



Shin-Chnagon Taira Tomomori

Date
1885

Primary Maker
Tsukioka Yoshitoshi

Medium
woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Description

Before the battle at Dan-no-ura in April 1185 Taira Tomomori tried to warn the commander-in-chief Taira Munemori about possible defections. The outcome of the battle was still in doubt, when, as Tomomori had feared, the general Taguchi Shigeyoshi turned traitor. Lowering his red Taira flag, Shigeyoshi boarded Yoshitsune's ship, and pointed to the ship bearing the child-emperor Antoku. Tomomori hurried to the imperial barge to announce that all hope of success was over. As shown, the mother of Antoku who was dressed in multilayered silk robes, collapsed in tears. In a final gesture of loyalty and reverence, Tomomori swept and cleaned the deck of the imperial ship. As an elegant Taira courtier-warrior, he wears armor decorated with cherry blossoms stenciled on the lacing. The purple hanging displays the butterfly crest used by the Taira-clan. As ships appeared on the horizon, Antoku's grand-mother Nii-no-Ama prayed to the Imperial Ancestress of Ise and to Amida Buddha. Embracing her grandson she jumped into the sea saying: "In the

depths of the ocean we have a capital." After assisting court-ladies and warriors to do the same, Tomomori put on extra armor and an anchor to weigh his body down as he plunged into the sea. Antoku's distraught mother was however fished out by a Minamoto warrior who caught her long hair in a rake.

Dimensions

36.5 x 25 cm (oban)