

## SYNOPSIS

Mizoguchi was a young man born in a lonely cape in northeast of Maizuru. He had a weak constitution, suffered from a stutter, which he thought it was an obstacle between him and the outside world. He was alienated from the outer world. However, the fact of not being understood by other people had become his only real source of pride.

Since he was child, his father—who was only a simple country priest and deficient in vocabulary—always taught him “there is nothing on this earth so beautiful as the Golden Temple.” His father asked the father Dosen to look after his soon when the time has come. His father wished him became a priest in the Golden Temple. After his father’s death, he went to Kyoto and became an acolyte at the Golden Temple. He was ordained to the priesthood under the father Superior. The Superior provided him with school expenses, but in return he should attend to and do the house work. His position was equivalent to that of a student dependent. His real period of boyhood came to an end.

He became an acolyte at the Golden Temple and lived there. The Golden Temple, which had disappointed him so greatly at first sight, began to revivify its beauty within him day after day. Gradually the Golden Temple came to exist more deeply and more solidly within him. And at that temple, Tsurukawa was the only friend of him. Tsurukawa was the only person to whom he had revealed his strange attachment to the Golden Temple.

Mizoguchi did not like to his mother. Concerning a certain incident, he never addressed a single word of reproof to his mother. Since that incident

occurred, he could not forgive her. That incident happened when he was only thirteen, his mother had an affair with other man called Kurai.

Mizoguchi was recommended by superior for a university education on Otani University. In Otani University he made friend to Kashiwagi, a man who was born clubfooted. That was Kashiwagi who had changed his point of thinking. And everything became brighter than his view before. Also with Kashiwagi, Mizoguchi knew about woman and how to make relationship with woman.

Every time Mizoguchi would do something out of control, the beauty of the Golden Temple appeared before him. He thought how he could not possibly stretch out his hands toward life when he was being enwrapped in the beauty of the Golden Temple. But that feeling was only for the short time that he was completely embraced by the vision of Golden Temple. When he returned to himself, the temple was already hidden. The moment of illusion, in which he had imagined himself being accepted and embraced by the Golden Temple, had passed. A delicate change started in his feeling concerning the Golden Temple.

All the changed was caused by Kashiwagi's suggestion to Mizoguchi, that to live and to destroy were one and the same thing. And the life that Kashiwagi suggested was in short a dangerous joke. And all the things that contacted to Kashiwagi always produced small acts of immorality, small desecration, and small evil, but these always made him cheerful.

Mizoguchi thought that he had been estranged from life. He asked why did the Golden Temple try to protect him and try to separate him from the life without asking. It might be that the temple was saving him from falling into hell, but by so

doing, the temple was making him even more evil than those people who actually do felt into hell.

After the unpredicted meeting with the Superior that together with a geisha, the attitude of the Superior toward Mizoguchi was change. Mizoguchi was filled hatred and emerged the desire to get away from all his surrounding, to leave the conception of beauty which so shackled him, to leave the isolated obscurity in which he lived, to leave his stuttering and all the other conditions of his existence. At his leaving way, he got the idea to set fire to the Golden Temple. He thought that if he burnt the Golden Temple, he would be doing something that will have great educational value.

The more he thought about it, the more cheerful he become. His decision to set fire to the Golden Temple was as though he had been planning ever since his birth. It was as though the idea had been growing within him, since he had first visited the Golden Temple with his father.

Mizoguchi prepared everything concerned with his plan, but if it closely to his did, the glittering of the temple always emerged into his eyes. The famous passage in the chapter of the Rinsairoku: "*When ye meet the Buddha, kill the Buddha! When ye meet your ancestor, kill your ancestor!...*" which made his whole body was infused with strength all of sudden and that glittering temple of his vision had begun to fade away. Finally he went to set the fire to destroy the temple.