

## STORY OF A FLY



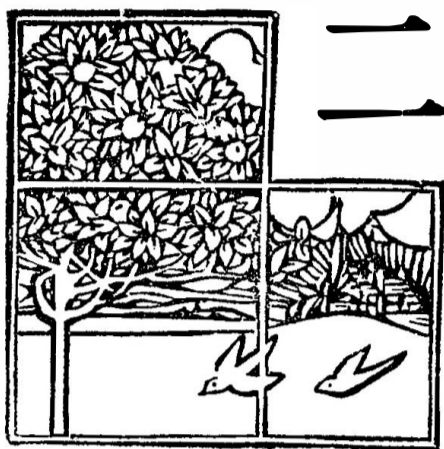
**A**BOUT two hundred years ago, there lived in Kyōto a merchant named Kazariya Kyūbei. His shop was in the street called Teramachidōri, a little south of the Shimabara thoroughfare. He had a maid-servant named Tama,—a native of the province of Wakasa.

Tama was kindly treated by Kyūbei and his wife, and appeared to be sincerely attached to them. But she never cared to dress nicely, like other girls; and whenever she had a holiday she would go out in her working-dress, notwithstanding that she had been given several pretty robes. After she had been in the service of Kyūbei for about five years, he one day asked her why she never took any pains to look neat.

Tama blushed at the reproach implied by this question, and answered respectfully :—

“ When my parents died, I was a very little girl; and, as they had no other child, it became my duty to have the Buddhist services performed on their behalf. At that time I could not obtain the means

## 蠅 物 語



一 百年許り以前に京都に飾屋九兵衛とい  
二 ふ商人が居た。店は島原往來の少  
し南の、寺町通といふ町にあつた。  
下女に若狭の國生れの玉といふが

居た。

玉は九兵衛夫婦に好遇されて居て、眞實二人に愛着して居るやうに見えて居た。ところが玉は他の女の子のやうに綺麗な衣物を着ようとはしない。休暇を貰ふと、美しい衣物を數々貰つて居たのに、いつも仕事衣を着て出るのであつた。五年許りも九兵衛に奉公してからのこと、或日九兵衛はどうして身綺麗にしやうと骨を折らぬのかと彼女に尋ねて見た。

玉はその間にこもつて居る非難に顔を赤らめて、恭しく斯う答へた。

『私の双親が死にました時は私はまだ小さな子供でありました。他に子供がありませんでしたから、二人の爲に法要を營んで貰ふことが私の義務になりました。その時

to do so ; but I resolved to have their *ihai* (mortuary tablets) placed in the temple called Jōrakuji, and to have the rites performed, so soon as I could earn the money required. And in order to fulfil this resolve I have tried to be saving<sup>1</sup> of my money and my clothes ; —perhaps I have been too saving, as you have found me negligent<sup>2</sup> of my person. But I have already been able to put by about one hundred *momme* of silver for the purpose which I have mentioned ; and hereafter I will try to appear before you looking neat. So I beg that you will kindly excuse my past negligence and rudeness.”

Kyūbei was touched by this simple confession ; and he spoke to the girl kindly,—assuring her that she might consider herself at liberty thenceforth to dress as she pleased, and commending her filial piety.

Soon after this conversation, the maid Tama was able to have the tablets of her parents placed in the temple Jōrakuji, and to have the appropriate services performed. Of the money which she had saved she thus expended seventy *momme* ; and the remaining thirty *momme* she asked her mistress to keep for her.

But early in the following winter Tama was suddenly taken ill ; and after a brief sickness she died, on the eleventh day of the first month of the fifteenth

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註 1. Saving—economical さいふ意の形容詞。

分には左うする程のお金をこしらへることが出来ませんでした。然しそれに入用な金が儲けられたなら、早速二人の位牌を常樂寺といふお寺へ置いて貰つて法事を營んで貰はふと決心しました。それでその決心を果たす爲に、お金と衣物とを節約しようと力めました。——身體のことを構はぬとお氣付になつたことでありましたから、餘り節儉し過ぎたのかも知れません。然し、お話申上げました目的の爲に銀百匁ばかりの貯蓄がもう出来ました。此後はあなた様のお前へ身綺麗にして出るやうに致しませう。これまでの懈怠と失禮とをどうか御免下さいますやうお願い致します。』

九兵衛は此の率直な自白に感心した。そこでその子に親切な言葉をかけて、その後どんな衣物を着やうと自分の勝手だと思つてよいからと安心させ、且つまたその親孝行を賞めてやつた。

二人の此會話があつてから間もなく下女の玉はその双親の位牌を常樂寺に置いて貰ひ、また相當な法要を營んで貰ふことが出来た。貯へた金のうち、斯くして七十匁費した。そして残り三十匁を主人の妻に預つて置いて下さいと頼んだ。

ところが翌冬に入つて間もなく玉は急に病氣になつた。暫時煩つた擧句、元録十五年(千七百二年)正月の十一日

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2. negligent—neglectful, careless。saving と同様に、その目的物を示すに of を用ふ。a man negligent of his duties の如し。

year of Genroku [1702]. Kyūbei and his wife were much grieved by her death.

Now, about ten days later, a very large fly came into the house, and began to fly round and round the head of Kyūbei. This surprised Kyūbei, because no flies of any kind appear, as a rule,<sup>1</sup> during the Period of Greatest Cold, and the larger kinds of flies are seldom seen except in the warm season. The fly annoyed Kyūbei so persistently that he took the trouble to catch it, and put it out of the house,—being careful the while to injure it in no way; for he was a devout<sup>2</sup> Buddhist. It soon came back again, and was again caught and thrown out; but it entered a third time.<sup>3</sup> Kyūbei's wife thought this a strange thing. "I wonder," she said, "if it is Tama." [For the dead—particularly those who pass to the state of Gaki—sometimes return in the form of insects.] Kyūbei laughed, and made answer, "Perhaps we can find out by marking it." He caught the fly, and slightly nicked the tips of its wings with a pair of scissors,—after which he carried it to a considerable distance from the house and let it go.

Next day it returned. Kyūbei still doubted whether its return had any ghostly significance. He caught it again, painted its wings and body with *beni* (rouge), carried it away from the house to a

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註 1. as a rule 概則として、常例として、概して。

に死んだ。九兵衛と妻とはその死を大に悲んだ。

さて、それから十日許りすると、非常に大きな蠅が一匹その家へ入つて来て、九兵衛の頭の廻りを飛び始めた。どんな蠅も、大寒中にはまづ出て来るものでは無いとなつて居るし、大きい蠅は暖かい時候の折でなければ滅多目に當らぬものだから、九兵衛は之に驚いた。その蠅があまりしつこく九兵衛を悩ますので、わざと捉へてそれを戸外へ放り出した、其間少しもその蠅を痛めぬやうにして。それは九兵衛は信心な佛教者であつたからである。直ぐ蠅は戻つて来た。そしてまた捉へられて又投げ出された。ところが又も入つて来た。九兵衛の妻は之を奇異な事に思つた。『玉ぢやないか知ら』と言つた。〔死んだ者——殊に餓鬼の身となる者——は時々虫の姿になつて戻つて来ることだから〕。九兵衛は笑つて答へた。『目印をつけたら分るだらう』。そこで蠅を捉へて、極少し許り翅の両端を鋏で切つた——それから家から餘程離れた處へ持つて行つて放した。

翌日歸つて来た。それが歸つて来たことに何等心靈的意義があるかどうか九兵衛は猶ほ疑つて居た。又もそれを捉へて、その翅と軀とへ紅(べに)を塗り、家から前よ

2. devout—pious, religious.

3. a third time 又もやはり。三度目には for the third time なるを記せよ。

much greater distance than before, and set it free. But, two days later, it came back, all red; and Kyūbei ceased to doubt.

“I think it is Tama,” he said. “She wants something;—but what does she want?”

The wife responded:—

“I have still thirty *momme* of her savings.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps she wants us to pay that money to the temple, for a Buddhist service on behalf of her spirit. Tama was always very anxious about her next birth.”

As she spoke, the fly fell from the paper window on which it had been resting. Kyūbei picked it up, and found that it was dead.

Thereupon the husband and wife resolved to go to the temple at once, and to pay the girl's money to the priests. They put the body of the fly into a little box, and took it along with them.

Jiku Shōnin, the chief priest of the temple, on hearing the story of the fly, decided that Kyūbei and his wife had acted rightly in the matter. Then Jiku Shōnin performed a *Segaki* service on behalf of the spirit of Tama; and over the body of the fly were recited the eight rolls of the sutra *Myōten*. And the box containing the body of the fly was buried in the grounds<sup>2</sup> of the temple; and above the place a *sotoba* was set up, appropriately inscribed.

註 1. savings 貯蓄といふ場合には複數なり。savings-bank の如し。

りもずつと遠い處へ持つて行つて放した。ところが二日経つと、眞紅の儘で戻つて來た。そこで九兵衛は疑はなくなつた。

『玉だと思ふ』と彼は曰つた『何か欲しいことがあるのだ。——何が欲しいのだらう』。

その妻が答へて曰ふに、

『私は玉の貯蓄の三十匁をまだ有つて居ます。自分の靈魂の爲に供養を營むやうに、その金をお寺へ納めて貰ひたいのでせう。玉はいつも後生を氣づかつて居ましたから』。

さう話してゐるうちに、その蠅がそのとまつて居た障子から下へ落ちた。九兵衛が拾ひ上げて見たら、死んで居つた。

其處で夫婦は早速お寺へ行つてその娘の金を寺僧に納めやうと決心した。二人は蠅の屍骸を小箱に入れて、それも携へて行つた。

お寺の主僧自空上人は、その蠅の話を聞かれると、九兵衛夫妻の取計らひは正しいと決斷された。それから自空上人は玉の靈魂の爲に施餓鬼を營なまれた。それから蠅の遺骸に對して妙典八卷を誦された。そして蠅の遺骸の入つて居る箱はお寺の境内へ埋められた。そして相當な銘の書いてある率塔婆がその上へ建てられた。<sup>3</sup>

2. 構内、境内といふ場合には複數なるを記せよ。寄宿舎は學校々内に在り、は The dormitory stands in the school-grounds. なり。

3. 此一文は新著聞集卷の五にある執心篇第十一のうちの『亡鬼蠅さなる』を逐字譯せるものを添削して作り爲されしものなり。