

## The Snow Lady (雪女)(6)

- 1) In the sideshow tent Ginji fights off a group of ruffians using his handy *jutte*. “Think you can take me on?” “Yar!” (yells Ginji bravely). He knocks them all flat. The tightrope walking girl Osono appears...

Note: A *jutte* was a metal rod with a hook attached to it meant to catch/deflect sword blows. It was often carried by law enforcement officials during the Japanese feudal period.

- 2) ...“You brute, you’ve sniffed me out haven’t you?! I won’t let you live!” (she says menacingly to Ginji). And with that she draws her short-sword, ready to fight. “Stop! I now know that you are the true form of the Snow Lady,” (declares Ginji).
- 3) “Yar!” (yells Ginji). “Oh!” (whimpers Osono) . Ginji disarms her of her sword with ease. Ginji takes out the charm bag that the Snow Lady dropped.
- 4) “This is yours, isn’t it?” (insists Ginji) “You were born in Edo, so why did you become something like a fake courtesan?” “Why did you target the *hatamoto* Murasugi?” (Ginji asks Osono). “Let us talk this over” (Ginji suggests).

Note: Edo is Tokyo’s former name. A *hatamoto* was a class of samurai in direct service to the shogun.

- 5) “You went to kill Murasugi, but he was not there so you snatched his child instead. But the child was too darling and you could not bring yourself to do it,” (asserts Ginji). “I’m sorry. Actually...
- 6) ... Murasugi killed my father 15 years ago for being impolite. And because my father was a commoner and Murasugi a samurai, there was no way of getting

revenge. I felt deeply troubled by Murasugi escaping his sin. So I decided to avenge my father by targeting him," (confesses Osono).

Note: During the Feudal Period, samurai were the highest ranking class, coming above farmers, artisans and merchants. If a samurai felt disrespected by anyone of a lower social class, he was given the right to retaliate. Also, only samurai were allowed to carry out vendettas against others, samurai etc. who had killed their kin. Being a mere commoner Osono had no recognized right to avenge her father's death, legally.

- 7) "Osono, please give up on this revenge" "The samurai are only our master's in this lifetime. Killing something like a person won't bring you anything. If you return the child, this will end here, (advises Ginji). "Yes, I understand," (replies Osono).
- 8) Ginji returns the boy to Murasugi. "There's no reason, no nothing. The Snow Lady is no more," (says Ginji). "Hmm, I see, I am sorry. Thank you," (says Murasugi).
- 9) Morning has broken. "Take, I think we should go and have our morning bath, and take a good nap," (says Ginji to his helper, Take (pronounced ta-keh)). "Ha, ha let's do that, the incident is all taken care of," (replies Take).

This marks the end of the series.