

Two to Deliver One Letter
(Fumi Ninai)

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Taro Kaja (TK)

Jiro Kaja (JK)

Master (MR)

MR I am a resident of this neighborhood. These days I have been trysting with a lovely young man named Senmichi who resides in Higashiyama. He has written me a letter requesting that I visit him tonight. So I have written him an answer agreeing to do so. I mean to call my servants Taro Kaja and Jiro Kaja order them to deliver it. Here, the two of you! Are you there?

TK & JK Here!

MR There you are.

TK At your service, Sir.

MR You came quite quickly. The matter I have called you here about is of no great import. Jiro Kaja probably does not know about my recent activities, does he, Taro Kaja.

TK The matter about which you speak is known by not only Jiro Kaja, but by the entire world, isn't it, Jiro Kaja.

JK Truly. . .

TK & JK It is no secret at all.

MR I have tried to be discrete, but since everybody knows, I must be more careful.

TK & JK It is as you say, Sir.

MR Well, you see, I have received a letter inviting me to come for a visit tonight. So since I intend to go, I have written an answer that I will. While I realize it is a great imposition, I order the two of you to go and deliver it.

TK As you say, Sir. But if you wife should get wind of this, she will surely scold us, so please allow us not to go.

MR That would be a misunderstanding on her part, for it is not a letter to another woman, but to a young man, so since there is no problem, go and deliver it.

TK Though it is to a young man, since it means that we would be messengers on the road to love, she has strictly warned me

against becoming involved in such aberrant behavior. So please allow me not to go.

MR If that is the case, you go deliver it, Jiro Kaja.

JK But I do not know where he resides.

MR Taro Kaja, you surely must know where he resides, so I order you to go deliver it.

TK I beg you to allow me not to go.

MR Here, you rascal, you refuse to listen to me as you are afraid of what my wife will say, and for which reason you refuse to listen to my orders.

TK Oh, no, that is not the case.

MR What are you jabbering about?! Will you go or will you not? Give me a straight answer! (threatening to draw his sword)

TK & JK Oh, please wait, Sir.

MR Wait for what?

TK I will go.

MR But you just refused to.

TK I will go.

JR He says he will go.

MR So you will go?

TK Haaa.

MR (laughing) I was only joking, so do not worry, just go and deliver it.

TK I refused once, but since that is the way things are, I will go.

MR While it is a matter that can be done by one person, in order for you to learn where he resides, Jiro Kaja, I order you to go along too.

JK As you say, Sir.

TK So does this mean that you order us both to go on this errand?

MR That is indeed what I mean.

TK As you say, Sir.

MR Go quickly and hurry back.

TK & JK Haaa.

MR Ei

TK & JK Haaa.

(MR exits.)

(TK & JK laugh)

TK Well, I must say, what a strange matter this is, don't you agree.

JK It is a strange matter indeed.

TK But, still, we must go. Come, come, let us be on our way.

JK With all my heart.

TK Well, now, just what do you think. In this world, taking a wife is for having children to carry on the family line. So of what use is a man like our master who is crazy about young men?

JK In any case, I want him to give up his craze for young men.

TK It is as you say indeed.

(BOTH laugh.)

TK But, wait a minute.

JK You say I should wait?

TK I did indeed. (Tries to hand the letter to JK, who refuses.)

JK Here, you rascal, he ordered me to go along in order to learn where he resides. I was not ordered to carry the letter.

TK But it was the two of us he ordered to go on this errand, so, come, come carry it.

JK If that is the case, let us take turns.

TK Do not be so picky, just carry it.

JK (taking the letter) Come, come, let us be on our way.

TK With all my heart.

JK Now, what do you think? As our master is a man of few words, I would like to hear what he has to say to his young man.

TK It is likely like nothing more than a scrap of dirt picked up off the straw floor mats.

JK It is most likely something of that sort.

(BOTH laugh.)

JK Here, take it.

TK You're giving it to me so soon?

JK What do you mean so soon? Here, here, take it.

TK (taking the letter.) If that is the case, come, come, let us be on our way.

JK With all my heart.

TK There has never been a letter that I have not wanted to carry as much as I do not this one.

JK I feel just as strongly that I do not want to carry it either.

TK Here, take it.

JK You're giving it to me so soon?

TK What do you mean so soon? Here, here, take it.

JK (taking the letter.) If that is the case, come, come, let us be on our way.

TK With all my heart.

JK I have never carried a letter before that seems as heavy as this one.

TK What do you mean by heavy?

JK What do you mean what do I mean?

TK Maybe he was so happy about going to pay a visit tonight that he wrapped up some cash inside is what I mean!

JK Maybe that is truly the case.

(BOTH laugh.)

JK Here, here, take it.

TK You mean to give it to me again?

JK What do you mean by again? I have carried it quite a long time. Here, here, take it.

TK Passing it back and forth like this only serves to slow us down. I wonder if there isn't not a better way to carry it. Oh, I know what we should do.

JK What is it?

TK Here, here, let us tie it to this bamboo stick and carry it between us.

JK That is a fine idea.

TK You help me with it.

JK With all my heart.

TK If we proceed in this manner, don't you agree that we will avoid being upset with each other?

JK It is as you say indeed.

TK Now just what do you think? From times long past is it not most unusual to carry a letter in this manner?

JK There are very few examples I can think of.

TK Come, come, let us be on our way.

JK With all my heart. It has gotten a lot heavier. No wonder it is so heavy. Why have you pushed it over my way?

TK I have not pushed it. It is just because it is so heavy that there is nothing to prevent it slipping.

JK Put in the middle.

TK With all my heart. Well, now, I don't think that we should simply carry this letter. I think that we should make up a song about it and sing as we go along. What do you think.

JK That is a fine idea.

TK You sing with me.

JK With all my heart.

TK (Singing.) More irritated do I become,

**BOTH As I bear my love wrapped in a straw mat
On my shoulder, it weighs down my shoulder too much,
How lonely it is to sleep alone with only my arm for a pillow,
I try it on my other shoulder, but the reason I still cannot carry it
Is due to the bitter and unbearable heaviness of the letter.**

TK Oh, how very heavy it is!

JK It is indeed too heavy.

TK It seems strange to hear myself say this, but let us open it and have a look.

JK Hey, you rascal! What do you mean by suggesting that we open this letter that has been so very carefully sealed shut?

TK Then just what do you suggest that we do with it?

JK I do not agree to open it at all.

TK Here, here, just take a look at the address.

JK What is written there?

TK To be delivered to Senmichi.

JK & TK From the depths of my heart and soul.

(BOTH laugh.)

TK This is the sort of letter one writes to a woman.

JK He must have learned to write that from someone.

JK He must indeed have learned that from someone.

TK Well, then, let's open it and see what's inside.

JK Just leave well enough alone.

TK (Opening the letter and reading.) Oh, there is a lot written here, quite a lot.

JK What is written there?

TK Well, well. . .

JK I long for you, how I long for you.

TK (Laughing.) No wonder it is heavy. He has written with all the weight of Pebble Swamp Mountain.

JK Here, here, let me read it too.

TK Well then, just take a look.

JK I miss you as much as,

BOTH All of Mount Fuji. (They laugh.)

JK No wonder it is so heavy, for he has written in even Mount Fuji.

TK Here, here, let me see.

JK Well, then, just take a look.

TK Well, I must say, what infantile penmanship. It looks for all the world like sparrows have danced across the page.

JK Here, here, let me see.

TK Well, then, just take a look.

JK It looks like it was scribbled over by an earthworm.

TK Here, here, let me see.

JK Well, then, just take a look.

TK There are both places where the ink is thin and where it is thick.

JK And he thought that he could send a letter with this sort of penmanship.

TK It is just as you say.

(BOTH laugh.)

JK Here, here, let me see.

TK Just let me read a little more.

JK Here, just let me see.

TK Just let me read a little more.

JK Oh, just let me see.

TK Just let me read a little more. (They pull the paper so hard that it tears down the middle.) Now just look what you have done.

JK What do you mean?

TK Though you could have just let me read it a little more, you have pull it so hard, that it has torn in two as you see. I know nothing about it. You go give our master the best excuse you can think of.

JK Hey, you rascal. Though I strongly objected, you are the one who insisted on breaking the seal and starting to read it, are you not? I know nothing about it. You go give our master the best excuse you can think of.

TK Oh, here, here, the way things stand now, neither of us can escape our fate.

JK As you say, neither can escape our fate.

TK So just what is there for us to do.?

JK Let us explain together and gain our master's forgiveness.

TK Oh, no, he is not the sort of man to listen to our excuses.

JK Then just what should we do?

TK I think we should run.

JK That is a fine idea.

TK Where are you off to?

JK You said to run, so I am running.

TK I did not mean to run, but to throw the letter down and run after it.

JK That is a fine idea.

TK But at the same time, it would not do at all to simply throw away a love letter on its way to be delivered. I think we should sing a little song as we throw it away.

JK That is a fine idea.

TK You sing along with me.

JK With all my heart.

TK (Fanning the pieces of the torn letter.) Passing by Shiga Bay, I dropped the letter,

BOTH And the wind in the pines on the beach at Hamamatsu picked it up and deliver its scattered pieces, on the wings of the wind, on the wings of the wind.

TK Watch them scatter, just look how they scatter!

JK On the wings of the wind, on the wings of the wind. Watch them scatter, just look how they scatter!

TK On the wings of the wind, on the wings of the wind. Watch them scatter, just look how they scatter!

MR I sent my two servants on an errand, but they are very late in returning. I intend to go out to meet them. Hey, hey, you hateful rascals!

BOTH Its our master.

MR Oh, how angry I am, how angry.

JK I thought that you would be.

MR Hey, you rascal.

JK Haa? Here is your answer.

MR What do you mean by saying that this torn thing is my answer.

JK Oh, forgive me.

MR You hateful rascal.

TK What is this? What a vexing situation.

MR Hey, hey, you hateful rascal.

TK Here is your answer.

MR What do you mean my answer? What a hateful rascal you are. What am I to do with you?

TK Oh, please forgive me.

MR What do you mean forgive you. You hateful rascal. I'll catch you both yet, I'll catch you yet.

BOTH Oh, forgive us, please forgive us.

MR I'll catch you yet, I'll catch you yet.