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In: Graphic Novel, Gurukitty Studios, Anthology

# Once Upon a Time...



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## Basic info

Gurukitty Studios second annual Anthology

Cover by ?

Manga sized Softcover, ?? pages, Black & White

Published by Gurukitty Studios

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## Description

Contains the following 20 Short comic stories based on Fairy and Folk Tales:

- Dream of Angus By Patrick McEvoy & O. Pel'ezMaria
- Makiling By Lindsay Silva & Aileen Balucanag
- Lazon By Chev Kamie
- Lindorm King By Michelle Silva
- Godfather Death By Autumn Haynes
- The Happy Prince By Bevan Thomas & Ksenia Kozhevnikova
- The Snow Child By Owen Heitmann & Sarah Milne
- The Evil Boyar's Farmhand By Reetta Linjama
- The Glass Mountain By Jen Overstreet
- Biron, Bronin, and Borm: The Hulder's Deal By Thomas Oman & John Oman
- The Last Temptation of Hansel and Gretel By Troy Minkowsky and Line Olssen
- Coyote Burns his Children By Donut
- Lions Wings, Lions Bones By Jeri Weaver
- 6 Reasons for Revenge By Jayleen Weaver
- The Thieves and the Serpent By Chris Cirillo
- Kaguya Hime By Timothy Nakayama, Sara Moodie and Jay Penn
- Small Wars Of Inconsequential Beings By Jason Hart
- Pumpkin Humpkin By Tammy Taylor
- Warmth By Erica Fletcher
- Momoteru by Becca T Hillburn

Once Upon a Time...	
	
Author	Various
Illustrator	Various
Published on	2016
Publisher	Gurukitty Studios
Publication order	
Previous	Next
Ghost Tales	Gateways to Beyond







ANCIENT JAPAN.

A WELLSPRING OF MYTHS, A FOUNTAIN OF LEGENDS.

THE PEOPLE ARE JUST STARTING TO KNOW PEACE. UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF THE YOUNG EMPEROR, THE IMPERIAL ARMY HAS DRIVEN THE OGRES INTO THE WESTERN MOUNTAINS.

THE WAR WITH THE OGRES MIGHT BE NEAR ITS END - BUT EVERY WAR HAS ITS PRICE.

HE WAS BRIGHT, INQUISITIVE AND LOVED TO SING.

TAKETORI AND SUZUME HAVE PAID THAT PRICE - AND IT HAS BEEN A STEEP ONE INDEED.

THEY ONCE HAD A SON, MUNENORI.

BUT THEN THE YOUNG EMPEROR WAGED WAR AGAINST THE OGRES.

WHEN HE CAME OF AGE, MUNENORI JOINED THE ARMY - IT WAS HIS DUTY.

HE DID HIS DUTY.



AFTER MUNENORI'S DEATH,  
TAKETORI AND SUZUME  
EKED OUT A  
SUBSISTENT LIVING.



SUZUME MADE  
MEDICINAL SALVES  
OUT OF THE HERBS  
SHE GATHERED IN  
THE FOREST.

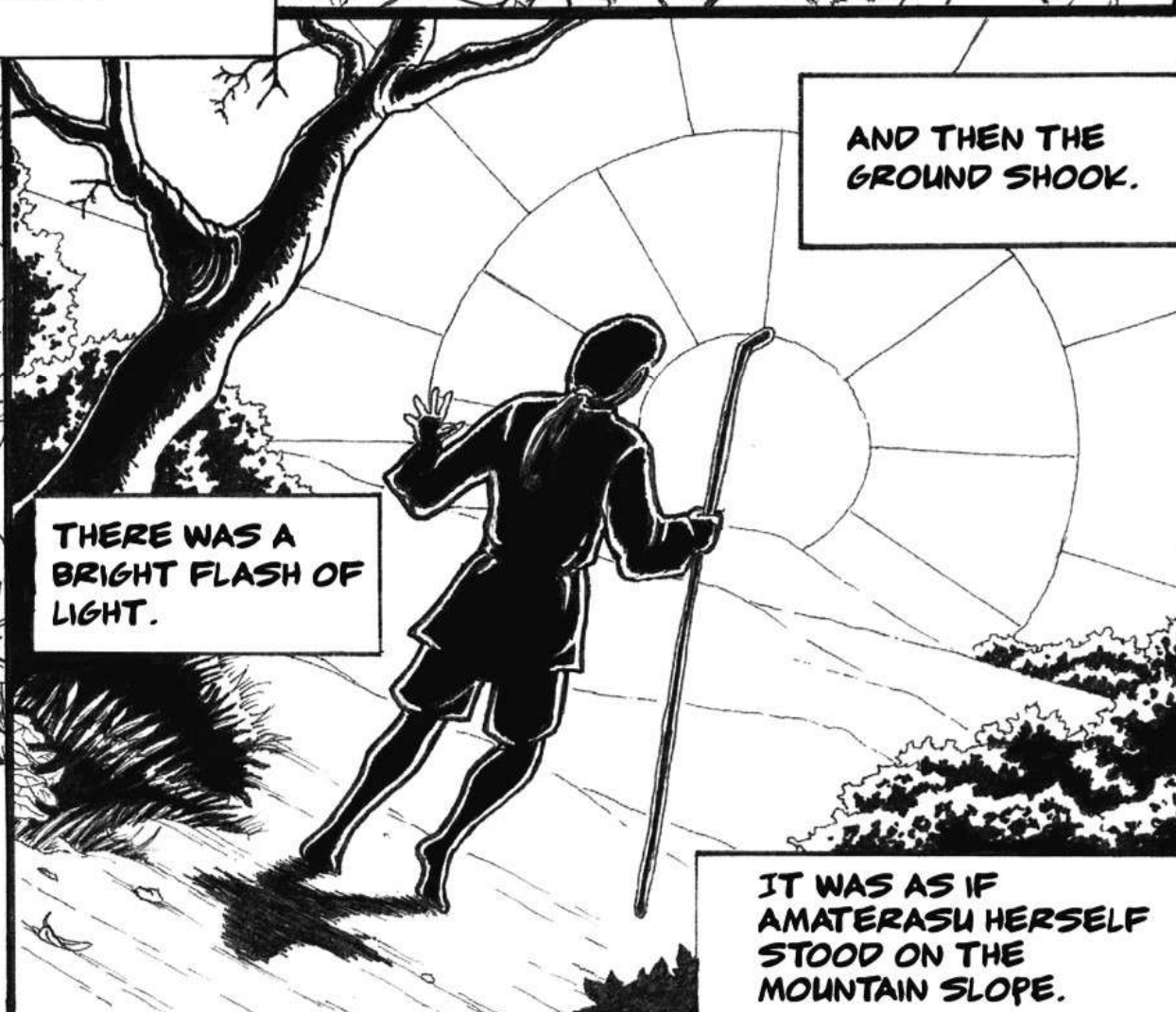
TAKETORI MADE  
VARIOUS  
DEVICES OUT  
OF THE BAMBOO  
CANES HE CUT  
FROM THE  
MOUNTAINSIDE.



ONE DAY, AS  
TAKETORI WAS  
HEADING UP THE  
MOUNTAIN  
SLOPE...



THERE WAS A  
BRIGHT FLASH OF  
LIGHT.



AND THEN THE  
GROUND SHOOK.

... HE HEARD A  
NOISE. A SHARP,  
HIGH-PITCHED  
SOUND.

IT WAS AS IF  
AMATERASU HERSELF  
STOOD ON THE  
MOUNTAIN SLOPE.

ARE THE  
OGRES HERE?

TAKETORI WAITED, NOT  
DARING TO MOVE. BUT  
THERE WAS ONLY SILENCE  
ALL ALONG THE  
MOUNTAINSIDE.

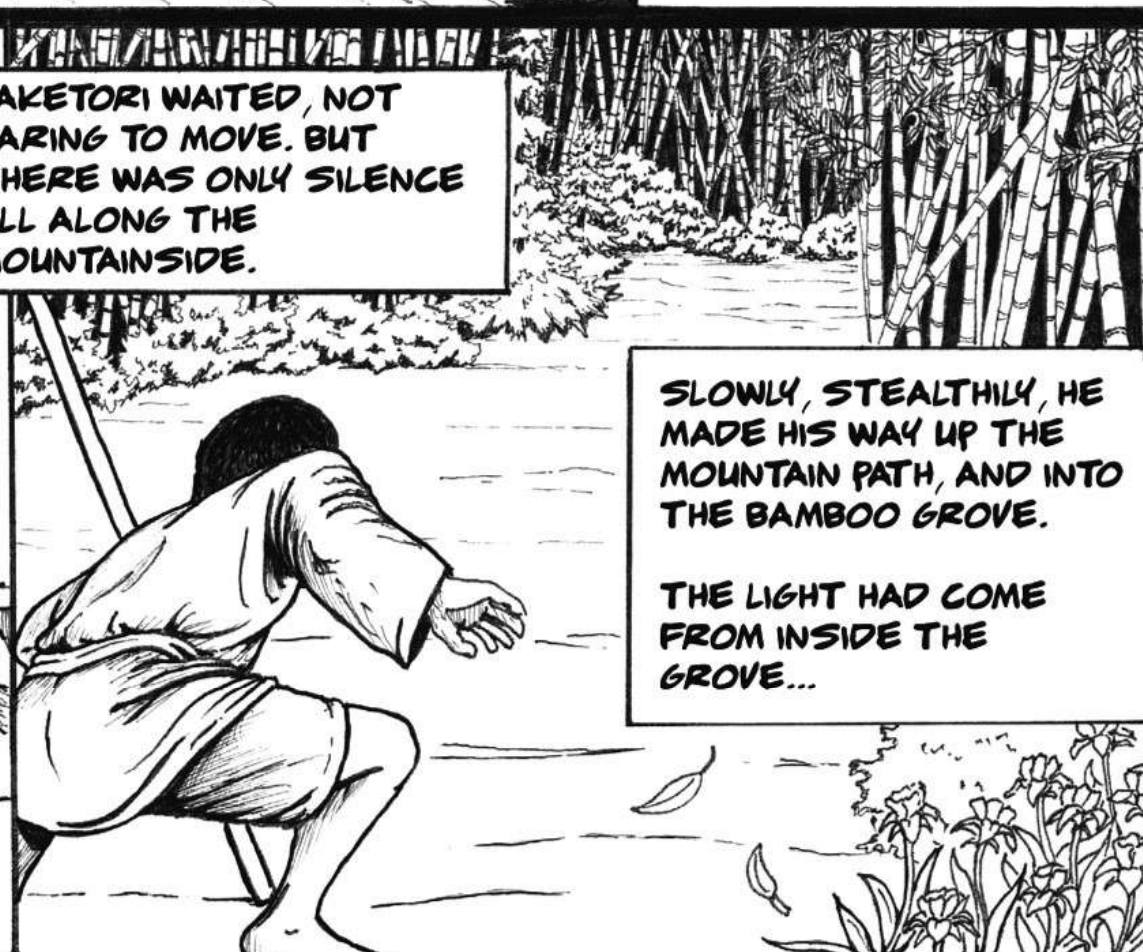


COULD IT BE  
ONE OF THEIR  
MAGIC  
BOULDERS?

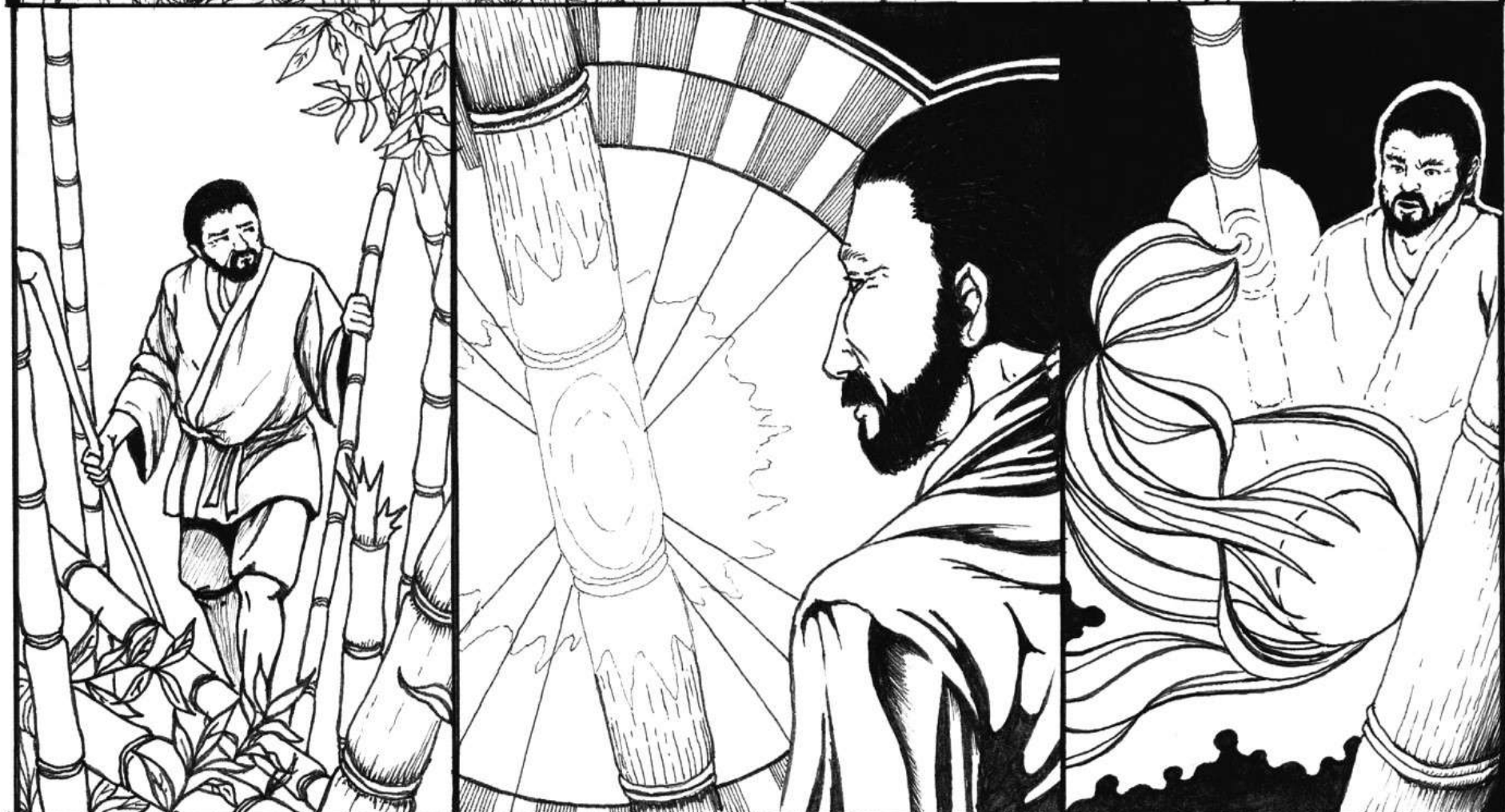
BUT THAT  
BRIGHT LIGHT...

SLOWLY, STEALTHILY, HE  
MADE HIS WAY UP THE  
MOUNTAIN PATH, AND INTO  
THE BAMBOO GROVE.

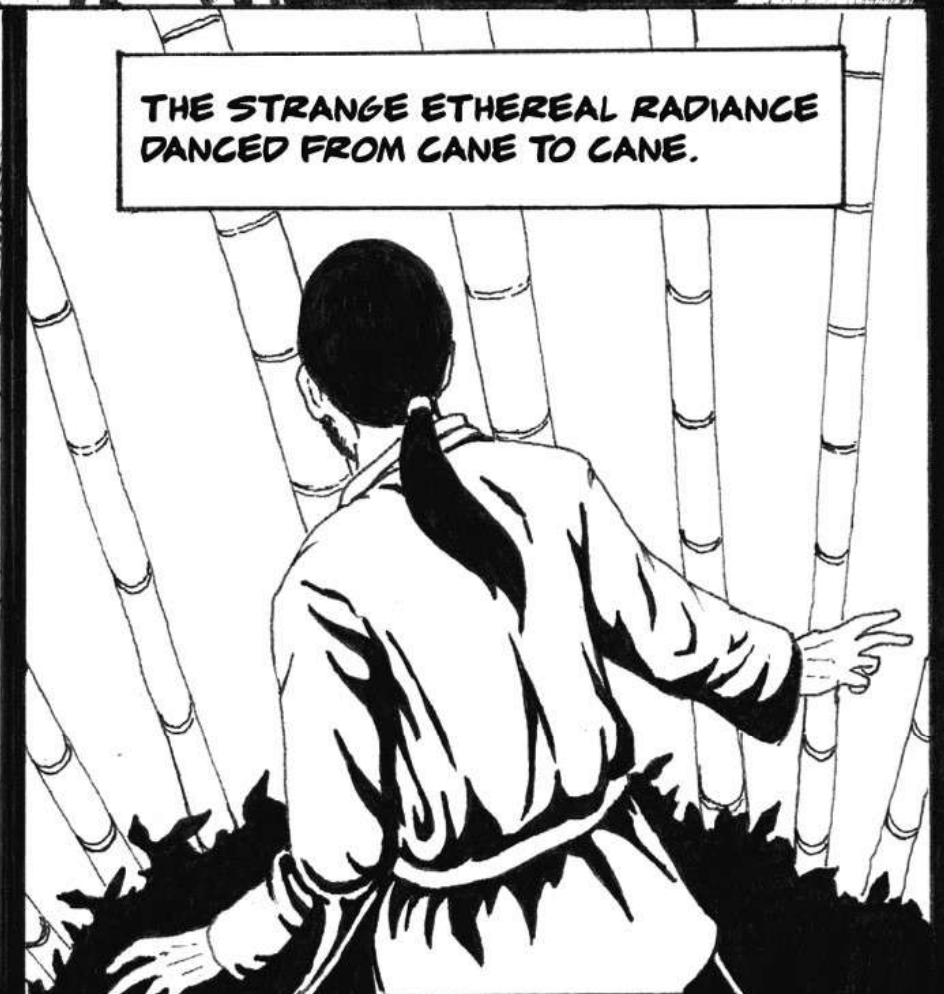
THE LIGHT HAD COME  
FROM INSIDE THE  
GROVE...







THE STRANGE ETHEREAL RADIANCE  
DANCED FROM CANE TO CANE.





BUT THEN IT FINALLY STOPPED.

TAKETORI UNSHEATHED  
HIS BAMBOO CUTTER...

...AND, WITH THE  
UTMOST OF  
CARE, CUT INTO  
THE BAMBOO  
CANE.

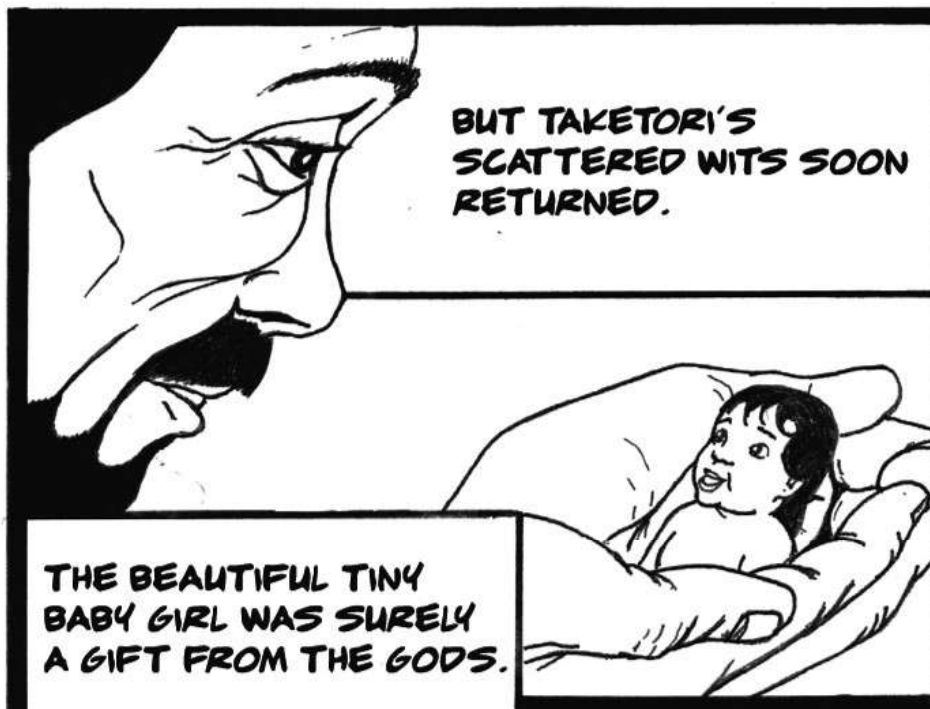
SHE WAS TINY.

NO BIGGER  
THAN HIS  
LITTLE FINGER.

AND SHE  
SHONE WITH A  
MYSTERIOUS  
RADIANCE.

LOOKING AT HER,  
TAKETORI FOUND  
HIMSELF AT A  
LOSS FOR  
WORDS.







SHE WAS ALWAYS SURROUNDED BY THE HALO OF A MYSTERIOUS RADIANCE.



AND SO THEY NAMED HER "KAGUYA HIME" - THE ILLUMINED PRINCESS.



BUT MOST OF ALL, THEY TAUGHT HER HOW TO LOVE.



THEY BROUGHT UP KAGUYA HIME JUST LIKE THEY HAD DONE WITH MUNENORI - WITH ALL THE LOVE IN THEIR HEARTS.

THEY TAUGHT HER HOW TO READ, AND HOW TO WRITE.

THEY TAUGHT HER HOW TO COUNT, AND HOW TO DRAW.



MONTHS TURNED INTO YEARS, AND KAGUYA HIME GREW UP TO BE A BEAUTY BEYOND COMPARE.





SUCH WAS KAGUYA HIME'S BEAUTY THAT HER FAME SPREAD FAR AND WIDE ACROSS THE LAND.

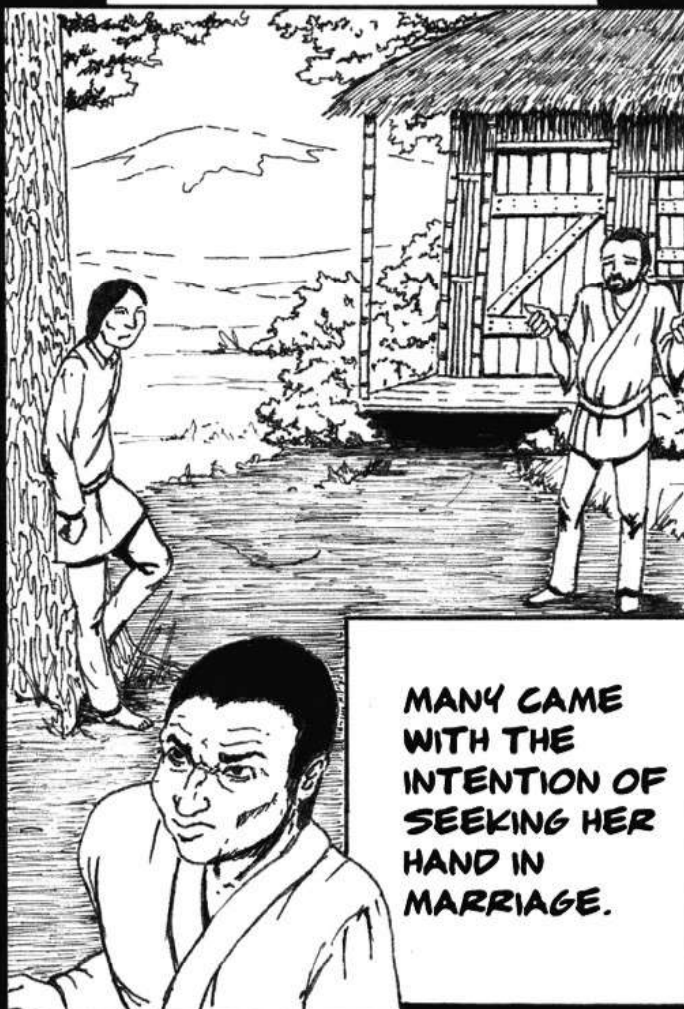


THOSE IN TAKETORI'S VILLAGE WERE THE FIRST TO BECOME ENAMOURED OF HER.

AS WORD OF KAGUYA HIME'S BEAUTY BEGAN TO SPREAD, OTHER VILLAGES AND TOWNS STARTED FALLING IN LOVE WITH HER.



MANY A YOUNG MAN CAME TO THE VILLAGE, TO SEE FOR THEMSELVES WHETHER KAGUYA HIME WAS AS BEAUTIFUL AS THE STORIES CLAIMED.



MANY CAME WITH THE INTENTION OF SEEKING HER HAND IN MARRIAGE.

BUT KAGUYA HIME NEVER SPOKE TO ANY OF HER ADMIRERS.



SHE NEVER LEFT THE COTTAGE, NOR DID SHE ADMIT ANYONE INSIDE HER ROOM.



THERE WERE THE OCCASIONAL GLIMPSES.



BUT SO RARE WAS THE ATTENTION SHE RETURNED IN KIND THAT THEY SOON CAME TO REGARD HER AS SOME UNOBTAINABLE ANGEL -

- AND SHE WOULD NEVER COME TO BE THEIRS.



THESE MEAGRE APPEARANCES SATISFIED CURIOUS FOLK.



MANY OF THE ARDENT YOUNG MEN GAVE UP THEIR VISITS IN DESPAIR.



THERE WERE, HOWEVER,  
FIVE YOUNG MEN WHO DID  
NOT GIVE UP.

THEY CONTINUED  
WRITING THEIR  
LETTERS TO HER,  
EACH ONE PENNED  
WITH FIERY PASSION.



SUCH WAS THEIR  
UNQUENCHABLE  
ARDOUR THAT KAGUYA  
HIME COULDN'T HELP  
BUT BE AFFECTED.

FINALLY, SHE GRANTED  
ALL FIVE OF THEM AN  
AUDIENCE. AND THE  
FIVE MEN WERE...

RYOFU YAGYU.



RYOFU THE MERCENARY WAS  
AS STRONG AS A BUFFALO.  
AND PERHAPS AS DENSE.

RYOFU'S PRODIGIOUS SKILL  
WITH WEAPONS WAS  
WELL-KNOWN THROUGHOUT  
THE LAND - IT WAS SAID THAT  
HE HAD NEVER LOST A SINGLE  
DUEL.

TETSUYA MATSUMOTO.

SLIM, SLENDER  
AND PRETTY AS  
THE CHERRY  
BLOSSOMS  
IN SPRING,  
TETSUYA  
WAS THE  
BEST  
MARKSMAN  
IN THE  
MATSUMOTO  
CLAN.

IT WAS  
SAID THAT  
HE COULD  
DEFLECT  
AN ARROW  
IN MID-FLIGHT  
- WITH ONE  
OF HIS OWN.



YUKIO KOBAYASHI.

HAILING FROM A CLAN OF  
HORSE-BREEDERS, YUKIO  
KOBAYASHI RODE HIS FIRST  
HORSE WHEN HE WAS TWO.



YUKIO'S AMAZING  
HORSEMANSHIP WAS THE  
REASON BEHIND HIS  
APPOINTMENT AS CHIEF  
MESSENGER FOR ALL THE  
REMOTE VILLAGES AND  
TOWNS SCATTERED ACROSS  
THE COUNTRYSIDE.

TAKAYUKI YAMAMOTO.



TAKAYUKI WAS A GRIZZLED  
VETERAN WHEN IT CAME TO  
THE GREAT OUTDOORS.

HE HAD CLIMBED AND  
TRAVERSED ACROSS  
MOUNTAINS, DUG THROUGH  
COLLAPSED RUINS, CUT HIS  
WAY THROUGH SWAMPS AND  
JUNGLES. NATURE HELD NO  
SECRETS FROM HIM.

JIN.

NO ONE KNEW ANYTHING  
ABOUT HIM.



MANY TRIED TO GUESS  
HIS TRUE IDENTITY. AND  
THE REASON HE HID BEHIND  
A MASK. SOME SAID IT  
WAS BECAUSE OF A  
DISFIGURATION. OTHERS  
CLAIMED THAT HE DID SO  
BECAUSE HE WAS A  
WANTED VAGABOND.



WHEN THE FIVE WERE GATHERED IN FRONT OF HER, KAGUYA HIME GAVE EACH OF THEM A DIFFICULT TASK.



THE FIVE YOUNG MEN HAD TO ACCOMPLISH THEIR TASKS BEFORE THEY COULD WIN HER HAND.

OF RYOFU YAGYU, SHE REQUESTED BUDDHA'S BEGGING BOWL.



RYOFU HAD NO IDEA HOW TO START LOOKING FOR BUDDHA.

SO HE MADE HIS WAY TO THE CASTLE OF TAKEDA MITSUHIKE, A CRUEL WARLORD WHO LIVED IN THE EAST.

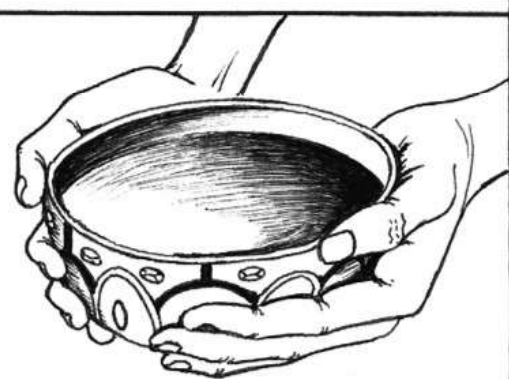
RYOFU STORMED THE CASTLE SINGLE-HANDEDLY, DEFEATING ALL OF TAKEDA'S MEN WITH EASE.



IT TOOK HIM LESS THAN A MINUTE TO SUBDUDE TAKEDA HIMSELF.

RYOFU LEFT WITH THE MOST EXPENSIVE BOWL HE COULD FIND IN THE WARLORD'S CASTLE.

WHEN KAGUYA HIME SAW THE BOWL, SHE KNEW IT WAS NOT THE BUDDHA'S BEGGING BOWL.



"IF THIS WAS BUDDHA'S BEGGING BOWL, IT WOULD BE MADE FROM STONE, AND IT WOULD SHINE LIKE THE SUN," SHE SAID.

OF TETSUYA MATSUMOTO SHE REQUESTED THE GOLDEN BOUGH WHICH FLOURISHED ON MOUNT HORAI.



NOT ACCUSTOMED TO HARDSHIP, TETSUYA NEVERTHELESS PERSEVERED. HE OVERCAME ALL NATURAL OBSTACLES AND FINALLY REACHED MOUNT HORAI.

UNFORTUNATELY, TETSUYA WAS WAYLAID BY THE FAERIES THAT LIVED ON MOUNT HORAI.



THEY INVITED HIM TO THEIR FEAST AND REVELRY - AND SINCE TETSUYA LOVED FOOD, WINE AND SONG, HE COULD NOT RESIST JOINING THEM.

TETSUYA THEN RETURNED TO FACE KAGUYA HIME.

I HAD SO MUCH FUN WITH THE FAERIES OF MOUNT HORAI!

BUT WHAT ABOUT THE GOLDEN BOUGH?

WHAT GOLDEN BOUGH?





OF YUKIO KOBAYASHI, SHE REQUESTED THE PELT OF THE LEGENDARY FIRE-RAT.



YUKIO, HOWEVER, HAD NO IDEA WHAT THIS FIRE-RAT WAS.

SO HE DECIDED HE WOULD FIND THE FOLKS WHO DID.

SO YUKIO RODE FROM VILLAGE TO VILLAGE, SOME OF THEM SEVERAL DAYS' TRAVEL AWAY.



AND HE ASKED THEM ALL ABOUT THE LEGENDARY FIRE-RAT.

AFTER A WEEK, HE FOUND A VILLAGE THAT POINTED HIM TO THE WHEREABOUTS OF HIS QUARRY...

WHEN YUKIO PRESENTED KAGUYA HIME WITH THE RAT, SHE TRIED TO HIDE HER SMILE.



"THAT IS A MOUNTAIN RAT. ONE WITH RED FUR."

OF TAKAYUKI YAMAMOTO, SHE REQUESTED THE HEART JEWEL FROM THE NECK OF A DRAGON.

TAKAYUKI KNEW JUST WHERE TO LOOK.



HE HAD SEEN DRAGONS FLYING AROUND NEAR THE MOUNTAINS OF THE YELLOW RIVER WATERFALL IN HUNAN, ANCIENT CHINA.

TAKAYUKI FOUND DRAGONS AT YELLOW RIVER.



BUT THOUGH HE WAS WISE, WELL-TRAVELLED AND TOUGH, STEALING A DRAGON'S HEART JEWEL WAS SOMETHING THAT HE HAD NOT DONE BEFORE.

IT WOULD PROVE TO BE FAR MORE DIFFICULT THAN SCALING A MOUNTAIN.

IN FACT, IT PROVED TOO DIFFICULT FOR TAKAYUKI.



HE RETURNED TO JAPAN AND APOLOGIZED TO KAGUYA HIME FOR HAVING FAILED AT HIS TASK.

"YOU HAVE TRIED YOUR BEST. HERE, TAKE THIS SALVE. IT WILL HELP WITH THE HEALING OF YOUR WOUNDS," SHE SAID IN CONCERN.

OF JIN, SHE REQUESTED THE LEGENDARY KOYA-SUGAI, A COWRIE SHELL OF TALISMANIC VIRTUE, SAID TO HAVE BEEN HATCHED FROM A SWALLOW'S EGG.



"I WILL RETURN WITH THE KOYA-SUGAI," JIN SAID SIMPLY, NO FALSE BRAVADO IN HIS VOICE.

AND HE RETURNED, THREE WEEKS LATER...

...WITH A PLAIN COWRIE SHELL IN A LACQUERED BOX.



"THE KOYA-SUGAI," JIN SAID.

KAGUYA HIME LOOKED INTO THE BOX -

- AND REACHED FOR THE COWRIE SHELL.



"THIS IS THE REAL KOYA-SUGAI!"



"HOW DID YOU GET IT?"



"WELL, I HEARD THERE WAS A HERMIT WHO LIVED ALONG THE IZU SHORELINE, ONE WHO COULD SPEAK WITH BIRDS."

"THERE WAS A HERMIT."



"AND WHEN I FOUND HIM..."

...I STRUCK A DEAL WITH HIM."

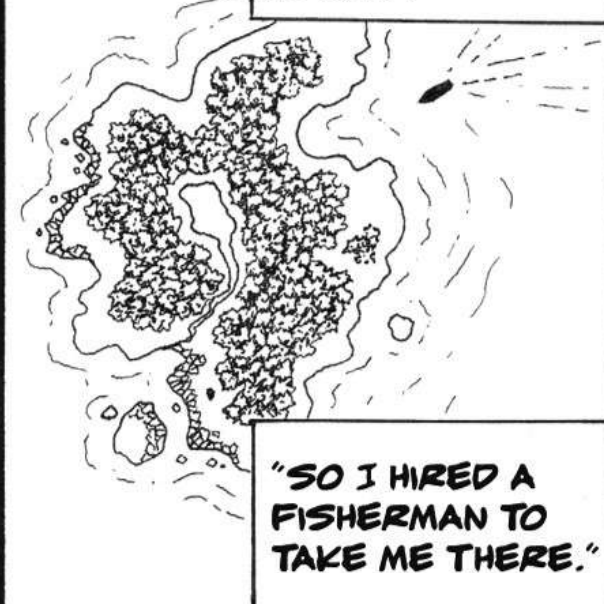


"I'D COOK HIM A NICE MEAL... IF HE TOLD ME WHERE THE KOYA-SUGAI WAS LOCATED."

"HE AGREED."

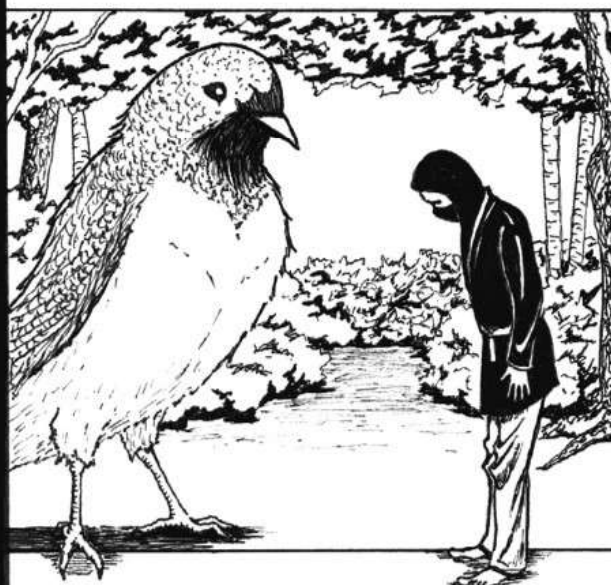
"THE HERMIT POINTED TO A FAR-AWAY ISLAND A FEW MILES SOUTH OF THE SHORELINE."

"GO FIND THE ELDER SWALLOW," HE SAID.



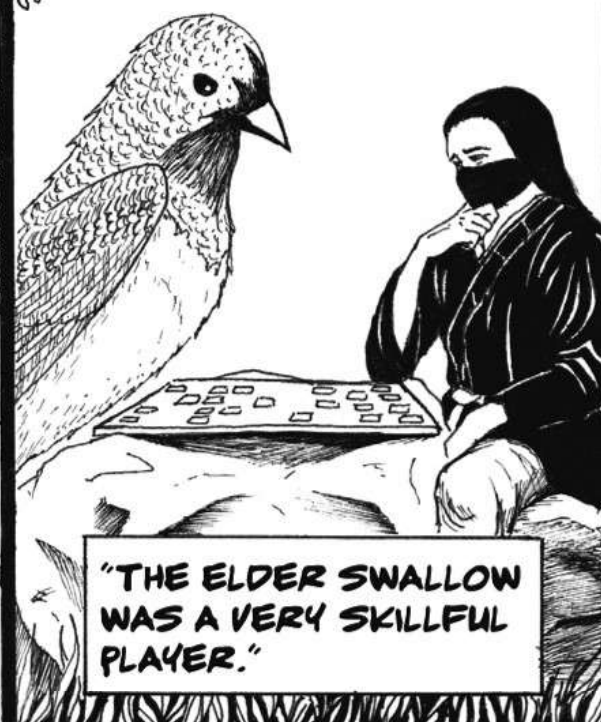
"SO I HIRED A FISHERMAN TO TAKE ME THERE."

"I SEARCHED FOR HOURS, AND FINALLY FOUND THE ELDER SWALLOW."



"I HAVE THE KOYA-SUGAI" THE ELDER SWALLOW SAID. "I WILL GIVE IT TO YOU IF YOU CAN BEAT ME IN A GAME OF SHOGI."

"OUR GAME LASTED NEAR THREE HOURS."



"THE ELDER SWALLOW WAS A VERY SKILLFUL PLAYER."

"BUT I MANAGED TO WIN THE GAME. JUST BARELY."



"TAKE THE KOYA-SUGAI TO THIS WOMAN YOU LOVE," THE ELDER SWALLOW SAID AS HE PLACED THE SHELL IN MY PALMS.

YOU ARE A MOST INTELLIGENT AND RESOURCEFUL MAN. I TRULY DID NOT EXPECT ANY OF YOU TO SUCCEED.

BUT HERE YOU STAND, YOUR QUEST A SUCCESS.

YOU WENT TO SUCH GREAT LENGTHS - WILL YOU NOT REVEAL YOUR FACE?



AS YOU WISH, KAGUYA HIME.







KAGUHA HIME DID NOT  
RECOGNIZE THE  
UNMASKED MAN



BUT TAKETORI AND  
SUZUME DID.



IMPERIAL  
MAJESTY - PLEASE  
FORGIVE US! WE  
DID NOT KNOW

PLEASE  
GET UP!  
THERE'S  
NO NEED  
FOR THAT.



THE EMPEROR?  
BUT - WHY DID YOU  
HIDE YOUR FACE?



BECAUSE I  
DIDN'T WANT  
ANY  
FAVOURS.



IMPERIAL MAJESTY - YOU  
ARE WISE, RESOURCEFUL  
AND INTELLIGENT.

I WANTED TO REMAIN  
ANONYMOUS AND BE  
TREATED THE SAME AS  
YOUR OTHER SUITORS.

BUT I CANNOT GO TO THE  
PALACE WITH YOU, FOR I  
AM NOT OF YOUR  
COUNTRY.



WHERE IS IT  
YOU HAIL FROM?

OLD CHINA?

OR FROM THE  
SUNNY LANDS OF  
THE SOUTH?



I COME FROM A  
PLACE FAR, FAR  
AWAY, IMPERIAL  
MAJESTY.



IT MAKES NO  
MATTER.

LAWS AND RULES  
CAN BE BROKEN.  
THEY CAN BE  
CHANGED.



YES.  
THEY CAN.

BUT SOMETIMES,  
THE PRICE IS  
JUST TOO HIGH.



"I WILL GIVE YOU BOTH  
TIME AND SPACE TO THINK  
ABOUT MY PROPOSAL,  
KAGUYA HIME."

"I HAVE FALLEN FOR  
YOU. AND I WOULD  
LIKE YOU TO COME  
AND LIVE WITH ME  
IN MY PALACE."

AND WITH THAT,  
EMPEROR SATOSHI  
RODE BACK TO THE  
CAPITAL.

"HAVE YOU CHANGED YOUR  
MIND?" HIS LETTERS  
WOULD ASK.

AFTER THE PASSING OF  
THOSE THREE YEARS, A  
CHANGE CAME OVER  
KAGUYA HIME.

THE EMPEROR AND  
KAGUYA HIME KEPT IN  
TOUCH OVER THE  
FOLLOWING THREE  
YEARS.

BUT HER ANSWER  
WAS ALWAYS THE  
SAME.

SHE GREW  
SAD AND  
DESPONDENT -  
HAPPY SMILES  
WERE  
REPLACED BY  
MASKS OF  
WORRY AND  
SORROW -

- AND HER SADNESS GOT  
WORSE ON THOSE CLEAR,  
MOON-LIT NIGHTS.

KAGUYA'S UNHAPPINESS  
CAUSED HER ADOPTIVE  
PARENTS GREAT ANXIETY.

THE COTTAGE BECAME  
A DARK AND DISMAL  
PLACE.



TAKETORI OFFERED TO  
CALL UPON THE SERVICES  
OF A FAMOUS PHYSICIAN.



MY SADNESS STEMS  
FROM NEITHER  
AFFLICTION NOR  
DISEASE, BUT  
FROM THE TRUTH  
OF WHERE I  
CAME FROM.

MANY TIMES  
I'VE WANTED  
TO SHARE  
WHAT'S IN MY  
HEART. BUT  
FEARING  
THAT IT MAY  
CAUSE YOU  
GRIEF, I  
AVOIDED  
DOING SO.



YOU SEE, I'M A  
NATIVE OF  
MOON LAND.

I'M NOT SURE WHY I WAS  
SENT TO THIS WORLD. IT  
MUST HAVE BEEN THE  
MOON KING'S CELESTIAL  
DECREE.



AND I KNOW - DON'T ASK  
ME HOW - THAT ON THE  
FIFTEENTH DAY OF THE  
EIGHT MONTH, WHEN THE  
MOON IS FULL, A  
MESSENGER FROM THE  
UPPER WORLD WILL COME  
DOWN AND TAKE ME BACK  
TO MOON LAND.

WE'VE RAISED YOU AND  
LOVED YOU FOR NEARLY  
20 YEARS! HOW DOES  
THAT MAKE YOU A NATIVE  
OF MOON LAND?



OH, FATHER. MY HEART  
NEARLY BREAKS WHEN I  
THINK OF BIDDING AN  
ETERNAL FAREWELL TO  
THIS LITTLE VILLAGE. I'VE  
SPENT MY ENTIRE  
CHILDHOOD HERE.



IF ONLY I HAD A CHOICE,  
FATHER. BUT I DON'T.  
THE CELESTIAL  
COMMANDMENT MEANS  
I MUST RETURN TO THE  
UPPER WORLD. I PRAY  
THAT, IF YOU PUT  
YOURSELVES IN MY  
PLACE, YOU CAN SEE  
THAT THIS IS THE ONLY  
PATH OPEN TO ME.



TAKETORI AND SUZUME DESPAIRED -  
THEY LOST A SON BEFORE, AND  
NOW THEY WERE GOING TO LOSE A  
DAUGHTER.



TAKETORI PONDERED ON WAYS TO  
STOP THE MOON PEOPLE FROM  
TAKING KAGUYA HIME AWAY FROM  
THEM.

AND THEN IT HIT HIM.



EMPEROR SATOSHI - HE  
LOVED KAGUYA HIME, DID  
HE NOT?

TAKETORI WAS SURE  
THE YOUNG EMPEROR  
WOULD KNOW OF A WAY  
TO STOP THE MOON  
PEOPLE.



THE LETTER  
REACHED  
EMPEROR  
SATOSHI.

YUKIO  
KOBAYASHI,  
NOW THE  
EMPEROR'S  
HEAD ROYAL  
SCOUT AND  
MESSENGER,  
RODE LIKE  
THE WIND.



"I WILL BE SENDING MY  
BEST SOLDIERS TO  
GUARD KAGUYA HIME" WAS  
THE EMPEROR'S REPLY.

AND HE DID SEND THEM.



ALL 2000  
OF THEM.

THESE MEN WERE THE ELITE OF  
THE IMPERIAL ARMY, EACH ONE A  
VETERAN OF MANY BATTLES.



TAKETORI AND SUZUME WERE PREPARED FOR THE COMING OF THE MOON PEOPLE AS WELL.



TAKETORI. YOU HAVE ALREADY LOST ONE CHILD - I DO NOT MEAN FOR YOU TO LOSE ANOTHER.



THANK YOU, IMPERIAL MAJESTY. WITH SO MANY OF YOUR FINEST HERE, LET US HOPE WE CAN PROTECT HER.



THAT'S WHAT I INTEND TO DO.



AND SO THEY WAITED.



AND WAITED.



AND AT MIDNIGHT -



- THE MOON FOLK DESCENDED FROM THE HEAVENS.





BUT THE MOON PEOPLE  
APPEARED TO PAY NO  
ATTENTION TO HIS  
WORDS.

"COME NO FURTHER!"  
THE GENERAL OF THE  
IMPERIAL ARMY  
ROARED.



**SPEARS!  
ATTACK!**

RYOFU YAGYU, NOW FIRST SPEARMAN  
OF THE IMPERIAL ARMY, WAS THE  
FIRST TO CHARGE.



HE LEAPT IMPOSSIBLY HIGH, HIS GLAIVE  
READY TO RAIN DEATH AND  
DESTRUCTION UPON THE MOON PEOPLE.



BUT RYOFU'S  
FEARSOME ATTACK WAS  
BRUSHED ASIDE WITH  
CONTEMPTUOUS EASE.



THE ARCHERS WENT  
NEXT.



BUT THEIR ARROWS WERE  
DEFLECTED BY AN INVISIBLE  
SHIELD.  
TETSUYA MATSUMOTO, NOW  
FIRST BOWMAN OF THE  
IMPERIAL ARMY, TOOK AIM -  
AND BECAME THE ARROW.



IT WAS THE  
FIRST TIME  
TETSUYA'S  
SHOT MISSED  
ITS MARK.







ENOUGH!



I AM THE MOON KING, OLD MAN. AND I HAVE COME FOR THE GIRL YOU CALL KAGUYA HIME. SHE IS ONE OF US. NOW THAT THE CELESTIAL WAR HAS ENDED, IT IS TIME FOR HER TO RETURN HOME.

BUT YOUR MAJESTY - SHE HAS BEEN AFFECTED WITH A SERIOUS DISEASE, AND CANNOT LEAVE THE VILLAGE.



VERY ADMIRABLE, BAMBOO CUTTER, BUT YOU AND I BOTH KNOW THAT SHE IS PERFECTLY FINE.

COME, PRINCESS.



YOUR ELIXIR OF IMMORTALITY, PRINCESS.

MY DAUGHTER!



EARTH FATHER, EARTH MOTHER - I MUST LEAVE NOW, FOR IT IS THE KING'S WILL. THANK YOU FOR YOUR LOVE. MAY THE REMAINDER OF YOUR LIVES BE HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS. HERE. MY LETTER TO YOU BOTH.



CAN I GIVE THE REMAINS OF THE ELIXIR OF IMMORTALITY TO EMPEROR SATOSHI?

HE IS THE EMPEROR OF HIS PEOPLE - DO AS YOU WISH, CHILD.

AND SO KAGUYA HIME GAVE THE EMPEROR WHAT REMAINED OF THE ELIXIR OF IMMORTALITY.



AND A LETTER.



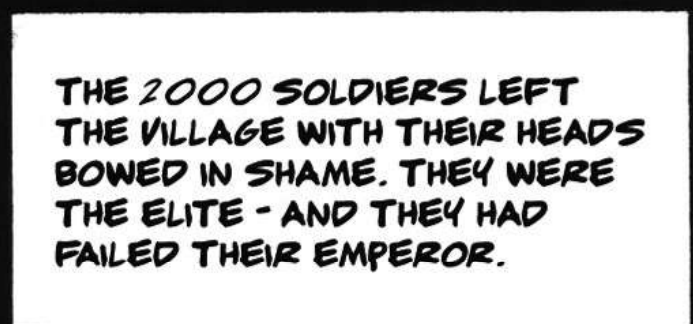


PRINCESS, IT  
IS TIME FOR  
YOU TO DON  
YOUR ROBE.

OH -  
THANK YOU....



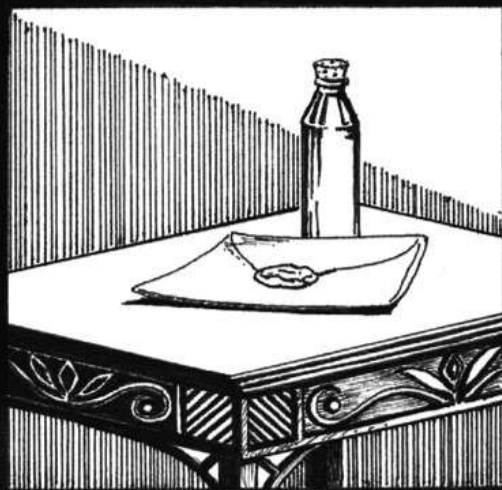
THERE WAS A BRIGHT FLASH  
- AND THE MOON FOLK WERE  
GONE.



THE 2000 SOLDIERS LEFT  
THE VILLAGE WITH THEIR HEADS  
BOWED IN SHAME. THEY WERE  
THE ELITE - AND THEY HAD  
FAILED THEIR EMPEROR.







THE LETTER REMAINED UNREAD FOR MANY DAYS. DAYS BECAME WEEKS, AND WEEKS BECAME MONTHS.



EMPEROR SATOSHI SPENT MANY OF HIS NIGHTS LOOKING UP AT THE MOON. HE WOULD STARE AT IT FOR HOURS, SILENT AND STILL.

ONE DAY, EMPEROR SATOSHI OPENED THE LETTER, AND STARTED READING.

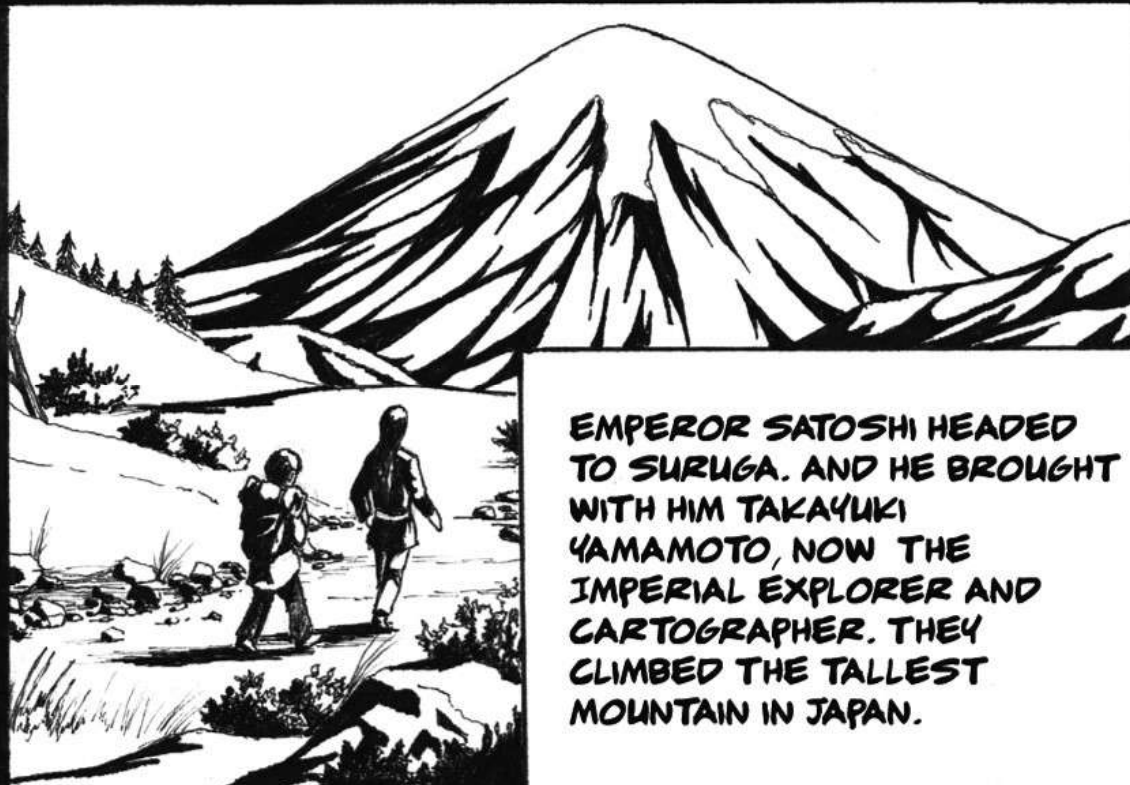


HE WAS SILENT FOR A VERY LONG WHILE.

WHEN HE FINALLY SPOKE, EMPEROR SATOSHI ASKED HIS CHIEF COURT ADVISOR FOR THE LOCATION OF THE TALLEST MOUNTAIN IN ALL OF JAPAN.



THE ADVISOR REPLIED THAT JAPAN'S LOFTIEST MOUNTAIN WAS LOCATED IN THE PROVINCE OF SURUGA.



EMPEROR SATOSHI HEADED TO SURUGA. AND HE BROUGHT WITH HIM TAKAYUKI YAMAMOTO, NOW THE IMPERIAL EXPLORER AND CARTOGRAPHER. THEY CLIMBED THE TALLEST MOUNTAIN IN JAPAN.

WHEN THEY REACHED THE PEAK, THE EMPEROR HAD TAKAYUKI BUILT A HUGE FIRE ON THE GROUND.



THEN HE POURED THE ELIXIR OF IMMORTALITY INTO THE FLAMES.



THE ELIXIR OF IMMORTALITY FED THE FIRE.

IT IS SAID THAT THE SMOKE NEVER DIED, EVEN AFTER HUNDREDS OF YEARS.



AND FROM THAT DAY ONWARDS, MOUNT FUJI HAS ALWAYS BEEN CALLED THE MOUNTAIN OF IMMORTALITY.