

Virtue: The Way of The Modern Samurai

By

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INTRO: BLACK SCREEN

Words appear: SEISATSU YODATSU - THE RIGHT OF THE SAMURAI TO KILL THOSE IN LOWER CASTES, OFTEN FOR THE SMALLEST OF INSULTS AND INFRACTIONS.

Smaller words: What if we had to live by this?

1. INT. DOJO OF HYADO - MORNING

--INTERCUT MONTAGE SCENES--

1st SCENE:

We see HYADO meditating, surrounded by burning incense.

2nd SCENE:

We see HYADO practicing techniques with his wooden katana. He is shirtless and we see the tattoo of his clan, the DRAGON, on his back. The dojo is sparse in style. We see weapons displayed in various places. Of particular interest are his katana, which has a dragon hilt, and a metallic war fan. BUTLER enters. He is dressed in a modern suit.

--END MONTAGE SECTION--

BUTLER

Pardon me, sir. Manizomo will soon be here for your appointment.

HYADO

Yes, thank you.

BUTLER

Sir? Do you think this wise?

HYADO

Do you mean marrying off my cousin's daughter, or riding in my enemy's car?

Hyado stares at a katana on the wall.

BUTLER

Both, sir.

Hyado chuckles.

HYADO

We will soon find out.

BUTLER

Sir, your cousin left a message.
He is very upset over this
arrangement.

HYADO

Is that because of the marriage,
or the sword?

BUTLER

I couldn't say, sir.

HYADO

Inform my cousin that he will do
as I command.

BUTLER

Very well, sir.

2. INT. OFFICE IN THE DOJO OF HYADO - LATER

Hyado is standing at a desk, now dressed in a white shirt and tie and a shoulder holster. There is a topographical map of Massachusetts on one wall with red and white tacks inserted in what could be considered a strategic fashion. There are also antique maps of the Lowell area. He checks and then holsters the handgun that rests on the desk and then straps on his katana. He then puts on his suit jacket. The Butler stands by.

BUTLER

Do you think they will be
necessary, sir?

HYADO

(eyes closed)
It matters not.

Butler nods. The sound of a car HORN is heard.

BUTLER

He has arrived.

Hyado opens his eyes and nods.

3. EXT. LIMO - DAY

We see a luxury sedan driving through downtown Lowell. The city looks clean and the buildings beautiful. Flags displaying the Kraken clan's symbol mark the car as an official diplomatic vehicle. The car passes by and we see it heading down Merrimack St. towards city hall.

4. INT. LIMO - DAY

MANIZOMO and Hyado sit in the back of the sedan. Manizomo is dressed in an equally nice suit with a red shirt and tie. His right hand is holding a katana and has a tattoo with the symbol of his clan, the Kraken. It is notable that his katana has a Dragon on the hilt. There is a tray with tea service set between them. Manizomo is just finishing off his tea and looks out the window.

MANIZOMO

This province is much improved.
How does a city like Lowell gain
the favor of the Emperor?

HYADO

Cities reflect the quality of
their citizens.

Manizomo sneers. Hyado sips his tea.

HYADO

Shall we return?

MANIZOMO (to DRIVER)

Turn left here.

The car turns down a different street.

HYADO

We should not delay. I should report to the Emperor.

MANIZOMO

I am in no hurry.

Hyado frowns.

5. EXT. LIMO - DAY

The car drives into a more run down area. The buildings are in ill repair or condemned. The people look more downtrodden and poor.

MANIZOMO

Let us walk amongst *these citizens* so they may better appreciate the protection and stability we offer them.

Hyado scowls, controls his anger. Manizomo smirks. The car begins to slow and eventually comes to a stop.

HYADO

Fine. It is a good thing to appreciate the bounty they provide for us.

Manizomo exits the vehicle just as Hyado finishes speaking. Hyado puts down his tea and exits.

6. EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Hyado and Manizomo walk along a city sidewalk. The sedan follows a proper distance behind. A COUPLE hurriedly crosses the street ahead of them to avoid being in their path. Another CITIZEN who doesn't see them coming simply stops and bows where he is with his head lowered.

HYADO

It is said, the Emperor would like to see our feud put aside in favor of unity. It is said that he has seen an outside threat to our great nation.

MANIZOMO

Is it so? Hmm. So this proposal of marriage between our two houses would seal a truce between us.
(glances at Citizen bowing)
Do you really believe the fighting would stop?

HYADO

Why shouldn't it? You have offered one of your own sons. That is a generous token on your part. We had not expected such and are pleasantly surprised by your offer.

MANIZOMO

Bah! Do not be surprised. My sixth son is a milksop, barely fit to wield a mop, never mind become a proper Samurai.

HYADO

No matter. His blood is strong and could produce an heir that surpasses him.

As Hyado finishes speaking they both turn around the corner of a building.

7. EXT. TAVERN - DAY

Hyado and Manizomo come around the corner of the building and walk in front of a bordello masquerading as a tavern. A ruckus underway inside now spills out onto the street. We see one man punch another and the second man (HATI) falls back onto the street. Upon landing, his hand touches the shoe of Manizomo. The crowd who followed the two men out of the 'tavern' gasps. Hati jumps back up in fear, then immediately bows.

MANIZOMO

Son of a wet dog!

HATI

A...a...a...thousand pardons dono-
sama. So sorry. Forgive! Forgive!
I am but a humble, worthless
merchant.

MANIZOMO

Kneel!

Manizomo points to the ground beside him. Hati gasps and whimpers in fear, kneels down and begins wetting himself. In one smooth motion, Manizomo pulls out his handgun and SHOOTs Hati in the head, then holsters the gun just as fast.

Hyado studies his movements.

A half-naked woman (KIJI) comes running out of the tavern and falls across the body of Hati, crying.

Hyado averts his gaze.

KIJI

Monsters!

MANIZOMO

Harlot! What indecency! Cover
yourself!

Kiji stares daggers at Manizomo.

KIJI

This is how you protect us!
To hell with you!

Kiji spits on his shoe. Manizomo SHOOTs her in the same fashion as Hati.

After a moment of shocked silence, and a glance from Manizomo, the gathering scatters in chaos, some SCREAMING. Manizomo starts toward the tavern door.

HYADO

Manizomo, I would caution
benevolence. Justice has been
served.

MANIZOMO

No! Justice will be served when I
remove this stain from the cloth
of our land.

Manizomo walks into the tavern. Hyado watches through the window, studying Manizomo's movements. We hear several SHOTS fired.

8. INT. TAVERN - DAY

Manizomo slaughters everyone he can find, first unloading his handgun, and then drawing his katana. During the slaughter, one man (PIPE VICTIM) grabs a pipe to defend himself. Manizomo, with a powerful stroke, cuts the pipe in two, killing the man. We see flashing images of the slaughter.

9. EXT. TAVERN - DAY (CONT.)

Manizomo walks out of the 'tavern' with splatters of blood on his face, and returns to Hyado's side.

HYADO

You have been overzealous.
It is unseemly.

MANIZOMO

I have only done what honor
dictates.

HYADO

I see no honor in your actions.

MANIZOMO

So, Hyado, you would call a
duel then?

Hyado looks around the street, noting the bystanders.
Including a small boy watching from behind a fence.

HYADO

It seems I must.

MANIZOMO

(harsh laugh)

The Emperor would be displeased at
our calling off the alliance.

HYADO

The Emperor's wishes, regarding
our alliance, are but a rumor
leaked through the media. The
Emperor's true feelings are still
unknown.

Manizomo's eyes betray his anger. He removes a cloth from
his pocket and wipes the blood from his face.

MANIZOMO

So be it.

Manizomo gestures for his car to approach. Hyado takes out
his cell-phone and hits a button.

HYADO

Prepare the dueling grounds.

10. INT. LIMO - MOMENTS LATER

Hyado and Manizomo ride in silence. They each in turn sip calmly at their tea.

11. EXT. DUELING GROUNDS: ENTRANCE GATE - DAY - LATER

Samurai WITNESSES file into the complex wearing colors of other clans. Two SOLDIERS stand guard. There is a sign on the door that states: USE OF CAMERAS, CELL-PHONES OR ANY VIDEO SURVEILLANCE EQUIPMENT STRICTLY PROHIBITED.

12. INT. DUELING GROUNDS: FIELD HOUSE - DAY

Manizomo and Hyado are standing in front of a MAGISTRATE dressed in their suits with katanas. Banners representing the two clans hang behind the participants. The Witnesses are present and two more soldiers. The Magistrate presents two pillows with a war fan and iron bracer respectively.

MAGISTRATE

Your chosen secondary weapons.

The Magistrate grabs two other pillows with guns on them off a pedestal while the Samurai arm themselves. He then presents these.

MAGISTRATE

Your guns. Each has one round.

The Samurai each take a gun and holster it. They then walk twenty paces apart.

MAGISTRATE

If any of the participants wish to forgo the duel with honor, they may do so by way of seppuku. If you wish to call your second, you may do so now.

The Magistrate holds out a cell-phone. Both Samurai shake their heads.

MAGISTRATE

So be it.

The Magistrate moves out of the way.

MAGISTRATE (O.C.)

Begin.

The Samurai bow to each other. They study each other for a very long time. The crowd is SILENT. Then the Samurai erupt, seemingly simultaneously. Manizomo is a split second sooner. They both draw their guns and shoot. Hyado whips up his war fan as he shoots and it blocks the bullet, knocking him to the ground. Manizomo raises his bracer and deflects the bullet coming at him. A WITNESS (one of the soldiers) is struck with the deflecting bullet. He falls down, dead. Everyone ignores him. We see a mark left on Manizomo's arm bracer by Hyado's bullet. Hyado hops up and throws his fan aside, the bullet stuck in it. Both of them stop and study each other again. They charge simultaneously, Manizomo letting out a war cry. Manizomo performs his powerful downward stroke. Hyado fakes as if to block then performs a sidestepping maneuver and tumbles to one side. They pass each other and then both combatants pause. Hyado stands up and is now without his sword. Manizomo pauses and looks down at the sword now protruding from his abdomen. Then Manizomo falls to his knees, spits blood and falls over dead. Manizomo's hand finally releases his dragon katana. Hyado removes his sword from Manizomo's body, wipes it off with a cloth from his pocket and sheaths it, then bows to his opponent. He then bows to the Magistrate who bows in return.

HYADO

Remove and wash his head so I may present it to the Emperor. See to it my cousin receives his sword.

MAGISTRATE

It will be done.

The Witnesses and Soldiers file out of the Dueling Grounds Field House and walk back to the gate.

THE END.