FREE20: DEAD PRINCESS



CHRIS 4. FIELD

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Requires the Use of the D20 Modern Core Rulebook, Published by Wizards of the Coast

Black Tokyo's Unlimited Edition is now available, and its far past time we got some free content for this bizarre, adults-only campaign setting. Free20: Dead Princess is a minicampaign model for Black Tokyo, focusing heavily on the Goryohime player race, first introduced in Black Tokyo: Races of Black Japan. The Goryohime are reprinted here, with a few additional racial traits, for your convenience.

A few days after putting the finishing touches on Black Tokyo's Unlimited Edition, I watched the <u>Corpse Princess</u> animated series for the first time. This excellent horror anime is very similar, in both tone and content, to the world I imagined for Black Tokyo, and provides a new way of looking at the Goryohime player race. Corpse Princess also offers a unique breed of Buddhist monks, the heroes (?) of the Kogan Sect, who bind themselves spiritually and emotionally to the brave undead girls called *shikabane hime*.

Campaign Model: Living Monks and Dead Princesses

The Living Monks and Dead Princess campaign type is defined by its limits and rules modifications. Unlike a typical Black Tokyo campaign, where players build incredibly diverse protagonists, everything from Tanuki industrial spies, Kami yakuza to spellcasting POETICA androids, the character choices in this campaign model are far, far more limited. Character roles are strongly gender biased, and the campaign model assumes that most (if not all) the characters are heterosexual, as heterosexual romance defines the campaign.

The Herges

The heroes in a Living Monks and Dead Princess campaign are ghost hunters, specialized in destroying undead and protecting the living. The heroes likely belong to a religious faction, with no real connection to Black Japan's government or military forces, though they are united by common purpose with groups like Chrysanthemum Seven.

Good backers for heroes using this campaign model include the Hidden Cathedral, the Chusan-Ji Temple, the Hanging Academy, and the old men of the Momonjii Cemetery, at Nagasaki.

Enemies

Undead are the prime enemies in this campaign type. Each session should focus on hardfought battles against predatory ghosts and hungry yokai, with the most disturbing, body horror abilities possible. The Ubume Empress makes an excellent long term nemesis- creating a climate of guilt and fear that will in turn create more unquiet ghosts and angry spirits.

The following monsters from the Black Tokyo Ultimate Edition are especially well

| Monster | Challenge Rating | Size, Type and Subtypes | Core Concept |
|-----------------|---------------------|---|--|
| Aosaginohi | CR 2 | Tiny NE Magical Beast | Ghost bird that foretells death |
| Aswang | CR 6 | Medium CE Undead | Birdlike devourer of fetuses |
| Bake-Kujira | CR 18 | Gargantuan CE Undead (water) | Burning ghost whale |
| Binbogami | CR 2 | Medium LN Undead | Relentless zombies |
| Harionago | CR 8 | Medium CE Undead | Undead murderess with prehensile hair |
| Ittan | CR 1 | Small CE Undead | The undead clothes of a murder victim |
| Jinzu | CR 7 | Large CN Undead | Jellyfish like ghost of an aborted fetus |
| Nure-Onna | CR 6 | Medium CN Outsider (fire, water) | Woman made of boiling salt water |
| Sazae-Oni | CR 6 | Large CE Outsider (evil) | Seductive snail woman |
| Shingami | CR 25 | Colossal CE Monstrous Humanoid (giant, fire) | Kaiju-sized embodiment of anti- Japanese bigotry |
| Skinless Yakuza | CR 5 | Medium LE Undead | Skinflaying undead swordsman |
| Ushi-Oni | CR 7 | Medium LE Outsider (devil, evil, law) | Hellish soldiers |

suited to serve as villains in a Dead Princess campaign.

CHARACTER CREATION

Male heroes are limited to the Human and Kami player races, though most are Human. Male heroes must take their first level as a Cleric with the Bonded Priest archetype added; they may later multiclass freely, but must always have more levels in Cleric than any other character class. These Clerics are Buddhist or Shinto priests, by default, but rarely might represent another sect, such as Catholic monks of the Hidden Cathedral.

Female heroes are limited to the Goryohime player race, and they must take their first level as a Hentai Hero. Later, the Goryohime can multiclass freely, though female characters usually focus on classes with purely physical abilities: Fighter, Monk, Rogue, Powered Hero and additional Hentai Hero class levels. Of the D20 Modern advanced classes, Gunslinger and Soldier are also excellent fits.

Goryohime in this campaign model are a little more somber, more serious than the norm. These unbreathing women become undead in response to a more compelling call than the vain hedonism of typical martyr-victims of the Great Tree.

There is precedent in the source material for female Bonded Priests, but they are comparatively rare, usually no more than one per game group. Depending on the campaign, the female Cleric's relationship to her bonded Goryohime can be maternal, sisterly or a bond between Sapphic lovers.

Campaign Themes and Subplots

Death is the major focus of the campaign.

Avoiding death, overcoming death, returning from the land of the dead, regretting your suicidal transformation into a Goryohime, accepting the death of a mentor or loved one, eventually embracing your own (hopefully heroic) death.

The campaign is melancholy, and while the Goryohime and their Bonded Priests are expected to slaughter predatory undead without mercy, they occasionally find good cause to pity the undead spirits they battle. Creatures that rise as undead usually do so because of regrets or obsessions they couldn't let go in life, or missions they couldn't leave behind. Given the fact that Goryohime themselves became undead out of an obsession with beauty and self sacrifice, they usually see at least a little bit of themselves in the monsters they put down.



The Bonded Priest Archetype

The Bonded Priest is a variant breed of Cleric, who forges a potent emotional link

Bound To a Girl (SU)

The Bonded Priest shares an unbreakable psychic link to a special girl, sharing energy and strengthening her when she needs it the most. The Bonded Priest's Bound Girl may be another player character or major NPC Goryhohime, in which case she is treated as a cohort to the Bonded Priest, even if the character does not meet the requirements for the Leadership feat.

A Bonded Priest can share energy with his linked Goryohime, transmitting love and life energy through a link that grows only profound as they fight alongside one another. Effectively, the bound Goryohime is treated as a companion animal or familiar to the Bound Priest, and vice versa. As long as the Bonded Priest and his Goryohime are within 60 ft of one another, both characters gain the Alertness feat. While within this range, anytime the Bonded Priest spends an action point for any reason, the Goryohime also receives a temporary action point, which must be spent before the end of the current encounter or is lost without effect.

As a standard action, the Bonded Priest can sacrifice any number of his own Hit Points; if she is within 60 ft, his Bonded Goryohime recovers an equal amount. Hit Points in excess of her normal maximum are retained as temporary HP for one minute. After sacrificing any amount of HP in this manner, the Bonded Priest receives a +1d4 morale bonus on attack rolls and WILL Saving throws for one round.

The Bonded Priest's Goryohime is never harmed by her Bonded Priest's channel energy usage, and always recovers hit points, whether the Bonded Priest channels positive or negative energy.

Bound To a Girl replaces the Cleric's Domains class feature.

Drawbacks of Being Bound To a Girl

If the Bonded Priest dies, his spiritual link to his Goryohime becomes an anchor, dragging her down into hell. If the Bonded Priest dies, his Goryohime, regardless of her distance to her master, must succeed at a WILL Save or become a monstrous horror under the Game Master's control. The Goryohime becomes a sociopathic predator, driven by a dark mirror of her heroic impulses, and kills randomly and indiscriminately. This WILL Save DC's is equal to 10 + the Bonded Priest's CHA Modifier + $\frac{1}{2}$ his level. Even if the Goryohime succeeds at the saving throw, she must repeat the save each sunset until she either fails a save and becomes a monster, or forges a new bond.

Forging a New Bond

A Goryohime who's Bonded Priest has perished can attempt to survive by binding to a new Bonded Priest. This character must be a male (usually) and must have either at least one Cleric level, or must possess the Religious (or similar) starting occupation. The Cleric and Goryohime undergo a private ritual, lasting the better part of a day. Depending on their desires and the rituals of the sect they belong to, this ritual might represent hours of intense meditation, sexual communion or elaborate conversation and negotiation. Both participants willingly sacrifice an action point at the ritual's climax.

The new Bonded Priest loses access to their Domains class features, and gains the powers of the Bonded Priest archetype. If the character does not have Cleric levels, they must take a level of Cleric when they next level-up, and gain the Bonded Priest archetype.

Feats for Bonded Priests

These feats enhance the bond between a Cleric and his soul-bound Goryhohime. The prerequisite listed as "member of a Bond" means that either a Bonded Priest or a Bonded Goryohime may select that feat.

Die to Save a Girl (SU)

You draw strength from within yourself, suffering horrible psychic wounds, in your quest to aid the brave undead teenager you've bonded to.

Prerequisite: Bonded Priest archetype **Benefit:** As a standard action, you can suffer 1d4 points of temporary ability score damage to either your STR, DEX or WIS scores. If your bound Goryohime is within 60 ft, she receives a +2 enhancement bonus to the same ability score you sacrificed, which remains in place for one hour.

Effortless Sacrifice (SU)

You give your life energy to your bonded Goryohime with a laugh and a smile.

Prerequisite: Bonded Priest archetype

Benefit: You may sacrifice Hit Points to aid your bonded Goryohime as a swift action. If you possess the Die to Save a Girl feat, you may also use that ability as a swift action.

Fight Side by Side (Combat)

You are especially adept at battling side by side and back to back with your Goryohime partner.

Prerequisite: member of a Bond, Base Attack Bonus +1

Benefit: When you are adjacent to your Goryohime partner, both you and she gain a +1 insight bonus to attack rolls and a +1 deflection bonus to Armor Class. If both members of the Bond have this feat, the bonuses provided increase to +2 instead, and neither partner provokes attacks of opportunity for making a ranged attack while engaged in melee, if they are adjacent to their Bonded partner.

Sacrificial Bond (SU)

You give selflessly of your life energy to protect and empower your Goryohime.

Prerequisite: Bonded Priest archetype **Benefit:** When sacrificing your Hit Points to assist your Goryohime, you may choose not to receive the usual bonus to attack rolls and WILL Saves. Instead, your bonded Gorhohime receives two HP for every HP you sacrifice, and receives a +1 morale bonus on attack rolls and WILL Saves until the end of the encounter.

The Goryohime

Medium Undead

Goryohime are a race of glamorous, bright undead culled from the ranks of Black Japan's most beautiful young girls. Choosing a special form of ritualized suicide while still in their teens, these schoolgirl undead ensure their bodies will never change, their breasts will never sag, their skin will never wrinkle, their hair will never thin nor grey. After their suicide is complete, some continue in a kind of half life, retaining ties to their mortal existence.

Goryohime might still attend the same high school or preparatory academy they did in life, cling to the same clique of friends (some of which might eventually follow her into undeath), shop at the same hip stores. The only clue to their true nature is the coolness of their unblemished marble skin, or the distinctive, instantly recognizable raspy voice of a living ghost created through ritual strangulation. Others find their new existence as undead makes their world stranger than they could have imagined while they still breathed- they might attend classes as the prestigious Hanging Academy, learning the twin arts of necromancy and seduction. Others might become demon hunters and exorcists, hunting the oni and human predators that prey on Japanese high school girls.

Appearance

At first glance, a Goryohime could easily pass for the school girl she was in life. On closer inspection, her undead nature becomes apparent. A Guryohime does not breathe, and her heart does not beat; her milky white skin is cool and smooth. The Guryohime bears the marks of her suicide; her throat is black and purple with bruises and abraded with rope burns. Their tongues are long and black, and their voices have an instantly recognizable raspy sultriness.

Goryohime dress in the same styles they enjoyed in life, with many adopting seductively modified school uniforms as a personal statement. The race as a whole is vain, fashionable and almost stereotypically girlish. Akaname who know them claim that the race smells faintly of the urine and shit they spilled in their last dying moments, a scent they find delightful. Ordinary mortals lack noses keen enough to detect this ghostly perfume.

Reproduction

Guryohime are an undead strain of humanity, which cannot reproduce, and only continues by new girls choosing the Guryohime path. The vast majority (as high as 80-90%) of all successful Guryohime are of Japanese descent, though occasionally a girl from China, Korea or even distant America or Europe might hear the dream-call of the Great Tree. Future Guryohime have erotic nightmares of hanging noosed from one of the branches of a great tree of light. These nightmares



begin shortly after the girl reaches puberty. Most girls fight the Great Tree's compulsion on their own, or drown their dreams with anti-psychotic meds, but every year dozens of girls give in to the noose-dreams. If a girl reaches her twenties without giving into the noose-dreams, they fade entirely.

A girl who chooses to become a Guryohime instinctively knows the steps necessary to complete her rebirth into undeaththe white kimono, the brown obi, the strangling noose woven with purple thread, the prayer, the song, the final kicking away of the stool.... Relatively few would-be-Guryohime have the strength of will necessary to return as an undead girl. Most are simply lost to the afterlife and the great wheel of reincarnation. Guryohime don't grieve for their failed sisters- they celebrate their lives, eroticize their deaths, and comfort with the fact they are promised to rebirth somewhere in the Tatakama as temple miko of the Great Tree.

Homes and Lands

Guryohime are creatures of Black Japan's cities, and attend school as strange, half-living students. Many still reside in their parent's homes, or have small apartments near to their still living friends and relatives. An extremely high percentage of Guryohime make their homes near Aokigahara Forest, at the base of Mt. Fuji, as many of the undead girls ended their mortal lives in the eerily still "Sea of Trees".

Goryohime Racial Traits

Size and Type

Goryohime are Medium sized undead. As Medium creatures they suffer no special bonuses or penalties due to their size. A Guryohime's base landspeed is 30 ft.

Ability Score Modifiers

+2 CHA.

As undead, Goryohime lack a CON score. Guryohime are physically attractive, cultivating their youthful beauty and choosing asphyxiating undeath to preserve this beauty forever.

Enhanced Senses

Goryohime possess lowlight vision.

Eased Passage Between Life and Death (SU)

Goryohime have died once, and orgasmed messily as they perished. They have no fear of dying again. Goryohime never lose a level for being raised from the dead or resurrected. They always return to existence as a Goryohime, however. Reincarnation has no effect on a Guyrohime.

If the Guyrohime casts *raise dead* or *resurrection* (or similar magic) to benefit another creature, that creature returns to life without suffering level loss or CON loss.

Noose Dreams (SU)

The noose-dreams which called the Goryohime into undeath give the girl a phenomenal insight into the nature of magic and the structure of the three realms: Earth, the Tatakama and the Black Else. Goryohime receive a +1 racial bonus on Knowledge (arcana) and Spellcraft checks. They receive a +4 racial bonus on Spellcraft checks made specifically to identify magic items from the Necromancy school.

Undead Immunities (EX)

Goryohime have all the immunities common to Undead player characters.

Undead Player Characters

Undead player characters have all the traits common to Undead (described fully in The Bestiary), with one notable exception. As thinking beings, with true souls, Undead player characters remain vulnerable to mind-influencing effects. An Undead player character's Hit Die, base attack bonus and base saves are determined by its character class.

Becoming a Goryohime In Game

Unlike other forms of undead, like the Akaname and the Ubume who begin their 'life' as an undead creature, Goryohime live several years as a teenaged girl before accepting undeath. Over the course of a campaign, a female character with a CHA score of at least 11+ who is in the Young Adult age category might be blessed (or cursed) with noose-dreams of the Great Tree. Either the gamemaster or the player might decide that a specific character who meets those criteria begins experiencing the dreams, but the actual choice to become a Goryohime is always in the player's hands.

Unlike NPC Goryohime, who risk being lost to death forever, assume a player character Goryohime succeeds in the suicide-ritual and rises an hour or so after her death as an undead, still writhing in her noose. The character loses all existing racial traits and race specific feats and talents, and gains the Goryohime's racial traits. The character may select an equal number of Goryohime-specific talents and feats. She does not lose her old racial ability score modifiers, merely receiving a +2 racial increase to her CHA score.

Gorvohime Alternate Racial Traits

Bonded Protector (SU)

The Goryohime is especially dedicated to protecting the mortal man who accompanies her on her adventures, and will die again, and again to protect the man she loves. When the Goryohime is adjacent to her Bonded Priest, once per round, as a swift action, she can choose to suffer a successful melee attack inflicted against her Priest in his place. She is treated as if she were the original target of the melee attack, using her Armor Class as the attack's target number.

However, the Goryohime suffers a -4 racial penalty on WILL Saves to resist becoming a monster if her Bonded Priest is killed.

Bonded Champion replaces the Goryohime's Noose Dreams racial trait.

Chaste Goryohime (SU)

The Goryohime followed a different path into undeath, and preformed a far crueler suicide ritual on herself. She followed the path of the Chinese Chaste warrior sisterhood. In her death ritual, she ritually severed her clitoris and sewed her labia shut with golden wire, before opening the veins in her thighs. Her undead flesh is as white and hard as porcelain, and her corpse still bears the signs of its mutilation.

The Chaste Goryohime's self mutilation hardens her will, and makes an apprentice member of the eternal, demon-slaying Chaste sisterhood. The Chaste Goryohime receives Combat Martial Arts as a racial bonus feat. The Chaste Guryohime receives a +1 racial bonus on saving throws against spells, spell-like abilities and other effects which specifically target the female gender.

The Chaste Guryohime does not receive the Guryohime's +2 racial bonus to CHA. This trait replaces the Guryohime's Noose Dreams racial trait.

Dead Daughter of the Tatakama (SU)

The Goryohime was born and lived as a mortal girl somewhere in the endless twilight of the Tatakama. She crossed to Black Japan to begin a new existence in a world as strange and exciting as her own undead state. The Goryohime can sense the direction to and approximate distance to any *Torrii Gate* between realms, and receives a +2 racial bonus on Knowledge checks made to figure out how to open a sealed *Torrii*.

Dead Daughter of the Tatakama replaces the Guryohime's Eased Passage racial trait.

Glamorous Spirit (SP)

The Goryohime is a seductive and beguiling death-spirit. Once per day, the Goryohime can cast *Charm Person* as a sorcerer of her total character level. If the Goryohime engages in an hour long ritual which culminates in a second hanging, replicating her transformation to undead, for 24 hours she may choose to cast *Charm Monster* instead. This ritual must be witness by at least one living or Akaname character.

Glamorous Spirit replaces the Goryohime's Eased Passage racial trait.

Peristaltic Magic (SU)

The Goryohime will never forget the sensation of bladder and bowels empting in mortal death, and she uses these memories to fuel her sorcery. A Goryohime Modern Spellcaster receives a +4 racial bonus on WILL Saves made to safely overcast any spell with the *Skatto* descriptor (many of which are described in Spells and Gods of the Tatakama, Otherverse Games, 2012).

Even if she dies while overcasting a spell with the *Skatto* magic descriptor, she successfully casts the *Skatto* spell as if she possessed the Suicide Spellcaster feat.

Peristaltic Magic replaces the Goryohime's Noose Dreams racial trait.

| D12 | Adjective | Character | Action | |
|-----|------------|---|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1 | Vulgar | Fallen Samurai | Seeks enlightenment in an unlikely | |
| | | | place. | |
| 2 | Courageous | Goryohime | Prepares for death. | |
| 3 | Broken | Android | Is reborn into a new state. | |
| 4 | Desperate | Man | Dpens a long forgotten door. | |
| 5 | Lustful | Woman | Glimpses the Tatakama for the | |
| | | | first time. | |
| 6 | Lonely | Child | Finally claims a chance at | |
| | | | vengeance. | |
| 7 | Enraged | Traveler from | Gives into dark impulses. | |
| | | the otherworld | | |
| 8 | Lovestruck | Lord of the Abandons friends and obligation | | |
| | | Black Else | | |
| 9 | Jealous | Homeless and | Runs from the future and abandons | |
| | | forgotten man | the past. | |
| 10 | Reborn | Murderer | Is lost to the darkness of the Black | |
| | | | Else. | |
| 11 | Repentant | Unborn ghost | Is hunted by threats more | |
| | | | dangerous than any ever faced | |
| | | | before. | |
| 12 | Pious | Kitsune | Has the noose dreams of the Great | |
| | | | Tree. | |

Portentous, ominous and spoiler free.

Anime fans are well familiar with the melodramatic previews of the upcoming adventure that plays at the end of an episode. A deep and overly dramatic voice hints at the twists and turns the serialized story will take, providing just enough information to seduce the viewer into watching another episode.

This random chart allows you to quickly script an intriguing summary of your next Black Tokyo game session, perfect if you want some inspiration for an upcoming adventure.

- First Sentence: A [adjective] [character] [action].
- Second Sentence: [Poetic Statement], [Ominous Warning].
- Third Sentence: Next time, on Black Tokyo episode XX: [Poetic Title I] [Linking Phrase] [Poetic Title II] !

| D10 | Poetic Statement | Ominous Warning | |
|-----|----------------------------------|---|--|
| 1 | A day of pleasure, | ,as the demons feast. | |
| 2 | While heroes rest, | ,a child is defiled forever. | |
| 3 | The cherry blossoms drift on the | ,while Tokyo burns. | |
| | spring wind, | | |
| 4 | An unlikely princess emerges | ,as a lover long dead rises from the grave as a | |
| | from the darkness, | servant of Hell. | |
| 5 | A cold wind blows, | ,and a dragon is enraged beyond all reason. | |
| 6 | Love burns bright, | ,as a sea of blood rises to drown the world. | |
| 7 | Equals duel one another, | ,as an endless night shrouds the Earth. | |
| 8 | A sacred mission is finally | , as a mentor dies in the arms of their only | |
| | discharged, | surviving student. | |
| 9 | An old wound finally closes, | ,and the world quakes as a demon-prince | |
| | | wakes from its eternal slumber. | |
| 10 | Hope is reborn, | ,as the clouds of final battle gathers. | |

| 2D8 | Poetic Title | Linking Phrase | Poetic Title II |
|-----|----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| 2 | Flowers | Of | Edo |
| 3 | Centipedes | Of | Evening |
| 4 | Episode | And | The Witches |
| 5 | Exorcism | And | The Wolves |
| 6 | Dreams | Against | Morning Sunlight |
| 7 | Music | Against | Darkness |
| 8 | Three Women | Of | Mystery |
| 9 | Blood | Of | Dark Wonders |
| 10 | Steel | And | Lust |
| 11 | Chrysanthemums | And | Fires of the Night |
| 12 | Feathers | Within | Heaven and Earth |
| 13 | Remembrances | Without | Sin |
| 14 | Secrets | Between | Nightmares |
| 15 | Memento | Inside | Secrets |
| 16 | Cats and Foxes | Beyond | Sorrow |

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