

972) Taku Nagato recommends his grandson as caretaker during the lord's absence.

In 1637 when Lord Katsushige went up to Edo for biannual residence, Taku Nagato said to him, "I have been training my grandson Mimasaka as an attendant. I would like you to appoint him caretaker while you are away." Accordingly, Mimasaka received the appointment at about twenty years of age. There came the time of the riot in Arima. Several people were asked to go to the border with the territory of Saga, and Mimasaka, the new caretaker, drew up the whole plan within a short time by himself.

In the Edo residence Lord Katsushige was anxious about what preparations to make for the riot, and told Nabeshima Ichisuke to draw up a plan. When he looked at Mimasaka's plan later, both were very similar to each other in content.

* Taku Mimasaka was 30 years old at the time.

973) Nabeshima Sho-zo brings a unique present to Lord Naoshige.

Nabeshima Sho-zo came back from visiting Ise Shrine and went to see Lord and Lady Naoshige with a gift. It consisted of mortuary tablets for Lord Naoshige's parents. "It is so kind of you to bring these tablets to us," he said. "I have been worrying about the ones at Koden-ji Temple because they are not in good condition." To their surprise, he took out two more tablets. "Who are they for?" they asked. "They are for both of you, sir," said Sho-zo. The present tablets are those which Sho-zo brought at that time.

* Ise Shrine is the Imperial Family's shrine, where the Sun Goddess, their mythological ancestor, is enshrined.

974) Lord Naoshige boasts of his son.

When Shimomura Sho-un came up to the castle, Lord Naoshige said, "I am glad that my son is healthy and quite strong for his age. I was told he could defeat older men at *sumo* wrestling." "Is that so?" said Sho-un. "Then let me wrestle a bout with him on the floor, though I am an old man." Sho-un threw him down, treating him to a painful experience. "He is not strong enough," he said. "He has not built up a strong physique yet. If he boasts of his power like that, he will make a fool of himself. He is not

so strong as he looks.” And he went away.

975) Nagayama Roku-zaemon succeeds in accompanying the lord to the castle.

When Lord Mitsushige was in Edo, there was a big fire. All the attendants were about to go with him to the site. Some senior counselors asked them to remain but they would not listen. The lord was told, and said, “Those of you on duty today should come with me but the others go back to your posts.” The matter was settled by his single authoritative word. Then Nagayama Rokuro-zaemon seized the hand of Yamasaki Kageyu, a senior counselor, and said, “Let me go. I am on duty.” He managed to go with the lord, though in fact he was not on duty that day.

976) Aiura Gen-zaemon fulfills his duty as a messenger.

In 1634 Shogun Iemitsu went up to Kyoto, and Lord Katsushige accompanied him. A letter was brought to Lord Katsushige at his residence from Nagai Shinano, a Shogunate counselor. Aiura Gen-zaemon was told to take the lord’s reply to Nagai Shinano.

When he took it to Nagai’s residence, he was told by the attendant that he had gone to Nijo Castle. As it was the first time for him, Gen-zaemon was not familiar with Shogunate formalities. He carried the message directly to the entrance of Nijo Castle, where the keeper met him and said reproachfully, “What a careless fellow! I am going to arrest you.” Holding a staff, he was about to seize him.

Gen-zaemon crouched by the wall and took out the letter from his clothes and said, “Please calm down. I have something to report.” Since he looked very serious, the keeper stood still for a moment. Then Okabe Tamba-no-kami appeared from the inner room and asked about the confusion at the entrance.

“My name is Gen-zaemon,” he said. “I have brought Lord Katsushige’s letter to hand to Nagai Shinano-no-kami.” “Oh, you are an attendant of Lord Nabeshima, are you not?” said Tamba-no-kami. “Do you know me?” Gen-zaemon said he did not know him.

Feeling disappointed, Tamba-no-kami said, “It seems this is the first time he was sent on such an errand. That is proved by the fact that he does not know me. Let me receive the letter.” Looking down at Gen-zaemon with contempt, the keeper left the place.

“Hand me the letter. Let me give you our reply,” he said. Hearing his words,

Gen-zaemon said, "I have brought this at the risk of my life. I will not show it to anybody I do not know." "You are quite right," he said. "However, you probably do not know that Lord Katsushige's wife is my sister. My name is Okabe Tamba-no-kami, so please show me the letter. You do not have to worry at all."

Gen-zaemon handed him the letter. Soon he appeared with a reply from Nagai Shinano, which Gen-zaemon received and went back to the residence. In the evening Tamba-no-kami visited and told Lord Katsushige about the incident. "Gen-zaemon behaved splendidly," he said. "He is a man with guts. You should make much of him." Gen-zaemon was not scolded for his conduct at the castle, but was awarded a present. Later he was promoted to a high-ranking post.

977) Moro-oka Ka-uemon is awarded a picture by the lord's son.

Moro-oka Ka-uemon was in charge of the entrance of the Edo residence. When he was receiving a visitor, Lord Mitsushige passed by. Moro-oka Ka-uemon reported to the lord and ushered the visitor to the lord.

Another day when Moro-oka Ka-uemon was accompanying the lord's son Tsunashige up to Edo, they met his father Lord Mitsushige on his way back to Saga. Soon after they parted from the lord, Tsunashige told Ka-uemon to go as a messenger to his father. "Dress yourself in the official garb," said the prince. However, he could not open the container because the key was missing. Tsunashige was watching him, but Ka-uemon broke the box and took out the clothes. Later Prince Tsunashige gave him a sketch of the scene which he had drawn.

* Prince Tsunashige was good at drawing.

978) Ohki Gon-zaemon has a bout with Lord Yamashiro.

Ohki Gon-zaemon made a New Year visit to Lord Yamashiro's residence. "It is you, Gon-zaemon," he said. "I have never wrestled with you. Let us have a bout. You counter with a defensive fall." "All right, sir," said Gon-zaemon. "But please change roles in the next bout. Otherwise, I will not wrestle with you." "OK," said the lord.

In the first bout, Yamashiro held him down by force. Seeing him leave after that, Gon-zaemon said in a loud voice, "Sir, you promised to change roles. Do you break your promise as a *samurai*?" "Oh, I am sorry. Let us have another bout. Let me counter with a defensive fall this time," he said. Gon-zaemon pinned him to the floor very

violently. Lord Yamashiro was held down by him, though he was stronger. "What a fellow!" he groaned, pinned beneath him. When Yamashiro was about to push him back, Gon-zaemon drew out his sword and held it to the lord's neck, saying, "This is how we take the head of a *samurai* in armor." He would not allow Yamashiro to move an inch.

979) The irony of Jimbey and Yohey's duel

Ishi-i Jinku and Matsuda Yohey were on good terms with each other. Yohey had a grudge against a *samurai* named Nozo-e Jimbey on account of some incident. Yohey said to him, "I am going to kill you, Jimbey. Let's go." They walked in the direction of a mountain monk's hut in Kihara. There was a bridge over a canal near the hut, so they dismantled it together. When they reached the hut, each explained his grudge against the other, and it emerged that they arose from mutual misunderstandings. They headed back, but the canal was unbridged. "What shall we do? We cannot go back without the bridge," they said.

In the meantime those who had heard of their encounter came to the canal. Seeing the scene, the pair decided to have a fight so that they would not be spoken ill of in the future. They slashed at each other for a while and Yohey got seriously injured, falling down in a vegetable garden. Jimbey was also badly wounded. With blood in his eyes, he could not see Yohey. While Jimbey was looking for him, Yohey wielded his sword as he lay in the garden. He cut Jimbey down, and tried to put his sword in his throat, but was too weak to manage it with his arms. Finally he finished Jimbey off by pressing it home with his legs.

Yohey was taken back to his house by his comrades. After he recovered he was ordered to commit *seppuku*. He invited his friend Jinku to the site, and they exchanged a farewell cup.

980) O-shima Ichi-dayu is run through with a spear.

When there was a fire in the town of Nagase, Taku Hyo-go and his attendants did their best to extinguish it. When they were returning to their post, they came across a man named O-shima at the back of Sainen-ji Temple. At the time he had been dismissed from his post. He stepped aside, but Hyo-go's attendants threw him into the moat, saying "Uncouth fellow!" O-shima's son Ichi-dayu, who had been following his father, fought bravely against the scores of attackers, but was beaten up.

The following year on August 15, Ichi-dayu was walking to a temple, carrying a hand lantern, when he was stabbed to death by a man with a spear at the bank of the Tafuse River. The perpetrator was never found, but it was thought to have been Taku Hyogo. That was the rumor put about by a bunch who were regarded, by themselves and others, as toughs.

In the meantime Taku Hyogo sent those toughs invitations to an evening party. They assumed that his purpose in doing so was to complain about the rumor, but he said nothing about it. The party went on till dawn. After that nobody spoke of the murder at all.

981) Goro-zaemon uses a three-legged kettle to teach his lesson.

When Yoshijima Goro-zaemon accompanied Lord Katsushige up to Edo, he was summoned by a senior council member of the Shogunate, because he was a well-known gardener. He was carried to his appointment with the Shogun's official in a bath tub! It was not permitted to enter Edo Castle on horseback, so he chose to go in a bath tub.

Once, when he invited Taku Nagato to his house, Goro-zaemon sent some men for a gracefully shaped tree in the mountains and rebuilt his garden for his guest the very day before the visit.

Another day when they were discussing fund-raising at Nagato's residence, Goro-zaemon brought out a three-legged kettle and said, "This leg stands for the lord, this one for all the family members, and the last one for our clan's farmers. The kettle is supported by three legs. If one of them is lost, it will fall down. If any of you do not help in raising money, our clan will fall without failure." Taku Nagato said, "Yes, it is just as you say." There was no further discussion of the matter.

Goro-zaemon passed his household to his sons but they quarreled among themselves, ending in his family's ceasing to exist. Goro-zaemon published a book entitled "A False Story," in which were these two poems.

"In spite of my old age, expense piles on expense, and I have need of cash!"

"If it is the desire of Lord Buddha to help people, let me remain as I am, in this world."

982) Suko Hachi-bey holds down a royal guard.

When Lord Katsushige went to Edo Castle, Suko Hachi-bey accompanied him. They were supposed to go round the dismounting spot to the Tatsu-no-kuchi gate. When they passed behind the guards, one of them raised his stick to beat someone in front, but it hit Hachi-bey on the forehead. It began to bleed. Wiping the blood off, Hachi-bey pounced on the guard and held him down. All the other guards lifted their sticks, and the attendants of Lord Katsushige also stood ready to fight, with their swords in their hands. Then the chief guard came out and said, "My men are to blame. We will punish the fellow." He took the man away, and the incident was settled.

983) Aged 15, Kan-no-suke fights *sumo* wrestlers.

O-kubo Toh-uemon kept a liquor shop in Shiota, patronized by Nabeshima Ken-motsu. O-kura, a physically handicapped son of Lord Naozumi of the Hasuike clan, lived in nearby Mino Village. He patronized *sumo* wrestlers and was fond of villains. The *sumo* wrestlers went to neighboring villages and did violence to many people.

One day two wrestlers came to Toh-uemon's shop, where they not only drank wine but picked a quarrel with him. Toh-uemon fought them with a halberd, but was killed by them.

His 15 year-old son Kan-no-suke was told of his father's death at Jo-zai-ji Temple where he was engaged in study. He rushed back to his house and fought against the two big men with his short sword, finally killing them. He got wounded in 13 places, but recovered eventually. Later he took the name Do-ko and mastered the art of massage.

984) Taku Shigefumi, lord of the Taku clan, is loved for his compassion.

The tea-ceremony master for the Taku family was on his way home after drinking a lot of rice wine. It was late at night and he walked with unsteady steps. He wandered into the residence of Ohta Dan-uemon, the lord's brother-in-law. Entering the inner room, he destroyed with his sword such items as a picture scroll, *tatami* mats, and sliding doors. He also stepped down into the garden and damaged some plants. Nobody witnessed it. About dawn he was seen waving his sword on a bridge in the western part of the town.

When Kumashiro San-zaemon, a gatekeeper at the Kumashiro residence, was looking around the house that morning, he happened to see him. He seized him and took him to the lord's residence. The drunkard finally sobered up with the keeper's help and

sneaked back to his own house.

At the residence of Ohta Dan-ueemon, the inner room had been badly damaged but they could not discover who had done it. After some time, however, it became known to the Taku family as a result of investigation. The tea-ceremony master confessed, and the retainers decided to put him to death and reported it to their master.

The lord said, "Wait for a while. I have decided not to take any human life till the seventh anniversary of my father-in-law's death. I will see Dan-ueemon and discuss the matter with him. He is my brother-in-law."

When he met Dan-ueemon at the castle, the lord told him about it. "Please do not punish him," said Dan-ueemon. "If you sentence him to death penalty, I will also have to punish a number of retainers. Then public service will become impossible." The upshot was that the tea master was not punished after all.

Later Lord Taku Shigefumi took the name I-yo. He was such a gentle lord that not only his attendants but all the farmers in the district were deeply attached to him. When he passed away, all the leaders of the farmers asked the branch clan government to allow them to hold a memorial service for him. It has been held regularly ever since.

* Taku Shigefumi was a son of Lord Mitsushige by his concubine. So was Ohta Dan-ueemon.

985) Nakano Matabey never forgets the advice of Nakano Kazuma.

When Nakano Matabey started in service, Kazuma said, "Everyone learns the phonetic syllabary in childhood. By and by you learn how to write Chinese characters, and some are good at it and others are not. A retainer should learn his job with someone as his model. But few think of this, and most find it hard to serve the lord properly." "So who do you recommend as a model?" he said. "Yamasaki Saburo-bey would be one of the best," said Kazuma.

Following this, Matabey tried to model his behavior in everything after Saburo-bey. It got so that Matabey would always be with Saburo-bey when he attended Lord Katsushige. They were told to walk one at each side of the palanquin whenever the lord went out.

When he grew old, Matabey would often speak of his teacher. "It was thanks to the advice of Kazuma," he said. "I still remember what he taught me, and whenever I am told to do something, I think of what his advice would be."

986) Old Tokunaga Zen-zaemon still longs to rush to the front.

Tokunaga Zen-zaemon would often say, “I am an old man now. Even if I were told to go to the front, I would be unable to make it because of my age. However, I still long to plunge into the enemy front and be pierced to death. How much I regret simply losing my life through old age!” This was his favorite refrain. When he was young, the priest Gyo-jaku would often hear from him. His teacher, the priest Yomon, was the youngest son of Zen-zaemon.

987) Nakano Kazuma inter the ashes of his son’s fiancée at his family temple.

San-dayu, the youngest son of Nakano Kazuma, was to be married to a daughter of Iwamura Kura-no-suke, but the girl died of smallpox at about 5 years of age. Kazuma said to Kura-no-suke, “Your daughter was the fiancée of my son. Please allow me to inter her ashes at our temple.” Her body was carried to his house and cremated. At the time, three infants contracted smallpox at Iwamura’s house, one of whom had just fallen ill. Iwamura was very anxious about it, but Kazuma would not listen to him.

988) Katata-e Kin-zaemon fights a fierce tiger.

During the Korean campaign, they went tiger hunting. A giant tiger was roaring on a rock. It looked really fierce, and nobody would approach it. Then Kin-zaemon drew out his sword and rushed forward to fight it. Battling against it for some time, he slashed his sword into the head of the beast, injuring it badly. In anger the tiger pounced on Kin-zaemon’s head and tore it in two with its sharp paws. Everyone was deeply moved by his fighting. Kato Kiyomasa, the lord of Kumamoto, hit his sword guard in excitement so hard that all his fingers were bleeding.

The brave *samurai* was a servant of the Isahaya family. His son was awarded a piece of land by Lord Katsushige. Kin-zaemon’s grandson became a priest, by the name of Kei-ryo.

989) Takase Jibu-zaemon does not accept headhunting as a *samurai*.

When Sagara Kyu-ma was appointed as an administrative retainer, he said to Nabeshima Hei-zaemon, “I am fortunate to have been promoted to such a high rank, but I have no reliable servant. It causes me great difficulty, so I would like to take your

attendant Jibu-zaemon as my own attendant.” Hei-zaemon said, “I am glad that you have decided on him. Let me tell him about your intention.”

Hei-zaemon summoned him and told him about Kyu-ma’s intention, but Jibu-zaemon said, “Please allow me to give my answer directly to him.” He called upon Kyu-ma and said, “I feel honored and so happy to know you thought of me as your servant. However, a *samurai* is not supposed to serve two masters. Given your very high rank, I will be able to spend my life free of worries if I become your servant. My present master does not have a high rank, so we live a frugal life, eating simple food like porridge day after day. But we are happy. I hope you can understand what I am driving at.”

Kyu-ma was moved by his attitude and felt all the more attached to him. Jibu-zaemon was one of the *samurai* who joined Daizen’s troop at the Battle of Arima in 1637.

990) A *samurai* kills his wife’s adulterer.

When a *samurai* came home late at night, he noticed a stranger enjoying sweet talk with his wife. He cut him to death. Then he broke the wall and put a straw bag of rice against it. He went to the magistrate’s office and reported that he had killed a burglar. Soon a magistrate came and confirmed the fact. He was not accused of anything, because his plot was unknown. Before long he made his wife return to her parents’ house, settling the matter successfully.

991) Another case of adultery

A *samurai* came back to his house and found his attendant lying together with his wife in bed. When he went to the inner room, the attendant ran to the kitchen. The *samurai* killed his wife, then called his maid and explained the matter to her. “It may bring disgrace on our child, so I will pretend that my wife died from illness,” he said. “If you do not agree, I will kill you.” The maid said to him, “No, I will tell no one. Please spare my life.”

With her agreement, they dressed the body in nightwear and sent one messenger after another for the doctor, as if it was an emergency. The last messenger to be sent said to the doctor, “She has breathed her last. You do not have to come over. Thank you.”

Soon his wife’s uncle was sent for. When he arrived, the *samurai* explained about his wife’s adultery, which the uncle accepted. Her death was ascribed to illness and the

true facts remained completely unknown. The attendant was exiled from the house for ever. This happened in Edo.

992) A *samurai* gives up the idea of killing his superior.

When the lord was in Edo, a young attendant came to the residence on business. He was severely rebuked by a superior, who had been promoted to a high position. The young *samurai* left the place without saying anything. He looked so serious and clearly determined to kill his superior that another official called him into a small room and said, "I know that you have a grudge against him and have decided to kill him. It seems to me that you feel so angry with him because your idea of service is different from his. The lord keeps us at a distance because he wants to use us in emergencies, like warfare or commotion. On the other hand, the man who abused you is treated very casually and given trivial jobs. He is quite unaware of why he is treated so amicably by the lord. He even feels proud, though he is as light as a fly on the head. To think of killing such a silly fellow is unworthy of you as a *samurai*. If you were to carry it out, it would also be an act of infidelity to our lord. If you refrain from killing the man, you will deserve to be called a true attendant. Let me say no more. I have said this much simply out of concern for you. It is not for me to prevent it." With such advice, he abandoned his intention to kill his superior.

993) The lord should be vigilant of branch families.

Taku Mimasaka went to see Nabeshima Motoshige, the lord of the Ogi branch clan. He asked the lord, "What do you think might happen in the future to make the clan go bankrupt?" "I am afraid our branch families will be responsible for that." Mimasaka changed the topic of conversation and returned. Later the lord said, "He is such a faithful retainer. He posed that question to me in order to remind me of that." An award was made to him later.

994) Nakano Jin-uemon never forgets his sense of humor in emergency.

In January 1598 a great many ships appeared in the sea off Urusang, Korea. All the Japanese soldiers were awestruck at the scene. Lord Naoshige said, "What a great number of ships they are! I wonder how many." Nakano Jin-uemon said, "In Japan we liken such countless profusion to the number of hairs on a three-year-old ox." At

that everyone burst into laughter and recovered their spirit.

Lord Katsushige related the incident to Nakano Matabey when he went hunting in Shiraishi. Matabey was the sixth son of Jin-uemon. “Nobody else could have made such a humorous remark in that situation,” said the lord.

995) Serve the lord even if he treats you mercilessly.

Nakano Jin-uemon used to say. “Anybody can serve his master faithfully when he is in a good mood. That is not real service, though. You should serve him even if you are treated mercilessly, or if unreasonable demands come from him. That is true service. Do not forget this.”

996) Nakano Jin-uemon has the same dream for three nights in a row.

When Nakano Jin-uemon lived in Mono-no-kawa, he had a strange dream, in which the god of the shrine on top of Mt. Kurokami appeared and said, “Since you are living in poverty, I will give you a jar full of money. Come up here as soon as you can for my gift.” He had the same dream for three nights in a row.

He climbed up the mountain and said to the shrine, “Thank you very much for your kindness in giving us a jar full of money. But we do not want it, though our life is hard. I ask you to protect all the Nakano family so that we will survive and prosper in the future. Let me return the jar to you.” Then he came down.

One day he said, “Thanks to my prayer, all my family were granted some land and were employed at various posts. But we are still poor. That is probably because I returned the jar to the god, ha, ha, ha!”

997) Yamamoto Jin-uemon never groans at his deathbed.

Yamamoto Jin-uemon was in his sickbed, seriously ill. He was now eighty years old. He looked as if he might start groaning. “Please let out a groan, and you will feel better,” they said. “No, I will not,” he said. “The name of Yamamoto Jin-uemon is known all over the country. Why should I groan merely from pain?” He never once groaned, right up until he breathed his last.

998) An attendant falls in love with his master’s wife.

When Tashiro Ri-uemon went out on business, his servant said to the master's wife, "I know it outrageous, but cannot stop wanting you. In vain have I tried to stop, again and again. Please understand how much you mean to me." She was furious with the attendant and scolded him severely, but he could not give up the opportunity to confess his love to her.

"I did not know how much you loved me," she said. "I am very happy to hear that. All right, I will give you what you have been dreaming of. Please go and wait for me in the hut at the back of the house." The servant went into the hut with great delight. Then, while pretending to be fixing it, she locked the entrance.

Soon Ri-uemon came back and was told of the servant's illicit love for his wife. Dragging him out of the hut, he killed him on the spot.

999) Too much is as bad as too little.

A man was appointed senior counselor by Lord Tsunashige, and held a party at his house, to which he invited his acquaintances. One of his friends entertained the guests with wine. It grew very late, but the man still went round entertaining the guests. When he came up to a certain guest seat and tried to coax him to drink more, the man said, "No more, thank you. We should call it a night." "Please do not say that. Have one more cup," he said, but the guest would not accept his cup. Then he said to the guest, "If you keep refusing, you will end up like Hotta." The guest reprimanded him furiously. "Since my friend asked me, I have been doing my best to entertain you all," he said. "It was a big mistake of me to try too hard. Please forgive my error." All the other guests mediated between the two, and the matter was settled satisfactorily.

Someone said, "It was very good of him to apologize like that. But the guest should not have got so angry, either. He should have said to him," 'You refer to Hotta'. Do you mean by that to eviscerate me with your sword? If so, you are mistaken. You have aimed at the wrong target. My life is to be offered to the lord. I would not let you take it so easily. You seem to have drunk too much. Why not sober up with a cup of tea in the kitchen?" A well-timed word is more effective than death itself. We should remember that.

* Hotta Masatoshi, the highest ranking official for the Shogunate, was speared to death by the counselor Inaba Seikyu on November 29, 1695.

1000) Lord Mitsushige thinks of appointing young Toneri as an administrative retainer.

Yamasaki Kurando was summoned to Lord Mitsushige. The lord said, "Since Sagara Kyuma has died, I am thinking of Ogawa Toneri as his replacement." "I quite agree with you," he said. "There is no one else we can think of. The only problem with him is that he is still young. I am afraid that his impetuosity will prevent him from serving you well. But he has wisdom. I think it will be better to wait a couple of years before appointing him." The lord agreed. Leaving the lord's room, Kurando went to see Toneri and said, "This is what I said to the lord about you. Please understand."

1001) Mori Mombey helps his son commit *seppuku*.

Mori Mombey's son had a fight with someone and came back injured. "What happened to your opponent, my son?" he said. "I cut him down." was the reply. "I see. And did you finish him off?" "Yes, of course," said the son.

"You did well," said Mombey. "You need have no regret. Sooner or later you will be sentenced to death. Let me act as your second now rather than be dispatched by another. Get yourself ready here." Mombey assisted his son in committing *seppuku*.

1002) Aiura Gen-zaemon kills his own attendant by the lord's command.

One of the attendants of Aiura Gen-zaemon did something wrong and was handed a note by an administrative retainer. He was told to show it to his master. Gen-zaemon read it and said to the man, "According to this warrant, I am supposed to put you to death. I will kill you at the east bank. You have practiced in swordsmanship. Fight with all your strength." "I understand, sir," he said.

Gen-zaemon went out with him. When they came to the Jikken-bori moat, another attendant of Gen-zaemon could be seen standing on the other bank. He shouted "Look out!" and Gen-zaemon turned round. The next moment the doomed man slashed at him, but he cut him to death as he stepped back.

After returning to his house he put his clothes in a wooden container, which he would show to none as long as he lived. When he died, the clothes were retrieved and, they turned out to be slashed at the edge, according to his son.

Someone else said that Gen-zaemon was aware that his attendant had slashed at him before they left the gate. The moment he turned round, his sandal slipped and he lost his balance. As he stumbled, he drew his sword and waved it, cutting the man in both arms. Gen-zaemon went to his feet and delivered the coup de grace to the attendant's

throat.

1003) Nanri Chikara and Fuka-e Ju-bey fight under the influence of liquor.

Tajiri Kunai bought a horse and held a party at his house, to which he invited his familiar friends. His house was in the Daimyo lane. The party went on into the middle of the night. Nanri Chikara and Fuka-e Ju-bey began quarreling, ending up in a fight. Jubey held Chikara down, being big and strong, as well as good at archery, horse riding and swordsmanship. Chikara could not move at all.

All the others prized Ju-bey from him and got them to make up by having them exchange a cup of wine. Chikara left the house before Ju-bey did. Soon Ju-bey also left and was passing by Chikara's house. He was met by Chikara's attendants standing outside the gate with their swords and spears, and other weapons. "You are going to try to stop me from going through, I suppose," he shouted. "All right, let me see if I can break through." He drew out his sword and struck out at them, but was killed in the end, because their number was so large and he was heavily drunk. Chikara was not present at the scene, but was condemned to death later. Chikara was a son of Daizen, and Ju-bey was a brother of To-nyu.

1004) Kimura Bu-uemon, attendant to a priest, kills a man in Edo.

Bu-uemon was a boy attendant of the priest Engi. Once he accompanied the priest to Edo. The priest was very fond of him and thought of making him a direct retainer of the Shogun in the future.

In the meantime Bu-uemon was told in secret by the priest Sho-gan-in that the second son of a direct retainer of the Shogun was going to kill him out of a homosexual grudge. He was as careful as possible not to be found by the fellow, but Bu-uemon happened to see him, so he killed the retainer's son before he himself was killed.

When he learned of this, Engi got very angry and said to him, "I have taken care of you, but you do not mend your ways and have committed this crime. You are dismissed from your post. I do not wish to see your face again, but I will write a note in token of your service." After finishing the note, Engi threw it at his face angrily. The boy was driven out of the temple immediately.

The incident was reported to Lady Tsunashige. Feeling sorry for the boy, she protected him for some time, but it was decided that he should be taken back to Saga secretly by her attendants. Before he started for Saga, people arranged for him to see

the priest again. Engi gave him a large sum of money as a farewell gift. When he returned to Saga, Nabeshima Mondo heard of him and appointed him a reserve soldier, with a rice supply.

It is said that in his youth Bu-ueon competed with other young blades in attacking and cutting down innocent passers-by.

1005) Hyakutake Hikobey stops an insane *samurai* tactfully.

One day late at night Hyakutake Hikobey was walking along the southern moat of the castle, when someone shouted, "Please stop that man." He walked up to the man in question and found him carrying a naked sword. He slashed at Hikobey, who pulled out his sword from his belt, but still in its scabbard to receive the man's attack. His sword got stuck in the scabbard. "Off you go, fellow," said Hikobey. "I am just passing along." When the man put up his sword and turned to go away, Hikobey threw him down on the ground. Some others appeared and said, "He is a lunatic. Please keep it secret." So Hikobey handed the man to them.

When he was in Edo, Natsume Hayato, an exiled *samurai*, fell in with two murderers at the Nihon-bashi Bridge. Someone called from behind, "Please stop them." "Can I cut them down if they behave roughly?" "Yes, please do so," they said. So he killed the first and held down the other.

A man was working at the Osaka residence. When he was walking along, he saw a murderer coming toward him. "Please stop that man!" said someone from behind. He stepped aside to let the man run along and when he came by, he cut him down, but they complained to him. He said to them, "You asked me to stop him, so I did that by killing him. Take the body up." Then he left the place without allowing them to say anymore.

1006) An Edo magistrate finds fault with Sagara Kihey's swords.

Sagara Kihey accompanied the lord to Edo. One day when he was returning on horseback, he met a Shogunate magistrate in front of the Saga residence. The magistrate stopped his horse and said, "Your swords are against the rules. Measure them now."

Surrounded by the magistrate's attendants, Kihey knelt on the ground and said in a

loud voice, "I am an attendant of Lord Katsushige, the lord of this residence. Yesterday evening I arrived at this house all the way from Saga. I have been told about the length of the swords, and I understand it. However, there are highwaymen on the way and this is the first time for me to come up to Edo. In spite of the rules, I dared to carry swords which are bit longer, to protect myself. But knowing the rules, I visited a shop to order lawful swords, and have just come back from there. I am prepared to lose my life for breaking the law, but I would like you to know that my lord taught me about the rules strictly." Then he put his hand to his sword and assumed a defensive posture with a sober expression. "Very well," said the magistrate and went away.

During their conversation, many men were waiting inside the gate ready to rush out at any time. Lord Katsushige was told of the incident and said, "I am confident that he will not disgrace the name of our family." He told them to go outside just to make sure. After the incident was over, Kihey was presented with a *haori* garment by the lord.

1007) The times are not to blame for the shortage of talented people.

O-kubo Do-ko said, "They say that there will be few masters of art when the world ends, but I think not. Beautiful flowers like peonies and camellias have all been produced through long improvement. The later the time, the more beautiful the flowers. I am sure masters of art will appear even at the end of the world, just like such flowers. People seem to think we are approaching the end of the world, and refrain from doing their best, but the world is not to blame. It is rather humans who are to blame."

1008) While hunting Nabeshima Shima's attendant shoots his master by mistake.

When Nabeshima Shima was young, he went hunting wild pigs in Fukahori. His attendant shot him after mistaking him for one of those creatures, injuring the master's knee slightly. He fell from a height, so the attendant was really surprised, opened his clothes and was about to cut into his stomach with his sword.

Shima said to him, "You can commit *seppuku* later. Give me some water to drink. I feel sick." The attendant brought a cup of water and helped him to drink it, and he revived. Shortly, the attendant said he would commit *seppuku* for his misconduct, but Shima ordered him not to do so and had him watched by another attendant. Shima met with his own father Kan-zaemon and asked him about how to deal with it. "He did not shoot you on purpose. Tell him to continue his work as usual," said Kan-zaemon.

1009) Saito Gon-uemon fights with Mizota Ichiro-zaemon, a giant.

Saito Gon-uemon was the second son of Yo-no-suke. Since he was very tall, Lord Katsushige had him serve by the side of his palanquin. He took good care of the young man.

There was a person named Mizota Ichiro-zaemon in the neighborhood. He was also tall and very strong. He never wore a sword and could floor any one with his strong arms. One day Gon-uemon came across him on the road, when Ichiro-zaemon picked a quarrel with him over some trifle thing and tried to throw him down. Gon-uemon drew his sword and slashed at him. People nearby mediated between them and made both of them return to their houses.

Gon-uemon thought Ichiro-zaemon would come for revenge, but said to himself, "I must have injured him badly. He has probably died from it. But his father is also very rough, and I am afraid he will come to kill me. He is an old man, and I would not like to kill him. I will offer my neck to him so that he can kill me." Ichiro-zaemon had returned to his house and taken out his sword for revenge. Soon, however, he suffered severe pain from his wounds, and breathed his last.

After investigation, Gon-uemon was sentenced to death by *seppuku*. The lord was told about it and rescinded the penalty. When the lord died in March 1657 at the Edo residence, Gon-uemon was in Saga. Hearing of the lord's death, he followed him to the grave on April 7. My teacher was told this by Saito Sado, the Shinto priest, a grandson of Gon-uemon.

1010) A *samurai's* brave wife goes out for revenge with her husband.

A *samurai* named Takagi had a quarrel with three farmers in the neighborhood and was thrown into a rice paddy. When he returned home crestfallen and looking miserable, his wife said, "You forgot that you should have risked your life, did you not?" "Of course not," he said grumbling. "We have to lose our lives sooner or later," she said. "Everyone must die, whether from illness, by the sword, by *seppuku*, hanging or whatever. How disgracing it will be to lose your life in a miserable death!"

She then went out herself, and returned shortly. After putting their children to sleep, they prepared a torch. Around sunset they dressed in white. "When I went to the town, the three were talking noisily at a tavern," she said. "A really good chance. Let us go!" Each armed with a sword, they lit their torch and set off. When they arrived at the tavern, they rushed in, killing two of them, and seriously injuring the third. The

survivor ran away in panic. The husband was later sentenced to death by *seppuku*.

1011) Two attendants quarrel over a wooden container.

Before Lord Tsunashige inherited his household and was living in the Azabu residence, there was a big wooden container in a room by the entrance. Mitsuoka Ju-zo was working there as a recorder. Ju-zo told Yamanaka Rikken, a boy attendant, to remove it, saying, "It ruins the appearance of this room." "But it is not mine," said Rikken. "Let me ask around before I remove it." But the big container remained there day after day, untouched.

One day Ikeda Yaichi-zaemon, an attendant of Lord Mitsushige's son, came and Rikken entertained him with wine. Ju-zo appeared and said to Rikken, "Come with me because I have something to tell you." He tried to take Rikken away, seizing him by his clothes. He also called him names, so Rikken kicked Ju-zo on the leg, making him fall to the floor.

Rikken was on top, squeezing Ju-zo's neck, when Yaichi-zaemon saw them and pulled them apart with the help of his servants. Actually the big container had been removed five days before, but Ju-zo was unaware of it, hence his behavior.

Ju-zo offered an apology to Rikken, so the incident would have been smoothed over. Soon after, however, Yaichi-zaemon learned that Ju-zo was a member of the same group as himself. "We backed Rikken, but we should have not done so. We got it wrong."

As a result of the incident, Ju-zo was first confined then dismissed from his post, and Rikken was also dismissed from his post. Later Rikken was recalled and was eventually promoted to master of the tea ceremony.

1012) Thanks to Aoyama Daizen, a serious incident is settled.

Kumashiro Uhyo-e went up to Edo to visit his sick mother. At the beginning of summer he was on his way back to Saga, when he met Suzuki Mata-zaemon and Kakei Yosobey at a tea house between Hara and Yoshiwara. They were both guards at Nijo Castle, Kyoto.

Kumashiro's attendant Ken-no-suke entered the tea house and scooped up some water with a ladle to drink. Another attendant named Kichi-uemon said, "I would also like to drink. Please bring me a cup of water." So Ken-no-suke brought the ladle filled with water to him outside the tea house.

Unfortunately for Ken-no-suke, he collided with Suzuki Mata-zaemon riding on his

horse. The water splashed over his clothes, so he got angry and said, "Do not let him away with that!" So his attendant poked him in the stomach with the butt of his spear. Ken-no-suke yelled in discomfort, but Mata-zaemon said, "Go on, poke him!"

Ken-no-suke got furious, rushed at Mata-zaemon and slashed his left arm badly. Since none of Mata-zaemon's attendants resisted him, Ken-no-suke ran to join Kumashiro Uhyo-e's attendants. Mata-zaemon got off his horse and wound his left arm with a belt and slung it from his neck.

Matsushima Roku-zaemon and Fukuda Zembey, attendants of Uhyo-e, rushed to their master to discuss the emergent situation. Suko Hachibey also joined them. He had come up to Edo as an attendant of Lord Katsushige. When he was about to go back to Saga, the lord told him to remain with Uhyo-e.

All three apologized to the two guards, but they refused to take it lying down. Roku-zaemon said to them politely, "We admit frankly that we were wrong. Please return to your inn for the moment. Let us visit you to express our apology later. I am afraid we are also blocking the way for passengers." Since he made his request so politely, they returned to their inn.

Uhyo-e also went back to his inn, but his attendants were on their guard against any attempt at revenge. The innkeeper said to them, "Let me stand by you in this unexpected situation." He provided them with twenty bows, and arrows. He also said, "At the Mata-zaemon's inn, they are discussing how to get revenge on your master."

But it turned out that Aoyama Daizen, lord of Amagasaki Castle, was lodging at the post station. This was very good news. The innkeeper visited Daizen at his lodging and told him about the affair, and Daizen went to see Mata-zaemon right away. He persuaded him to leave the matter to him. Through his mediation, Ken-no-suke was put to death and his head was placed on a tray and brought to Mata-zaemon by Roku-zaemon. In this way the matter was settled. Lord Katsushige sent a present to Aoyama Daizen with his gratitude, but Daizen said, "Do not worry. I dealt with it for the good of the Shogunate. No gratitude is needed." The present was returned later.

* Uhyo-e was the 10th son of Lord Katsushige.