



Glimpses of an Unfamiliar Japan, Second Series

Lafcadio Hearn

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According to the Preface: "...the rare charm of Japanese life, so different from that of all other lands, is not to be found in its Europeanised circles. It is to be found among the great common people, who represent in Japan, as in all countries, the national virtues, and who still cling to their delightful old customs, their picturesque dresses, their Buddhist images, their household shrines, their beautiful and touching worship of ancestors. This is the life of which a foreign observer can never weary, if fortunate and sympathetic enough to enter into it--the life that forces him sometimes to doubt whether the course of our boasted Western progress is really in the direction of moral development."

According to Wikipedia: "Patrick Lafcadio Hearn (27 June 1850 – 26 September 1904), also known as Koizumi Yakum after gaining Japanese citizenship, was an author, best known for his books about Japan. He is especially well-known for his collections of Japanese legends and ghost stories, such as Kwaidan: Stories and Studies of Strange Things... The Japanese director Masaki Kobayashi adapted four Hearn tales into his 1965 film, Kwaidan. Some of his stories have been adapted by Ping Chong into his trademark puppet theatre, including the 1999 Kwaidan and the 2002 OBON: Tales of Moonlight and Rain... Hearn was a major translator of the short stories of Guy de Maupassant. In Ian Fleming's 1964 novel *You Only Live Twice*, James Bond retorts to his nemesis Blofeld's comment of "Have you ever heard the Japanese expression kirisute gomen?" with "Spare me the Lafcadio Hearn, Blofeld."

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