



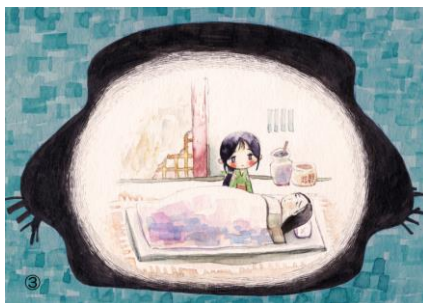
[1st flip]

Folktale of Kusatsu-city: 「blue flower」



[2nd flip]

Long ago, there used be a small village called Kinokawa-village under the magistrate named Ishihara, in the region of Omi.



[3rd flip]

In the village, there was a girl named Kiyo along with mother with illness, living day-to-day. She was really a kind girl, although the family was living in a poverty.



[4th flip]

One day, Kiyo heard the oracle of mercy goddess in the dream. "Well, it seems that you are really poor, wake up early tomorrow morning and go to the lone-pine on the bank of Kusatsu-river. I will supply you with the daily portion of rice."



[5th flip]

In the morning of following day, Kiyo rushed to under the lone-pine of Kusatsu-river, soon after she woke up. There was a crate under the pine-tree with white rice. Kiyo took out some portion of rice, only the daily supply to eat.



[6th flip]

Kiyo went to Kusatsu-river again the following day in the morning. There she found the white rice just like the other day. Kiyo took some portion of it home again.

Then she made trip there every morning for five to six days and managed to take the daily portion home each time.

Although it turned out to be that once poor life of Kiyo became poverty-free and easy living, as the time passes by, the signs of greed started to arise in her mind.

She took whole crate of rice, instead of taking daily portion each day.



[7th flip]

On the next morning, Kiyo finds somewhat black looking grain, not looking edible, instead of white rice.

“Oh, no!

It was my fault that my terrible greed caused the state of which, not being able to serve my precious mother with delicious steamed rice. Please forgive me.”



[8th flip]

That’s how Kiyo started to begging mercy goddess for forgiveness every day.



[9th flip]

Kiyo heard the oracle of mercy goddess again in the dream, one night after the series of suffering days.

“I have traded the white rice for black grain for you have exposed greed.

Black grain is actually the seed for Asiatic dayflower, and blue flower will bloom if you sow it.

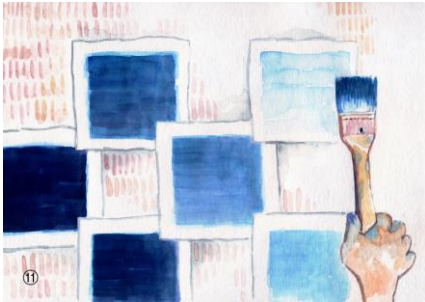
Soak into paper after you pick it. Yu-zen wholesaler in Kyoto will buy it from you. That will allow you to put food on the table.”



[10th flip]

Kiyo again rushed there to get the black seed and sowed it in the field right away.

And then, there bloomed a lot of blue flowers just like the oracle.



[11th flip]

She would pick it early in the morning and squeeze its juice, and let it soak into paper. It was extremely painful work, which required endless routine of letting it dried and soaked, one after another, under the scorching sunshine. On the top of that, it will ruin the paper by fading the color, if this dayflower paper would be exposed to rain and sweat. It was in great anxiety in an hot summer heat.



[12th flip]

Hence, she finally managed to bring it to wholesaler in Kyoto, which is the product from the dayflower, and ended up selling it for unexpected high price, for it is suitable for drawing the sketch.



[13th flip]

Kiyo had to work super hard from picking the petal in the early morning till Japanese paper to be finished in the color of the crow's wet feathers everyday. It was not just once when she thought it to be an hell flower. But in return, they managed to live without trouble. Her mother's sickness has been cured, which, followed by the neighboring people learning it and started growing the flower, which was shared by Kiyo.

That's how the dayflower paper from dayflower became the special product of Omi



[14th flip]

Dayflower is still used in premium Yuzen-dyeing now.

Dayflower, which was called ‘Aobana’ is called ‘Tsuyukusa’, which, used to be called ‘Tsukikusa’ in super ancient era, and even appears as ancient style writing in one of the earliest poetry scrolls, called ‘Manyo-shu’, portrays well of the characteristics of the color being washed away with water smoothly.

Original text: “Kinokawa Rojin Club”