



Coffinman: The Journal of a Buddhist Mortician

Shinmon Aoki

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Coffinman: The Journal of a Buddhist Mortician Shinmon Aoki

This story looks at one man's very personal struggle to engage his Shin Buddhist faith to make sense of his experiences with the dead and dying. Shinmon Aoki is forced by extreme financial circumstances into a job in one of the most despised professions in Japanese society, that of the *nokanfu*, one who washes and prepares dead bodies for burial. Shunned by family and friends and burdened by his own initial revulsion for his work, Aoki throws himself into the job with a fervor that attracts the attention of the townsfolk and earns him the title of Coffinman. In this spiritual autobiography, Aoki chronicles his progression from repulsion to a gradual realization of the tranquility that accompanies death. He assists the uninitiated in gaining an understanding of the basic principles of Shin Buddhism and its concepts of death and dying. Also included are definitions of key terms and phrases and a bibliography.



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