

あらしのよるに
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New Kabuki production On the night of a storm

Commentary and highlights

"On the night of a storm" is a story authored by famous picture book author, Kimura Yuichi, on October 1994. The story depicts the budding friendship between a wolf and a goat, who reunite on a dark and stormy night, by reciting the promised password "on the night of a storm".

This enthralling story captured the hearts of many readers, as zookeeper turned illustrator, Abe Hiroshi, brings life to the story with his vivid illustrations of Gabu and Mei, and steady dialogues leading up to the exploration of worldviews. Due to its immense popularity, "One Stormy Night", which was supposed to be a single production, was developed to the sixth volume, "After the Snowstorm", including a special edition, "The End of the White Darkness", and concluding chapter, "One Full Moon Night". The series continue to be loved by children and adults 20 years after its first publication.

The story is also included in Japan's primary school textbooks, and has been adapted into a movie, novel, television drama, and even musical. In addition, on September 2015, it was performed as a new Kabuki production in Kyoto. The performance was so well received, that it was performed again at Tokyo Kabukiza in 2016, and will now make its appearance at Hakataza on November 2018. The performance preserves the essence of the original work, while incorporating Kabuki music such as takemoto and nagauta, as well as traditional Japanese dance and Kabuki techniques.

The secret friendship between a wolf and a goat. Arrival of the popular picture book story at Hakataza!

On the night of a storm, Gabu the wolf and Mei the goat are waiting for the weather to clear up. Amidst the darkness, where their identities are concealed, the two friends made a pact to meet up the next day, with "on the night of a storm" as their secret passcode. Thus, the next day, Gabu and Mei meet once again when the storm has passed, and are shocked to find out each other's identities. However, Gabu is determined to befriend Mei, leading him to hide the fact that he loves eating goats, and introduces Mei to the land where delicious grass grows.

On the other hand, Giro the wolf harbors deep hatred towards the goat that chewed off one of his ears. He consults Obaba, who possesses strange powers, and learns that his ear can

be returned to normal if he takes medicine brewed by boiling the livers of three goats. Thus, Giro seeks the help of Gabu to attack Mei. However, Gabu tries to protect Mei and ends up getting caught and sent to the jail cave. In order to save Gabu, Mei attempts to sneak into Ishikari but Giro and his pack spot her. Then, the other goats arrive to save Mei, and the goats and wolves start a vicious battle. In the midst of the battle, Gabu and Mei escape to the top of the snow-covered mountaintop, where they are eventually caught by Giro and his pack.

The new Kabuki production, which was performed at Kyoto's Minamiza and Kabukiza, has finally come to Hakataza. Enjoy a play which intertwines the perspective of the popular picture book, and the traditional features of Kabuki performance.

ARASHI NO YORU NI

On the night of a storm

— Three Acts --

Gabu	Nakamura Shido
Mei	Onoe Matsuya
Tapu	Nakamura Mantaro
Princess Mii	Nakamura yonekichi
Uncle Goat	Ichimura Kitsutaro
Haku	Ichimura Takematsu
Gai	Kawarasaki Gonjuro
Aunt Wolf:	Ichimura Manjiro
Giro	Nakamura Kinnosuke

Opening Act

A herd of goats grazes in a grassy meadow. They are suddenly attacked by a pack of wolves, including the wolf Giro.

Among the goats attacked by the wolves is the nanny goat Matsu, who was slow in fleeing and chews off one of Giro's ears, and who also tells one of the other goats, Ojiji, to take care of the young goats. Giro bites Matsu to death and also murders the leader of the wolf pack. Giro had long coveted the rank of head wolf, and when he steals away the necklace that marks the leader, he stands before Gai and the other wolves and claims that their leader had been killed by the goats. Gai, however, had noticed a spearhead lying near their leader's body and doubts Giro's claim.

Act 1, Scene 1

Time goes by, until one dark night, the goat Mei seeks shelter from a storm in a small, crude

hut. Later, Mei is joined in the hut by the wolf Gabu who is also seeking shelter. In the total darkness of the hut, neither can tell what the other is, and they strike up a conversation. They discover that Gabu and Mei have much in common, and they promise to meet again the following day, deciding that they would identify themselves with the password "on the night of a storm," since neither knows what the other looks like.

Act 1, Scene 2

The next day Gabu and Mei manage to find each other using their password, "on the night of a storm," but they are each shocked to see who their new friend is! Goat is one of Gabu's favorite foods, but he tells Mei he has never eaten goat meat. Gabu finds himself torn between a hunger to eat Mei and his hopes not to turn Mei against him.

Then comes the sound of thunder, and a startled Mei hurts himself. Gabu tends to the wound and is very happy to hear Mei call him a good friend. Once more they promise to meet again.

Act 2, Scene 1

Giro, who had killed the old pack leader and taken over that position himself, considers his mangled ear as a great insult and seeks a cure from Obaba, who is said to possess strange powers. Obaba informs him that his ear can be returned to normal if he takes medicine brewed by boiling the livers of three goats, specifically the livers of three who were childhood friends born in the same year, during the same month, on the same day, at just the same time—Mei, Princess Mii, and Tapu. Obaba also tells Giro that Gabu can serve as a tool in looking for these goats, whereupon Giro orders his henchmen to keep an eye on Gabu and his actions.

Act 2, Scene 2

In the woods, the squirrels and rabbits and other animals are gossiping. To a rabbit's claim that a wolf and a goat had been seen walking together like friends, the animals' reaction was that strange things can indeed happen. One of the wolves named Bariii hears these rumors and hurriedly passes them back to the other wolves, and likewise, Tapu and fellow goat Haku hear them and quickly inform the rest of the herd.

Act 2, Scene 3

One evening a few days later, Princess Mii asks Mei if he isn't hiding something. Mei at first considers telling the truth about Gabu, but he wonders whether Princess Mii would believe him. To tell the truth, Mei is worried that the anxiety he feels may be because he doesn't trust Gabu without any reservation. Princess Mii for her part hopes that if Mei is worried about something he will tell her about it—isn't that what friends are for?

Act 2, Scene 4

Gabu and Mei have come out to gaze at the moon, but Tapu and Princess Mii have followed

the pair and now make themselves known. No sooner have the two goats shown themselves than the wolf pack appears and tries to carry off Mei and the other goats. Giro and Obaba are there, too, along with Gai and Ojiji, and everyone is searching around in the darkness to find the others.

Act 3, Scene 1 Mei and the other goats—and Gabu as well—find themselves prisoners of the wolves, who confine them in a mountain cave used as a jail. Obaba is entrusted with getting the truth out of Tapu and makes a medicine to force Tapu to reveal all. Obaba tries to make Tapu take the medicine but fails.

Act 3, Scene 2

About that time, Ojiji creeps into the jail cave where Mei is being held prisoner. Ojiji reveals that Mei's mother Matsu, who had been wet nurse to Princess Mii, had been killed by the wolves. Until that moment, Mei had been told that his mother had fallen to her death in a valley and is aghast to hear the truth. Ojiji tells Mei that the wolves and goats are linked by fate, that it is the wolves' fate to eat the goats and the goats' fate to be eaten by the wolves, and then leaves.

Act 3, Scene 3

Giro then learns that Princess Mii is a friend of the goat who had bitten off his ear and tries to beat Princess Mii into revealing where the rest of the goats are. Gai appears and helps Princess Mii escape.

Act 3, Scene 4

Mei is led to the jail cave where Gabu is being held. Both are relieved that the other is unharmed, and confess the doubts each had felt about the other. Once again they confirm that they are good friends. Giro comes upon this scene and reveals that he is the wolf who had his ear bitten off. Gai then joins them and, citing as evidence the spearhead and the lead wolf's necklace that symbolized his position, reveals that Giro who had murdered the old leader, who had been Gabu's father.

His evil deeds revealed, Giro leads his henchmen in an attack on Mei and his friends, but Haku and Ojiji and the other goats arrive, and the wolves and goats engage in a violent battle.

Pursued by Giro and the other wolves, Gabu and Mei finally arrive at a snow-covered mountaintop. Gabu, Giro, and Mei engage in a fight to the death, and during the fighting, all are caught up in an avalanche.

Act 3, Scene 5

When Mei later comes to, he finds Gabu nearby. But Gabu seems somehow strange. What will be the fate of Gabu and Mei? The answer is