



Kotto: Being Japanese curios, with sundry cobwebs

Lafcadio Hearn

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This historic book may have numerous typos, missing text or index. Purchasers can download a free scanned copy of the original book (without typos) from the publisher. 1902. Not illustrated. Excerpt: ... Old Stories The following nine tales have been selected from the "ShinChomon-Shit "Hyaku Monogatari" "Uji-Jui-Monogatari-Shd? and other old Japanese books, to illustrate some strange beliefs. They are only Curios. The Legend of Yurei-Daki near the village of Kurosaka, in the province of Hold, there is a waterfall called Yurei-Daki, or The Cascade of Ghosts. Why it is so called I do not know. Near the foot of the fall there is a small Shinto shrine of the god of the locality, whom the people name Taki-Daimyojin; and in front of the shrine is a little wooden money-box--saisen-bako--to receive the offerings of believers. And there is a story about that money-box. One icy winter's evening, thirty-five years ago, the women and girls employed at a certain asatoriba, or hemp-factory, in Kurosaka, gathered around the big brazier in the spinning-room after their day's work had been done. Then they amused themselves by telling ghost-stories. By the time that a dozen stories had been told, most of the gathering felt uncomfortable; and a girl cried out, just to heighten the pleasure of fear, " Only think of going this night, all by one's self, to the Yurei-Daki!" The suggestion provoked a general scream, followed by nervous bursts of laughter.... "I'll give all the hemp I spun to-day," mockingly said one of the party, "to the person who goes!" "So will I," exclaimed another. "And I," said a third. "All of us," affirmed a fourth.... Then from among the spinners stood up one Yasumoto O-Katsu, the wife of a carpenter;--she had her only son, a boy of two years old, snugly wrapped up and asleep upon her back. "Listen," said O-Katsu; "if you will all really agree, to make over to me all the hemp spun to-day, I will go to the Yurei-Daki." Her proposal was received with cries of ast...

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