

for having been shown kindness and sympathy, though she is but a poor island girl. I have no family, she said, so I pray that my husband's good friend Yasuyori will be my elder brother and that Lord Shunkan will act as my father. I will be a most devoted daughter and sister in return, she said. As she spoke, the tears falling freely from her eyes, her charm was just like that of a woman from the capital. She begged us to take care of her.

Naritsune bows low, his head near the ground.

CHANTER:

Her words have penetrated to my very soul.
Hearing this tale, Lord Shunkan
is overcome with delight.

SHUNKAN: This is just wonderful! Your love story is fascinating yet tinged with pathos, dazzling yet commendable. Yours is a truly precious love. I want to meet this girl. Shall we go to your hut?

YASUYORI: No, no, that won't be necessary. She's come along with us to your place. Wait a moment.

He rises, crosses to the rampway, and beckons with his right hand. The wave drum patterns begin.

Chidori! Chidori! Please come here! Lord Shunkan wishes to meet you.

Come on over, Chidori! Chidori!

CHIDORI (*From the rear of the rampway*): Coming!⁵

CHANTER:

Chidori responds and comes
running through the weeds
carrying a basket of bamboo.

Chidori runs in along the rampway. Overcome by shyness, she turns around and runs out again. Yasuyori laughs. She soon returns, and this time Yasuyori stops her before she can flee again [figure 3.58]. He takes the rake, places it near one of the rocks, and resumes his former position. Chidori sits between him and Naritsune at right center and bows low.

Her beauty is such that,
though she be clad in rags,
it were as if her garments
were of silk and silver threads.
Why in the world was she born
a lowly maker of salt?

YASUYORI: Allow me to introduce Chidori.

SHUNKAN: I must say I have been quite impressed by all the charming things I've heard about you. You've already met with Yasuyori, I know, and I know also that you wish me to act as your father from this day forward. We three men are already virtually related. Since we are to be parent and child, from now on you are my daughter. If a pardon were to be granted to us, we four would return to

5. In the Zenshin troupe's production, male and female actors play Chidori in alternating performances. More conservative troupes do not permit women on stage.

the capital together; you would be acknowledged as the wife of Naritsune, lord of Tamba, and would wear long, trailing, scarlet hakama skirts, like any other noblewoman. But what I find terribly annoying is that even if we were to dig through all the rocks and earth on this island (*he looks around and makes grabbing gestures at the sand*), we would not find one drop of wine or even a cup to drink it from. After all, we should perform the congratulatory wedding rites.

CHIDORI: Dear Lord Shunkan, if a lowly saltmaker like me were to wear long, scarlet skirts, she would surely be punished. (*Bows low quickly*) I am happy enough merely to be married to a gentleman from the capital. A sacred hermit lived for seven hundred years by drinking water in which chrysanthemums were floated.⁶ (*Takes a bamboo tube from her basket*) We should follow his example and drink fresh water from an island stream as if it were wine. This abalone shell will serve as a winecup. (*Takes a shell from her basket and holds it out as if it were a cup*) We shall thus be parent and child from this day on. How delightful it will be to call each other "Father" and "Daughter."

She runs over to Shunkan, places the abalone shell and bamboo tube next to him, turns back, almost stumbles into the seated Naritsune, and sits at his right, very bashfully, her hand on his.

CHANTER:

The men all laugh at her
charming island accent.

YASUYORI: Congratulations! Congratulations! (*Rises*) Then I will act as go-between. (*Wave drum patterns during the following*) Naritsune, you must sit in the groom's seat. (*Takes Naritsune to stage left, then crosses to Chidori*) You, Chidori, must take the bridal seat.

Chidori faces upstage, removes her straw apron, and gives it to a stage assistant. Yasuyori takes her to the left, where she sits diagonally upstage of Naritsune.

We will have to skip a lot of the formalities, of course. As the groom's father-in-law, Shunkan, you take the seat of honor.

Yasuyori takes the abalone shell and hands it to Chidori. He mimes pouring water

6. Refers to the legend of Kikujidō, a page to King Mu during the Chou dynasty, who became a hermit after being banished and achieved immortality by drinking dew off chrysanthemums. The story is told in the noh play *Kikujido* and many other classical Japanese works.



FIGURE 3.58. Chidori enters to Yasuyori's summons. Her bright green kimono has an octopus design, and a seaweed motif decorates her pink obi, which is tied in front. Her wicker basket contains a bamboo tube and an abalone shell. The slatted windows of the music room are visible in the background. (Photo by Aoki Shinji.)