



蛇の道はへび

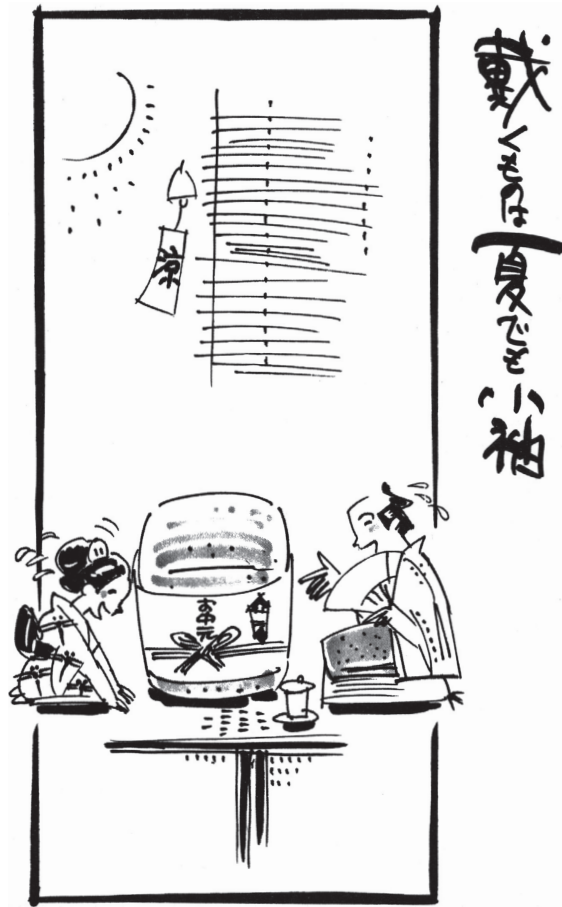
8.

蛇の道はへび *Ja no michi wa hebi.*

Snakes follow the way of serpents.

[Set a thief to catch a thief.]

Obviously about imitation, this proverb has a sinister aspect because snakes are often viewed as sly or evil. In short, this proverb is also about corruption. A gentler form of this observation about mimicry is “Monkey see, monkey do.”



9.

戴く物は夏でも小袖 *Itadaki mono wa natsu de mo kosode.*

A padded jacket is an acceptable gift even in summer.

[Take what you can get.]

This proverb refers to a gift out of season—i.e., an inappropriate one. (A *kosode* is a short-sleeved garment, but quilted and hence worn in winter.) The point here is that such a gift is better than nothing—or at least so run the thoughts of a materialist.