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**Cover:** A scene from *Shiroyaki Bunshō* (*Bunshō the Saltmaker*), a story from the *Otogi Zōshi* compendium of folk tales, which is held in the Main Library of Kyoto University. Such illustrated short story collections were popular among Japan’s general populace from the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and some of the stories remain well-known to this day.

*Shiroyaki Bunshō* is a story of social climbing. The hero of the tale, born into a low-class family, makes a great fortune in the salt business. His daughter’s marriage to an influential court noble leads to his own appointment as a high-ranking official. Because of this happy ending, many wealthy families gave colorful and ornate books containing the story to their daughters as marriage gifts.

The book is one of many rare books and other materials that can be accessed via the Kyoto University Rare Materials Digital Archive.