

Falling Flowers (ちりゆく花)(1)

- 1) At the edge of the village there runs a river. There is no bridge across the river. People cross using a ferry. The man who rows the ferry, the captain of the vessel, is named Seikichi. However, today Seikichi's daughter Yōko is rowing the boat instead of her father.
- 2) Finally the boat reaches the shore. "Oh, oh, good job, well done, you're most admirable, taking on your dad's job." "Keep the change," (says the passenger in praise). "Thank you very much." "My father had an errand to run. He's at the government office," (replies Yōko).
- 3) After the customers get out of the boat, Yōko takes out a book and begins to read. This is because Yōko and her father live alone and when her father has an errand to run, she takes off from school to row the boat. At that moment two boys returning from school happen to pass by.
- 4) "Hey, you're playing hooky aren't you? Sitting there reading your book," (says the mean boy, looking to tease Yōko). "Who, me?" "Why, what have I done?" (asks Yōko, wondering why the boys are picking on her).
- 5) Ms. Tanaka, their teacher, arrives on the spot. "Kenta, Jirō, it is because Yōko is taking people across the river, in place of her father. She is not playing hooky," (says Ms. Tanaka, scolding the two). "Gulp! Good-bye teacher..." (say the two boys, nervously).
- 6) Kenta and Jirō run off. (Ms. Tanaka turns to Yōko and says), "Yōko, good work on the rowing. You took today off, but anyway, you are to be the lead in the school's arts festival play." "Ah, I wonder if I could possibly do it?" (says Yōko hesitantly). I am sure you will do just fine!" (says Ms. Tanaka). Just then...

- 7) Yōko's dad, Seikichi arrives, having finished his business. "Ms. Tanaka, you're looking at crossing over to the opposite I suppose?" (asks Seikichi). "Yes, I have something to do," (replies Ms. Tanaka). "If that's the case, I'll row you over. Yōko, good work today," (says Kiyochi to his daughter).
- 8) Yōko and Ms. Tanaka get into the boat. Kiyochi starts rowing, pulling the creaking boat away from the shore. Yōko's character, having decided to play the leading role in the school play, will be up against the bad girl, played by...
- 9) ... a rich girl by the name of Masae. "Mother, Ms. Tanaka is just awful. She's making me take on a role that is just too horrible for me, and that daughter of the boatman is being given the nice role!" (moans Masae) . "Well, it looks like they're making you look bad," (agrees her mom).
- 10) Masae's father, who is the top man in the village, returns home. "What, they gave our daughter, the daughter of the head of the PTA committee, that kind of horrible role? Outrageous!" "That teacher, Ms. Tanaka, is undoubtedly playing favorites!" (says Masae's father angrily).

And then...