

Introduction

This is a game about Keeton, wandering medicine master in a far-off land of older days. Keeton travels across the countryside to villages troubled by natural spirit creatures called *yōkai*, whose motives and actions are wholly alien to human thought. This game is inspired by the animated series *Mushi-shi*.







Keeton intently studies *yōkai* and knows their ways well. However, this does not always make his job easy. Helping a village troubled by a *yōkai* often requires sacrifices to be made by all, and some villagers resist that. Keeton must convince them.

To play, you need one player to play as Keeton, a few others to be villagers, and one normal die for each player, as well as papers and pencils. Once everyone is gathered, Keeton begins the first round of play, according to the instructions in “Keeton's Guide – First Round”. Both Keeton and the villagers have specific instructions in this booklet.

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Dice Reference

You roll normal dice in *Keeton's Journey*; you will sometimes use their results to discover what happens next. Using normal dice like this might seem strange at first. Don't worry!

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 “The Path” (/)
Outcome: the villager reveals a powerful motive
Command: Keeton reveals worse consequences
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 “The Box” (□)
Outcome: the villager reveals a harsh reality of village life or a social/physical limitation of theirs
Command: Keeton limits the consequences
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 “The Crossroads” (✕)
Outcome: the villager reveals an inner conflict
Command: Keeton requires a hard choice
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 “The Loner” (•)
Outcome: the villager explains how they're alone
Command: Keeton explains why the villager escapes consequences

As a villager, you want to flesh out the village, its relationships, and the *yōkai*. Re-incorporate previous details, and build everything into a complete picture. Give information even as you hold back your secret. Play to your human desires and your role in the village, especially when they cause problems.

As Keeton, you want to direct the flow of the investigation. Keep everyone focused, and ask questions about the *yōkai*. Try to build a complete picture. Give the villagers reasons to cooperate. Tie everything together at the end.

Everyone should keep one principle at the forefront: **honestly follow the dice**. When someone chooses a result, play that result to its logical end.

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General Game Advice

Keeton's Guide – First Round

You begin the game by telling everyone how you come to a village troubled by a *yōkai*. Ask someone what the village looks like. Tell everyone what the *yōkai* is doing to the village. Continue the scene by briefly meeting each villager, and then end the scene. Everyone rolls a die into the center of the table. Pick a villager to go next.

When a villager has a scene with you, explain how you interact with them. They may reveal information about the *yōkai*. The scene ends when you ask a question or make a demand of the villager. Pick one of the dice from the center of the table; the villager will give the Outcome of the scene. Then, reroll the die and wrap up the scene.

When all the villagers have had a scene, begin the second round of play with “Keeton's Guide – Second Round”.

When it is your turn, tell everyone how and where Keeton finds you in urgent circumstances. Play through the scene, then take a die from the center when you make a choice: either reveal your secret (take the Path or the Crossroads) or hide it from Keeton (take the Loner or the Box). Give it to them to work with you. Tell them the consequences that they face because of the *yōkai*. They will respond and give you a die from the center of the table. Give and explain the Command for that result (see the Dice Reference), and reroll the die. When all villagers have had a scene, the Epilogue begins.

Villager's Guide – Epilogue

If the village is saved, help Keeton describe how the *yōkai* is sent away. Then, each villager should (in turn) tell what happens to them afterwards. If the village is doomed, the villagers must tell Keeton how it is ruthlessly destroyed. Use villagers' hidden secrets to explain how.

When everyone is done, the game has finished.

Villager's Guide – Second Round

Villager's Guide – First Round

When Keeton enters the village, talk with the other villagers to determine the main features of this village. Decide on everyone's role in the village; everyone then picks a name. Finally, everyone should write a **secret**: this is a personal connection to the *yōkai* problem that makes you reluctant to help Keeton fix things. Don't reveal it yet.

When it's your turn, describe to everyone how you run into Keeton. Other villagers may appear, but this is your scene. Give Keeton information about the *yōkai* problem, but not about your secret. Invent details and add depth and color to the situation. Build on what other villagers have described.

Eventually, Keeton will pick a die and turn to you for an answer. Give an Outcome according to that die (see the Dice Reference), and explain what it means. Then, pick a villager who hasn't had a scene yet. It's their turn now.

Now that all the villagers have had a scene, you take your next turn. Explain how the trouble gets much worse. Someone is likely hurt because of the *yōkai*. Then, pick a villager to start their scene.

During a villager's turn, do everything you can to get them to work with you. Tell them the consequences that they face because of the *yōkai*. They will respond and give you a die from the center of the table. Give and explain the Command for that result (see the Dice Reference), and reroll the die. When all villagers have had a scene, begin the Epilogue.

Keeton's Guide – Epilogue

If the majority of the villagers revealed their secret, the village has been saved. Tell the villagers how the *yōkai* leaves the village. Otherwise, the village is doomed to disaster. Ask the villagers what happens to it.

Keeton's Guide – Second Round