

The Bush Clover Lord
(Hagi Daimyo)

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Lord
Taro Kaja
Garden Owner

LORD I am a feudal lord from a land far away. After staying in the capital for quite some time, all my affairs are at last in order. I have been granted a certificate of possession for my fief, as well as a large grant of new land. And on top of all that, I have received a furlough and intend to set out for home in a few days. First, I will call my servant Taro Kaja to tell him this news and make him happy. Here, here! Is anyone about? I say, is anybody there?

TARO KAJA Here.

LORD Are you there?

TARO KAJA Here.

LORD There you are.

TARO KAJA At your service, Sir.

LORD You came quite quickly. The matter I have called you here about is of no great import. After staying in the capital for quite some time, all my affairs are at last in order. I have been granted a certificate of possession for my fief, as well as a large grant of new land. And on top of all that, I have received a furlough and intend to set out for home in a few days. Have you ever heard such happy news as this?

TARO KAJA I have been waiting expectantly for quite some time, but I did not expect such happy news as this.

LORD Is it not happy news, indeed?

TARO KAJA That it is.

LORD Well, now, I have been under great pressure during my stay in the capital, so I want to go on a nice outing. What do you think?

TARO KAJA If you had not mentioned it, I was about to suggest it myself. That is a fine idea, indeed.

LORD If that is the case, where should I go?

TARO KAJA Just where should you go?

LORD Where would be best?

TARO KAJA Rather than haggling over this place or that place, what do you think of visiting the Higashiyama area?

LORD But what part of Higashiyama do you suggest?

TARO KAJA You really should pay a special visit to the Kannon Buddha at Kiyomizu Temple.

LORD And what is the reason for that?

TARO KAJA Throughout your time in the capital, knowing how busy you were, I visited the Kannon Buddha at Kiyomizu Temple daily to pray for success in your place.

LORD If that is the case, I must go and express my gratitude.

TARO KAJA Fortunately, there is a tea house I know part way up the hill that has a very fine garden. As the bush clover (hagi) blossoms are just now in bloom, I will take you there and show them to you.

LORD That will make the outing that much more pleasant.

TARO KAJA Now, everyone who pays a visit there is required to give a presentation. Do you think that you could possibly manage giving a presentation?

LORD What? A presentation?

TARO KAJA Yes.

LORD What do you mean by giving a presentation?

TARO KAJA It means reciting a poem.

LORD No. If it entails something as difficult as that, I will visit the Kiyomizu Temple only.

TARO KAJA I would really like to show you the garden, so don't you think that you could do it if I teach you how?

LORD There is no reason that I could not do it if you teach it to me.

TARO KAJA If that is the case, I remember a poem that the neighborhood lordlings had me help them rehearse when they went there sometime back. I will teach this poem to you.

LORD And is it difficult?

TARO KAJA It is not particularly difficult. It goes:
"Seven petals, eight petals,
Nine petals, I expected,
But they blossomed with ten glorious petals,
The flowers of the bush clover."

LORD And who is to recite it?

TARO KAJA Who do you think? It is you who must
recite it.

LORD You mean me, all by myself?

TARO KAJA Most certainly.

LORD How could I possibly learn something so very
long, even if I spent five or three years in the attempt?

TARO KAJA Well, I must say, what a pity. So do
you think you could learn it, if I provide you with hints, by
comparing it to other things?

LORD I should be able to learn it if you provide me
with hints by comparing it to other things.

TARO KAJA For example, a fan has ten bones. When you are to say, "Seven petals, eight petals," I will open my fan to show you first seven and then eight bones.

LORD I've got it.

TARO KAJA And for "Nine petals, I expected," I will show you nine bones.

LORD Well done.

TARO KAJA And for, "But they blossomed with ten glorious petals," I will open the fan all the way.

LORD (Laughing.) Well, I must say, how clever you are, but there was something or other more on the end.

TARO KAJA Right you are. It is simply, "The flowers of the bush clover."

LORD That's it, that's it. That is the part that there is no way I can remember.

TARO KAJA You mean you cannot memorize even this much?

LORD I cannot even so much as imagine memorizing it.

TARO KAJA Oh, I say, you do, indeed, have a poor memory.

LORD Please compare this, also, with something, if you possibly can.

TARO KAJA Oh, I know. When you scold me, you always complain that the only thing mature about me is my long shanks (hagi). So, while I realize how rude it may seem, I will point to my shank on the other side.

LORD You have compared well, compared well you have! No matter how poor my memory may be, there is no way that this will not work.

TARO KAJA If that is the case, everything is ready. Now, you should be on your way.

LORD Come, come. Follow me, follow me.

TARO KAJA As you say, Sir.

LORD Well, now, thanks to you, I will be able to view a fine garden.

TARO KAJA And after you have viewed it, you will have a fine memory to take back home with you.

LORD Indeed, it will be a fine memory to take back home with me. And do we still have far to go?

TARO KAJA Here we are already. I will announce your arrival. Please wait right there for a moment.

LORD With all my heart.

TARO KAJA Hello in there? Is anybody home?

GARDEN OWNER Someone is at the door. Who is there?

TARO KAJA It is I.

GARDEN OWNER Oh, Taro Kaja. Are you on your way to visit the temple again?

TARO KAJA Today I have brought my master with me. He says he would like to view your garden. Please show it to him.

GARDEN OWNER That is a most simple thing to do, but as I have not cleaned it today, I cannot show it to him.

TARO KAJA That is not of the least concern. Please show it to him.

GARDEN OWNER If that is the case, please come all the way inside.

TARO KAJA With all my heart.

GARDEN OWNER (Opening the door.). Zara, zara, zara.

TARO KAJA (To the LORD.) He says you are to come all the way inside.

LORD With all my heart. Is the owner of the garden at home?

TARO KAJA Indeed, he is at home. And that is him.

LORD You say that is the owner?

TARO KAJA That it is.

LORD Sir Owner, I request your kind hospitality.

GARDEN OWNER I am most grateful that you deign to drop by such an unsightly place as mine.

LORD I appreciate the kindness that you always extend to Taro Kaja when he visits you.

GARDEN OWNER What a polite greeting!

LORD Taro Kaja, bring me a stool.

TARO KAJA As you say, Sir. (He goes to get a stool.) Here is a stool for you. (He places it behind the LORD.)

LORD (He sits on the stool, and gazes out into the garden.) Hey, hey, Taro Kaja. Is that the garden you are always talking about?

TARO KAJA That is it.

LORD Well, I must say, what a lovely garden it is.

TARO KAJA That it is.

LORD (To the OWNER.) You seem to have very good taste.

GARDEN OWNER Oh, no, not at all.

LORD This white stuff in the front, is it sand?

GARDEN OWNER It is sand.

LORD Where did it come from?

GARDEN OWNER It is Bingo sand.

LORD You say it's Bungo sand?

TARO KAJA Shhh. It is the famed Bingo sand.

LORD The famed Bingo sand? Well, I must say, how white it is. It looks just exactly like white rice from Domyo Temple.

TARO KAJA Shhh. The owner will hear you.

LORD Is that stone over there a sea stone or a mountain stone?

GARDEN OWNER It is a mountain stone.

LORD I was quite certain it was, indeed, a mountain stone.

GARDEN OWNER You have most discerning eyes.

LORD Taro Kaja. Is not that a fine stone?

TARO KAJA It is, indeed, a fine stone.

LORD That place about the size of a man's fist sticking out there is most amusing, is it not?

TARO KAJA It is most amusing, indeed.

LORD I would be a good idea to knock that piece off and use it as a flintstone.

TARO KAJA Shhh.

LORD Is that tree over there a plum tree?

GARDEN OWNER It is a plum tree.

LORD Are its blossoms white or red?

GARDEN OWNER It is a prunier blanc.

LORD Blanc what?

TARO KAJA Prunier blanc means white plum.

LORD You say prunier blanc means white plum? Why everybody knows that, do they not?

TARO KAJA That they do.

LORD Oh, just look at that branch over there. The way it stretches up so straight and tall is most amusing, is it not?

TARO KAJA It is amusing.

LORD I know how that could be used.

TARO KAJA What would you use it for?

LORD I would chop it off and use it as a tea mortar stone handle.

TARO KAJA Shhhh. The garden owner will hear you.

GARDEN OWNER Taro Kaja! Tell him that if he has a use for it, I will break it off and give it to him.

TARO KAJA Oh, no. He was only joking.

LORD I say, I say, Sir Owner. I was only joking. My saying that it should be used as a mortar stone handle was meant as an admonition to you not to chop it off.

GARDEN OWNER As you say, Sir.

LORD Taro Kaja!

TARO KAJA Ha.

LORD What is that big red thing you can see over there in the distance?

TARO KAJA That is a bush clover bush.

LORD So that is a bush clover bush?

TARO KAJA That it is.

LORD Well, I must say, what a fine bush clover bush it is. I say, I say, Sir Owner. Where is that bush clover bush from?

GARDEN OWNER It is from Miyagino.

LORD What's that? You say I should take it home as a souvenir (miyage)?

TARO KAJA Shhh. Miyagino is a place that is famous for its bush clover.

LORD You say Miyagino is a place that is famous for its bush clover. I say, I say. If you were to scatter those red bush clover blossoms on this white sand, it would look for all the world like festive rice with red beans. (He laughs.)

TARO KAJA Shhh. You must not say things of that sort!

GARDEN OWNER I say, I say, Master Taro Kaja. Everyone who pays a visit here is required to give a presentation on the subject of bush clover blossoms. Tell

you master that if he could possibly manage to give a presentation, I would be most obliged.

TARO KAJA With all my heart. (To the LORD.) I have a matter to report to you.

LORD What is it?

TARO KAJA Did you hear what he just said?

LORD What was it?

TARO KAJA Presentation.

LORD Presentation. . . presentation. . .

TARO KAJA The poem, the poem. . .

LORD So presentation means the poem?

TARO KAJA That it does.

LORD I say, I say, Sir Owner. I am also a poetry fan, so I will recite a poem for you.

GARDEN OWNER For that I would be most grateful.

LORD Taro Kaja! I said I would recite it.

TARO KAJA Then do recite it.

LORD I will recite, I will recite it. This is how it goes.

GARDEN OWNER How does it go?

LORD Seven bones, eight bones. . .

GARDEN OWNER "Seven bones, eight bones. . ."

TARO KAJA Shhh. It is "Seven petals, eight petals."

LORD That was a mistake. It is "Seven petals, eight petals."

GARDEN OWNER As an opening line, that is most amusing.

LORD Do you find it amusing?

GARDEN OWNER That I do.

LORD Nine bones. . .

GARDEN OWNER "Nine bones. . ."

TARO KAJA Shhh. It is "Nine petals, I expected."

LORD Here, I say, I say. That was also a mistake.

GARDEN OWNER What was it supposed to be?

LORD It is "Nine petals, I expected."

GARDEN OWNER This is most amusing.

LORD Open all the way. . .

TARO KAJA Shhh. It is "But they blossomed with ten glorious petals." (Aside.) Such a man is best served by putting him in an embarrassing situation. (He exits.)

LORD Well, I must say, I apologize sincerely. That was another mistake.

GARDEN OWNER You make frequent mistakes, do you not?

LORD This one goes, "But they blossomed with ten glorious petals."

GARDEN OWNER Let me try it out as a chant.

LORD (He has noticed that TARO KAJA is no longer by his side and begins getting nervous.) Do whatever you like with it.

GARDEN OWNER (Chanting.)

"Seven petals, eight petals,
Nine petals, I expected,
But they blossomed with ten glorious petals. . ."
This is most amusing.

LORD Do you find it amusing?

GARDEN OWNER That I do.

LORD Then, fare you well. (He gets up to leave.)

GARDEN OWNER Oh, I say, I say. Until you give me the last line of your poem, I will not let you get away.

LORD The last line of my poem is. . . Where has Taro Kaja gone off to?

GARDEN OWNER I say, I say. The last line of your poem does not require Taro Kaja. Just tell me the last line of your poem yourself.

LORD It is "Seven petals, eight petals."

GARDEN OWNER You are right. It goes,
"Seven petals, eight petals,
Nine petals, I expected. . ."

LORD That's it, that's it.

GARDEN OWNER "But they blossomed with ten glorious petals. . ."

LORD Why, what a fine memory you have!

GARDEN OWNER Please recite me the rest.

LORD You say you want the rest?

GARDEN OWNER Most certainly.

LORD That is all there is.

GARDEN OWNER Oh, here, here. Though you say that is all there is, it lacks sufficient syllables.

LORD If it lacks sufficient syllables, I know how you can solve that.

GARDEN OWNER How is that?

LORD All you need do is keep repeating, "But they blossomed with ten glorious petals, But they blossomed with ten glorious petals" until you have enough.

GARDEN OWNER Well, I say, that makes it too short.

LORD If it is too short, I have an even better way to solve it.

GARDEN OWNER What is that?

LORD Just draw out the last syllable of "But they blossomed with ten glorious petaaaaaals" until it is long enough.

GARDEN OWNER Well, I swear, it appears you are making fun of me. (Grabbing a hold of the LORD.)

LORD What are you up to?

GARDEN OWNER Until you tell me the rest of the poem, I will not let you get away.

LORD What's that? Until I tell you the rest of the poem, you will not let me get away?

GARDEN OWNER Most certainly.

LORD It that a fact?

GARDEN OWNER It is a fact.

LORD Is it your true intent?

GARDEN OWNER That goes without saying.

LORD Oh, I just remembered what the rest of the poem is.

GARDEN OWNER What is it?

LORD This is it.

GARDEN OWNER What is it?

LORD But they blossomed with ten glorious petals. . .

GARDEN OWNER "But they blossomed with ten glorious petals. . . "

LORD Taro Kaja's outside shank.

GARDEN OWNER You lazy rascal, get out of my sight!

LORD (Bowing.) I humbly beg your pardon.