

“This is the bronze of the Kazuraki nunnery.” Returning the image to the nunnery, the messenger sent the thief to court, where he was imprisoned.

The dharma-body Buddha of the ultimate reality<sup>5</sup> has neither flesh nor blood. Why then did it suffer from pain? This took place only to show that dharma exists changeless. It is another miraculous event.

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### *On the Fiends, Messengers of King Yama, Who Canceled Death in Exchange for a Bribe<sup>1</sup>*

Nara no Iwashima 橋磐嶋<sup>2</sup> lived at the Fifth Avenue, the Sixth Street, East Side of Nara 諾樂左京六條五坊,<sup>3</sup> that is, in the village west of Daian-ji 大安寺.<sup>4</sup> In the reign of Emperor Shōmu he got a loan of thirty *kan*<sup>5</sup> from the Sutara 修多羅 fund of Daian-ji,<sup>6</sup> went to the Tsuruga port in Echizen 越前都魯鹿<sup>7</sup> on business, and loaded the goods he had purchased on a boat to bring them home. On the way home he suddenly fell ill and got off the boat. Thinking he would go on alone, he hired a horse and set out.

When he reached Shiga-no-karasaki, Takashima district, Ōmi province 近江[國]高嶋郡磯鹿辛前,<sup>8</sup> he looked around and saw three men half a furlong<sup>9</sup> away running after him. At the Uji Bridge of Yamashiro 山代宇治橋,<sup>10</sup> they caught up and went along with him. Iwashima asked them, “Where are you going?” They replied, “We are messengers from the office of King Yama<sup>11</sup> sent for Nara no Iwashima.” Then Iwashima said, “I am the very one you are sent for. But why do you want me?” The fiend messengers<sup>12</sup> answered, “When

5. 理法身 *ri-hosshin*; see Chap. II(3)b.

1. Cf. *Kongō hannya-kyō jikkenki* (I, Kyūgohen 13); *Sanbō ekotoba* (II, 14), *Konjaku monogatari-shū* (XX, 19), *Genkō shakusho* (XXIX).

2. Since Iwashima lived in Nara, 橋 may be 諾樂(奈良).

3. The southeast quarter of the capital.

4. Daian-ji was called Ōtsukasa-no-ōtera or Takechi-no-ōtera before its transfer to the capital of Nara in about 710 (see Chap. I(1)c). It was originally built by Emperor Tenmu 天武 in 674.

5. One *kan* consists of one thousand *mon*, pieces.

6. See Chap. I(1)c, nn. 65, 66, for Sutara-shū 修多羅宗. According to “Daianji garan engi” (*Nara ibun*, ed. by Takeuchi, I, 369), the Sutara fund was 1,668 *kan* and 61 *mon* in 747, the biggest at Daian-ji.

7. Present Tsuruga-shi, Fukui-ken 福井縣敦賀市.

8. The northern part of present Ōtsu-shi, Shiga-ken 滋賀縣大津市.

9. One *chō* 町 equals about 120 yards.

10. Located at present Uji-shi, Kyoto-fu. See I.12, n. 8.

11. 閻羅王闕.

12. 使鬼.

we looked for you at your home, we were told, ‘He has gone on a business tour.’ Therefore, we went to the port so that we might meet and catch you there, but a messenger from the Four Divine Guardians<sup>13</sup> implored us, saying, ‘You should excuse him, since he is engaged in business with a loan from the temple.’<sup>14</sup> So we let you go free for a while. We have spent so many days trying to catch you that we feel hungry and exhausted. Do you have any food with you?” Iwashima answered, “I have only dried rice,” and gave it to them to eat. The fiend messengers said, “Don’t come any closer to us, or you will be made sick by our spirit.<sup>15</sup> You need not be afraid of us, though.”

Eventually Iwashima took them home and gave them a feast. The fiends said to him, “We like the flavor of beef very much.<sup>16</sup> Will you serve us beef? We are the fiends who steal cows.” So he told them, “I have two brindled cows. Will you let me go free if I offer them to you?” They said, “Well, we have eaten much of your food. If we release you because of your kind treatment, we shall be accused of a grave sin and be hit one hundred times with an iron stick. Do you by chance know anyone of the same age?” “No, I don’t,” he answered. Then one of the three fiends, after thinking a while, asked, “In which year were you born?” He answered, “I was born in the fifth year of the tiger.”<sup>17</sup> Then the fiend said, “I heard that there is a diviner<sup>18</sup> who was born in the same year at the shrine of Izagawa 率川社.<sup>19</sup> He can be your substitute. We will take him instead. I urge you, however, to recite the *Kongō hannya-kyō*<sup>20</sup> one hundred times,<sup>21</sup>

13. 四王 *Shiō*, four deities who guard the four quarters of the world, that is, Dhṛtarāṣṭra 持國(E), Virūdhaka 增長(S), Virūpākṣa 廣目(W), and Vaiśravaṇa 多聞(N). See *Konkōmyō saishō-kyō*, VI (*Taishō*, XVI, 427b–432c).

14. This indicates a belief that business conducted with the temple funds is an act to attain merit. In T’ang and later China, moneylending became a flourishing business of the temple. Michihata explains the presence of many legends on the penalties incurred by stealing the samgha property or not repaying the loan of the temple as one of the measures for self-protection taken by the monks. See his *Tōdai Bukkyōshi no kenkyū*, 539.

15. 氣, vital force.

16. Animal sacrifice is made for an evil foreign deity (II.5) or hungry ghosts such as in this story.

17. 戊寅 *tsuchinoe-tora*; a combination of the Ten Stems and the Twelve Branches used as a device to indicate the year; in this case, the year of birth.

18. 相八卦讀 *sōhakkēyomi*; literally, one who can read the features of a house or man, and the eight trigrams (Ch. *pa kua* 八卦). Cf. Fung Yu-lan, *The History of the Chinese Philosophy*, 378–395.

19. Izagawa is the name of a brook which originates in Mt. Kasuga (see II.31, n. 2) and flows into the Saho River.

20. *Kongō hannya haramitsu-kyō* 金剛般若波羅蜜經 (*Vajracchedikāprajñāpāramitāsūtra*) (*Taishō*, VIII, No. 235). See the *Vagaakkedikā* or *Diamond Cutter, Buddhist Mahāyāna Texts*, ed. by Cowell (*SBE*, XLIX, 109–144).

21. 百卷; literally, one hundred volumes, but translated here as one hundred times for it is a one-volume scripture.

invoking our names, so that we may escape whipping for the sin of accepting your offer of a cow. The first name is Takasamaro 高佐麻呂; the second, Nakachimaro 中知麻呂; the third, Tsuchimaro 槌麻呂.” With this, they left him at midnight.

The next morning Iwashima found one of his cows dead. He went to Nantōin 南塔院<sup>22</sup> of Daian-ji and asked Novice Ninyō 仁耀<sup>23</sup> (at that time not yet ordained) to recite the *Kongō hannya-kyō* one hundred times. On his request Ninyō spent two days in reciting it. After three days the fiend messengers came to Iwashima, saying, “Owing to the power of the Mahayana scripture we escaped one hundred whipping strokes; besides, we were given half a bushel<sup>24</sup> more rice than the usual ration. How happy and grateful we are! Please be virtuous and hold services for our sake hereafter on every holy day.”<sup>25</sup> Then all of a sudden they disappeared.

Iwashima was over ninety when he died.

As Te-hsüan 德玄<sup>26</sup> of T'ang China escaped the messenger of King Yama owing to the power of the *Hannya-kyō*, so did Iwashima of Japan because he was engaged in business with a loan from the temple fund. The same moral will be found in the story of a flower vendor who was born in Tōriten 切利天,<sup>27</sup> or of Kikuta 掬多 who had once wanted to poison Buddha but whose good heart was restored by Buddha's omniscience.<sup>28</sup>

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### *On the Fiend, Messenger of King Yama, Who Accepted the Hospitality of the One for Whom He Had Been Sent and Repaid It<sup>1</sup>*

In Yamada district, Sanuki province 讃岐國山田郡,<sup>2</sup> there lived a

22. Unidentified.

23. 沙彌仁耀 (d. 796) (Shiban, *Honchō kōsoden*, LXVI). He must have been in his late teens then, before ordination.

24. 一斗, 1 to.

25. 節 *setchi*, equal to 齋 *sai*; see I.24, n. 3.

26. Tou Te-hsüan 賀德玄, a high minister who lived in the reign of Kao-tsung (650-683) (*Kongō hannya-kyō jikkenki*, I).

27. Transliteration of Skt. *Trāyastriṃsa* meaning thirty-three heavens above Mt. Sumeru.

28. *Daishōgonron-kyō* 大鞋巖論經, XIII (*Taishō*, IV, 327c-333a).

1. Cf. *Myōhōki* (III, On Ma Chia-yün 馬嘉運), *Konjaku monogatarihū* (XX, 18), *Hōbutsushū* (VI).

2. Present Takamatsu-shi, or Kita-gun, Kagawa-ken 香川縣高松市, 木田郡.

woman whose name was Nunoshiki no omi Kinume 布敷臣衣女.<sup>3</sup> In the reign of Emperor Shōmu, she suddenly fell ill. Therefore, she laid all kinds of delicious offerings on both sides of her gate to give the deity of plagues a banquet as a bribe.<sup>4</sup>

There came a fiend, a messenger of King Yama, to seize her. Exhausted from searching for her, the fiend cast a covetous look at the offerings of delicacies and accepted them. Then he said to her, “As I have accepted your hospitality, I will repay your kindness. Do you know anyone of the same name as yours?” Kinume answered, saying, “Yes, there is another Kinume in Utari 鵜垂 district<sup>5</sup> of the same province.” Thereupon, he took her to the other Kinume's home in Utari district to see her, and, taking out a one-foot chisel from his red bag, drove it into the latter's forehead and arrested her. The former Kinume of Yamada district went home in secret.

When King Yama, who had been waiting for them, examined her, he said, “This is not the Kinume I sent for. You have got the wrong person. Kinume, will you stay here for a while? Go and get the Kinume of Yamada district.”

As he had failed in trying to conceal her, the fiend again went to Kinume of Yamada district to arrest her and came back with her. King Yama saw her and said, “This is the Kinume I sent for.”

Meanwhile, Kinume of Utari district went home only to find her corpse had been cremated during her three-day absence. She came back and appealed to the king in grief, saying, “I have no body to enter into.” Then, the king asked, “Is there the body of Kinume of Yamada district?” There was, whereupon the king said, “Go and take her body as yours.”

In this way Kinume of Utari district came back to life in the body of Kinume of Yamada district. She said, “This is not my home. My home is in Utari district.” At that her parents said, “You are our daughter. Why do you say such a thing?” She would not listen to them, however, and visited her own home, saying, “This is my real home.” Her real parents disclaimed this, saying, “You are not our daughter. We have already cremated her.” Thereupon, she explained in detail what King Yama had told her. Having heard her story, both sets of parents believed her and allowed her to inherit both fortunes. This is why the present Kinume had four parents and two inheritances.

There is sometimes merit in making offerings to a fiend as a bribe.

3. The Nunoshikis is a native family in Kinai.

4. This practice of making offerings of delicacies at the gate is also found in II.16. Its purpose is to bribe the fiends, executioners, or deities not to kill.

5. Present Ayauta-gun, Kagawa-ken 香川縣綾歌郡.