

## The Impudent Jizo Statue

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(Kanazu Jizo)

Son  
Country Man (CM)  
Father  
Worshippers

CM I am a resident of Kanazu in the Land of Echizen. We have built a six-foot square temple for the area. The temple was completed according to plan, but as yet we have no suitable sculpture for it. I have decided today to go to the capital and obtain a sculpture. I must hurry on my way. Truly, the countryside is a most inconvenient place. The temple is completed, but as we have no sculptor, there is no way for us to obtain a sculpture. Wah! Wah! It looks like I am near the capital as all is in a bustle. And as one would expect of the capital, different from the houses of the countryside, the eaves are built right up against each other as though they are all the best of friends. Well, I must say, how lively it is here! Ah, I just remembered something I had completely forgot. I have no idea where a sculptor may live or what sort of person he might be. I should have inquired carefully about this before I set out, but now that I have come this far, there is no way I can go back to inquire. Just what am I to do? Huh? Huh? Huh? (Laugh.) Just as one might expect of the capital, it appears that people go about shouting out the things they want to sell or buy. If that is the case, I will also

go about shouting. Here, here, I say! Is there a sculptor living there? I want to buy a sculpture. I would like to buy a sculpture. Where is there a sculptor? I want to buy a sculpture. I would like to buy a sculpture. I say, I say! Is there a sculptor living there? You say there's none? I want to buy a sculpture. Where is there a sculptor? I want to buy a sculpture. I would like to buy a sculpture.

FATHER I am a resident of the capital with a most deceitful heart. That looks like a country man over there, and he is yapping about something or other. I think I'll just try to strike up an acquaintance. Here, here! I say, I say.

CM Is it me to whom you speak?

FATHER Indeed, it is you to whom I speak. What is it you are yapping about in the middle of this broad highway?

CM As I am a country man, I spoke without knowing yapping is prohibited.

FATHER No, no! There is no prohibition against yapping. I am simply asking you what it is you want as it may just be that I can provide you with it.

CM For that I would be most grateful. As I desire a sculpture, I am seeking for a sculptor.

FATHER And would you recognize a sculptor if you saw one?

CM Well, as a man of the capital, you should know better. If I could, I would not walk about shouting out like this. It is because I do not know one that I seek for one.

FATHER Then I was very wrong. In that case, you are a man of good fortune.

CM You speak of good fortune, but these clothes clearly show the extent of my fortune.

FATHER No, no. The way you dress is not the sort of fortune of which I speak. I mean that your meeting me is your good fortune.

CM And just what do you mean by that?

FATHER In the capital are many people, but the one you seek is I, a bona fide sculptor.

CM Oh, how frightful! Stay away from me!

FATHER What is wrong with you?

CM Ever since I was born, I have had a strong dislike of boa constrictors.

FATHER You have simply heard wrong. I am not a boa constrictor. I said I am a bona fide sculptor.

CM So you say you are a sculptor?

FATHER Most certainly.

CM If you are a sculptor, you should have simply said you are a sculptor. What do you mean by bona fide sculptor?

FATHER Your doubt is understandable. In the past, there were Unkei, Tankei, and Annami: three separate sculpting lines. Unkei and Tankei both languished and died out, and of the line of Annami, I am the sole survivor. Thus I am a bona fide sculptor.

CM Now that I hear your reason, I understand completely. So as I desire a sculpture, please show one to me.

FATHER Fortunately I have on hand a well-made Jizo statue. I will show it to you. Please wait right there for a moment.

CM With all my heart.

FATHER Here, my Son, are you there?

SON Here.

FATHER There you are.

SON At your service, Father.

FATHER I have something to tell you. If you will listen to what I have to say, I will speak, but if you refuse to listen, I will tell you nothing.

SON What a roundabout way of speaking. What son would ever refuse to listen to his father? Say whatever it is you have to say.

FATHER These days I have not been able to support myself nor you no matter how hard I may try, so feeling that it would be best for all of us to sell you, I have consulted with my wife and she agrees. Will you allow us to do so?

SON Of course, I am willing to do anything to show my filial piety, so sell me to whom ever wherever you feel fit.

FATHER Oh, how happy I am. Concerning which, it is such an urgent situation that I will explain the plan I have devised on the spur of the moment. A man from Kanazu in the Land of Echizen has come seeking after a Buddhist statue. But since I am not capable of carving so much as a toothpick, and since I just want to get the money he has to pay for one, I tricked him by say that I am a Biuddhist sculptor. In other words, my plan is to sell you as a Saint Jizo statue, so prepare your heart for that.

SON Since you are going to sell me, you cannot sell him nothing, but I have never before become a Saint Jizo.

FATHER Oh, but all you need do is pretend you are a Saint Jizo, and there will be no problem, so I humbly beg you to do this for me.

SON If I go now, I will not be able to see either you my dear dad nor my dear mom again.

FATHER Well, no, you would not be able to see us again very soon.

SON That is the sole thing that makes me reluctant, that is what makes me sad.

FATHER Truly, there is nothing so sad in this world as being poor. To sell ones own son is not the normal thing to do, but do not bother yourself about it, because for the time being, I will take you to the temple they have built and place you inside, and then, first, I will come back home regretting having parted from you, but then, later on, I will sneak back there and bring you back home, so please be calm and do not worry.

SON I am most grateful. Please make certain to come back for me as soon as you can.

FATHER First, let's dress you up like a Saint Jizo. Come along with me. (The FATHER takes the SON upstage right and dresses him in a formal costume and puts a mask over his face, then seats him on a stool center stage. Then he calls out to the CM to come forward from where he has been waiting.) Country Man, are you there?

CM Here I am.

FATHER It was necessary to touch the statue up a bit, so it is for that reason that it has taken me quite a bit of time. I am sorry to have kept you waiting.

CM You did not keep me waiting so very long.

FATHER Please have a look at the Saint Jizo. (He mimes raising a curtain hanging in front of the and both he and the CM fold their hands in prayer for a short time.)

CM Well I must say, what a fine statue it is. Since it is a true masterpiece, it gives the impression of being alive. (He folds his hands once again and then touches the cheek of the SON and draws back in surprise.) Aaagh! Its skin is quite warm like that of a living person.

FATHER So very little time has passed since I applied the paint, so until the paint adhesive solidifies, it will remain warm.

CM I understand well what you say. The more I gaze upon it, the more it looks like a real live person.

FATHER As I explained before, of the line of Annami, I am the sole survivor, and, though I am reluctant to say so, I am proud of it myself, and it is for this reason that it does not appear to be made of mere wood.

CM It is finely made indeed. And how much is the price.

FATHER Ten thousand pieces.

CM That is very high, but since it is a Buddhist statue, I will by all means purchase it at your price. In other words, I will hand you the cash at the Daikoku Shop in Sanjo.

FATHER I agree, and I am familiar with the Daikoku Shop, so I will go there to receive your payment.

CM Well then, shall I put it in a box to carry it away with me?

FATHER That would suffocate it, so please simply carry it on your back.

CM With all my heart. (The FATHER helps put his SON on the back of the CM.) Since the paint adhesive is not yet dry, it continues to feel warm.

FATHER Oh, while there is some warmth from the paint adhesive, since it already possesses the heart of the Buddha, it not only has warmth, but it will likely act in various miraculous ways. So make certain that you believe fully in it, and do not neglect to give it food and other offerings that it will naturally consume, and it may even speak to you. So prepare your hear for that.

CM Well, I must say, what a wonder it is. Well, then, now I will be on my way.

FATHER Yes, do be on your way.

CM As you say, Sir.

FATHER I am most grateful that you came.

CM (Setting out for home.) Oh, how happy, how happy I am. I have purchased a Buddhist statue with the greatest ease. When I tell my fellow villagers about it, I am certain that they will all rejoice with me. Well, here I am already. (He takes the SON off his back and seats him on a stool.) I say, are you all there?

WORSHIPPERS Here we are.

CM I have just now come home.



WORSHIPPERS And we thank you for your efforts.

CM And, to be brief, I have bought a Buddhist statue and brought it home with me. And I placed it in our temple. Come quickly and worship it.

WORSHIPPERS As you say. Let us all worship.

HEAD WORSHIPPER Well, I must say, what a wonder. (They fold their hands in prayer in front of the SON.)

COUNTRY MAN Now, you must offer flowers and incense.

(WORSHIPPERS open their fans and make their offerings.)

SON I am very happy to receive your flower and incense offerings, but I would really like to have some bean-jam buns.

COUNTRY MAN What is this? The statue speaks. But don't you all get excited, for the sculptor is the only descendent of Annami in the entire city, so his statue will work many different miracles, so you must most certainly not be surprised. Just believe and offer some bean-jam buns.

WORSHIPPERS Well we must say, what a wondrous thing to behold. So let us offer some bean-jam buns. Here are bean-jam buns in offering to our Kanazu Jizo.

SON I am most grateful for your offering of bean-jam buns, but I would also like to have a drink of your oldest wine.

WORSHIPPERS More and more miraculous. Let us offer our oldest wine.

COUNTRY MAN That is a fine idea. Make certain that you offer plenty of your best.

WORSHIPPERS With all our hearts. Here is our oldest wine in offering to our Kanazu Jizo.

SON I am most grateful, most grateful indeed. But you do not seem to be enjoying yourselves, not in the least.

COUNTRY MAN What do you all think? Being a seated Jizo statue as it is now, it does not suit our temple. Since it can speak, I think that we should request that it take a standing pose. Just what do you think?

HEAD WORSHIPPER That is a fine idea.

COUNTRY MAN It is a most jolly Jizo statue, so let us make our request in rhyme and rhythm, so all of you join me in singing and dancing.

WORSHIPPER That is an even better idea.

COUNTRY MAN Then let us begin singing and dancing. All of you get to your feet.

WORSHIPPERS & COUNTRY MAN (Singing and dancing.) Oh, Kanazu Jizo, we say, Kanazu Jizo. Let us see you move a bit, oh, let us see you move.

SON Though I would prefer not to move even a little bit, since it is the desire of you my patrons, I will move just ever so slightly.

COUNTRY MAN (Singing and dancing.) Oh, Kanazu Jizo, we say, Kanazu Jizo. Let us see you stand up, oh, let us see you stand up.

SON Though I would prefer not to stand up even a little bit, since it is the desire of you my patrons, I will stand up a bit for you.

WORSHIPPERS & COUNTRY MAN (Singing and dancing.) Oh, Kanazu Jizo, we say, Kanazu Jizo. Let us see you dance a bit, oh, let us see you dance.

SON Though I would prefer not to dance even a little bit, since it is the desire of you my patrons, I will dance a bit with you.

(All dance and sing in a circle, going round and round repeatedly, becoming more and more deeply involved and increasing in intensity and tempo.)

FATHER I have come to see how my beloved son is doing. Now that I see how things are going, I think this is a good time to take him home with me. (He beckons to his SON from a short distance away. The WORSHIPPERS do not notice him, so they keep on dancing and singing.) Oh, my dear son, come along with me, just come along with me.

(The SON slips out of the circle of dancing WORSHIPPERS, climbs on his FATHER's back, and the FATHER carries him swiftly away.)

HEAD WORSHIPPER (Finally noticing what has happened, he stops dancing and calls out to the others.) Oh, look, just look! Somebody or other is running off with our Saint Jizo on his back.

COUNTRY MAN That is the sculptor that I met in the capital. Hey, hey, you hateful rascal!

FATHER (Stopping for an instant and look back.) What is it you want of me?

COUNTRY MAN What do you intend to do with our Saint Jizo on your back?

FATHER If you do not mind, I will just take it away out of your sight, I will just take it away from here. (Turning and dashing away.)

COUNTRY MAN He is a shyster. Everybody, go and grab him, go and grab him. Oh, look, he is getting away.

WOSHIPPERS Let us chase after him, let us chase after. (Chasing off after the FATHER and SON.) We'll catch you yet, we'll catch you yet! We'll catch you yet, we'll catch you yet! We'll catch you yet, we'll catch you yet!

