

Sensoria

by Jamal H. Iqbal

"What if you used Herons for Sushi?" Takama-san asked his sensei, even as both of them tried in vain to get comfortable finding ways to avoid looking at each others' uncovered penises in the close confines of the Swiss sauna - eucalyptus and elm vapors meeting lavender after shave balsam.

Awkward had always come easy to the both, "So it's no wonder Takama is hinting at as lame a joke, as a 'red heron', distracting me from this unexpected and complete drop of guard never prescribed on any page of Zen and the Master-Disciple Code for the Modern Japanese." thought Sensei Yoko as he chuckled uncontrollably in his head. Aloud he chortled a staccato guttural, "Heron for Sushi, ha!".

For Takama this created the second conundrum of the day. One even bigger than the first. When he'd first learnt that sensei and he would be boarding a flight together for a series of demonstrations in Geneva, little had he expected he would be locked up in a 6 foot by 6 foot wooden box in his birthday suit. ("Trust the English to add disjointed non-delicate vocabulary to a delicate situation", thought he.) Added to that was the fact that his sensei was also stark naked, every wrinkle and every rash hanging in front of his young apprentice.

Meanwhile, tradition dictated that they follow the customs of their hosts at all times. Tradition also dictated, that irrespective of whether your toes curled up or your butt threatened to topple a bucket of water bringing it to a swift sizzle on the wooden slat, when a Sensei laughed at a disciple's joke, you, the disciple had to bow. All the way to the waist, keeping the eyes level and pointed to the front. Not to his face. Not below. Fixing your eyes straight ahead, unblinking.



As she waited for Air Nippon 345 to land at Narita, Cabin Supervisor Ichiko Nori touched up her cherry lips, happy to finally get rid of this 14-hour 40-minute long haul. And (after she would

somehow manage to wake them up) finally get rid of these two country buffoons from Shimakapu Dojo, on government sponsored Club J12 and 13. "We are Bushido", they'd boasted. And in between three bottles of Jim Beam, seven Saporos and a tumbler of Hiro Sake they insisted she pour them with crushed rice crackers, they'd pretty much told the whole aircraft where they'd lost their virginity, when they'd first masturbated, how both their mothers' breasts looked like funnels with withered grapes on top and why and by whom the older one had gotten circumcised. The last she'd heard from the younger idiot was an incessant and uncontrolled giggle fit intermittently bridged by the words, "Red Heron? You thought WHAT? Ahahaha, what the hell is a Red Heron old man?"

