

## Noh Hachinoki 鉢木

(“The Potted Trees”)

The regent of Kamakura, Hôjô Tokiyori, is traveling incognito as a priest. He seeks shelter from snow at the house of Tsuneyo, the former lord of Sano now in poverty, who cuts three potted trees to warm his guest. Tsuneyo tells how his lands had been taken from him, but claims that he would gladly fight for the Lord of Kamakura. Tokiyori does not reveal himself, but when he returns to Kamakura, issues a general alarm. True to his word, Tsuneyo appears before Tokiyori whom he now realizes was a priest. Tokiyori returns Tsuneyo's lands and gives him three estates for the three trees he ungrudgingly gave up.

Author: Unknown. Although often attributed to either Kan'ami (1333-1384) or Zeami (1363?-1443?), there is no clear evidence for this.

Scene: Winter, mid-Kamakura period (13<sup>th</sup> c.), Sano in Kôzuke province, the present Sano in Takasaki city, Gunma prefecture; then Kamakura, Sagami Province, the present Kamakura, Kanagawa prefecture.

Category: Fourth category miscellaneous (compassion) play/informally a second category warrior play, present time noh, without stick drum.

Performance practice: Performed by all five schools.

Characters (in order of appearance)

- Tsure (accompanying Shite main actor): Wife of Tsuneyo. Wears a middle-aged woman (fukai or shakumi) mask.
- Maewaki (Waki secondary actor in first half): a traveling priest, in fact Hôjô Tokiyori, also known as Saimyôji Tokiyori, the regent of the Kamakura shogunate travelling incognito.
- Maejite (first half shite main actor): Sano no Genzaemon Tsuneyo, the former lord of Sano now reduced to poverty. Without mask.
- Ado-ai (secondary interlude actor): a messenger sent on horseback.
- Nochiwaki (Waki in second half): Hôjô Tokiyori/Saimyôji Tokiyori.
- Wakizure (accompanying Waki actor): a retainer of Tokiyori.
- Omo-ai (main interlude actor): a servant..
- Nochijite (shite in second half): Sano no Tsuneyo.

Synopsis: scene by scene.

1. Waki entrance: Tsuneyo's wife enters. A priest (in fact, Tokiyori) enters to shidai music and tells of his journey through Shinano province. Noting the deep snow, he decides to go to Kamakura to await spring. He sings describing his journey and his arrival at Sano. Due to a heavy snowstorm, he decides to seek shelter.
2. Waki and Tsure exchange: The priest asks Tsuneyo's wife for lodging but she has him wait for Tsuneyo's return.

3. Shite entrance: Tsuneyo's enters and tells how he loved snow in former days, but it now reminds him of his poverty-stricken existence.
4. Shite, Tsure and Waki exchange: The wife explains, then Tsuneyo informs the priest that they have no room for him. He suggests that he travels to the next village. The priest leaves in disappointment.
5. Tsure and Shite, then Shite and Waki exchange: The wife says that their wretched state is due to wrong actions of their past life and that their unkindness will bring ill-fortune in their next life. Tsuneyo leaves to call the priest back. The chorus describes how Tsuneyo catches up to the priest in the snow and brings him back.
6. Shite and Waki exchange: Tsuneyo offers the priest boiled millet saying that this coarse food now keeps him alive. Noting that his former time of comfort have passed, the chorus sings for Tsuneyo saying that now the cold wind keeps him awake so he cannot even dream of better days. The stage assistants carry on a potted tree.
7. Shite's tree-cutting: Tsuneyo noting the night cold, offers to cut his potted trees of plum, cherry and pine which he has kept from better times. As the chorus sings, he sadly cuts them down, places the branches in front of the priest and starts a fire.
8. Shite's courageous spirit: The priest questions Tsuneyo who reveals that he is the former lord of Sano whose lands were usurped by kinsmen. The priest suggests he takes his case to Kamakura but Tsuneyo says that Tokiyori is away on a pilgrimage. Tsuneyo goes on to say that if the need arose, he would gladly put on his broken armor, take his rusty spear, mount his weak horse, and fight for his lord.
9. Waki departure: The priest encourages Tsuneyo and prepares to leave. The chorus tells them to look for him if they come to Kamakura. He leaves. Tsuneyo and his wife exit to hayatsuzumi solo drum.
10. AI's speech: A messenger announces that Tokiyori has returned to Kamakura and orders the lords of the eastern provinces to gather.
11. Nochiwaki, wakitsure, ai entrance: Tokiyori enters with a retainer and a servant to issei music.
12. Nochijite entrance: Tsuneyo enters to hayafue music dressed for battle as if on a horse. He describes the splendidly attired knights though they may laugh at his poverty, he claims a valiant heart. The chorus sings of Tsuneyo trying to speed up his old horse.
13. Waki's order: Tokiyori orders his retainer who in turn tells a servant to find the most ill-conditioned knight. The servant approaches Tsuneyo who thinks he is going to be executed. He goes anyway and the chorus tells how he walks boldly before the other knights who scorn and laugh at his tattered appearance.
14. Shite and Waki meeting, ending: Tokiyori tells Tsuneyo that it was him whom he sheltered from the snow. Praising him for keeping his word, he orders the return of his lawful estate in Sano and awards him three more. Plumfield, Cherrywell, and Pinewell-field. Tsuneyo takes the deeds to these lands and as the chorus sings, shows them to the knights gathered. In joy, he returns home.

[Richard Emmert]