

5 - The Treacherous Tse li Men

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(Please feel free to edit the speaker names if incomplete or inaccurate. Names are handled on a best-effort basis depending on the info on the source file. Dialogue is left as is.)

[01:12] Nar

The Kawada yakuza group and Akagi are about to hold a Mahjong rematch.

[01:18] Nar

Today's rematch for eight million will take place here.

[01:23] Nar

Akagi's opponent is the blind master Ichikawa.

[01:27] Nar

However, Akagi has still not arrived at the match location.

[01:33] Nan

He's late.

[01:34] Nan

It's already past the agreed time.

[01:37] Nan

Why isn't he here?

[01:40] Cop

We'll just have to start without him.

[01:41] Nan

We can't do that!

[01:43] Nan

Can't we get them to postpone?

[01:45] Cop

No, we can't.

[01:47] Cop

Everything has been set up,

[01:48] Cop

and Boss Miyauchi himself has come all the way here.

[01:51] Cop

We can't put it off.

[01:53] Nan

But there's no way I can beat him!

[01:57] Cop

We may be no match for him,
but there is a way.

SIGN Episode 5

SIGN The Treacherous Tse li Men

[02:07] Nar

Two new rules were added to this battle.

[02:11] Nan

1 of bamboo!

[02:13] Nar

In consideration for Ichikawa's blindness,

[02:16] Nar

the other three players must call
out whatever tile they are discarding.

[02:21] Nar

And at the end of each East-South match,

[02:23] Nar

if either Ichikawa or Akagi
still have points left,

[02:24] Nar

the game will continue into
the West and North rounds.

[02:28] Nar

That's right.

[02:29] Nar

This is a death match that will
continue until one of them goes bust.

SIGN - East Hand 1 -

[02:33] Nar

East Hand 1.

[02:34] Nar

Nangou is the North player.

[02:36] (Flashback) Cop

Nangou-san, let's lay
down our ground rules.

[02:40] (Flashback) Cop

Basically, just play it straight,

[02:42] (Flashback) Cop

and as soon as you have a
two-way wait, declare riichi.

[02:47] (Flashback) Cop

A tactic that mostly aims
for self-drawn wins.

[02:49] (Flashback) Cop

Don't count on other players
to deal into your hand.

[02:52] Nan

8 of circles!

[02:53] (Flashback) Cop

As long as you don't waver,
we still have a shot at winning.

[03:00] Nan

It's still a closed wait.

[03:01] Nan

I've got to make it a two-way wait.

[03:03] Nan

8 of characters!

[03:06] Nan

I've got a two-way wait!

[03:08] Nan

3 of circles!

[03:08] Nan

Riichi!

[03:14] Nan

Pinfu tsumo, 7 of circles!

[03:18] Nar

At the very beginning,
Nangou was blessed with luck.

[03:21] Nar

Tsumo!

[03:22] Nar

Tanpin, one dora!

[03:24] Nar

He wins twice in a row.

[03:25] Nar

At this point, Nangou has 38,200 points.

[03:29] Nar

Ichikawa has 20,400.

[03:31] Nar

An amateur like Nangou

[03:33] Nar

overtaking a pro like Ichikawa
is an unexpected development.

[03:35] Nar

But it only lasted until East Hand 2.

[03:39] Nar

Ichikawa had already seen
through this strategy.

SIGN - Next Hand -

[03:46] Nan

I have to get a two-way wait.

[03:50] Nan

1 of characters!

[03:51] Ichi

Ron.

[03:55] Nan

He had a single 1 of characters wait?

[03:58] Nan

That's crazy.

[04:00] Nan

With his discards,

[04:02] Nan

*he'd have had an ideal tanpin sanshoku
if he'd kept the 4 of characters.*

[04:05] Nan

*But he deliberately threw that away
for a single 1 of characters wait?*

[04:08] Nan

He can foresee which tiles I'll discard

[04:10] Nan

*to get out of my closed wait,
and he's gunning for those.*

[04:12] Nan

*He's going after the tiles that'll
be left over after midgame...*

[04:15] Nan

He's onto our strategy.

[04:19] Nan

And it only took him two hands!

[04:22] Nar

And then, it was East Hand 4.

SIGN - East Hand 4 -

[04:27] Nan

What should I do?

[04:29] Cop

Nangou!

[04:30] Cop

*If you waver now,
you're playing into his hand!*

[04:33] Ichi

*This man is like every other
man I've killed up until now.*

[04:38] Ichi

He is the same species.

[04:40] Ichi

When amateurs play against us,

[04:42] Ichi

they usually follow one of two strategies.

[04:46] Ichi

*They declare riichi the
moment they're in tenpai,*

[04:47] Ichi

*or they go for a two-way wait,
relying on self-drawn wins.*

[04:51] Ichi

He chose the latter.

[04:54] Ichi

*So all I have to do is pick off
the tiles he gets rid of*

[04:57] Ichi

from his closed waits.

[05:01] Nar

The tenth turn.

[05:02] Nar

If Nangou discards the 9 of
characters, he'll be in tenpai.

[05:06] Nan

*Ichikawa is aiming for
numbered tiles on the edges.*

[05:09] Nan

I can't discard this 9 of characters.

[05:11] Nan

So what?

[05:13] Nan

I have no choice.

[05:15] Nan

West wind!

[05:16] Ichi

Ron.

[05:21] Ichi

Chiitoitsu, with a single west wind wait!

[05:24] Ichi

It can't be!

[05:25] Nar

It's a game neither Nangou nor
Yasuoka can afford to lose.

[05:31] Nar

But now they are in the
worst possible position.

[05:37] Nar

They only have 2,000 points left.

[05:40] Nar

If they lose them, it's all over.

[05:45] Nan

I'm up against the wall.

[05:47] man

Green dragon!

[05:48] man

Pon!

[05:51] man

7 of circles!

[05:52] man

Chi!

[05:55] nan

Now or never!

[05:58] Ichi

On the offensive again?

[06:00] Ichi

A noble effort, but too little too late.

[06:04] Ichi

If you wanted to win,

[06:05] Ichi

*you should've played like that
from the very first hand.*

[06:11] nar

Nangou is also aware that
his efforts are futile.

[06:14] nar

However, regardless of this knowledge,

[06:17] nar

he has no choice but to press on.

[06:20] Man

1 of circles.

[06:21] Nan

Pon!

[06:22] Nar

The eleventh turn.

[06:23] Nar

Nangou has called three
times and is now in tenpai.

[06:26] Nar

He's waiting on the red dragon.

[06:28] Nar

His tenpai is like a beam of light
momentarily penetrating the clouds.

[06:31] Nan

4 of circles!

[06:32] man

Chi!

[06:35] nan

He's in tenpai, huh?

[06:39] Ichi

Riichi.

[06:43] Man

Riichi!

[06:46] Nar

All this happened in one turn.

[06:50] Nar

The momentary beam of light disappeared,

[06:52] Nar

suffocated by the dark clouds.

[06:55] Nan

They're both in riichi...

[06:56] Nan

*And the guy after me is
probably going for a honitsu.*

[06:59] Nan

*I've only got these four tiles...
Not enough to dodge their bullets.*

[07:04] Nan

All I have left is to win.

[07:07] Nan

If I draw my winning tile now, I'll be fine!

[07:11] Nar

Nangou prays with all his might.

[07:14] Nar

He reaches towards the wall

[07:15] Nar

as if to ask the goddess of
victory to shake his hand.

[07:20] Nar

However...

[07:22] Nar

The hand he ends up grabbing
is that of the Grim Reaper.

[07:24] Nar

The dora, the white dragon.

[07:27] Nar

Now every tile in his hand is risky.

[07:34] Nar

The white and red dragons are risky

[07:35] Nar

because Ichikawa is going for honor tiles,

[07:37] Nar

and the player after him is going for a honitsu.

[07:40] Nar

The 3, 4, and 5 of circles are dangerous
because of the player after him

[07:42] Nar

and the one before him, who's declared riichi.

[07:50] Nan

What should I discard?

[07:53] Nan

Discarding any of these is akin to suicide.

[07:56] Nan

*It's basically the same
as jumping off of a cliff.*

[08:00] Nan

It's no use... I can't choose.

[08:11] Nan

Could that be....

[08:17] Nan

Akagi!

[08:19] Man

That's him, Boss.

[08:26] Cop

What took you so long, Akagi?

[08:29] Aka

Nangou-san, want to switch?

[08:31] Nan

Yes!

[08:39] Aka

2,000 points left.

[08:41] Aka

Two people are in riichi
and these are your tiles.

[08:44] Aka

Talk about being in a
tight spot, Nangou-san.

[08:47] Nan

Yeah...

[08:48] Aka

Well, in this situation, this is all we can do.

[08:53] Nan

Akagi, that's really...

[08:56] Aka

It's fine, just be quiet.

[08:58] Aka

I'm going to make this tile pass.

[09:02] Aka

Definitely.

[09:09] Nar

Just then, Ichikawa was
in a double pon wait

[09:13] Nar

for a white or a red dragon.

[09:17] Ichi

What did you discard, Akagi?

[09:21] Man

It's a west wind.

[09:25] Nan

That's impossible!

[09:26] Nan

A west wind?

[09:29] Cop

What happened to that red dragon?

[09:32] Cop

I could've sworn he discarded the red dragon.

[09:35] Cop

This brat bumped it!

[09:38] Cop

*He sensed that both the white and
red dragons were winning tiles,*

[09:42] Cop

*so at the last moment,
with everybody's eyes on him,*

[09:45] Nar

*he bumped the west wind down
while discarding the red dragon!*

[09:49] Nar

This is a sleight-of-hand that makes it
appear as if the west wind is discarded

[09:54] Nar

by pushing it down with the
red dragon tile as he discards it.

[09:59] Nar

What is so useful about this
cheat is that it also allows one

[10:02] Nar

to get rid of the dreaded
red dragon at the same time.

[10:05] Nar

The tricks kills two birds
with one stone instantly.

[10:09] Cop

Unbelievable.

[10:10] Cop

*This is the first thing he does
in such a major match.*

[10:12] Cop

He's pure evil!

[10:18] Aka

Looks like it passed.

[10:21] Aka

I will do whatever it takes.

[10:23] Aka

Let's take a little trip
down to Hell, Nangou-san.

[10:27] Aka

The goddess of luck lies
in wait beyond there.

[10:36] Aka

Here it comes.

[10:38] Aka

It's time for our counterattack.

[10:41] Aka

Tsumo.

[10:43] Cop

It came!

[10:44] Cop

Akagi!

[10:50] Nar

Akagi's back from the
dead with a dora tsumo.

[10:52] Nar

In one shot, he's managed to get
his point box back to 16,000.

[10:56] Nar

And now, he has a dealer streak.

[10:58] Aka

We're playing until either Ichikawa
or I completely run out of points?

[11:01] Cop

Yeah.

[11:02] Cop

So you're the last dealer of South Hand 4,

[11:05] Cop

but that doesn't mean it's the last hand.

[11:09] Aka

*Which means I can't win unless
I get a direct hit on Ichikawa.*

[11:16] Aka

*Still, for now I should focus
on getting some points.*

[11:19] Aka

Easy points to start.

[11:21] Nar

As expected, the players before and
after him do not take any risks.

[11:26] Nar

They're only taking part in this
high-stake match to fill the table,

[11:29] Nar

and their mindset is easy to discern.

[11:31] Nar

Their only concern is to stay inconspicuous.

[11:34] Nar

They do all they can to avoid
dealing into anyone's hand

[11:36] Nar

and stay out of the conflict.

[11:38] Nar

Akagi takes advantage of this
mindset with extreme ease.

[11:43] Aka

Riichi.

[11:45] Nar

Against these people,
hinting at a tanpin,

[11:48] Nar

while actually having a
hell wait, is quite effective.

[11:51] Nar

From there, they'll step
into the trap themselves.

[11:56] Shimo

Green dragon!

[11:57] Aka

Ron.

[11:59] Aka

Riichi, ippatsu, iipeikou.

SIGN Ippatsu - Winning in the turn after declaring riichi. Iipeikou - Double sequence in the same suit, e.g. 223344.

[12:01] Aka

There's an ura dora, too,
so that's a dealer mangan.

[12:05] Aka

Now I've got 28,300.

[12:07] Aka

I'm safe for now.

[12:09] Nar

Then, in the next hand...

[12:10] Aka

Chi.

[12:13] Aka

Pon.

[12:14] Aka

Kan.

[12:16] Shimo

Four dora!

[12:22] Man

Damn, he's lucky.

[12:24] Guy

8 of bamboo.

[12:25] Aka

Kan.

[12:29] Aka

Kan.

[12:31] Aka

1 of bamboo.

[12:32] Man

What kind of game is he playing?!

[12:35] Man

*No one could've expected him
to get so many yaku!*

[12:38] Man2

What is this?

[12:39] Man2

*He's been calling tiles like crazy,
and now, he's up to a haneman.*

[12:43] Man2

6 of bamboo.

[12:45] Man

Safe tile.

[12:47] Aka

As expected, he's given up on winning.

[12:50] Aka

*Can't wait to see what he does
when the safe tiles run out.*

[12:54] Man

What's this kid waiting for?

[12:58] Man

The 1 of bamboo is a live tile.

SIGN Live tile - Tile that has not yet been discarded this hand.

[13:00] Man

It's the perfect tile to keep for a tsumo win.

[13:02] Man

*But if he discarded it, does that
mean he wants a ron win?*

[13:06] Man

*But then, that means I can't discard
any of these character or honor tiles.*

[13:11] Man

*These bamboo or circle tiles
might be a better choice.*

[13:15] Nar

The more he agonizes, the more

he plays into Akagi's plan.

[13:18] Nar

Assuming from the discarded 1 of bamboo that Akagi wants a ron win,

[13:21] Nar

he can't discard the character or honor tiles that Akagi knows he's holding.

[13:25] Nar

Which leaves the bamboo or circle tiles.

[13:28] Nar

But in this situation, their strategy

[13:30] Nar

is to discard from a pair or a triplet.

SIGN Pair Triplet

[13:33] Nar

Then, if they survive one discard, they'll have two or three safe turns.

[13:36] Nar

So, what tiles have they accumulated?

[13:39] Nar

With the 4 of circles tiles used up,

[13:40] Nar

tiles like the 3 of circles can no longer be used for sequences.

[13:42] Nar

The same goes for the tiles around the 8 of bamboo, namely the 7 and 9.

[13:47] Nar

In any case, there is no surefire way to avoid a single wait.

[13:53] Aka

Come on.

[13:54] Aka

I'll take it.

[13:57] Nar

Is Akagi's insight actually pulling the tile towards him?

[14:00] Nar

Or is this the work of something entirely different, something demonic?

[14:04] Nar

He will discard it.

[14:07] Nar

As if possessed...

[14:09] Man

3 of circles.

[14:13] Aka

Ron.

[14:14] Aka

San kantsu, four dora.

SIGN San kantsu - A hand of three kans.

[14:15] Aka

Haneman.

[14:17] Nan

He did it!

[14:19] Nan

He's at 46,900.

[14:21] Cop

You did it, Akagi!

[14:23] Cop

You're truly a genius.

[14:25] Cop

We can always count on you.

[14:27] Aka

There's still one big nuisance
sitting across from me.

[14:31] Aka

We can celebrate once I've
properly crushed him.

[14:34] Ichi

You're a ballsy kid.

[14:36] Ichi

You took out the small fry,
and you built up a stash of points.

[14:40] Ichi

I guess it's time for the main event, eh?

[14:44] Aka

I guess so.

[14:46] Aka

I'm going to take you out.

[14:50] Nar

It's a match between Ichikawa and Akagi.

[14:53] Nar

A death match that will continue
until one of them loses all of his points.

[14:58] Nar

He needs to get a direct
hit off of Ichikawa...

[15:02] Nar

A near-impossible task.

[15:05] Nar

This is where the match really begins.

[15:07] Nar

And this is Akagi's first discard.

[15:10] Aka

3 of circles.

[15:11] Cop

Huh?

[15:15] Cop

He's discarding the 3 of circles
from a hand like that?

[15:17] Cop

Why?

[15:18] Nar

And again, on the second turn.

[15:20] Nar

And on the third turn.

[15:22] Nar

Three 3 of circles discards in a row.

[15:26] Nar

No one can understand
what he's trying to do.

[15:28] Nar

But Ichikawa alone understands.

[15:34] Boss

Hey, hey, what are you doing?

[15:40] Cop

I get it!

[15:41] Cop

He determined that it'll be

[15:42] Cop

*too difficult to get direct hits
off each other in a normal game,*

[15:45] Cop

*so he is purging an entire
suit from his hand on purpose.*

[15:50] Cop

Akagi threw down the gauntlet,
and Ichikawa accepted his challenge.

SIGN Tse li Men

[15:54] Nar

Purging an entire suit, Tse li Men...

[15:57] Nar

Known in Japanese as "zetsu ichimon."

[15:59] Nar

Once both players eliminate
one suit from their hands,

[16:02] Nar

the tiles left when one is in tenpai will
naturally be from the other two suits.

[16:07] Nar

Usually the players end up trading blows until one falls.

[16:10] Nar

Essentially, it's Mahjong where you can't run away.

[16:13] Nar

Comparatively, regular Mahjong is like out-boxing.

[16:18] Nar

While you fight, you keep an escape route ready.

[16:21] Nar

But a zetsu ichimon game is like in-fighting at close range,

[16:26] Nar

with both your feet planted.

[16:28] Boss

This is insane.

[16:30] Boss

Ignoring the circles right from the start...

[16:33] Boss

They're going to be waiting on bamboo or character tiles.

[16:36] Nar

But on the 13th turn...

[16:39] Aka

2 of circles.

[16:41] Nar

Akagi discards a 2 of circles from his hand.

[16:44] Boss

Why is he discarding a 2 of circles from his hand now?

[16:46] Boss

Wait... I see.

[16:50] Boss

He was trying to play us from the start!

[16:53] Boss

In a zetsu ichimon game, one suit gets purged,

[16:56] Boss

so that suit inevitably becomes safe.

[17:00] Boss

But if he uses that principle against us

[17:03] Boss

and waits long enough, there's no better camouflage.

[17:06] Boss

He was saving his 2 of circles for that.

[17:09] Boss

*But the next player has
already discarded one,*

[17:11] Boss

*and the previous player two,
eliminating all of them.*

[17:15] Boss

*He had no choice but to give up
on his single 2 of circles wait.*

[17:18] Boss

*Now he's probably in a multi-sided
wait for a bamboo or character tile.*

[17:22] Boss

*Man, you can't let your
guard down with this kid.*

[17:32] Aka

Ron.

[17:33] Aka

Ittsuu, one dora.

SIGN Ittsuu - Full straight, 1-9 of one suit.

[17:34] Aka

Three consecutive wins, so 8,600.

[17:37] Boss

A single 1 of circles wait?!

[17:39] Boss

How could he wait on that?!

[17:41] Boss

He just won't go down.

[17:43] Boss

*He pretended to give up his single
wait by discarding the 2 of circles,*

[17:46] Boss

*but was still concealing another
single wait for a circle tile!*

[17:50] Boss

*This is demonic... This isn't
something a kid could come up with!*

[17:55] Nar

In their first zetsu ichimon match,
Akagi outfoxes Ichikawa.

[18:01] Nar

It's an auspicious start.

[18:03] Nar

This was the start of their

[18:05] Nar

zetsu ichimon battle that

had no end in sight...

[18:09] Nar

Akagi continues to masterfully

[18:10] Nar

utilize waits that circumvent
the principles of zetsu ichimon.

[18:14] Nar

At first, it seems that
Ichikawa is being played

[18:17] Nar

by Akagi's varied and
unpredictable playing style,

[18:20] Nar

but that is not the case.

[18:23] Ichi

Tsumo.

[18:24] Nar

Ichikawa is orthodox.

[18:26] Nar

He does not insist on a direct hit on Akagi.

[18:30] Nar

He frequently calls tsumo.

[18:33] Nar

And then...

[18:35] Nar

The fate of zetsu ichimon...

[18:37] Nar

The inevitable outflow of certain tiles...

[18:40] Aka

2 of circles.

[18:42] Ichi

Ron.

[18:43] Nar

He's out to kill.

[18:45] Ichi

Tanpin, two dora, mangan.

[18:48] Nar

They were both playing
zetsu ichimon matches,

[18:51] Nar

but their playing styles couldn't
have been more different.

[18:54] Nar

Akagi favors change, while Ichikawa
prefers to stay true to the basics.

[19:00] Nar

But eventually, the gap widens...

[19:07] Aka

9 of characters.

[19:08] Ichi

Ron.

[19:11] Ichi

Pinfu, iipeikou, two dora.

[19:16] Ichi

Mangan.

[19:18] Nan

No problem.

[19:20] Nan

It's no biggie.

[19:22] Nan

That much is expected in
a game of zetsu ichimon.

[19:23] Cop

I don't think so, Nangou-san.

[19:28] Cop

Akagi is suffering.

[19:31] Cop

I thought that too, in the beginning,

[19:34] Cop

but now, Ichikawa is the
one with the points.

[19:41] Cop

They've both won the
same amount of times,

[19:44] Cop

but the value of each win is different.

[19:46] Cop

It's only natural, considering that
Akagi mostly uses irregular waits

[19:48] Cop

that make his hands worth less.

[19:51] Cop

Meanwhile, Ichikawa is
constantly building his hands

[19:54] Cop

on wins that mean much more in Mahjong.

[19:57] Cop

True, his style isn't
exciting, but he wins big.

[20:02] Cop

In a straight race for points,
there's no way Akagi can win.

[20:07] Cop

He's letting Akagi stand in the spotlight,

[20:08] Cop

while reaping the profits for himself.

[20:11] Aka

3 of characters.

[20:12] Ichi

Ron.

[20:13] Ichi

Tanpin, sanshoku.

[20:16] Ichi

Mangan.

[20:19] Ichi

That's right.

[20:21] Ichi

Have you realized it now, Akagi-kun?

[20:24] Ichi

*It's nonsensical to scheme
elaborate waits in zetsu ichimon.*

[20:27] Ichi

*What needs to flow out
will flow out regardless.*

[20:31] Ichi

I'll leave the skillful Mahjong to you.

[20:35] Ichi

I don't mind being unskilled...

[20:37] Ichi

I'll just win.

[20:39] Ichi

*Since you prefer that kind of
showy style, you can't beat me.*

[20:44] Ichi

*To defeat me, you'd have to
overturn the most basic rules*

[20:48] Ichi

*of Mahjong itself, and not
even God can do that.*

[20:51] Nar

Ichikawa is unaffected by
Akagi's aggressive attacks.

[20:56] Nar

He is truly like an impregnable fortress.

[20:59] Nar

Akagi seems to be caught
in his own trap...

[21:03] Nar

Does he have a plan to get to victory?

SIGN Next Time: "The Picaro's Talent."

SIGN Next Episode

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