

# Yugiri's Gift

An Adventure for *Legend of the Five Rings*, First Edition  
By Peter Schweighofer

After many years of service to the Lion Clan, Lord General Akodo Asagao is retiring from the samurai's life to one of meditation and quiet study. In the past he led Lion armies to many victories, never once suffering defeat. For years he maintained the frugal life of a loyal samurai, accepting no gifts but those from his superiors, and shunning public life unless called upon by his clan. His fame as a warrior almost outshines his wise reign as lord of the town of Asagao, a small city at the edge of the Heigen no Otaku (Plains of Battle) in the heart of Lion Clan territory.



Even now emissaries from the major Rokugani Clans travel toward Asagao bearing gifts intended for the retiring Lord General, but which he may pass along to his son, the fiery tempered Hayate, who will assume his father's place as a Lion Clan general and governor of Asagao. These representatives reflect the middle echelons of clan society, as befits the Lord General's station within the Lion Clan. The gifts also reflect his station, though the presentation ceremony—a few days off—embodies the highest level of noble etiquette.

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## Episode One: Duel in the Mist

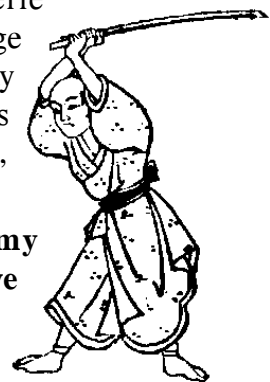
The characters serve one of Rokugan's great clans—this text assumes the Crane Clan, but you can alter it to suit any particular clan. They are charged with delivering and presenting a gift in the clan's name to Lord Asagao, a minor general of the Lion Clan who is retiring from the martial life of bushido to one of meditation and study. The characters know little of Lord Asagao other than what's presented in the introduction above. They might learn more of him while preparing to present their gift.

The characters carry a bamboo cage containing a beautiful songbird. Gold and silver wires tie the cage joints, while bits of jade decorate bands around the top, bottom, and mid point joints. The bird's colorful plumes are outshone only by its melodious voice, which chirps and sings constantly whenever its woven cover is lifted from the cage. The highest-ranking character

must handle the presentations the day after tomorrow, offering the gift to the Lord General and graciously accepting the Lord's deferral before offering it again twice more (according to Rokugani custom: see the *Legend of the Five Rings* first edition rulebook, page 37, for more details).

The characters must travel through a light forest before reaching the town of Asagao, where the Lord General resides and plans to accept his gifts. Dusk falls as the characters journey down the forest path. Evening mist begins to cover the ground, filling the hollows and blanketing the woods in a eerie atmosphere. They reach a bridge over a ravine, but are only halfway across when a samurai-ko steps from the mist on the other side, blocking their path:

**“You who trespass on my bridge, step forward and prove yourself against the cold steel of my blade.”**



## Yugiri's Gift

The samurai-ko is the specter of a woman who committed seppuku years ago to retain her honor in a scandal involving the Lord General Asagao—a scandal he caused. Yugiri persists as an angry spirit because the general refused to leave this life honorably, instead hiding his shameful secret and rising to become an influential Lion Clan leader.

She eyes the characters, seeking one who would step forward and engage in an iaijutsu duel. If anyone asks her name, she replies that she is Akodo Yugiri, loyal retainer to Lord Asagao and guardian of the bridge. Beyond that she simply stares angrily at the characters. Should they try to retreat, she brands them as cowards unworthy of presenting the Lord General with any gift.

Assuming a character steps forward for the duel, conduct the iaijutsu as normal (using the rules found in the *L5R* first edition book, pages 108–9).

### Yugiri

#### Earth 2

(Stamina); (Willpower)

#### Fire 3

(Agility) Defense 3, Iaijutsu 4, Kenjutsu 5;  
(Intelligence) History 3

#### Water 3

(Strength); (Perception) Battle 3, Calligraphy 2

#### Air 2

(Reflexes) Archery 4; (Awareness) Bard 3

#### Void 2



#### Meditation 3, Tea Ceremony 3

**Rank 2:** Ignores opponent's armor or gains free raise in combat; adds Honor Rank (4) to Attack and Damage rolls.

**Primary Weapon:** Katana (3k2)

**Primary Armor:** Light Armor (5)

**TN to be Hit:** 10 + Armor (5) = 15

**Wounds:** 4/4/4/4/4/(down)

Once someone sustains a hit and concedes the duel, Yugiri tosses them her tanto, saying, "Present this to Lord Asagao on my behalf, that I may be freed from captivity in the Living Lands and may pass with him to the place where we may prepare for the next life." At this, her body fades, along with the character's daisho!

If they concede the duel to her, Yugiri nods her head, then tosses the lead character her sheathed tanto and speaks as above. As he catches it, he realizes his own daisho disappear, fading into the mist like the samurai-ko before them.

As they will soon learn from the priest Asakaze, they must somehow convince Lord Asagao to accept the tanto (with a distinctive bamboo leaf design on the scabbard) before the daisho will reappear. Until then, they must travel as a samurai without swords....

Before they can continue their journey toward Asagao, they unexpectedly find themselves waking in the austere home of a lonely priest.

## Episode Two: The Priest's Tale

After the duel, the characters mysteriously wake up the next morning, as if the samurai-ko and her challenge were just a dream. They appear to rise in a simply furnished house. A stooped old man, a priest identified by his shorn head, waddles out from behind a screen with bowls of cold rice and fish. In a growling voice he wakens them, "Get up, get up, only the trees sleep through the day and remain in one place." He introduces himself as Asakaze, a priest and wise man. "I maintain the shrine to the Seven Fortunes across the road," he says. "A fickle and distemperate bunch of gods they are, but I meditate on their whims and follies to enlighten myself and others."

## Yugiri's Gift

He dispenses eccentric and poetic wisdom at odd intervals, all while inquiring about the characters' journey. Asakaze knows of the Lord General's retirement, and assumes they're heading for Asagao. If they ask, he claims they stopped here last night, lost in the evening mist, seeking shelter. According to the priest, they fell into exhausted sleep almost immediately.

If they tell him of their encounter with the spectral samurai-ko Yugiri, Asakaze's eyes grow wide. "You met Yugiri," he whispers, "Lady of the evening mist." He is quite familiar with her tale, and shares it with any willing to listen.

Seeing one of the characters with her tanto, he advises them. "You must present that to Lord Asagao to break her curse and free her spirit from the bridge." He begins playing with their songbird gift, feeding it seeds from a pouch. "How fortunate to offer two gifts to Lord Asagao, both full of beauty and meaning, to aid him in the meditations at the end of his life." Asakaze is playful because he is Yugiri's brother. Throughout

the rest of the adventure he may appear at times to offer guidance, make poetic observations, or goad the characters into action. Away from the temple he wears a straw

### Asakaze's Wisdom

Yours is not a song  
we hear only once in a while,  
little cuckoo.  
Though we listen all our lives,  
your every song surprises.

hat that covers most of his face, and plays mischievous tunes on a bamboo flute.

After feeding the characters, he helps them pack and get on their way. He tells them Asagao isn't far, then gives each a ball of rice and some cold fish for the journey.

## Asakaze

### Earth 2

(Stamina); (Willpower)

### Fire 3

(Agility) Bo Stick 3, Music 3 (also Awareness); (Intelligence) Etiquette 3, History 3

### Water 3

(Strength); (Perception) Calligraphy 3, Heraldry 2

### Air 2

(Reflexes); (Awareness) Poetry 3

### Void 3

Meditation 3

### Rank 2

### Honor: 4

**Primary Weapon:** Bo Stick (2k2)

**TN to be Hit:** 10

**Wounds:** 4/4/4/4/4/(down)

## Legend of the Evening Mist

*As told by the priest Asakaze...*

Countless seasons ago a beautiful and skilled samurai-ko named Yugiri served in the guard at the town of Asagao. The young lord of that town, also a samurai, took a fancy to her. The woman tutored the lord in courtly ways, in which she had some experience. The two soon became lovers, and fell into each other's arms as the pine needles rustle in the breeze. But the lord could not take a samurai-ko from his own garrison as his wife. When she learned of his feelings, Yugiri fled Asagao to her favorite spot for meditation, a woodland bridge overlooking a deep stream. Here she committed seppuku, her body toppling over the bridge into the waters.

Since then the lord has enjoyed success on the battlefield, wisdom in civil matters, and a prosperous reign. Yugiri's ghost has haunted the woods near Asagao, particularly the bridge upon which she honorably took her own life. Her ghost sometimes challenges travelers, attempting to prove her worth as a samurai-ko and enlist others in her cause. To free her spirit from this place, someone else must present her tanto to the lord who spurned her. Only when he takes his own life with the blade can Yugiri accompany his spirit beyond the Living Lands to a place where they can be free to prepare for the next life.

## Yugiri's Gift

**Spells:** Sense (TN 5, sense elements), Commune (TN 5, speak with elemental nature spirits), Summon (TN 10, create small samples of elements), Fires from the Forge (Earth, TN 5, repairs items), Bo of Water (Water, TN 10, bo inflicts 3k3 damage), Blessing of Purity (Water, TN 10, negates poisons and diseases), Calm Mind (Water, TN 10, negates fear and other attitude effects), Amaterasu's Blessing (Fire, TN 5, summon light), Inflammate (Fire, TN 5, ignites items).

The walled town is only an hour's march up the road. The characters come upon the gate facing the forest—it remains closed, and the sentries in the gatehouse shout for them to go around to the next gate. From the looks of it, the giant doors rarely open, and few use the track heading into the forest.

Beyond the forest gate the terrain opens up into rolling grasslands. Entourages from the other clans have erected pavilions and enclosures of banners and cloth outside this next gate. The characters may choose to camp here, or enter the city and find lodgings within. Every samurai they encounter notes with disdain the lack of the one character's daisho, and takes even greater notice if the character displays Yugiri's tanto tucked into his sash.

## Episode Three: Rumors in Town

The delegations do not make their gift presentations until the following day. Besides, the emissaries are still waiting for the representatives of the Crab Clan to arrive. Characters can use this day to settle into their lodgings or encampment, mingle with the other delegations, or amuse themselves around town.

During this time they can gain access to most areas in the city and, with a show of proper etiquette, to the clan enclosures outside. They might also meet envoys during their wanderings in the town. The Lord General's guards prohibit anyone from entering his

stronghold guarding one of the city's walls—characters might learn why by interacting with townspeople. Only those presenting gifts may enter tomorrow.

## Townspeople

The characters may roam the town during daylight hours—after dark the authorities expect them to bunk down at one of the city's three inns or camp in their enclosure in the field outside the gate. Besides the clan emissaries, the town is bustling with various personages from across the Empire here to offer their best wishes to the Lord General, witness the spectacle of fireworks tomorrow night, and indulge in his generosity in a great festival in the main street after the gift presentation. Use the "Fortified City" map found on page 225 of the *L5R* first edition rulebook for ideas on locations and street organization within Asagao.

Most citizens show distanced respect toward samurai, particularly those of other clans. Few open up at all until samurai interact in a friendly manner with them. The city's merchants also display respect, but with a

healthy dose of cheerfulness. The gift presentation ceremony provides an opportunity for them to spread their goods and reputation beyond Lion Clan territory, so they strive to make good impressions with visiting samurai.

Assuming the characters strike a good rapport with even one merchant, they begin hearing a variety of rumors. Depending on the subject of their discussions, merchants might impart any of the following rumors to inquisitive samurai:

**Battle Magic:** Some say Lord General Asagao was aided by a mysterious samurai-ko who miraculously appeared at his side in the most dire of battles.

**Gifts:** The Lord General's ability to artfully decline gifts is renown. In all his years, he's graciously refused gifts from all but the Emperor himself,

### Asakaze's Wisdom

The mountain cuckoo  
cries long, but its plaintive song  
cannot bring on the day:  
plenty of night remains  
for an old man to lie awake.



## Yugiri's Gift

without offering offense. Nobody knows why he has this aversion to gifts, for he's granted many himself.

**General's Son:** Most know Hayate for his short temper, arrogant nature, and contempt for townspeople. Some even hear of his overconfident displays to other samurai and even ranking emissaries from other clans. Many fear the angry, bitter, and impatient Hayate will prove to be a tyrannical ruler when he assumes his father's duties.

**General's Wife:** Lady Asagao is a spiteful, bitter woman who hates her son. She resents Hayate's open arrogance, and secretly yearns for power herself. The only thing that softens her heart is her grandson, of whom she is overly fond.

**Priest Asakaze:** He's an old curmudgeon who lives in a hut in the haunted woods. He often wanders through town playing his flute and reciting poetry for alms. He's harmless and eccentric, so folks tolerate him.

**Yugiri's Ghost:** Nobody uses that road through the haunted woods, so nobody's really seen the ghost. Maybe she just appears to fellow samurai. Sometimes her moaning, heartbroken voice carries on the evening breeze.

**Clan Emissaries:** Everyone's been very generous during their visit to Asagao. Most keep to themselves, but deal with townsfolk with a quiet, removed manner. The Unicorn Clan entourage has lavishly and boisterously spent their koku in the city's inns, tea house and geisha house. The Scorpion Clan envoy never speaks, but the Dragon Clan samurai is by far the strangest, with a reptilian look about him and almost glowing green eyes.

### Typical Citizen/Merchant

**Sample Merchant Names:** Bannai, Gihei, Goemon, Honzo, Ishido, Kempai.

**All rings are 2:** Commerce 3, Craft 3

**TN to be Hit:** 10

**Wounds:** 4/4/4/4/(down)

### Clan Emissaries

The clan envoys keep to themselves, spending most of their time in their enclosures constructed of rope tied to stakes hung with colorful banners and sheets for privacy. When they wander into the city, a small escort

of 2-4 ashigaru accompany them.

While in town, the characters have opportunities to encounter each clan emissary. Visits to the enclaves result in formal audiences full of restrictive etiquette and custom. Only the boisterous Unicorn Clan samurai displays any relaxed manner for others.

The envoys are Rank 3-4 samurai.

### Unicorn Clan: Shinjo Tatikaze

A somewhat portly fellow, Tatikaze's boastful and almost jolly manner proves more amusing and friendly than offending. Although he casts off this demeanor for the gift presentation ceremony, he intends to enjoy himself while visiting Asagao.

**Encounter:** A woman from the town's geisha house approaches the characters, seemingly soliciting for her establishment. Tatikaze sent her to lure them back to the house where he invites them to partake in his debauchery. He accepts a gracious, polite refusal, welcomes company that revels in such pleasures, but sneers at anyone offended by his common offer of hospitality.

### Phoenix Clan: Shiba Hayabusa

This gaunt fellow remains aloof from everyone. He never speaks directly to commoners, but passes instructions to an ashigaru lieutenant who speaks for him. Hayabusa literally looks down on other samurai given his tall stature, but is a soft-spoken gentleman. Any conversation seems to bore and weary him, and he is quick to beg pardon to retire to his camp. Those visiting him in his enclave enclosure deal with the lieutenant, who claims Hayabusa is tired and is resting.

**Encounter:** The characters witness an altercation between the Lord General's son, Hayate, disrespectfully mounted on horseback, and Hayabusa. The arrogant youth seems offended by the Phoenix Clan samurai's lazy demeanor and physical dissipation, and expresses his public disgust. The Phoenix ashigaru show more restrained anger than their master, but allow the Lion Clan firebrand to finish his insults and gallop off.

### Asakaze's Wisdom

True, I may appear  
unkempt like a rotting tree,  
jetsam or flotsam,  
but on the right occasion  
this old heart can still blossom.

### Crab Clan: Hida Yamagumo

This delegation arrives mid-afternoon while the characters explore the town. They do not enter the city, but set up their encampment by evening. Characters might encounter them during wanderings the next day, when most clans are preparing for the afternoon gift presentation audience. Yamagumo displays a gruff, almost angry demeanor, though he avoids being openly disrespectful. His scars attest to his long combat experience, about which he refuses to speak.

**Encounter:** Several farmer's children play near the site where the Crab ashigaru erect their camp. When they get too close, Yamagumo appears, roaring and chasing them like some deranged oni. The children (and perhaps the characters) might not know what to make of this at first. If they step in, the characters receive a stern lecture to mind their own business. If they stand off, the children taunt Yamagumo again, and prove his response was playful—the samurai has a soft spot for little ones and enjoys playing when he can get away with it.

### Scorpion Clan: Bayushi Yugure

Most people know Bayushi Yugure as the Night Samurai. Few realize this entity is a woman. In public she restrains her breasts, pads her shoulders, and alters

her gait, either when dressed in armor or a samurai's kimono. Like many Scorpions, she conceals her face behind a mask: a straw hat and the fierce mask conceal her female features. She does

*Asakaze's Wisdom*  
The mind is all sky,  
the heart utterly empty,  
and the perfect moon  
is completely transparent  
entering western mountains.

not speak in public, communicating her desires through hand gestures her ashigaru interpret. At night, however, she lurks around the city as Yugure, unmasked, in a woman's kimono, masquerading as a geisha.

**Encounter:** During the day characters might notice the Scorpion entourage engaged in combat exercises near their enclave—and displaying a keen expertise with the blade. In town they might notice the Night Saumrai



speaking to a lady in a palanquin: Lady Asagao. At night Yugure approaches them as a geisha, attempting to lure them to a geisha house (at which she made arrangements earlier) to ferret out of them any ulterior motives for their visit. In her conversation she tries sowing a seed of suspicion against the Dragon Clan emissary, claiming she's heard rumors of a plot to kill the Lord General.

### Dragon Clan: Mirumoto Inaduma

This samurai's bright green eyes unnerve others with whom he deals. His proud, secretive manner makes him quite visible and very aloof, and he looks suspiciously at anyone bold enough to address him. The Dragon ashigaru keep others at least five feet away from Inaduma, even when speaking with merchants.

**Encounter:** The characters come upon a puppet show entertaining a crowd of children. The plot involves a samurai and noble lady who frequently beat a fickle husband. A new puppet suddenly jumps into the fray—a cheerful-looking archer who begins shooting the other puppets! What a clever display of puppetry! When the other puppets and the puppeteers object, the archer runs off the stage and scampers through the crowd...right past Inaduma and his imposing Dragon ashigaru speaking with Lady Asagao in her palanquin. When asked about the puppet, they impassively and imposingly peer at the crowd, refusing to believe such a thing happened. He declines to help locate the renegade puppet, who cannot be found amidst the bustling city. (The puppet is a homunculus created by Scorpion Clan shugenja, intended to replace an arrow-firing automaton Inaduma plans to present as a gift to Lord Asagao. Little does he know his own gift is involved in a plot to assassinate Hayate....)

### Typical Ashigaru

#### Earth 2

(Stamina); (Willpower)

#### Fire 2

(Agility) Defense 3, Kenjutsu 3; (Intelligence)

**Water 2**

(Strength); (Perception)

**Air 2**

(Reflexes) Archery 3; (Awareness)

**Void 2**

**Primary Weapon:** Yari (longspear) (4k2)

**Primary Armor:** Light Armor (5)

**TN to be Hit:** 10 + Armor (5) + 15

**Wounds:** 4/4/4/4/(down)

## Asakaze Butts In

An any appropriate point in their city wanderings, the characters might suddenly run into the priest Asakaze. Perhaps he's nearby, playing his flute or spouting wise poetry. Use him to steer the characters on track, motivate them to action, or influence their impressions...particularly of the suspicious nature of the Dragon Clan's Inaduma and the Scorpion Clan's Night Samurai.

The priest can also serve as a reminder of their principle mission—to present Lord Asagao with Yugiri's tanto and remind him of is youthful shame.

## Episode Four: Presentation Ceremony

The emissaries spend the following morning preparing themselves and their entourages for the presentation ceremony that afternoon. Each delegation approaches Asagao's stronghold, leaving their daisho and other heavy weapons at the gate—only Asagao's guards carry weapons, though characters may take tantos and aiguchi inside. The samurai with Yugiri's tanto may openly wear it (eliciting an initial shock from Lord Asagao when he spies it), or may wrap it in rice paper as a gift.

In the audience hall the emissaries arrange themselves as directed by a herald. The Lord General arrives and takes his place at the head of the room, flanked by his wife and son. A representative from the Emperor's court, a magistrate bearing no gifts, sits off to one side to witness and later report on the ceremony. The audience chamber opens on a courtyard where the ashigaru

and city representatives gather in an orderly manner.

Each envoy presents his gift in turn, with Lord Asagao refusing twice, and accepting on the third time. They may procede in any order, as long as the Dragon Clan goes near the end. A silk cloth covers each gift, which the envoy removes upon presentation.

**Unicorn Clan:** Tatikaze presents a mated pair of gray horses, who are led into the courtyard much to the wonderment of the onlookers. Gray horses are rare, coming from the best Unicorn Clan stocks and possessing the greatest strength and speed. After the customary two refusals, Lord Asagao bestows them on his son, who looks at the beasts ungratefully.

**Crab Clan:** Yamagumo presents the Lord General with a fierce-looking preserved oni head. The trophy has no innate magical powers (it does not speak, offer advice, or ward off evil), though Yamagumo suggests it hang over a gate to frighten enemies.

**Phoenix Clan:** Hayabusa offers a volume of poetry with a prized bonsai. Lord Asagao notes that he plans to spend much time in his studies meditating on poetry and contemplating nature.

**Crane Clan:** After the customary refusals, the Lord General expresses somber delight at the gilded bamboo cage and songbird. "How strange," he says, "That the lovelier of the two shall die soon, while the more worldly shall last quite a bit longer."

**Scorpion Clan:** The Night Samurai presents a weathered scroll. It implicates the Lord General in a youthful scandal; minor compared with shaming Yugiri. Asagao offers thanks for the "fine historical text involving strategic matters."

**Dragon Clan:** Inaduma's gift seems the most impressive: a short, decorated box upon which sits an archer puppet, complete with strung dai-kyu and arrows. By manipulating a series of strings, the automaton actually fires arrows. A servant erects a target to one side so he doesn't accidentally shoot a bystander. At first the automaton misses, but by adjusting the string controls, he hits the target on the second try, and hits a bulls-eye

*Asakaze's Wisdom*  
Lonely autumn moon  
in multicolored foliage  
with the stag's sharp cry  
you return all our sorrows,  
you return our hour of gloom.

on the third. As everyone exclaims their amazement at this mechanical marvel, the automaton suddenly rises from his box and draws an arrow aimed at Hayate!

The characters must act in time to save Hayate from the poisoned barb and any subsequent attacks. After his first shot, when others suddenly notice him, the homunculus takes his two remaining arrows and scampers off. When he isn't evading pursuit, he's shooting at those hunting him, particularly the Dragon Clan envoy. Inaduma looks just as surprised as anyone else, and expresses shock at this insidious magic.

The Imperial magistrate will eventually conduct a full investigation (possibly a hook for a subsequent scenario). Lady Asagao's treacherous correspondence and meetings with the Night Samurai and other Scorpion Clan associates might be revealed, along with her plot to kill Hayate and assume power, only after a thorough and convoluted investigation.

### Archer Boy Homunculus

**Earth 1**

**Fire 2**

**Water 1**

**Air 3**

**Rolls When Attacking:** 6k3

**Rolls For Damage:** 1k1 plus poison

**TN to Hit:** 15

**Armor:** 0

**Wounds:** 6: -1; 12: Dead

### Yugiri's Tanto

To free Yugiri's spirit from the Living Lands, the chosen character must present her tanto to Lord Asagao (preferably before the homunculus attacks). He graciously refuses two times, but, even if he knows what the tanto represents, he finally accepts should the character persist in offering the gift.

Asagao takes particular interest in the blade, removing it, examining the scabbard, and replacing the tanto. Depending on the dramatic circumstances, he might wait until later that evening to commit seppuku (he has become, at heart, quite honorable at this late stage in his life). For more dramatic effect, however, he might remove his ornate robes, revealing the simple white costume acceptable for the seppuku ceremony, and take

### Glossary of Names

**Asagao:** Morning Glory

**Asakaze:** Morning Breeze

**Hayabusa:** Peregrine Falcon

**Hayate:** Squall

**Inaduma:** Lightning

**Tatikaze:** Wind from the Stroke of A Sword

**Yamagumo:** White Clouds on the Hillsides

**Yugiri:** Evening Mist

**Yugure:** Evening

his life right there in the presence of the clan emissaries. The true reason might only remain known to the characters—some would consider it inappropriate and dishonorable to reveal the Lord General's true shame.

Should Asagao commit seppuku, Yugiri's ghost appears to collect his soul, and the two walk off and fade out of the Living Lands. The chosen samurai's daisho appear again, though they might have some enchantment after spending time in the spirit world.



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