

1. Mother Receives a Letter from Sakurago Sent by Human Trafficker

Human Trafficker appears and announces that Sakurago (Cherry Blossom Child), who sold himself to the trafficker, has left a letter and money for his mother with him. The trafficker delivers them to the mother. Sakurago's mother becomes mad with grief and leaves home to look for her son.

Human Trafficker

I, the man in front of you, am a human trafficker from an eastern province. I have stayed in Kyoto for a long time, but on this journey I have visited Hyūga Province in Kyūshū. Yesterday evening, I bought a young boy here. He then asked me to be certain to bring this letter and ransom money to Sakurago's mother living in the west of Sakura-no-Baba. Following his request, I am just now hurrying to the house of Sakurago's mother. It seems she lives somewhere around here. I shall ask for directions.

Excuse me. Could anyone help me, please? Is this the house of Sakurago's mother?

Sakurago's Mother

May I ask who you are?

Trafficker Yes, madam. I bring a letter from Sakurago. Also, he requested that I be certain to bring his ransom to you, and so I bring it here as well. I surely hand them to you.

桜川
さくらがわ

一 母、貧窮の足しにと我が身を売った桜子からの手紙を受け取る

人商人ひとあきんどが現れ、我が身を自分に売った桜子さくらこから母宛の身代金と手紙を預かったと告げ、母に届ける。桜子の母は、悲しみに狂乱し、子を求めて旅立つ。

人商人 ここにいる私は、東国の人商人です。私は長く都にいましたが、このたび九州の日向国を訪問しました。ここで昨日の夕方に、幼い人を買いました。その人が言われるには、この手紙と身代金を、桜の馬場の西に住む、桜子の母を尋ねて確かに届けてほしい、とのことでした。その言葉に従い、只今桜子の母の家へ、急いでいるところです。どうやら、このあたりのようです。まずは案内を請おうと思います。

もし、案内をお願いします。桜子の母のお宅はこちらですか。

桜子の母 どなたですか。

人商人 はい。桜子よりお手紙を預かっています。また、身代金を確かに届けてほしいとご要望でしたので、ここまで持参しました。確かに、お届けいたしますよ。

Mother Oh, I didn't expect this, but no matter: I will read the letter. "Well, I have seen how you have lived over the last few years, and how sad the life it has been! I have decided to sell myself to this human trafficker and go to the eastern provinces."

Oh no, he is the one who should not be sold! Alas, what a tragedy. The man who just came by has now already gone off for parts unknown. How does the letter continue? "Please consider this an opportunity to follow the way of the Buddha and renounce the world. And yet, I will miss you so much."

If you miss your mother, how come you left her instead of staying with her?

All alone opening and closing the grassy door of this hovel, all alone opening and closing the grassy door of this hovel, I have lived. Even my pain and hardship have been comforted at just the sight of my child. Please, O Deity Konohanasakuya-hime, the deity on whom I rely, please hold Sakurago, your believer.

Reciters There is no longer any reason for her to live on patiently in this hometown where she has borne the harshness of life. She sobs and wanders out from the village to seek out the whereabouts of her son. She wanders out from the village in tears.

[Interlude]

〔中入り〕

ただでさえ辛い暮らしを送っていたこの故郷に、もはや耐え忍んで住み続ける理由はないと、(桜子の母は) 我が子の行方を尋ねて、泣きながら迷い出て行く。泣きながら迷い出て行くのだった。

ただでさえ辛い暮らしを送っていたこの故郷に、もはや耐え忍んで住み続ける理由はないと、(桜子の母は) 我が子の行方を尋ねて、泣きながら迷い出て行く。泣きながら迷い出て行くのだった。

地

名残り惜しいというのなら、なぜ一緒におらず、母と別れたのか。

たつた一人でこのあばら家の草の戸を、たつた一人でこのあばら家の草の戸を、開け閉めして暮らし、辛いときにも、子どもさえ見れば慰められるというのに。どうか私の頼りとする神様、木華開耶姫様、このはなさくやひめ氏子の桜子をお引き止めください。

ただでさえ辛い暮らしを送っていたこの故郷に、もはや耐え忍んで住み続ける理由はないと、(桜子の母は) 我が子の行方を尋ねて、泣きながら迷い出て行く。泣きながら迷い出て行くのだった。

桜子の母

あら、思いもよらないことだけど。まず手紙を見よう。「さて、このところ年月を送るご様子を見るにつけ、余りにも悲しい暮らしぶりです。そこで人商人にこの身を売り、東へ下ることと致します」

あら、その子は売ってはならない子でございますよ。ああ、何て悲しい。今来た人も行方知れずになつてしまった。手紙の先はどうだろう。「これを仏道との縁として、ご出家なさいますようお願いいたします。唯、返す返すも、お名残り惜しく思っております。」

2. Sakurago and the Monks Leave to View the Cherry Blossoms

Sakurago has been apprenticed to the chief monk of Isobe-dera Temple in Hitachi Province (which mostly corresponds with the present Ibaraki Prefecture). The season of cherry blossoms has come. The chief monk goes out to enjoy the cherry blossoms at Sakuragawa River, a site renowned for them, with Sakurago and other monks.

Monk and Accompanying Monks

We have waited for this time, and now it has become the right season to enjoy cherry blossoms. We have waited for this time, and now it has become the right season to enjoy cherry blossoms. Let us hurry along the spring mountain path.

Chief Monk of Isobe-dera Temple

I am the chief monk of Isobe-dera Temple in Hitachi Province. This young person here came from some unknown place and asked to rely on this menial monk. I therefore exchanged an apprenticeship contract with him. By the way, there is a spot nearby, called Sakuragawa River, famous for cherry blossoms. I have heard that the cherry trees are in full bloom now, so we are in rush to the river, accompanied by this young person, too.

Monk and Accompanying Monks

Mount Tsukuba, in full bloom in all directions.

Accompanying Monks

In full bloom in all directions.

Monk and Accompanying Monks

Cherry blossoms spread like a forest of clouds, and seem even to change the color of the blue sky. The hue of pine leaves reflect the spring color—we arrive at Sakuragawa River, where cherry petals, dancing and falling in the stormy winds, float. We arrive at Sakuragawa River.

二 僧と桜子たち、桜川に花見に出かける

桜子は常陸国（主に今の茨城県）、磯辺寺の住職に弟子入りしている。桜の季節になり、磯辺寺の住職は、桜子ほか従僧とともに、花の名所である桜川に花見に出かける。

磯辺寺の僧
と従僧たち

頃を待ち、桜狩りによい季節となった。頃を待ち、桜狩りによい季節となった。春の山路を急いで行こう。

磯辺寺の僧

この私は常陸国磯辺寺の住職を勤める僧でございます。ここにいらつしやる幼い人は、どこからとも知れず来て、愚僧を頼りたいと言われるものですから、師弟の契約を交わしました。ところで、近所に桜川という花の名所がございます。今まさに桜の花盛りだということですので、この幼い人も連れて桜川へ急いでいます。

磯辺寺の僧
と従僧たち

筑波山、こちらもちらもちらも花盛り。

従僧たち

こちらもちらもちらも花盛り。

磯辺寺の僧
と従僧たち

花は雲の林のように連なり、緑の空も色が変わるようだ。松の葉の色も春めいて、吹きさらす嵐に舞い散る花を浮かべた桜川に着いた、桜川に着いた。

*Phrases within [] are used only by the Kanze school.

- Villager [My goodness, what's all this, why did you leave so late?]
- Monk [Yes, I am indeed late, because I took everyone and came with a big group. Wow, they look so gorgeous. The cherry blossoms are in full bloom today, aren't they?]
- Villager [Yes, certainly the flowers are in full bloom today. By the way, there is something interesting going on here. A crazy woman came with a beautiful net and is scooping cherry petals floating on Sakuragawa River. Her madness is very entertaining. Please stay here for a while. Let this young boy see the madwoman.]
- Monk [Then, could you invite the crazy woman here?]
- Villager [I got you. Hey, hey, please tell that crazy woman to come here with the net she always carries.]

3. The Mother Laments Her Situation While Looking at Sakuragawa

The mother who has become a madwoman appears holding a net in her hand.

*以下、[]内の台詞は、観世流のみにある。

里人 何と申しましょう。どうしてこんなにも遅くお出でになったのですか。

磯辺寺の僧 はい、皆をお供に連れ、大勢で来たものですから遅くなりました。おお、見事ではないですか。桜は今が真つ盛りと見受けられますね。

里人 はい確かに花は今が盛りでございますよ。さてこちらでは面白いことがあります。女物狂がおりまして、美しい掬い網を持ち、桜川流れる花びらを掬い上げているのでございます。ことのほか面白く狂います。ここにしばらくいらしてください。この物狂を、幼い人にもお見せになつてください。

磯辺寺の僧 それではその物狂をこちらへお呼びください。

里人 心得ました。やあやあ、あの物狂にいつものように掬い網を持ってこちらへ来なさいとお話しなさい。

三 母は桜川を見ながら身の上を嘆く

狂女となった母が掬い網を持って現れ、桜の散りかかる桜川を眺めつつ、狂乱する。ややお

She descends into madness while looking at Sakuragawa River where the cherry petals fall. After she somehow regains her calm, she laments the life which has made her separate from her child, and narrates her increasing love for her son.

Madwoman (Sakurago's Mother)

Excuse me, you who are passing by, are the cherry blossoms already floating on Sakuragawa River? Oh, they have already started to fall. So sad—spring entices the falling flowers so soon and so soon leaves like flowing water.

“Even if I traced the water upstream to where the cherry blossoms fall, even from the mountains spring has already gone.” Even while I recollected this old poem and rested myself, the flowers keep their distance from me and fall like snow. Cherry blossoms...

[kakeri]

In a series of movements which describe madness, the performer moves around on stage. Performed with a Japanese flute, small and large hand drums.

Madwoman

“Lingering traces of the wind which scattered the cherry blossoms away, the petals floating in the air..

Group Reciters

look like a wave in the waterless sky.” (There is a poem like this.)

さまつてから、子と別れた身の上を嘆き、子への募る想いを語る。

狂女 もし、そちらをお通りになるお方よ、桜川にはもう花が散っているのですか。あら、

散りかかっているのですね。ああ悲しい、こんなにも早く、春は散る花を誘って、流れる水のように去ってしまう。

(桜子の母)

「花散れる水のまにまに尋め来れば山にも春はなくなりけり（花が散り失せる流水を辿って上流を訪ねても、山の春さえも、もはや終わってしまった）」という古歌を思い浮かべてしばらく休んでいても、花と疎遠になって雪のように散ってしまう。「桜花……」。

「カケリ」

狂乱の様子を表して、舞台を巡る所作。笛、小鼓、大鼓で奏される。

狂女 「桜花散りにし（散りぬる）風の名残りには（桜花を散らしてしまった風の名残りに、

空に漂う花びらは）

地 水なき空に波ぞ立つ（立ちける）（水のない空に波が立つかのようだ）」（という歌があるが）

Madwoman

My love for the flowers overlaps with my love for my son and piles up like deep snow.

Reciters This river with scattered petals must be the river of my tears.

Madwoman

This mad person appearing here is from Hyūga in Kyūshū (mainly a part of the present-day Miyazaki Prefecture).

Reciters (or Madwoman)

Having lost my beloved son, my heart is in turmoil. With all of my heart, I passed the sea and mountains of Tsukushi (Kyūshū) to Hakozaki (current Fukuoka Prefecture) and came to the Suma Coast by boat from there. Then, I traveled across the coast of Suruga and came down to a place called—what was it—Hitachi.

Madwoman

Without the way of love between mother and child,

Reciters (or Madwoman)

Who could complete such a journey to far off distant lands? (No one can do it).

Madwoman

Here there is a well-known river, an interesting sightseeing spot, called Sakuragawa River. Since my separated son's name was Sakurago, this river will be a memento of my son. The blossoms are just at their peak, at Sakuragawa River which has such a sweet and unforgettable name,

Reciters I shall scoop the snow of falling flowers and leave the wet-flowered robe as a memento of this spring.

狂女

花への思いが私の子を想う心と重なって、深々と積もる雪のよう。

地

その花の散る川は、私の涙の川だろうよ。

狂女

ここへ出て来た物狂の故郷は、九州日向（主に今の宮崎県）の者。

(または狂女)

愛しいわが子を失って、心は乱れ、心を尽くして筑紫（九州）の海山を越えて箱崎（今の福岡県）に至り、そこから海路で須磨の浦へ渡り、さらには駿河の海を過ぎ、常陸とかいうところまで下って来た。

狂女

まったく親子の情愛の道なくしては、

(または狂女)

この遙かな旅をできただろうか（できはしないだろう）。

狂女

ここにまた名前のよく知られた、桜川という面白い名所があり、別れた子の名も桜子だから、子の形見ともなり、折からの花盛りでもあり、その名も懐かしい桜川に

地

散り行く花の雪を汲み、水の花衣をみずからの春の形見に残そう。

花と鳥とが別れるように親と子の、別れるように親と子の行くえも知れず、遠い田舎で長旅の末に年若い、衰えてしまったら、たとえ逢うことが叶っても、親も子も

Mother and son, separated as a flower and bird separate, separated as a flower and bird separate, their whereabouts are unknown. If I grow old and weaken in a distant countryside at the end of long journey, even I can finally meet my son, if both mother and son forget each other's faces, what could we do? How miserable. Although flowers are invisible while hibernating in winter, they now bloom in this spring. How come then for my son, Sakurago, the flower of his name does not bloom? Why doesn't Sakurago appear like a flower coming into bloom?

4. Monk Asks the Madwoman the Reason Why She Scoops Flowers

The monk asks the crazy woman her place of origin and the reasons why she became mad and scoops flower petals. She narrates the story of separating from her son and explains that she cannot waste cherry flowers because her son has a tie with cherry blossoms. She then scoops the flowers falling in the wind and floating on the water.

Monk Hello, madwoman over there. Where on earth are you from?

Madwoman

I have come all the way from Kyūshū.

Monk How did you come to turn mad?

Madwoman

I was widowed and separated from my little son, who was the only memento of my husband. My heart therefore fell to disturbance.

Monk It sounds so pitiful. By the way, you hold a beautiful net, and with it scoop floating cherry petals; moreover, you seem to be devout. May I ask you the reason?

顔立ちを忘れてしまったら、どうしよう。情けない、しばらく冬籠りして見えなくても、今この春には花は咲く、それなのにわが子桜子の、その名の花はどうして咲かないの？ 桜子が花咲くように姿を現さないのはどうして？

四 僧は狂女に花を掬うわけを問う

僧は狂女の出自や狂乱の原因を尋ね、さらに花びらを掬い取る理由を聞く。狂女は子別れの境遇を語り、わが子は木華開耶姫このはなさくやひめの氏子で桜に縁のある名を持つゆえに、桜の花も粗末にできないと語り、風に散る水面の花を掬う。

磯辺寺の僧 これ、そこの狂女よ、いったいあなたはどこの人なのか？

狂女 私は遙か遠くの九州の者でございます。

磯辺寺の僧 なぜこのような狂乱の有様となつたのか？

狂女 夫には死に別れ、ただひとりの忘れ形見の幼い子には生き別れてしまったのです。そのために、思いが乱れているのでございます。

磯辺寺の僧 おおそれはお痛わしいことですね。ところでお見受けしますところ、美しい掬い網

Madwoman

Yes, sir. The deity protecting my hometown is Konohanasakuya-hime and her holy symbol is the cherry tree. My separated son is one of the deity's parishioners, so I named him Sakurago and raised him.

The deity's name is Sakuya-hime. My son for whom I have been looking is Sakurago. And the name of this river is Sakuragawa. The very name makes me feel nostalgic, and so I regret to waste even the falling flowers.

Monk

It is such an intriguing story. Truly, everything is interrelated. It is also due to an invisible tie that you have come all the way from distant Kyūshū to this Sakuragawa River in this eastern province.

Madwoman

This river is well-known as prestigious because it flows in a remote area. Remember the poem made by the famous Tsurayuki (Ki no Tsurayuki, The editor of Kokin Wakashū).

Monk

The ancient man, Ki no Tsurayuki, he too heard, in far-gone Kyoto

Madwoman

in the Province of Hitachi which he had never seen,

Monk

there is a river called Sakuragawa

を持ち、流れる桜の花びらを掬い、その上信心深いご様子もあります。何かわけでもあるのでしょうか？

はい、私の故郷の神様は木華開耶姫このはなざくやひめとおっしゃって、桜の木をご神体になさっています。離れ離れになってしまったわが子もその氏子で、桜子と名づけて育ててきたのだから。

神のお名前も開耶姫、探しているわが子の名も桜子、しかもこの川の名は桜川という。名前からして懐かしさが込み上げ、散る花ですら粗末にできないと思うのだ。

磯辺寺の僧 謂れを聞くにつけ、面白い。まことに何事も縁である。遠い遠い九州から、この東路の桜川まで、下ってきたのもまさに縁なのだなあ。

狂女 この川の名前は、遠いからこそこの高い誉れがある。かの貫之（古今和歌集選者、紀貫之）の歌がそうではないか

磯辺寺の僧 本当に昔の貫之も、遙か遠くの都から、

狂女 見たこともない常陸国に

磯辺寺の僧 その名も桜川というところが

Madwoman

he heard the rumor.

Group Reciters

“When spring comes, waves full of flowers wash the shore of Sakuragawa River without cease.” As he made this poem, both the shower of blossoms at this place and Tsurayuki earned their classic places in history. At each rapid in Sakuragawa River, constant white waves make the mist over the river trail away, and the island in Shida (an island in Kasumigaura River) is covered by the mist. How intriguing—yes, how intriguing the rapids of this river where flowers float truly are.

Phrases within [] are used only by the Kanze school.

Monk

What is wrong with her? I heard this madwoman’s madness is amusing, but why today is she not mad?

Villager

Well, there is a way to drive her insane. If one tells her that cherry blossoms fall in Sakuragawa River, she will be mad. Let me show you how she changes.

Monk

Please quickly make her mad.

Villager

Yes sir, I will.

里人

心得ました。

磯辺寺の僧

早く狂わせてご覧なさい。

里人

はい、狂わせるには方法があります。桜川に花が散るよ、と語れば狂いますので、狂わせてお目にかけてみましょう。

磯辺寺の僧

どうしたことが。この物狂は面白く狂うとおっしゃいましたが、今日はなぜ狂わないのですか。

*以下、[]内の台詞は、観世流にのみある。

地

「常よりも春べになれば桜川波の花こそま(間)なくよ(寄)すらめ(春ともなれば、いつもよりも、桜川には波の花が隙間もなく寄せているのだろうな)」と詠んだので、この地の花吹雪も貫之も、古い名を後世に残したという。桜川の瀬ごとに白波が絶え間なく立って霞を追いつき、信太の浮島(霞ヶ浦の島・中世の歌枕)は霞に包まれる。そのように水面に花の浮き立つこの川瀬は、本当に面白いよ、この川瀬は本当に面白いよ。

狂女

あると聞き、

Monk (Villager)

Oh, no. Gusts from the mountain sweep the cherry blossoms and flowers are falling into Sakuragawa River.

Madwoman

Why do you mention such a thing? Well, the evening winds from the mountain seem to invite the flowers in the deep mountains to fall. Before the fallen flowers flow away, I shall scoop them.

Monk Looking at the trees, gusts really sweep down from the mountain,

Madwoman

the cherry blossoms fall and increase the level of water. They must be pure white

Monk waves, but actually

Madwoman (Monk)

they are falling from above.

Monk (Madwoman)

Are they cherry blossoms?

Madwoman (Monk)

Or, the snow?

Monk (Madwoman)

Or waves?

Madwoman (Monk)

Or flowers?

(里人) 磯辺寺の僧 おや、困ったことに、にわか山風が吹き、桜川に花が散っていますよ。

狂女 つまらないことを言う、いや夕べの山風が吹いて奥山の花の散るのを誘うよう。流れてしまわないうちに、花を掬おう。

磯辺寺の僧 見れば本当に山風が木々の梢に吹き落ちて、

狂女 花が散って水嵩を増し、真つ白い

磯辺寺の僧 波かと思れば

狂女 上より散る

(磯辺寺の僧)

磯辺寺の僧 桜か

(狂女)

狂女 雪か

(磯辺寺の僧)

磯辺寺の僧 波か

(狂女)

狂女 花かと

(磯辺寺の僧)

Monk (Madwoman)
Rising clouds

Madwoman (Monk or Madwoman and Monk)
in winds traveling over the river,

Reciters if the flowers fall, even the waves of Sakuragawa bloom. With the falling flowers, even the waves of Sakuragawa River flower. I shall scoop the floating flowers.

Madwoman
I even forget to go home when I am under the cherry blossoms,

Reciters And I receive the flowers falling like snow on my sleeves.

[iroe]

A series of movements to show the madwoman walking under the cherry tree. It is accompanied by music.

5. Mother Becomes Mad and Dances

In the beautiful scenery of cherry blossoms falling into the water, the mother whose heart is fiercely disturbed by her loss gives voice to her love for her son and frantically dances.

Madwoman
Spring when the flowers fall into the flowing stream seems to continue forever.

磯辺寺の僧 浮き立つ雲の
(狂女)

狂女 河風に
(磯辺寺の僧、または狂女と磯辺寺の僧)

地 散れば波まで花咲ける桜川、散れば波まで花咲ける桜川、流れる花を掬おう。

狂女 花の下では帰ることすら忘れてしまい、

地 雪のように降る花を袖で受ける。

「イロエ」

囃子の演奏を背景に、桜の下を巡る様子を見せる所作。

五 わが子への想いを募らせ、母は狂い舞う

水面に桜の落ちかかる麗しい花景色のなか、心を激しく乱した母は、わが子への恋慕を切々と訴え、狂い舞う。

狂女 流れる水に花が降りかかる春は、永遠にも続くかのよう。

Reciters However, the moonlight coldly shines alone, winds blow in the high sky, and the crane does not come back.

Madwoman

The flowers blooming on the shore shine redly in the water. The trees growing between rocks impart the hue of green to the winds.

Reciters The cherry blossoms in the mountain look like a gorgeous brocade. The gorge clutching the water in a warm embrace looks like indigo blue.

Madwoman

How interesting. Unintentionally I have drifted out to here.

Reciters Its name is Sakuragawa, which resonates nostalgically. Sleeping under a tree, scooping the water of a river—it is said that these ties are all foreordained from your previous lives. Because of the name of the place I learned since I scooped its water, if I can end up meeting Sakurago, it surely must be a tie ordained in my other lives.

An ancient poem says, “Across the years this water has been a mirror for the cherry blossoms—or perhaps the water thinks the scattering blossoms fogs it up.” Even though one may realize that these flowers eventually become dust after they fall, so fleeting is life that one doesn’t realize one’s own body is as fragile as dream and thereby believes it happens only to flowers. For this reason we do not in the least suspect that these flowers falling in emptiness from the sky will become bubbles on the water—we are simply accustomed to love these flowers with familiarity. Later there will be no escape, regardless of how oft one may repent. An ancient poem says “I envy the bush warbler playing and flirting with the cherry blossoms although I know this lasts for but a few moments.” The human heart always appreciates something fragile, feeling pity for mists and grieving for dew drops.

地 けれど月影は冷え冷えと寂しく、風高く吹き鶴は帰つてこない。

狂女 岸辺の花は水を紅く照らし、岩間の樹木は風に緑を含ませる。

地 山に花開いて錦のよう、谷はふくよかに水を湛えて藍のよう。

狂女 ああ面白い、と思わずここに浮かれ出て

地 名も懐かしい桜川。一樹の陰に宿り、一河の流れを汲むのも他生の縁というけれど、水を汲んで知ったその名の所から、桜子に逢うことが適えば、とりわけ他生の縁というものだ。

「年を経て花の鏡となる水は散りかかるをや曇るといふらん（長い年月、花を映す鏡となってきたこの水面は、花の散りかかる様を「曇る」とでもいうのだろうか）」と古い歌に詠まれたが、散れば花は後にはただの塵になると知ってはいても、この身みずからが夢のようなものとも知らず、花のみと見るのは何とも儂いことだ。それゆえに、梢より空しく散った花だから落ちて水の泡になるとは少しも思わず、ただただ花を愛で馴れ親しむばかり。後に、幾たび悔いてもどうすることもできない。「百千鳥花に馴れ行くあだし身（み）ははかなきほどに（ほども）羨まれけり（鶯が花にじゃれる浮気な様子は、東の間ながら羨ましい）」という古歌にあるが、霞をあわれみ、露を悲しむように、儂いものを愛でるのが人の心というものだ。

Madwoman

Anyhow, I have just heard its name, and...

Reciters the waves of the Sakuragawa River, to which I wandered so lost in thought, look like a wide beautiful belt. I shall not waste even a few of fallen flowers. I stop the flow and try to dam the waves swirling with cherry petals like snow. Augustly, cherry is the holy symbol of the Deity Konohanasakuya-hime. Winds, please avoid the cherry trees. Water, please don't cloud yourself, for in you are reflected the flowers. I enter the water and do not care that the bottom of my dress is wet. I shall dam the water which draws near to the flowers and make a cherry blossom river.

[Ami-no-dan]

The highlight of this piece with a special chorus and dance.

Madwoman

What is wasteful is the cherry blossoms,

Reciters What is wasteful is the cherry blossoms falling. It is the sin of the cherry blossoms, and I am wistful with it. The flower itself is melancholic. Winds just harrow me. The flowers entice winds when they fall.

Madwoman

They fall again when winds entice them. The flowers I saw when I...

Reciters when I hanged and offered a flowery ornament for Buddha was...

Madwoman

was a weeping cherry tree which looked like a lush green willow.

狂女

それにしても、名前だけを聞いて遙々と

地

思い渡つてきた桜川の波のかかる様は、常陸帯をかけるよう。ほんの少しばかり散る花すらも無駄にすまいと水を堰き止め、雪のような桜花を湛えて浮く波に柵をかけようとする。かたじけなくもこれは木華開耶姫のご神木の花であるから、風も避けて吹け、花を映す水も影を濁すなど言い、袂を浸し裳裾を濡れるに任せ、花に寄る水を堰き止めて、桜川にしよう。

〔網ノ段〕

特別な謡どころ、舞どころ。

狂女

もつたいないのは桜が、

地

もつたいないのは桜が散つてしまうこと。それが桜の咎であり、恨めしい。花も憂い深く、風も辛いばかり。散れば風を誘い、

狂女

風が誘えばまたも散る。桜を花の鬢に

地

かけて眺めたのは、

狂女

青柳のような糸桜。

Reciters What you can see between mists is...

Madwoman
kaba-zakura cherry blossoms.

Reciters The ones which look like clouds are...

Madwoman
the cherry blossoms in the holy mountains of Yoshino.

Reciters In holy Yoshino, in holy Yoshino the waves in the rivers are as fretful as waterfalls. If I try to scoop flowers from the flow, I might be able to catch sweetfish. I miss the time that I called those fish cherry-blossom fish. Although I gathered and scooped all the white flowers, cherry blossoms, snow, and waves, they are just flowers. Honestly I truly miss my dear Sakurago for whom I am seeking. Ah, I miss my Sakurago.

6. Mother and Sakurago Meet Again

After three years, Sakurago finally stands in front of his mother. Although his appearance has changed, Sakurago is truly her son. The mother sheds tears of joy for the reunion. The story tells us the preciousness of the love between parent and child.

Reciters Oh, now what is this—having heard what this madwoman has said, I wonder whether she mayn't be someone from Kyūshū.

地 霞の間に間に見えるのは

狂女 樺桜 かばざくら

地 雲かとも見えたのは

狂女 三吉野の山の桜

地 三吉野の、三吉野の川の淀に瀧のように立つ波から、花を掬おうとすれば、国栖魚（鮎）もかかるだろうか、その魚を桜魚と呼んだのも懐かしいよ。いずれも白い花も桜も雪も波もすべて掬い集め、持ったけれども、これはただの木々の花、本当は私の探し求める桜子が恋しくて、ああ私の桜子が恋しくて。

六 母と桜子は再会する

三年の時を経て、今まさに桜子は母の前に立った。かたちは変わっていたが、桜子は桜子。母は巡り逢えた嬉しさに、涙を流す。親子の情愛の有難さが説かれる。

地 これはどうしたことか。狂人の言葉を聞くにつけ、もしや九州の人ではないだろうか。

Madwoman

I haven't had a chance to learn who you are, but you are asking whether I am from Kyūshū. What brings you to ask such a question?

Reciters There is nothing to hide now. The tie between a parent and a child never falls into decay. Look at the flowery Sakurago.

Mother Sakurago, Sakurago? Hearing the name, it must be a dream, and even though I look at him, I cannot identify him immediately. Is he really my child?

Reciters Since three years have passed, the distantly separated, separated mother and son,

Mother their appearances have changed. However,

Reciters the familiar face...

Mother if I closely look at his face...

Reciters it is Sakurago's face, his flowery visage. Yes, truly, it is him. Just as bush warblers cry for joy when they meet each other, the mother is choked with tears of joy.

Now, they go home together. Now, they go home together. Sakurago helped his mother and led the mother to renounce the world. They secured their comfort under the Buddha's law for this life and the next. The deep bond of parent and child is so precious. The tie between parent and child is truly precious.

狂女

今までは誰と知ることでもなかったけれど、九州の人かとおっしゃるのは、どうい
おつもりなのでしょうか。

地 今は包み隠すことはない。親子の契りは朽ち果てることはない。花の桜子をご覧なさい。

母(狂女) 桜子と、桜子と聞けば夢かと、見てもにわかには分からず、本当に私の子なのか。

地 三年の年を経て、遠く離れ離れになった親子の

母 姿かたちは変わったけれど

地 さすがに見慣れた面差しを

母 よくよく見れば

地 桜子の花のような顔立ち。本当にこの子だと、鶯が逢うときに喜んで鳴くように、
母は嬉し涙にむせぶ。

こうして一緒に家に帰り、こうして一緒に家に帰り、桜子は母を助けて出家に導き、
今の世と後の世の世の二世にわたり安楽の身を得た。その縁深い親子の道こそ有難い、
親子の道こそ有難い。

Sakuragawa (The River of Cherry Blossoms)

Synopsis

In the Sakura-no-Baba (Cherry Blossom Riding Grounds) in the province of Hyūga (the present-day Miyazaki Prefecture), a mother and a son lived in poverty. The son, Sakurago (Cherry Blossom Child), distressed at his mother's hardships, sold himself to a human trafficker. The mother learnt by a letter from the trafficker that her son sold himself. In a frenzy of grief and tears, she dashed out from her house and set out on a journey to find Sakurago.

Three years have passed since then. Sakurago has been apprenticed to a monk of Isobe-dera Temple in the remote province of Hitachi (the present-day Ibaraki Prefecture). The spring blossoms were at their peak, and the monk, with Sakurago and others, went out to Sakuragawa River, a nearby famous spot for cherry blossoms, to enjoy the view. Just then Sakurago's mother arrives at the riverside of Sakuragawa after her long journey.

The mother, who became a madwoman, scoops cherry petals floating on the river with a net, showing her madness. When the monk asks her why she does this, she explains that she cannot waste the blossoms, related as they are to the name of her son, Sakurago, from whom she is separated. Enticed by the falling flowers, the mother reaches an extremity of frenzy, spurred on by her thoughts of her son.

Eventually the mother meets a boy accompanying the monk. Realizing that the boy is her son Sakurago, the mother regains her right mind, and sheds tears of joy—mother and child return home together. Later, the mother also renounces the world and obtains the blessings of the Buddha. Thus we are taught the lesson that the way of the parent and the child is truly precious.

Highlight

This is one of the madwoman stories in which a mother, separated from her child, travels in her madness to look for that child. Although this piece has a happy ending, in which finally the child and mother meet, as it unfolds, the emotions of the son who pities his mother and of the mother who whole-heartedly loves her son are finely described and come to settle in the hearts of the audience.

Additionally, what deepens the savour of this piece is the variation in coloring based on cherry blossoms. According to the research of a scholar long ago, there are eleven kinds of cherry blossoms, forty-eight references to the word “cherry” (*sakura* in Japanese), and fifty-three references to flowers in this piece. The name of the separated son is “Sakurago (Cherry Blossom Child),” their hometown is “Sakura-no-Baba (Cherry Blossom Riding Grounds), and the setting for the climax of the story is at “Sakuragawa (The River of Cherry Blossoms).” In particular, the chorus, depicting the overlapping of the mother's feelings and the river into which the cherry petals fall like snow, corresponds with the frantic dance of the mother; it describes the beautiful though fleeting, sad, poetic atmosphere of the drama. This is something to which only Noh drama can give expression. The special dance and chorus, from the *kuse* to *Ami-no-dan* (the Scene of the Net), is a must-see.

Since ancient times, cherry blossoms have been cherished by the Japanese. The audience can fully enjoy the deep emotions associated with this flower through the special techniques unique to the art of Noh.

Further, this piece, which chooses cherry blossoms as its subject, is often compared with “Mii-dera (Mii-dera Temple),” which is another madwoman story focusing on the moon. Your interest in Noh will be further deepened if you compare the two.

School	All five	
Category	The fourth group Noh, kyōjo-mono	
Author	Zeami	
Subject	Unknown	
Season	Spring (March in the lunar calendar)	
Scenes	<i>Maeba</i>	Near Sakura-no-Baba in Hyūga Province
	<i>Nochiba</i>	Sakuragawa in Hitachi Province
Characters	<i>Mae-shite</i> (the first half lead part)	Mother of Sakurago
	<i>Nochi-shite</i> (the second half lead part)	Mother of Sakurago in Madness
	<i>Kokata</i> (juvenile Noh actor)	Sakurago (Cherry Blossom Child)
	<i>Waki</i> (supporting cast)	Chief Monk of Isobe-dera Temple
	<i>Waki-tsūre</i> (companion of <i>waki</i>)	Accompanying Monk (two or three)
	<i>Waki-tsūre</i> (companion of <i>waki</i>)	Villager [only for the Kanze school]
	<i>Mae-waki-tsūre</i> (the first half companion of <i>waki</i>)	Human Trafficker
Mask	<i>Shite</i>	<i>Shakumi</i> or <i>Fukai</i>
Costumes	<i>Mae-shite</i>	<i>kazura</i> (wig), <i>kazura-obi</i> (belt for a wig), <i>karaori</i> (outer robes), <i>kitsuke / surihaku</i> (short-sleeved kimono, worn as the innermost layer of the costume of a female character), and a fan.
	<i>Nochi-shite</i>	<i>kazura</i> , <i>kazura-obi</i> , <i>mizugoromo</i> (a type of knee-length kimono), <i>kitsuke / surihaku</i> , <i>koshimaki / nuihaku</i> (a type of kimono), <i>koshi-obi</i> (belt), and a fan. Holding a net in hand.
	<i>Kokata</i>	<i>kitsuke / nuihaku</i> , <i>nagabakama</i> (long <i>hakama</i> -style trousers), and a fan.
	<i>Waki</i>	<i>sumi-bōshi</i> (a hood for regular Buddhist monks), <i>mizugoromo</i> (a type of knee-length kimono), <i>kitsuke / kogōshi-atsuita</i> (thickly-woven kimono with small check pattern), <i>hakama</i> -style trousers in ōkuchi-style (white), <i>koshi-obi</i> , Buddhist prayer beads, and a fan.
	<i>Waki-tsūre</i> (Accompanying Monks)	<i>sumi-bōshi</i> , <i>mizugoromo</i> , <i>kitsuke / muji-noshime</i> (<i>noshime</i> -style kimono with no pattern), <i>hakama</i> in ōkuchi-style (white), <i>koshi-obi</i> (belt), Buddhist prayer beads, and a fan.
	<i>Waki-tsūre</i> (Villager)	tops and bottoms of <i>suō</i> (unlined hemp kimono for warrior's daily wear), <i>kitsuke / muji-noshime</i> or <i>kitsuke / dan-noshime</i> (<i>noshime</i> -style kimono with very wide stripes), a small sword, and a fan.
	<i>Mae-waki-tsūre</i>	tops and bottoms of <i>suō</i> , <i>kitsuke / muji-noshime</i> , a small sword, and a fan. Holding a letter.
Number of scenes	Two	
Length	About 1 hour and 20 minutes	

桜川（さくらがわ）

あらすじ

日向国（主に今の宮崎県）、桜の馬場の西に、母ひとり子ひとりの貧しい家がありました。その家の子、桜子（さくらご）は、母の労苦に心を痛め、みずから人商人（ひとあきんど）に身を売ります。人商人が届けた手紙から桜子の身売りを知った母は、悲しみに心を乱し、泣きながら家を飛び出して、桜子を探ねる旅に出ました。

それから三年。桜子は、遠く常陸国（主に今の茨城県）の磯辺寺の住職に弟子入りしていました。春の花盛り、住職は桜子らとともに、近隣の花の名所、その名も桜川に花見に出かけます。折しも桜川のほとりには、長い旅を経た桜子の母がたどり着いていました。

狂女となった母は、川面に散る桜の花びらを網で掬い、狂う有様を見せていたのです。住職がわけを聞くと、母は別れた子、桜子に縁のある花を粗末に出来ないと語ります。そして落花に誘われるように、桜子への想いを募らせて狂乱の極みとなります。

やがて母は住職が連れてきた子と対面します。その子が桜子であるとかわり、母は正気に戻って嬉し涙を流し、親子は連れ立って帰ります。後に母も出家して、仏の恵みを得たことから、親子の道は本当に有難いという教訓が語られます。

みどころ

子どもと離れ離れになった母が、狂乱して子を探ね歩く、子別れの狂女物のひとつです。子と母は最後の最後に巡り合うというハッピーエンドの物語ですが、その過程で母をいたわる健気な子、子を一心に思う母の人情がぎめ細かく織りなされ、見る人の胸に迫ります。

しかしそれ以上に、この曲の味わいを深めるのは、“桜”を大本に据えた濃淡の多彩な色づけです。昔の人の調べたところによれば、この曲に桜11種類、桜の字が48字、花の字は53字出てくるそうです。別れた子の名は「桜子」、母子の故郷は「桜の馬場」、そして物語佳境の舞台は「桜川」。ことに花吹雪の乱れ落ちる桜川と母の心理を重ねて描写する話は、母の狂乱の舞姿に呼応して、殊更に美しくもはかなく切ない詩情を表します。これもまた、能にしかできない表現と言えます。特に、クセから網ノ段と呼ばれる特別な舞、謡どころは必見です。

古来より、日本人が大切にしてきた桜。その花にまつわる深々とした情感を、能独特の手法でじっくりとお楽しみいただけます。

また花を材とする「桜川」と月をあしらう狂女物の「三井寺」とは、折りに触れてよく対比されますので、見比べてみると能の面白さも、ひととき深まることでしょう。

流儀	五流にあり
分類	四番目物、狂女物
作者	世阿弥
題材	不明
季節	春（旧暦3月）
場面	前場 日向国桜の馬場近く 後場 常陸国桜川
登場人物	前シテ 桜子の母 後シテ 狂女となった桜子の母 子方 桜子（さくらご） ワキ 磯辺寺の住僧 ワキツレ 従僧（二～三人） ワキツレ 里人〔観世流のみ〕 前ワキツレ 人商人（ひとあきんど）
面	シテ 曲見（しゃくみ）または深井（ふかい）
装束	前シテ 鬘、鬘帯、唐織、着付・摺箔、扇 後シテ 鬘、鬘帯、水衣、着付・摺箔、腰巻・縫箔、腰帯、扇、網を持って出る 子方 着付・縫箔、長袴、扇 ワキ 角帽子、水衣、着付・小格子厚板、白大口、腰帯、数珠、扇 ワキツレ（従僧） 角帽子、水衣、着付・無地熨斗目、白大口、腰帯、数珠、扇 ワキツレ〔里人〕 素袍上下、着付・無地熨斗目または着付・段熨斗目、小刀、扇 前ワキツレ 素袍上下、着付・無地熨斗目、小刀、扇、文を携える
場数	二場
上演時間	約1時間20分

桜川（さくらがわ）
Sakuragawa (The River of Cherry Blossoms) ©2018 the-noh.com

発行：2018年1月10日（ver 2.0）
編集：the 能ドットコム編集部 <http://www.the-noh.com> (e-mail: info@the-noh.com)
発行：(株)カリバーキャスト

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