

Musashi

Book I

The Little Bell

Takezo lay among the thousands of fallen. He could not get up and remained unconscious for some days, and he knew that his side had lost the battle. One of his supposed allies had secretly sided with the Eastern army, and so the Western armies were wiped out. Then he heard a voice, it was Matahachi. The two had been friends since childhood; they had joined the army hoping to become samurai but had been taken on only as foot soldiers. Soon they heard horses: the enemy was coming to trample the corpses. The pair escaped and slipped out of the village. Along the way they came upon more corpses and a girl, who started when she saw them. They followed her and found a village. At first the villagers would not open their homes, but when they learned that the two were only foot soldiers, they opened their doors and gave medicine to Matahachi, who was suffering from stomach pains. After a few days' rest, their wounds healed. When Takezo asked the girl why she had been among the corpses, she gave no answer and shut her door, the little bell rattling.

The Comb

Takezo was stouter than most. The village made its living selling moxa, which it traded in nearby villages. Matahachi moved into the house and drank sake, while Takezo still hid outside. After a few days, Matahachi told him he should come indoors, since living in the open was less dangerous than hiding outside. Oko offered Takezo a drink, but he refused. When her daughter, Akemi, went out to gather mushrooms, Takezo went with her, and he learned that she had been foraging among the corpses on the day they first met. They could live on selling moxa, but her mother had a taste for expensive things. On the mountain they came upon a band of men led by Temma, a looter who had killed Akemi's father. They hurried back to the house, and when her mother learned that Temma was coming, they hid the goods looted from the battlefield. Takezo found his sword, and Oko returned it to him. That night, as he slept, he woke to find Oko coaxing him beside him. He asked her to go back to her own room. Then came a knock at the door: Temma's men had arrived. They first demanded that Oko tell them where the loot was hidden, and she insisted there was none. Temma did not search the house and instead tried to seduce Oko, but she resisted. So he ordered his men to search the ceiling, and all the hidden goods came raining down on them. When the men turned to punish Akemi, Takezo stepped in with a wooden sword and Matahachi with a real one. Takezo killed Temma, Matahachi killed one of his men, and one escaped. They slept, and when they woke, Oko told them that Temma had a brother who was a better fighter than Takezo and Matahachi combined. Takezo and Matahachi resolved to return home. But when Takezo woke, the house stood empty, with only a red comb left behind: Oko had seduced Matahachi, and the two had gone off together.

The Flower Festival

Miyamoto was a town of scattered hamlets, where Lord Shimmen of Iga kept a castle. It was the home Takezo and Matahachi had left behind. Otsu was picking flowers when a priest, clad in nothing but a

wrapping cloth, came to speak with her about the nature of evil in women. She and the priest argued over it, and afterward Otsu went to see Takezo's sister, who had already lit a memorial candle for both Takezo and Matahachi, believing them dead.

At the religious ceremony, the crowd paid more attention to Otsu than to the festival itself. Takuan, a monk, was collecting offerings from the crowd while Otsu brushed calligraphy of poems. Then she caught sight of Takezo's eyes and cried out his name.

The Dowager's Wrath

Otsu could not find Takezo when she searched for him in the crowd. Matahachi came from a proud samurai family, and his mother was furious with Takezo for having led her son off to war. So when the old woman went to the house of Takezo's sister, Otsu came along. Ogin did not know where her brother was. Matahachi's mother unleashed a barrage of tirades against him and left. Then they heard a noise: a dead soldier tumbled down from the ceiling. Soldiers arrived and arrested Ogin, while Otsu managed to flee into the forest, where she met the monk.

Takezo cursed the villagers for reporting him the moment they saw him. He had been hiding in the mountains for days, and when he finally came down to the crowd he had to flee because Otsu had called out his name. Later, when he went to his sister's house, Matahachi's mother was there, and a soldier spotted him; he killed the man with a wooden stick and ran. While he was eating a raw bird, he came upon a villager, and after questioning him learned that his sister had been arrested. Before rescuing her, he went to Matahachi's mother and told her that her son had married a woman in another province. She cooked him a meal and drew him a bath, but while he was bathing she summoned the samurai. When they arrived, Takezo attacked, killed several of them, and escaped.

The Art of War

Takezo went to the temple to talk to Otsu about Matahachi, but found a samurai captain trying to force himself on her. He killed some of the captain's men and escaped. Otsu received a letter, delivered by Takuan, revealing that Matahachi had married Oko. When she was late bringing the captain his dinner, Takuan went looking for her and stayed at her side through the meal. The captain resented Takuan's presence and told him to leave, but Takuan only reproached and teased him, calling him a dolt. When the captain tried to fight him, Takuan replied that he was a friend of Lord Terumasa, and the captain dropped his sword. Takuan then lectured on the art of war as it applied to capturing Takezo, and he struck a bargain with the captain: he and Otsu would go into the forest and capture Takezo within three days. If he succeeded, the captain would let him decide the prisoner's fate; if he failed, he would hang himself from the cryptomeria tree. So Otsu and Takuan set out, and instead of combing through the forest, Takuan chose to wait in a cave. They stayed there three days, and Otsu began to doubt that Takuan could really capture Takezo. She then learned that Takuan had read the letters after she left the weaving shed. Saddened once more, she played her flute. Then they saw movement in the grass: it was Takezo. Takuan spoke with him, told him that he could not win in the long run, and bound him with a rope. Takezo could have kicked the monk into the air, but he chose not to.

The Old Cryptomeria Tree

The temple bell rang early, and the village learned that Takuan had captured Takezo without a weapon. He then gathered the villagers to decide Takezo's fate. The captain wanted to intervene and hand Takezo over to the government, but Takuan threatened to set him free instead, so the captain relented and let him continue. It was decided that Takezo would be tied to the old cryptomeria tree and thrashed. Once he was bound, Otsu could not understand why Takuan did not simply behead him to spare him the suffering. Then Matahachi's mother came to her and urged her to move into her house, believing Otsu should wait there until her son returned. But she set Otsu a condition: she must guard Takezo and see that he was beheaded. She also handed Otsu a letter and a gold coin, instructing her to cut off Takezo's head herself. Takuan read the letter after the old woman left. Takezo shouted at the monk, insisting that he had come only to tell Matahachi's mother about her son. Then the rain began to pour, and Otsu implored Takuan to untie Takezo, but he would not budge. He slammed the door in her face, yet she did not give up, and went on pleading for Takezo's release.

The Rock and the Tree

When Takuan woke, Matahachi's mother came to check whether Takezo was dead, but he seemed to have survived the harsh storm. Otsu, however, fell ill from the rain. Takuan and Takezo traded words, Takezo hurling insults, Takuan teasing him in return, while Takezo struggled to wriggle free of the rope. He wept and told Takuan that he wanted to live, but Takuan said he could not release him. That night, Otsu came and cut the rope, and the two fled together. But Takezo wanted to save his sister, so they parted ways, promising to meet at Himeji. When Takezo reached the stockade, he found that his sister had already been moved to Himeji, so he set off there to meet Otsu. Meanwhile, in Miyamoto, Osugi, Matahachi's mother, and Uncle Gon resolved to catch Takezo and Otsu themselves, and set out after them. Arriving at a teahouse, they learned that the owner was caring for a girl with a fever. They tried to seize her, but Otsu escaped into the ravine.

The Birth of Musashi

When Takezo reached Himeji, he waited for Otsu but could not find her. Then Takuan seized him and brought him into the castle of Lord Terumasa. Invoking their agreement, Takuan asked to decide Takezo's fate, and sentenced him to a dark room filled with books. There Takezo read the works of Sun Tzu and others. He lost count of the days and turned twenty-one after three years in that room. Then Takuan appeared and announced that Takezo would be released. He brought him before Lord Terumasa, who asked him to become his vassal, but Takezo declined, resolving instead to travel. He was given a new name: Miyamoto Musashi. Takuan told him that his sister had been looked after since her release, but Musashi chose not to see her, unwilling to return to his past. As he left the castle, he met Otsu, who begged him to keep his promise and take her wherever he went. Musashi did not want to bring her along, but she insisted. By the time she came back with her belongings, Musashi had already gone.

Book II, Water

The Yoshioka School

The country had been ruled by a shogun for two years before power passed to his third son. Those years had seen no major battles, leaving Osaka bustling with lights, though something seemed to be brewing in the air. Students from the Yoshioka School entered the brothel district; one wore a hat to avoid drawing attention, but their uniforms gave them away. They went into a restaurant and watched a girl dance. Oko and Akemi served the drinks, and Toji flirted with Oko. Matahachi could not bear to see other men chase his wife, yet he had grown lazy and could find no work of his own, so Oko and Akemi kept him fed and supplied with drink by running this business. Oko treated him badly, but he could not go back to his village. He thought of Otsu, who had waited for him and whom he had abandoned. As he was tearing at Oko's clothes, he overheard a man asking for Toji and the young master, because someone named Miyamoto Musashi was challenging the Yoshioka School and no one could defeat him. Matahachi recognized the name of his home village.

The Wheel of Fortune

The Yoshioka School had amassed great wealth, even though it received no official allowance from the shogun. When Musashi appeared at their gate, they assumed he had come to beg for food. Then he challenged them, and one after another the disciples went down. So they set out to find the young master to face him, but when they returned to the school, their attempt to trick Musashi failed, for he was already gone. Matahachi learned from the school that, spelled out in characters, the name looked like "Takezo."

Encounter and Retreat

Musashi watched the porters at work with wonder in a market near the temple. As he stood gazing at the entrance, a group of porters surrounded him. Then Osugi and Uncle Gon stepped forward and began to challenge him, but Musashi would not answer them. The porters started cheering the two old people on, admiring their perseverance and boldness. Still Musashi made no reply, and he escaped by leaping over the six-foot wall.

The Water Sprite

The inn had come to feel like home to Musashi, for he had been living there twenty days. A ronin questioned a boy about him. The boy, who was especially fond of Musashi, later told him all about the ronin and asked whether he might become his disciple. Musashi decided it was time to leave for Nara. As he set out, he heard a boy shouting behind him: it was Jotaro, the boy from the inn, angry at being left behind. Jotaro said the innkeeper had given him permission to follow Musashi. Musashi apologized for leaving him and accepted him as his disciple. The boy then handed him a letter from Matahachi, who wrote that he had heard Musashi's name at the Yoshioka School and that they were searching for him. So Musashi sent the boy to the school with word that he would return to fight, along with a letter to Matahachi asking to meet.

A Spring Breeze

The boy met Akemi and learned that Matahachi had run away, so he gave her his master's message to pass on should Matahachi return. On the road to Nara, Jotaro hitched rides and teased a horse, and in the process dropped the bamboo tube containing the Yoshioka's reply. A samurai returned it to him. A girl

with a flute laughed at Jotaro for losing his tube. He assumed she was carrying a tube for a master of her own, but then learned that her name was Otsu and that she played the flute. The samurai was a well-known swordsman named Kizaemon. Learning that Otsu was traveling to Nara alone, he offered to escort her to a castle. Nara, with its many temples, made an ideal hiding place for samurai fleeing the Tokugawa government. Hoping to find Musashi there, Otsu accepted his offer, and the boy continued on to Nara.

The Hozoin

Musashi looked around the temples and, coming upon one, asked an old monk where to find the Hozoin. The monk directed him there, and when he arrived, he signed the registry as instructed and waited his turn to fight. Agon was sending everyone flying, and the others were afraid to face him, so Musashi stepped forward. The old monk appeared and told Agon not to fight, for he could see that Agon had already lost. Agon went wild and was wounded by Musashi. The old monk then greeted Musashi warmly, explaining that the abbot was away traveling for a few days. His name was Nikkan, of the Hozoin. After talking with him, Musashi felt defeated. He came back and asked the old monk to tell a boy, should one come looking for him, that he was staying at one of the inns. Musashi took a room at an inn, and Jotaro managed to find him even though no one had told him where he was. The letter from the Yoshioka School warned that if Musashi did not show up, he would be made a fool of in Kyoto. Musashi burned the message. Three swordsmen from the Hozoin came to him and tried to follow him, but he turned them away. A few days later he learned that a group of ronin and priests were waiting for him on Hannya Plain, including, as rumor had it, the abbot of the Hozoin, because he had supposedly put up posters defaming the temple. So Musashi resolved to travel to the plain.

Hannya Plain

Musashi told Jotaro to run away, but the boy stayed behind, hiding by a tree and praying. A band of ronin set upon Musashi while the priests held back. He cut down most of the ronin, and as some tried to flee, the priests joined in, though their blows fell on the ronin, not on Musashi. The plain was soon littered with ronin corpses. Officials arrived, recorded the scene, and departed. Inshun, the abbot of the Hozoin, told Musashi that these ronin had been preying on bystanders and plundering travelers. Then the old monk came and spoke with Musashi, telling him that he must learn not to use force in every situation, for the way of the samurai was more than the way of the sword. From this, Musashi understood that he needed to seek out Lord Yagyu to learn that way.

The Koyagyu Fief

Musashi and Jotaro rested at an inn for several days to recover in body and spirit. While bathing, Musashi overheard stories of the retired Lord Yagyu, who had taken no side in the war and so had remained untouched through the years, had he chosen a side, he would have fallen. Lord Yagyu lived in a village beneath Mount Kasagi, keeping his wealth and retainers. It was a quiet place with beautiful views.

The Peony

In his youth, Lord Yagyu had once fought Sekishusai. Sekishusai, then young, attacked with brute force but lost after two days of combat. From this he learned that the art of war is not always about force, and

afterward Lord Yagyu gave the young man manuals to help him perfect the Yagyu style. Sekishusai now lived in a house with Shoda Kizaemon and a girl he had taken in to play the flute. Kizaemon was pleased that his master had grown fond of Otsu. Sekishusai even sent her out to meet some youths who were challenging him. Otsu went to the inn where Musashi happened to be staying. After she left, Kocha, from the inn, brought Musashi one of the flowers. From the cut of its stem, he could tell it had been severed by a skilled swordsman. Jotaro spoke with Otsu as she headed back to Sekishusai. Meanwhile, Kizaemon was training a group of samurai on the castle's outer grounds. Jotaro came in and asked Kizaemon to read a letter from his master, which asked who had cut the peony's stem. Kizaemon and the others were amazed that Jotaro's master could notice such a detail when they had not, and so they invited him to the castle. On his way back to his master, Jotaro was bitten by a dog that the lord was fond of.

Jotaro's Revenge

Musashi thought it over and decided to go to the castle. There they examined him and questioned him. Then they heard a dog cry out: Jotaro had killed the master's dog, and the keeper was trying to beat the boy. Musashi stepped in to defend him. Kizaemon accused him of plotting to incite a riot in the castle and said that, having failed, he should commit suicide. Musashi refused, and fought all four of them. Unable to hold off so many, he fled into the forest. As his breathing slowed, he heard a flute playing somewhere in the woods.

The Nightingales

Musashi told himself it could not be Otsu's flute, and yet he thought of her. He came upon a house with a plaque bearing a poem, declaring that its master had retired not only from the sword but from all worldly affairs. Then he saw Otsu through the gate. Jotaro was with her; she had learned her master's name the night before, and the two of them wept. Then Jotaro spotted an old rag belonging to his master, and they called out Musashi's name, but he fled. Otsu and Jotaro tried to follow, but he was gone. Otsu later met Takuan, who urged her to marry a villager, warning that the god of death seemed to be watching over her. But she insisted she would keep searching for Musashi, and asked Takuan to say goodbye to Sekishusai for her.

Book III, Fire

Sasaki Kojiro

Castles were being repaired across the country as Ieyasu sought to consolidate his power. The construction brought work for the masses and trade for the merchants, and the farmers were told to stay out of politics. Yet everyone suspected that war was coming. Matahachi, working a laborer's job at one of the construction sites, dreamed of taking revenge on Oko and of matching Musashi. He thought of going back to Otsu and trying to marry her. Then he saw a student sketching the castle, and they quarreled. The student showed no wish to flee, even when Matahachi accused him of being a spy. No one nearby noticed the fight, but one samurai up on the scaffolding branded the student a spy, and the workers threw stones at him until he lay dead. Matahachi was told to wait by the corpse. He took some bundles from the student, tucked them into his kimono, and fled into the fields. There he found a deserted house with a

priest inside, mourning his past accomplishments and the mistakes he had made while thinking of his son, Jotaro. The priest had once been a warrior. Matahachi read the letter from the bundle and found it to be a certificate stating that the man had completed his training in swordsmanship. He slept there for the night and ate the priest's food and drink. Then the priest woke him, angry that he had eaten his food. Matahachi gave him some money from the dead ronin, and the priest let him go. From the priest, Matahachi got a lead: to return the certificate to the ronin's birthplace.

Reunion in Osaka

Matahachi followed the lead and reached Osaka. When he arrived, he was captivated by the city's liveliness and stayed for two months, spending half his money. He moved into a small room and drank sake at an inn. The man he was drinking with claimed he could down ten jars. Matahachi and this man, named Yasoma, fell into conversation. Matahachi introduced himself as Kojiro, using the dead swordsman's name. Yasoma praised him and said he could find him a job at a castle, so they visited some brothels before Yasoma was to go to the castle to arrange the work. After three days, Yasoma vanished, and Matahachi realized he had been tricked. He tried to find the man and caused a scene at a gambling house. Then Uncle Gon and Osugi found Matahachi and told him everything about Otsu and Takezo. When he learned that Otsu no longer loved him, he wanted to kill Takezo. Then he carried Osugi on his back and set off down the road.

The Handsome Young Man

Merchants were gathering at a port near Osaka to buy tobacco, contraband under the Tokugawa government, from the freebooters. Toji and others from the Yoshioka School were also there on business, for their expenses had outrun their allowance and their house was in danger of falling into a merchant creditor's hands. There they met a young man from Jisai who taunted Toji. He boasted that he could cut seagulls out of the air, and asked the merchants to let some gulls loose there rather than shoot them over the sea. Another young man, with a trained monkey, was aboard the ship; when the monkey stole some cards, the captain tried to shoot it, but the young man asked him not to.

The Seashell of Forgetfulness

The ship reached port, and Toji met Oko and went to the inn. Akemi was also bathing there. Then the samurai with the monkey cut off Toji's topknot, enraging the Yoshioka disciples. Akemi was searching for seashells of forgetfulness along the shore while the disciples hunted for the samurai. Then Seijuro called her over and told her that her mother had sold her to him. Akemi tried to escape but could not. After a while, she fled the room and into the forest.

A Hero's Passing

Uncle Gon and Matahachi were talking while Osugi rested near the trees. Then Osugi and Matahachi argued, and he left them. Uncle Gon saw a girl drowning in the river and tried to save her, but the water pulled them both under. Fishermen nearby recovered them, but only Akemi survived. Osugi tried to wake Uncle Gon, but his breath was gone forever. Akemi was brought back to the inn, with Seijuro at her side. Then a letter arrived from Musashi renewing his challenge, and Seijuro returned to Kyoto.

The Drying Pole

The man with the monkey was spotted, so the Yoshioka students went looking for him along the shore. They found him on a ship and called him to come down. The samurai cut them down, and they retreated one by one before his sword, which he called the Drying Pole. Then Seijuro arrived and told him to calm down, recognizing him as his senior. The samurai's name was Kojiro, and Seijuro said he would speak with him about his conduct. They discussed sword styles. Seijuro invited him to the Yoshioka School, but he declined and continued on his journey.

Eagle Mountain

Yoshioka Kempo of Kyoto and Yagyu Muneyoshi of Yamato had been the leading rival swordsmen of eastern Japan in the 1550s and 1560s. Musashi, his foot swollen, was trying to reach a blacksmith named Baiken. He had stepped on a nail, but rather than wait for the wound to heal, he pressed on toward his meeting with Matahachi. When he arrived at Baiken's, he was told that Baiken was at the house of Arakida. So he set off to find it, and on the way he came upon a house of the virgins, took a cold bath, and began to climb Eagle Mountain. He thought that if Takuan could see him limping up the slope, he would call him a fool. Though Musashi was growing stronger, his body and his sword were still not as one. He reached the summit and felt the joy of the clouds above him, even as he saw the pus draining from his foot.

The Manfly in Winter

The maidens from the house of the virgins found the sword Musashi had left behind and called Otsu, who was teaching them to play the flute. Otsu and Jotaro had arrived there two months earlier, unable to travel further through the winter. Jotaro could not stay at the house of the virgins, so he was lodged at Arakida's house. Otsu brought Musashi's bundle to Arakida, while Jotaro swept the floor of the sacred garden. Then Arakida told her she must leave: because she had been traveling with other men, the house of the virgins did not suit her. Otsu thanked him for letting her stay three months, and Arakida asked her, as a favor, to deliver some paintings to a friend of his. So Otsu and Jotaro left the house and set off to deliver the paintings to Arakida's friend.

The Pinwheel

Musashi met Baiken, who boasted about his skill with the sickle-and-chain. They drank together, and Musashi was given a place to sleep for the night. Musashi dreamed that his life was in danger, so he slipped out of bed, and then saw Baiken and his disciple strike the bed, thinking Musashi still lay sleeping there. Baiken was Temma's brother, and he realized that Musashi was the one who had stayed at Oko's house four years earlier. Then they went out looking for him. Musashi considered killing Baiken, but he thought that the infant owner of the pinwheel would one day take revenge if he did, so he set out to travel elsewhere.

The Flying Horse

Otsu and Jotaro reached the gate early, and Jotaro wanted to ride a horse. They rented one from a nearby inn. Then Baiken came down and demanded the horse to go after Musashi. When Otsu and Jotaro heard

that Baiken was hunting Musashi, they tried to delay him. Baiken sensed a connection to Otsu and seized her to use as bait. Meanwhile, Jotaro and the horse went flying through the village. Jotaro asked after Otsu, and a ronin named Hanzo, the nephew of Watanabe, said he had seen a pretty woman, bound, being walked along the road by several men. He helped Jotaro free Otsu, and they took a less-traveled road to find Musashi at the place appointed for his meeting with Matahachi.

The Butterfly in Winter

Akemi encountered another man who tried to abuse her, but a priest named Tanzaemon, who kept a monkey, saved her and brought her to a warm hollow where he had been living. Akemi felt he was a good man. She wept all night, and Tanzaemon slept little either. He went out to buy food and medicine. Meanwhile, Seijuro and the others were talking about Musashi, as their appointment drew near. Then the samurai with the forelock took his monkey and Akemi. The dog bit Akemi's forearm while they were in town. So when Tanzaemon returned, he learned of it from the beggar.

The Announcement

Seijuro was waiting for Kojiro to serve as his sparring partner, and was searching for him. Then someone came asking where he would fight Musashi. They posted a notice on a bridge. Musashi, meanwhile, was searching for his aunt in the village. When he found her, she wanted him to leave, because Osugi had been staying at the aunt's house and they believed Musashi had disgraced the family. Still, they let him stay a while, until Osugi arrived and his aunt told him to go. He was hungry and wanted food. Then Osugi discovered Musashi while he was bathing. Had he still been Takezo, he might have killed her, but he could not. Since he was on his way to meet Matahachi, he thought her son could explain everything, and so he tied her up.

The Great Bridge at Gojo Avenue

Musashi waited for Matahachi at the bridge, but only Akemi came, telling him that Matahachi had never received his message. Then she wept and told him everything. A man and woman embracing on the bridge broke the hearts of Jotaro and Otsu, who were watching. Musashi left after learning that Matahachi would not come, and he freed Osugi and let her go. Jotaro and Otsu ran after Musashi, but Osugi and Jotaro got into a fight. Then Osugi asked Jotaro to fetch Otsu, saying she was no longer angry with her. Osugi asked Otsu to speak with Matahachi; Otsu did not want to, but Osugi insisted, telling her she had forgiven her. Otsu asked Jotaro to deliver the painting in her place and to look for Musashi. Jotaro and Otsu agreed to meet at the duel between Seijuro and Musashi.

Book IV, Wind

The Withered Field

A large crowd gathered in anticipation of the duel, and Jotaro could not find Otsu; he feared Osugi had done something to her. After some minutes, Seijuro came limping back, his shoulder in pain. He and Musashi had fought, and the bones of his shoulder had been shattered, so he asked his disciple to cut off

his arm. After Kojiro severed it, Seijuro walked home. Akemi was there, and though she could have run away, she was drawn to Seijuro like a moth, even though she despised such men.

A Man of Parts

Musashi believed he had won, but he could not feel it. He checked his wooden sword for blood and found none, he had only injured Seijuro. He felt he should not have fought Seijuro, who lacked confidence. Then he saw an old woman flee at the sight of him, dropping her basket. Musashi picked it up and followed her. He returned it to her son, Koetsu, one of the most experienced swordsmen. He talked with them and learned much from the conversation, but he left, as he had other matters to attend to. Koetsu told Musashi he was welcome to come back and stay at his home.

Too Many Kojiros

News of Musashi had reached Matahachi, who was using the certificate to get by. Then he got into a fight with a monk who was searching for Kojiro, and Matahachi ran away. He met Akemi, who was also fleeing another Kojiro, the one with the Drying Pole. Matahachi tried to fight this Kojiro but was beaten, and the monk came to ask why he was using Kojiro's name. Matahachi confessed, but the monk said he had to kill him, for he had been sent by Kojiro's family to avenge Kojiro's death. Then the monk met the other Kojiro, and they talked about swords. This Kojiro was the real one, whose certificate Matahachi had been using. So they punished Matahachi by tying him to a tree and carving into the bark words declaring that he had used another man's name.

The Younger Brother

After learning of his brother's defeat, Denshichiro agreed to return to Kyoto to fight Musashi. The group found Matahachi tied to a tree and freed him, since some of them knew him as Oko's husband. Matahachi, guessing that this might be Seijuro's younger brother, tried to explain how Musashi had wronged him. After Matahachi left, Denshichiro remarked that he must be a buffoon. Seijuro was still recovering in bed when his brother came to him. He asked his younger brother to make up for his mistakes and to lead the Yoshioka School. Denshichiro agreed, but when he said he wanted to fight Musashi, Seijuro urged him not to, certain that he could not win. Denshichiro disagreed, and they argued as they had in the old days. Denshichiro ordered the disciples to find Musashi, and they found him while he was with Otsu. When Denshichiro tried to speak with Seijuro, he found not his brother but a letter.

A Mother's Love

Otsu felt lonely with Osugi and longed for Jotaro's company at the inn. She was under the innkeepers' constant watch, for they took their orders from Osugi. Then Otsu saw Akemi, which stirred a pang of feminine jealousy. Osugi returned and told Otsu she would never let her marry Musashi, among other things. Then a letter came saying Matahachi was on the mountain. So they climbed up and found Kojiro, who asked about Akemi; then Osugi found Matahachi and told him to kill Otsu. Matahachi tried to win Otsu back, but she wanted only Musashi, so he tried to kill her, and she fled. He then slashed at a dark figure he took for Otsu, but it was not Otsu; it was Yasoma, who had swindled Matahachi. Takuan,

meanwhile, was looking for Otsu at the inn, knowing that Osugi and Matahachi meant to murder her. Then the people went up the mountain to bury the corpse and found Otsu lying unconscious.

The Urbane Craftsman

Musashi had grown up hearing his father speak of their clan's famous ancestors. So he went to visit a temple near the bridge in town. He also called on Koetsu and his mother, and was invited to stay longer. At Koetsu's house, Musashi learned much about painting and other arts. Then Koetsu invited him along to a geisha house, and his mother prepared a kimono for Musashi. Then three men from the Yoshioka School came looking for Musashi and delivered a letter from Seijuro's younger brother, saying they should fight that evening. Musashi agreed and went on with Koetsu to the licensed district. Koetsu and Shoyu used nicknames and pressed Musashi to drink the warm sake, but he told them he could not, as he did not want to grow drowsy. While Koetsu and Shoyu busied themselves writing poems and sending them to the lord in the house, Musashi slipped out the back to meet Seijuro's younger brother as arranged.

Reverberations in the Snow

Musashi went out through the kitchen, trying not to be seen. But one of the girls met him, and he asked her to bring some rice balls, then left. He asked a man to return the kimono and a letter to Koetsu if he did not come back. Denshichiro was waiting with his disciples, and his uncle came to warn him. Musashi, well prepared, tried to provoke him by arriving a little late and telling Denshichiro he could not win. Denshichiro attacked and quickly realized that Musashi was a formidable opponent. Musashi held his ground, cut off the head of one disciple, and killed Denshichiro. When the other disciples searched for Musashi, he had already slipped away, into a building far from the Yoshioka men.

The Elegant People

Koetsu and Shoyu were drinking in the parlor, and Shoyu went to see Lord Karasumaru about the blank paper he had sent. Though drunk, he could still walk to the parlor. Takuan opened the door at Lord Karasumaru's, and Shoyu drank with the noblemen. He joked that the noblemen, insulted by the samurai, sought relief in the licensed quarters. Then they held a drinking contest. Takuan and Jotaro had been caring for Otsu, who was feverish. Takuan went looking for Koetsu but found Musashi alone in a room. They found Koetsu in another room. Then, at her invitation, they went to Yoshino's house. She was the third most famous person in Japan, beautiful even without any elaborate attire. She asked Musashi to sit beside her and wiped a drop of blood from his hand. When the others asked why her handkerchief was stained red, she said it was from the petal of a red peony.

The Broken Lute

Yoshino warmed the room with red peony wood. Then they wrote poems and admired Yoshino's beauty. As they were leaving, Yoshino asked Musashi to stay the night. He refused at first, but when Koetsu insisted and the lookout reported that samurai from the Yoshioka School were waiting at the gate for him, he stayed at Yoshino's house. Yoshino played the lute and told Musashi that he had been too rigid and needed flexibility, for he looked like a man about to be cut down. Then she broke the lute to show him that its soul lay not within the instrument but in the heart. Then day broke.

A Sickness of the Heart

The snow had melted, and a warm breeze could be felt. Otsu refused to eat anything, so Jotaro went looking for oranges for her. Takuan received a letter telling him he must return home because his mother was unwell. Jotaro peeled an orange for Otsu to eat. Then Takuan called Jotaro over and told him that Musashi was at the brothel with Yoshino. So Jotaro set out to find the Ogiya, where Yoshino usually received guests.

The Scent of Aloeswood

Jotaro found the Ogiya and asked where Musashi was; he attacked one of the servants and ran off. One of the girls was sent after Jotaro and showed him where Musashi was hiding, for the Yoshioka men were searching for him. Jotaro found his master drawing pictures. He told him how sick Otsu was and that Musashi needed to see her. Musashi asked Jotaro to return the kimono to Koetsu and to take his own clothes back to him. Then Musashi decided to have a servant return his clothes instead of Jotaro. He got his clothes back along with a letter from Koetsu, who wrote that he hoped to meet him again. Musashi then tried to say something to Yoshino, but she was busy. As he was leaving, a servant came and handed him a letter that smelled of aloeswood.

The Gate

Musashi told Jotaro to jump first from the wall, then followed. The Yoshioka samurai were caught off guard and did not know what to do. After a few steps, they told Musashi to stop and surrounded him, but none dared attack. Then a magistrate arrived and told them all, Kojiro included, to follow the rules of swordsmanship. The Yoshioka disciples asked Kojiro to guarantee that Musashi would not flee, and they set the place and time for the duel. Genjiro of the Yoshioka would fight Musashi, but since he was only a boy, his seconds would accompany him. Musashi agreed and went on with Jotaro. When they reached the gate, Musashi told Jotaro that he could not see Otsu, because he could not bear her tears. He said that he lived a life of discipline, and that his love for Otsu would interfere with his path. So he asked Jotaro to tell Otsu to find someone else for her future. Jotaro could not understand his words, or why he refused to see Otsu. Musashi told him that he might die in the duel, and then he vanished. Otsu was waiting in the cold for Jotaro, and he opened the door to tell her about Musashi.

A Toast to the Morrow

Matahachi told his mother, Osugi, about the coming duel between the Yoshioka and Musashi. They believed the Yoshioka would kill Musashi to save their school. Matahachi asked his mother to pack and join the Yoshioka for the fight. Then he met Akemi, who told him that her mother had run off with Toji and had ruined both their lives. When they tried to settle the bill, their leather money bag was gone, along with a note from Akemi.

The Death Trap

The men of the Yoshioka School climbed the mountain, but only seventy joined the ascent. Three roads led to the appointed place, and Genzaemon, Genjiro's father, tried to station swordsmen along them.

Then Kojiro arrived, saying he had come to witness the duel, but the Yoshioka disciples treated him rudely. Kojiro's anger was calmed by Genzaemon, who asked for his help in laying traps for Musashi.

A Meeting in the Moonlight

Musashi bathed in cold water and set out for the appointed place. He knew he might die, but he felt he must fight, for it was the way of the samurai. Then he met a coffin-maker and learned that his uncle had passed away. Kojiro came out and warned Musashi that hundreds, even thousands, were waiting for him. Musashi brushed him off, knowing that Kojiro was the man who had wanted to be his second. Then he ran toward the mountain but was stopped by a man, a servant of Lord Karasumaru, with Jotaro and Otsu. Having learned from Jotaro that Musashi was prepared to die, Otsu had been searching for him. She was coughing blood, and Musashi held her in his arms. He told her that he had loved her but had chosen a life of discipline. Otsu said she had known all along, that she loved him, and that she was dying with him. Then they heard a scream, and Musashi left, telling her that though he might die, he would live on in the heart of every Japanese samurai, and urging her not to die for him. Jotaro was wearing a mask to frighten off the wolves when he heard a scream from the woods.

Stray Geese

Matahachi was being followed by Osugi, but he was faster, and she kept asking him to slow down. Then they heard a scream, and Matahachi ran straight toward it, only to find that it was Akemi, who had screamed at Jotaro's mask. She apologized for stealing the money from Osugi, and Matahachi told her they should go to Edo and start a new life. Akemi thought for a moment, then nodded.

The Spreading Pine

Musashi ran on toward the appointed place. He reached a shrine and prayed. He saw the musketeers with their backs turned to him, so he attacked first, shouting his challenge. Then he killed Genjiro and the others. Musashi's swordsmanship followed no fixed principle; it was born of experience. The Yoshioka swordsmen, molded by their school, were at a disadvantage against him. Priests and others came to watch the fight. Musashi killed many swordsmen and was wounded in the arm, with cuts visible on his left leg as well. Then he leapt away into the village.

An Offering for the Dead

The temples on Mount Hiei had burned down four decades earlier, though some had since been rebuilt. A boy brought lunch to Musashi, who was sleeping in a temple. Musashi was carving a statue, and he told the boy that his wounds had nearly healed. He was thinking of Genjiro, who had been about the boy's age. Then he was summoned by a priest, who told him that Mount Hiei wanted no one who had killed a child, even in a fight. Musashi felt he had been right in the eyes of swordsmanship, but he could not stop thinking about the boy. He then saw an old woman speaking ill of him to the priest, it was Osugi. She tried to attack him but only hurt herself. So Musashi was given a cow for Osugi, and they set off for a town called Otsu.

A Drink of Milk

Musashi could not bring himself to see Osugi as an enemy, even though she had harmed him more than anyone. They rested a while, and Osugi asked a farm woman for some milk. Then she asked the woman for directions and told her not to tell the villain if he came looking for her. Musashi overheard this and laughed. He then asked the farm woman to deliver a message to the house of Lord Karasumaru for Otsu, saying that he would wait for her at the bridge. Then he met Matahachi. Musashi embraced him, and they spoke of all that had happened since the battle. Matahachi promised to start a new life through study and work. Then he told Musashi that he was with Akemi, and Musashi warned him about keeping company with people like Oko and Akemi. Then they learned that Akemi had run away from the inn. Musashi told Matahachi to go find his mother and gave him some money. Musashi went into the inn and overheard Kojiro talking about the Yoshioka and about him, about the duel and the tricks Musashi had used. Then Musashi came face to face with Kojiro and told him, with a laugh, that he would not forget this. Kojiro said he would not either.

Entwining Branches

Jotaro heard that Musashi was staying at an inn and asked Otsu to go to him. But Otsu said she would go only if Musashi sent for her. Jotaro did not understand her. Then a letter came, and Otsu read it and went to the appointed place. Musashi and Otsu met, and together they set out for Edo. Musashi wanted Otsu to receive an education befitting a woman, and Jotaro to train alongside him. He waited for Matahachi, but Matahachi had met Kojiro, who told him that Musashi had taken advantage of him. Matahachi drank with Kojiro, then went out to the appointed place. Musashi had left a letter saying they could meet on the road to Edo. Matahachi saw Musashi, but with Otsu, and, filled with anger, swore to himself that he would take revenge.

The Male and Female Waterfalls

Jotaro saw the waterfalls, and Musashi and Otsu recognized them as the male and female falls. They rested, and Musashi tried to force himself on Otsu, but she rejected him and ran off, though not far. Realizing he had done wrong, Musashi went down to the river. Jotaro and Otsu called out to him, but he stayed in the water a long while. Then his voice returned. He looked like a new man, and he lay down beside the cow.

Book V, Sky

The Abduction

Jotaro asked Otsu to buy him food at the shops they passed. Musashi traveled ahead, and the two of them slept in separate rooms. Jotaro again asked Otsu for food and mentioned that he had seen Matahachi. Then Matahachi told Otsu to stop, and Jotaro taunted him, saying he was too scared to talk back to the old woman. Matahachi threw Jotaro into the trees and ran off with the cow, Otsu riding it. Musashi, thinking of Otsu, realized they were taking longer than they should. He hurried down to the town.

The Warrior of Kiso

Musashi asked a man for help and learned that a young man had kidnapped a woman and a boy. So he searched for the ronin who had taken Otsu and Jotaro, not knowing it was Matahachi. Then he found the cow near a house, along with a farmer and his mother. Musashi attacked the man, whose fighting style impressed him. He managed to pin the farmer down, but the man's mother attacked Musashi with a lance. Musashi realized that this farmer was not the one who had kidnapped Otsu and Jotaro. So they talked, and he learned that Gonnosuke, the farmer, had found the cow in the mud. Musashi and Gonnosuke set out to find Otsu, and learned that a boy covered in mud had been seen running, telling people to find Daizo. So Musashi and the farmer set off to find him.

Poisonous Fangs

Otsu was trying to free herself, but Matahachi kept lashing her back for having entered the temple. He dragged her inside and demanded to know why she did not love him. Then he told her that her body belonged to him. Matahachi sank his teeth into Otsu's arm until it bled. She fainted, but he woke her and told her that Musashi would see the marks. Then a farmer from a nearby village heard Otsu's cries and was seized by Matahachi. Matahachi took the farmer's horse and ordered him to carry Otsu to Edo. Otsu told Matahachi that she would come quietly if he freed the farmer. Matahachi gave the horse back to the farmer, and he and Otsu continued on to Edo.

A Maternal Warning

Gonnosuke was weeping because he had not fought well. Musashi was asleep in the house. Gonnosuke's mother told her son that he was weak because he had never faced a real challenge. Musashi overheard this. Gonnosuke's mother urged him to fight Musashi if he still hoped to found a school in his own style. Musashi slipped out of the house and asked where Daizo was. When he reached Daizo's house, Jotaro and Daizo had already gone out to find Otsu. So Musashi climbed the mountain and left a sign saying he would meet them there. Then he saw Gonnosuke and his mother, who asked him to fight her son. Musashi fought Gonnosuke and cut him with the edge of his sword. Then Musashi cried out that he gave up, a red mark on his abdomen. Gonnosuke learned a lesson from the fight, and years later, after founding his school, he told his disciples about his bout with Musashi.

A One-Night Love Affair

Musashi was being followed by a ronin. While bathing, he bumped into the ronin, who had been looking for him. The ronin had been sent by Lord Date after Musashi's fight with the Yoshioka School. He had seen the sign Musashi posted and followed him. Musashi could not understand why a skilled swordsman would invite him for drinks. The man, Geki, was asking Musashi to come with him to speak with Lord Date. Geki spoke of swordsmen and of the situation in Japan. Musashi told him that he was searching for a woman and a young boy.

A Gift of Money

Musashi went into town and searched for Otsu and Jotaro. Then a group of laborers told him they could find her, and Musashi paid them some money in advance. He had no money left, but he thought finding the two on his own would be difficult. They told him to wait for them at the gate. When Musashi arrived

at the gate, no one was there. A swordsman told him that he had been robbed. Then a laborer came and told him that the young boy was with Daizo, and that they were staying at an inn. The laborer said his companions had taken the money and gone off gambling; he felt bad and had gone looking for the boy himself. Musashi gave him the money he had set aside for food. So he went to the inn and asked for a meal. He asked the innkeeper whether he could pay with a carving instead. Then gold, silver, and a note signed by Geki slipped out of his pocket. Three drunken men saw it. Musashi paid the innkeeper and left, since the innkeeper did not know the boy. One of the drunken men followed him. He threw a log at Musashi, who dodged it and cut him down. Then Musashi dodged a gunshot from the forest.

A Cleansing Fire

Musashi saw sparks from the guns. Two men were hiding among the trees. Musashi cut one down, and the other fell into the ravine. It was Toji, who went into the house and told Oko to put out the candle. Musashi demanded that they open the door and threw a rock; he then found Oko and learned that it was Toji who had tried to rob him. Musashi urged Toji to stop robbing people, and Oko asked him to stay the night. While Musashi slept, Oko slipped out to summon the others to kill him, for Toji wanted revenge for the Yoshioka and the money. They tried to kill Musashi, but he was already gone. Oko was tied to a tree, and they could find no trace of Musashi.

Playing with Fire

Jinnai had once been a samurai, but he had given up swordsmanship and made his living as a brothel keeper. He was traveling to Edo with his prostitutes, since the Tokugawa government was allotting them places to set up business there. He met Sasaki and asked him about Edo. Akemi was traveling too, having agreed to serve under Jinnai. Jotaro was with Daizo, who was staying at one of the temples along the road to Edo. The priest asked Daizo to look around the temples, as he was one of their benefactors. Jotaro did not want to sleep at the temple, so they went to an inn. There Jotaro met Akemi, who learned about Otsu and Musashi. Jealous, she drank a great deal of sake and asked Jotaro to push her down. Then a ronin came, carried her off, and threw Jotaro aside. When Jotaro woke, he learned that the ronin had raped Akemi. Jotaro returned to Daizo.

A Cricket in the Grass

Daizo took a walk at night. Jotaro secretly followed and saw him burying gold in the ground. When Jotaro woke the next morning, Daizo told him to go on to Edo, but Jotaro insisted on going alone to find Musashi, for he thought Daizo was a thief. Daizo realized that Jotaro had seen him the night before, and told him to become his son or be killed. Jotaro agreed, afraid for his life. Daizo said that he did not steal from the people, but from the nation.

Pioneers

Osugi arrived in Edo. The laborers teased her, and one threw mud at her. So she washed her kimono at the inn and was robbed by a thief. But Yajibei saved her and had the thief bound to a post. Osugi stayed at Yajibei's for more than a year and a half. The buildings of Edo were new and bright, and Yajibei had a number of men under him. Yajibei told Osugi that he would act as her second once his men found Musashi.

Slaughter by the Riverside

Yajibei went to the temple to visit his mother's grave, and Osugi went with him. Yajibei made an offering to the priest and noticed a board recording that Daizo had donated ten gold coins. The priest told them Daizo had come the previous year and made the donation. Then they heard men fighting. A samurai cut down four men with his Drying Pole. Osugi saw that it was Kojiro and introduced him to Yajibei and his men, Juro and Koroku.

Shavings

Yajibei, Osugi, and Kojiro drank together and talked about Musashi. Yajibei asked Kojiro about the men he had cut down, and Kojiro said they had insulted him. Yajibei asked Kojiro to train his two disciples, so Kojiro took them along and went to the licensed quarter, after some scuffling with other disciples. Kojiro went to the house where Simya and her girls served. He asked about Akemi, who had been given the name Hanagiri. But Akemi hid behind the shavings. She hated men like them and was waiting for a man like Musashi. Kojiro and the others waited, then left after complaining to Simya. Akemi ran away from Simya's after drinking the sake.

The Owl

Yajibei's disciples asked Kojiro to spend the night at Simya's, but Kojiro said he did not want to sleep with Akemi. Then Kojiro was attacked by disciples of the Obata school, and he killed most of them. The founder of the Obata school had been a famous samurai, but he was now old and sick, and Shinzo, one of his senior disciples, was caring for him. Shinzo told the disciples not to fight Kojiro, since the school taught military science, not swordsmanship. But the disciples tried to challenge Kojiro anyway; he pursued them and demanded they fight, yet they dared not. Shinzo witnessed the scene and vowed to take revenge on Kojiro. When he received a letter from Yogoro, the founder's son, Shinzo took his leave and set out to find Kojiro and fulfill his vow to take his head.

A Plate of Loaches

Musashi was training his spirit hard when he saw a boy catching loaches. The boy reminded him of Jotaro and Otsu; it had been two years since he had seen them. Musashi asked the boy if he could stay the night at his shack. That night he dreamed of heavy rain and woke to the sound of the boy sharpening a knife. The boy was thinking of cutting up his dead father's body, since he could not carry it to the hill. Musashi told the boy that he would carry the body for him. The boy came from a samurai family, but his grandfather had lost a battle and burned the family genealogy. Then the boy asked Musashi to train him, and Musashi struck him with a stick, yet the boy kept coming at him. Musashi told the boy that he would train him to become a samurai.

Like Teacher, Like Pupil

Musashi and Sannosuke left the shack, and Musashi told him to tie the horse to a tree. Then he told Iori that he should be grateful to his father and grandparents, and he burned down the house. Musashi told him that they would rebuild it as a dojo in which to train. Iori assumed they would train elsewhere, but Musashi cut down trees and built the place with the boy. Then he took up a hoe and set about preparing

the land for farming. The villagers came and told them they were wasting their strength, since the place would flood. Musashi paid them no mind, though Iori was angry at them. Then the rains came, and Musashi was saved by the boy, who brought supplies when they could not go outside. The rain washed away the land they had hoed. Musashi did not give up and tried again, but the rain washed the land away once more. Then he realized that he should not oppose the way of the universe, but follow it. With this new approach, he succeeded at farming.

Mountain Devils

A high-ranking samurai named Sado was staying at the temple. Then Iori came asking for millet. Sado heard the boy and asked the priest to bring him over. Iori told Sado that he wanted to be a samurai and that he had a teacher. Sado gave him sweets, and Iori started back, but then he saw shadows and realized they were mountain devils: bandits. Iori tried to warn the village, but one of the men spotted him and tied him to a tree. When a dying villager freed him, Iori ran to Musashi and begged him to fight the bandits. Musashi killed some of them, and the rest fled. Knowing they would return, Musashi urged the villagers to stand and fight. When the bandits came back, Musashi and the villagers fought them and killed nearly all of them. Sado heard about the fire and the fight and wanted to meet Musashi, but he had business in Edo, so he returned there.

First Planting

The shogun's fief was managed by a vassal named Hosokawa, and Sado assisted him. One of Sado's colleagues approached him, asking him to recommend Sasaki Kojiro to the young lord. But when Sado tried to speak to the young lord about Kojiro, the young lord asked instead about Musashi. So Sado returned to the village, where he learned that it now had more fields, and that the villagers were praying at a shrine dedicated to Musashi. Musashi had left after plowing the land and making it stronger. Sado thought that he should have met Musashi.

The Flies

Musashi went to Edo with Iori and found the gate strict toward ronin, but since he mentioned the name of Lord Munenori, they were let in with ease. Musashi met Juro when Juro returned a pouch that Iori had dropped. Musashi found the flies and the heat unbearable, though only days before he had regarded the creatures of the fields as his fellow beings. The horse traders being noisy in their room tried to pick a fight with Musashi, but when one of them saw him catching flies with chopsticks, they moved to other quarters. Musashi received a letter from Lord Munenori saying that he looked forward to seeing him, and Musashi sent Iori with a reply to the lord.

The Soul Polisher

Musashi went to Kosuke's shop and asked him to sharpen his sword, but Kosuke refused, weary of samurai who thoughtlessly asked him to polish their blades. He told Musashi to read the sign that said "Soul Polisher," and said that he was a disciple of Koetsu. When Musashi mentioned that he had met Koetsu and his mother, Kosuke realized who he was. Kosuke told Musashi that he would polish his sword, and that Musashi could take a sword from his shop. Musashi picked one out and liked it, but he could not pay

for it, so Kosuke asked him to carve a statue in return. Musashi and Kosuke drank together, and then Musashi went back to his inn to wait for Iori.

The Fox

Iori could not find the house of Yagyu, and when he did, the guard told him that the lord no longer lived there and gave him a map showing where he now lived. Iori spent the night there with the guard and then went to find Yagyu's house. On the way, Iori saw a fox and tried to chase it. Then he saw Otsu and Hyogo, one of the Yagyu men. Lord Yagyu had saved Otsu from Matahachi three years earlier, when Matahachi was forcing her to take work in Edo. Hyogo was searching for Otsu, who had wandered near a shrine. Then Hyogo and Otsu saw Iori.

An Urgent Letter

Hyogo went to Lord Munenori, who had been asking after Otsu. Lord Munenori wanted Otsu out of his household, as it was not fitting for a woman to live among men. Then a letter came saying that a friend of his was ill, and he sent Hyogo to tend to him. So Hyogo took Otsu along, and she believed she would be closer to Musashi outside Edo. It was on this journey that they met Iori, and they told him the way to Lord Munenori.

Filial Piety

Osugi was copying out prayers on filial piety when Juro told her about his meeting with Musashi. Yajibei was away from Edo, so they did not know what to do. Then they read a poem that moved them to tears and reminded them of their parents. Sasaki Kojiro came in and found them weeping over the poem.

Spring Shower in Red

Juro told Kojiro that he had met Musashi, who was staying at Kosuke's. Kojiro said he had left his own sword at Kosuke's for repair and was going there to fetch it. So they hatched a plan to attack Musashi, setting off for Kosuke's with Osugi and Kojiro. They sensed someone following them but pressed on. Kojiro asked Kosuke whether his sword was ready, and Kosuke said it was not yet finished. Kojiro then asked him to summon Musashi, claiming he had something for him from the Hosokawa. Then he heard a scream: Shinzo had cut down Juro and the others. Kojiro pulled Osugi out of the water and struck Shinzo down with a blow to the neck. When Kosuke reached the scene, Shinzo's weight collapsed onto him.

A Block of Wood

Musashi was cutting wood while Kosuke called out to him. Musashi kept his mind fixed on carving the heirloom wood into a statue for Kosuke. Kosuke laid Shinzo down and tended the wound in his neck. When Musashi found Shinzo, Kosuke told him that Shinzo was out of danger and that they should send word to the Obata school.

The Deserted Prophet

Iori found Musashi at Kosuke's and gave him a letter from Lord Munenori, who replied that their bout could not take place and that Musashi should instead challenge his son, Hyogo, though Hyogo was away

tending to the sick lord. Musashi learned that Iori had been bewitched by a fox and told him to reflect on it. Musashi went to the Obata school to report that Shinzo had been wounded but was out of danger. There he met Obata's son. Obata saw Musashi and asked his son to call him back, thinking Musashi might be fit to carry on his ideas. But his son could not find Musashi, who had already gone into the forest.

The Talk of the Town

Musashi learned that Shinzo was leaving and offered to accompany him. As Musashi and Shinzo made their way to Shinzo's father, they were attacked by Yajibei's men, since Shinzo had cut down two of them. Musashi threw one of them into the moat and escaped with Shinzo. They reached the home of Shinzo's father. After the incident, Yajibei's men put up a sign calling Musashi a coward, saying he should stop running and face them. They set out to insult him.

Book VI, Sun and Moon

A Chat with the Men

Lord Hosokawa studied Confucius in his free time. He was accompanied by young samurai who practiced their sword skills. Lord Tadatoshi still remembered Musashi, even though Sado had mentioned that he had left the village. Kakubei recommended Sasaki Kojiro to him, but the young lord wanted Musashi. Then he heard about the signs Yajibei's men had put up, claiming Musashi had run away from them. The lord wanted to see Musashi. When Kakubei again brought up Kojiro, the young lord told him to bring Kojiro to him.

Buzzing Insects

Kakubei went to Kojiro, who had just received his still-unpolished sword back from Kosuke. Kakubei told him that the lord wished to see him, but Kojiro declined, unwilling to be inspected. While Kojiro slept, he was attacked by Yogoro, the son of Obata.

The Eagle

Kakubei had taken a liking to Kojiro and again urged him to see the lord. Kojiro agreed to watch the lord practice archery. He dressed in a kimono and met Lord Tadatoshi. Kojiro described his style, and the lord arranged a match between Kojiro and one of his men. Goroji fought with a lance, Kojiro with a sword. Kojiro broke the lance in two and wounded Goroji. Lord Tadatoshi left without a word. Kojiro visited Goroji afterward to make amends, hoping he would spread good words about him.

Green Persimmons

Kojiro saved Matahachi, who was selling watermelons, from two samurai who were fighting him over a woman he was with. Kojiro said he wanted to visit Matahachi's home, but Matahachi refused, saying his place was not fit for him. Kojiro suggested Matahachi go to his mother, but Matahachi did not want to see her in his current state. Matahachi returned home, where Akemi was waiting. The neighbors assumed they were husband and wife. Akemi was trying to get away from him, seeing him only as a perch from

which to take flight. Matahachi told her about Kojiro, and Akemi said she did not want Kojiro to find her. Green persimmons fell near Matahachi as Kojiro walked toward the town.

Eyes

Iori asked Musashi why he had not won the fight, and Musashi said it was because of the sheer numbers. Musashi chose a place to build a house where he could meditate and train Iori in the sword. He told Iori to look into his eyes, but Iori could not hold his gaze. Then they saw someone approaching: it was Shinzo, asking Musashi to come to his father. Shinzo had been adopted into the Obata family after Obata's sons were killed and Obata himself had died. Shinzo told Musashi that a friend from his childhood was also waiting. Musashi went to Edo with Shinzo.

Four Sages with a Single Light

Musashi thought of Otsu, but he learned that it was Takuan and Lord Munenori who were waiting for him. They were considering Musashi as a tutor to the shogun. From Lord Munenori, Musashi learned that Otsu was going to care for the lord's father, along with his nephew. Musashi told them that he was still immature. Takuan, Lord Munenori, and Shinzo's father decided that they would recommend Musashi to the shogun as his tutor.

The Locust Tree

Akemi had left with her new kimono, and Matahachi was searching for her. Then Daizo of Narai called Matahachi to go fishing with him. Daizo asked him to shoot the shogun, offering thirty gold pieces in advance. Matahachi accepted, since Daizo said he would kill him if he refused. Matahachi went to Daizo's place to collect the first payment, and Daizo told him that he was to enter the castle in Edo as a construction worker and shoot the shogun from there. Daizo gave him the gold, and Matahachi hid it under a tree. But Akemi was with Daizo; it was all a scheme to drive Matahachi away, and when Akemi later followed Matahachi and dug up the money, only twenty-eight pieces remained. Daizo did not take kindly to those who stole from him.

Tadaaki's Madness

Osugi was copying prayers when a man handed her a letter, it was from Matahachi, who had sent her two gold pieces. Osugi tried to follow Matahachi but was kidnapped by disciples of the Ono school. The Ono were practical swordsmen, trained to kill, unlike Munenori's men, who displayed their swordsmanship with style. Kojiro was called upon to act by Yajibei. He went to the Ono school and challenged Tadaaki, its master. Kojiro could land no strike, but Tadaaki, feeling his age, conceded. Kojiro took Osugi with him, and Tadaaki offered him some drinks. He told Kojiro that Musashi was being considered for the group that would train the shogun. Tadaaki left Edo, and some said he went mad after his departure.

The Poignancy of Things

Musashi and Iori had weathered a storm, and the wind was fierce. Musashi went out to help other farmers, while Iori thought they should repair their own house first. Then Musashi returned with the other

farmers, who thanked him for his help; working together, they repaired most of the village and lent their hands to fix Musashi's place as well. Then Iori heard drums and the songs of a dance. He asked Musashi to go and see the shrine and the dancing.

Two Drumsticks

Musashi and Iori went to the shrine, where one plaque caught Musashi's eye, it honored Daizo of Narai. He asked the priest about him, but they knew little. So Musashi went to watch the dance and saw a drummer playing with two sticks, which made him realize that he should wield two swords, and that the art of war was aligned with this. Iori wanted to stay longer, but Musashi said they should go on to the shrine in the mountains.

The Demon's Attendant

A man saw Musashi entering the shrine and told Oko, who wanted to consult Toji and was plotting something. Baiken, Temma's brother, was there, and together they attacked Musashi. Musashi found it hard to counter Baiken's chain-and-ball weapon, but his two-sword style cut down both Baiken and Toji. Because the fight had taken place at the shrine, Musashi went to report it to the officials, who arrested him. Iori tried to save his teacher.

Brother Disciples

Iori thought of freeing Musashi, but he fell asleep by a tree. When he woke, he overheard two men talking about hiding treasure. He learned that their names were Daizo and Jotaro. After burying the treasure, Daizo and Jotaro went their separate ways. Iori followed Jotaro, who caught him. They fought, and Jotaro learned that Musashi was Iori's master. Jotaro dragged Iori to Takuan, and Iori told Takuan that Jotaro was a thief. Jotaro explained everything to Takuan: that he and Daizo had a secret pact, that they had stolen from the treasure house and meant to give it to the poor. Then he told Takuan that the group planned to assassinate the shogun. Takuan told him to flee to his father and hide there. Musashi had been arrested for the treasure-house theft, and Takuan and Iori set about trying to save him.

The Pomegranate

Iori and Takuan went to Lord Hojo and Shinzo. Matahachi could not bring himself to kill the shogun, but he worried that the workers would discover the musket buried in the ground. The workers arrested him, refusing to believe he was a well digger. Matahachi got out of the shed and dug up the ground, but found no musket. He realized that Daizo of Narai had never planted one. Then Takuan brought Matahachi before the inspector by the ear.

Land of Dreams

Takuan was granted an audience with the shogun, Hidetada, and told him about the plot and about a man named Daizo of Narai, one of those the shogun had been trying to capture. Takuan told the shogun that there would always be traitors, and that killing them would never stop, so the punishment should be light. The shogun told Takuan that he should decide the punishment. Takuan shaved Matahachi's head and

brought him out to the place of execution. Akemi had also been arrested, but Daizo of Narai was still at large. Matahachi expected to be killed, but instead they were flogged and banished from Edo.

The Challenge

Iori met Osugi at Shinzo's place. He threw horse manure at her and ran off. Iori learned to ride a horse and set out to find Musashi, who had been released from prison and was now being considered as one of the shogun's tutors. On the way, Iori met Kojiro and Osugi. Kojiro had been appointed a vassal of the Hosokawa, and he asked Iori to carry a letter to Musashi, saying that Musashi should come and fight him. Iori was attacked by a bear but was found by Musashi and Gonnosuke. Musashi told Iori to return the horse to Shinzo.

The Gateway to Glory

Shinzo's men told him that Kojiro had killed Yogoro. They wanted to fight Kojiro, but Shinzo refused and told them to wait for the right moment. They thought him weak. Musashi went to Lord Ujikatsu and Takuan, who told him that he would go to the shogun's palace to be appointed as the shogun's tutor. Musashi wanted to refuse, but he did not want to disappoint Takuan and Lord Ujikatsu. So Musashi went to the shogun's palace in Edo.

The Sound of Heaven

Musashi was asked to wait in a room by Lord Tadatoshi, who then told him that his appointment as the shogun's tutor had been canceled, and Musashi felt fortunate. The rumors spread by Osugi had reached the shogun. Musashi went back to Gonnosuke and asked him to give Iori his father's gold pouch, along with a letter to Takuan and Lord Ujikatsu saying that he would withdraw to the mountains, and that Gonnosuke should look after Iori until he returned. Gonnosuke delivered the pouch to Iori and the letter to Takuan.

Book VII, The Perfect Light

The Runaway Ox

Otsu and Hyogo were managing the affairs of Lord Sekishusai when the abbot came to witness his death. He warned Shureko that Lord Tojo was trying to expand his boundaries. Otsu was riding the ox when she and Shureko went out into the forest. Then a group of samurai attacked them, and a sword struck the ox, which bolted. Otsu closed her eyes and was saved by a swordsman in a village. Then she met the abbot's attendant, who told her and Shureko that the samurai cutting down the plums and expanding the boundary were not Lord Tojo's men.

Hemp Seed

Hyogo received a letter from Takuan, dated the previous year, saying that Musashi had been appointed tutor to the shogun and that Otsu should come to Edo. Otsu set out for Edo when she got the message from Hyogo. Then Hyogo received another letter saying that Musashi's appointment had been canceled; he wanted to call Otsu back but did not think it would be appropriate. Then Ushinosuke came to Sekekuro

and asked to become his disciple. Ushinosuke fought Sekekuro's disciples, and although he could not fight well, he leapt over his opponents. He told Sekekuro that he had to run over the hemp, because if he did not jump every day, the hemp would grow taller and he would no longer be able to clear it. Sekekuro and Ushinosuke went to a martial contest at the temple. One of the priests' lancers fought well and had no challenger. When an outside priest challenged him, he backed down, for there were swordsmen from the war wandering about disguised as priests. Then Iori and Ushinosuke quarreled over Iori's mat. Gonnosuke learned from Sekekuro that Otsu was going to Edo, and Sekekuro learned from Gonnosuke that Musashi was not in Edo.

Sweepers and Salesmen

Iori and Gonnosuke continued their journey and went to the priests' hall to pay tribute at the grave of Gonnosuke's mother. They were followed by the priest who had issued the challenge at the festival. Iori thought he saw his sister. They looked around the temple and met Koetsu and his mother sweeping, and they talked about Musashi. Gonnosuke and Iori went on their way and were attacked by the priest who had been following them. Iori managed to throw a stone at him, and the priest ran off, but he came back with other men and took Gonnosuke, believing him to be a spy from Edo.

A Pear Blossom

Yukimura had been given the rank of priest on Mount Kudo, and Sado went there to see him. Yukimura was loyal to the enemies of the Tokugawa, while Sado and the house of Hosokawa supported them. They discussed the current situation in Osaka and Edo, and a swordsman named Miyamoto Musashi. As Sado was leaving Mount Kudo, the priest came to Yukimura with Gonnosuke. The priest was a loyal retainer of Yukimura, and he had brought Gonnosuke to Mount Kudo.

The Port

Iori was calling out for Gonnosuke when two women came and rescued him. They were merchants on their way to Okazaki, and they thought a young boy like Iori might be useful in their shop. Iori wanted to keep his sword, but the manager would not allow it, so they argued, and the mistress of the house let him keep it. Then he saw Kojiro coming into the tea shop, and he threw cups at Kojiro's face. Kojiro asked the manager to punish Iori by pouring boiling water on him. Then Sado arrived, and Kojiro asked the manager not to punish the boy after all. Sado asked the merchant to take Iori with her, as Sado was searching for Musashi.

The Writing Teacher

A ronin named Muka was teaching writing to some boys in a village. Matahachi came to see Musashi during one of these lessons. Musashi met Matahachi in Karasumaru, and after hearing of his troubles in Edo, the two talked late into the night. They were waiting for a Zen master named Gudo, for Musashi felt he had reached an impasse in the way of the sword. Matahachi asked Musashi to look after Otsu. Then two samurai attacked them, and Musashi killed them. A servant came looking for Musashi, who was summoned to the lord's residence; the lord apologized for the attack, explaining that the two samurai had trained at the Yoshioka School. Musashi had killed them with a single two-sword stroke. Musashi thought

of leaving Osaka but had to wait for Gudo. Matahachi came with Gudo, who had just returned from his travels around the country. Musashi asked Gudo to enlighten him, but Gudo said he had nothing to say to him and went on to Kyoto with Matahachi. Matahachi told Musashi to follow behind and speak with Gudo.

The Circle

Musashi followed Gudo: when Gudo slept at an inn, Musashi slept at another; when Gudo slept at a temple, Musashi slept at the gate. Musashi looked like a vagabond, but he was determined to speak with Gudo. Gudo and Matahachi walked quickly, and Musashi struggled to keep up. When he was a few feet from Gudo, he begged him for some words of wisdom. Gudo said that he had heard everything from Matahachi, including about the woman. Then Gudo drew a circle around Musashi and left. Musashi was angry at the priest for giving him no wisdom. Then he looked at the circle around him and realized that it was the shadows that changed, not the universe. The universe had always been a circle, and he should be one with it.

Shikama Blue

Otsu was staying at a house in a village in Shikama, dyeing cloth. She had been searching for Musashi ever since she learned that he was not in Edo. Mambei, from Miyamoto, visited Otsu and told her that he had met Ogin, Musashi's sister, who had a message from Musashi. Mambei asked Otsu to come with him to Ogin. Otsu went with Mambei, but he took her instead to Osugi, and they tied her up. Then Jotaro arrived and told Osugi that she should not hate Musashi or spread rumors about him. Jotaro tied Osugi up in a cave and rescued Otsu from the other members of Osugi's clan. Jotaro told Otsu that he had seen her and been following her. They talked about Musashi.

The Mercy of Kannon

The rain began to pour, and Otsu worried that Osugi might be alone in the cave. So Otsu went to save her. She pushed aside the stone and opened the cave. But Osugi attacked her, and Otsu fell unconscious. Osugi then felt she had been too harsh on Otsu, and she waited in the cave until the rain stopped. When the members of Osugi's clan arrived, Osugi told them to care for Otsu.

The Tides of Life

Musashi was on a ship to Kokura to fight Kojiro in Buzen. The duel between Musashi and Kojiro had been arranged by Sado. Takezaemon, Koetsu, and other swordsmen accompanied Musashi. The fight had long been rumored, and now it was finally arranged. Kojiro was to face Musashi.

The Evening Boat

Osugi was attending to Otsu and begging her forgiveness. Otsu was feverish but longed to see Musashi, and they came to the place where his ship might stop for a while. Jotaro said that Musashi could be received at the dyer's house. But he could not be seen there, lest rumors spread before the duel. So Jotaro told Otsu that he would bring Musashi to her. Then Jotaro came back and told them that the ship had not stopped, since there were no passengers to disembark and Musashi wanted to reach Kokura as quickly as possible. Otsu told them to follow Musashi's ship.

A Falcon and a Woman

Tadatoshi recommended Kojiro for his outstanding character. Kojiro was teaching his Ganryu style and issuing certificates authorizing others to teach it. He would talk back whenever anyone mentioned Musashi and his success in Edo and elsewhere. Soon everyone in the Hosokawa house believed there was a rivalry between them, which led to the duel. Kakubei came to see Kojiro while he was feeding the falcon Kakubei had given him. Kakubei spoke of a girl named Omitsu who was serving Kojiro. Omitsu was Tadaaki's niece, and Kakubei wanted Kojiro to marry her, only to realize that Kojiro had already had an affair with her and kept it secret. Kakubei told him about the place of the duel with Musashi.

Before the Thirteenth Day

Moji, the castle town, was filled with visitors anticipating the duel. The lord of the town issued an order forbidding anyone from going to the island where the duel would take place. Matahachi, who had just arrived in Moji, was nursing the baby with Akemi. The ronin asked him where Kojiro lived, but Matahachi did not know. Kojiro, meanwhile, was meeting with his aunts and other guests at his home. He told his trusted attendant that he had left two letters, one for Omitsu and one for Kakubei.

At Daybreak

Musashi arrived in Moji. He knew no one, and no one knew him. He went to Sado to tell him that he accepted the time and place of the duel. He met Iori, who told him that Sado had taken good care of him. Sado was not in, so Musashi left, even though the retainers urged him to wait. Then he was greeted by Magobeinojo and other colleagues of his father, who invited him to their annual gathering after he declined their invitation to wait for Sado. They told Musashi that they had woven horseshoes for a living after the battle, and that the Hosokawa house had later taken care of them. They drank sake and talked. Meanwhile, Sado was searching for Musashi and could not find him anywhere; many assumed he had run away. Then Iori suggested that Sado look for Musashi at Takezaemon's place. Sado and Iori went there and spoke with Musashi, who gave Sado a letter explaining that he could not travel to Funashima on Sado's boat, as it would make Sado appear to be opposing Lord Tadatoshi. Sado and Iori returned and showed the letter to everyone. Matahachi and Akemi happened by and saw it.

The Marriage

Ninosuke showed the letter to Magobeinojo. Takezaemon was waiting for Musashi to board the boat, but Musashi was painting for Sasuke and Otsuru, Takezaemon's daughter. Musashi seemed to have forgotten about the duel. He boarded the boat only after finishing his paintings. Then Gonnosuke and Osugi came to say their farewells. Osugi asked Musashi's forgiveness, and Musashi said he could forgive her if she could forgive him. Then he saw Otsu and grew concerned about her health. Otsu asked him to say that she was his wife. Musashi told her that a samurai's wife should not weep. Then the boat sailed toward Funashima.

The Soul of the Deep

Musashi asked the boatman whether he could have the old oar. He began carving a wooden sword, and Sasuke was puzzled by all the odd questions Musashi kept asking. Musashi saw Hejima and asked whether

it was Funashima. Sasuke said they still had about a hundred yards to go. Unseen by them, on the island of Hejima, were samurai ready to take revenge should Kojiro lose. Musashi reached Funashima two hours late, and Kakubei served as the impartial witness. Kojiro told Musashi that his trick of arriving late would not work on him, and drew his sword, throwing away the scabbard. Musashi then laughed and told Kojiro that he had already lost by throwing away his scabbard. The words shook Kojiro to his core. They began to fight, and Musashi did not attack cautiously as he once had, but furiously. Kojiro thought he had struck Musashi's head, but instead he saw a fleeting smile. Musashi crushed the head of Sasaki Kojiro of the Ganryu with his wooden sword. There was no blood on the sword, yet Kojiro's soul never returned to his body. Musashi boarded the boat and went on to somewhere unknown. There was no record of any revenge by Kojiro's samurai. Some say that Musashi acted dishonorably in the fight. But there were always waves of sound in the air. The fish dance in the waves of the water, but who knows the depth and the heart of the water?