

Twilight of a Crane – Yu Zuwa Junji Kinoshita

CHARACTERS

Tsu..... The name reads Tsu-u.

Yohyo..... The name reads Yohyo-o.

Sodo..... The name reads So-o-do.

Unzu..... The name reads Un-zu.

Children.

(A tumble-down hut in a field covered with snow. The setting sun is illuminating the western sky.

A children's song is heard from a distance:

“Jiyan Ni Kiseru Futo Nuuno

Bayan Ni Kiseru Futo Nuuno

Chin Kara Kan Kara

Ton Ton Ton.....”

The meaning of this song is:

“Let's sew a cushion for grandpa!

Let's sew a cushion for grandma!

Chin Kara Kan Kara

Ton Ton Ton.....”

(In the interior of the hut Yohyo is seen taking a nap by the fire-side.

The song stops. The children appear running in.)

(In unison, as if singing) Tsu- yan,

Tsu- yan, let us sing!

Tsu-yan, Tsu-yan let us play ! Tsu-

yan, Tsu-yan, let us

sing !

Children: *(awaken)* Hello! What are you doing here?

Tsu-yan, let us play! Let us sing!

Looking for Tsu? No, she isn't here.

She went out.

She's gone, really? What ever shall

we do? Where'd

she go?
How do I know!

Yohyo:

Children:

Yohyo:

Children:

Yohyo:

Children: Come on, Yohyo. Tell us where she went. When's she coming back? Soon? Yohyo, please.....

Yohyo: Be quiet! You're making too much noise! (*He stands up to his feet.*)

Children: (*scattering*) Yohyo is getting angry! Ha ha ! You're a bit teched! cross.

Yohyo: (*Laughing*) Ha, ha, ha! stay here I'll play with you.

Children: Really? What'll we play?

Yohyo: What'll we play?

Children: "Nen-gara"?

Yohyo: All right, "Nen-gara"

Children: Singing ?

Yohyo: All right, singing.

Children: Snow-ball fights?

Yohyo: Fine, snow-ball fights.

Children: "Kagome – Kagome ?"

Yohyo: Yes, "Kagome- Kagome,"

Children: Run sheep run?

Yohyo: All right, run sheep run. Let's go! I'll tag you. Are you ready?

Children: Yes, run sheep run, run sheep run.....(*Repeating these words, they run away. Yohyo is also about to follow them, but stops.*)

Yohyo: Oh dear, I almost forgot! Cold soup is no good for my sweet heart ! (*He puts a kettle on the fire as Tsu appears from inner room.*)

Tsu: My darling.....

Yohyo: Hello, my dear, where've you been?

Tsu: Oh, nowhere specially, but.....you, my dear, don't.....

Yohyo: (*giggling*) Nothing! Just going to warm up some soup for you. It's no good unless it's hot!

Tsu: Thank you, my dear, Now I'll make supper for you.

Yohyo: Thank you very much. I'll be back soon. Now we are going to play "Nen-gara."

Tsu: Really?

Yohyo: And snow-ball fights.....and then singing.

Tsu: And "Kagome-Kagome".....then, run sheep run.....Isn't that the name?

Yohyo: That's right- Run sheep run. Tsu, why don't you come too?

Tsu: I wish I could. But I have to prepare supper!

Yohyo: Forget the supper. Tsu, let's go (*He pulls at her hand.*)

Tsu: No, no I can't.

Yohyo: Stop worrying about the supper. You have got to come. Let's play together!

Tsu: No, I can't, Yohyo. I have got to(*With a smile, she is pulled off by Yohyo*)

(*Pause, A children's song is heard from a distance. Sodo and Unzu appear*)

Sodo: Is that (.....) Is that Yohyo's wife?

Unzu: Yes, (indeed) Yohyo is the luckiest man in the world to get such a nice wife. Since she came here, he never does anything but, sleep by the fire-side all day long. How I envy him!

Sodo: How in the world could a stupid man like him get such

a pretty wife?

Unzu: I wish, I knew! From somewhere and unnoticed she appeared like a wind. Since then, that lazy fellow has been coining money without lifting a finger over.

Sodo: Unzu! Are you positive about that story of the precious cloth?

Unzu: Of course, I am. It's true. My goodness, we could sell that cloth at 10 dollars yard in the town!

Sodo: Really? Did you say that that wife of his weaves the stuff?

Unzu: That's right – but there's queer thing – she won't let any one see her in the weaving-room ! Yohyo told me, every time she goes to the weaving room, she says: "Don't look into the room." And Yohyo is so foolishly honest that he never tries to peep. He goes to bed right away, and when he wakes up in the morning, there is the cloth all finished. It's a really wonderful cloth.

Sodo: You called it "Senba- Ori" didn't you?

Unzu: Yes, that's what the town-folk call it! They say cloth of that sort cannot be seen unless they go to the "Ten jiku" (Heaven). It's as valuable as that.

Sodo: Unzu, you must be making a pretty good profit in your deals with that cloth.

Unzu: Well- INot too big but not so small either.

Sodo: Curse you, you wretched thief.....But, Unzu, if it is really a "Senba- Ori" it must be worth a lot more than a hundred dollars.

Unzu: Is it ?..... Then Sodo, tell me what on earth is the "Senba- Ori"

Sodo: Well, it's the fanciest cloth you ever did see! made of a thousand feathers plucked from a live hen crane

Unzu: I can't believe it? Well then, where on earth does she get such feathers?

Sodo: Humph- is this the weaving- room? (*In spite of himself he goes up into house and looks into the adjoining room.*) Yes, it's true- there's a loom.....Oh, heavens!..... (*With surprise and curiosity he goes into the weaving-room*)

Unzu: Sodo, what's the matter with you?

Sodo: (*coming out of the weaving- room with two or three pieces of feather in his hand*) look! Unzu! This is a crane's feather !! Now I know you're right.

Unzu: You, see? I never lie.

(*Pause. Tsu, who has been back unnoticed, comes out of the inner room*)

Unzu: (*Surprised*) Oh, Heavens!

Sodo: (*Surprised, too*) God bless me! I -I am sorry to have broken in while you- you were out.....

Unzu: Excuse me, Mrs – but I- I am U - Unzu from the village over there. And- I –I am much- much obliged to Yohyo about – about the cloth - and –

Tsu:? (*She stands in silence inclining her head on one side like a bird*)

Sodo: Then, Mrs.- I've got an idea about the cloth which this low- fellow here told me you've wovenO, sorry! I should have told you who I am. I'm Sodo from the village over there And I'd like to have a little talk with you..... Well, now - I'm afraid I shouldn't ask you thing like this – but if you don't mind, would you tell me if it is a real “Senba Ori” ?

Tsu:(*She has been looking at them inquiringly with a puzzled look, but suddenly moves away quickly into inner room as if she heard a sound.*)

Sodo:?

Unzu:?

Sodo: Unzu!

Unzu: How come..? she didn't seem to understand!

Sodo: Yes, she didn't realize what we were saying..... She acted just like a bird.....

Unzu: You're right ! just like a bird !

(*Dusk falls and fire in the hearth flickers.*)

Sodo: (*Looking upon the feathers which he picked up before*)
Didn't you ever hear of the story of a bewitched crane that married a man?

Unzu: What's that ! what did you say?

Sodo: How I begin to get it ! Here's the point

Yesterday a villager told me that a couple of days ago when he happened to pass by the lake in mountain in the evening, he saw a young woman standing on the beach..... And, can you imagine, while he was spying on her, she went in to the water and became a crane!

Unzu: Oh, Lord! is that the absolute truth?

Sodo: And, after having swum a bit, she became a woman again and disappeared!

Unzu: Oh, my God! (*He runs out of the hut.*)

Sodo: You crazy hoot-owl! stop your shouting! (*But he himself rushes out of the hut unconsciously*)

Unzu: Then, is she.....is his wife the ghost of a crane?

Sodo: Be quiet, you shivering coward! only God knows!

Unzu: What shall I do? (*Groaning with hands over his head*)
Oh, God help me! I've cheated Yohyo out of a lot of profit!

Sodo: Forget it, Unzu! if it's a real "Senba Ori"- Gee we can sell it at a thousand dollars in Kyoto!

Unzu: A thousand dollars? Did you say a thousand dollars?

Sodo: Yes surely. Besides that, you said that lately Yohyo has been getting a bit sharper about money, didn't you?

Unzu: Yes, that's right. It's positively true.

Sodo: Well then, if that's so, the best idea is to get him on our

side and get his wife to weave a lot more of the cloth!

Unzu: Yes..... I guess you're right.

Sodo: Look! Here he comes.

Yohyo: (*coming back absent-mindedly, singing*) Jiyan Ni
Kiseru Futo Nuuno, Bayan Ni Kiseru Futo
Nuuno, Chin Kara kan kan , Ton Ton Ton – why, I've
forgotten to boil rice for Tsu.

Sodo: Hello, Yohyo !

Yohyo: Yes.....?

Sodo: Don't you know me?.....I'm Sodo from the village
over there.....AndUh, Unzu- you tell him.

Yohyo: Oh, Unzu, you've been here again talking shop,
haven't you?

Unzu: Yes, right. If you'd turn out that cloth, you could make
as much easy money as you want!

Yohyo: Sorry, there isn't any more cloth!

Sodo: Why?

Yohyo: Tsu told me that's all there is!

Unzu: Don't be silly, Yohyo. You'd make a quick profit!

Yohyo: No, no..... I love Tsu. She is my darling!

Sodo: You do love her, don't you? Well, then why not save
up money for her by selling the cloth?

Yohyo: Yes, that sounds all right..... But every time she
weaves the cloth, she loses weight.

Sodo: What? She loses weight?.....Just a minute, Yohyo!
When and how did she first come to you?

Yohyo: You mean Tsu? Yes, I've forgot when it was – but some
night when I was going to bed, she'd dropped in and
said she wanted to become my wife. (*He smiles.*)

Sodo: Is that a fact!.....Yes, I see. Now then, have you –
haven't you ever done something to help a crane?

Yohyo: Crane? You say a crane? Yes, I remember now!
One day when I was working in the field a crane came

down with an arrow stuck in its back. So I pulled the arrow out of its back and saved its life.

Sodo: Really?.....Humph.....Unzu, now I got it- don't you see?

Unzu:(*he is shuddering.*)

Sodo: Well, if it's so, if that's true, we can still make a lot of money that's the whole point of this deal anyhow.....

Yohyo, I want to have a little talk about the – that cloth I we –Yohyo ! You tell him the story.

Unzu: Yes, all right - that's a- no, you see, Yohyo, if you take the cloth to Kyoto, you can get- get a thousand

Sodo: You stupid fellow!..... why, Yohyo- it's possible for you to get hundreds of dollars this time! Then, get your wife to weave the fabrics- just once more!

Yohyo: What? Hundreds of dollars? Really! You say hundreds of.....

Sodo: Yes, hundreds of dollars. (*To Unzu*) Isn't that, right?

Unzu: Yes, it's right. You can make hundreds of dollars.

Yohyo: Really? Really hundreds of dollars.....?

Sodo: Well, then, you might coax your wife again.....

(*noting Tsu who has been looking at them from inside of the house*) Yohyo, come here! I'll tell you privately the whole story.

(*Pulling Yohyo by the sleeve, they exit.*)

(*Tsu, coming out, looks after them. And expression of embarrassment and trouble is written all over her face.*

before long, the children come running in.)

Children: (*severally*) Here's Tsu! Let us play now. Why did you run away? Let us sing. "Kagome" - Hide and seek – singing- Ring around the rosy.....(*They surround Tsu.*) Let us play, let us play!

Tsu: Dear children, it's already dark. I'll see you tomorrow.

Children: No, no, dear - let's play, let's sing!

Tsu: (*absent-mindedly*) Singing.....?

Hide- and -seek?

Children: Hide-and-seek?

Tsu: Ring- around - the rosy.

Children: Ring- around-the rosy?

Tsu: "Kagome - Kagome"

Children: "Kagome - Kagome"?

Tsu: Yes, all right - we'll play "Kagome-Kagome"!

Children: (*Forming a ring around Tsu, they move round singing*)

"Kagome, Kagome,
Kago No Naka No Tori wa

Itsu Itsu Deyaru,

Yoake No Ban Ni,

Tsuru, Tsuru, Tsubetta! (They stop)

"Ushiro No Shomen Dahre?

Ushiro No Shomen Dahre?"

(*The meaning of this song:*

" Here we go walking around a bird in the cage,

Walking round and round, round and round,

Until evening, until morning.

Now will you tell us who is behind you,

When the song stops '')

Who's standing behind you? Who's standing behind

you?..... Say, my dear, why don't you put your

hands over your eyes? you crouch down, my dear Tsu!

Tsu (*having stood in deep thought, awoken*) Oh, I am

sorry. Yes (*She crouches down and covers her*

with her hands.)

(The children continue to move round singing the same song. The light quickly fades out, leaving Tsu alone in its focus.)

Tsu *(Slowly standing up)* Yohyo, my dear- what's happened to you? You are gradually changing. I can't understand why.

But you are moving to the other world where I can never live. You are casting your lot with those malicious, terrible people who shot me with an arrow. You are becoming the same as those whose language I cannot understand. What's happened to you, Yohyo, my Love? What shall I do?

What on earth can I do?.....

Yohyo, you've saved my life. You were once so innocent and kind that you could take the arrow out of my back solely through tenderheartedness - and only out of sympathy for me. I was deeply touched by it.

I was so glad to come to you..... And when I first wove the cloth with my feathers, you were as pleased as a child. Then, in spite of the pain, I wove them again and again. But you- my dear, you exchanged it every time for the thing called "money". But it's all right. I don't mind if you like the "money" so much.....But now you have money enough.

I'd like to live with you in this small house peacefully and quietly without being troubled by anyone. My darling, you shouldn't be the same as they. You should be a man of the world I belong to. I wished I might have lived with you forever, setting up our world in the middle of this field, playing with children and working on the farm..... But still, you are going to leave me. You

are going farther and farther from me..... What shall I do? Tell me, my dear, what can I do?.....

(The song has stopped unnoticed. The lights come up on the stage, but the children have already gone away.

Tsu looks away casually, and runs back into the house with fear. Sodo, Unzu and Yohyo come in.)

Sodo: You see, Yohyo? If she says she can't weave any more, you've got to threaten to leave her.

Yohyo: *(giggling)* Anyhow, that's a wonderful cloth Tsu has woven for me, isn't it?

Sodo: Yes, certainly. It's so wonderful that we can sell it for three or four times more than before! You see, it's worth that much more. So, tell your wife this.

Yohyo: Yes, it's worth three or four times more than before – is that right?

Sodo: Yes, it's worth hundreds of dollars.

Yohyo: Hundreds of dollars- are you sure?

Sodo: Yes, I'm certain of it. Then, you have her weave it right away. *(To Unzu)* Don't you think so, Unzu?

Unzu: Yes, indeed, get it woven tonight, right away.

Yohyo: All right,..... but Tsu said she couldn't weave any more.

Sodo: You poor idiot! If you get a lot of profit from it, your wife'd be pleased, too.

Unzu: Right! I bet your wife'd be pleased, too

Yohyo: Maybe.....

Sodo: Then, too, we'll take you to see Kyoto. Don't you think, Unzu, Kyoto is a splendid city?

Unzu: Yes, it's a wonderfully gay city!

Yohyo: I can imagine how fine it is.

Sodo: Can you? Good! You see, you can make a lot of money, and on top of that you can see. Kyoto. Over

there we'll take you to many interesting places as I told you. Or- say, Yohyo, don't you want to see Kyoto?

Yohyo: Why not! I could go!

Unzu: You want money, too, don't you?

Yohyo: Yes, I want it.

Sodo: (*noticing Tsu in the house*) Yohyo! Go ahead! If she says no, you tell her you're leaving, do you see?

Yohyo: Yes.....

Sodo: (*pushing Yohyo toward the house*) You're a good fellow, my friend. Best of luck! Unzu, we'd better hide ourselves to see what happens.

(*Sodo and Unzu go out. As soon as they disappear, Tsu leaps to welcome Yohyo*)

Tsu: Oh, my darling, come here now. Dear me! You've soaking wet! I'm afraid you'll catch cold! Come here, and warm yourself. Supper's ready. Thanks to you, the soup is boiling. Won't you eat supper now?

Yohyo: Yes. (*He sits down by the fire-side*)

Tsu: My dear, do start, please.

Yohyo: Yes. (*He eats*)

Tsu: What's the matter with you? Why are you so sad?.... You shouldn't stay outside so late. It's too cold..... You'll not go out anywhere, will you? You'll not talk with strangers anymore, will you?

Yohyo: No.

Tsu: Please, promise me..... My dear, I'll do anything for you. I'll do whatever you want..... Now you have got the "money" you like.....

Yohyo: Yes, I've got money. I've got a lot of money in that sack.

Tsu: Yes, you have. Then, from now on, won't you lead our life quietly as before? Won't you please enjoy a life of peace and happiness with me, together and forever?

Yohyo: Yes, I love you, my dear.

Tsu: My darling, I love you with my whole heart. Then you'll always stay as you are now, will you?

Yohyo: Yes, I love you deeply and dearly. (*Pause*)

Tsu: Won't you have some more?.....Why? What's happened?..... Why aren't you eating, my dear?

Yohyo: Yes..... Aw nothing But, darling.....

Tsu: Yes.....?

Yohyo: You are lucky to have seen Kyoto so many a times. I really envy you.

Tsu: Do you? But I saw it just from the sky- (With a start she changes the topic) Why? Why don't you eat some more?

Yohyo: Yes, ah.....(*Hesitating and timidly*)..... My dear, listen.....

Tsu: Yes.....?

Yohyo: I say.....Oh, for Heaven's sake, I can't say it!.....

Tsu: Why? What's the matter?

Yohyo: Well, dearest.....(*Hesitating and giggling*)..... I just can't say it!.....

Tsu: Why? What's the matter? Why can't you say it?..... Then, shall I guess it?

Yohyo: Yes.

Tsu: Well..... You want buckwheat cakes again, don't you?

Yohyo: No.

Tsu: No?.....Well, then..... You want to hear my song, don't you?

Yohyo: No, it's not right..... of course, I like your song, but not today.

Tsu: That isn't it either?.....well, let me see..... Then, you want to hear from me about Kyoto, don't you?.....Yes, I think I am right!

Yohyo: Yes, you're almost right, but also half wrong? Ha, ha, ha.....(*He laughs.*)

Tsu: What do you mean - half right and half wrong ?.....

Please, please, tell me what it is.

Yohyo: Darling, you won't be angry?

Tsu: Why should I get angry with you?.....What is it?

Please, please tell me, my darling.

Yohyo: Well..... You see, Honey, I- I want to go Kyoto.

Tsu: Why!

Yohyo: To make a lot of money. So.....I want another piece of that cloth.

Tsu: (*in surprise and embarrassment*) You want some more of that cloth? But, my darling! For God's sake.....

Yohyo: (*in hurry*) No, no, I don't need any more, dear.

Tsu: (*as if talking to herself*) I promised and you agreed that I wouldn't weave any more..... But you still want more.....

Yohyo: Yes, we agreed to that. I don't want any more. I don't need any more (*As if a child scolded, he is trying to keep back his tears.*)

Tsu: (*Suddenly something occurs to her mind*) Oh, now I see! It's they- it's they who are pulling you away from me. Yes - those two who came to see you this evening they are trying to convert you to their way of thinking.

Yohyo: Now, Darling.....Don't be angry.....Tsu.....

Tsu:

Yohyo: Tsuu.....my dear.....

Tsu: (*absent-mindedly*) Money.....Money.....Why do they want it so much?

Yohyo: Well.....Because if we have money, we can buy nice things we want.

Tsu: Buy? What's "Buy"? What's nice thing? What do you want beside me? No, no please, don't want anything but me! I hate money, I hate "buying" too. Please love me, love only me. Love me forever, and let us live

together always!

Yohyo: Yes, certainly, I like to live with you- I love you very much.

Tsu: My darling- please, my darling.....(she embraces him).....Please, live with me like this. Don't go away from me!

Yohyo: Why! Who on earth wants to leave you! My dear! My dear Tsu!

Tsu: In your arms.....I recall the days gone by..... Nothing bothered me- I was perfectly at ease in the vast sky, and..... My dream's come again. I am glad, my dear, I am happy- I am happy only if you are always with me. Please, be with me forever.....please, don't leave me.....please(Pause. Suddenly, she thrusts him away) Yohyo, you are still thinking of Kyoto..... you are still thinking of "money"!

Yohyo: Yes-but, Tsu..... I can't help it.

Tsu: You are.....you are..... I see.....(*With a sudden intensity*) No, no, no, don't go to Kyoto, please! You'll not return again! You won't come back to me!

Yohyo: Don't be a fool, dearest. I'll be back. I know I'll come back. I'll go to Kyoto just to make a lot of profit..... Oh, that's a good idea - we'll go to Kyoto together! (*pause*)

Tsu: Are you so terribly anxious to go to Kyoto?.....Are you so terribly anxious for money?

Yohyo: Yes, you see, Tsu, no one can be indifferent to money.

Tsu: Are you so eager to get money? Are you so eager to go to Kyoto? You are not as fond of me as of money, are you? You are not as fond of me as of Kyoto, are you?

Yohyo: Tsu.....I - I dislike you putting it that way!

Tsu: Dislike? Did you say "dislike"?

Yohyo: Yes, I dislike you. I don't like you. I'm not fond of you- you are a cross woman!

Tsu: Yohyo! How could you.....?

Yohyo: Weave the stuff right away! I'll go to Kyoto! I'll make big money!

Tsu: Dear, me! please, for God's sake! Why on earth do you speak like that, my darling?

Yohyo: Weave the cloth. If you say you can't, I'll leave you!

Tsu: For the Good Lord's sake! You said you'd leave me, didn't you? My dear.....Darling.....How.....how could you say such a thing?

Yohyo: *(He keeps silence stubbornly)*

Tsu: My dear, my dear, please.....*(Shrugging his shoulders)*..... Are you in earnest? You say it in earnest? Please ,my dear.....

Yohyo: Yes, I'll leave you- unless you weave the cloth.

Tsu: Oh, Heavens!

Yohyo: Weave the cloth! make the stuff! Right away! They say they can sell it at three or four times more than before –it's worth hundreds of dollars!

Tsu: *(in tremendous astonishment and confusion)* What? What did you say now? "Weave the cloth! Make the stuff!"-following that, what did you say?

Yohyo: It's worth hundreds of dollars. I said they can sell it for me at three or four times as much!

Tsu: *(She looks at him inquiringly, inclining her head on one side as if a bird does)*

Yohyo: You see, Tsu?.....This time they can sell it for more than three or four times what it brought before.....

Tsu: *(crying)* I cannot understand! I cannot understand what you are saying! It's just the same as those who came here this evening. I could see your lips moving and hear the sound of voices. But I couldn't understand what you were saying!.....Good gracious! You've also begun to speak their language- the words which I can't

understand- the words which belong to the other world
I can never join! Oh, Heavens! What shall I do? What
shall I do? what should I do, dear Lord?

Yohyo: What's the matter with you, Tsu?

Tsu: "What's the matter with you, Tsu, " you said that,
didn't you ? " What's the matter with you, Tsu? "
you said that, didn't you?

Yohyo: (*Astonished, he keeps looking at her face*)

Tsu: Did you? Did you? You said so, didn't you?..... Alas!

You are going farther and farther from me.....My

Heavens! What shall I do? What can I do ?.....

Please, don't –don't entice my husband..... Please.....

(*she goes out of the house*).....Please.....For Heaven's
sake.....Where are you, dear villagers?.....I ask

you.....I plead with you.....For Mercy's sake.....

Please, Stop pulling my Yohyo away(*she walks*

up and down on the stage) Please, for the Good Lord's

sake!..... For Mercy's sake..... I ask you- I plead

with you! Are you hiding yourselves?

Come out, you cowards! Please..... You're silly you're unfair!

Please..... I loathe you! I hate

you!.....Come out, you-..... I'm sorry I said I hate

you. No, noPlease, dear villagers, for God's

sake..... For Mercy's sake - I ask you- I plead with

you..... Please, for the Good Lord's sake.....

(*Her strength is gone little by little, and at last she*
sinks down in the snow)

Yohyo: (*coming out timidly and with fear*) Hey

What's the matter with you, Tsu? My dear..... (*He*
embraces her.)

Tsu: (*coming to herself*) Oh, my darling.....

Yohyo: It's cold-in the snow..... (*He takes her to the fireside*
in his arms.)

(They warm themselves for a while in silence.)

Tsu: You want so much - so much to go to Kyoto?

Yohyo: Yes, that's..... because.....

(Pause.)

Yohyo: They say Kyoto is awfully beautiful.....By this time cherry-blossoms will be in full bloom, won't they?

(Pause.)

Yohyo: The streets are crowded with celebrities riding on ox carriages, aren't they?..... You used to tell me that before.

(Pause)

Yohyo: Oh dear! I've become sleepy. *(He lies down.)*

(Pause. Tsu lays a blanket on him and keeps looking down at his sleeping face.

Abruptly, she jumps to her feet and goes to a corner of the room to take a sack. Opening the sack, she pours gold coins into the palm of her hand. The coins overflow to fall on the floor. She stares at the coins motionlessly.

The light quickly fades out, leaving the figure of Tsu and gold alone in its focus)

Tsu: This is it..... This is it - everything comes from this stuff..... Money Money..... I wove that cloth only to show you its beauty..... I was so glad to see you appreciate it joyfully.....for your pleasure - for the sake of your joy - I have woven it at the sacrifice of my weight..... But, now, there is no other means left to keep you in my arms than - weaving another piece of that cloth and having you make money.....

Otherwise, you'll not stay with me anymore, will you?..... But..... Yes, that's all right- if you are so fond of money-saving up money, and-you are so anxious to go to Kyoto, and further if I can keep you in my arms

by doing so-I will weave one more piece of cloth for you..... Will you forgive me with it?-that's the last one Because, if I go beyond it, I'm afraid I may not live any longer..... Pardon me, my darling.....But you may go to Kyoto to sell it-and, please, come back with the money gained! Please come back to me! You must come back! Please, swear to me to come back, my darling!And thereafter, we may live together forever, forever..... please, my love, promise me! Swear to me!

(The lights come up.)

Tsu: *(Shaking up Yohyo)* My dear.....My darling..... please.....

Yohyo: *(half-asleep)* Yah-aw.....blah, blah.....

Tsu: My dear- My Love.....I'll weave another stuff for you, is that all right?

Yohyo: Yes, aw.....What did you say?

Tsu: I say I'll weave that cloth for you again.

Yohyo: What? You say you weave.....? Is it true? Is it true, dearest?

Tsu: Yes, it's true. I will- only once more.

Yohyo: My dear! You're fooling me, aren't you?

Tsu: No. It's true. I'll weave it once more. Then you may go to Kyoto with it.

Yohyo: Really? May I take it to Kyoto? Can I? Are you sure?

Tsu: Yes. And-getting your precious money, you have to come back right away, you, see? And then, after that, you and I

Yohyo: Really? You say you'll weave the cloth again for me?

You say I can go to Kyoto? Oh, wonderful! How nice it is!..... Yes, I know I'll come back with a lot of profit-certainly, I'll earn a lot of money. Tsu, I'm happy.

.....I'll.....

of money - saving up money, and - you are so anxious to go to Kyoto, and further if I can keep you in my arms by doing so- I will weave one more piece of cloth for you..... Will you forgive me with it?- that's the last one Because, if I go beyond it, I'm afraid I may not live any longer..... Pardon me, my darling.....But you may go to Kyoto to sell it- and, please, come back with the money gained! Please come back to me! You must come back! Please, swear to me to come back, my darling!And thereafter, we may live together forever, forever..... please, my love, promise me! Swear to me!

Tsu: *(having looked at Yohyo in the seventh heaven of his delight)*.....Well, now, here is the promise as usual – you mustn't watch me at all, you, see?

Yohyo: Yes, certainly. I'll never peep at you.....Oh, thank God! You'll weave it for me!.....

Tsu: Please, Yohyo, never, never, never look at me. Please, swear before the gods..... If you should watch me, it'd be the end of our relationship, you, see?

Yohyo: Yes, I see. I'll never look through. Yes- I'll go to Kyoto I'm going to sell it four, five times more than before!

Tsu: Please, swear never to look. You see, Yohyo? Please never break this pledge by any means.....*(She enters into the weaving-room)*

(The sound of a loom begins to be heard. Sodo rushes out of his hiding place followed by Unzu.)

Sodo: Fine! Look, Unzu. She's begun to weave.

Unzu: Yes.....But, having watched her from over there, I've begun to feel sorry for his wife.

Sodo: Stop, you foolish bastard! We're in the big business of money-making; what the hell will the pity and sympathy do! *(Rushing up into the house ,he tries to look through*

the weaving-room.)

Yohyo: Holy Moses! You can't look into the room! Hey! You cannot.....

Unzu: Sodo, He says you can't look into that room.....

Sodo: Quiet stupid fool! Unless we see the weaving itself, who the hell can be sure whether it's a real "Senba-Ori" of the crane's feathers!

Yohyo: No, no, no- please! You cannot! Tsu will be angry Sodo, please.....!

Unzu: Sodo.....

Sodo: Let me go! Let me see! You stupid nit-wit! *(At last, he peeps into the weaving-room, and surprised)*

Oh, Heavens!

Unzu: What's the matter?

Sodo: Look, Unzu! A crane- there's a crane-a crane's weaving on the loom.

Unzu: What? A crane?..... *(He also peeps into the room, and surprised.)* Oh, heavens! That's not the wife but a crane! The crane is pacing to and from on the loom with her feathers in mouth.....How extraordinary!.....

Sodo: Unzu! Now we've got it! All right!

Unzu: Yes.....

Yohyo: I say, what's happened? What's the matter?

Sodo: Nothing! There's no one in the room but your beloved one..... Say, Unzu, now we can get that stuff tomorrow morning- well, let's go and wait at home.

Unzu: Aw, Yes.....

Yohyo: I say, what did you say?.....What's there- in that room?.....Isn't Tsu in there?

Unzu: *(being marched off by Sodo)* Yes, there's a crane! A real crane is weaving on the loom! *(Pulled by Sodo, he exits.)*

Yohyo: What? A crane? - in this room?....I want to see- I could see!.....But - no, no, no, I can't. Tsu'll get angry

But- I wonder what's the crane doing? What's it doing?
.....I want to seecan't I see, Tsu? Tsu! can't I
see? Yes, I want to see.....I'll take a quick look?- Is
that all right? No, no, no, I can'tTsu said never
to look in But.....Darling, why don't you answer
me?... Tsu, my dear.... what's happened? What's the
matter with you? Tsu..... Darling She doesn't
answer.....I want to seeI want to see..... I'll take a
short look, may I, Tsu?.....(*At last, he peeps through
a crevice in the door to the next room.*) Oh, Heavens!
There's only a crane!..... There's not a shadow of my
darling! What's the matter?.....What's happened?.....
my dear, Tsu!.....No, she isn't there..... Heavens! What
shall I do? She is not.....She is not.....She is not.....
Good God!..... (*He tries to open the door, but the door
does not open.*) Tsu! My dear!.....Darling.....Where've
you gone?.....My dear!Darling.....(*He goes out
aimlessly, looking for Tsu in vain. The sound of the loom
alone continues.*)

FADE OUT

(*During the darkness a poem is read, doubling the continued
sound of the loom. The meaning of the poem is as follows:*

Yohyo, Yohyo, where are you going?

Looking for your Tsu in vain.

In the midst of the dark, snow-blanketed field?

When the morning lights come up in the East,

You are still crying,

And your voice is hoarse.

Soon, it becomes noon,

But you are still crying;-

“My dear, my dear Tsu”.

Before long the dusk falls today,

And the evening glow again begins to burn

In the Western sky, as usual.....

The lights come up on the stage, tinged with the sunset glowing in the West.

The sound of the loom continues from the previous scene, Sodo and Unzu are looking after Yohyo who has been taken in their arms from the field where he was lying)

Yohyo! Keep up your nerve!

That's right. You're so stupid to lie down in the snow.....

Unzu: Why did you go to such a far corner of

Sodo: the field?

If we hadn't found you, you'd have been frozen to death by now.

Unzu:

Yohyo: My dear, my dear Tsu.....

Unzu: Oh, have you come to yourself?

Sodo: Yohyo! Take courage!

Yohyo: My dear, my dear Tsu..... (*Pause*)

Sodo: Well..... I wonder how long will she last weaving the cloth!

Unzu: Yes.....Usually she's through in a night. But this time it takes all day long.

Sodo: Yes.....Well, I'll look in again. (*He is going to the door to the next room*)

(*The sound of the loom suddenly stops*)

Unzu: Oh, it's stopped!

Sodo: She's coming!

(They go out in a hurry to hide themselves in some nearby place. Tsu appears carrying two sheets of cloth. She seems to have become awfully thin)

Tsu: (shaking up Yohyo) My dear..... My darling.....

Yohyo: My dear.....My dear Tsu.....

Tsu: My dear.....My darling.....

Yohyo: Dear.....Dear Tsu.....(*He has come back to himself at last*) Oh, my dear Tsu! (*He clings to her, crying*)

Tsu, my dear, where have you been? You weren't here, I've..... I've.....

Tsu: Excuse me, my darling, I am sorry to have kept you waiting. But.....Look, these sheets of cloth! I've just finished them. They're wonderful, aren't they?

Yohyo: Really! Oh, you've finished them! Thank you! Thank you, darling!

Tsu: (*She stares motionlessly at Yohyo who is in joy*)

Yohyo: Goodness! It's really wonderful! It's awfully beautiful! Thanks a lot, my dear! Oh, it's a pair, isn't it?

Tsu: Yes, it's a pair. That's why I've taken so long. my dear..... You may go to Kyoto with it now.

Yohyo: Yes, Certainly I'll go to Kyoto. Tsu, you will go with me, will you?

Tsu: (*She is weeping*)

Yohyo: Darling, we shall go together to look around the sights of Kyoto in blossom time, won't we?

Tsu: -My darling.....You saw me while weaving after all.....

Yohyo: Now, I'd like to go to Kyoto as soon as possible! My dear, these stuffs are pretty well finished- don't you think so?

Tsu: After all I had asked youAfter all you had promised faithfully.....Why- why did you look in at me? Why did you do it, my darling?

Yohyo: Well! What are you weeping for, darling?

Tsu: I wished I could have lived with you forever, forever..... But.....Please, my darling. I beg you to keep one of these -this one- keep it with you as a treasure.....

Because I have woven it with my whole heart.....

Yohyo: Yes, this is really wonderfully done!

Tsu: *(Taking hold of his shoulders)* Please keep it with you..... Please treasure it always!

Yohyo: *(like a child)* Yes, I'll treasure it- of course I will! I'll always obey you by all means. Then, dear Tsu, you'll come with me to Kyoto, won't you?

Tsu: No, my darling, I can't..... *(She stands up to her feet with a sad smile .She seems to have become white suddenly.)* I've grown thin because of thisI've used up all the feathers I can possibly spare..... Now I have just enough left to fly..... *(She smiles sadly)*

Yohyo: *(sensing something unhappy)* My dear- dear Tsu.....*(He holds on to her- but in vain. His arms have just grasped the air)*

Tsu: My darling, Yohyo..... Good luck!..... Please, live long- forever.....

Yohyo:*(The children's song is heard from a distance*
"Jiyan Ni Kiseru Futo Nuuno
Bayan Ni Kiseru Futo Nuuno
Chin Kara Kan Kara
Ton Ton Ton.....")

Tsu: Alas! I have to say good bye to my children, too..... How many times I used to play with them, singing that old song.....My darling, Yohyo, please never, never forget me! I'll never forget you, eitherThese few days- it's only a short time- I've been really happy wrapped up in your love, and singing and playing with the children.....I'll never, never forget these happy days wherever I go – and forever.....

Yohyo: Tsu-darling.....Where are you going?

Tsu: Please, never put me out of your mind , my darling..... And –please, keep the one piece of cloth with you as a treasure?

Yohyo: I say- my darling.....

Tsu: Good-bye, My Love.....Good luck.....

Yohyo: Wait, Darling! just a minute! I'll go! I'll go with you!

Tsu: No, no you cannot. I can no longer take the shape of woman. I have to go back again to the old sky by myself.....Good-bye, my darling.....Good luck.....

Good bye.....Adieu, my Love.....(*she disappears.*)

Yohyo: My dear-dearest.....Tsu.....where are you going?

Tsu! Darling!.....Tsu.....(*Crying he goes out of the house*)

(*Sodo and Unzu rush out of their hiding place to hold him back.*)

Unzu: (*out of breath, to Sodo*) Say!.....

Sodo: (*out of breath, too*) Yes, she's gone!.....

(*Yohyo looks dazed in Unzu's arms. The Children appear running in.*)

Children: (*in unison, as if singing*) Tsu-yan, Tsu-yan, let us sing.

Tsu-yan, Tsu-yan, let us sing.....(*A deep, long pause*)

Children: Are you not in, Tsu-yan?.....We're sorry!.....(*To Yohyo*) Yohyo, where'd she gone? When's she coming back?

Yohyo: (*toward the interior of the house, timidly and fearfully*)

I say.....Tsu.....darling.....Here are children.....They want you to sing the song as usual.....

Tsu.....Darling.....

(*A deep and long pause*)

One of the children. (*Pointing up at the sky*) Look! a crane! A crane's flying!

Sodo: Oh! The crane!.....

Unzu: Goodness!.....

Children: Yes, a crane! There's a crane! A crane's flying! (*They run away following the shadow of the crane*)

Unzu: Yohyo! Look, the crane!

Sodo: It's flying crookedly! (*Pause*)

Sodo: *(half to himself)* Well, now, it's very nice to have got two pieces of the cloth- God bless us! *(He tries to take the stuffs off from Yohyo's hands, but unconsciously Yohyo does not let them loose.)*

Unzu: *(Following the crane with his eyes while holding Yohyo in his arms)* Look! It's flying away! It's becoming small!

Yohyo: *Tsu!.....Tsu!.....My dear!.....(He takes a few stumbling steps as if to follow in the direction of the crane, and halts, grasping the stuffs tightly)*

(Sodo also turns his eyes in that direction, and all eyes are riveted on a distant point in the sky. The children's song begins faintly in the distance.)

CURTAIN