

Radio Script: OSHIDORI

Narrator:

There was once a hunter named Sonjo, who lived in Tamura-no-Go, in the Mutsu area. One day, he went hunting and could not catch anything. But on his way home, at a place called Akanuma, he saw two *Oshidori* (mandarin ducks) swimming together in a river.

For a long time in the Far East, *Oshidori* have been a symbol of a good relationship between a husband and a wife. So it was not good to kill an *Oshidori*.

But Sonjo was very hungry. So he shot an arrow at the two birds. The arrow hit the male bird and killed it. The female flew away and disappeared. Sonjo took the dead bird home and cooked it.

That night, Sonjo had a very sad dream. In his dream, a beautiful woman came into his room and stood by his pillow. Then, she started to cry. She cried so sadly that Sonjo felt like his heart was being torn out. The woman spoke to him.

Woman (The Bird):

"Why? Oh, why did you kill him? What did he do to you? We were so happy together at Akanuma. But you killed him."

Narrator:

She continued to cry as she said:

Woman (The Bird):

"Do you know what you have done? You have killed me too. Because I cannot live without my husband. I came to tell you this."

Narrator:

Then she cried even louder. Her cries were so sad that Sonjo felt like it cut into the deepest part of his bones. The beautiful woman then whispered:

Woman (The Bird):

"I asked him to return with me at twilight. But now, I sleep alone in the shadow of river grass at Akanuma. This sad, terrible feeling is something I cannot explain."

Narrator:

She spoke once more.

Woman (The Bird):

"You do not know, and you cannot know what you have done. Come to Akanuma tomorrow, and then you will see."

Narrator:

Then, she went away, still crying.

Sonjo woke up the next morning, and he remembered his dream. It felt so real that he thought long and hard about it. He especially remembered the words:

Woman (Voice):

"Come to Akanuma tomorrow, and then you will see."

Narrator:

So Sonjo decided to go to Akanuma at once. He wanted to know if his dream was real. Sonjo arrived at the river and saw the female *Oshidori* swimming alone.

When the bird saw him, she did not try to escape. Instead, she looked him in the eye and swam straight toward him. Then, suddenly, she tore open her body with her own beak and died right in front of Sonjo.

Sonjo shaved his head and became a priest.

DJ Win:

Ooh, kowai na (Ooh, that's scary). The remaining *Oshidori* tore her own body open with her beak... wow. I just got goosebumps (zotto shimashita). Have a great weekend.