

Vampires of Africa's Gold Coast

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The Ashanti people of the Gold Coast of Africa – Ghana, are said to have two vampire creatures. *Obayifo* is what they call their incognito vampire witch. The *Dahomean* tribe calls the same vampire witch *Asiman*.

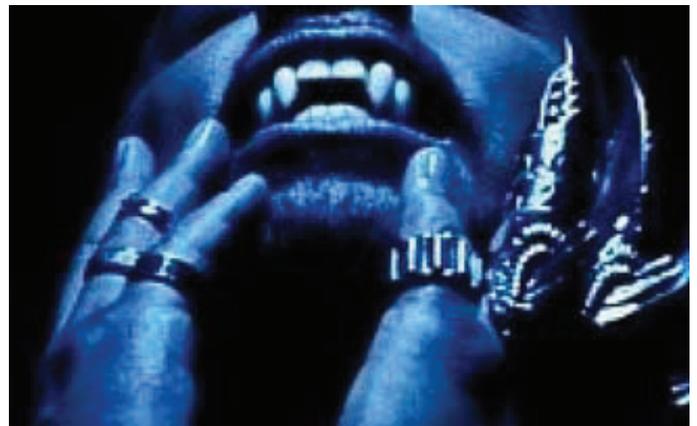
The *Obayifo* in human form finds it very easy to keep its secret. As long as it's not confronted (he fears violence), he will act and look human. If he fears violence, his skin begins to glow with a phosphorescence substance. He also has a vampire familiar or servant called *Sasobonsam*.

Witchcraft is learned, and so there are no tells as to who is or will become an *Obayifo*. This vampire witch has a food obsession, and it is able to leave its body and travel like a glowing ball of light. It uses its powers to attack people, especially kids. It can also suck the juice from fruits and vegetables, though blood is its favorite. The bean of the cacao tree is its favorite crop (the tree that is used to make chocolate).

When it drains the life energy from someone, it's a long, slow, and painful process. It can take days to weeks for the victim to die. If the *Obayifo* drinks a special potion made of fruit and vegetable juice, it gives it the power to shape shift into various animal forms, and it will take these animal forms to attack its prey.

If someone were found guilty of witchcraft, he would be tried, and if convicted the tongue was pulled out and pinned to the chin with a thorn to prevent any more curses from being uttered. The *Obayifo* would then be impaled on a sharp stake, and the head would be severed. These practices are very similar to Eastern Europe's treatment of vampire suspects.

After burial, if someone was suspected of being an *Obayifo*, the corpse would be examined for signs of blood and abnormal swelling. The grave of a true witch had a small hole in the dirt. It was believed that a witch could take the form of a rat or cat and leave the coffin through



the small hole. Usually the body would be destroyed to prevent anymore witch activity.

The vampire monster *Sasobonsam* can serve the *Obyaifo*. The *Sasobonsam* lives deep in the cotton tree (*Kapok* forests) and is rarely encountered.

This vampire stands about five feet tall, has a bearded face, a mouth full of fanged iron teeth, and a row of scaly ridges over its blood shot eyes. It also has a small horn that protrudes from the top of its head.

Its long arms look like huge bat wings, so large that the wingspan is 20 feet long. The *Sasobonsam*'s torso is so thin it looks like a skeleton, its legs are permanently bent, and it has three hook-like toes on each foot.

Its body is covered in black and white spots to help camouflage it while sitting on the tops of the cotton trees. When it catches its prey, it brings it up and bites off its head, then drinks the blood. The *Sasobonsam* also has the supernatural power of making a person unlucky enough to look upon its visage become very sick and die.

The size of the cotton trees is said to be proof of the *Sasobonsam*'s existence, as no one is brave enough to cut them down. ♦