

Design : Masako Ban

Mr. Pole

## "tsuno" ?? Bride has (horns) ??

A friend showed me a photo from his wedding ceremony in which his wife was in a beautiful kimono. She was also wearing a headdress, and I was intrigued by its interesting shape. "Oh, that," the friend said. "It's called **tsuno kakushi** (角隠し), a horn cover." Horns on a bride's head? But he wasn't joking. Japanese people often associate horns with devils, but why did horns also come to be associated with brides, of all people?

### Suppose you are invited to a wedding...

#### What to wear

The usual wedding attire for male guests is a black or dark suit and white tie. Women, on the other hand, are allowed a little more flexibility and can wear either a formal dress or kimono. The width of the kimono sleeves differs depending on the wearer's status: For married women, they reach to the hip, whereas single women's sleeves are wide enough to hang down to their calves.

#### Gifts

The wedding gift is usually money, and there are rules dictating how you present it. Get a **goshugi-bukuro** (御祝儀袋) envelope designed for the purpose and available at convenience stores. Write your name in the lower half on the front and insert the money in crisp, new bills (**shinsatsu** = 新札). When you arrive at the wedding, offer it to the person at the reception desk, bow and say, "omedetogozaimasu" (Congratulations.). Make sure you put in an odd number (**kisū** = 奇数) of bills, because it is believed there is a jinx in an even number (**gū** = 偶数), which can be divided into two and spell the couple's separation. An exception is two bills. Nine bills are also thought of as bad luck.

#### Speeches—what you can expect

Once the reception starts, expect to sit through a long series of speeches by guests chosen by the newlyweds. Speeches are part of the wedding formalities and their content is often stilted.

#### Return Gifts (hikidemono = 引出物)

When the wedding reception is over, you are given a large paper bag containing a thank-you gift from the newlyweds. It is not good manners to open it at the wedding. Return gifts are typically cooking utensils, serving dishes or—if you get lucky—a gift catalog and voucher. Kitchen items are so common that some Japanese homes end up with a large collection of them.

#### Choosing the date

There are six fortune designations given in a continuous cycle in the traditional Japanese calendar, which is based on traditional Chinese fortune-telling. One designation, **taian** (大安), is regarded as most desirable for weddings, while **butsumetsu** (仏滅), on the other hand, is to be avoided. Because of this, when a taian falls on a weekend, wedding halls, hotels and shrines everywhere are booked out. Few



## Pera Pera Penguin's

5-minute Japanese Class by Hitomi Hirayama

Vol. 5

In Edo era (1603-1868), women of samurai families used hair grease of the type still used by today's sumo wrestlers. The trouble with the grease was that, whenever they went out, it would gather dust. So they came up with the idea of wrapping white silk fabric around their heads to keep the dust off. It eventually evolved into the headdress you saw in the photo. Interestingly, by the time it came to be worn by brides and be called **tsunokakushi**, the covering had a new meaning: It was worn to hide—symbolically—the bride's horns, or her selfishness or ego. It reflected the belief that the bride should hide such "horns" in the presence of her in-laws, to convince them she could live with them harmoniously.

### Onomatopoeia

(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
ほっ hot relieved	ふらふら fura fura dizzy; stumble	がぶがぶ gabu gabu gulp	ぎりぎり giri giri barely (space, time, deadline, etc.)
		どきどき doki doki scared; nervous	からから kara kara bone-dry

Mr. Pole is talking about the wedding reception he attended yesterday. On the day of the wedding, I got lost (took the wrong road).

結婚式の日道を間違えました。  
**kekkon-shiki no hi michi o machigaemashita**  
wedding ceremony road made a mistake

But I just made it on time.  
でも **demo** ① barely で間に合いました。  
**de maniaimashita**  
but

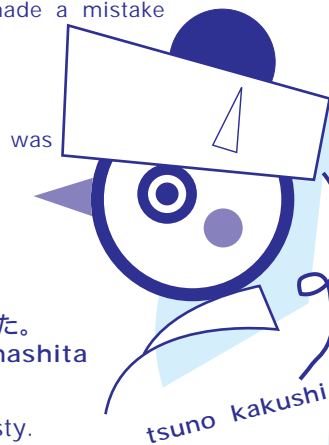
I was nervous giving a speech.  
スピーチは **speech wa** ② nervous しました。  
**shimashita**

When it was over, I was relieved.  
終わった時は **owatta toki wa** ③ relieved としました。  
**to shimashita**  
when finished

After the speech, I was extremely thirsty.  
スピーチの後 **speech no ato** のどが ④ bone-dry でした。  
**no nodo ga deshita**  
after the speech throat

So, I gulped down some sake.  
ですから **desukara** お酒を ⑤ gulp 飲みました。  
**osake o nomimashita**  
therefore sake drank

I felt dizzy. Today, I have a hangover.  
⑥ dizzy しました。今日は **shimashita kyō wa** 二日酔い **desu** です。  
today hangover



tsuno kakushi

- Answers
- ① (d)
  - ② (e)
  - ③ (a)
  - ④ (f)
  - ⑤ (c)
  - ⑥ (b)



lucky day (calendar wise)  
**大 安**  
tai an  
(big) (peace of mind)

unlucky day (calendar wise)  
**仏 滅**  
butsu metsu  
(Buddha) (death)

**安** an: peace of mind  
yasu(i): cheap

**安物買いの銭失い**  
**yasumono-gai no zeni ushinai**  
cheap goods buying money lose

Buying cheap and wasting money/Penny wise and pound

I bought it because it was cheap, but it broke straight away.  
安かったので買いましたが、すぐに壊れました。  
**yasukatta node kaimashita ga, suguni koware mashita**  
was cheap so bought soon was broken

Penny wise and pound foolish, I suppose.  
『安物買いの銭失い』ですね。  
"yasumono-gai no zeni ushinai" desu ne

**仏** butsu: Buddha  
hotoke: Buddha

**仏の顔も三度**  
**hotoke no kao mo sando**  
Buddha face three times

There is a limit to one's patience.  
You can only pray to Buddha

If I fail this time, it will all be over.  
今度失敗したらおしまいです。  
**kondo shippai shitara oshimai desu**  
this time if it is a failure be all over; the end

Our president is patient, but there is a limit to anyone's patience.  
社長は気が長いですが『仏の顔も三度』です。  
**shachō wa ki ga nagai desu ga, "hotoke no kao mo sando" desu**  
company president patient

You ought to be careful.  
気をつけたほうがいいですね。  
**ki o tsuketahō ga i desu ne**  
had better take care

**仏作って魂入れず**  
**hotoke tsukutte tamsāni irezu**  
Buddha make soul not giving

Doing something in a superficial way, forgetting the most important part.  
(Lit. Making a Buddha statue, but failing to give

Despite all efforts (on the document), the main point is missing.  
せっかく作ったのに要点が抜けています。  
**sekkaku tsukutta noni yāden ga nuketeimasu**  
make efforts made though main is missing point

A statue of Buddha with no soul, right?  
『仏作って魂入れず』ですね。  
"hotoke tsukutte tamaishi irezu" desu ne

With cooperation from Akiko E. Yasukawa