

MAGICIANS OF MT. SHI

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Cast of Characters (in order of appearance):

1 male, 1 female, 4 either

Narrator [m/f] A sage that presents the story as a parable.

Tebiki [m/f] The jinn of Mt. Shi. A guiding spirit that gifted magic to the ancestors of Hito and Deshi, and has since served the family as a guardian and teacher.

Deshi [f] A magician of noble birth who gracefully carries on the traditions of her ancestors. She carries great power but humbly withholds it in her duties as a mystic healer.

Hito [m] A magician of noble birth and brother to Deshi, he is fiercely dedicated to improving his ability on his own terms. His headstrong nature can sometimes turn his ambitions into stubborn acts of vanity.

Ogres 1 and 2 [m/f] A pair of violent spirits who pick fights with travelers of the mountain.

Time:

A fabled age.

Setting:

The sacred Mt. Shi, and the valley it guards.

Note:

Characters that could be either gender have been assigned one for the sake of readability. Please change pronouns according to casting.

(At rise: the stage is bare, and ethereal chimes twinkle ambiently. The NARRATOR enters.)

NARRATOR

The world was barren.
Out of darkness, spirits came
To claim their new realms.

(TEBIKI enters. He forms the valley as he speaks.)

TEBIKI

I am the jinn Tebiki.
From my realm, Mt. Shi, I lord.

(TEBIKI forms Mt. Shi and looks over the realm from its peak.)

NARRATOR

From Tebiki's hand,
People of the sediment
Formed in the valley.

(HITO and DESHI enter wearing masks, representing the people of the valley.)

TEBIKI

From my people, I chose two
To bear magic in their blood.

(The masked HITO and DESHI perform magic.)

NARRATOR

The generations
Passed the mystic blood through time
To sameborn siblings.

(HITO and DESHI remove their masks and TEBIKI exits.)

DESHI

I, Deshi, wield great magic.
I master it with measure.

(DESHI receives magic and is initially overcome by the power she possesses. She eventually discovers that she can heal without much difficulty, and hones this ability.)

NARRATOR

Deshi remains true
To the ways of her forebears.
She is a healer.

(DESHI kneels within a temple, offering healing services to village folk.)

DESHI

Here I harness my power
As one would a wild horse.

NARRATOR

Her skill is unmatched
Yet singular in its form.
Routine staves her fear.

HITO

I, Hito, wield fierce magic.
I master it by my hand.

(HITO receives magic and gets a taste for its power. He initially follows instruction from his master before making off on his own and instructing himself.)

NARRATOR

Hito believes that
A true master should not need
Others to guide them.

(HITO demonstrates multiple types of magic, but at a noticeably smaller scale than DESHI's magic.)

HITO

In freedom I have found strength.
It is true strength; it is mine.

(HITO tests his might against various non-magical opponents, defeating them swiftly.)

NARRATOR

He matches skill with
Challengers. He lays claim to
Each mundane trial.

(The chimes cease, and other ambient instruments and sounds of nature replace them. A new verse has begun. HITO sits outside of DESHI's temple and gazes past the horizon.)

NARRATOR

Hito watches as
The moon retreats, and the sun
Blossoms through the clouds.

(HITO stands.)

HITO

The morning swallows the moon.
Will you speak with me, sister?

(DESHI stands and invites HITO before her.)

NARRATOR

Moons well-numbered passed
Since Hito's passion blossomed
And sent him away.

DESHI

Your absence brought many tears.
Now you come by moonlight. Why?

NARRATOR

He shines like the moon;
A pale glint. In thoughts, he is
A master blossomed.

HITO

Tebiki's path is your charge.
By moonrise, I will best him.

(There is a long silence between DESHI and HITO.)

NARRATOR

As the blossoms fall,
The moon's phantom brilliance
Finds room for waning.

(DESHI steps aside to let HITO pass.)

DESHI

Go. And may the moon's ray find
A man whose strength has served him.

(HITO passes through DESHI's temple and steps onto the mountain path. A new verse has begun. DESHI waits on the side of the path, unseen by HITO. She worries for his safety.)

NARRATOR

Hito's brazenness
Makes the ground firm for his steps.
Spirits challenge him.

(OGRE 1 and OGRE 2 enter. They size up HITO and prepare to fight.)

OGRE 1

A boy has come here to die!

OGRE 2

Let us tear him to pieces!

(The OGRES attack. HITO is able to fend them off with his magic for a time, but eventually he is overwhelmed by the coordinated assault. While HITO lies vulnerable, the OGRES jeer and heckle in anticipation of their final blow.)

NARRATOR

Formidable foes
Blindside Hito. As death looms,
He clings to his pride.

OGRE 1

Your blood will soak the soil!

OGRE 2

Return your soul to the mount!

(The OGRES pounce for their final blow, but DESHI uses her healing magic to protect HITO. HITO is revitalized and becomes immune to attack.)

NARRATOR

From cover of wood,
Deshi stays the hand of death.
Love conquers honor.

(The OGRES become agitated by and then afraid of HITO's invincibility. They exit. HITO looks around, confused. DESHI reveals herself.)

HITO

You came? I am sufficient.
A fair duel is mine to take.

NARRATOR

Deshi, in her grace,
Sees through his stubborn protest.
The wise forgive slights.

DESHI

Mt. Shi is rife with danger.
I'll see you to Tebiki.

(HITO and DESHI travel further down the path. HITO leads, staying a notable distance ahead.)

NARRATOR

The magicians go
Up the mountain, now as two.
Silence aparts them.

(HITO triggers a magical trap and becomes caught in a box. The OGRES can be heard cackling from somewhere deep in the forest.)

HITO

Spirit trickery!

(to the OGRES)

You cheat . . .
Is this your only recourse?

(HITO attempts to break the box with his magic, without success; he is not strong enough.)

NARRATOR

To make iron sharp,
You must meet an iron edge;
Dull not upon gold.

DESHI

Brother, I heal, not destroy.
I go to seek help for you.

(DESHI goes to leave, but the box begins to constrict
around HITO.)

NARRATOR

The finest wagon
Is stopped at the river's edge.
Learn to build a boat.

HITO

Sister . . . you are who I need.

DESHI

. . . I'm afraid to lose control.

(HITO puts his hand on the wall of the box. DESHI meets
it with her own hand. They share a silent moment. HITO
guides DESHI through the process of casting a destruction
spell. She wavers occasionally, but with the motivation of
her brother succeeds and destroys the box.)

NARRATOR

Hito and Deshi,
Together as one. In union,
A master forms them.

(HITO and DESHI embrace.)

HITO

Great form . . . Deshi, please forgive—

DESHI

I do. I love you, Hito.

NARRATOR

With newfound vigor,
Pupil and pupil press on
To meet Tebiki.

(HITO and DESHI continue up the mountain side by side until they arrive at the peak. Ethereal chimes herald the entrance of TEBIKI.)

TEBIKI

My children of the valley.
Why have you come before me?

NARRATOR

Vain motivation
Prostrates to humility;
Two roads wind on yet.

HITO and DESHI

Alone, we had met an end.
Together, let us begin.

End of Play