

STOP IN YOUR TRACKS

(Shido-Hogaku)

Taro Kaja (Shite)

Master (Ado)

Uncle (Koado)

Horse (3rd Ado)

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MASTER: I am a resident of this neighborhood. Today there is to be an impromptu tea-comparing party at Higashiyama. I will call my servant Taro Kaja and give him a job to do. Taro Kaja, are you there?

TARO KAJA: Here.

MASTER: There you are.

TARO KAJA: At your service, Sir.

MASTER: You came quite quickly. The matter I have called you here about is of no great import. Today there is to be an impromptu tea-comparing party at Higashiyama. While I realize it is a great imposition, I order you to go to my uncle and tell him that I have not yet unsealed my tea box, and that I wish for him to loan me a bag of his best tea.

TARO KAJA: As you say, Sir, but, while I realize how rude it may seem, I advise you to refrain from both borrowing tea from him and attending the tea-comparing party.

MASTER: What do you know! Go tell him that I promised to go several days ago and borrow the tea from him.

TARO KAJA: Ah!

MASTER: Also, even those there of the lowest class will be carrying swords, so borrow a sword from him too.

TARO KAJA: With all my heart.

MASTER: And everyone will come on horseback, so borrow a horse from him too.

TARO KAJA: And how many people will you send with me?

MASTER: You lazy rascal! Who else is there in my household to send but you? You are to go alone to borrow these things.

TARO KAJA: Just stop and think. How can I possibly bring back a tea box, a sword and a horse all by myself?

MASTER: In that case, borrow a footman as well.

TARO KAJA: No matter how benevolent your uncle may be, how can I possibly ask him to loan me a footman as well?

MASTER: You are on very good terms with my uncle. Just speak to him politely and borrow the things I ordered.

TARO KAJA: I have no idea whether I will succeed or not, but since you insist, I will go and see what I can do.

MASTER: Go quickly and hurry back.

TARO KAJA: Ha.

MASTER: Ei.

TARO KAJA: Ha. (The MASTER exits.) Well, I must say, I have been burdened with a most bothersome task, but there is nothing for it but to go. (He sets out on

his trip.) Truly, there has never been such a self-willed man as my master. I do wish he would stop attending tea-comparing parties when he has no tea to compare. But when I give him such sound advice as this, he just bares his teeth at me and shouts, "What do you know?" I have never been so humiliated. Well, here I am already. First I will announce myself. Hello in there. Is anybody home?

UNCLE: Well, someone is at the door. Who is there?

TARO KAJA: It is I.

UNCLE: Oh, Taro Kaja. What have you come for?

TARO KAJA: My master ordered me to come and tell you that today there is to be an impromptu tea-comparing party at Higashiyama and that he has not yet unsealed his tea box, so he wishes for you to loan him a bag of your very superior best tea.

UNCLE: Here, Taro Kaja, one should not go to tea-comparing parties if one does not buy tea.

TARO KAJA: Well, this year, it appears that he did buy a little.

UNCLE: What are you talking about? I know very well that your master never buys tea.

TARO KAJA: He said to come tell you that he promised to go several days ago, so I humbly beg you to loan him some tea.

UNCLE: If he promised to go several days ago, he cannot very well back out now. I will loan him some tea.

TARO KAJA: I am indeed most grateful.

UNCLE: Wait there for a moment.

TARO KAJA: As you say, Sir. (Aside.) Now my first purpose is accomplished.

UNCLE: Here, here. Take this to him.

TARO KAJA: This looks to be very fine tea indeed. Even the box you put it in is lovely.

UNCLE: Well, I thought it would be embarrassing for him not to have the best.

TARO KAJA: I am most grateful indeed. And there is still more.

UNCLE: What is it?

TARO KAJA: Even those of the lowest class there will carry swords. The metal tip of the scabbard of my master's sword fell off so we sent it to the goldsmith to be fixed. My master did not order me to borrow this from you, but I humbly beg you to lend a sword to me.

UNCLE: If I am to lend you one thing, I may as well lend you two. I will lend you a sword. Wait right there.

TARO KAJA: I am most grateful. (Aside.) This is also accomplished.

UNCLE: Here, here. Take this to him.

TARO KAJA: This is much too fine a sword. Please lend me a plainer one.

UNCLE: No, no. Though this is a family heirloom, I will lend it to you, so take it with you and be careful not to damage it.

TARO KAJA: I am sure this will please my master greatly.

UNCLE: So will you now be on your way?

TARO KAJA: Huh?

UNCLE: I said will you now be on your way?

TARO KAJA: (laughing.) There is still more.

UNCLE: What's that? You say there is still more?

TARO KAJA: Everybody will come on horseback, so for my master to be the only one to come in walking barefoot would be detrimental to your reputation as his uncle as well. Thus after all, if you would be so kind as to lend me a horse as well, I would be more grateful.

UNCLE: In any case, there is no way my nephew could afford a horse in his lowly state. So I will loan you a horse as well.

TARO KAJA: For that I am most grateful indeed.

UNCLE: Wait right there for a moment.

TARO KAJA: As you say, Sir. (Aside.) Oh, how happy, how happy I am. I have completely accomplished my purpose. When my master hears of this, I am certain he will be overjoyed.

UNCLE: (Leading on the horse.) Hup, hup, hup. (The HORSE neighs.)

TARO KAJA: I thank you for leading him here yourself.

UNCLE: Hup, hup, hup. (The HORSE neighs.)

TARO KAJA: Oh, it seems you have take good care of your horse.

UNCLE: He has gotten fat, has he not?

TARO KAJA: Thanks to your thoughtful care of him, he has truly gotten fat.

UNCLE: Well now, have you come all alone.

TARO KAJA: I am alone.

UNCLE: You cannot take all these things back by yourself.

TARO KAJA: I most certainly cannot take everything from the tea box to the sword and the horse all back by myself. Thus I would be most grateful if you would send one of your servants or two along to help me.

UNCLE: Normally nothing would be simpler, but today I have sent them all out here and there on errands, leaving not a single servant in the house.

TARO KAJA: You say there is not a single servant in the house?

UNCLE: Most certainly.

TARO KAJA: If that is the case, there is no way but for me to go home carrying the tea box and the sword in one hand and leading this horse with the other.

UNCLE: As things stand, there is nothing else to be done. Well now, this horse has one bad habit.

TARO KAJA: And what might that habit be?

UNCLE: Whenever anybody coughs behind him, he suddenly starts bucking. Prepare your heart for that.

TARO KAJA: That is a bad habit. As I am now aware of this, I will take care not to do that, but if some passerby who does not know it should cough behind him and he starts bucking, what am I to do?

UNCLE: There is a special incantation that will quickly quiet him. I will teach it to you.

TARO KAJA: What is that incantation?

UNCLE: You must say, "By Shakyamuni's footman Jakuren and the sixty thousand Bodhisattvas, settle down this instant! Stop in your tracks!"

TARO KAJA: You say I should say, "By Shakyamuni's footman Jakuren and the sixty thousand Bodhisattvas, settle down this instant!" And what was the rest?

UNCLE: Stop in your tracks.

TARO KAJA: Oh, oh. Stop in your tracks. Now I've got it.

UNCLE: Well now, I have something to ask of you as well.

TARO KAJA: And just what might that be?

UNCLE: Up to this time, I have loaned your master any number of tools and things, but not a single one has ever come back. As I have lent you many of my most favorite things this time, when you have finished using them, please return them quickly.

TARO KAJA: (Laughing.) On that score I assure you, you have no need for concern. I myself will return them to just as soon as we finish using them.

UNCLE: I beg you to make sure to do so.

TARO KAJA: I will with all my heart. Now I must be on my way.

UNCLE: Are you going so soon?

TARO KAJA: Ha. (The UNCLE exits and TARO KAJA mounts the HORSE.) Hup, hup, hup. (The HORSE neighs.) Oh, how happy, how happy I am! Though I was uncertain whether I could, I have succeeded in borrowing all three items. Now I must hurry home. Hup, hup, hup. (The HORSE neighs.) Truly, there is not a finer person in the world that this uncle of my master's. No matter when or how often I visit him with a request, he has never once refused me. If it were not for this uncle of his, I do not know how my master would ever be able to make his way in society. Anybody who would dare to think badly of such a man would surely be punished. Hup, hup, hup. (The HORSE neighs.)

MASTER: (Overlapping the above six lines.) I sent my servant Taro Kaja to my uncle's place on an errand. He is so late returning that I will go out

to meet him. (Setting out.) Truly, he should be back by now. I wonder what he is up to. Well, just as expected, there he comes now. Hey, hey! Hey, you hateful rascal!

TARO KAJA: Huh?

MASTER: What do you mean "huh"? What have you been up to?

TARO KAJA: What do you think I've been up to? It is not just one or two small things that I have borrowed, so I had to coax and flatter your uncle in this way and that before I could finally convince him to lend me all these things.

MASTER: Why should you need to coax and flatter him to borrow no more than these things? Just what time of the day do you think it is?! Thanks to you, it got so late that all of my friends went on ahead and left me behind. They left me behind!

TARO KAJA: Oh, is that so?

MASTER: I wager you have simply been at your long-winded chattering again. Get off that horse. (He shoves TARO KAJA off the HORSE and mounts it himself.) Hup, hup, hup. (The HORSE neighs.)

TARO KAJA: (Aside.) Without even so much as a word of thanks for going to the trouble of going and borrowing these things, this is what he does!

MASTER: Hey, hey. Get out of my sight!

TARO KAJA: Who is to carry this tea box and sword?

MASTER: Who do you think? You carry them, and get out of my sight.

TARO KAJA: I'm on my way.

MASTER: Get out of my sight. Hup, hup, hup. (The HORSE neighs.)

TARO KAJA: This is what is meant by boiling water and pouring it over ice. What an unreliable master I have!

MASTER: Hey, hey! What are you doing over there where there is no road?

TARO KAJA: If there's no road here, I'll come back to the one you're on.

MASTER: Come back over here.

TARO KAJA: I'm coming.

MASTER: Well, I must say, what a hateful rascal. The only way to handle the likes of you is to have you follow right beside me.

TARO KAJA: Right beside you?

MASTER: Follow along right beside me.

TARO KAJA: If that's what you want, I'll follow right beside you. (He pushes up against the MASTER from the side.)

MASTER: Aaagh. I tell you to follow beside me and you get right on top of me. The only way to handle the likes of you is to have you walk in front.

TARO KAJA: You want me to walk in front?

MASTER: Walk in front.

TARO KAJA: If that's what you want, I'll walk in front.

MASTER: Here, here! What do you mean by that ominous expression on your face? If that's the way you want to act, prepare yourself for a good beating when we get back home. Hey, hey, hey! Hey, you rascal!

TARO KAJA: Huh?

MASTER: I tell you to walk ahead and you go wandering off without any sense of proper distance.

TARO KAJA: You said to walk ahead, so I'm walking ahead. So now what do you want me to do?

MASTER: You have no sense of proportion.

TARO KAJA: I do not know what you think of as a proper sense of proportion.

MASTER: You're still talking nonsense. Come back here.

TARO KAJA: I will come back.

MASTER: Come back.

TARO KAJA: Ah!

MASTER: Oh, what a hateful rascal. Hup, hup, hup. (The HORSE neighs.)

TARO KAJA: I must say, how angry I am. What shall I do? Oh, I know, I'll make the horse throw him off. (He goes behind the HORSE and coughs. The HORSE begins bucking and neighing violently. The MASTER is thrown to the ground, and TARO KAJA puts the tea box and the sword on the ground and mounts the HORSE.) By the Shakyamuni's footman Jakuren and the sixty thousand Bodhisattvas, settle down this instant! Stop in your tracks! Stop in your tracks! There, there, there. (TARO KAJA turns his head away from his MASTER and laughs in satisfaction. Then, he looks back at his MASTER.) Why, Sir, did you fall off the horse?

MASTER: I fell off the horse due to all the bother you have caused me.

TARO KAJA: That is a very dangerous thing to do. I would very much like to come and help you to your feet, but since the horse was bucking, I have mounted him myself to quiet him down. Did you hurt yourself in the fall?

MASTER: I fell hard on my hip bone.

TARO KAJA: That is indeed a dangerous thing to do. In any case, the horse has quite settled down now, so you must mount him again.

MASTER: Oh, no! I do not wish to mount such a horse again.

TARO KAJA: Then what are we to do with him?

MASTER: Let him go find his own way home.

TARO KAJA: What is this? How can you even think of letting your uncle's favorite horse go back home alone without even so much as a footman to lead him?

MASTER: In that case, you ride him.

TARO KAJA: If that is what you wish, I will ride him, but who is to carry that tea box and sword?

MASTER: Who do you think? You carry them as you ride.

TARO KAJA: Well, I cannot believe that you have said such a thing. You fell off this horse when simply riding him. So if I who am not at all accustomed to riding were to attempt to ride while carrying that tea box and sword, I would most certainly fall off. Come, I beg you to ride him.

MASTER: I told you I will not ride him. This is all your fault as you borrowed such useless things. As there is nothing else to be done, I will carry the tea box and sword myself.

TARO KAJA: What's that? You say you will carry them yourself?

MASTER: Most certainly.

TARO KAJA: I thank you for taking such a burden upon yourself. In that case, shall I ride on ahead?

MASTER: Go, go!

TARO KAJA: I humbly beg your pardon for riding in front of you. Hup, hup, hup.

(The HORSE neighs.)

MASTER: Hey, hey, Taro Kaja. You ride very well.

TARO KAJA: Do you really think so?

MASTER: Very well indeed.

TARO KAJA: I certainly do not mean to take advantage of your kind words, but, you know, when you attain distinction, I may be required to ride horseback and I may even find it necessary to take charge of servants under me, and it would be a shame if I did not know how to handle servants at that time. Fortunately today there is no one in sight either ahead or behind, so if there were only somebody appropriate for me to practice on, I would like to try ordering them about. (Laughing.) Oh, I will not presume to ask, I will not presume to ask you.

MASTER: What's that? You say that when I attain distinction, you may be required to ride horseback and you may even find it necessary to take charge of servants under you, and it would be a shame if you did not know how to handle servants at that time, and fortunately today there is no one in sight either ahead or behind, so you would like to try ordering me about as though I were your servant?

TARO KAJA: Oh, no never. I did not mean you. I just said I would like to try it if there were somebody appropriate for me to practice on.

MASTER: That is an excellent idea. And since I have never before been a servant, and since there is no one in sight either ahead or behind, I will allow you to order me about.

TARO KAJA: Oh, though you say I may, it would be too great an imposition. How could I possibly bring myself to order you about?

MASTER: I do not mind at all. Hurry up and order me about.

TARO KAJA: In that case, I will try ordering you about.

MASTER: Order me about, order me about.

TARO KAJA: Aah. (He looks at his MASTER face and laughs in embarrassment.) I just don't think that I can make myself order you about.

MASTER: You must not be so shy. Just pluck up your heart and boldly order me about.

TARO KAJA: In that case, I will pluck up my heart and boldly order you about. Please forgive me for doing so.

MASTER: I will certainly forgive you for doing so.

TARO KAJA: Here, here, Taro Kaja.

MASTER: Ha.

TARO KAJA: Are you coming?

MASTER: Ha.

TARO KAJA: Are you there? (Suddenly folding his hands in supplication.)
Oh, forgive me, please forgive me.

MASTER: What is this?

TARO KAJA: Well, you see, as soon as I look in your face, I completely lose my courage, and find it quite impossible to order you about.

MASTER: With such a weak spirit, you will never be able to attain distinction. I will forgive you, so pluck up your heart boldly and order me about.

TARO KAJA: Let me make sure I heard you right. Did you really say that I should pluck up my heart boldly and order you about?

MASTER: Most certainly.

TARO KAJA: If that is the case, prepare yourself and forgive me for doing so.

MASTER: I forgive you, I forgive you.

TARO KAJA: I am going to order you about.

MASTER: Order me about quickly.

TARO KAJA: Here, here, Taro Kaja.

MASTER: Ha.

TARO KAJA: Are you coming?

MASTER: Ha.

TARO KAJA: Hey, you rascal! What have you been up to? Just what time of the day do you think it is?! Thanks to you, it got so late that all of my friends went on ahead and left me behind. They left me behind! I wager you have simply been at your long-winded chattering again. Get out of my sight. Hup, hup, hup. (The HORSE neighs.) Well, I must say, what a hateful rascal. Hey, hey! What are you doing over there where there is no road? Come back over here. The only way to handle the likes of you is to have you follow right beside me. Follow along right beside me. Hup, hup, hup. (The HORSE neighs.) Aaagh. I tell you to follow

beside me and you get right on top of me. The only way to handle the likes of you is to have you walk in front. Walk in front. Here, here! What do you mean by that ominous expression on your face? If that's the way you want to act, prepare yourself for a good beating when we get back home. Hey, hey, hey! Hey, you rascal! I tell you to walk ahead and you go wandering off without any sense of proper distance. You have no sense of proportion. Come back here, come back here. (Aside, laughing.) Just look at his face. Hup, hup, hup. (The HORSE neighs. -- To the MASTER.) Well, I must say, what a hateful rascal.

MASTER: Oh, how angry I am. (He shoves TARO KAJA off the HORSE and mounts it himself. -- To TARO KAJA.) Hey, you rascal!

TARO KAJA: Huh?

MASTER: What do you mean "huh"? And what do you mean by what you said just now?

TARO KAJA: Since you said I should order you about and that you would forgive me for doing so, I was ordering you about.

MASTER: Though I said I would forgive you, do you not know the proper way to speak to your master? You were simply mimicing what I said to you before to get back at me, weren't you?!

TARO KAJA: Here, here, you said I should order you about and that you would forgive me for doing so, and already you are scolding at me.

MASTER: You are still jabbering nonsense. Get out of my sight.

TARO KAJA: I am going.

MASTER: Get out of my sight.

TARO KAJA: I am going.

MASTER: Well, I must say, what a hateful rascal. Hup, hup, hup. (The HORSE neighs.)

TARO KAJA: (Aside.) Well, I must say, how angry I am. I'll just make the horse throw him off again. (He goes around behind the HORSE and

coughs. The Horse neighs and throws the MASTER off, and exits. TARO KAJA jumps on his MASTER's back, thinking he is the HORSE.) By the Shakyamuni's footman Jakuren and the sixty thousand Bodhisattvas, settle down this instant! Stop in your tracks! Stop in your tracks!

MASTER: Hey, hey! Its me you're on! It's me!

TARO KAJA: Is it you, Sir?!

MASTER: You lazy rascal, you'll not get away. (Chasing TARO KAJA off.) I'll catch you yet, I'll catch you yet.

TARO KAJA: Oh, forgive me, please forgive me.

MASTER: I'll catch you yet, I'll catch you yet.

TARO KAJA: Oh, forgive me, please forgive me.

MASTER: I'll catch you yet, I'll catch you yet.