

# **Temple of the Gaki**

## **Outline**

This is a one shot for either Third or Fifth Edition DnD for 3-5 PCs of level 3. The adventure makes the assumption that one of the players will be a paladin or cleric (hereafter simply referred to as the paladin for simplicity).

The paladin is issued an order to "Cleanse the temple of the Gaki". It is up to you how best to convey this order, be it an angelic envoy, a dream or vision, or an order from a superior in their church or similar organisation. This should be framed as the paladin's final rite of passage, be it full acceptance into the order, or a move to an unsupervised position, or the final acceptance of their oath by their chosen deity, etc...

The remaining PCs can either already be companions of the paladin, or be hired as help by the paladin or his superiors in order to provide support.

During the course of the adventure the players will fight undead creatures, uncover who or what the gaki are and settle on a method of "cleansing the temple". It is recommended you read the adventure in full before attempting to run it for the first time.

XP values are given for both editions for events such as exploration. If you run 5e and prefer not to hand out XP, simply level the players up at the end of the module.

## **Journeying to the Temple**

After assembling, the party may consider hiring a guide to help find the temple. The questgiver will have indicated the general direction, but for 5gp the PCs can find a guide in the nearby tavern, a dark skinned man with short grey hair and missing a few teeth despite seeming to be in his early 40s. He introduces himself as Nadri and says he can take them most of the way there, but won't cover the final approach to the temple as it is cursed.

The paladin may also attempt to seek further information on the temple or the gaki from the questgiver, in which case they will inform the paladin that a gaki is a malevolent spirit and that discovering more information about the situation is part of the trial. Similar sentiment should be expressed by anyone else in the paladin's organisation, encouraging them to figure it out for themselves at the temple.

The party may wish to roll for their own knowledge.

A Knowledge Religion roll will reveal which deity the temple belonged to. This could be the same deity as the paladin, or an opposed deity if you think that is more appropriate for your group. I would generally recommend making it the same deity as the paladin.

In either edition, this should be a DC 11 roll for a cleric or paladin, meaning they would pass automatically by taking 10 in 3rd Edition. For any other class with ranks or proficiency in Religion (or Bardic Knowledge) this should be a DC 15.

A Knowledge History (or Bardic Knowledge) check reveals some history of the temple.

A DC 15 (3rd Edition) DC 13 (5th Edition) check reveals that the temple was a monastery some two hundred years ago that suffered some sort of catastrophe. The word of mouth version is that the monks were struck with a plague that killed them off and that lingering threat of sickness is the reason none have visited since. Undead creatures have been seen in the forest near the monastery which may explain Nadri's reticence in approaching

further.

Players beating the DC by 5 or more know that the plague was in fact a curse, inflicted by the monks' own deity after they did something to displease him/her.

A Knowledge Religion / Bardic Knowledge can also be rolled for information on the gaki. A DC 16 (3rd Edition) DC 14 (5th Edition) reveals that a gaki is the spirit of a sentient being that has failed to cross into the afterlife, often due to some unresolved moral burden. While not immediately hostile, their presence does cause lesser animals to become undead.

With or without Nadri, the party should expect to leave early in the morning, strike west through the vast forest at the base of the mountain range, and arrive at the monastery an hour or so before sunset.

Read or paraphrase the following:

*The day was already promising to be warm and as you strike forth into the forest, the heat soon rises; a combination of the tightly packed tree canopy and walking in armour/with heavy gear.*

*Even through the sunlight isn't direct, the air in the forest is hot and humid and the breeze is only gentle. The bright sunlight is sometimes visible through gaps in the canopy, breaking the monotony of the greenish tint that pervades, leaving bright patches on the forest floor. Walking through these shafts of sunlight causes you to squint and the extra heat is immediately noticeable. In between these patches, the dappled light gives the whole area an ethereal quality and it is hard to keep track of time with no way to track the sun's progress through the sky. There is no obvious trail and while the undergrowth is easily traversable in most places, from time to time you have to hack away at denser underbrush with a sword or knife, sending small lizards scuttling away from your exertions. Birdsong accompanies your travels throughout and even curious monkeys sometimes swing through the trees above, observing your progress.*

(If Nadri is present mention him leading the crew and advising them when to hydrate, maybe even coming across a stream that he encourages them to fill their waterskins from. If the party has a druid, ranger or scout, maybe drop in a little flavour how they warn the group away from a venomous snake, or a hornet's nest or something).

As the party draw close to the monastery, perhaps an hour or so away, they begin to see signs of its influence. Small skeletal woodland creatures make an appearance, perhaps a skeletal squirrel running up a tree, or a zombified bird flitting between tree branches. These creatures are not hostile, but become more commonplace as the party plod on. Eventually, the group should be allowed a Spot/Listen or Perception checks to notice the undead panthers stalking them. The DC will be set by the panthers who can either take 10 on the check in third edition, or roll for Hide/Move Silent in 3rd Edition, Stealth for 5th Edition using the stat blocks.

In 3rd Edition, if the party fail their checks, the panthers attack with a surprise round from a concealed position, flanking the party on opposite sides. This should result in a single attack per panther, striking two different party members.

In 5th Edition, use the surprised condition rules, or the updated disadvantaged initiative check rule as appropriate for your version. The panthers can move and attack in 5th, so have them move in from range and take their target(s) of choice.

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## **Third Edition Stats**

### **Panther Ambush (EL 3)**

Add 2 HD to Skeleton for 5 players. Remove 2 HD from Zombie for 3 players.

### **Skeleton Panther**

Medium Undead

Hit Dice: 3d12 (19 hp)

Initiative: +9

Speed: 40ft, Climb 20ft

AC: 17 (+5 dex, +2 natural), Touch 15, FF 12

Base Attack/Grapple: +1/+4

Attack: Bite +4 melee (1d6+3)

Full Attack: Bite +4 melee (1d6+3) and 2 claws -1 melee (1d4+1)

Space/Reach: 5ft/5ft

Special Attacks: None

Special Qualities: Immunity to Cold (Ex), Damage Reduction 5/Bludgeoning (Ex)

Saves: Fort +1, Ref +6, Will +3

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 21, Con 0, Int 0, Wis 10, Cha 1

Skills: Jump +11, Hide +9, Move Silent +9

Feats: Improved Initiative

Environment: Warm Forests

Organization: Solitary or Pair

CR: 1

Treasure: None

Alignment: Neutral Evil

### **Zombie Panther**

Medium Undead

Hit Dice: 6d12+3 (42 hp)

Initiative: +4

Speed: 40ft, Climb 20ft

AC: 17 (+4 dex, +3 natural), Touch 14, FF 13

Base Attack/Grapple: +3/+6

Attack: Bite +7 melee (1d6+4) or Slam +7 melee (1d6+4)

Full Attack: Bite +7 melee (1d6+4) or Slam +7 melee (1d6+4)

Space/Reach: 5ft/5ft

Special Attacks: None

Special Qualities: Damage Reduction 5/Slashing (Ex), Single Actions Only (Ex)

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +5

Abilities: Str 18, Dex 19, Con 0, Int 0, Wis 10, Cha 1

Skills: Jump +12, Hide +8, Move Silent +8

Feats: Toughness

Environment: Warm Forests

Organization: Solitary or Pair

CR: 2

Treasure: None

Alignment: Neutral Evil

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## **Fifth Edition Stats**

### **Panther Ambush**

5e is a crapshoot for monster stats. Add an extra skeletal panther if you have five players, knock a dice off the damage output of both panthers if you have 3 players. Play the rest by ear, give the skeleton a few extra HP if it's gonna die in one hit, knock some off the zombie if the combat is dragging. Technically the panthers only have a +2 to stealth from their dex, so a surprise ambush is unlikely.

### **Skeleton Panther**

Medium Undead, Lawful Evil

Armour Class: 13 (Natural Armour)

Hit Points: 27 (6d8)

Speed: 50ft, Climb 40ft

Abilities: Str 14, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 3, Wis 14, Cha 7

Damage Vulnerabilities: Bludgeoning

Damage Immunities: Poison

Condition Immunities: Exhausted, Poisoned

Senses: Darkvision 60ft, Passive Perception 12

Languages: -

Challenge: 1 (100xp)

#### **Actions**

Maul. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5ft, one target. Hit: 7 (1d6 + 4) slashing damage.

### **Zombie Panther**

Medium Undead, Neutral Evil

Armour Class: 8

Hit Points: 45 (10d8)

Speed: 50ft, Climb 40ft

Abilities: Str 14, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 3, Wis 14, Cha 7

Damage Immunities: Poison

Condition Immunities: Poisoned

Senses: Darkvision 60ft, Passive Perception 12

Languages: -

Challenge: 1 (100xp)

Undead Fortitude: If damage reduces a zombie to 0 hit points it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + half the damage dealt, unless the damage is radiant or a crit. On a success, the zombie drops to 1 hit point instead.

#### **Actions**

Slam. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5ft, one target. Hit: 7 (1d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

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After the fight, if Nadri is present he points the PCs in the right direction and leaves, claiming it is too dangerous for him to go further. The PCs arrive at the monastery before sunset.

If Nadri is not present, one PC needs to make a Survival check to continue without the team getting lost.

This is a DC14 check for a druid, ranger or scout, or a DC 18 for any other class. At DM discretion apply the 14 to any other class you think might be appropriate such as an animal totem barbarian (5th Edition), a cleric of a forest deity (Obad-hai, Ehlonna/Silvanus), Spirit Shaman (3rd Edition) etc...

On success, the party find the monastery before sundown and you can skip the next section and continue from "Arriving at the Monastery". On a fail, the party get lost and you can follow the next section, "Lost".

## **Lost**

Read or paraphrase the following:

*It's difficult to keep track of the right direction without the usual reliable shadows to follow. You thought you were heading in a reasonably straight line but you must have veered off track as soon the light is starting to dim and there's still no sight of the monastery. As you keep glancing above to try and check your orientation, your foot snags a root in the undergrowth...*

Have the player who failed the survival check make a DC 12 Reflex (3rd Edition) or Dexterity (5th Edition) save. They take 1d6 subdual (3rd Edition) or bludgeoning (5th Edition) damage on a failed save, and half that if successful, as they take a nose dive.

*With your pride wounded more than your ankle, you did at least manage to glimpse the sun in the sky before your tumble and are confident of the correct direction to get you back on track. Eventually you see a tower visible over the treeline and a half hour later as the sun is barely setting, you get your first glimpse of stone through the trees and realise you are approaching the temple. You eventually break through into what was once a well maintained clearing, but has slowly been reclaimed by the forest encroaching on the temple space. Small bushes litter the remains of a cracked stone path leading to the entrance and the pinkish stone walls are peppered with moss and creepers. In places the masonry has begun to crumble and there are loose stones near the base of the walls where bigger pieces have fallen free. It may have been painted back in the day, judging by the occasional patch of flaky red paint remaining, but now the walls are mostly faint pink with patches of lichen and remnants of bird droppings. Surprisingly, the front doors still stand, two solid wooden doors, heavily varnished and banded with rusted iron. They form a gothic arch shape, though without ornamentation. The tower that you saw rises up the monastery's right hand side. Before you can move forward, a creature shimmers into existence, patrolling a path back and forth in front of the entrance. It's a sickly grey looking quadruped, its skeleton visible and solid looking, but the remnants of flesh and fur clinging to it seem misty and ghost-like. Instead of a dog or cat like head, it has a sharp looking beak and glowing red eyes. Every so often it flickers out of existence before returning moments later.*

This creature is a Thought Eater.

In 3rd Edition, use the monster as presented in the 3.5e Expanded Psionics Handbook, page 211, or the SRD if you don't own the book.

<https://www.d20srd.org/srd/psionic/monsters/thoughtEater.htm>

In 5th Edition, use this version by The Fox Wizard on tumblr:

<https://www.tumblr.com/thewizard-blog1/187513829800/i-converted-the-thought-eater-up-to-5e-from-the>

There are two methods of passing the Thought Eater. One option is to kill it, though if killed, the creature will reform outside the entrance 15 minutes later with an extra HD, up to 6HD max in 3rd Edition and 12HD max in 5th Edition. Players only receive XP for

killing the creature the first time. The other option is to distract its attention somehow so the players can check the doors. Be fairly loose and fast with this. The creature is easily distracted and will go investigate noises or illusions or whatever the players come up with to lure it away from the entrance. If the players successfully distract it and enter the monastery through the doors, give them XP as though they defeated the Thought Eater. The doors are not locked but are stiff on their hinges after centuries of neglect. They can be overcome with a DC 14 Strength check (3rd Edition) or a DC 15 Athletics check (5th Edition). If the players distract or kill the creature and pass this check move to "Entering the Temple".

If the players try to seek another point of ingress, have them roll Search (3rd Edition) or Perception (5th Edition), DC 16. On a success, they find an area of wall around the back where some creature seems to have dug under the foundation. With some effort the tunnel can be widened and leads into the cellar. Go to section "The Cellar".

A DC 15 Knowledge Nature (3rd Edition), or DC 12 Nature (5th Edition) identifies this as the work of a particularly large badger.

### **Arriving at the Monastery**

Read or paraphrase the following:

*You get a glimpse of the tower above the treeline and using this to navigate, a half hour later you find yourselves approaching the monastery. The sun is still an hour or so from setting when you eventually break through into what was once a well maintained clearing, but has slowly been reclaimed by the forest encroaching on the temple space. Small bushes litter the remains of a cracked stone path leading to the entrance and the pinkish stone walls are peppered with moss and creepers. In places the masonry has begun to crumble and there are loose stones near the base of the walls where bigger pieces have fallen free. It may have been painted back in the day, judging by the occasional patch of flaky red paint remaining, but now the walls are mostly faint pink with patches of lichen and remnants of bird droppings. Surprisingly, the front doors still stand, two solid wooden doors, heavily varnished and banded with rusted iron. They form a gothic arch shape, though without ornamentation. The tower that you saw rises up the monastery's right hand side.*

The doors are not locked but are stiff on their hinges after centuries of neglect. They can be overcome with a DC 14 Strength check (3rd Edition) or a DC 15 Athletics check (5th Edition). If the players pass this check move to "Entering the Temple".

If the players try to seek another point of ingress, have them roll Search (3rd Edition) or Perception (5th Edition), DC 16. On a success, they find an area of wall around the back where some creature seems to have dug under the foundation. With some effort the tunnel can be widened and leads into the cellar. Go to section "The Cellar".

Award the players 150 xp each (3rd Edition) or 90 xp each (5th Edition) for entering the monastery regardless of which entrance is chosen.

### **Entering the Temple / The Chapel**

Read or paraphrase the following:

*The doors finally bow under your strength and you push them open, the bottoms scraping across the stone with a high pitched squeaking. A blast of musty air greets your nostrils, dust with a bouquet of decay. Indeed, the dust lies thick on the floor here in the lobby and you leave visible footprints as you step through. It's hard to see in here without a light source, though there are lanterns on the walls that could be filled with oil and lit, if you have any. This place has windows, which by miracle or magic, are still intact, though*

*crusted over with centuries of dirt. This entry lobby is large, likely serving as the area the public were allowed to enter for the purposes of worshipping at the shrine at the far end of the room. A chapel, if you will.*

(Flavour this shrine in accordance with the chosen God, and note that unlike the rest of this place, it seems to be in good condition, as though it is being actively maintained. It should be fairly austere, perhaps lacking some of the more modern symbology of the chosen religion, emphasising its old nature.)

*The remains of rotted wooden kneeling benches are immediately in front of the shrine, with some collapsed wooden seating benches behind those. Flanking the shrine are two large wrought iron stands designed to hold multiple votive candles to be lit by worshippers. You would expect any wax remnants to be long since gone and yet evidence of recent activity is present, the melted beeswax stubs of votive candles. Behind the shrine is a simple cubby that seems to still be intact.*

*To the left and right hand sides are solid wooden doors with big circular ring pulls made of twisted iron, each with a large keyhole.*

Players investigating the candles soon realise they are not real. Not an illusion exactly, but an echo, spiritual in nature. Passing a hand through them makes them disperse and reform moments later, like fog.

In the cubby are actual beeswax candles, still in usable condition. Any PC lighting one on the votive stand and offering a genuine prayer to the deity receives a +2 sacred/profane bonus on their next skill check, depending on the alignment of the god (once per player). If the deity is neutral, use a morale bonus. In 5th Edition, the bonus type isn't a concern. The two doors are locked but the left one is easily pickable due to the weak lock. Allow the party's rogue if they have one to bypass it without rolling, noting how well used it is. The one on the right is trickier and requires an Open Lock DC 18 (3rd Edition), Sleight of Hand DC 14 (5th Edition).

Either door can be forced open with a DC 16 Strength check (3rd Edition) or DC 14 Athletics check (5th Edition).

The left door leads to The Kitchen, which in turn leads to The Pantry, The Cellar and the Catacombs via the Gardens. The right door leads to the upper floor where the monks' Cells and the Room of Records are. There is also access to the Belltower from here, and the Beacon above it.

The goal at this point is for the players to explore the monastery, where they will find the gaki spirits. Clues throughout will hint at who these gaki are, the circumstances of their sins and how to forgive or condemn them. The following sections will detail each area and what can be found there. The section after that will discuss each gaki and explain the clues and the rituals. It is entirely up to the paladin to define his own moral code by choosing who to forgive or condemn.

All gaki share some common traits. They are considered undead, and despite appearing semi-substantial, they are considered corporeal. In 3rd Edition they are treated as having 5 hit dice for the purposes of turn undead. In 5th Edition, they have advantage on their +5 Wisdom save against being turned. They are considered lawful evil aligned for the purpose of Detect Evil or similar spells.

Gaki generally have AC 14 unless otherwise noted. If attacked outside of a ritual, they dissipate if they take damage, restarting whatever their patrol loop is. They essentially have infinite hitpoints as they cannot be permanently banished without the correct ritual being performed. Although corporeal for the purposes of combat, gaki can pass through the doors of the monastery as though they don't exist and can pass through players who try to block their way unless a ritual is underway. They do not talk and are generally indistinct in

terms of their features unless otherwise noted. See the area details for specifics on gaki patrol routes.

### **The Kitchen and Pantry**

This description is from the point of view of entering through the door from the Chapel. If your players are entering from the Cellar then adjust this accordingly.

*Stepping through the door you find yourself in a spacious kitchen. Ahead of you, on the opposite wall, a door leads outside. A large, rusted deadbolt holds it shut on this side. Immediately to your right are simple wooden tables with benches, likely where the monks ate, and a serving bench dividing that area from the rest of the kitchen proper. The far wall has a couple of large sinks, a large oven for baking bread and a large cauldron hanging above a firepit, likely for cooking stews, all framed by large open windows that would once have offered a view of the gardens, but now are simply caked with brown grime. On the far right wall, another door with a smaller keyhole than those in the chapel. Past the benches, in the lower right corner of the room, a shallow staircase leads down to another door with a small keyhole.*

The staircase leads down to the Cellar. The door is locked with a DC of 14 (3rd Edition) or 12 (5th Edition). Point out to a rogue picking it that though this technically is a better quality lock, it feels damaged as they work on it, like previous picking attempts have damaged the innards. This is just a bit of environmental storytelling. The players will later find a damaged homemade lockpick in Mariko's chamber, hinting at how she and Tomori were able to sneak into the Cellar.

The doors can be forced open with a DC 16 Strength check (3rd Edition) or DC 14 Athletics check (5th Edition).

The door on the right wall leads to the pantry. The rogue can pick this with a DC of 18 (3rd Edition) or 14 (5th Edition) or it can be forced open with a DC 16 Strength check (3rd Edition) or DC 18 Athletics check (5th Edition).

The door leading out to the Gardens is not locked but the deadbolt is rusted. It takes a DC 20 Strength check to force open in 3rd Edition or a DC 18 Athletics check in 5th. If the party lubricate the mechanism somehow, give them a +2 circumstance bonus in 3rd Edition, or advantage in 5th Edition until the door is opened. Once dealt with, assume the mechanism can be closed again without effort.

The other thing of note in here is the gaki of Brother Hodabi. If the players entered the monastery through the Chapel, this will likely be the first gaki they see.

*A figure comes walking out of the door on the rightmost wall. He doesn't open the door, simply passes through it, materialising in front of your eyes like a ghost. His form is fuzzy and indistinct but not fully incorporeal. There's a tangibility to him that's unnerving, but near the floor, his limbs give way to mist, having no feet on the end of them. He doesn't seem to respond to your presence, simply drifts over towards the kitchen where he noiselessly begins pantomiming the motions of preparing food. Food itself seems to blink in and out of existence like it has a partial memory of its own. As his palm passes the table, a ghostly ball of dough is there one moment, gone the next. Spectral fire and smoke occasionally appear around the cauldron, though with no heat or scent to them. The figure itself has no obvious distinguishing features and its hard to judge his height, weight, race or age, like a monk drawn by a child.*

If the players gain access to the pantry, they can observe that Brother Hodabi enters the



pantry from time to time, collecting an item of food and returning to the kitchen. Any player making a Spot check DC 18 (3rd Edition) or Perception DC 16 (5th Edition) can notice that he avoids one particular shelf, giving it a wide berth as he passes. The only thing on this shelf that is still intact is a ceramic tub of salt with a wax seal. This item will be needed in the banishment ritual. The only other things on the shelves are various rotted foodstuffs, long past the stage of even being mouldy, they are now simply residues, powders and stains.

If anyone suggests that they observe Hodabi for a long period, 10 minutes or more or making it clear they intend to watch the loop to see where it starts and begins, that kind of thing, they can observe the salt thing without a check even if they previously failed. Additionally, they should note that at the very end of his loop, Brother Hodabi bends down and does something in the very far corner of the pantry. When the players investigate, they find a loose brick and behind it is Brother Hodabi's journal.

This brick can also be found without observing the gaki with a Search check DC 24 (3rd Edition) or Investigation DC 18 (5th Edition).

The brick is easy to remove but the player will have to insert their hand to reach for the journal hidden within. There is a mousetrap inside, as a deterrent. This is a simple nonmagical trap that allows a Reflex save to avoid, DC 16 in 3rd Edition, or a Dexterity save DC 15 in 5th Edition.

On a failure, the player takes 1d4 damage (3rd Edition) or has disadvantage on Dexterity based checks for 10 minutes (5th Edition). On success, they avoid the trap.

Should a player think to check for traps, they can see it if they have sufficient light source (or darkvision) and pass a DC 18 Search (3rd Edition) or DC 16 Investigate (5th Edition).

### **Brother Hodabi's journal:**

*This journal is paper bound in leather and still holds faint writings within. Some of the symbols are nonsensical, while others are clearly an older form of Common, similar enough to that which you speak now but with some uncommon spellings. As you flick through the pages, a few of the more recent entries stand out.*

*#1 - You don't recognise the dating system the book uses, but this entry reads:  
I have done a terrible thing. My meddlings have left us too short on supplies to assist the request from Nuthaven. My tracks are covered and the numbers should seem ok to the casual observer, but I fear what will come to light if someone looks too deeply into them. I feel bad to have denied the request, but how could I foresee such troubles? No matter. What is done, is done. I will try to reduce my dippings into the supplies.*

*#2 - A later entry seems to follow this up:  
My shame knows no bounds. The winter was harsh for the people at Nuthaven and five deaths occurred due to the lack of food. I cannot help but feel partially responsible. I promised myself I would curb my appetite and yet, I find myself weak in the face of the cravings. I have lit candles for the fallen each morning. I cannot undo what I have done, so my prayers are all that remains.*

A DC 14 Decipher Script (3rd Edition) or DC 13 Intelligence Deception (5th Edition) reveals that the nonsensical symbols are some form of accounting shorthand that show that whoever owned this journal was using formulae to slowly but believably reduce the figures over time, essentially stealing food from the stores on a long term basis. Smart players may realise that this indicates that this gaki is the one who lit the ghostly candles in the Chapel. The fact that they linger is a clue as to their importance to this ritual. If the players do not connect the dots themselves, see the section for Brother Hodabi for a way to deliver this info to them once they have all the clues. At this point, nothing here has given them a name for this gaki. There is nothing else of import to find in the Kitchen, but feel

free to give it some set dressing if you think it's too spartan.

Award 150 xp (3rd Edition) or 90 xp (5th Edition) for acquiring Brother Hodabi's journal.

One final note. Anyone using Prestidigitation to clean the windows will be able to see outside. Give them a brief description of the Gardens beyond like so:

*Through the clean section you can see the gardens out back. While they may have been beautiful when kept well, they have now run wild and are a tangled mess with only hints of pots and planters buried beneath the undergrowth. Another gaki is just visible, walking through the mess away from the monastery. There appears to be some collapsed wooden structures out there but it's hard to tell what they are from this distance.*

## **The Cellar**

This section assumes the players are entering through the doors. If instead they have entered through the hole from outside, tailor this description accordingly so they they drop in through the hole first. Note that if entering from outside, the lock will need to be picked or the door broken down using the DCs from the previous section in order to progress to the Kitchen.

*With the doors open, you can see beyond what would have been an impressive cellar, with strong beams of timber bracing the roof. Most of the barrels are still standing as are some bottle racks, still holding clay bottles. Before you can explore further, you notice two stripy creatures charging out from under the shelves... Roll for initiative.*

For 3rd Edition, the creatures are a Dire Badger and a Badger, pages 62 and 268 respectively of the Monster Manual, an EL 3 encounter. If you have five players, use two Dire Badgers for EL 4.

For 5th Edition, use the Giant Badger from page 323 of the Monster Manual for both creatures, with the following changes for Badger 1 (Female):

Increase AC to 12.

Increase HP to 33.

Increase to hit to +5.

Increase Bite damage to 1d6+4 and Claw damage to 2d4+2.

And Badger 2 (Male):

Increase AC to 12.

Increase HP to 25.

Increase to hit to +4.

Increase Bite damage to 1d6+2.

This should make it fairly balanced, but if they're dishing out too much damage feel free to fudge a roll, or vice versa if they're going down too easy. Buff or nerf this slightly in terms of HP and damage output for 3 or 5 players. I'd recommend 8hp either side and a -1 or +1 to hit, but as always, wing it as best you can.

These are the badgers that dug the tunnel through from the outside and they have been living here. If killed, they will rise as undead zombie badgers 24 hours later, assuming the gaki have not been banished by then. It is unlikely the players will still be here then but if they are, in 3rd Edition apply the zombie template from the MM, and for 5th Edition just buff their HP a little and give them Undead Fortitude and Poison Immunity.

When the players resume their investigation of the Cellar they discover that the large barrels are completely empty. The same is true for most of the ceramic bottles, though three appear to still hold liquid, sealed with a decent quality cork that seems to have held.

If unopened, they are worth 75gp each. If opened, they no longer hold the value but do contain delicious cherry wine that is so nice, anyone drinking from it gains a +1 morale bonus on their next Fortitude saving throw in 3rd Edition or advantage on their next Constitution save in 5th Edition. In this regard, each bottle contains 4 portions, drinking less than that is insufficient to receive the bonus. Each PC can only benefit from this bonus once per day.

On a shelf near the door is an earthenware drum containing lantern oil. The seal is intact and the oil is still inside though it has gone rancid. It can be burned in a lantern for up to 12 hours, though it gives off an unpleasant smell. There are various lanterns hanging around the monastery so if the players didn't bring their own, they can easily source one each.

There are two other features of note here.

One is that, provided the players have light, there is a dark brown stain on the floor to the left hand side, about halfway down, behind the barrels. This is all that remains of the bloodstain where the bodies of Tomori and Mariko fell.

The other is the remains of some rope tied over one of the central supporting beams. The ceiling here is fairly high and this is where Kasuo was hanged, being beneath the monastery and thus not hallowed ground, this is also where he was buried for his crimes. The rope has clearly been cut and it's up to you what skill you might allow the players to roll to know this is the remains of a noose. Perhaps consider your players' backgrounds and whether they might have had a run-in with such apparatus or not. It may become obvious when they see Kasuo's gaki.

For now, there is nothing else to find here, though this will serve as the site of one of the gaki rituals later.

## **The Gardens**

The Gardens are an overgrown mess. If your group has not yet glimpsed them through the Kitchen window, read the following when they gain access:

*While they may have been beautiful when kept well, they have now run wild and are a tangled mess with only hints of pots and planters buried beneath the undergrowth. Pottery shards poke out of the hard earth in places and the remains of a simple stone path are visible, though plants have pushed through the cracks until only a hint remains. Some wooden structures, partially collapsed are just visible across the mass and another gaki, this one looking distinctly female comes walking towards the monastery. She passes by you, sobbing despairingly, heading through the kitchen door.*

This is the gaki of Sister Mariko. Her patrol route carries her from the Beehives, through the Kitchen, across the Chapel, up the stairs to the Belltower and back again, sobbing all the while. If the players want to follow her and have access, they will see that when she reaches the tower, she will look out to the Beehives and turn around to go there and when she reaches the Beehives, she will look up towards the Belltower, to begin the cycle anew. She does not deviate from this path.

When the players decide they wish to check out the wooden structures:

*As you near the wooden structures you can see that they are the remains of Beehives. All but two are destroyed by age and even those still standing look like they will collapse in a stiff breeze. The remains of dark brown paint show what they might have looked like in their prime. A few ghostly bees still drift aimlessly too and from the Hives, dissipating as they move too far away. A gaki tends them, pulling ghostly honeycombs from the hives that disappear after a few seconds. Oddly, it looks as though the gaki has a noose around*

*its neck. Furthermore, to the left, previously obscured by the plant mass, you can see a stairway that looks like it leads down to a subterranean structure. The entrance is overgrown with roots, but you could hack your through if you so wished.*

The gaki is that of Brother Kasuo.

A Knowledge Nature DC 16 (3rd Edition) or Nature DC 14 (5th Edition) reveals that the brown paint is to help the hive retain warmth, common in cooler areas. It is likely that hives would be repainted white during the summer to deflect the heat.

A Search check DC 18 (3rd Edition) or Investigation DC 16 (5th Edition) reveals that within one hive is Kasuo's dagger with which he killed Mariko and Tomori (see gaki section). This will be needed for the ritual. If the group specifically say they touch a beehive, have the other one collapse. If they then choose to touch the remaining one, then that too collapses and they find the dagger without needing to roll. If the group piece together the clues later that Kasuo hid the murder weapon and was the beekeeper, then allow them to find the dagger without rolling. The dagger can be cleansed of its negative effects by forgiving/condemning Brother Kasuo.

### **Kasuo's Dagger**

*This +1 dagger is stained with old blood. It was clearly used and then stashed here without even taking the time to clean it, hinting at its nefarious purpose. It can be handled fine, but if a good aligned character makes an attack roll with it, they instead hit themselves for 1d4+1 (+ their Strength mod).*

*The handle is wrapped with dark leather in a criss cross pattern. The pommel has a segmented pattern, like a bulb of garlic. Small curved ram's horns serve as a crossguard and the blade itself is short and tapered.*

The players can hack away the roots leading to the Catacombs without a check, it simply takes time and a slashing weapon. If the party do not have a slashing weapon, there is a woodcutter's axe in Brother Fuju's room that will do the job or Brother Kasuo's dagger if they have it.

### **The Catacombs**

The Catacombs are dark and the players will need a light source or darkvision. The doors are locked and can be opened with the keys from the Abbot's room or be forced open with a DC 18 Strength check (3rd Edition) or DC 16 Athletics check (5th Edition) or picked open with Open Lock DC 20 (3rd Edition) or DC 18 Sleight of Hand (5th Edition).

*The catacombs are as you expect, essentially a tunnel, flanked on either side by stone loculi; shelves where bodies could be laid to rest. Some bones remain on those shelves and you can see the drainage holes on the loculi. Typically bones would be moved to the ossuary when decomposition was complete. The catacombs are small and take little time to explore. There is little of interest here. Just the loculi leading to a central ossuary that holds the sanctified bones of the monks. When you retrace your steps to leave the catacombs you notice there is a strongbox built into the wall near the entrance. It has a small keyhole.*

There is no easy way to force the strongbox open unless the players actually brought a crowbar, in which case allow a DC 22 Strength check or DC 20 Strength Athletics. The lock can be picked with Open Lock DC 22 (3rd Edition) or DC 20 Sleight of Hand (5th Edition).

*Inside the strongbox are a few meagre trinkets, mostly jewellery worth 100GP*

*collectively if cleaned up. Of more interest is a hunting horn, pale white and tipped in silver, it seems to have been the horn of a mountain goat. It is decorated with delicate carvings of snowflakes and feathers into which a dark blue dye has been expertly set.*

### **Horn of Feather Falling**

*This horn is pale white and decorated with delicate carvings of snowflakes and feathers into which a dark blue dye has been expertly set. When the horn is in your hand, you can blow it as an immediate action/a reaction to apply a feather fall effect to up to four targets within a 30ft radius of the wielder.*

*This effect functions twice per day and resets at dawn.*

*The feather fall is cast at 3rd level, lasting for 3 rounds or until touching the ground.*

If you're playing 5th Edition, be sure to run the horn as listed here, as if you use the 5th Edition Feather Fall, it will completely negate any threat during the Beacon Ritual as the players will have Feather Fall for ten rounds of combat.

Note that in 3rd Edition terms, this item is use activated, requiring no command word or spell completion. It requires intent to use so the horn can be used as a horn, and, if blown prior to identifying it, functions solely as a mundane horn. Using it does not provoke an AOO.

Allow your players a chance to identify this item as it will be of use to them in the ritual to cleanse Brother Fujū. Suggested skills would be Knowledge (Arcana), Knowledge (History), Knowledge (Local) or Bardic Knowledge as appropriate for edition, flavouring this as recognising the magic, or the horn's utility by mountain hunters in the area, etc. You might have to adjust the DC based on your party composition and skill investment. I'd recommend a minimum 75% success chance, essentially DC 6 + skill ranks/proficiency + Intelligence modifier. If you prefer to fail forward, you can even let everyone except the paladin roll first and if they all fail, tell the paladin he has seen one of these for sale before in the market, an item commonly used by mountain hunters in this region, and describe its effect. That way they are guaranteed to know its use.

### **Upper Floor**

The door on the right hand side of the Chapel leads upstairs to the upper floor. A hallway runs the length of the outer wall (above the kitchen), branching into two halls running the length of the monastery and terminating in the Belltower access door. On either side, these halls lead to the monk's Cells, forty in total. Beyond those are the Room of Records, and the Abbot's study and Cell.

The Cells have nothing to indicate who they belong to beyond the seeded clues. They are all very similar, spartan quarters with a bed, cupboard, drawers and small writing desk.

### **Hodabi's Cell**

Cell number 29 is Brother Hodabi's cell. While it is visually similar to the other cells, searching thoroughly reveals the letter from Nuthaven, addressed to Brother Hodabi, stashed behind the drawers. This is a DC 18 Search check in 3rd Edition or DC 14 Investigation in 5th Edition. 3rd Edition players will likely take 20 to find this automatically. Anyone specifying they look behind the drawers can also pass this automatically.

### **Letter from Nuthaven**

*It is with heavy heart that I find I have to write to you to request aid in this most harshest of winters. Our final harvest was depleted due to the early frosts and some of our stored*

*grain has been lost to a rare fungus that thrived in the sudden cold snap. Even if we ration ourselves strictly, I fear we will not all see the season through. I humbly request you might find it within your means to assist us, as loyal subjects of (insert deity), by providing us with the following from your stores:*

(a short list of various cereals, pulses and grains follows with amounts you are not familiar with)

*Thank you in advance for your assistance.*

*Tamaril, Elder of Nuthaven*

Award the players 50 xp each (3rd Edition) or 30 xp each (5th Edition) for finding this letter.

Additionally, as the players go to leave, they notice that on the back of the door, on a small hook, is a keyring with three keys. These open the door to the Kitchen, the door to the Cellar and the door to the Pantry.

### **Kasuo's Cell**

Cell number 7 belonged to Kasuo as can be evidenced by finding his journal hidden within. Players may note that the arrival record shows that Mariko was given the cell opposite; number 8.

Kasuo's journal is wedged behind the cupboard and much like Hodabi's cell, can be found with a DC 18 Search check in 3rd Edition or DC 14 Investigation in 5th Edition. Most of the journal is bland stuff, detailing minor parts of his life in the monastery but mostly focusing in his love of the bees and the gardens, including many observations and diagrams about bee behaviour. Beehaviour, if you will.

One entry stands out as being distinctly different in tone to the rest of these observances. The dating system is not one the players are familiar with, but the entry reads:

*I fear my suspicions have come true. Mariko is no longer faithful to me. The divide between us has been growing. She is less free with her feelings and her words. I find it more difficult to catch her eye and she is often flustered or distracted. I do not want to believe such a thing is true, but I fear it may be even worse than I had first considered. I could not think who among the monks would dare violate our marital bond. They are all so devout. I realise that it is far more likely to be an outsider, someone who does not belong here, one who has always harboured a secret jealousy against me. I pray it is not true. That my sense is clouded and I am mistaken. But I can see only one culprit in my nightmares. My brother through blood, not through faith. Whether this makes the betrayal worse or not, I cannot decide. I must confront them, tonight. I think I know where they have been meeting.*

Note that Kasuo does not name Tomori here. The group will need to note the relationship in the Arrival Records. Award the players 50 xp each (3rd Edition) or 30 xp each (5th Edition) for finding the journal.

### **Mariko's Cell**

Cell number 8 belonged to Mariko, though there is nothing to really evidence this. The only thing to be found here is a couple of makeshift lockpicks hidden inside the remains of the mattress. They are badly damaged and crudely made, likely formed from hair clips. Any competent rogue can recognise that they are the work of an amateur.

The lockpicks can be found with a DC 22 Search check in 3rd Edition or DC 17 Investigation in 5th Edition. These cannot be found automatically. Award 150 xp (3rd Edition) or 90 xp (5th Edition) to each member of the group if these are found.

If the party has a rogue who already noted the damage to the lock on the Cellar, give them some time to draw that connection themselves, but feel free to mention it if they head to the Cellar to perform the ritual without having noted the link. A simple:

*Seeing the Cellar door again suddenly slots the pieces into place for you. The lockpicks you found in Mariko's room. She's the one who damaged the lock, sneaking in here after hours to meet clandestinely with Tomori.*

### **Tomori's Cell**

Cell number 19 belonged to Tomori, though the presence of Mariko's haircomb might throw the party off at first. It is easily found in the bottom drawer automatically if mentioned, otherwise a simple Search DC 12 (3rd Edition) or Investigation DC 10 (5th Edition) turns it up.

### **Mariko's Haircomb**

*A simple haircomb made of lacquered wood. The upper portion resembles a fox with nine tails. The carving is simple, but neatly done.*

Value: 50gp.

### **Fuju's Cell**

Cell number 22 belonged to Fuju. Inside, propped behind the door, is a woodcutter's axe. It was clearly well maintained and has remained functional. It should be found automatically.

Also hidden in this room is a pouch containing dried medicinal herbs. This can be found wedged underneath a drawer. This takes a Search DC 20 (3rd Edition) or Investigation DC 15 (5th Edition). Simply saying they search the drawers is not enough to find this automatically.

The herbs can be identified with a suitable skill; Knowledge Nature, Heal/Medicine, Survival, or even Craft (Alchemy). Use a DC of 18 for 3rd Edition or 15 for 5th Edition. The Detect Poison spell would also work here.

The herbs are a mixture of Henbane, Mandrake, Moonflower and Belladonna, together a potent hallucinogenic narcotic substance often called Witchflight due to the sensations it gives, bestowing a dreamlike state where the user feels as though they are flying. They are usually smoked though can be eaten for a delayed experience. The after effects involve a deep lethargy which is difficult to shake.

The stats presented here are for 3rd Edition. There is no system in place for 5th Edition so simply describe the effect if anyone eats or smokes them. Note that the Alchemy DC listed here is for creation, not identification. The pouch contains 12 doses. The party could potentially sell the drugs for 120gp, but doing so is considered an evil act and is likely an issue for the paladin. I mention only in case an enterprising rogue can manage to spirit them away.

### **Witchflight (Drug)**

Type: Inhaled DC 16 / Ingested DC 16

Alchemy DC: 12

Initial Effect: 1d2 Wisdom damage

Secondary Effect: +2 morale bonus on Strength checks for 2 hours

Side Effects: The user is sluggish, as though mildly inebriated, while under the effects, slurring their words and feeling floaty. They have difficulty balancing or performing complex tasks, though regular users may still be able to largely function. They do however feel stronger and users will often find themselves performing better in strength related activities such as manual labour. These effects last approximately 2 hours after which the

user is fatigued. A second dose does not negate this fatigue. Ingesting the drug delays the initial effect by 20 minutes.

Overdose: None

Addiction rating: Low

Award the players 150 xp each (3rd Edition) or 90 xp each (5th Edition) for finding these herbs.

### **Room of Records**

The Room of Records is not quite as grandiose as its name suggests but it is an important room for multiple clues.

*This room has a plaque on the wall outside; a wedge of lacquered wood into which someone has burned neat letters. It reads "Room of Records". Pushing the door open you find a somewhat chaotic archive. It looks like there was a plan, initially, and it rapidly grew out of hand. The walls are dominated by large pigeonhole (cubbyhole) shelving and scroll racks with more free standing units dividing the room. The scroll racks are crammed full of scrolls, some in sheaths, some simply tied with string, many of which are mouldering and look fragile. The smell of mildew pervades as you brush past them. The pigeonholes hold more scrolls as well as many books; sheaves of paper or in some cases vellum, mostly bound in wood but a few look like leather. Some are in better condition than others. It seems like the room is divided into sections, though there doesn't seem to be any rhyme or reason beyond that. It would take days if not weeks to sort through all of this. There could be useful information here if you had any idea where to begin looking. For now, you note the sections. Religious Treatises, Burial Records, Correspondence, Historical Records, Accounts, Reference Guides. On the left of the far wall is a map, framed behind glass. It seems remarkably intact and likely has some historical value.*

Reference Guides is a bit vague and if the party check that section, they simply find that it contains practical guides to skills like Cooking, Gardening, Farming, Animal Husbandry, Woodwork, etc. They seem to be compilations by various monks, used to teach others the collective knowledge gained over decades. Once the party have some idea what they are looking for, they will find useful records here to assist them.

**Duty Roster** - Any players wondering if there might be a list of monks who were dwelling here or such can search the Accounts section and turn up the most recent duty roster. No roll is necessary here as this is a key item that the players need in order to solve the adventure.

*Quickly thumbing through the Accounts section, you focus on what you hope are the more recent documents. You soon find what you think is a Duty Roster for the monastery. It's largely intact and lists the following:*

*Steward - Brother Meiji*

*Morning Prayers - Brother Wataru*

*Kitchener/Cellarer - Brother Hodabi*

*Mason - Brother Hajime*

*Bellringer - Brother Tomori*

*Infirmarer - Brother Ryobe*

*Chamberlain - Brother Akihiro*

*Beekeeper - Brother Kasuo*

*Groundsman - Brother Anshi*



*Archivist - Brother Sanjiro*  
*Carpenter/Cooper - Brother Benkei*  
*Lumberjack/Beacon Keeper - Brother Fujū*  
*Butcher/Tanner - Brother Kenji*

*The document goes on to specify the kinds of duties each role is expected to fulfil, most of which are fairly obvious.*

(I presume these are all fairly familiar terms. The only ones players might not know are the Steward who is essentially the Treasurer, handling the Monastery's finances, and the Chamberlain who basically handles laundry, clothing maintenance, bedding, that sort of thing. A tanner processes animal hides, a cooper makes barrels. If the players get smart and question other roles they think should be there simply state that it looks like there might have been a little more to the document but the edges have mildewed and decayed and this is all that remains legible. If they start asking where's the infirmary or the woodwork shop or the stables, well at that point just point out there are collapsed structures outside the monastery proper that probably once served these purposes. You can even sow those seeds when you describe the exterior if you envisage this coming up.

**Arrivals Ledger** - Any players seeking out the arrivals record with a mind to cross reference any of the names from the duty roster find something interesting.

*After a few moments flicking through arrivals records checking names, you do notice two things of interest.*

*Firstly, you find the name Kasuo Tanaka, presumably the Kasuo listed as the Beekeeper. It seems he arrived at the same time as Mariko Tanaka and the record notes they were assigned Cells opposite one another.*

*Secondly, a year later, you see an entry for Tomori Tanaka. A co-incidence? Or is there something linking these three?*

**Burial Record** - Players checking the burial records after learning about the men from Icebrook can find an entry about them.

*It's easy enough now to locate the entry about the men from Icebrook. The records confirm that six men were interred in the Catacombs while the villagers sought safety in the monastery. A note has been made in the margin, in the Abbot's handwriting, which says the wife of one of the deceased wanted her husband to rest with his hunting horn. The Abbot notes the horn was quite valuable, so after the villagers left, he transferred it to a lockbox in the Catacombs for safekeeping.*

*The names of the deceased are listed:*

*Karr Frostblood*  
*Throm Icewind*  
*Mina Snowstorm*  
*Egrin Hoarfrost*  
*Garp Chilltouched*  
*Mung Coldbones*

Award players 50 xp (3rd Edition ) or 30 xp (5th Edition) for finding the Burial Record.

**Valuable Map** - This map shows the region as it once was and is probably worth around 100gp to the right scholar. However, in order to secure it, the players will need to avoid the trap...

**Floor Trap** - The floor in front of the map is rotten through. Anyone heading close to the map (suggesting an intent to touch it, pick it up, look at it closely, etc) steps on this floor. Reflex save DC 16 (3rd Edition), Dexterity save DC 13 (5th Edition), damage is 2d6

bludgeoning on a failed save, nothing on a success. A Rogue (or other 3rd Edition class with Trapfinding such as a Scout) should get a passive check to spot the trap if they don't actively search.

For 3rd Edition, that's a 10 + their Spot total against DC 16.

For 5th Edition, they spot it if their Passive Perception is 14 or higher.

It is possible for multiple people to bumrush the map and fall into the trap. Anyone who actually does fail their save lands in the entryway to the monastery.

### **Abbot's Study**

To the left of the Room of Records is the Abbot's study.

*This room has three large tables in, one offset at the far end of the room. You suspect this was the office of the Abbot. He would have likely sat at the lone table with the others serving as stations for the Steward or for novices being taught by the Abbot, or copying texts. Ink pots around the room seem to all be long dried up. One wall has shelves of books, all of which are in poor condition with faded ink and crumbling pages. The lid of the Abbot's writing desk can be lifted and reveals a letter from Nuthaven and a partially completed response.*

### **Letter from Nuthaven #2**

*Father Abbot*

*I apologise for having to bypass your Kitchener and address this to you directly. As I hope you are aware, we recently had cause to petition you for aid during this unseasonal winter past. I was saddened to receive a missive denying that request. It is not like the monastery to find itself so underprepared. In the past, the monastery has been a valuable source of aid for villagers in the area. Unfortunately, this has led to a substantial cost for our village and we have laid to rest the following poor souls:*

*Johann Belegor*

*Tuomas Renpapi*

*Granville Mahoki*

*Reshi Tonga*

*Wells Coprick*

*I ask that you say a prayer for our fallen.*

*Tamaril, Elder of Nuthaven*

### **Letter to Nuthaven**

*Elder Tamaril*

*I can only express my sorrow and offer our apologies that our stores were insufficient to provide aid to your village this year. I have looked into the records and can confirm we did not have surplus to spare. Quite how this oversight occurred I know not, but I will ensure we make better preparations in future. Your dead are in our hearts and I will ensure sufficient prayers are sent along with their souls. I hope...*

### **Abbot's Cell**

*The Abbot's bedroom is not much different from the other monk's cells. It's a little larger and has a larger, sturdier writing desk, a bookshelf and even a small rack for scrolls. The books have long since surrendered to the elements, but one scroll remains intact in its lacquered wooden case.*

### **Abbot's Scroll**

*It is not often as Abbot that I have to record something quite so tragic. Yesterday, on the fourth day of the third week of the year of Koriji, Brother Fuju took his own life. It is my*

*belief that he chose this act out of overwhelming grief after learning of the consequences of his failure to maintain the beacon light two weeks gone. The villagers of Icebrook managed to make their way to the monastery, to shelter from the incoming storm, but Brother Fujū's lapse in vigilance led to six of their number perishing. We managed to recover the bodies when the storm passed and have interred them in the Catacombs. Brother Fujū's remorse was severe and I cannot help but feel like I have failed to offer him sufficient support in the wake of his mistake.*

*I, Abbot Shinji, officially record the death of Brother Fujū and have interred his body in the Catacombs. I hope this will serve as a cautionary note, for myself and for future Abbots.*

Anyone searching the drawers finds a set of five keys. These open the door to the upper floor, the door to the Kitchen, the door to the Cellar, the main monastery doors and the lockbox in the Catacombs.

## **Belltower**

*The door to the Belltower is not locked. It opens onto a spiral stone staircase that leads up, the tower widening as it goes. As you climb, suddenly a gaki comes from below you, passing through the group as it ascends the stairs.*

*At the top of the stairs are the ropes for the monastery's three small bells, more than sufficient to ring out across the entire monastery and its environs. The sequence these were rung in would likely signal to the monks to assemble in the chapel for prayer, or ring out a warning perhaps. The ropes are different colours, red, blue and yellow. The gaki you saw before has one hand on the red rope, while he peers distractedly out of the window.*

*In the ceiling, a hatch leads further up the tower. A ladder bolted to the wall leads up to the hatch. The fittings are rusty but the wood seems sturdy enough. The cool wind blows through the louvres covering the tall thin windows. A long lidded chest along one wall appears to hold firewood logs, though few remain.*

The bells still function, at least until Brother Tomori is condemned, in which case one of them cracks. Louvres are the angled slats that fill the windows. Players looking out can see that the tower has a decent view of the monastery grounds, particularly the garden. If they specifically try to look where Tomori was looking, they do indeed see the gardens, and note Mariko's gaki wandering towards the Beehives. IF players linger, Tomori's gaki will eventually descend back down the stairs, disappearing as he exits the tower door. Players searching the Belltower for anything hidden will turn up Tomori's Journal. No check is required as this is mandatory to perform the ritual and this will hopefully telegraph as much to the players.

*This journal is written in poor handwriting with nothing to indicate who it belongs to. It seems to be the work of a troubled man, documenting his reasons for coming to the monastery, which include avoiding repercussions for both debts incurred and powerful men slighted. The author indicates that his older brother was already accepted here, which was why he chose this place as a safe haven, relying on his brother to vouch for him. Despite this, it seems clear he harbours resentment to his brother. The journal details jealous thoughts and it's clear the younger brother bears the older a grudge, oft complaining of how much easier the elder's life is, how easily he is respected by his peers and how the younger brother struggles by comparison. The book takes a darker turn as it notes a growing desire for his elder brother's wife as he spies on them from the Belltower. As the entries continue, it becomes clear that the younger brother has seduced the wife of the elder brother, Mariko, he names her, and the two are having an illicit*

*affair. There are some sordid details of their dalliances in the cellar after lights out and then an unexpected change of tone. The brother notes Mariko is not happy with her husband, has grown disillusioned with him. What's more, the author expresses that the desire to simply hurt his brother has waned, and he finds himself developing real feelings for Mariko that she seems to return. The last entry considers the value in leaving the monastery with Mariko, to try and forge a new life together in one of the neighbouring villages, but the author expresses regret that he lacks real practical skills, bellringing aside.*

The players should be able to piece together that the author of this journal is Brother Tomori and that his brother is Brother Kasuo.

The hatch above leads to the Beacon platform. It is stiff and unyielding at first, requiring a Strength check DC 13 (3rd Edition) or Athletics DC 14 (5th Edition) to open. Sadly, it is also trapped. Shoving the hatch open dislodges the fungus growing above, releasing poisonous spores.

The unlucky shover can make a Fortitude save DC 15 (3rd Edition) or Constitution save DC 14 (5th Edition).

On a fail, the character takes 1 initial point of Constitution damage, with another point of Constitution damage on the secondary save (3rd Edition) or is poisoned for 1d4 x 10 minutes (5th Edition).

As the "trap" is on the other side of the hatch, players do not get a passive check to spot it. This is considered poison in both editions for racial bonuses against such. It is an inhaled poison and while you cannot avoid it simply by holding your breath, a character that does not breathe, such as a Warforged, is effectively immune.

The ladder is actually sturdy and will hold out as the players ascend to the Beacon platform.

### **Beacon Platform**

*The hatch opens onto the beacon platform, a 30ft by 30 ft square topping to the tower. Some of the side crenellations have toppled to the ground below but the platform itself feels fairly stable. The central 10ft by 10ft square is the beacon, a cast iron encasement which can be loaded with firewood. If fed regularly, this beacon would burn bright at night time, and would have been visible over the treetops. Another gaki is visible, huddled up in the corner, seemingly asleep.*

This is the location of the ritual to cleanse Brother Fujū. To light the beacon the group will need to acquire firewood from the neighbouring woodland. It's up to you how to handle this. I think they should be able to do this without a check if they have Brother Fujū's axe (or an axe-like weapon). Otherwise, Strength/Athletics checks with a sword-like weapon or similar blade. If the party do not have a suitable tool they will need to find Fujū's Axe in his room. To initiate the blaze the players will need either a flint and steel or a suitable spell that can actually light something on fire (Prestidigitation is usually a good go-to). If they really don't have anything, then spawn a spare flint and tinder in the firewood bin downstairs. Lighting the beacon with flint and steel is a full round action that draws an AOO. You 5th Edition guys are just gonna have to lump it, it takes your action and your move action to light the beacon and draws an AOO from an adjacent enemy. I know 5e usually doesn't work that way, so let your players know in advance so that they can prepare for these special circumstances.

Lighting it with a spell (or spell-like ability) follows the normal rules for casting that spell, with the action economy and AOO as normal for your edition.

The gaki of Brother Fujū will not respond to any actions until the beacon is lit.

## **Gaki #1: Hodabi**

Brother Hodabi was an overweight and greedy monk in life, though he appears as indistinct as the other gaki. The players will likely see him for the first time patrolling between the Kitchens and the Pantry as though fetching and preparing food.

Hodabi's sin is that he had been eating into the monks' food stores, falsifying the inventory records to hide his gluttony. While this alone is hardly the crime of the century, the players will also find evidence that Hodabi denied a request for aid from a nearby village who were suffering a food shortage during an extreme winter, making the situation out to be even worse for the monks than it actually was. When it came to light later that five people had starved in the village as a consequence of his actions, Hodabi wrote of his remorse in his journal but notes his seeming inability to mend his ways.

The players should find the following clues to identify Hodabi:

- A duty roster in the Room of Records naming Brother Hodabi as the Kitchen Steward, listing his responsibilities as meal preparation and manager of the stores.
- A letter in Hodabi's room which is a plea from the people living in Nuthaven, requesting food from the surplus.
- A letter in the Abbot's study which is a follow-up from Nuthaven, listing five people who perished due to the lack of food. A partially written response indicates that the Abbot has checked the records and confirms that Brother Hodabi was right that the monks could not spare the food.
- Brother Hodabi's journal, hidden in the Pantry, which expresses his guilt after being confronted by, and lying to, The Abbot and the fact that he has lit votive candles in remembrance of the dead villagers.

Observing Hodabi should allow the players to note that he:

- Patrols between the Pantry and Kitchen as though preparing meals.
- Avoids the tub of salt in the pantry.
- On rare occasions, accesses the loose brick behind which his journal is hidden along with the records showing the real and falsified figures.

The ritual to deal with Hodabi is to lure him to the votive candle stand which the players can do by presenting any food item. If the players are struggling to figure this out, allow them an easy check to put the information in their clues together. You can allow the paladin to roll, or simply explain that he would know the right words as part of his calling, such as:

*Now that you have gathered the clues and identified Brother Hodabi and his crime, you think you have an idea of how to settle his spirit. If you can lure him to the site where he expresses his guilt, you can begin a ritual in which you condemn or forgive him for his crime.*

From there you can explain as the DM the precise action the paladin will need to take in combat.

Once at the site of his guilt, the ritual can begin. The paladin will need to recite the following.

"Brother Hodabi. I, (insert name), paladin of (insert deity), forgive/condemn you for indirectly causing the death of (Villager 1) due to your gluttonous behaviour."

The point is, the paladin will need to expend his standard action each turn, clearly reciting the words and channelling his faith into them.

Saying Hodabi's name while he is present is essentially the trigger for combat and players

should roll initiative and act accordingly. Hodabi acts on initiative count 10.

On Hodabi's turn, he will wail in despair and attempt to flee. If he passes through a door or window, he will de-spawn and reappear in the Pantry, resuming his patrolling.

A player can prevent his escape by standing in front of a door or window and preparing an action to throw salt at him as he approaches. Hodabi might make a successful escape the first time, so at that point, consider explaining that the salt might prevent his escape if the players haven't cottoned on when he makes his second escape. Players can reattempt the ritual as many times as they want though the chip damage from his aura might prove wearying.

After five rounds, the Paladin will have recited the names of all five villagers and Brother Hodabi will be forgiven or condemned as appropriate.

Hodabi doesn't have a full set of combat stats as, like all gaki, if attacked he will dissipate upon taking damage, except during the ritual where he essentially has infinite health. The players do not need to make an attack roll to hit him with the salt, they merely need to ready an action to prevent his escape. When a player hits Hodabi with their readied salt action, Hodabi will follow up by attacking them (+7 to hit, 1d6 necrotic damage) before returning to the votive stand.

On the fourth and fifth rounds of combat Hodabi will cease trying to flee and will instead attack the paladin in his desperation.

With three players lower this to 1d4 damage and have Hodabi make two escape attempts before attacking the paladin for three turns.

Hodabi has an Aura of Starvation when the ritual begins that applies 2 necrotic damage to anyone within 30ft of him at the start of their turn. In 3.5e this is an extraordinary ability. If you have only 3 players, lower this to 1 point of damage.

If a player pulls out a potion at any point, Hodabi will teleport to them and eat it, as an immediate action (3rd edition, supernatural ability) or a Legendary (re)action (5e). This functions three times per day in either case.

Upon successfully completing the ritual, regardless of whether Hodabi was condemned or forgiven, describe his passing in suitable fashion and as he disappears in a burst of light, the players are all healed for 2d8+5 damage. Award the players 150 xp (3rd Edition) or 90 xp (5th Edition).

Note that if the ritual is disturbed due to Hodabi escaping, it must be begun from the start again. However, if the paladin simply needs to pause his recital (for example, to use lay on hands) he can resume on the following turn.

### **Gaki #2: Kasuo, Gaki #3: Tomori, Gaki #4: Mariko**

This trio of gaki find their fates intertwined. Kasuo and Mariko were husband and wife at the monastery and Tomori was Kasuo's younger brother, who arrived a year later than the couple. Tomori was resentful of his older brother in life, upset by Kasuo's popularity, station, wife and general happiness. From the Belltower, he would witness the couple walking happily through the gardens and plotted his scheme to wound his brother as he wallowed in his jealousy. He chatted with Mariko and learned that she was growing disillusioned with Kasuo. He sought to seduce her, but somewhere during their affair, Tomori found himself developing genuine feelings for Mariko, who seemed to return them. The pair were eventually caught, mid-canoodle, in the cellar, where Kasuo killed the pair of them. He hid the murder weapon in the Beehives he tended. After finding the bodies, the monks held a trial for Kasuo, realising he could be the only perpetrator despite the lack of murder weapon. He was ultimately found guilty and hanged. As the ground around the temple is sacred, he was buried beneath the wine cellar.

The players should find the following clues to identify these gaki:

- A duty roster in the Room of Records, listing Kasuo as the beekeeper.
- Brother Kasuo, noose hanging from his neck as he tends the Beehives.
- A journal in Kasuo's room that mostly documents the bees, but also has a page where he has noted his suspicions of the pair and his plans to confront Tomori.
- Brother Tomori, climbing the stairs of the Belltower, where he pantomimes ringing the bells.
- Sister Mariko, the sole female gaki, seen sobbing as she wanders from Tomori's room to the Beehives and back again.
- A journal hidden in the Belltower that details Tomori's plan and his change of heart towards Mariko.
- A ledger detailing arrivals that can be found in the Room of Records. It lists Kasuo and Mariko as arriving together as Kasuo and Mariko Tanaka. Tomori arrives a year later and is listed as Tomori Tanaka.
- A haircomb, belonging to Mariko, hidden in Tomori's room.
- The murder weapon, a dagger hidden in one of the remaining standing Beehives.

The ritual to forgive or condemn this trio must take place at the site of the murder; in the cellar. All three gaki must be summoned here simultaneously by bringing the murder weapon (Kasuo), Haircomb (Mariko) and Tomori's journal (Tomori).

Have the ghosts apparate a few seconds after the players enter the room, immediately initiating combat as the brothers see other. It is up to the paladin which members of this love triangle are forgiven or condemned and in what order. Much like the previous ritual, the paladin must expend their action to clearly forgive/condemn each participant by name, specifying their crime. The precise wording can vary, but for the sake of example, consider the following:

"Brother Kasuo. I, (insert name), paladin of (insert deity), forgive/condemn you for the murder of Tomori and Mariko Tanaka."

"Brother Tomori. I, (insert name), paladin of (insert deity), forgive/condemn you for committing adultery with Mariko Tanaka."

"Sister Mariko. I, (insert name), paladin of (insert deity), forgive/condemn you for committing adultery with Tomori Tanaka (or betraying your marriage vows with Kasuo Tanaka)."

This can be done in any order, but as each spirit is dismissed, the others will grow stronger. This trio of Gaki act on initiative count 12.

In round 1 of combat, Kasuo will attempt to attack the paladin. He has a +6 to hit and deals 1d4+2 slashing damage.

Tomori will attempt to grapple the paladin with his shadow bellrope ability. This is spell-like ability useable once per round. A shadowy rope drops from the ceiling and attempts to grapple the paladin, who can make a reflex save DC 14 to avoid (3rd Edition) or a dex save DC 12 (5th Edition). If the paladin fails his save he is considered Grappled (3rd Edition) or Restrained (5th Edition). This can be removed by dealing any damage to Brother Tomori (AC 14). Smart players may realise they can try to force Tomori to draw an AOO as he casts so they can try to interrupt him. Tomori may not cast defensively and has a concentration check of +6 (3rd Edition) or a Constitution save of +4 (5th Edition).

Meanwhile, Mariko will attempt to silence the paladin with her Keep the Silence spell-like ability. Once per round, Mariko will cast this on the paladin, prompting a Will save DC 16 (3rd Edition) or a Wisdom save DC 13 (5th Edition). If successful, the paladin cannot perform their forgiveness/condemnation on their next turn (nor do anything else requiring verbal components). This lasts until the start of Mariko's next turn and is not broken dealing damage to her, though an AOO while casting can force a concentration check with

the same stats as Tomori.

When one of the gaki is successfully banished, the remaining two gain bonuses as follows. When a second gaki is banished, the last remaining gaki gains their bonus again.

Kasuo gains an extra attack. This is not an iterative attack and is made at his full attack bonus.

Tomori gains the ability to target an extra player with his shadow bellrope. He cannot target the paladin twice, it must be the paladin and another target (or two other targets if he's the last).

Mariko gains +1 to her save DC and +2 to her Concentration check/Constitution save.

When all three gaki are successfully banished, the players are healed for 3d8+6 hp. Award them 300 xp (3rd Edition) or 180 xp (5th Edition).

With three players, increase Tomori's DC by 1 instead of giving him extra grapples and reduce all of Mariko's DCs by 1.

With five players, increase Kasuo's attack by +1 and Tomori's DC by +1.

If the fight is going bad and the group need to break off, they can leave the Cellar to abandon the ritual and recoup. The group can resume the ritual by re-entering the cellar, but this results in a surprise round for the remaining gaki (3rd Edition) or disadvantage on initiative rolls for the players and advantage on initiative for the gaki (5th Edition).

After the ritual, Kasuo's dagger is cleansed, becoming a +1 dagger. Mariko's haircomb remains and is worth 50 gp if the players choose to keep it.

### **Gaki #5: Fujū**

Brother Fujū was tasked with maintaining the beacon atop the tower. The beacon was primarily used as a warning of incoming inclement weather, something the monks could predict thanks to the bees which would often swarm the hives when bad weather approached. The beacon would have been visible to multiple settlements in the area, the tree canopy being lower back then and the area around the monastery being less wild. Most importantly, it was visible to the village of Icebrook, nestled at the base of the mountain. The village would rely on this warning, as it was exposed to the worst of the weather and the villagers would usually seek refuge at the monastery, using the beacon to navigate to safety.

As the sun set and it became apparent bad weather was incoming, Brother Fujū lit the beacon, but it he soon realised that he had not kept the stockpile in the tower filled and it would be insufficient to keep the beacon going. He went to fetch more wood for the beacon from the main reserve in the gardens. After multiple trips up and down the tower he had prepared a supply of fuel to keep the beacon burning through the night. He settled down beside the beacon to tend it, ready to add fuel when the flames died down, only to fall asleep in the warmth it offered. When he awoke hours later, he quickly relit the beacon, but the damage had been done. It would later come to light that his negligence had caused the refugees to stray off course, leaving them struggling onwards through the storm. By the time the group managed to reorient themselves to the relit beacon and arrive at the monastery, the harsh weather had claimed six of their number. Their bodies were interred in the monastery's catacombs.

The players should find the following clues to identify this gaki:

- A report in the Abbot's room indicating that Brother Fujū took his own life when he learned the cost of his failures. This report is dated, giving the players a date to check the historical records to find the report at the end of this list.
- A duty roster in the Room of Records, indicating that Brother Fujū's job was woodcutter and that he was also in charge of lighting and maintaining the beacon.



- A woodcutter's axe in Brother Fujū's room.
- A hidden pouch of herbs in Brother Fujū's room that suggest he was using a mixture of Henbane, Mandrake, Moonflower and Belladonna, a potent hallucinogenic narcotic substance often called Witchflight due to the sensations it gives, likely the cause of his sleepiness.
- Records in the Room of Records noting that six men from Icebrook were interred in the Catacombs. A note from the Abbot says that one villager left her husband's horn with his body, but noting that it was valuable, the Abbot moved it to a lockbox within the catacombs for safekeeping after the villagers had left, to which he holds the only key.
- The gaki of Brother Fujū, asleep in the corner of the beacon room. He does not respond to efforts to awaken him and is impervious to attacks, magic, turning, etc while in this state.

The ritual to forgive/condemn Brother Fujū involves lighting the beacon. The players will need to source wood from the forest, for which they can use Brother Fujū's axe.

When they light the beacon, Brother Fujū will awake with a start and initiative can be rolled, with Brother Fujū acting on initiative count 15. Unsurprisingly, the paladin will need to recite a phrase to forgive or condemn Brother Fujū for the six listed names in a manner similar to the previous rituals.

"Brother Fujū. I, (insert name), paladin of (insert deity), forgive/condemn you for the death of (Villager 1) due to your negligence/drug use."

The hazards in this ritual are two-fold.

On Brother Fujū's turn he will use his modified Gust of Wind ability.

This functions like Gust of Wind in 3rd Edition, with the following changes:

- It has a 20% chance to blow the beacon fire out requiring a full round action to relight. This increases by 5% for each name spoken by the paladin.
- Instead of a line, it is a 15ft cone.
- Small and Medium creatures are knocked prone on a failed save (Fort DC 14). Small creatures are also pushed 5ft back on a failed save.
- Anyone rolling a natural 1 on their save is blown off the tower. A Reflex save, DC 14 allows them to grip hold of the edge and pull themselves up on their next turn (move action). A failure means they plummet from the tower, potentially taking 10d6 bludgeoning damage from the 100ft fall. However, if blown off the left or upper side, they will land on the monastery roof instead, taking 6d6 fall damage.
- The penalties to sound still apply, but this does not affect the paladin's recital which is magically fuelled and will remain clear and distinct as long as he isn't blown off the roof. It also does not affect the functionality of the Horn of Feather Falling.

In 5th Edition, this also functions like Gust of Wind. Make the above changes, but also the spell does not require concentration, and only functions as Fujū uses it, instead of lasting for a minute. The save is a Strength save DC 12. A natural 1 fails as above. Allow a Dexterity save DC 12 to cling on.

The other thing the party have to contend with is the elementals.

In 3rd Edition, at the start of round 1, roll initiative for a small air elemental and a small fire elemental (Page 96 and 99 of the MM).

This is an EL2 encounter but treat it as EL 3 due to the Gust of Wind.

For five players, add an extra fire elemental.

In 5th Edition, use two of these Fire Elementals from:

<https://dr-eigenvalue.github.io/bestiary/creature/small-fire-elemental>

Any active elementals will die the moment the ritual is completed.

In both cases, the goal is for it to feel like the threat of elementals is ever increasing, so you'll need to spawn more each round. The pacing is really up to you. Give your players a break if the going is hard and they're beat up, or keep spawning if they can handle it.

Ideally the dramatic conclusion is to ramp it up in the final two rounds so they finish the ritual with a handful of elementals present that all dissipate with Brother Fujū.

So how many elementals? Play it by ear depending how quickly they kill the ones they have and how injured they are, either maintaining parity or increasing the number. Don't worry about having too many elementals on the field, they're fairly weak and you can always fudge the rolls if needed. The dice purists might balk at that, so if you have the experience and think you can run this straight then I'd recommend spawning 1d3 extra elementals per round if your players manage to kill one or more in round 1. If they fail to kill during round 1, I'd use 1d4-1 instead to have a chance of spawning zero.

For cleaner initiative tracking, have new elementals spawn in at the top of the round and act on initiative count 13.

Go down a dice on both cases for 3 players, or a full 1d4 for 5 players.

Award full xp for the starting elementals and an additional 150 xp each (3rd Edition) or 90 xp each (5th Edition) for ritual completion.

As with the Hodabi ritual, the paladin can break off if necessary to heal or defend.

### **Gaki #6: Abbot Shinji**

The Abbot's crime is essentially his lax oversight of the other monks.

When all the other gaki are forgiven or condemned, the Abbot manifests in the Chapel, kneeling in front of the shrine. He rises to his feet as the players enter. If the players have not figured it out, you can tell the paladin he understands that the Abbot must now be forgiven or condemned for his part in each gaki's demise, as well as for his failure to his deity.

In terms of clues here, the only thing needed beyond identifying and banishing the other gaki is the Abbot's name, which can be found in the report on Brother Fujū's death. If the party have somehow not yet found this, you may have to suggest to them that there seems to be some piece of this puzzle still missing.

You can recommend something along the lines of:

"Abbot Shinji. I, (insert name), paladin of (insert deity), forgive/condemn you for failing in your duty of care for Brother Hodabi."

And so on for each gaki, finishing with:

"Abbot Shinji. I, (insert name), paladin of (insert deity), forgive/condemn you for failing in your duties to (insert god)."

That's six rounds of recital in a similar vein to previous rituals only this time, the Abbot doesn't attack directly. Each round he will attempt to interfere with the paladin's recital using representations of the other monks. When the players come across the Abbot and he rises up, note the following:

*A ghostly spectre resembling Brother Hodabi appears in front of the Abbot, though you sense no life from it. This is not the gaki you banished, merely a memory of him. The Abbot's arms move like a conductor's and the Hodabi shade mirrors the movements, like a puppet being controlled by its master.*

The round by round play follows this pattern. The paladin will attempt his recital, the Abbot will try to intervene. The players can make skill/ability checks to prevent the intervention. No initiatives are necessary here as everything essentially happens simultaneously.

### **Round 1: Hodabi**

As the paladin begins his recital, Brother Hodabi conjures up food inside the paladin's mouth and throat, causing him to choke. Players can make a Heal check DC 15 (3rd Edition) or a Medicine check DC 13 (5th Edition) to perform a successful Heimlich Manoeuvre. If successful, the paladin can continue his recital and proceed to round 2. On a failure, the paladin remains choking on the food and round 1 must repeat. The paladin takes 1d6 subdual damage (3rd Edition) or bludgeoning damage (5th Edition).

### **Round 2: Kasuo**

As the paladin begins his recital for round 2, Brother Kasuo's shade will appear and will begin launching spectral daggers at the paladin. Two daggers will fly at the paladin and if either hits him, he takes 1d4 piercing damage and fumbles his recital requiring another round. Players can help protect the paladin by making a Reflex save DC 14 (3rd Edition) or a Dexterity save DC 12 (5th Edition) to catch a dagger. If both daggers are caught, the paladin can complete his recital and move on to round 3. A monk with Deflect Arrows (or anyone else with the feat) can automatically catch one dagger per round without needing to roll (3rd Edition). In 5th Edition this would only apply to a monk's Deflect missiles ability.

### **Round 3: Tomori**

A shadowy bellrope descends from the ceiling and lynches the paladin as he begins his recital for round 3. Weapons pass harmlessly through it, but a player can attempt to undo the knot with an Escape Artist check DC 15 (3rd Edition) or Sleight of Hand DC 14 (5th Edition). This might be a good time to remind players that there is an assist action. Each round the paladin is hanging he takes 1d4 subdual damage (3rd Edition) or bludgeoning damage (5th Edition).

### **Round 4: Mariko**

Mariko's shade lets out a banshee wail of pure silence, not only creating an eerie oppressive atmosphere, but leaving the paladin mouthing silent syllables. The players must raise a din to force the silence back. This is a Perform check DC 15 in 3rd Edition or a Performance check DC 14 in 5th edition.

A bard with Countersong (3rd Edition) can counter this effect automatically. The assist action may be helpful in overcoming this challenge.

### **Round 5: Fujū**

Roiling black smoke fills the chapel, causing the paladin to cough and splutter as he recites. The smoke must be blown away with something suitable (a cloak for example), using a Strength check DC 15 (3rd Edition) or Athletics DC 17 (5th Edition).

A Gust of Wind spell will also suffice.

### **Round 6: The Abbot**

Resigned to his fate, there is nothing more the Abbot can do. He falls to his knees, head down, resigned to his fate. The paladin is clear to pass his final judgement here.

When the Abbot is banished, the curse on the monastery is lifted and any undead cease to function and the Thought Eater is dismissed. Award the players 500 xp (3rd Edition) or 300 xp (5th Edition).

All that remains is for the group to return to their hometown and for the paladin to receive his reward, which will be as decided at the start of the adventure, perhaps the bestowing of a specific rank or title within his church or the acceptance of his oath. Maybe have some kind of ceremony performed. At the conclusion, award the players another 500 xp (3rd

Edition) or 300 xp (5th Edition), which should almost certainly result in a level up. If not, fudge it if you want, that's your prerogative.

### **Judgement Notes**

There are no right or wrong answers to the paladin's judgements, but with each gaki forgiven or condemned, note the following visuals changes as the players pass through the appropriate areas to give those choices weight.

#### **Brother Hodabi:**

Forgiven: The votive candles in the Chapel burn with a steady, warm light. The kitchen smells of freshly baked bread.

Condemned: The votive candles burn with a black flame that seems to make the Chapel darker. The kitchen grows cold and the windows show signs of frosting.

#### **Brother Kasuo:**

Forgiven: Wildflowers bloom around the Beehives. The ghostly bees can be heard buzzing and become more numerous.

Condemned: The Beehives collapse and the plant life around them withers and dies, leaving a ten foot radius of decay.

#### **Brother Tomori:**

Forgiven: The bells ring out, chiming clearly for a few seconds. Birdsong can be heard in the Belltower.

Condemned: One of the bells audibly cracks. A cold wind howls through the Belltower when climbed.

#### **Sister Mariko:**

Forgiven: Roses bloom along her patrol path in the Gardens and her sobbing becomes gentle humming.

Condemned: Her sobbing becomes a banshee howl and the wind picks up in the Gardens.

#### **Brother Fujū:**

Forgiven: The beacon burns pure white with no heat and does not run out of fuel.

Condemned: The upper reach of the tower collapses (after the PCs leave). A permanent burnt smoke smell lingers in what remains of the tower.

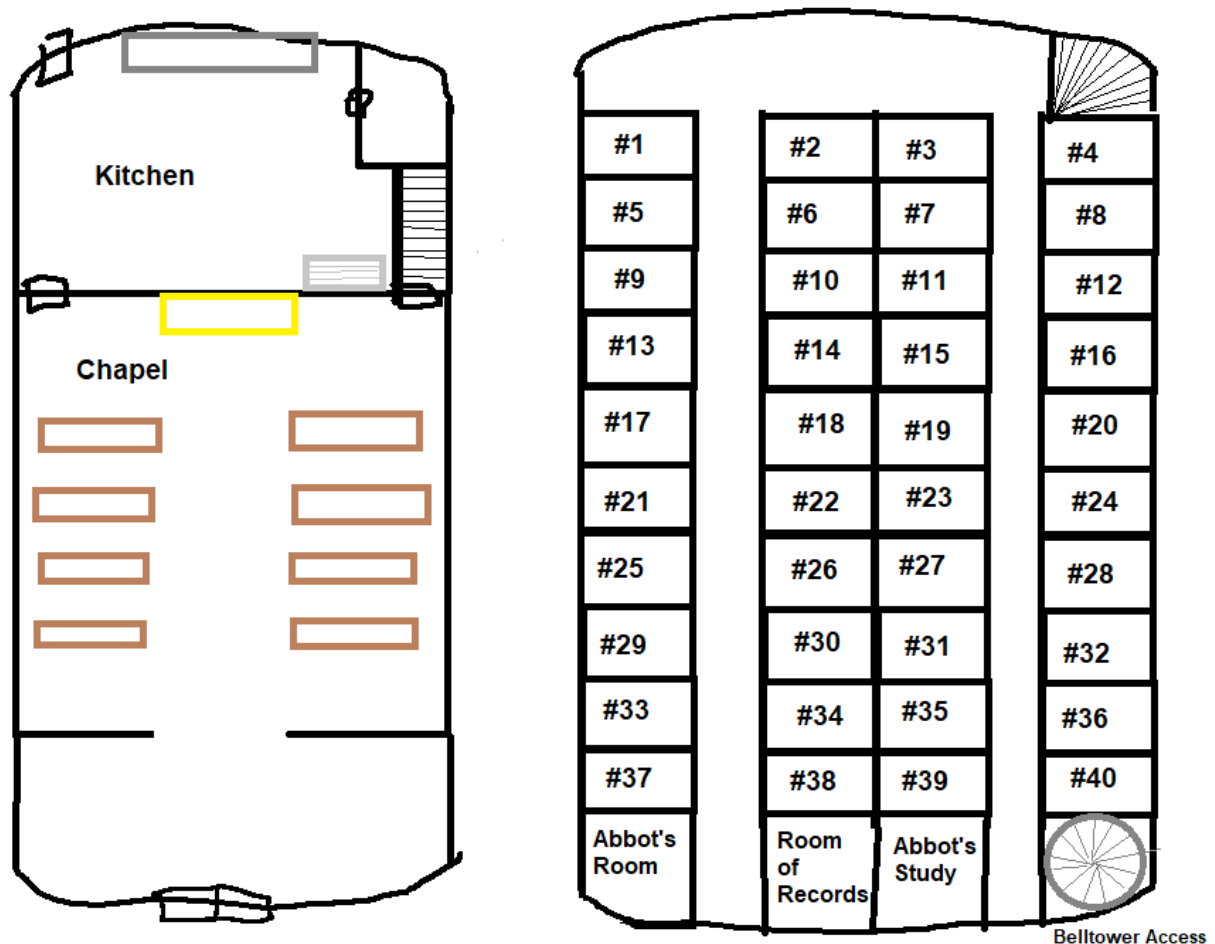
#### **Abbot Shinji**

Forgiven: Birdsong fills the monastery and on return to the questgiver, the paladin is informed that the monastery is to be repaired and repopulated.

Condemned: The shrine on the far wall collapses and a desolate air fills the Chapel. On return to the questgiver, the paladin is informed that the intent is to demolish the monastery and raise a monument in its place.

## Maps

Look. One thing you have to understand is that I can't do maps. I have aphantasia, I can't get my idea into a visual concept. I've tried so many different mapping softwares and it's just bad every time. So accept this scrawl for what it is, a rough guideline to give you a feel for the layout of the interior of the monastery. Everyone else seems to find mapping super easy so I'm sure you can fill in the gaps yourself. The only area I've described any specific size for is the beacon top which is sized as dramatically appropriate for the fight. You can make the rest fairly spacious. For the Cellar I'd advise bisecting the room with some shelving, but it's not super necessary. Use your own best instincts.



## FAQ

Q. What if my group has more than one paladin?

A. Indeed! Well, only one paladin can perform the necessary recital for a ritual in any one round. If that paladin is interrupted during his round, the recital is still interrupted, another paladin cannot pick it up in the same round. However, they can continue after that, swapping out as necessary. Clerics can also perform the recital.

For example, in round 1, Paladin 1 performs the recital, but takes some damage. In round 2, Paladin 1 takes his turn to heal himself with a potion, while Paladin 2 performs the recital. In round 3, both paladins are fighting elementals and the Cleric takes over the recital.

Q. Can the players sleep/long rest in the monastery?

A. Sure! It's safe and there are plenty of beds to choose from. However, remember that the badgers will resurrect as undead 24 hours after being killed unless the curse is lifted before then.

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