

## KOJIKI FAMILY SAGAS



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### WHOM DO YOU LOVE MORE?

Princess Saho became the Empress of Emperor Suinin. The Empress's elder half-brother, Prince Saho, asked the Empress, "Whom do you love more, the Emperor or me?" She responded, "I adore you more." Prince Saho then revealed that he was plotting to overthrow Emperor Suinin and handed the Empress a knife to kill the Emperor.

Following Prince Saho's plan, the Empress resolved to kill the Emperor in his sleep. Yet she could not bring herself to stab him. The Empress's tears fell upon the face of Emperor Suinin, and the Emperor woke up, saying that he just had a frightful dream. The Empress confessed Prince Saho's sinister plot to kill the Emperor.

The Emperor raised an army to attack Prince Saho. Meanwhile, the Empress, who was pregnant, snuck out of the palace to join Prince Saho in his fortress. In the fortress, surrounded by the Emperor's army, the Empress gave birth to a son.

Emperor Suinin still felt strongly for the Empress, despite the treachery of her half-brother. Emperor Suinin tried to get Empress to return to him with their newborn son, but the Empress only handed over the child. The Empress chose to die together with her elder half-brother. Traumatized by this tragedy, their son was never able to speak, even as he grew up to become an adult.

Emperor Suinin had a dream in which the Deity of Izumo told him that if he made Izumo Taisha Shrine as splendid as his palace, his son would be able to speak. The Emperor asked Prince Aketatsu to find out whether a pilgrimage to Izumo would help his son.

Prince Aketatsu asked a heron in a tree to fall if the pilgrimage would be a success. The heron fell into the pond below and died. Prince Aketatsu then commanded the heron to live again, and the heron immediately came back to life.

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## A MOTHER'S INSTINCT SAVES PRINCES' LIVES

After Emperor Jimmu passed away, the Empress Isuke-yori-hime became the wife of Prince Tagishi-mimi, a son of the late Emperor from another marriage. Prince Tagishi-mimi then started plotting to kill the sons of the Empress, his three younger half-brothers, in order to secure his position as the next Emperor.

Learning of his plans, the Empress agonized over the fate of her children, and she sang a song as a veiled warning to her sons.

*Clouds are rising*

*From the Sai River*

*On Mt. Unebi*

*The leaves of the trees are rustling*

*The wind is about to blow*

Thanks to the Empress's wisdom and instincts as a mother, her sons understood their older half-brother's wicked plan in time, and they set out to kill him first.

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## THE PRINCE WHO PLACED LOVE ABOVE STATUS

After Emperor Ingyo died, Prince Karu was expected to succeed his father.

However, before he ascended to the throne, he started having an affair with his sister, Princess Karu, who was renowned for her beauty. The affair became quite a scandal.

Prince Karu lost the trust of his inner circle and the people. Sensing danger, he fled to a house of a confidant and armed himself.

Prince Karu was captured by Prince Anaho (who later became Emperor Annei) and was exiled to the hot springs of Iyo.

After a while, Princess Karu joined Prince Karu in exile, and they chose to commit suicide together.

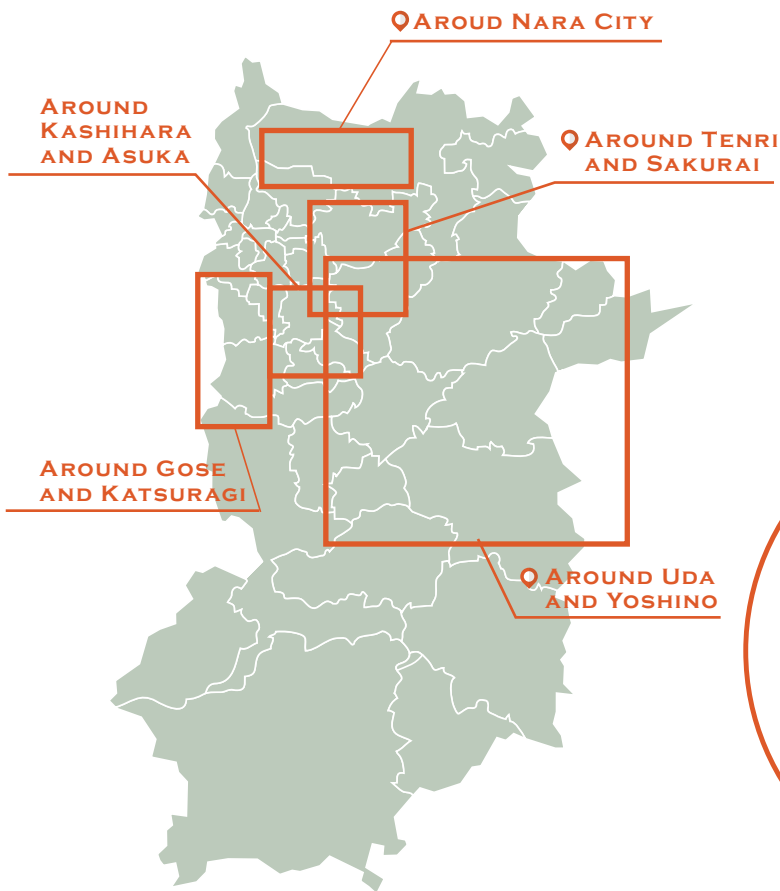
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## TRAGEDY OF THE LOVE BIRDS

Emperor Nintoku sent his younger brother, Prince Hayabusa-wake (Lord Falcon) as a go-between to propose to his half-sister, Princess Medori (Female Bird). The Princess rejected the Emperor's proposal and instead married Prince Hayabusa-wake. Brokenhearted and filled with jealousy, the Emperor tried to capture and kill the couple.

The couple fled, being chased by the Emperor's troops. As they reached the Soni Highland in Uda (in present day Nara Prefecture), the Emperor's men caught up with the couple and killed them both.

## NARA AREA MAP



### Getting Around IN nara

Nara is about a 30-minute train ride from Kyoto or Osaka, and getting around in Nara is easy. Major tourist destinations are connected by Nara's extensive public transportation system. Rental bicycles are also a popular way to find your way around.



### Kasugataisha Shrine

📍 AROUND NARA CITY

One of the most popular shrines in Nara, enshrining many of the deities that appear in *Kojiki* stories. (Nara City)

### Sai River

📍 AROUND TENRI AND SAKURAI

This river is mentioned in the song that Empress Isuke-yori-hime, who had been the wife of Emperor Jimmu, sang to warn her children about the threat to their lives. The Sai River, flowing from Mt. Miwa, is also the place where Emperor Jimmu and Empress Isuke-yori-hime are said to have fallen in love. (Sakurai City)

### Mt. Wakakusa

📍 AROUND NARA CITY

East of Nara Park, this 342-meter-high mountain top provides a bird's eye view of Nara. One can see the sites of Princess Saho's tragedy and other *Kojiki* stories. (Nara City)

### Sagisu Jinja Shrine

📍 AROUND KASHIHARA AND ASUKA

Sagisu means "Nest of the Heron." The shrine was built at the location where the heron was said to have fallen in the story about the son of Emperor Suinin. (Kashihara City)

## Former Site of Fujiwarakyu (Fujiwarakyo Palace)

📍 AROUND KASHIHARA AND ASUKA

The palace built by Empress Jito, who succeeded Emperor Tenmu to govern Japan, used to stand here. Sagisu Shrine is also part of the site. (Kashihara City)

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## Soni Highland

📍 AROUND UDA AND YOSHINO

This is where Princess Medori and Prince Hayabusa-wake were caught and killed by the forces of the jealous Emperor Nintoku. The lush green fields of the summer transform into a spectacular spread of silver grasses in the fall. Nara's natural splendor can be enjoyed here all year round. (Soni Village)

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## Tamatsushima Myojin Shrine

📍 AROUND TENRI AND SAKURAI

Princess Karu is enshrined in her mother's hometown. The shrine has a hot spring well that is believed to have been used to clean Princess Karu after she was born. (Sakurai City)

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## Tamakiyama Tumulus Cluster

📍 AROUND TENRI AND SAKURAI

This group of mounds is located near the site where Emperor Suinin built Makimuku-Tamaki Palace. Mt. Miwa and many other historical points can be seen from the top of the mounds. (Sakurai City)

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