BAKU

The Baku is a powerful quadruped unique to the Orient. It is called the Eater of Dreams, and people in rural areas sometimes make offerings so that it will devour their nightmares for them. Nonetheless the Baku is not a kami but a physical creature, albeit one with myriad wondrous powers. Its power is not restricted to consuming evil dreams, either. It can devour any dream, and characters whose dreams are taken can become irritable or enervated.

If a Baku takes up residence in an area, it may come close to human habitations by night in order to feed. It at all time exudes a narcotic sorcery equivalent to the Kusa spell Sleep of the Dead. Characters visited regularly lose 5 points from Cool and Fellowship and 1 point from Toughness while the Baku's visits continue. If the visitations increase for several months, characters also start to acquire 1 Insanity point every 1-4 weeks. If the Baku is slain or prevented from reaching its victims, depleted characteristics recover with just a few good nights' sleep but Insanity points or disorders may remain.

Baku are semi-intelligent and have been known to speak in guttural, half-coherent tones. It may be that they do not understand what they say but only regurgitate garbled phrases from the dreams they have eaten. Sometimes Baku can be controlled by magic, so players may encounter one as the steed or servant of a powerful wizard.

Physique: The body of a Baku resembles a huge tiger – as large as a bull in most cases. Its fur is slick black and patterned with green circles like staring eyes. Its head has a long snout like that of a tapir or elephant, usually crested with long slender horns. It has a mane, but its domed forehead is bald (or even, in some accounts, fleshless). This is the appearance of a male Baku. Females have a completely different physiognomy, but there are no reliable accounts from which any description could be attempted here.

Psychological Traits: Baku fear daylight and will always return to their lair (usually a burrow, sometimes a deserted temple in thick woodland) before sunrise. While powerful, they are not used to encountering powerful opponents. Anytime a Baku takes a Wound it must make a Cool test or flee. Often Baku will flee without waiting to be wounded – they are intelligent enough to recognise there is no percentage in fighting against the odds.

Special Rules: When a Baku strikes someone in combat it steals some of the strength of his dream-self. This has no perceptible effect on most people, but against a mahotsakai it causes the loss of D6 magic points. These are recovered normally. Also, anyone wounded by a Baku must make a Will Power test or fall into a deep sleep until the Baku leaves the vicinity. A Baku given an hour to feast on the dreams of a sleeping mahotsakai will drain him of all remaining magic points.

In retreat, this creature can 'move like the wind' according to the description given by Kotei in his *Bakemonojin*. Double the Movement score given below when the Baku is fleeing from combat.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
7	37	0	5	7	17	50	2	—	27	27	27	95	2

GAKI

Gaki are "Hungry Ghosts", souls whose karma is so bad that they are reborn as ethereal monsters. All Gaki are characterized by a terrible hunger that can never be truly satisfied. This hunger corresponds to the selfish nature of the spirit in its previous existence. Someone who stole from the bodies of the dead, for example, might become a Corpse-Eating Gaki.

It is in the existence of Gaki that the foremost Bukyo teaching is most clearly illustrated: appetite and desire are the cause of suffering. For this reason, it is sometimes possible for a Bukyo priest to placate a Gaki by offering to perform the Segaki rite. This gives the creature a chance to escape its suffering and be reborn as some lowly creature such as an insect. However, it is difficult for even a devout priest to reason with a Gaki in this way because all Gaki are effectively insane in human terms.

Physique: Like all Ghosts, Gaki are not restricted to a given form. Sometimes they appear as roiling clouds of black smoke on which their human form is superimposed. This is thought to be a glimpse into Gakido, or the Hell of the Hungry Dead. Sometimes they are reported as having furry limbs or insectoid features, but this may be a subjective impression resulting from the observer's fear of the Gaki. More usually, just as a Gaki is about to attack, it will take a guise based on its craving. So a Ketsu-Gaki will manifest a face of wet blood, a Chokenju-Gaki might wear features moulded of clay, and so on.

Psychological Traits: Gaki must test against Cool whenever they have the opportunity to assuage their hunger. If the test fails, the Gaki must feed even if this means putting itself in danger.

All Gaki are subject to instability outside their normal environment. Usually the area of haunting will be a graveyard, temple or mansion, but in some cases it can be a much more extensive area. One notorious Gaki that was eventually Enlightened by the priest Dogen had been condemned to haunt the entire length of the Shokowado highway – more than two hundred miles from end to end.

Other than this, Gaki are unaffected by the psychology rules and cannot be forced to leave combat.

Special Rules: In general, Gaki cannot be harmed by non-magical weapons and can only manifest with any force at night (or perhaps during the daytime if there is a fog, blizzard or thunderstorm). Most can inflict Insanity points on those they meet, and people commonly develop a hatred or phobia (often, strangely, an insect phobia) as a result of encountering a Gaki. Other powers vary according to the type of Gaki encountered. The list here is only a framework on which the GM should feel free to build. Many Gaki have magical powers (a residue of merit from much earlier incarnations), and no two are entirely alike.

Jikininki

A ghoulish creature, usually the ghost of someone who robbed or defiled the dead. Anyone confronting a Jikininki must make a test against Will Power or become awestruck (unable to move or speak). The test can be repeated every D3 rounds until the character snaps out of it and, as with fear tests, once the roll is made successfully there is no need to check again in that encounter.

Jikininki do not kill to eat. They usually crave the flesh of someone who has died from other means, and will only fight if kept from reaching the corpse. They are powerful in battle, with Strength and Toughness both 6 or more. A person eaten by a Jikininki can never be restored to life.

In areas where a Jikininki is known to haunt, some families have acquired the habit of murdering wayfarers whenever someone in their household dies. This ensures that the Jikininki's hunger will be assuaged by eating the wayfarer instead of the family member on the first night, allowing the householders time to arrange a cremation the next day. Of course, people who do this kind of thing are only ensuring that they will return as Gaki in their next life.

Ketsu-Gaki

A Yamatese vampire, this is the ghost of a murderer or an excessively cruel and violent person. The presence of a Ketsu Gaki causes fear in living creatures. In combat, it can either strike normally (it has Strength and Toughness of at least 4) or else grapple. The attempt to grapple is made with a -20% WS modifier, and the Ketsu Gaki will usually do this only when fighting a solitary opponent. A character who is grappled must make an immediate test against Will Power, and if this fails he is paralysed for 2D6 rounds. The Gaki will make use of this time to drink the paralysed character's blood, extruding a proboscis or long needle-like teeth with which to do this. Each round it spends drinking will drain the victim of 1 Strength and 1 Wound; when either reaches zero, the victim is discarded. If he fails a Toughness x10 roll, he dies at once; if the roll succeeds, he is incapacitated and suffering from terminal bleeding (see *Warhammer*, p 130). Assuming he survives, he recovers 1 point of Strength and 1 Wound for each day spent resting.

Ketsu-Gaki can sometimes appear during the day wearing the appearance they bore in their previous incarnation. While in this manifestation they are able to control their hunger and are effectively just Ghosts passing for human.

Yokushiki-Gaki

Demonic spirits of carnality, corresponding to the incubi and succubi of Occidental myth. These beings were driven by overwhelming lust when alive, or else acquired bad karma through unnatural practices. By night such Gaki are able to appear as stunningly attractive individuals, but this is only an illusion and if encountered at all by day it is in the form of one made hideous by age and depravity. Yokushiki-Gaki should be treated as having Fellowship of 81 when encountered in their nighttime form, and can use Seduction against characters of either sex. If they succeed in coupling with a character, they drain him of his vitality: he will awaken the next morning with his Strength, Toughness and Wounds scores all permanently reduced by 1.

A Yokushiki-Gaki will usually retreat if faced with combat, though if interrupted in the throes of lovemaking (perhaps by the comrades of its victim, belatedly coming to his assistance) it will lash out violently. It has Strength and Toughness of 3 and its claws have a 30% chance of communicating the Red Pox. At the same time it will discard its comely appearance, the repugnant sight of its true face causing fear in everyone present. If someone who has had sex with a Yokushiki-Gaki sees its real face, he or she immediately acquires D3 Insanity points.

Doku-Gaki

These are the ghosts of poisoners, doomed to thirst for poison themselves. Anyone who is carrying or brewing any form of poison may attract a Doku-Gaki's attention. The creature is likely to begin its attack by approaching the character while he is asleep, usually in the form of a vapour with toxic or deliriant effect. Taking a more cohesive form if combat becomes inevitable, it strikes with envenomed claws. Its Strength and Toughness are both 5. Each time it hits, the target must test against Toughness x10 to resist the venom. The first failed roll results in drowsiness, the second in paralysis, and the third in death.

Kwa-Gaki

Arsonists – particularly those who have set fire to Bukyo temples – are reincarnated as Kwa-Gaki, or Fire-Eating Ghosts. All forms of heat and light are consumed by this goblin, including spells such as Lightning Bolt and Hand of Fire as well as the light of lanterns and candles. Such attacks are neutralized within a range of 12 yards of the Kwa-Gaki. Light automatically dims in the same region, with bright firelight guttering to the level of a candle and ordinarily dim illumination dropping to pitch darkness.

Even the weakest Kwa-Gaki have Strength and Toughness of at least 4, and some are much more powerful. Their touch draws heat from the target's body, causing the loss of an additional D3 Wounds if a Toughness x10 test is failed (see Freeze Attack, Warhammer p 189).

A Kwa-Gaki which comes across a sleeping character may try to enter him or her in order to steal bodily warmth over a long period. This process takes D10 minutes, but works automatically if the Gaki is not interrupted during this time. The character will begin to develop a chill (as the Gaki feeds on his body warmth) broken by brief periods of burning fever when the Gaki is satiated. This causes the character to be temporarily down by 1 or 10% on characteristics most of the time, and totally incapacitated while the fever is on him. Normal medical treatment will be ineffective, and the character must guess that he is host to a Gaki and seek the aid of a Bukyo priest. If and when the Gaki is exorcized, its victim's characteristics will recover almost at once.

Chokenju-Gaki

The spirits of men who despoiled shrines for the sake of gain, or who took treasure from ancient tombs. They are cursed with a ravenous hunger for grave-clay, funereal offerings and the charred remnants of funeral pyres. A Chokenju will usually be restricted to a graveyard and will not bother anyone who does not intrude on its feasting. If engaged in combat, it slashes with jagged talons which have a 30% chance of inflicting Tomb Rot. Its Strength and Toughness are liable to be in the region of 5 or 6. It may take a monstrous form comprising fragments of earth, cerements and mouldered bones, causing fear in any living creature who sees it.

Chokenju-Gaki are another class of these demonic spirits that are prone to taking normal human form by day. Often they will wear the guise of a solitary priest or hermit living in a cottage in the graveyard. They are typically less obsessive and more reasonable during the day, and they may even ask for help if confronted by one who has guessed the truth about them.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	51	0	*	*	25	60	1	21	18	30	18	79	23
* varies according to type; see Special Rules above													