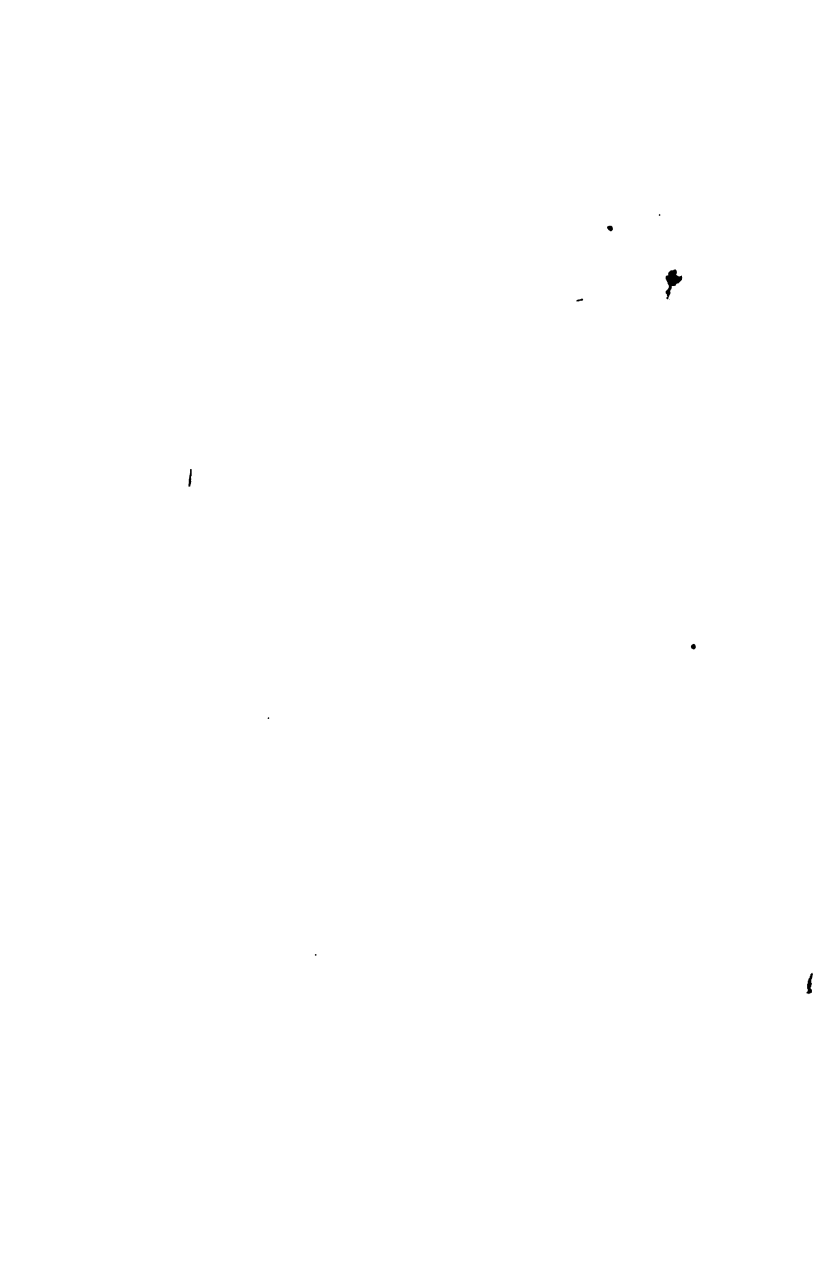
The next morning he went out on business, and on his return received a letter from Tetsuya. He first expressed his thanks for Hamura's kindness on the preceding night. He had thought everything over again, and he still concluded that going home would be of no use, so he was leaving for Manchuria with the twenty dollars, which Hamura had kindly loaned him, as travelling money. He earnestly asked Hamura to persuade Toki-ko to give him up. The

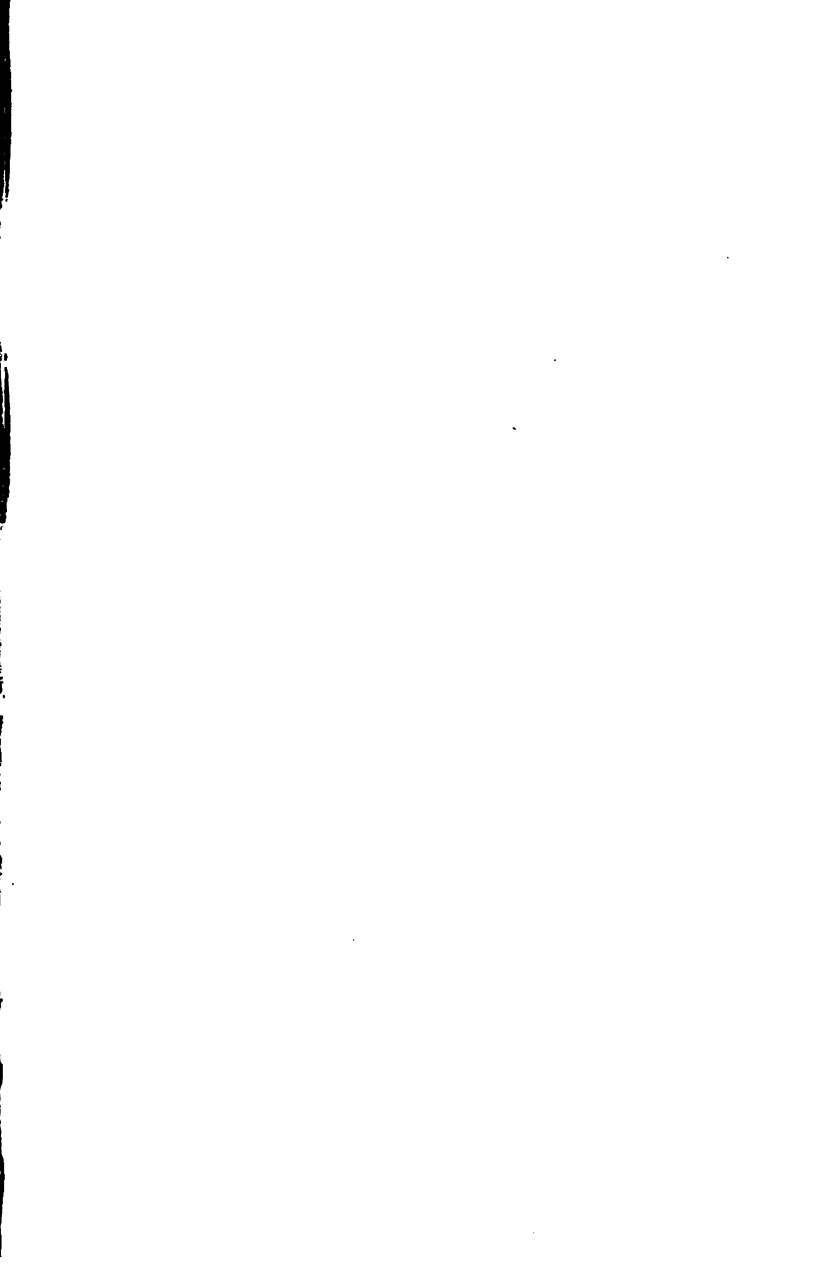
letter contained no more; there were no details. Hamura questioned the messenger [coolie], who spoke of Tetsuya as of a friend, and who informed him that "Hsiao" [as Tetsuya was called among the Chinese] had already left; he also demanded the messenger's fee.

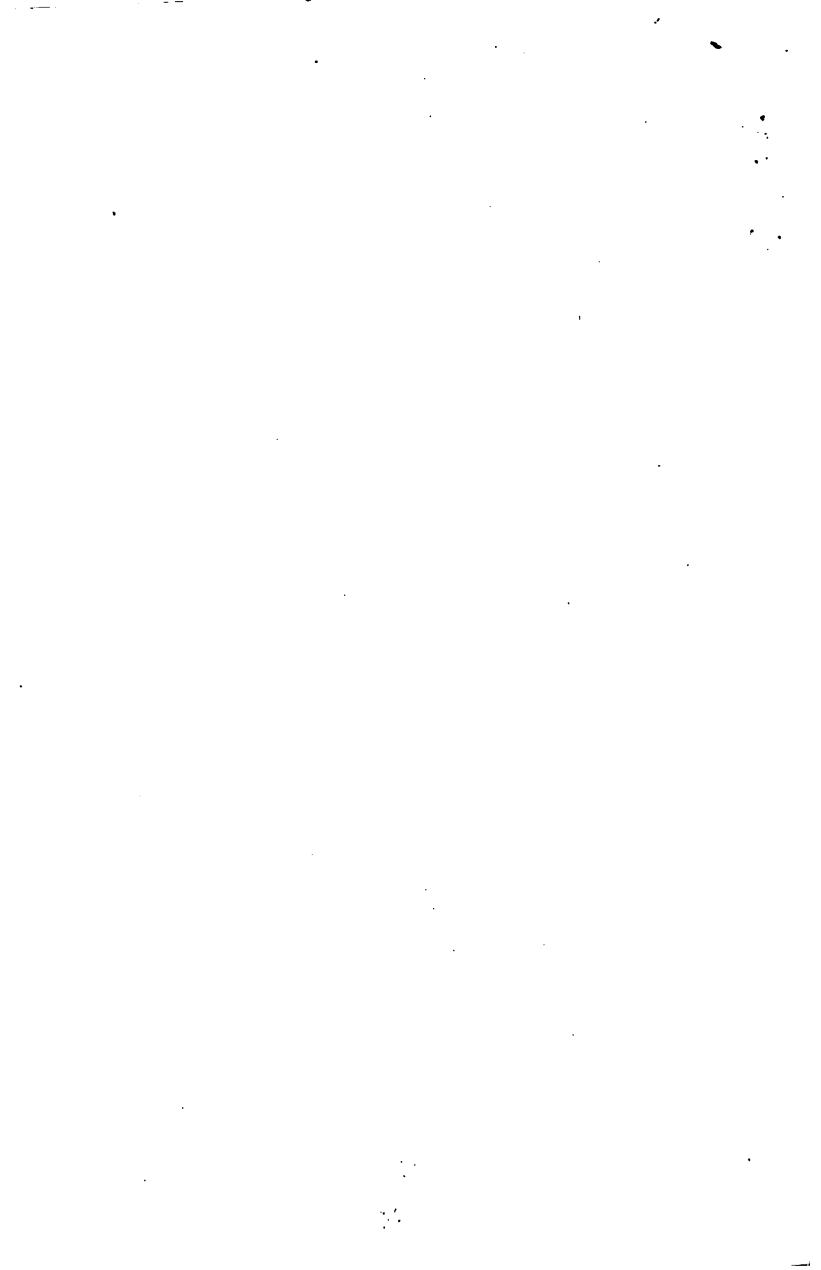
Hamura, giving everything up now, returned by boat the following day. No one ever heard from Tetsuya again. At the time of the Russo-Japanese War, a Bachelor of Laws, Ono by name, was said to be an interpreter on the staff of the famous "Hua Ta-j'en," but this report proved to be false. It was also reported that some one closely resembling Tetsuya was a clerk for a provision merchant attached to the Second Army; whether or not this was really Tetsuya is unknown. That Sayo-ko was seen on board a hospital ship, *Manshu-maru*, dressed in the white linen uniform of a nurse, may be true. Toki-ko retired to Mito with her mother, and no one ever heard of them again. Hamura alone grew more and more prosperous, and today he has four or five titles; such as "Director of Such and Such a Company," "Adviser to Such and Such a Company," etc., etc.; and he lives in a fine house with a gate beside Tenjin Shrine at Hirakawa-cho, Kōjimachi. It is said that he has made much money by speculation, and that he expects to have a carriage of his own by the time he is forty years of age. Anyway his prosperity is wonderful.











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