

Tamogo No Maho

This adventure can happen in any setting and pretty much anywhere in the Empire. Also while it takes place in a city with a near by cave network it could likely be moved anywhere. There is no set time frame for this adventure so it can be plugged into any game.

The Opening:

The city in which the PC's has been stationed at has been suffering a shortage of food supplies. This will come to the PC's attention one afternoon when they witness a confrontation between an angry Crab bushi and a servant at the their favorite inn.

The Crab will be angry that the inn is out of egg drop soup. While this normally isn't all that bad of a thing this has been a problem for him at every place he's gone to eat. The servant girl offers her apologies for the in convince. If the PC's intervene in the argument the Crab will back down. Otherwise he will berate the young girl.

If the PC's talk to her they will discover that the city seems to be short of basic food supplies. Grain, a bit of rice and egg's. Egg's seem to be the most scarce of supplies currently disappearing.

Should the PC's not get involved with the argument or not talk to the serving girl they can make a Courtier (gossip) check (TN 15) to hear rumors about a general food shortage. People in the know seem to indicate eggs and rice are in short supply. Speculation includes the possibility of war on the horizon to ronin bandits holding it for ransom.

A Rash of Thefts

A couple of days after the initial incident rumors will abound (Courtier gossip TN 15) of a series of thefts. They are mostly of minor items. Fan's, mirrors, trinkets. Nothing major but coupled with the food shortage it is making it's rounds on the local grapevine.

If the PC's are magistrates they will be asked to look into the thefts. If not a mirror of some worth to a dignitary from one of the PC's clans will be stolen and she will ask them to retrieve it for her.

An Investigation (TN 20) check will reveal that a ronin bandit gang calling themselves "The Hidden Ones" has set up shop in the area. Further investigation (Investigation TN 25) will help them find their hide out. If this adventure takes place in a large city they will be hiding out in an abounded warehouse in the city. Likely close to where the peasants live to further go unnoticed. If smaller city they will have set up camp about half a days travel away from the city.

The PC's should be able to organize a raid. The ronin gang is small (number of bandits to fit the PC group size). When confronted they will attempt to fight. If the battle goes against them most will try to escape.

Once the ronin are subdued the PC's can look around for more clues. The bandits will have some stolen goods among them. However they won't have the mirror or any of the missing food. However with their capture the local officials will consider the matter closed.

If any are left alive for questioning they will have no idea about the mirror (if that was the hook used to get the PC's involved) or anything else that is missing outside of what they have. Most of the stolen goods.

A Brush with a Rat

Two days after the PC's take care of the Hidden Ones one of the PC's will wake to the sound of someone scurrying through their belongings. Once they turn towards the sound they will see a nezumi going through their bag. It will flee at the first sign of trouble and will only fight to defend itself. It would have attempted to steal something small and likely shiny from the PC.

If the nezumi is caught and questioned he will reveal the rest of his pack is hiding out in the nearby caves. Otherwise an investigation into the incident (Investigation TN 20) will reveal that some locals have spotted nezumi near the caves. He will confess to having stolen the mirror and the food supplies.

If the nezumi is killed in the encounter then upon the PC's approach they will meet a small search party looking for their lost kin. The nezumi will try to divert the PC's interest away from the cave and deny any claims that they have taken anything. If combat erupts one of them will try to run away to warn the others.

Egg Magic

Once inside the caves the PC's will be assaulted by the smell of rotten eggs. A general inspection will indicate that the cave structure seems to not be very stable and loud sounds or vibrations may cause the ceiling to cave in on them. Inside they will encounter a man calling himself Ryozo. He will be surrounded by the remaining nezumi. Ryozo will proclaim how he has discovered the secrets of maho and how he can now cast it with out drawing his own blood. The secret lies in special marked eggs he proudly tells them. To demonstrate his power he will toss an egg at the PC's and watch it splatter against them.

The egg will not do anything as Ryozo has no real power. However he has the loyalty of the nezumi with him. If the PC's attack him or try to forcible apprehend Ryozo they will attack. During the fight Ryozo will toss egg's at the PC's screaming out words of "magic". If the PC's close in to him he will defend himself with a dagger he keeps handy.

Possible Conclusions

1. It is possible for Ryozo to be talked down. So long as everyone remains calm. He will of course be drawn to any females in the party. Ryozo will have papers among his things that indicate he is actually

Seppun Ryozo. The papers will also indicate that he is the nephew of Seppun Satomi a minor dignitary in the Imperial City.

This ending has two possible conclusions as well.

A. If the PC's are able to talk Ryozo down and get him back to Satomi with out creating any kind of scene they will gain the favor of Satomi

B. If the PC's talk Ryozo down but the truth of his insanity becomes known (including his involvement in theft of supplies and goods) the PC's will earn Satomi's ire.

2. If Ryozo senses any form of deception he will order his nezumi to attack. (He should be sufficiently capable of sensing deception). Ryozo will only fight till he is wounded or his nezumi are defeated. If he takes more than half his wounds and survives he will run. Likewise if the nezumi start to lose he will start to retreat.

A. If Ryozo lives he will make his way deeper into the caves. He will do his best to attempt to lose the PC's but could be found if they are persistent enough.

B. If Ryozo is killed they will find his papers that identify him as Seppun Ryozo. The PC's can attempt to cover up the incident. If however Satomi finds out they are responsible for her nephews death she will seek revenge on the PC's.

C. The fighting causes the cave's to start to collapse around the PC's. An injured Ryozo will crawl off into the caves. The path following him will be blocked by collapsed stone. Ryozo will crawl off for some time where he will encounter an oni spirit seeking a name. The oni was attracted to Ryozo's attempt to use maho and was eventually going to try to forge a pact with him. Ryozo in his condition will agree to give the Oni his name.

Ryozo will then eventually attempt to hunt down the PC's to make sure no one speaks about what happened in the cave.

In either case the PC's will have located the stolen items and food. They can return it to the city and gain their thanks and likely the favor of the cities governor who now won't have to have new food supplies shipped in.

NPC's

Ronin band - This group will consist of about 5 to 10 individuals. The size should be enough to challenge the PC's. Thus their rank should also be sufficient to challenge them. Mostly bushi.

Nezumi band - This group will consist of about 8 to 10 individuals. The first party encountered will be about 2 to 4 leaving the remainder for the cave encounter. They will be from the Grasping Paw tribe. This particular group were abandoned as pups and were raised by Ryozo thus why they are loyal to him.

Mostly composed of scouts and warriors.

Nezumi shaman - The leader of the nezumi loyal to Ryozo. He will be 1 rank above the party level. In combat he will attempt to remain at Ryozo's side and buy him time to escape if need be.

Seppun Ryozo - Rank 3 Seppun Guardsman. Ryozo has gone crazy and believes he can use maho via egg's. He will be confident in said ability till he has to defend himself and then will resort to the use of a dagger for self defense. If his life looks to be in danger he will of course try to run.

Seppun Satomi - Rank 4 Otomo Courtier. Satomi was trained as a courtier and is attached to the a group of Otomo courtiers in the Imperial city. She will always present the image of the perfect courtier and will not show signs of her displeasure.