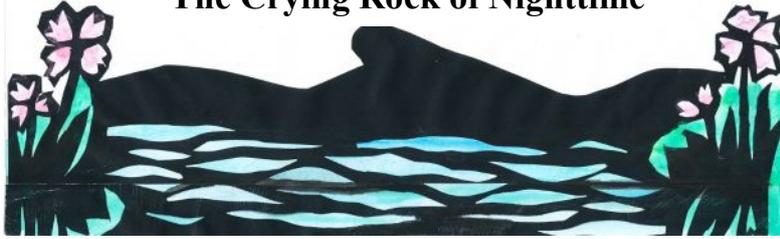


The Crying Rock of Nighttime



Once upon a time, a Samurai came to the town of Noheji. The Samurai had a long beard and his clothes were very dirty. He had traveled all throughout summer and was so tired. With him was his daughter who was also dirty from the long journey. The father and daughter collapsed at the Biwano River and gulped the water up with their hands.



Suddenly, a villager came upon them and said, “You look very hungry. Here, eat this.” and he handed them a rice ball. “There is a small hut over there,” he continued, “you can stay there for tonight.” The Samurai and his daughter were so thankful to the villager, and saw him off.

The next morning, when the villager arrived at the hut, he was very surprised. The Samurai had shaved his beard and changed into clean clothes. With the sudden change the villager noticed that the Samurai had the air of someone important. The villager, for the first time, wondered just who this Samurai was. The daughter, Chizu, was around thirteen years old and believed that her father was the most important man ever.





“Why don’t you build a house over there?” the villager recommended. The Samurai and Chizu agreed to make their home Noheji.

Every day, the Samurai would go out hunting with his bow and arrows. Chizu would quietly see her father off and pray for his safe return. After seeing her father off, Chizu would go and help the villagers. She often watched over the children or helped weed the crops.

After their long journey, both the Samurai and Chizu were happy to call Noheji their home. At the end of the day, they would sit under the night’s sky and gaze up at the bright stars. The Samurai thought of his kind wife who had passed away during their long journey to Noheji. Chizu would also think of her mother every night, and while looking at the night’s sky, she thought of how much she wanted to be like her mother.



During the winter, the Samurai worked on repairing his bow and making more arrows for the coming spring. Chizu would use her skill with a needle and make clothes and straw sandals. Every so often villagers would come to their house to play with them. The Samurai would tell his stories of hunting and of their long journey to Noheji.



Chizu and her father became great friends with the people of Noheji.

When spring arrived, the villagers and Chizu became very busy with planting rice and working in the fields. The Samurai was also very busy going up into the mountain and hunting every day.

On the night of a full moon when everything was quiet in Noheji, the villagers could hear a voice calling out “*Toto-Sama (Father)! Toto-Sama (Father)!*” Echoing in the dark. The villagers went out and found Chizu wandering around. She told them that her father had not come home that night. They joined her in search, but the Samurai’s voice could not be heard. Everyone wandered around Mt. *Eboshi* in search of the lost Samurai. Chizu was very worried for her father.



The next day, the villagers and Chizu went together climbing up the mountain and going down to the valley. They walked until their feet bled calling out for Chizu’s father. They climbed up Mt. *Eboshi* once more and the villagers called out “*Osamurai-Sama, Osamurai-Sama!*” while Chizu cried out “*Toto-Sama (Father)! Toto-Sama (Father)!*” and waited for the Samurai’s reply. No one had found the Samurai yet.



The villagers began to whisper to each other. “Maybe a bear ate him?” some said. Others, “Maybe a god has taken him?” They all agreed that they could no longer search for him and went down the mountain. Chizu refused to give up and stayed through the night.

Day after day, the villagers saw Chizu searching for her father's figure in the distance. The villagers were very worried about Chizu as she continued to wait for her father and refused to eat. Day after day, Chizu cried out for her father. Her voice became weaker and weaker as she called out "*Toto-Sama, Toto-Sama*" until it was almost gone, Chizu's strength wore away little by little. "*Toto-Sama, koi-shi* (Father, I love you)! *Toto-Sama, koi-shi* (Father, I love you)!" She cried out in her weak voice.



One day, the villagers could no longer hear Chizu's voice and could not see her anywhere. Worried, they went off in search. A villager found Chizu collapsed on the shore of Biwano River, dead. The villagers built Chizu a grave at that very spot and put down flowers in respect.

At the third bridge of Biwano River, at the shore, there is a rock in the shape of a woman hunched over, called *Yonaki-Ishi*, Crying Rock of Night. In the nighttime, by the



Yonaki-Ishi, in the flowing water of Biwano River, "*Toto-Sama, Toto-Sama, Toto-Sama, koi-shi, Toto-Sama, koi-shi*" can be heard. Even now, Chizu still searches for her beloved father, waiting for his return.