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GLYNN OWEN BARRASS
& FRIENDS

for 7th Edition
CALL of CTHULHU
JAPAN IN THE 1990S





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PROLOGUE

It's a sit down between a girl, her parents and two teenaged friends. Eating in the Japanese style, they sit on bended knees around a low dinner table. The daughter Eiko shuffles uncomfortably, her bare legs itchy against the Tatami mats while her friends, Mizue and Keiko, speak quietly and giggle, unused to Eiko's family's stern formality. Her father eats quickly, guzzling his Miso soup down in quick draughts, wanting to be away from the girls and in Whis study. Her mother takes delicate bites of her broiled fish and smiled at Eiko. Eiko returns the smile, goes to swallow a mouthful of fish, and then freezes as she discovers something blocking her throat. The act of swallowing, and breathing for that matter, become a sudden impossibility and she coughs loudly. Her father sends her a look of disapproval while her moth-

er leans over to touch her hand. Then, everyone realized Eiko's pain-wracked, purple face is due to something serious. Her strained lips part as what blocks her throat disgorges to the table, chewed slivers of fish followed by a thick stream of shiny black hair. Her mother screams, as does Mizue, her father dropping his soup bowl and pushing himself away from the horror. Eiko gasps, her pitiful noises almost inaudible beneath her mother's hysterics as she pulls at the hair in an attempt to clear her throat and breathe. Eiko's father clambers over to help her remove the hair but as he reaches out, Eiko shudders and falls, face down into the obscene black pillow. She twitches once, and moves no more.



KEEPER INFORMATION

Eiko Tanaka was the unfortunate victim of a ‘Yūrei’. Her terrible, untimely death was due to her proximity to the man she worked for, Jin Asaki, and a murder he committed that now has a sinister life of its own in the form of a ‘Yūrei’. It is already claiming more victims, and as is often the case in Asian horror, just a passing acquaintance, or even a chance encounter with someone connected to a curse is enough for that innocent’s ugly demise.

In Japanese legend, it is said that when a person dies whilst bearing a strong enough anger, a ‘Yūrei’ is born from their will. This ‘Yūrei’ can gather in the place the person died or frequented, or even follow the focus of that ‘Yūrei’ through their lives. The ‘Yūrei’ can manifest itself in many ways, such as attaching itself to a person entering the place the creator died or attacking someone the focus is close to. It often chooses innocents as its victims, not caring whether they have any connection to the original source of the ‘Yūrei’. The ‘Yūrei’ brings horrendous, painful death to those it chooses.

This scenario is set in the late 1990’s, in the city of Makinohara, in Southern Japan.

Makinohara is a Japanese city in western Shizuoka Prefecture. It is bordered by Suruga Bay on the Pacific Ocean to the east, and rises gradually to the Makinohara Plateau in the west. Katsumata River also stands to the west. The local economy is dedicated to the production of green tea, a small amount of fishing, and the manufacturing of Suzuki automobile components. Makinohara University is located near the center of the city.

THE NARRATIVE

The set up is as such: one of the witnesses to Eiko death, Mizue Ariyoshi, confides in Kim Minami, a newspaper reporter whom she and her friends met when Kim was writing an article on students for her newspaper. The dead girl’s brother, Koji, has accompanied Mizue to this first meeting. Shinta Arai, Kim’s assistant and cameraman also attends, as does Ken Ariyoshi, Mizue’s overprotective brother. These are the player characters.

EMULATING THE JAPANESE STEREOTYPE FOR PURPOSES OF THEATRE

The full nuances of Japanese etiquette and cultural differences to the West are too numerous to place here. The Japanese use the Yen for currency, and for gaming convenience 100 Yen equals 1 Dollar. For roleplaying scenes, if the keeper and investigators wish, a bow is used upon greeting, saying goodbye, and also when thanking someone. The deeper the bow the more respect is being shown (be careful not to knock heads!). Also, when investigators are speaking to each other or to NPCs, use the person’s surname and use a suffix to match the Japanese honorifics when speaking.

San - the most commonplace honorific, used as a title of respect between equals.

Sama - a more respectful honorific than ‘san,’ used when addressing those of a higher rank than oneself.

Chan - this honorific expresses that the user





finds the recipient sweet or endearing. Young girls use it a lot.

Sensei - this honorific is used to refer to or address teachers and other authority figures.

For example: Mizue Ariyoshi may address Kim as Minami-sama, as she is of much higher station than herself, but she would refer to her friend Eiko as Tanaka-san. She would refer to Hiro Mizuno merely as 'Sensei,' in respect for his career.

RESPECT AND HONOUR - these traits may initially be stifling to non-Japanese but it is an attempt to provide order to the populace. One of

the consequences of a society that values respect and honour is a certain level of accountability for all strata of society. A worker who has failed in his duties is expected to accept responsibility and admit his feelings, sometimes in tears, and ask for forgiveness. These tears are not 'fake' per-se but are seen as a necessary act of contrition. The biggest "sorry" you can display. In terms of meeting others in a business setting, as Investigators are likely to enjoy, is the attentiveness to details. Some swap business cards and ask a question based on information on it. "Is this your business address?" It shows you are paying attention and therefore respect. Some might recount a good anecdote to you concerning an incident you were involved in "Did that event have a satisfactory conclusion?"

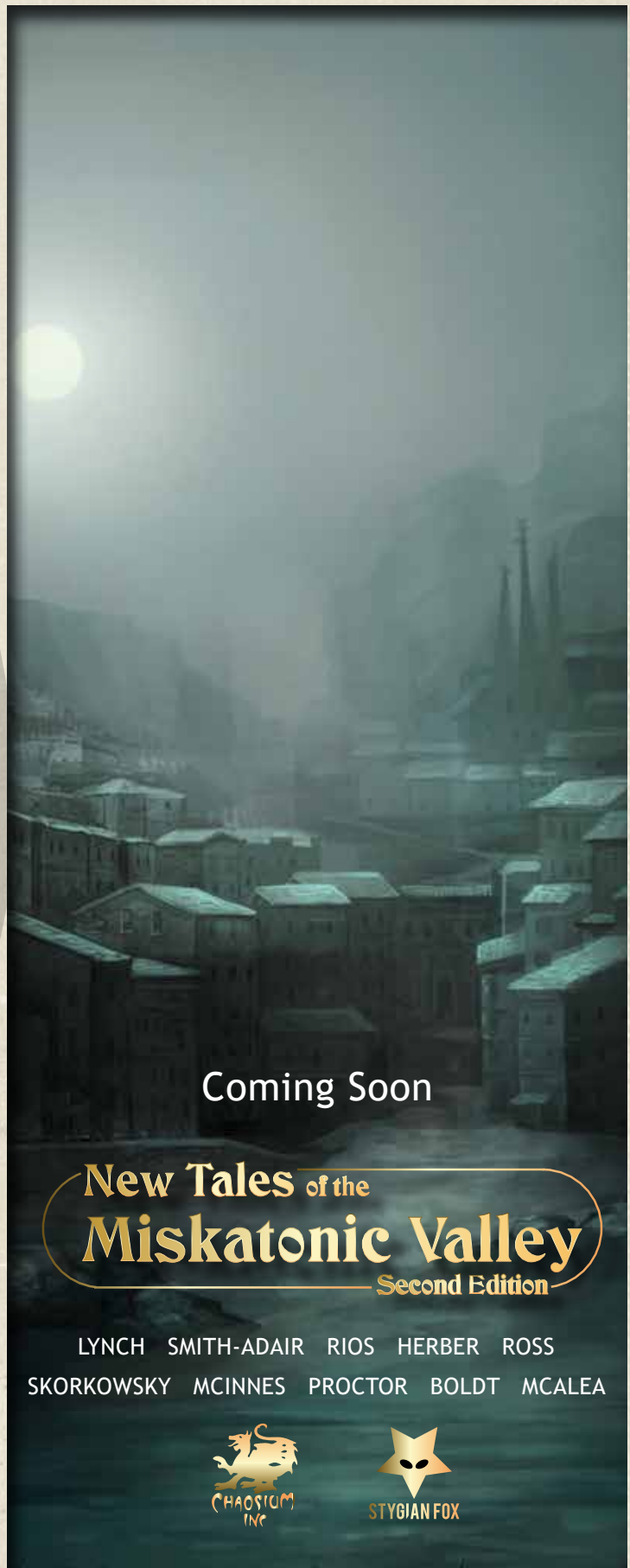
Emotions - It is a myth in the West to assume that the Japanese are less emotional than other cultures. Nothing could be further from the truth. They are very good at following social mores and, as such, rarely break them by having a meltdown in public. It does happen however, and sometimes, because of society's expected standards, it can be quite expressive and destructive when it happens.

MISBEHAVIOUR - there are many attitudes and behaviours which Japanese find distasteful. Taking things without asking or petty thievery to the point that finding a wallet on the ground will gain very unhappy looks if it is not handed in to the police. People being taken advantage of, especially the elderly, will provoke anger.

One surprising aspect of this is that foreigners are half-expected to be rude and ignorant and so can get away with certain things because they're expected to not know better. American tourists are seen sometimes as little more than barbarians who can shout and curse because that is what is expected of them. In fact, if a Japanese investigator is ever in a bind, his "Gaijin" friend can cause a ruckus and gain sympathy for his local friend as the locals think "Poor man, having to chaperone these barbarians!"

These are, of course, very rough stereotypes. We all know that all people across the world are nuanced individuals but, from a non-Japanese playing perspective, stereotypes help set a certain mood as long as they are not jingoistic or bigoted. Of course, Japanese players can forego these stereotypes and even reverse them if they choose to play non-Japanese characters.



This is a filtered down guide to Japanese cultural etiquette, a more detailed guide can be found in Chaosium's *Secrets of Japan* supplement.



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SCENE ONE: THE SPOOK CLUB

A Meeting In A Cafe Leads To Further Mysteries



The investigators have arranged to meet at a café called The Bakery, not far from the grounds of Makinohara University. Once they're seated, a waiter comes round and ask what they would like. The café sells pastries, cakes, sandwiches and specialty coffees etc. This is a good opportunity for the players to practice some Japanese phrases and manners for the sake of immersion. There are plenty of resources on the internet to help with this.

NOTE: The player acting out Mizue's role should paraphrase the following information, but first the keeper should share the scene at the beginning of the adventure with him/her, as they were the original witness, and have them include extras as they wish within reason. As you can imagine this was a traumatic event and

as such will be spoken of quietly and with discretion in order to not cause a scene or be publically shamed:

Mizue tells her companions that she was present during Eiko Tanaka's recent death. Her and her family were sat celebrating the fact the girls had passed their mid-terms and she saw the whole thing. She is worried now because since it happened she has not heard from her other friend who was present, Keiko. Maybe she is in mourning, or maybe... they need to go check this out.

At this point in the scenario, the investigators have the address for Eiko's parents, and also Keiko's telephone number. If tried, there is no reply from Keiko's number. They can either go to the parents first or check out Keiko's home at the start of **Scene 3**.

パン屋 **The Bakery** 

SCENE TWO: THE GRIEVING PARENTS

Grief Meets Formality

The Tanaka family live on a street in the southern suburbs of Makinohara. After knocking a short, pale, sad-faced woman answers the door dressed in a black kimono, greets Mizue and her son and lets them in. Past the front door stands a small, sparse foyer leading to the main room. Here investigators will be asked to remove their shoes. A sharp featured, worried man wearing a black suit sits at the low table in the main room, the husband Manabu. The main room is decorated in a modern Japanese style, with the floor covered in wood but emulating tatami mats with motifs and regular doors have been expertly crafted to look like Tategu 'sliding doors,' to the north and east of the room. To the room's west stands an alcove with a shrine dedicated to Eiko. Incense burns here, and there are many photos of Eiko surrounded by white chrysanthemums. A low table centers the room surrounded by cushions, this being the spot where Eiko died.

NOTE: have the investigators perform a Hard Difficulty POW roll. A success means they sense something untoward and sinister in the room, something they can't quite put their finger on.

Here is the information that can be gained from the Tanakas:

YUMEKA TANAKA

Yumeka begins by saying that the doctors involved in her daughter's death said that she choked, but all the witnesses saw the horrible thing that came from her, the dirty black hair that disappeared when she died. Yumeka believes that something horrible touched her daughter; a curse sent her way from hell. If asked if she knows how Eiko could have been cursed or if anyone had a 'Yūrei' against her she replies that no, her daughter was a good girl, spent lots of time with her



YUMEKA TANAKA

MANABU TANAKA



happened on the night of her death, he replies that she coughed and coughed but he could do nothing to save her. Some demon hair spilled from her mouth, half-filling the room but when the emergency services came it disappeared in a flash. Manabu adds that just recently she worked part-time, cleaning for one of the clients in his law firm. If asked, Manabu provides the address for his client, Mr Asaki.

EIKO'S ROOM

A small room lies beyond the door to the east of the main room, the short corridor leading to a door on either side. It is dark here, the only illumination coming from the main room. The Tanakas escort the investigators on and pause beside the first door to the right. A light switch is located to the right of the door that illuminates a small, square room with a bunk bed near the south wall and a desk near the east. The bed is freshly made, with underneath and all around it row upon row of cuddly toys. The desk is clear apart from a Makinohara University mug filled with pens, a small vanity mirror with a crack through it, and Eiko's cellphone. The desk drawers are empty if checked. The walls are covered in posters of pop stars, and a shoulder bag

shaped like a huge furry bat hangs from the back of the door. The only item of interest in the room, found with a successful **Spot Hidden** roll, is a sketch half-hidden behind one of the posters.

HANDOUT 1: SKETCH

NOTE: This is a hand-sketched, charcoal drawing of a small child like-being dressed in rags. Its head is bald and misshapen and lines of dark tears stain its face. Its overly long arms end in hands bearing dozens of twisted fingers. The bottom right of the sketch bears the signature: Yuji Miho. If asked about the sketch, the Tanakas are clueless, but allow the investigators to remove it. Unless Koji asks for it neither entertains the examination or taking of Eiko's cellphone, but an investigator could steal it with a successful **Sleight of Hand** or **Stealth** roll at Regular Difficulty. A fail results in the investigators being ushered from the house, with Manabu possibly even detaining them and calling the police.



EIKO'S CELLPHONE

If taken, the cellphone holds a few things of interest for the investigators, these being the phone numbers for Keiko, Yuji Miho, and one called: (Work) Asaki. As before, Keiko's phone just rings without being answered, but Yuji answers his (see **THE BOHEMIAN**). Calling the Asaki number puts the investigators through

to Jin, the elder son of the Asakis (see **THE TERRIBLE OLD MAN**).

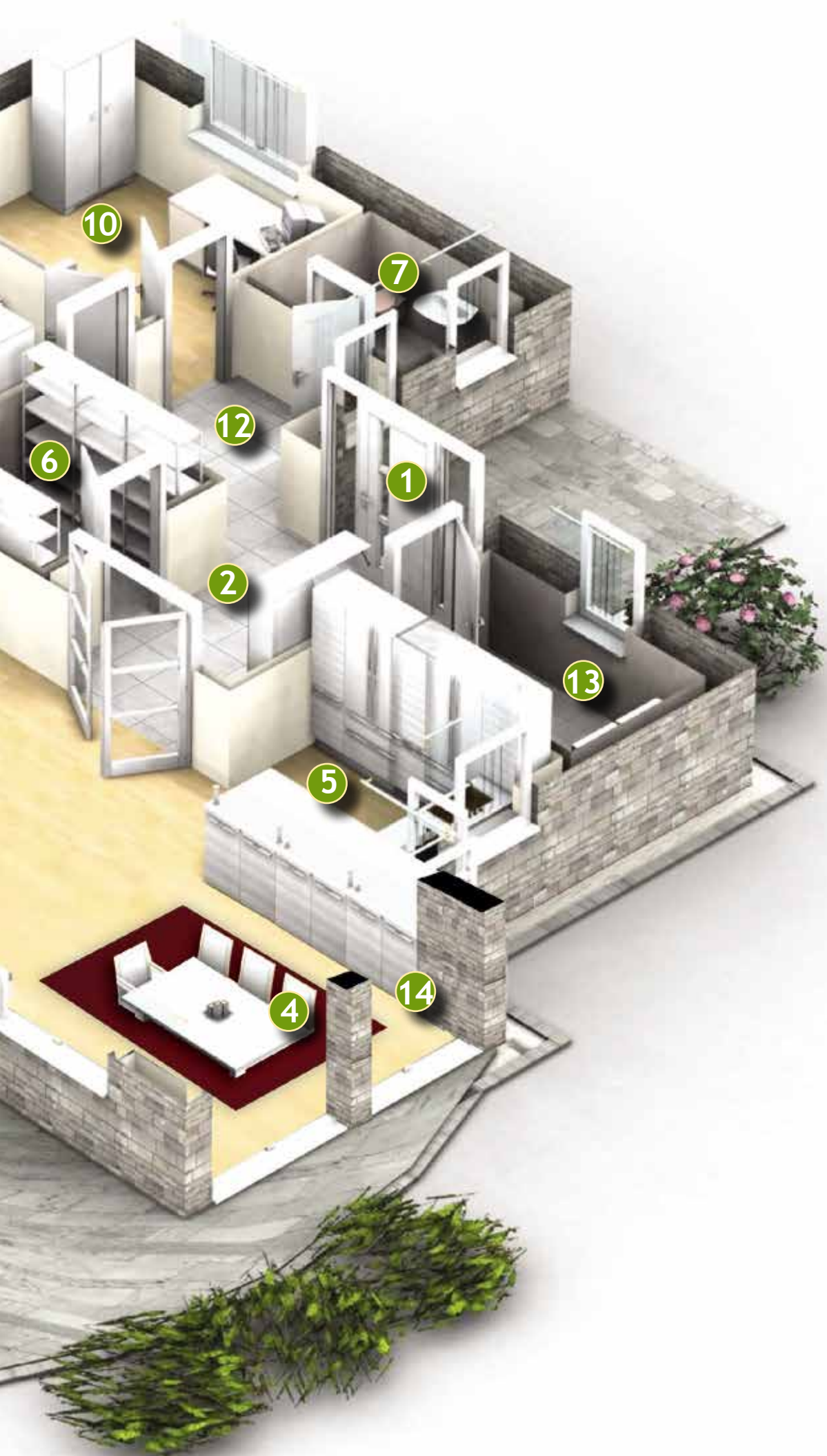
So what do the investigators do now? They should have at least one lead to pursue, maybe more, and of course there's Keiko to check on. The leads are listed under three headings, it being up to the investigators which one they pursue first.

THE TANAKA HOME

Designed in a modern-day style but along traditional Japanese lines, the Tanaka home is pristine, bright, but austere.

1. Entrance
2. Foyer
3. The Main Living Room
4. Where Eiko died
5. Kitchen
6. Store Room
7. Toilet
8. Eiko's Room
9. Bathroom
10. Spare Bedroom
(Koji's old room)
11. The Master
Bedroom
12. Utility Room
13. Cloak Room
14. Eiko's Shrine





10

7

12

6

1

2

13

5

14

4

SCENE THREE: DARK VISIONS

A Mirror Crack'd

THE LOST GIRL

Keiko Sawai's address can be found in the phone book - she is the only one listed. Sawai's residence is on the third floor of an apartment block near Makinohara University. Her apartment is number 3C. The first thing the investigators notice is that her door, unlike the others, has a letterbox stuffed with junk mail. Repeated knocking will garner no reply, and neither will calling her phone. However, if an investigator tries to phone her from outside her apartment, have them make a **Listen** roll and upon a success they discern a low trilling sound within. If the investigators leave and return later there is still no answer. Interviewing her neighbors informs the investigators that they haven't seen that: 'pretty young student' in days. They really only have a few options here, the first being to pick the lock using the **Locksmith** or **Mechanical Repair** skill. If the investigators choose to break down the door it has a **STR** rating of 80. Breaking down the door will certainly alert the neighbors and the police will soon arrive at the building to arrest them unless they have a damned good reason for trying to get into the apartment. Another option would be to go and find the Apartment Manager, and use a Regular Difficulty level **Communication** skill to convince him that they are a relative of Sawai's and they are concerned over her well being. He will then unlock the door for them without trouble.

SAWAI'S APARTMENT

The moment the investigators step through the door they realize something is wrong, for a sinister odor permeates the apartment; a rotten, unidentifiable stink. A short corridor lies beyond, ending at a door to its right leading to Sawai's living area. Inside this

room the smell suddenly grows stronger, although the source is not apparent. The room is a complete mess. Shelves stuffed beyond capacity line the west wall; a tatty leather couch stands against the south wall and a computer desk piled with papers and empty soda cans is located against the east. Books and papers litter the floor. Two doorways adjoin this room, both flanking the desk on the east wall. A sheet of clear plastic covers the doorway to the left, the one to the right, a woolen sheet. A search of the room reveals nothing of interest until they reach the desk. Her telephone can be found here under a pile of papers, and a thorough search of the desk provides the following

HANDOUT 2: An Email Printout

From Hiro (prof@MakinoharaUni.edu)

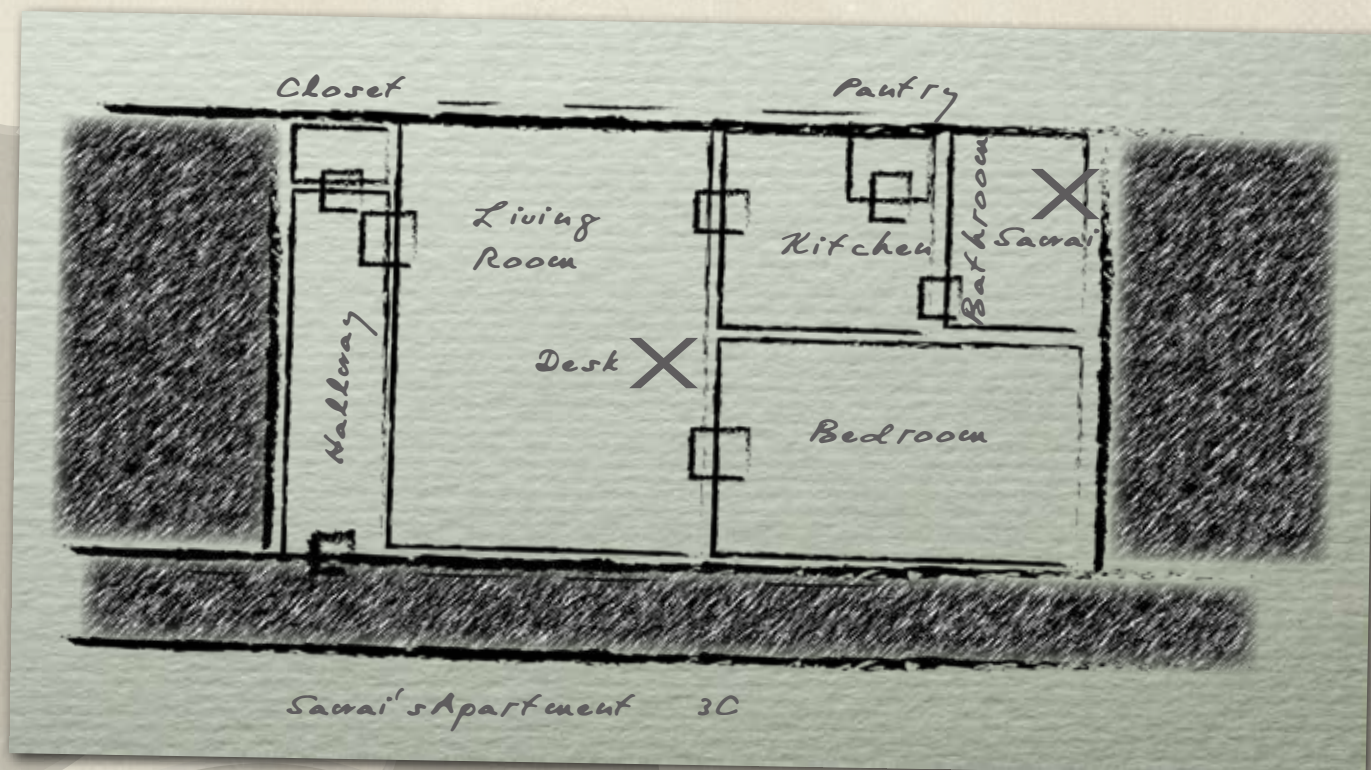
To: Mitzigirl@fullarch.com

Dear Miss Sawai,

I am sorry I missed you at my office. My usual working hours are 8:30 till 3.00 and I am away for lunch 12:00 till 1:00.

==== Hiro Mizuno

The door to the right leads to a bedroom littered with clothes. The mirror on the dressing table is cracked, but there is nothing of further interest here. Checking the other doorway is a different matter altogether. Beyond the sheet of plastic is a small kitchen, the worktops littered with decaying food. This in turn leads to a short corridor that ends at a sliding door.



NOTE: Have the investigators perform a Hard difficulty POW, a success means they get a sudden shiver, a recognition that something is wrong here on a psychic level. The keeper should also have the female investigators perform a Luck roll, and make a note of the highest failure. This poor individual is now the Nakuko's intended victim, but it won't stop there.

THE HAUNTED

The keeper should inform the players that from now on, things start getting spooky for them. When alone in a room, they feel a presence behind them, but when they turn there is no one around (0/1D2 SAN). Also, if they catch sight of their reflection in a mirror they may gain a quick glimpse of a small shape that quickly disappears (0/1D4 SAN). Or the mirror may spontaneously crack for no reason (0/1 SAN). The feeling is even more intense for the player the Nakuko has chosen as its victim. At one point the keeper should have them look in a mirror, witness the small shape, and have it shatter before them (1/1D6 SAN). The keeper should

embellish this in whatever way they want to frighten the players into thinking the Nakuko is coming for them.

Beyond the door lies something terrible, a stink of rot sourced to the corpse curled up on the tiny bathroom's floor. Here lies Sawai, dressed only in her bra and soiled panties, still frozen in her death throes and clutching her throat, the twisted expression on her face so horrible that investigators must make a SAN roll for 1/1D6 Sanity loss.

NOTE: Sawai is the Nakuko's latest victim. No one was present to witness the hair pouring from her throat and she died alone and in agony. The Nakuko, turning its attention to the investigators group, now begins to harass them.

Whatever the investigators do here, as they are returning to the living area the telephone starts to ring. It goes to the answering machine before they reach it, and after the beep, a crackling sound follows, followed by, a pained, female voice saying:

“Nakuko... why is he killing me? Oh god, it hurts.”

A scream follows, so horrifying the investigators must perform a SAN roll for 0/1D2 Sanity loss. Trying to replay the message finds none recorded.

There is nothing else to do here but leave, possibly after contacting the police. That is entirely up to the investigators, though if they broke in they will have some explaining to do. An anonymous call to the authorities might be best for everyone here.

THE BOHEMIAN

The investigators may want to seek the artist that drew the sketch in Eiko's room. If they didn't get his number from Eiko's cellphone, there are three Yuji Miho's in the phone book, so finding him won't be difficult. After two wrong numbers, asking the third voice whether they are the Yuji Miho that knew Eiko Tanaka the voice on the end of the line replies that she was a good friend of his and what is this all about? Being direct and to the point here is the best way to communicate with the man, so asking about the picture he drew for her, or if he can tell them anything which may help solve the mystery of her death, leads to Yuji inviting them to his home. Yuji lives and works on a street facing Suruga Bay. Day or night, he answers the door after about three minutes

If the investigators phoned ahead there won't be any problem speaking to Yuji. If this visit is unannounced however either an honest explanation or a successful Regular Difficulty level **Communication** roll will be required for entry. Regardless of what they say after he opened the door, Yuji, upon seeing the group says, *“Guys you look like characters from a horror movie, all harried and full pain.”* He instantly has eyes for

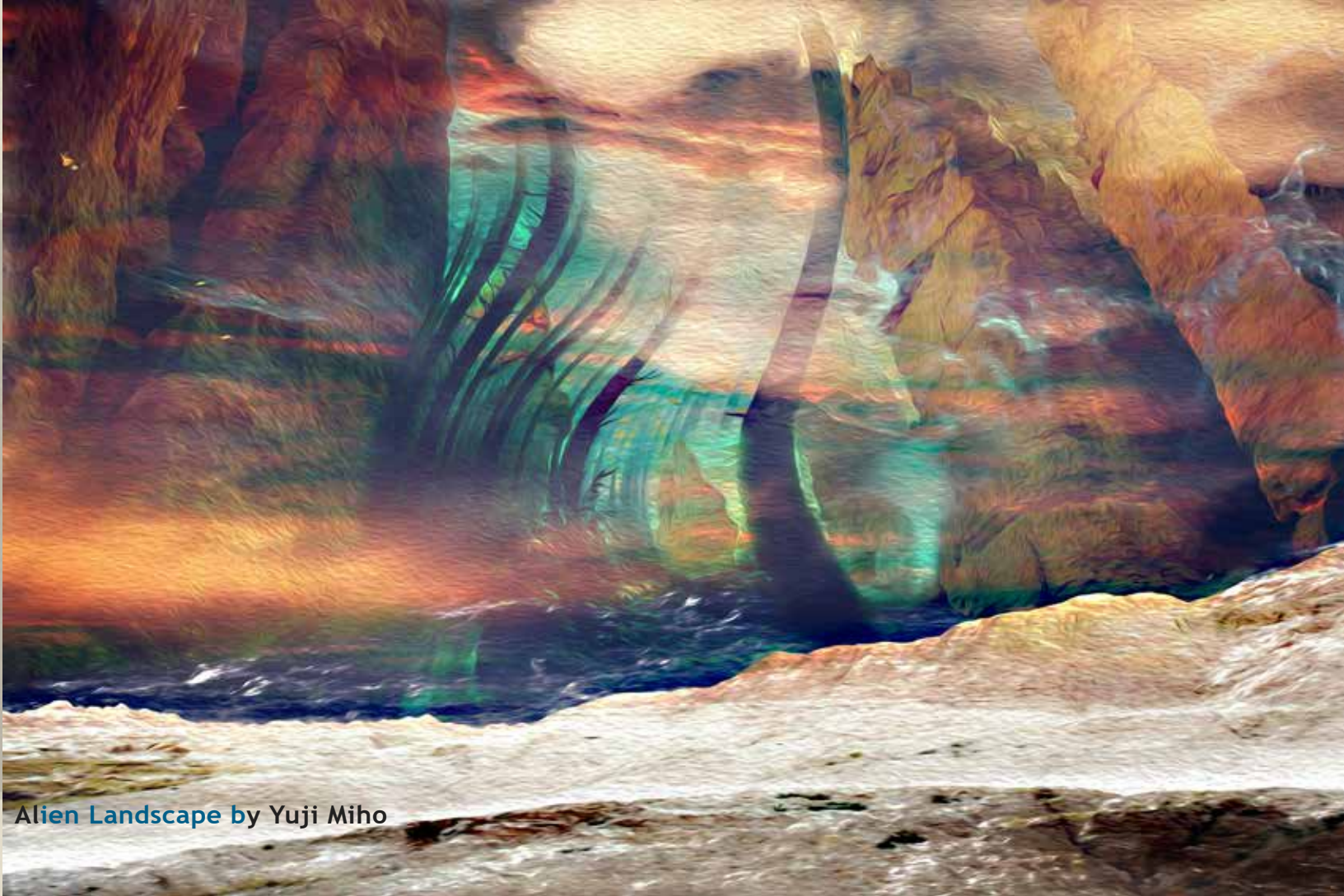
Mizue, and will smile at her and address her in the conversation whenever possible.

Yuji leads the group into a lounge area holding three voluminous ratty looking couches facing each other around a chipped wooden table. The walls are lined with Yuji's paintings. Numerous cats lounge around the room. A few hiss and run from the investigators on their approach, others rub around their legs amorously. All avoid the investigator that the Nakuko has chosen, and glare at her and growl when she is near. The north wall has a large bay window leading to the rear garden. Before the window is Yuji's easel and his latest project, concealed behind a dustsheet.

Yuji offers the investigators a seat and asks if they want coffee. If they say yes they will have a quick chance to examine the paintings while he's gone. The majority of Yuji's paintings are of landscapes, strange alien ones with brightly colored scenes containing forests of tentacles and geometric shapes floating in skies brimming with alien constellations. If examining the painting under the dustsheet the investigators find a portrait of a topless, smiling Eiko Tanaka, her hair discreetly covering her breasts.

Once everyone is settled the investigators can question him about Eiko. If they gained the interview using a subterfuge it won't be hard to turn the conversation towards Eiko.

If asked how he met Eiko, he replies that he was cutting through the campus one day, as he sometimes teaches there, and saw her sat alone. He was looking for a study to illustrate and approached her and asked if she'd model for him. They became friends after that. Asked about the time leading up to Eiko's death, Yuji grows visibly upset and says that she seemed okay, just

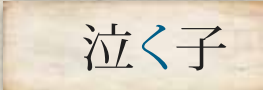


Alien Landscape by Yuji Miho

full of life. He can't believe she choked to death at the dinner table. If asked about the sketch he drew for her he replies that she was having nightmares about it and told him during one of their sessions. He asked her to describe it and drew it up, hoping it would exorcise the nightmare. Yuji next pulls a small notepad from his sweatpants and fingers through it before showing the investigators a page bearing two Japanese kanji, telling them Eiko said the symbols were appearing in her nightmares. She talked about asking a folklore professor at the university about them.

HANDOUT 3: EIKO'S VISION

NOTE: this is two letters of the Japanese alphabet on a small piece of paper, written with a black marker pen.



NOTE: on a successful Japanese language roll an investigator can translate the letters to: *Naku* (cry) and *Ko* (child), which equals Nakuko, the characters read as *na-ku-ko*. They won't be able to make anything else from them however.

So where next? Having finished speaking with Yuji the investigators will have the lead to go visit the folklore professor, as well as a copy of the Japanese letters Eiko saw in her nightmares. They can also get the lead on the professor from Keiko Sawai's apartment. And of course, there's the terrible old man...

THE TERRIBLE OLD MAN

The Asakis live in the suburbs west of Makinohara, near the Katsumata River. The Asakis address is listed

Eiko by Yuji Miho



in the phone book, but when dialed, the number is disconnected. The other way the investigators can get the address is during the interview with Yumeka Tanaka; a working phone number can be found in Eiko Tanaka's cellphone (see **THE GRIEVING PARENTS**).

If contacted by phone, the son Jin Asaki answers and if Eiko is mentioned he says he is too busy to talk and hangs up abruptly. A few minutes later Jin makes a return call where he says he is very sorry for his rudeness. He will agree to speak to the investigators at his home if they give him an hour. If the investigators arrive unannounced, Jin, a small, harried looking man answers the door. Either a successful Hard Difficulty level **Communication** skill roll, or the production of Kim Minami's credentials as a reporter, gains them an interview.

Beyond the front door stands an entrance hall with a staircase against the west wall with a chair lift attached. There is a door to the right of the staircase against the north wall and two against the east wall. A large mirror hangs on the wall between the easterly doors. Jin apologizes, saying he has just finished feeding his mother, and leads them to the second door on the east wall. This leads to a dining room centered by a large rectangular table. There are seven chairs at the table, and Jin asks the investigators to be seated.

A conversation with Jin won't prove very fruitful. Yes Eiko worked for him, helping with his mother and father, whom he explains are both infirm. He is very saddened by her death. Asked questions about Eiko and he will explain that she came to his house, helped out, and left again, and he knows nothing strange or untoward about her death. This is the truth. Just as Jin is telling the investigators they have to leave, a loud panicked scream issues from somewhere in the house, and Jin's jaw drops before he hurries from the door. Investigators worth their salt will follow Jin as the screaming continues, and upon entering the hall he is seen rushing into the next door along. Another final scream issues from the room and pursuing investigators witness the following:

An elderly woman, Jin's mother, lies twisting upon a futon mattress on the floor, tangled in her sheets. Her white dressing gown is stained and she drools from a toothless mouth. Jin rushes towards her, untangles her from her sheets and places her in a sitting position. She continues to twist and shake as Jin placates her. If any investigator goes to help he will be visibly relieved. An investigator making a successful **Psychology** roll will diagnose that Jin's mother is a state of advanced dementia.

The room's east wall window is shuttered but provides dull illumination. A large television on a cabinet stands against the north wall. The west wall holds an antique Samurai sword in a glass-covered frame.

Have an investigator make a **Listen** roll. Success hears a crunch under their foot. Looking down finds a small circular mirror on the floor. It is cracked with a few shards of glass broken out of it. Stepping on one of these made the crunch, but a **Spot Hidden** roll could also see the broken glass.

Just as Jin is calming down his mother, a noise issues from behind the open door, and a formerly concealed wheelchair bound man wheels himself out. This is Fujio, Jin's father, a wizened, bald man dressed in a faded brown tracksuit. He wears no shoes and the nails on his twisted feet are long and yellow. He looks at the investigators with contempt, telling them to get out. Jin releases his mother, stands up and bows meekly to his father and explains they are here about the dead girl. Fujio turns purple and is about to shout when the elderly woman moans and looks at the investigator who received the highest failure on their **Luck** roll, the one targeted by the Nakuko. She points shakily at them and says,

"He has you, Nakuko has you! You pay for another's sins like the girl did! He looks at you, but won't look at himself!"

At this, the woman falls unconscious and a stressed Jin tells the investigators they must leave while he deals with his mother. Fujio will follow Jin as he ushers the investigators out, mumbling and swearing.



Mr Asaki

SCENE FOUR: THE SPOOK CLUB RETURNS

Uncovering A Very Personal History of Shame

Another lead the investigators have is the Folklorist Hiro Mizuno. He can be found at Makinohara University, near the center of the city. He is the only Folklorist there, and if contacted by telephone will agree to meet the investigators as long as they explain it is to do with Eiko or Keiko. He is located in the university's History Quadrangle, and gives them half an hour of his time between working with his undergraduates.

THE PROFESSOR

Professor Mizuno's office is large and lined with wall-to-wall shelves filled with books. Professor Mizuno is found sat behind a desk, which is piled with books and papers. He is a tall, thin man, with medium length black hair and a goatee beard. There are only two seats spare in the office, so some investigators will have to stand.

Once the investigators are settled, the professor begins by mentioning Eiko's death, saying what a terrible thing it was. She came to him due to some strange dreams she'd been having. The Kanji she mentioned was quite obscure so he was more than willing to help her with the information she desired, except she never returned. The day after Eiko died one of her friends came to see him and left a note saying she was having strange dreams also. She hasn't returned his emails. What Eiko wanted to know was the meaning behind two symbols she was seeing in a dream, which translate to Nakuko, or Weeping Child. The only proper refer-

ence he has to this is in *Minkan Denshō*, a rare book on Japanese Folklore by Yamamuro Tanaka. It tells of a woman who was drowned, murdered by a robber. As she died a vision came to her of a small, crying being, who said that if she gave it her immortal soul it would give her revenge upon the man by killing all the women in his life. The Nakuko killed the man's wife and two of his daughters. It only stopped when he openly confessed his crime. Should the investigators ask if Eiko or Keiko could have been victims of the Nakuko, the professor replies that it is all just myth, folktales and stories and people trying to attach meaning to meaningless deaths, and if a supernatural explanation can be attached, the superstitious do so.

Now the professor informs the investigators he has university business to attend to and asks them to leave. He will want rid of them quickly if the investigators hinted that they believe in the existence of the Nakuko, for he has no belief in the supernatural and now view them as cranks.

RESEARCH INTERLUDE

The investigators have a few research leads to go on, should they wish, for by now they should have guessed that the 'Yūrei' and the deaths are connected to someone in both Eiko and Keiko's lives. Doing an online search of any of the characters involved provides nothing useful apart from the following. The first can be found after around an hour of searching using the **Computer Use** skill.

The Makino

Sunday, October 30, 1945

Amnesty Frees 46 Japanese

Disgraced officers of His Majesty's Imperial Army accused of war crimes were today removed by US military police from Sugamo prison, Tokyo. Prisoners include: Mineo Kawaguchi, Fujio Asaki, and Kaname Shinohara, all officers of the Imperial Japanese Army.

It is alleged that while stationed in the Philippines they committed dishonourable acts include rape, mass murder,

and delinquency at their post.

They have been released as part of an amnesty arrangement with American forces and as a prisoner exchange. Prefectures across the Home Islands are growing concerned with the increased number of delinquents returning from the war and with their capacity to house, feed, and clothe them.

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HANDOUT 4: WAR CRIMES

NOTE: This is a newspaper article containing a news clipping and still photo of a group of Japanese men guarded by US military police held on a Japanese history website.

THE MAKINOHARA NEWS ARCHIVES

A Library Use roll and few hours' newspaper search at the Makinohara Municipal Library will uncover the following information in regard to Jin Asaki:

HANDOUT 5: A Tragic Loss

NOTE: This is a web page article

THE MAKINOHARA GLOBE; online edition; Article 2/07

A tragic accident occurred yesterday morning when a 49-year-old woman, Kahori Asaki, slipped and fell in the water while taking a stroll along Katsumata River where she drowned. Police have appealed for witnesses but none were forthcoming and this has been classified as a tragic accident. Her husband, Jin Asaki, has stated to authorities that his wife never learned to swim. She is survived by a sister and two brothers.



A Tragic Loss

JAPAN-A tragic accident occurred yesterday morning when a 49-year-old woman, Kahori Asaki, slipped and fell in the water while taking a stroll along Katsumata River, Makinohara where she drowned.

SCENE FIVE: CONFRONTATIONS

Secrets Will Out

It shouldn't be difficult for the investigators to work out that the problem is sourced at the Asaki household. Beyond that however, the solution to the problem isn't so simple...

WHICH ASAKI IS THE BAD ASAKI?

If contacted by telephone, Jin refuses to speak to the investigators, hangs up, and this time he won't make a return call. They'll be forced to go to his house, and although he answers the door, Jin tells them in no uncertain terms that he is too busy to speak to the investigators. Only an Extreme Difficulty level **Communication** roll and a mention of his dead wife gain the investigators entry, or entering by force. Cowed by any violence towards him, there is only a 20% chance Jin will turn around and threaten to call the police.

ASAKI SENIOR

If investigators go after Fujio, they find him in the same room as before, watching television while his wife slumbers on the futon. Challenging him about his War Crimes provokes a barrage of insults. As the investigators challenged the wrong man, no threats or skill rolls will get the elder Asaki to confess to his War Crimes, and two things happen in quick succession. Ryoko awakes from her slumber and issues a low keening moan, and then, the television turns to static. The light illuminating the room flickers and it doesn't take a **POW** roll to sense the dark atmosphere enveloping the room. Now whichever investigator has been the focus of the Nakuko suddenly finds their throat blocked, and in no time at all, they start to cough and convulse

as wads of thick black hair pour from their mouth (See **NAKUKO ATTACKS**). By now Jin will have entered the room, and the investigators have limited time to save their companion.

ASAKI JUNIOR

As soon as the investigators confront Jin, if they are not in the room where his parents are located, Ryoko will begin to moan which sends Jin in there. Hence this scene occurs in this room whoever the investigators accused first. From the moment the investigators enter the room with Jin, they have 5 rounds before the Nakuko attacks the investigator it has been following, attacking as above. An accusation against Jin of his wife's murder makes him visibly upset, but he denies it. A successful Regular Difficulty **Psychology** roll proves he is lying. Use of **Communication** skills don't work here, in fact, the only way to make Jin confess is physical violence and a loss of Hit Points, then Jin will confess out loud that he murdered his wife, and the Nakuko will finally appear in person(s). Fujio will do nothing to hinder the investigators attacking his son; in fact he will egg them on! In gaming terms for the attempt at a confession, the keeper should give a round for everyone's skill roll attempt, and a round for every attempt at violence. Also, the keeper should knock off a round if the players spend too long discussing what to do next. Remember, after 5 rounds the Nakuko will attack one of the investigators and only a confession from Jin will stop their death (although the Nakuko's appearance will bring about more problems). Once the choking attack commences, consult the rules for **ASPHYXIATION AND DROWNING** (KR p.124)

THE NAKUKO

The moment Jin confesses to killing his wife, all the lights in the house go out. In fact, anything electrical such as flashlights, cell phones etc stop functioning. Accompanying the darkness, the sound of splashing water fills the room, a mirror on the wall shatters, and the Nakuko materializes within the room, its skin glowing an unearthly blue.

NOTE: the Nakuko is accompanied by two duplicates (See **Nakuko Attacks and Special Effects**), but if an investigator has just died, this number will be increased to three.

The Nakuko attacks Jin with the intention of throttling him to death. Jin won't fight back, and if the Nakuko is allowed to take its revenge it disappears moments after Jin dies. If the investigators attack the Nakuko or attempt to hinder it in any way it attacks the investigator in question and throttles them unconscious to reach Jin. Pitting ones **STR** against Nakuko's can be used for an escape attempt.

If the investigators have worked out that mirrors can thwart the Nakuko, they will come in very handy here. If not, keepers may give the investigators a Hard level difficulty **INT** roll to think of it. Mirrors are an anathema to the Nakuko, so much so that shards from one can be used to slice the vengeful specter with **25%** chance to hit, doing **1D4 damage**. If an investigator stabs "with all their might" they can add their **STR** bonus, if any, but then the delicate glass weapon breaks and does 1 Hit Point of damage to the wielder.

Another way to use mirrors against the Nakuko is to make it see its own reflection. Each investigator has a **25 + their DEX score %** chance to do this in combat, with each success causing the Nakuko to shriek in pain and take **1D8 damage**.

No other attacks hurt the haunt. In fact, it can't even be touched by anyone except the person it is choking. Should the investigators wish to fight their way out of this climax, all three (possibly four) forms of the Nakuko must be destroyed.

Fujio will do nothing but back off in terror at the sight of the Nakuko, and Jin's mother falls unconscious, the only woman in his life the Nakuko didn't choose to attack dying later in her sleep. At this point, Jin is the only victim the Nakuko desires - the death of anyone else is not necessary for its revenge.

CONCLUSION

Physically defeating the Nakuko causes it to vanish, but the angry spirit is not dead. Unless Jin dies or confesses his crime to authorities, the Nakuko will return **1D6+2** days later and it will pick up its haunting torments right where it left off.



The Vengeful Spirit Arrives

APPENDIX: THE PLAYERS IN THIS TRAGEDY

NPCs and Adversaries

CHARACTERS

YUJI MIHO is a tall, gangly looking but not unhandsome man. He has long black center-parted hair, a scruffy beard and bright blue eyes. When at home he wears a faded blue hoodie and black baggy sweatpants with no shoes, his clothing smeared in paint. A graduate of Makinohara University, he has a Master's Degree in Art Theory, and is accomplished at his chosen career. Before she died, he was actually starting to fall in love with Eiko, but hides his devastation well.

YUJI MIHO - Age 27, Bohemian Artist

STR 30 **CON** 50 **SIZ** 80 **INT** 85 **POW** 55
DEX 75 **APP** 75 **EDU** 80 **HP** 13 **BUILD** 0
SAN 55

MOV 7

Damage Bonus: none

Weapons: Brawl 25%, damage: varies

Skills: Art & Crafts: Art History 70%; Art & Crafts: Photography 55%; Charm 60%; Computer Use 55%; Art & Crafts: Fine Art 80%; Library Use 50%; Persuade 60%; Speak Japanese 80%

JIN ASAKI has streaks of white in his black hair and large bags under his eyes. A heavy smoker, the areas around his lips are wrinkled. He is small and meek looking. A former chemist he is now a full time carer for his parents, and almost exclusively wears worn clothes and an apron. Jin has lived a life domineered by his father, and when he married, his wife added to that domination. He is the source of the trouble with the Nakuko, for two years ago he drowned his wife in the river near their home, tripping her up and holding her head under until she drowned. Her hatred as she expired invoked the Nakuko's attention.

JIN ASAKI, Age 55, Son with a Secret

STR 65 **CON** 50 **SIZ** 55 **INT** 65 **POW** 40
DEX 40 **APP** 50 **EDU** 87 **HP** 11 **BUILD** 0
SAN 35

MOV 8

Damage Bonus: none

Weapons: Brawl 25%, damage: varies

Skills: First Aid 80%; Hide 70%; Listen 80%; Medicine 70%; Science: Chemistry 60%; Science: Pharmacy 60%; Sneak 70%; Speak Japanese 87%

NAKUKO - The Weeping Child

An entity of old wives tales and Japanese folklore, the Nakuko does not reside on our plane of existence but rather breaches this world when a woman dies a horrible death by murder. The Nakuko then appears in a vision before the dying victim and offers revenge in exchange for their immortal soul. This bargain gives the Nakuko a foothold in our realm and from that point on, it takes lives almost indiscriminately, stalking those close to its prey. It only stops killing when its target openly confesses to his/her crime, and then materializes to kill the target. It suffers a strong aversion to its own reflection, and if shown itself in a mirror it freezes in place, remaining frozen while the mirror is still pointed, unless it makes a POW x 1 roll, allowed once per round. The Nakuko resembles a child dressed in rags but with bright blue glowing skin. It has a misshapen, bald, elongated head with large opaque eyes with lines of black tears staining its face and chest. Its long arms end in hands filled with dozens of twisted, squirming fingers. It is completely silent in its movements and actions.

HAUNT VICTIM: This attack is performed on a psychic level. Once the Nakuko has chosen its victim (usually from their proximity to either the person cursed or proximity to the place another victim was killed), it haunts the victim with nightmares and sinister feelings of being watched etc. Those around the victim will suffer the same, this lasting until the victim is killed.

'Yūrei' HAIR: When the Nakuko tires of toying with and frightening its victim, it kills them in this way. It forms thick wads of black, phantom hair in the victims' throat, choking them as per the ASPHYXIA-

TION AND DROWNING rules (KR p.124), until dead. The only possible way to rescue a victim from this attack is to force the Nakuko to materialize.

MATERIALIZE/DUPLICATE SELF: Upon the subject of the grudge's confession, the Nakuko appears on our physical plane and sets out to kill them. Its appearance is always accompanied by a shorting out of nearby electrical devices and the sound of rushing water. When its has already killed victims connected to its grudge, the Nakuko will have duplicated itself, once per victim, all copies of the Nakuko focusing on the subject of the grudge, although each can act independently.

NAKUKO - The Weeping Child, Greater Servitor

STR 80 DEX 90 INT 150 CON 300

POW 200 SIZ 30 HP 33 BUILD 0

MOVE 10

Damage Bonus: None

Weapons: Brawl: Grapple 75%, damage SPECIAL; followed by Strangulation

Armor: none, but only vulnerable to mirrors.

Spells: none

Sanity Loss: 1/1D10 Sanity Points to see the Nakuko.

APPENDIX: THOSE WHO CHALLENGE ONI

Sample Characters to Challenge the Darkness

PLAYER CHARACTERS

KIM MINAMI

Tall, slim with long black hair, Kim Minami is an attractive woman with a pale, doll like complexion. Usually dressed in a suit, she takes great pride in her appearance, and won't avoid checking herself out in the nearest mirror. A reporter for the Makinohara Globe, she can turn on the charm at a moment's notice to get what she wants. She is the kind of woman who turns men's heads, but has a keen intelligence attached to her beautiful face and fine figure. Keen and analytical, Kim isn't easily frightened, likes to find a logical solution to everything, but isn't afraid to bend the rules if required.

KIM MINAMI - Age 25, Plucky Reporter

STR 40 CON 55 SIZ 70 INT 75 POW 45

DEX 70 APP 80 EDU 88 HP 13 BUILD 0

LUCK 65 CREDIT RATING 30 MOV 8

SAN 45

Damage Bonus: none

Weapons: Brawl 25%, damage: varies

Skills: Art & Craft: Photography 70%; Charm 80%; Computer Use 60%; Fast Talk 65%; Persuade 75%; Psychology 65%; Speak Japanese 88%; Spot Hidden 75%

Quote: "I guarantee this is off the record."



EQUIPMENT & NOTES

MIZUE ARIYOSHI

A happy go lucky student studying Anthropology at Makinohara University, Mizue is small, cute, and likes to talk, A LOT. She has short black hair in bunches, and likes to wear dungaree shorts, pastel hoodies, and hi-top trainers. What many would term a ‘nosey parker,’ she always has an opinion concerning someone else’s situation. Still, despite her shortcomings, Mizue is a bright and inquisitive girl. She has a strong crush on her dead friend’s older brother Koji, and has harbored it for years.

MIZUE ARIYOSHI - Age 19 and Cute

STR 45 CON 40 SIZ 50 INT 70 POW 75

DEX 65 APP 90 EDU 75 HP 09 BUILD 0

LUCK 70 CREDIT RATING 30 MOV 8

SAN 75

Damage Bonus: none

Weapons: Brawl 25%, damage: varies

Skills: Anthropology 70%; Charm 60%; Computer Use 65%; Fast Talk 65%; Library Use 85%; Sneak 70%; Speak Japanese 75%

Quote: “I’ll keep it to myself - pinky swears!”



EQUIPMENT & NOTES

SHINTA ARAI

Kim's assistant and cameraman, Shinta is tall, with shaved hair and would look handsome except he is a little too thin and hardly even appears clean-shaven. He wears old jeans and trainers and a checkered shirt beneath a well-worn leather aviator jacket. Unknown to Kim, Shinta is head over heels in love with her. He is a quiet, unimaginative man who analyzes a situation slowly before coming to any decision. Shinta is just waiting for a chance to prove himself to Kim, and would even put his life at risk to aid her. He drives a 'Makinohara Globe' van.

**SHINTA ARAI - Age 30,
Lovelorn Cameraman**

STR 70 CON 40 SIZ 80 INT 55 POW 50

DEX 50 APP 65 EDU 88 HP 12 BUILD +1

LUCK 40 CREDIT RATING 30 MOV 7

EQUIPMENT & NOTES

SAN 50

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons: Brawl 25%, damage: varies

Skills: Art & Crafts: Operate Video Camera 75%;
Electronics 50% Electrical Repair 60%; Listen 75%; Locksmith 50%; Mechanical Repair 70%; Sleight of Hand 60%;
Speak Japanese 88%; Spot Hidden 65%

Quote: "Let's all just calm down and try think this through properly."



KEN ARIYOSHI

Mizue’s brother, Ken is a short, unattractive, often scowling man. He has a bad complexion, short, greasy hair and dresses casually, usually in Chino’s and a Polo Shirt. A computer expert, he works as a freelance web designer and shares an apartment with his sister. Although he finds Mizue annoying, he is extremely protective of her, especially when it comes to men. This is because their parents died in a car crash a few years previously, and he has taken responsibility for his baby sister.

**KEN ARIYOSHI, Age 23,
Possessive Brother**

STR 55 CON 65 SIZ 50 INT 85 POW 45

DEX 65 APP 35 EDU 86 HP 12 BUILD 0

LUCK 60 CREDIT RATING 30 MOV 9

SAN 45

Damage Bonus: none

Weapons: Brawl: Martial Arts 65%, damage: 1D3

Skills: Computer Use 60%; Electronics 60%; Psychology 65%; Science: Physics 40%; Sleight of Hand 40%; Sneak 70%; Speak Japanese 86%

Quote: “Stop staring at my sister’s butt!”



EQUIPMENT & NOTES

KOJI TANAKA

The brother of Eiko, he is tall with long, dyed lilac hair and a winning smile. He dresses in baggy cargo pants, a trendy t-shirt, trainers and an oversized white Parka. He is the absolute antithesis of Ken, and Ken dislikes him due to the huge crush his sister has on him. His grief over the loss of Eiko only makes him more love-able to Mizue. He will search for what's behind Eiko's death no matter what it takes. Not really getting along with his parents, he lives near the university campus where he studies his Master's in Philosophy.

**KOJI TANAKA, age 26,
Grieving Family Member and Mizue's
Love Interest**

STR 60 CON 70 SIZ 80 INT 65 POW 55

DEX 65 APP 85 EDU 80 HP 15 BUILD +1

EQUIPMENT & NOTES

LUCK 75 CREDIT RATING 30 MOV 7

SAN 55

Damage Bonus: + 1D4

Weapons: Brawl: Martial Arts 75%, damage: 1D3 + 1D4

Tanto (dagger) 50%, damage 1D4 + db

Skills: Computer Use 60%; Jump 55%; Intimidate 60%; Library Use 55%; Persuade 45%; Philosophize 80%; Psychology 35%; Speak Japanese 80%

Quote: "Three things cannot be long hidden: the sun, the moon, and the truth."





FOX COUNTRY

ENJOY OUR VERY OWN TAKE ON CALL OF CTHULHU
VIA OUR PAGE ON DRIVETHRURPG.COM

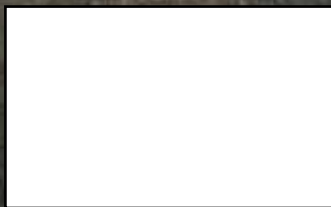
泣子

NAKUKO

THE WEeping CHILD

It's a sit down between a girl, her parents and two teenaged friends. Eating in the Japanese style, they sit on bended knees around a low dinner table. The daughter Eiko shuffles uncomfortably, her bare legs itchy against the Tatami mats. Moments later, Eiko will be dead, killed by a malevolent entity intent on revenge.

Can the Investigators face this threat head on and prevent more deaths in 1990s Japan?



STYGIAN FOX

for 7th Edition

CALL of CTHULHU
JAPAN IN THE 1990S



CHAOSIUM
INC

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COUNTRY

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