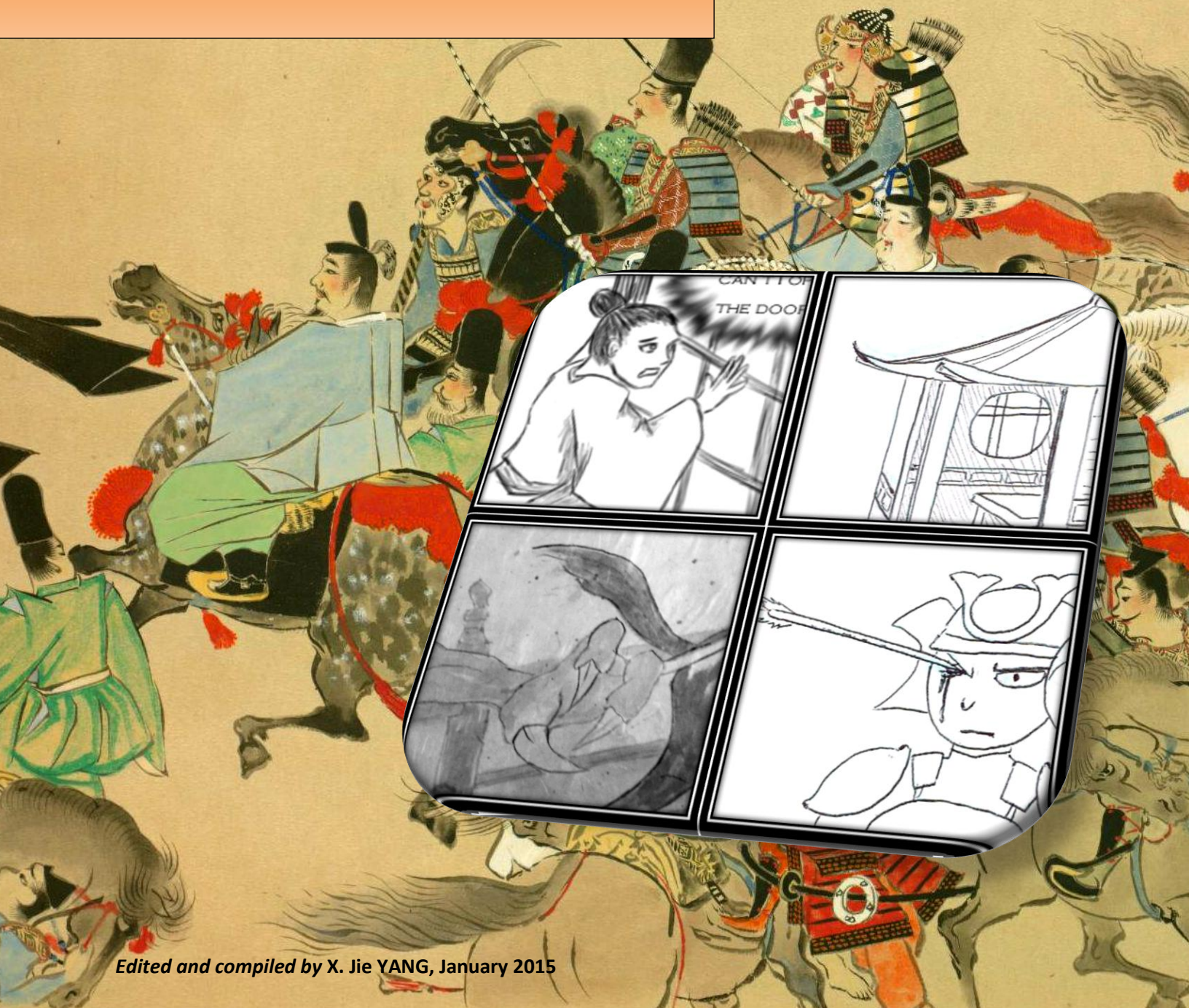


# Old Japan Redux



# Old Japan in Fiction

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**Welcome to a unique and exciting journey back to the classical Japan.**

# A Retelling of the Myth of Amaterasu in the Cave James Greenizan

By: James Greenizan

The man and the woman sat on a fallen tree, surrounded by the woods facing the large cave. A boulder had covered the entrance, though a halo of light shone past. The light illuminated the forest surrounding them and made this the only place in all of the world that was not cloaked in darkness.

The man and the woman had been there for the start of this conflict. Though fully grown in appearance, they were only children in age. They, along with 6 others, were the product of a contest between the Sun Goddess Amaterasu and her brother, Susanoo. They had seen who could create the most noble and divine children. Amaterasu had used Susanoo's sword to create three beautiful women, one of whom was sitting on the log. Susanoo had used Amaterasu's ornate chain to create five men. All eight of the children were so perfect in their creation, that neither of the gods was willing to admit defeat. Susanoo had truly believed that he had won the contest, but Amaterasu refused to agree. She believed her three women were superior to their brothers.

The gods argued often about their challenge, but neither would give way. Susanoo, believing he could push Amaterasu into defeat, began to lead violent campaigns. This climaxed when he took Amaterasu's sacred animal, a horse, and left it dead and flayed in his sister's hall. The man and woman were unsure of what had happened next. All accounts

seem to differ, some on the side of Amaterasu and some on the side of Susanoo, but all agreed that somehow, one of Amaterasu's attendants had perished.

That was the point when things took a turn for the worst. Amaterasu, enraged by the actions of her brother, fled into the cave, blocking herself in with a large boulder. As she hid, all the light of the world hid with her. Darkness had fallen over the land, plants withered without the sun to feed them, animals starved without the plants, and people went hungry without anything to hunt. The people of the world began to resent the gods, feeling that their prayers went unnoticed and unanswered. They believed the end of days was upon them, but all the gods could do was wait for Amaterasu's rage to subside.

"Do you truly think that this ruse will work?" The woman asked the man.

"I do not know." Replied the man

"I guess we can only hope."

The woman turned back and looked, once again, toward the cave. A plan had been hatched to draw Amaterasu out from the cave. This was not the first however. Many Gods and Goddesses had tried to coax her out. They used promises and gifts, poems and song, even lies and threats, but Amaterasu had ignored them all. It had been months since she was last seen and all of the denizens of the world were eager for her return.

"I am not confident in this plan." The man muttered to the woman.

"Why do you say that?"

“Many Gods and Goddesses have tried to lure her out, but none have succeeded, this plan seems to rely upon her curiosity. If she simply ignores us all, as she has every other time, then it is all gone to waste.”

“We have no other options right now, all of the best minds in the heavens have come together to hatch this plan, surely they must have something in mind if it does not go as they want it to.”

“I guess we can only hope.” Replied the man as her turned back towards the cave.

The two watched as the stage was set up, large rows of drums had been placed beside the cave, with other instruments placed in front. A wash tub had been placed nearby, in the center of a small clearing visible from the entrance of the cave. It had been blocked though, for a huge, ornate bronze mirror had been set up directly in front of the cave’s entrance.

“They say that mother has never seen her reflection.” The woman said to the man.

“Is that true?”

“I do not know. Hopefully it is, the plan will not work otherwise.”

“I guess we can only hope.”

The crowd had begun to arrive. Huge swarms of bodies filled every nook and cranny around the forest. The drinks were flowing and you would be hard pressed to find anyone without a mouth full of food. The noise was deafening. Rabble rousers filled the

woods, blocking out any light that had managed to escape the cave, though even in the dark, the party continued on. The vibrations that came from all the dancing shook the trees caused the dry dead leaves to fall off the branches and crunch underfoot, which couldn't be heard, only felt. The drinking, dancing and eating continued for hours, though no one seemed to tire. The man and the woman continued to sit.

“How long do you think this will last?” Asked the woman.

“I do not know.”

“Mother is sure to have heard the noise, do you think she will come out.”

“Only time will tell.”

“I guess we have to continue to wait.”

Within a few hours, the noise suddenly stopped and all in attendance turned and looked towards the wash tub in unison.

“I believe it is about to begin.” Said the man to the woman.

The guests had all moved away from the wash tub, clearing the way for a beautiful woman. She was clad in clothes made from flowers and leaves that seemed to still be alive, a rare sight for the time.

“She is beautiful, one of the most amazing sights I have ever seen.” Muttered the man.



“That is the Goddess Uzume. She is quite the sight to behold.”

Uzumi walked to the wash tub in the center of the clearing, flipped it over, and climbed on top. She began to dance to the beat of the pounding music while tugging at her clothes. The clothes began to stretch and rip, slowly revealing more and more of her pale, beautiful skin. Half of the guests looked on in amazement while the other half found the show incredibly humorous and roared with laughter. Soon all were laughing, even the man and the woman. All were so entranced by Uzumi’s dance, that few noticed the area slowly getting brighter. It wasn’t until the boulder blocking the cave had been completely moved that the man had noticed.

“Amaterasu has come out of the cave!” he yelled, trying to make his voice heard over the noise of the party. Though apparently he was not the first to notice.

When she left the cave, Amaterasu’s eyes did not fall on Uzumi, but rather on the large bronze mirror outside of the cave. She was taken aback at the beauty before her, for she had never seen her reflection and did not realize it was herself she was looking at. As she was gazing at the image in the mirror, a god, who had been hiding behind the rows of instruments, leapt out and push the boulder back to cover the cave’s entrance. He had successfully blocked Amaterasu from re-entering the cave. The party suddenly fell silent and a few of the more notable gods stepped forward to talk to Amaterasu.

The man and the woman continued to wait, sitting on the log, while the gods discussed the state the world was in. They listened as the gods pleaded for Amaterasu to return the sun to the sky, and they smiled when they heard her agree.

It seemed to happen quite suddenly. Before long, the grass was green, the trees were full of leaves, the rabbits and deer were frolicking through the fields, and the people were once again able to hunt and live their lives, back to believing that the gods were watching over them.



**James Greenizan** is from Airdrie, Alberta and is in his fourth year at the University of Calgary where he studies East Asian languages with a concentration in Japanese. His interest in Japanese language and culture began when his family hosted a Japanese exchange student for a few weeks when he was 13 years old. His main interest lies in Japanese mythology.

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## The Spirit of Sugawara no Michizane

By: Michelle Yet

I simply stood there staring at the young man whom lay in bed with a pale face and body covered in sweat. Whereas I simply stood to the side watching, everyone else was bustling around me while holding back the tears forming in their eyes. It was only a matter of time before his light would fade away. My eyes felt dry and my body tense. There had been strange happenings lately in Heian-Kyō, but more specifically, within the court. The current moment I stood watching was perhaps the worst of it all, the Crown Prince Yasuakira at the brink of death. A voice suddenly announced that the Emperor was coming to visit his son, to check his current condition. Automatically, everyone hurriedly left the room, except for me. I simply had to shift further away into the shadows of the vicinity. Not too long afterwards, I could hear the sound of fabric shuffling down the *engawa*. The *shōji* slid open quietly and the Emperor Daigo walked in to his son whom barely noticed as he had been drifting in and out of consciousness.

“My dear son, what has been done for such misfortune to be bestowed upon you?” The Emperor murmured softly while gently caressing the Crown Prince’s head. An aura of melancholy wrapped around the Emperor as he gazed upon his son’s sickly face. What a moment it was to see your son fading before you. How long the Emperor stayed there like that with his son I am not sure, but a few days later the Crown Prince lost the battle against this unknown illness and entered eternal sleep. The court in distress began to make connections to what may have caused a healthy young man to suddenly fall terribly ill and die shortly afterwards. There was no question or doubt in anyone’s mind that the source of

this great tragedy was no other than the spirit of Sugawara no Michizane. Twenty years ago Michizane died in exile in Dazaifu, this was a fact that everyone in court knew. The following years after Michizane's death, a few members of court passed away, but no thoughts or connections were made at the time. It was only now, after the death of the Crown Prince, did everyone begin to make these connections. After this revelation came into light, the Emperor immediately took actions to somehow appease the angry spirit of Michizane. Every bit inside me shivered knowing that the spirit of Michizane was not nearly satisfied with the Emperor's simple decision of removing records of Michizane's exile and reinstating him to his former role. The next few years proved my premonition correct.

Terror raged through Heian- Kyō. Typhoons, floods, illness- almost every kind of disaster possible harassed the city- no, the entire country. The efforts made in order to soothe the spirit of Sugawara no Michizane was clearly ineffective. It also became more apparent that all these events that were antagonising our country, particularly within Heian- Kyō, was the work of Michizane's spirit. All those who had relation in causing the exile of Michizane began to pass away one by one and their successors followed suit. The Emperor began to lose more children, as if they were being picked off like fruits from its tree. Every day as I gazed up upon the sky, I would almost always find myself staring at shades of grey. Darkness had tainted the sky; darkness had tainted our country. Disasters plagued our country and, of course, several many deaths as a result. When will he stop tormenting the country? Did he wish to see its demise? There were many questions that clouded my mind; questions that had no answer.

I stepped out of my quarters and gazed up upon the sky, the sky was unlike any other day so far. It was clear and sunny, unusually sunny. Today several of us were meeting at the *Seiryō-den*, but despite our meeting time drawing near, I found myself dragging my feet along as if some mysterious weight was pushing down on me. An ominous pressure loomed over me as I drew nearer and nearer to the *Seiryō-den*. I gazed up at the sky once more, only to discover dark clouds had invaded what used to be a clear sky. I let out a heavy sigh as I felt body go cold and my hands clammy. I barely caught sight of the white line that cut through the darkened sky as I suddenly found myself face to face with fire. I attempted to move forwards, but it was simply a futile attempt; every joint in my body was already frozen. Another flash of lightning streaked through the sky, connecting with the *Seiryō-den* once again. Through the smoke and darkness of the sky I could almost make out a silhouette that resembled Michizane in the sky. He was goading the *Raijin* on to continue to strike the building down. “*Again, again, again!*” His voice rang in my ears, before I was enveloped in darkness. It felt as though I was floating, floating in darkness with various thoughts and memories appearing as cracks within the darkness. Was this the afterlife?

I jolted up with a start; brightness flooded my vision and I instantaneously shut my eyes again. Opening them again, slowly this time, I stared at my hands. I was alive. Did I make it? Was it all over? My questions were soon answered as a female approached me and brought me up to speed with the world. I had been unconscious for a week since the ‘*Seiryō-den* incident’ and the Emperor had fallen ill. I began to laugh, unable to fathom what we have done to deserve such agony. My mind went blank, as I wasn't sure what was better at this point, to go on living or dying. Living meant being tormented by the thoughts

of wondering and waiting when my turn would come next. At least if I was dead I wouldn't have to be bothered by such thoughts and perhaps finally be able to find peace within my mind. I shook my head, ashamed of the pessimistic and cowardly thoughts that just ran through my mind. Recomposing myself, I apologised for my strange outburst before gathering my things and heading out. Despite being told about the Emperor's condition, I simply could not believe what I heard until I saw it with my own eyes.

Holding my breath, I entered the room silently. There the Emperor was, a weak smile upon his face, but nonetheless, happy to see me. He began to talk, informing me of preparations that must be taken in case this illness would take him just as it had taken the Crown Prince seven years ago. I remained silent, listening to every word the Emperor had to say carefully. Though he tried his best to retain his composure and strength, the illness had truly made him weaker. The despair of losing so many offspring and the thoughts of how to deal with all these calamities began to seep through with every word he spoke. I felt anger boil within me, questioning why I couldn't be next in line, but there still was hope... right?

Every week I visited the Emperor, but his condition continued to take a turn for the worse. I was due for a visit today and entered to find the Emperor bedridden. My heart sunk, as it was evident that the Emperor had lost all hope and had succumbed to the overwhelming fear that had taken many of us already. I opened my ears to the Emperor's voice as he began to talk like he did every week. I tried my best to give him some optimism, but it was futile as my reserve was suffering a drought. Regardless of my pathetic attempts, the Emperor had already made up his mind. Tomorrow he would be abdicating and the

following morning he would enter Buddhist priesthood as all the other Emperor's did when they abdicated. His eleventh son, Hiroakira-*shinnō* was to succeed the throne. I questioned the idea of a boy of barely eight years to succeed the throne, but it was not in my place to judge the decision. In the following days, true to his words, the Emperor retired from his role and became a monk, but in seven days, he too entered eternal sleep.

I was one of the first to receive the grave news, after that, everyone else heard it in no time at all. I shook with fury over this matter, still questioning why I was not next in line to face the wrath of Sugawara no Michizane. Baffled by this thought, I finally let out a long and heavy sigh, relinquishing all the thoughts of revenge and anger that coursed through my mind. After all, what could a mere human do against a vengeful spirit? Troubled as I was, I suddenly realised something. Perhaps it was simply a coincidence, but I felt it was surely a sign. The Emperor had passed away during the '*Autumn Long Month*', the month prior to the '*Month of no Gods*'. Perhaps it was a sign, indicating that the Emperor was the last that Michizane would take; a sign that everything was over and that I was the last one left. New beginnings were to be made, as I feared the spirit of Michizane was not yet satisfied. Perhaps it was my duty to make amends for the wrongs that have been done upon Sugawara no Michizane.

We entered the '*Month of Frost*' and Hiroakira officially took the role as the Emperor of our country. During the last month I had confirmed that I was indeed the last one left who had a connection to the exile of Sugawara no Michizane. I did not live proudly as the only survivor to Michizane's vengeance, as I came to realise that I was someone that

was not recognised. So, I took it upon myself to bring honour to the spirit of Michizane so that no more would have to suffer his wrath.



**Michelle Yet** is a student currently completing a degree in East Asian Studies with a minor in Japanese. Her interest for Japanese culture began as a small child and continued to grow, as she got older. This interest got exceptionally greater when her fond love for traditional Japanese architecture bloomed.

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# How two Woodsmen found some Nuns Dancing in the Forest, ate some Mushrooms, and Died

By: James Greenizan

“Just over this next rise” Hidekiyo told his companion. “Quite possibly the largest tree’s I seen in my lifetime as a woodsman. Each one is so large it may very well take us two days just to collect the lumber.”

“Two days?” Noritomo replied. “How is it that no one has found these trees yet? Surely such a prize is never left alone without a reason.”

“There’s a reason, my apprentice, and that reason is that the heavens have seen it fit to bestow such a gift to us.”

The younger man eagerly climbed over the large hill while his elderly master followed with vigor often unseen in men of his age. As they crested the hill, before them stood a large patch of extraordinarily average trees, however, the trees behind those made the formers look like small weeds just sprouting from the ground.

“I do not believe we’ll be able to make it back tonight, we have much work ahead of us.” Hidekiyo announced. “Do we have enough food to last us until tomorrow afternoon?”

“I have packed as much as I could carry without leaving our tools behind. It may be a little close, and we may be quite hungry when we return, but we will make due.”

“I do not relish the thought of carrying back such a large amount of timber on an empty stomach, but if that is the least of our troubles, we have done quite well by ourselves.”

The pair continued on their way. Crossing into the tree lined forest in front of them. The forest seemed very young. Many of the trees were just sproutlings, hardly large enough to be useful to them at all. Noritomo had the thought that a great fire must have happened recently; there were still lines of ash and burns of the bark of some of the larger ones. He thought it was strange that this part of the forest was affected, but the large trees behind were spared. He mentioned this to Hedekiyo, but his master brushed the thought aside and continued further in.

Before long, they found themselves surrounded by the enormous trees they had peered at from the neighbouring hill. Huge and gnarled, with thick, sap covered bark and branches so laden with leaves that many bent all the way to the ground. Hidekiyo had only seen them from a distance, but up close he marvelled at their majesty. As he did, Noritomo heard laughing coming from up ahead. Women’s laughter he supposed.

“Master, I hear others ahead, women I believe. Perhaps these trees have been left alone because they are the property of another?”

“Nonsense boy, we are far from any village, the closest thing is a temple on the other sides of these woods. Those women must be lost for no one would venture this far out.”

The pair headed toward the women, if they were lost, they would be able to help, and if not, their curiosity would be sated. Not far they found three women, joyously dancing and laughing under a great oak tree. At the base of the tree, piles of mushrooms were growing. The women wore robes, though they appeared to fallen into disarray while dancing. The women continued their dance as Noritomo approached.

“Pardon me, my master and I heard you from further into the forest. This seems like an odd place to be dancing, surely there must be somewhere closer to your temple where you could dance.”

The tallest of the three nuns replied. “We didn’t come out here to dance; we were hoping to make the journey to Osaka a few days faster by cutting through the forest. It wasn’t until we had made our way well inside that we realized none of us are able to find a path through and we became very lost.”

It took Hidekiyo a moment to understand what she had said because even though it was not a happy thought, she had laughed the entire time she spoke. “Why are you being so jovial about the situation?”

The nun replied “We came upon this great oak tree with a trunk cover in mushrooms and we thought to ourselves, surely we don’t have enough food to make our way through this entire forest. We are left with only two choices, we can starve or we can scavenge. Eating wild mushrooms is very dangerous, but if we did not eat them, we would

have starved regardless. After eating a couple each, we became so happy that we just had to dance.”

“How curious.” Hidekiyo said as he looked over to Noritomo. “Perhaps we should eat a couple and save our food. If these women are lost, it becomes our responsibility to show them the way out, and we do not have enough food for all five of us.”

Noritomo hesitantly agreed and they ate the mushrooms. Very soon after, they began to experience the euphoria that was affecting the nuns. The urge to dance became overwhelming and the five danced all throughout the night. Exhausted, they collapsed into a pile at dawn and slept. They were awoken by a loud roar. Surprised, they looked toward the sound. There stood a large demon, though his eyes were not on them. He looked towards the base of the great oak tree, which only a few hours ago was covered in the dancing mushrooms.

The demon roared a second time. He turned his gaze away from the tree and looked toward the group lying on the ground. “Who ate my mushrooms?” He rumbled at them.

The smallest nun replied. “My apologies mighty one, but it was us. We are lost in this forest and feared we would starve. When we came upon your mushrooms we lost ourselves to our hunger and...”

Before she was able to finish her sentence, the Demon leapt at her. He grabbed her by the waist, his long claws on his three fingers dug into her skin, ripping through her dirty,

wrinkled robe. The nun screamed in terror and the demon brought her to his mouth, and in one bite, took off her entire head.

The remaining four stared in horror and what had just happened. Within moments, Noritomo and Hidekiyo were up and running away from the demon. The nuns, however, struggled with their unkempt robes, fumbling and tripping. Within a mere moment, the demon had grabbed them, one in each hand, and took off their heads.

The pair ran as fast as they could. Hidekiyo's mind was racing. Perhaps the nuns had slowed the demon down enough for them to escape. He turned around to look and did not see the demon behind them. They ran back to where the trees were small and hid behind a large boulder in a small ravine.

“Master, what do we do? How can we escape such a huge monstrous demon?”

Noritomo asked Hidekiyo.

“Look around boy, the demon is not here. If we were after us, he would be upon us already and as you noted on our way in, the trees here are different, we must be out of his domain now. I do not believe we have anything to worry about.”

“How can you be so relaxed? We just watched three innocent nuns die to a huge demon. Surely you cannot think we escaped him just by leaving his area of the forest.”

“I do believe that. Something so large could catch us in an instant if he wanted to. He must have thought the small nun meant that it was only them who ate his mushrooms. She did not directly say we did as well, so we should be thankful for that.”

“If only those nuns had not thought to pass through the forest and gotten themselves lost, we would have never been in this situation. It was their short sightedness that lead to their deaths, and almost ours as well”

Noritomo sighed with relief. His master was right. The demon must have misunderstood the small nun. As Noritomo rested back against the boulder, trying to catch his breath, a loud rumble came from the other side.

“I had thought the nuns may have been the only ones to eat my mushrooms.” The demon announced as he came around the boulder. “But I had thought that maybe you two had as well. I overheard your conversation and no, my domain does not end after the large trees, I am free to go where I wish.”

Noritomo and Hidekiyo tried to rush off, away from the demon, but it was to no avail. The demon grabbed them and, as he had done with the nuns, took off their heads in one swift bite each.



**James Greenizan** is from Airdrie, Alberta and is in his fourth year at the University of Calgary where he studies East Asian languages with a concentration in Japanese. His interest in Japanese language and culture began when his family hosted a Japanese exchange student for a few weeks when he was 13 years old. His main interest lies in Japanese mythology.

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# Journal: Lord Toyotomi's Slave

By: Jennifer Nguyen

Dear son,

I write to you my son, telling you that my identity in the Toyotomi household has been compromised. I can no longer see you or continue undercover here because Toyotomi may have in possession one of my journal entries. I have a high suspicion that they are searching for the rat, me. I reckon that my chance of escaping this household is impossible because the entire house is under lockdown and if they search through my things, they will know that I am the rat. I give to you my journal for you to study upon. You may use my journal to learn about the lords and to make yourself good use to the Tokugawa family. Take care of Lord Tokugawa and keep on with your studies, for in the future, you too, will serve Lord Tokugawa by being the eyes and ears at another household.

Sincerely,

Father

## **Journal Entry #1**

I have left Azuchi and finally settled in as a slave under the Toyotomi household. I have not met my new "master" yet. According to the other slaves, Toyotomi Hideyoshi is on his way back from completing the task he was entrusted by Oda Nobunaga. Apparently,

the task was to bring the west under control. Furthermore, it is impressive that one of the fortresses was taken by diverting the course of a river and flooding the place. This is an interesting approach. It seems like my “master” used the west fortresses as the key to complete his task.

## **Journal Entry #2**

It has been a year since I last wrote a journal entry. In addition, I have been working for Lord Toyotomi for a year now. In this journal entry, I would like to mention that last week is the first time I wrote to Lord Tokugawa. I wrote:

Dear Lord Tokugawa,

I would like to tell you that Toyotomi Hideyoshi just got news that Akechi Mitsuhide turned on Oda Nobunaga and attempted to kill him. According to the news, “Oda Nobunaga committed suicide to avoid capture and his body was destroyed in the flames of the burning temple.” Toyotomi Hideyoshi negotiated with Mori in the west today and he is setting out to the capital to defeat the rebellious Akechi.

And today, I received a reply from Lord Tokugawa saying:

To whom it may concern,

Thank you for the letter and the information on what is going on at the household. I look forward to your future letters and please be careful. Toyotomi Hideyoshi has a good sense in politics, military ability, economic planning, and



applying principles of law and order. It will not be a surprise if he is also good at keeping an eye at those in his household.

I shall take Lord Tokugawa's words into consideration, it seems like Lord Tokugawa has a high opinion of Lord Toyotomi. Especially since it is evident that Lord Toyotomi is able to act hastily and decisive in situations such as upon the demise of Oda Nobunaga.

### **Journal Entry #3:**

Wow, just wow. In a couple months, Lord Toyotomi was able to gain control of "thirty provinces out of a total of some sixty in the country" and this included the twenty provinces that Oda Nobunaga had difficulty trying to take over. What's more, is that it is evident that Lord Toyotomi was able to consolidate his position as the dominant member of the council of the four leading commanders through the battle of Shizugatake. At this battle and in one of his swift night rides, Lord Toyotomi covered fifty miles in six hours, assembled his officers and ended Shibata's threat. I can see that from the death of Oda Nobunaga, Lord Toyotomi cunningly rose to the top by using his, like Lord Tokugawa mentioned, "good sense in politics and military ability."

### **Journal Entry #4**

It has been busy within the Toyotomi household. However, I think it may die down because Lord Toyotomi recently finished establishing the land survey onto the country.

According to a notice posted in the towns, this land survey requires “the size and yield of every rice field in the country to be set down, the permanent tenancy of a plot guaranteed to the actual cultivator and that permanent tenant is responsible for the entirety of the tax”.

The land survey that Lord Toyotomi initiated is an indication of his good sense in economic planning. The land survey was an indication of his good sense in economic planning because it is an effective attempt in trying to correct decades of self-protective evasions of tax.

### **Journal Entry #5**

It has been awhile since I last wrote in this journal.

To summarize what Lord Toyotomi had recently achieved, Lord Toyotomi led a successful expedition against the daimyo of Satsuma. Lord Toyotomi won a decisive battle near the Sendai River and Shimazu of Satsuma was at Lord Toyotomi’s mercy. From this, it is evident that Lord Toyotomi has a good sense in politics and military ability because he acted with a “wise combination of firmness and clemency” where he “allowed Shimazu to keep his own territory and a part of what he had won in previous fighting”. Additionally, when Lord Toyotomi returned to his base after the battle, Lord Toyotomi enacted the “Taiko’s Sword Hunt.” This measure is a confiscation of swords from all except samurai and it shows that Lord Toyotomi has a good sense in applying principles of law. This is so, because I can see that this measure kept the “deprived peasants, gentlemen-farmers, and

soldier-monks” from raising an armed rebellion and make “a clear distinction between the samurai and the farmer classes”.

Furthermore, consequently after the expedition against Satsuma, a Hojo chieftain of Odawara refused to come to Kyoto and offer submission to Lord Toyotomi. From this, Lord Toyotomi declared another expedition to the Kanto region with ample resources and a force of about 200000 men to reduce the central Hojo.

I must write a letter to Lord Tokugawa after this journal entry. I need to tell him that it does not seem like Lord Toyotomi is vulnerable at the moment or any time soon. Especially since Lord Toyotomi is allowing the military troops to bring their wives on the expedition, and musicians, dancers, and other form of entertainment will be present; the morale of Lord Toyotomi’s troops is going to be high.

### **Journal Entry #6**

Last month, Lord Toyotomi invited Lord Tokugawa to the Toyotomi household and a week later, Lord Tokugawa arrived at the Toyotomi household.

Up until the day when Lord Tokugawa arrived at the Toyotomi household, I noticed that Lord Toyotomi had been troubled. However, as of the night when Lord Toyotomi came back from a conversation with Lord Tokugawa, Lord Toyotomi no longer appeared troubled. What could they have discussed and resolved that made Lord Toyotomi seem less stressed? What could have been so secretive that Lord Toyotomi required the dismissal of

all of his followers? Was Lord Toyotomi at the least afraid of riding out with Lord Tokugawa alone?

In any case, I received a letter today from Lord Tokugawa. According to the letter, Lord Tokugawa is moving far away from the capital and is detaching his family from his old family ground; he is moving to Edo.

It looks like Lord Tokugawa may be at a disadvantage at the time being. The removal of his family from his old family grounds no longer allows him to count on the traditional loyalties if he should ever revolt. However, I think this would not slow Lord Tokugawa down too much because the Kanto area is well “developed both agriculturally and industrially.”

### **Journal Entry #7**

It seems like Lord Toyotomi has gained a lot more control over the country now. Lord Toyotomi is in my opinion, the highest authority within this country. Even though it should be the emperor, the emperor currently has almost no freedom of action or independent initiative.

One of reasons why Lord Toyotomi has gained a lot more control is from the recent promulgated expulsion edict where “a list of houses and occupants was to be prepared” and “all who entered a village from another village or an outside province were to be expelled”.

Another reason is from the way Lord Toyotomi organized the government. Under Lord Toyotomi, there is a strict discipline where Lord Toyotomi is the head superpower.

Moreover, with the Commission of Five, the Go-Tairo (Five Elders), and the Daikan, the political bodies assist Lord Toyotomi in governing, policy-making and watching over the activities of the daimyo in his favour.

### **Journal Entry #8**

Lord Toyotomi has been looking ill lately because his face has been thin with hollows beneath his high cheekbones. However, his head is still bent slightly forward, with keen and glittering eyes; Lord Toyotomi still gives the impression of concentration and nervous energy that he always had. Lord Toyotomi also still has a radiating air of decision, capacity and calmness.

Lately, Christianity has been continuing to prosper under Lord Toyotomi and today, I received a letter from Lord Tokugawa concerning Lord Toyotomi's plans on suppressing Christianity. I heard from a slave at this household that one of Lord Toyotomi's leading generals, Takayama Ukon is a Christian and even "helped Father Organtino secure a site for a church and a house near the great Osaka Castle" In addition to the Christian influence, when I was pouring tea for the officers in a meeting with Lord Toyotomi, I did overhear one of the generals saying that "Nagasaki city was practically run by the Jesuits and Portuguese trade was increasing." It seems like Christianity is going to be an issue for Lord Toyotomi to take into consideration.

In the letter that I am about to write a letter to Lord Tokugawa, I will not be able to anticipate Lord Toyotomi's plans or motives on Christianity. However, I think it is worth

mentioning that a doctor is coming to see Lord Toyotomi and from my observations, Lord Toyotomi is ill. Lord Tokugawa's time to make a move is coming.

### **Journal Entry #10**

I am currently missing my 9<sup>th</sup> journal entry as of about a week ago. I must have dropped the entry somewhere. This is dangerous, I think my position undercover at this household may be at a compromise. Lord Toyotomi recently had a fit of rage the other week. I wonder why? The other week, Lord Toyotomi ordered the torture through mutilation, the parading through a number of cities and the crucifixion upside down of twenty-six Christians, six Spanish Franciscans, three Portuguese Jesuits, and seventeen Japanese believers. Lord Toyotomi usually has fits of rage, however this recent fit of rage is especially petrifying.

### **Journal Entry #11**

I am speechless. Lord Toyotomi just invaded Korea with over a quarter of a million men. Although the Japanese naval convoy was "unaccountably late in arriving" to the battlefield, I think it was a part of Lord Toyotomi's strategic plan.

I believe it was Lord Toyotomi's plan because when I was serving Lord Toyotomi on that invasion, I overheard a general reported to Lord Toyotomi that the capture was a success. I think they captured the Korean courier because according to the gossip among

the troops is that the Korean Navy did nothing while they were being invaded. It appears as if the Korean commanding officer did not receive any orders. Thus, Lord Toyotomi was successful in capturing Pusan and Seoul without difficulty and initiated a land survey.

### **Journal Entry #12**

It has been a year and I still have not found my 9<sup>th</sup> journal entry.

Anyways, the household has been quiet and there is a menacing aura. I do not know why, but it seems like everyone is on high alert. Maybe it is because Lord Toyotomi has been looking a lot more sickly than usual? Wait. Could it be that Lord Toyotomi may have in possession of my 9<sup>th</sup> journal entry? No, probably not. I hope not.

Although the household has been quiet to me, the household has been busy because Lord Toyotomi invited all the great vassals, including Lord Tokugawa. According to another slave, they are invited to come and sign an oath to support the Toyotomi family.

On a side note, before the arrival of the great vassals and Lord Tokugawa, Lord Toyotomi ordered the slaves at this household not to leave or let anybody enter. Moreover, I overheard that the guards' corridors were searched last night. It seems like it will be quite the event tonight, so before the guards lock the gates and because of my uncertainties, I am going to end this journal and give it to a carrier to deliver it to my son.

### **[Missing] Journal Entry #9**

I can see that Lord Toyotomi will not rest or feel safe until the outlying parts of the country are under his control. From this, it is apparent that Lord Toyotomi is continuously trying to dominate the entire country by unifying the country under his control.

Aside from Lord Toyotomi's restlessness, Lord Toyotomi is probably one of the greatest political individual I have come across. Lord Toyotomi is "capable of swift decision and action," he is not "rash or impetuous," and he does "not waste lives making frontal attacks on fortresses when he could reduce them by siege or stratagem". Thus, like Lord Tokugawa assumed, Lord Toyotomi has a "good sense in politics, military ability, economic planning, and applying principles of law and order".

Although I am awestruck by Lord Toyotomi, I must not forget that I am here for Lord Tokugawa. My sole purpose is to send Lord Tokugawa updates on Lord Toyotomi. My letters regarding Lord Toyotomi is needed to let Lord Tokugawa know whether or not he should lay low until Lord Toyotomi is vulnerable.



**Jennifer Nguyen** is currently an undergraduate student at the University of Calgary. Jennifer is interested in modern Japan and its culture. From this, she finds the history of Japan significant because many factors from its history formed modern Japan and its culture.

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# The Invasion: Part 1-Beginnings

By: Savithri Wewala

Year 1592: Japan

Kobayakawa Yoshiaki's dark eyes took in the Nagoya Castle that loomed over him. It was an impressive sight, highly mounted on stone and many stories high. It also covered an expansive area and if rumors were correct, it had been constructed under the guidance of Katou Kiyomasa, one of the head commanders. To think that such an esteemed commander would also have such architectural sense.

"You should be getting ready, as well," A voice called from behind, startling Yoshiaki out of his reverie.

He stumbled back and turned around to see a tall, gruff looking man looking down at him. Suddenly the sound of thousands of men moving and talking filled his ears, and he remembered where he was. The military encampment. And soon they would be moving out of Kyushu and into Korea.

Yoshiaki's eyes appraised the older man in his armor, two swords in their sheaths at his side. His hair was pulled back tight into a short ponytail and he looked tired and worn, but determined. It suddenly occurred to Yoshiaki that he might be speaking to one of the samurai class and he immediately bowed, albeit a little too late.

"Ah, my apologies! I was entranced by the castle. That my own commander would have a hand in constructing it, I was greatly impressed..." Yoshiaki explained, realizing too late that he was rambling unnecessarily.

Surely this man would not care for his reasons, after all he was just a commoner, unlike the many experienced samurai moving around the camp...Yoshiaki glanced at the unknown man, who was now looking over the pale, lean youth in contemplation, but with no sign of annoyance on his face. He had a stony face with a long nose, but his eyes held a certain warmth to it.

"The castle is great that's true, but the real feat is to be able to control so many! We must give Toyotomi Hideyoshi credit for that though, eh?" The man said, laughing roughly, though Yoshiaki didn't quite see the humor there. "I'm Shimazu Takatora, by the way," he announced.

"Ah, I'm sorry, my name is Kobayakawa Yoshiaki. Pleased to meet you...Though, Shimazu...?" Yoshiaki started, the name rang familiar to him, but he didn't place it right away. Then it came to him that Shimazu was the family name of one of the other commanders. Which meant that this man was related to him! He hastened into another deeper bow, but Takatora waved him off.

"Enough of that! We're both just soldiers here." He paused and evaluated Yoshiaki for what felt like the umpteenth time, "So even commoners know Shimazu Yoshihiro, eh?"

Yoshiaki felt himself go red. Was it so obvious he wasn't a part of the samurai class, he wondered. That he was just a conscripted soldier from a poor peasant village? His hand went almost in comfort to the sword at his side. Its familiar feel comforted him. It had been his father's once, but since his father had passed away so many years ago, leaving his mother widowed and in anguish, he had taken it. He remembered how angry he had been when the Sword Hunt had begun and he had almost lost it. His village had been in an uproar. It was said that Hideyoshi had enacted the law to

keep the ronin in check, by why did the innocent peasants have to suffer too? He had managed to hide his away, but when he was conscripted he had been able to take it out for use again. It was ironic that he had so resented Hideyoshi, and now he fought for him...He patted the sword fondly, and looked back up at Takatora.

"Yes. His name did reach my small village at one time," He said, his voice defiant.

Takatora laughed, "Hold that fire for the invasion, it was just a question kid." Takatora gestured for Yoshiaki to walk with him, "So you said Katou was your leader, eh? Could you be in Division Two? If you are, we'll be in landing in Busan, over in Korea, together. I'm also in the Second Division."

Yoshiaki couldn't help feeling slightly relieved. He knew that he was here to fight a war, not make friends, but still, he hadn't known anyone up to this point.

"Yes! I'm glad to be under his leadership, I have heard great things." Yoshiaki glanced sideways at the swords at Takatora's side, as soldiers bustled around him carrying various goods and weapons, "Say...you don't use one of those arquebuses do you? Those firearms everyone has now?"

Takatora shook his head, "I never got the hang of those unfortunately. But enough of that for today." They had stopped in front of a tent, which Yoshiaki assumed belonged to Takatora, "Get some rest, kid, we'll be heading out soon now..."

Year 1593: Korea

Yoshiaki's breathing came fast and hard. The pungent stench of the corpses was already getting to him, but he held on as he dragged the dead body to the designated area to be burned with

the rest. He looked at the pitiful corpses, thankful at his luck in staying alive. Though of course, more than anything he owed Shimazu Takatora for his survival thus far. The samurai had constantly looked after the youth during the bloody battles. He closed his eyes for a moment, grateful to the memory of the day the two had met; it had definitely saved his poor mother from the woe of her only child's death, and being completely alone. He felt a pang then, in remembrance of his home.

"Hurry up brat, we have a body to dump too!" An angry voice shouted out, causing Yoshiaki to jump and shuffle away. He glanced back as a pair of soldiers carelessly threw another corpse onto the pile,

He should look for more of the dead, or maybe search out Takatora...he thought, instead he sank in exhaustion to an empty spot on the ground. What had happened? It had started so well, with them capturing castles and cities. He recalled so clearly the smell of gunpowder, arrows flying so narrowly close to his face he could barely keep his balance, the Korean soldiers running in fear as the Japanese had advanced. Their initial capture of Hanseong, and how their division had continued their march north in victory.

Yoshiaki stretched his neck out, rubbing a thin scar he had gotten from the battle at Byeokjegwan. Aah, Byeokjegwan...where they had been able to once again face the Chinese armies that the Koreans had cowardly sent for! After the humiliation of their previous loss to them, at Byeokjegwan they finally regained their honour. How the pathetic allied armies had underestimated them there! It had been their victory...and now he sat here in the dirt waiting to burn the dead bodies of his once comrades.

The Japanese forces had advanced so confidently up those steep slopes of Haengju, only to be fired upon with rocks, arrows, and gunfire. The painful screams of men and the deafening sound

of soldiers taking their last breaths still echoed in Yoshiaki's mind. The next thing he knew, Commander Katou was calling retreat. He felt unstable and sick. It had been so long since the war started and he had been back in Kyushu staring at the Nagoya castle...Would he ever return home and see his beloved mother? The village he had grown up in?

Year 1593: Korea

"They say Katou Kiyomasa and the other commanders are having disagreements. Apparently some of the commanders want to negotiate with the Chinese forces." Yoshiaki whispered, making sure to keep his voice in check around the sleeping warriors, though his stomach angrily betrayed him by rumbling in hunger. He glared at his stomach as if to assert some control, but his eyes snapped back up as Takatora responded with a snort.

"That's not going to go well. Katou's never going to pull out that easy. But the real decision lies with Hideyoshi." Takatora leaned in, his voice falling to such a hush that Yoshiaki could barely hear it, "Just between us, I've been hearing some rumours. Apparently not everything's getting back to Hideyoshi accurately. Some of the higher ups want to keep looking good and have been sending some misleading reports..."

Yoshiaki felt no sympathy and scoffed in dark humour, "Serves that old womanizer right. If he's not going to fight with his soldiers, and stay back in Japan in comfort, what can he expect from us?" He had never quite lost that anger towards Hideyoshi that he had cultivated during the Sword Hunt.

A tired smile etched Takatora's lips at the youth's spirit. "Easy now. He's Toyotomi Hideyoshi after all. He's the reason you and I are talking right now. If he hadn't brought the regions

together,, You're still young, you don't remember what it used to be like before Oda Nobunaga and him...Just be careful." The man sighed, his years suddenly written on his face.

Yoshiaki felt instant embarrassment, He still did not care for Hideyoshi, but he owed respect to Takatora at least. For Takatora's sake, he would keep his tongue at least.

Yoshiaki looked at Takatora in apology, "Let's just hope that someone pulls out of this war soon, and that that someone isn't us."

#### Year 1594: Korea

"A daughter of the Ming emperor, the southern provinces of Joseon, normal trade relations between China and Japan must be restored, and a Joseon prince and several high-ranking government officials as hostages" Takatora whispered, shaking his head in disbelief. "Well, that's what my contacts are saying...what's Hideyoshi thinking? Demanding those kinds of things?"

Yoshiaki gave a low whistle, and leaned back, "You said it before didn't you? Hideyoshi's not getting all the right information. He must think the Chinese are ready to give in and give Korea to Japan or something..."

Takatora just kept shaking his head, and a moment of silence fell between the two. They had both made it unscathed back to Busan where all the troops were returning too. After their food stores in Yongsan had been destroyed by a Chinese commando, Japanese moral had begin to plummet. 'What were they to do?' was the constant question. And to top it off, some high up Chinese official had threatened to bring in 400, 000 troops from China! Those Koreans, running to another country for aid! Commander Katou had to finally agree to a ceasefire, before they

completely lost. Apparently many of soldiers had already started sailing back to Japan...back home...Yoshiaki thought.

"That's going both ways apparently...the miscommunication," Takatora finally said. His eyes were distant, seeing things that Yoshiaki couldn't, "According to my inside men, the Chinese are under the impression that we're ready to forfeit this war..."

Yoshiaki looked around in alarm, "What! If things keep going this way, who knows what will happen! I thought we might finally settle back into Japan..." He looked miserably at the dark sky swirling around him, resenting it. Would he ever return home at this rate?

"So what will you do?" Takatora's rough voice suddenly called, looking keenly at the youth.

"What do you mean?" Yoshiaki asked in confusion, unsure what his friend was asking.

"Will you fight another round for your country?" Takatora asked, his voice calm and desolate.

Yoshiaki opened his mouth to answer, but nothing came out. Did he have a choice? He thought of his small village with the young children running around unchecked and the bustling townspeople trying to make their living. He thought of eating his mother's cooking again. A sudden blissful feel overtook him, and he knew that, no, he did not have a choice. He had people he must protect. He couldn't risk them being overtaken by barbarians.

Yoshiaki nodded, unable to quite put his emotions into words. Takatora smiled, and gave the young man a gentle pat on the shoulder.

"You are an honourable man. I knew that from the first time I met you. I could see it. Don't let me down now." Takatora said, his gruff voice kind. With that he stood up from the boulder he had been sitting on, and walked over to his tent nearby.

Yoshiaki watched him go for a moment, then closed his eyes. No, he wouldn't, couldn't, let Takatora or his villagers down, especially now.



**Savithri Wewala** is currently a student at the University of Calgary, majoring in Psychology with a minor in Japanese. Savithri has long since held a passion for Japanese culture and fond the brilliant history surrounding this culture just as enthralling. Savithri wishes that others will also be pulled in by the beauty and richness of Japan and that these stories with be helpful along the path to get there.

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## **The Invasion: Part 2-Returnings**

By: Wafaa Nurul Bayan

Year 1597: Korea

After staying here in Pusan for 3 years, waiting for General Hideyoshi's decision about the truce negotiations, I, Kobayakawa Yoshiaki, cannot wait for this to end. I cannot wait to return home. I cannot wait to go back, and live a peaceful life. But I can't. I know I made the decision to stay and I will proudly return to Japan with results.

One day, Commander Mori gathered us all and told us of Hideyoshi-sama's decision, "100,000 soldiers of reinforcement will be sent and we will continue the invasion of Korea. So, let us not disappoint him and make our families proud of us!" "Yeah!" we all replied loudly.

Right after the soldiers arrived, I started to get ready to take over this country so that I can go back home proudly, but then I realize that this second force need to rest... so I contained my excitement and began chatting with them. I asked them how Japan is doing and what the General has been doing while we, the soldiers, are fighting in this foreign land. They replied saying that Japan is doing alright and that the General is still busy with his political business.

I felt that this second invasion began with a resounding victory, we continued from cities to cities but somewhere deep down in my heart, I could feel that the Korean army is different. “You could feel it too, right?” Takatora crept up behind me. “Ah... Yeah, I could feel that they’re different somehow, but I just can’t pinpoint it.” I answered while thinking. “It seems that they’ve been trained. Even though they are just farmers, if they are trained, they could be as strong as any of us. So don’t underestimate them.” Takatora warned. “Yes, sir!”

Our doubts were right on place. We were not able to advance further. The huge Chinese army backed up the Koreans. That’s not fair, why can’t the Chinese just stay out of this and let us take over Korea without much effort. “Don’t rush, Yoshiaki.” Takatora advised, “There is no one in this world who would let their country taken over by others.”

“What do you mean?” I asked.

“Don’t you know why we’re battling and trying to take over Korea?” He asked surprisingly.

“Is it not because Korea is a prosperous country, so Hideyoshi-sama wants to take over it?” I answered in ignorance.

“No, Hideyoshi-sama wants to take over Korea as a stepping stone to invade and conquer China. So, mainland China is our real goal here. Which means...”

“Which means, even if by chance, we took over Korea, we may still have to continue battling and not return home until we take over China.” I continued in shock.

It could also mean that this battle may never end and I may even die here, in a foreign land, letting my family grieve my death with no body.

My daydreaming was forcefully stopped as more Korean soldiers pushes their way through. From my right and left, my comrades who are in the same position as me, falls down in agony as their souls are taken. I do not know why I suddenly felt envious of them, but I still continue to fight for my life and it is no longer for any proud nor is it for Hideyoshi-sama. But it is for myself.

I woke up to another day of cautiousness. Today, we are ransacking around the city and I found a torn up doll being stepped on, over and over by our forces. I could feel the evidence that Koreans are just human beings like us who love and worship. We then advance to destroy the Bulguksa, the most famous Buddhist temple in this city.

While I was gathering some artifacts in the temple’s storage room, I found a beautiful lady, hiding, shivering in fear. I tried to talk to her, to tell her that she doesn’t have to be scared, but then I realize that she does not speak my language. So, I picked a lying blanket and wrapped her with it. She started to calm down, and stopped shivering. I wonder if this is what I have been doing. Have I been instilling fear in the hearts of innocents?

“Yoshiaki-san, have you found anything valuable?” a voice from outside of the storage took me by surprise. “uh, nothing valuable here, only rubbles and pieces of tattered books. You can go ahead search other places. I will be right behind you.” I replied in a hurry. This is definitely getting me in trouble but I do not care, the only thing in front of me is a harmless lady, I hope. Moving toward the lady, I spoke to her “Please stay here, I will bring you food later.” while gesturing with my hands of what I said. Then, I went out as nothing happened and go back with the others searching the temple, leading the others farther away from the storage.

I took the foods out of my pockets and laid them in front of the lady then backed away to give her a space to eat comfortably. I stood watching from afar as she took the food and sniffed them. Having confirmed that the food is safe, she puts the bread in her mouth then the cheese and soup all at the same time. Seeing how she ate the food conclude my hypothesis that she have not been eating for at least a couple of days. However somehow I stopped thinking and started inspecting her face. She is indeed very beautiful and if she took a shower she would probably be more beautiful but her cheeks are stuffed with all the foods and her face and hand looks astonishingly dirty. I wonder how I could even think that she was beautiful and this has made me cracked up in laughter. The lady looked up in surprised since I just suddenly start laughing out loud but after a second she joined me, laughing in a voice that sounds like the birds are singing. This moment felt as the time has just stopped.

Days and weeks passed by quickly when I am with Hee-Yun, her name, she finally told me after weeks and being really assured that I mean no harm.

Year 1598: Korea

Last time, we were able to reach Seoul, but this time, we could not reach it and were stopped short of the city. Eventually, we were pushed steadily back to Pusan, back to square one. I knew that this invasion was going to be different, and that's true. This time, I found Hee-Yun, a beautiful girl that I want to protect. Even though we do not speak each other's language, we communicated and understood each other by adding gestures while talking. And we slowly learn each other's language. I learned that her parents died while she was young and she was left with no relatives in the temple, cleaning it and serving meals for the monks. Knowing that, I affirmed my feelings to her. My feeling of wanting to stay by her side and protect her forever.

I kept her hidden from my fellow soldiers, even from my friend Takatora. However, Takatora noticed that I've been snooping around and hiding something. He then finally approached me and asked me with a serious tone, "You've been acting differently, did something good happen that made you happy?" "Yes, indeed something happy did happen to me. But I will tell one day, when the time is right." I answered cheerfully.

The day we were all waiting for finally arrived. A messenger brought us with orders to withdraw from Korea and retreat back to Japan. "Finally!" I expressed. I started to pack up my belongings and hurriedly informed Hee-Yun of this great news. When I told Hee-

Yun of me going back to Japan, her face changed from the smile she had of seeing me to a frown she could not hide. I know I could not bear to live without Hee-Yun anymore and with no other choice I asked her to come with me, come to my homeland Japan. She was happy that I asked her but she is also scared to go to a land she only learned through my stories and request for me to wait while she think her decision thoroughly.

All the soldiers have gathered around the ships and it seems that I am the only one who keeps looking back, staring to a spot of the farthest scene my eyes can see. “Yoshiaki come, the boat is leaving” shouted Takatora in front of me. “Friends, let me introduce you to Hee-Yun.”

The boat sailed successfully and Hee-Yun is happy to experience riding a big boat that she never been before. We all let our guard down to feel the happiness of finally getting back home and I, especially, am the happiest to be able to meet a girl who I could cherish.

Under the cover of darkness, I woke up to the resonating sound of the cannons and fire arrows. The boat was shaking heavily and the first thing that came to mind was Hee-Yun. “Hee-Yun! Where are you?” I shouted anxiously.

“Ah... Takatora, have you seen Hee-Yun?”

“No! But let’s search for her together!” Takatora offered.

“Hee-Yun! Where are you? Please answer me!” I continued shouting.

“Yoshiaki! I’m here!” I head towards her voice and found her silhouette.

As I was holding her hands to bring her to safety with me, we heard another round of cannons being shot towards this ship. I saw wreckage falling over us and without thinking, my body moved on top of Hee-Yun protecting her right away. I awaken to the crying voice of Hee-Yun. “Yoshiaki! Wake up... Please, don’t leave me!” Hee-Yun cried with a shaking voice. I fought the sleepiness attacking me and could see her beautiful face covered with tears. But the lights are starting to dim and her voice begins to fade. I used my last strength to wipe her tears away and say...

“I love you”



**Wafaa Nurul Bayan** is in her 2nd year studying Energy management at University of Calgary. Wafaa was exposed to Japan through her sister whose major is Japanese and now loves it because of its unique culture. She has visited Japan for a short vacation and felt welcomed there. At first, Wafaa wrote this short fiction story as part of an assignment with her friend, but soon enjoyed writing it and would like to share it with you all.

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# The Son of A Shogun

By: Sierra Landolt



**Sierra Landolt** is a 2nd year student taking a Linguistics and Languages bachelor's degree. Sierra loves learning new languages and currently she is learning Japanese and Norwegian. Learning the history and the culture of the languages has always been an interest to her, and Sierra especially enjoyed learning about the Kamakura period which influenced her decision on the final project.

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YEAR 1291,

TSURUGAOKA HACHIMANGU SHRINE





FOR MY FATHER...

YOUR OWN  
BROTHER...WHO  
YOU KILLED FOR  
YOUR OWN BENEFIT.  
YOU ARE NOT WORTHY  
OF THE TITLE  
"SHOGUN"...



MINAMOTO  
SANETOMO



REST IN PEACE  
FATHER, YOUR SON  
HAS AVENGED YOU

A FEW DAYS EARLIER...

IT PLEASES ME TO  
SEE HOW MUCH YOU  
HAVE GROWN  
YOSHINARI-KUN

NO... I SHOULD BE  
CALLING YOU KUGYO-  
SAN NOW SHOULDN'T I.

AS THE  
SON OF THE  
FORMER SHOGUN  
YOU CERTAINLY  
HAVE SHOWN  
POTENTIAL



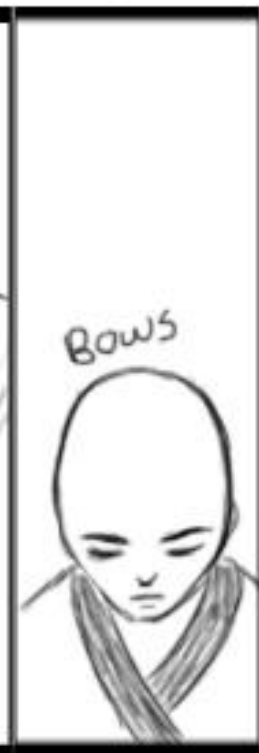
AS ONE  
OF MY GRANDSONS  
CAN'T HELP BUT TO  
BE CONCERNED FOR  
YOUR UPBRINGING.  
THAT IS WHY I THOUGHT  
IT BEST TO GIVE YOU  
A SUITABLE ROLE  
MODEL



IS IT....?



YOUR UNCLE  
SANETOMO WAS MORE  
THAN HAPPY TO TAKE  
YOU AS HIS OWN SON.



IT'S HIM.  
HE'S THE REASON  
MY FATHER IS  
DEAD.  
SANETOMO, MY  
UNCLE. I WILL KILL  
YOU!



HOLD ON TO THIS  
FOR ME WILL YOU  
YOSHINARI?



BE SURE TO  
GROW UP TO  
BECOME A MAN  
FIT TO BE THE  
SON OF THE  
SHOGUN



YOSHINARI!!

LISTEN TO ME  
YOSHINARI, YOU  
HAVE TO LEAVE!  
STAY AWAY FROM  
SANETOMO AND  
MY MOTHER!



FATHER! WHY  
CAN'T I OPEN  
THE DOOR?!?

DO YOU  
UNDERSTAND?  
LEAVE NOW!!

LOOK IT'S ONE OF  
YORIII'S BOYS! CATCH  
HIM!

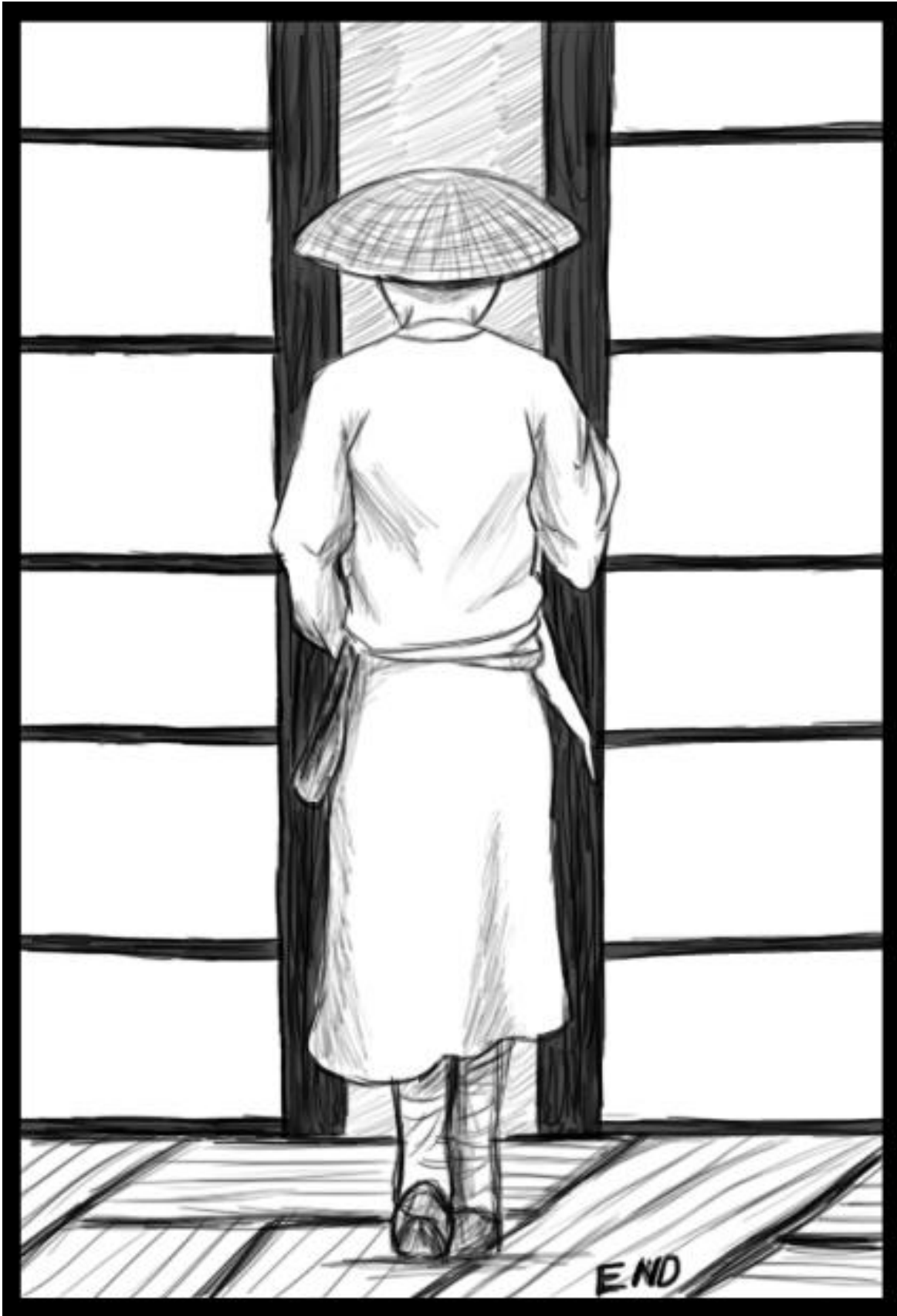
YOUR GRANDMOTHER  
HOJO-SAMA IS  
LOOKING FOR YOU

YOSHINARI  
-SAN!









## Four-frame Comics of Classics

By: Adrian Cruz, Aulora Oleynick



**Adrian Cruz** is an East Asian Language Studies student at the University of Calgary. He is fully enjoying learning both Chinese and Japanese, and is thankful for being able to study abroad in Japan for one month at Senshu University in 2014. Aside from learning languages, Adrian enjoys listening to music, playing piano, and spending time with friends.

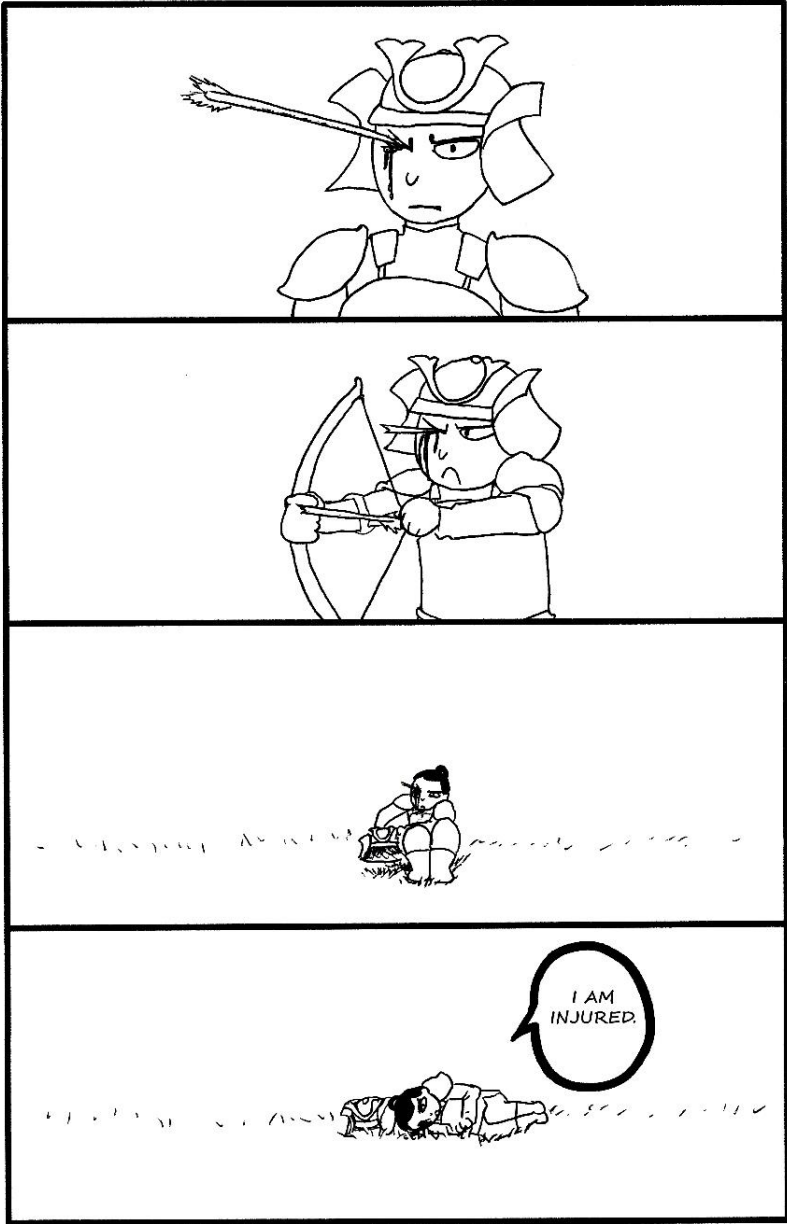
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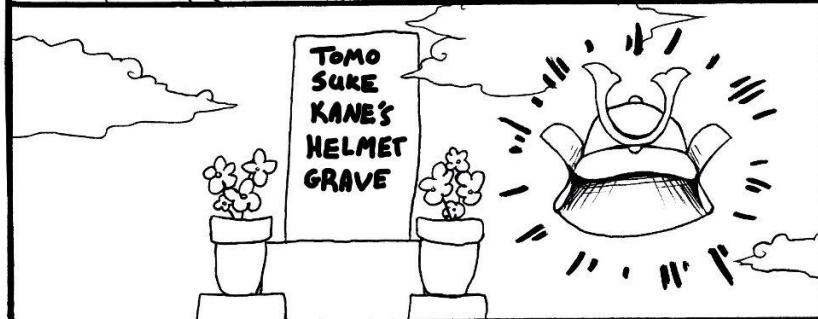
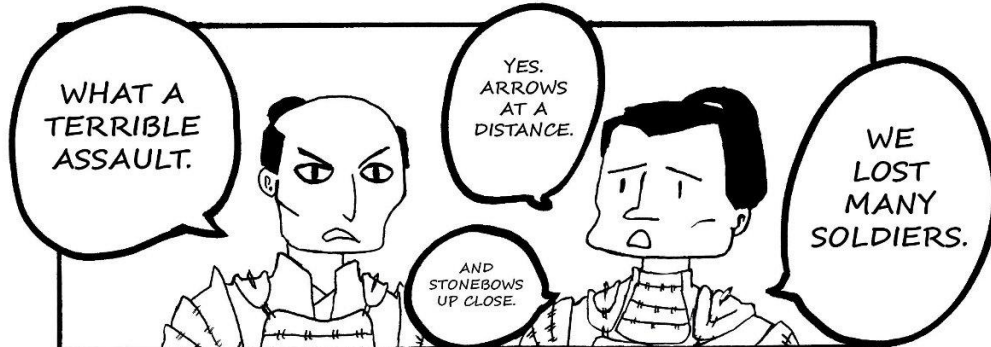
**Aulora Oleynick** is a student of the Biological Sciences program at the University of Calgary, and is aiming to enter the field of pediatrics in the future. Outside of sciences, Aulora has developed a passion for studying Japanese language and culture, and undertook a study abroad program in Japan at Senshu University in 2014. Aulora is perhaps best identified by her love of the colour green and for wearing green clothes every day.

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MINOR INJURY



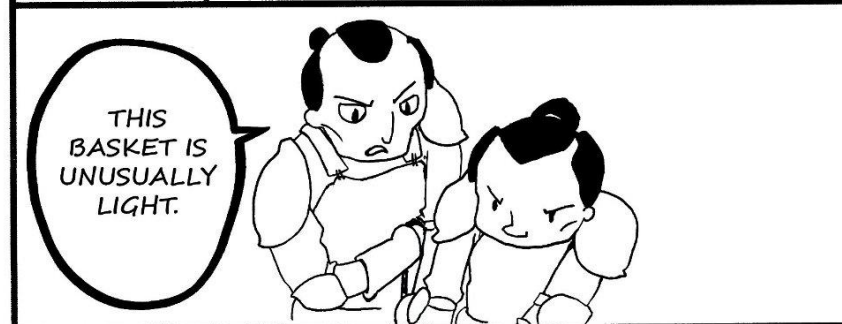
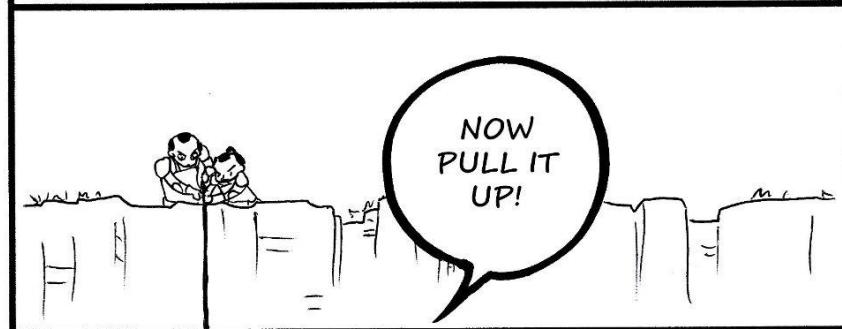
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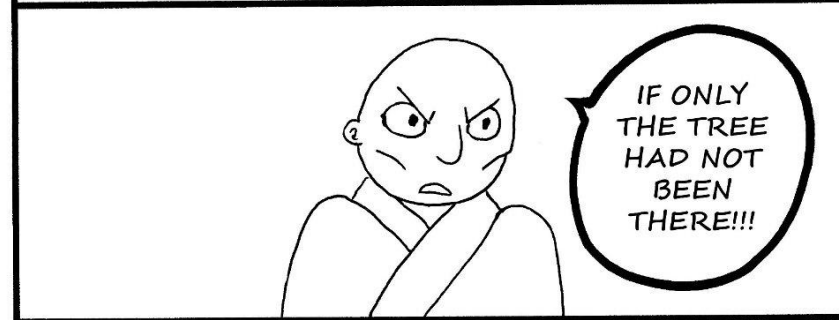
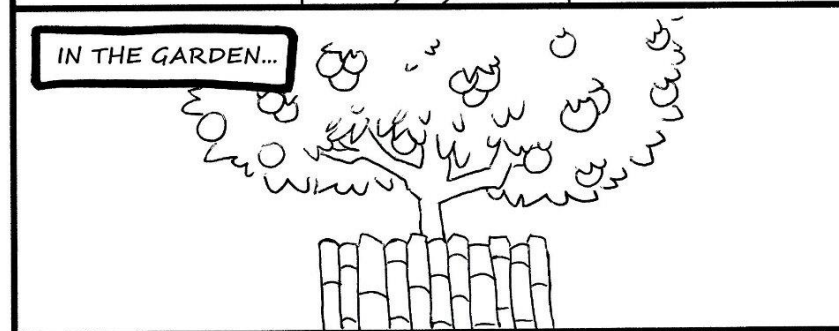
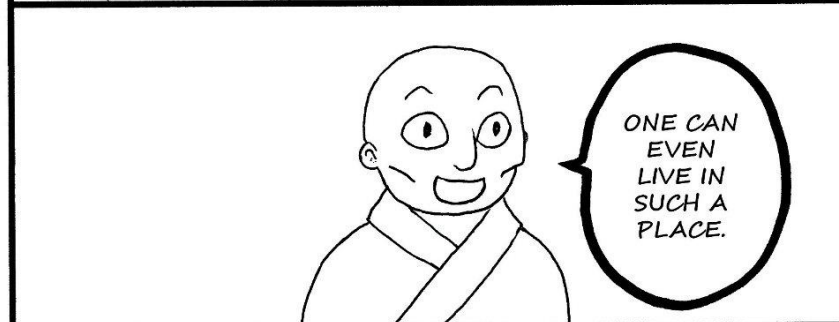
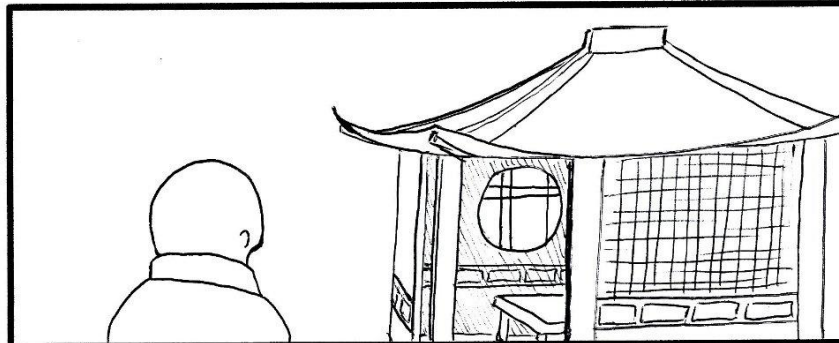
SAFEKEEPING



## THE GOVERNOR'S TREASURE



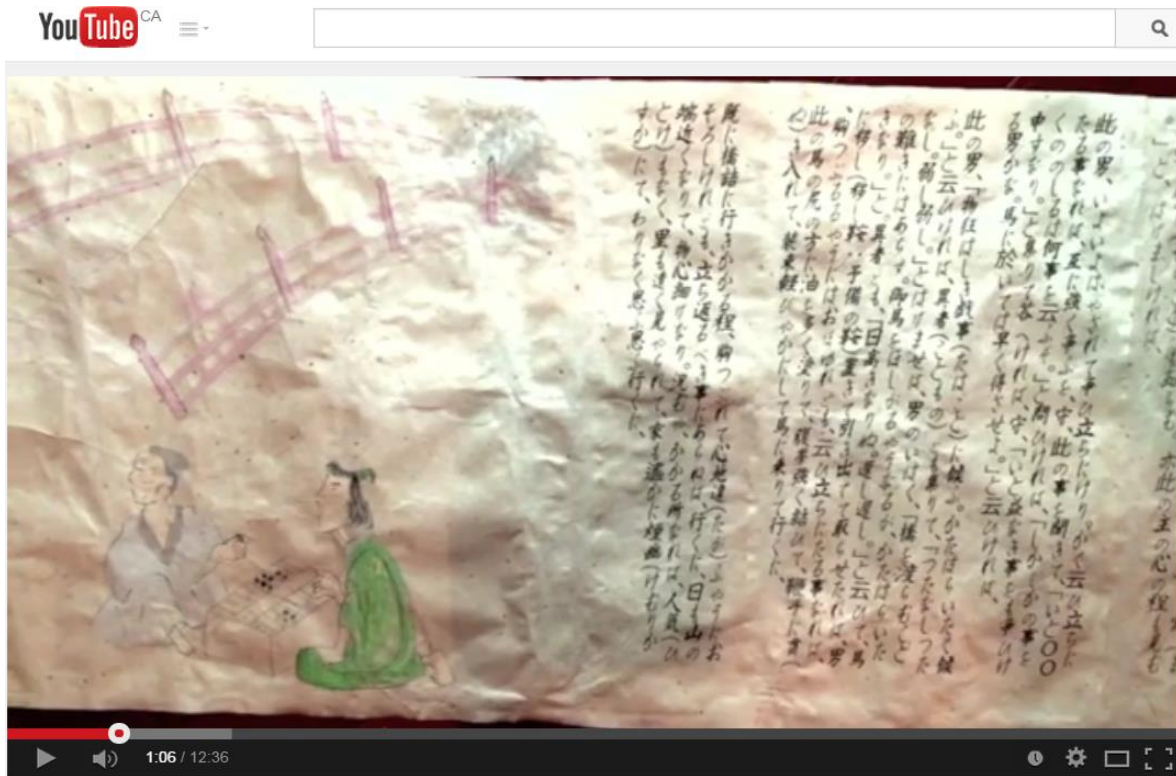
# KENKO AND TREES





# How The Demon At Agi Bridge In Omi Province Ate Somebody

By: Aziz Razavi



(Click the above picture or [THIS LINK](#) to watch the video at YouTube.)





**Aziz Razavi** is undertaking a minor in the field of Japanese at the University of Calgary. Aziz received both Sekiguchi Book Prize and Sekiguchi Prize, awarded to the student who achieved the highest grade in the Japanese classes. His passion and interest in mythology and folk lore has led Aziz to explore Medieval Japanese folk lore and transform a legend into a picture scroll.

## **Old Japan Redux**

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