

"Onbashira" the Opera

This drama is a mythological opera of ancient Suwa times.

A young man from Izumo, Minakata, lost a battle with the land of Yamato (present day Western Japan) and was miraculously washed ashore on the western side of Lake Suwa by the hand of the dragon god. He was attracted by the wild and holy nature of Suwa and decided to give his life to Suwa. He met with Princess Yasaka, who ruled the northern side of the Lake. His power increased and he became very popular. But because of that, there was great tension with Moreya, the ruler of the south side of Lake Suwa.

Two other people connected to Moreya, a young man, Kusamichi and his sister, Takateru tried to make their dream come true by using that tense situation. Their scheme finally brought about a duel between Minakata and Kusamichi, but Takei, the guardian of Princess Yasaka, settled the argument and no one was killed.

They received news that Mikazuchi, the shogun of Yamato, and his cavalry were coming to Suwa to pursue his old enemy, Minakata. Kusamichi's initial ambition was to gain the love Princess Yasaka, but now he wanted all of Suwa.

Takei, the guardian of Princess Yasaka, asked Moreya to send in reinforcements, but Kusamichi advised Moreya to decide which side to join after see the fighting of Yamato Mikazuchi's army and Minakata's forces. Minakata was outnumbered and challenged Mikazuchi to a one-on-one battle, but Minakata was wounded in a surprise attack by Kusamichi. However Takei's level-headed strategy put the Mikazuchi forces on the run. Moreya joined the fighting after seeing this, but Kusamichi mortally wounded Moreya and Takei and Moreya realized Kusamichi's ambition for the first time.

Minakata and Moreya sacrificed much and Princess Yasaka was impressed by their dying words, "Suwa is one!" She had seen this fate through her psychic powers and before committing suicide and ascending to heaven, she said that her powers, the four powers of energy, spirit, magic and reasoning would be passed on to provide the people of Suwa with peace and happiness forever.

It now became clear that the four deaths occurred so that the four souls could become the four powers and give new life to the people of Suwa.

As a symbol of this new life, the story comes to a close with a great chorus of singers and kiyari song while the four Onbashira are raised.