



*Legend of the
Five Rings*



ROLEPLAYING GAME
THIRD EDITION





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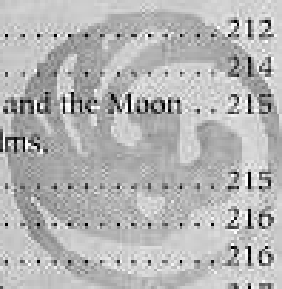
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BOOK OF EARTH



Takuro staggered slightly as he walked out of the sake house, wincing at the bright light of the morning sun. His two comrades laughed as they spilled out on either side, similarly unsteady from the previous evening's entertainments.

Takuro glanced about him with an arrogant sneer. He and his brothers had arrived in this village almost a week ago. This place was unaccustomed to being visited by samurai; the peasants here were weak and afraid. They had offered food and lodging with quiet terror, asking for nothing in return, clearly petrified by the two swords at his hip. Takuro and his brothers had decided that they liked it here; this village was theirs now.

As he looked around, however, he realized that something was different. The peasants all huddled at the edges of the open square before the sake house. They watched quietly, waiting. There was still fear in their eyes, but it was different somehow.

"You are the ronin that calls himself Takuro?" called out a calm voice. A man stepped forward from the shadows of a building across the street. A thick cloak was draped over his head and shoulders to ward off the evening chill. Like Takuro and his brothers, he wore the two swords on his hip, the symbol of a samurai.

Suddenly the haze of Takuro's alcohol and exhaustion was burned away by a surge of adrenalin. He felt his brothers tense beside him. They had all been ronin long enough to know the dangers of the life they led. Samurai were warriors, soldiers whose blade served the whim of their daimyo. A ronin, a samurai with no master, was a wild, uncontrolled force in the Empire. Though they offered no allegiance to any man, they had no protection save their own wits.

"I am Takuro," he growled. "What business have you with me?"

"I am an acquaintance of a young lady by the name of Sei," the stranger replied. "She has told me that you treated her in a disrespectful manner. Is this true?"

Takuro laughed, and his laughter was echoed lewdly by his brothers. "Yes it is true, and what of it?" he asked. "She is nothing, just a geisha."

"She is my friend," the stranger said, "as are the men and women of this village. If you are men of honor, you will offer them your apology."

"Apologize to peasants?" Takuro asked with a laugh. "They are unworthy. I will treat them as I please and you will stay out of it."

"If you will do what you please, ronin," the man seemed to spit out the word, "then so shall I — and it pleases me to champion this village's honor. If your apology is not forthcoming then the matter will be settled with violence."

Takuro eyed the man cautiously. "You are a fool, stranger," he said. "There are three of us and one of you."

"So you accept my challenge?" the man asked.

"So be it," Takuro laughed. "I do not know where you came from, but you have come a long way to die in this forsaken village."

The man allowed his cloak to fall from his shoulders, revealing long white hair and a brilliant blue kimono, the mon of a crane standing on one leg emblazoned on his right shoulder. He adjusted his stance, holding his right hand palm up over the hilt of his katana, as if offering a gift. He looked up, fixing cold crystal blue eyes upon the ronin and his brothers. "My name is Kakita Mitsuo," he replied in an even voice, "and I come from the Esteemed House of the Crane."

A chill of fear ran down Takuro's spine. The Kakita were among the most renowned swordsmen in the Empire. Even so, it was too late to back down now. He could not show weakness in front of these filthy peasants, not after lording over their village as he had. The Crane had challenged him, and what remained of his honor demanded that the challenge be answered. Of course so far from the eyes of the Crane's kin, there was no reason for the fight to be a fair one.

"Kill him," Takuro hissed to his brothers.

They ran forward with a defiant cry, drawing their blades and moving to flank Mitsuo. The Crane glanced quickly from one to the next and fell into a low stance. He ducked smoothly to one side, avoiding the first man's sword and kicking at the man's ankle to throw him off balance. Mitsuo's blade was free of his sheath and in his hand faster than the eye could follow, moving in an upward stroke and deflecting the second blade with a clang. The sword came back down with a savage stroke, cutting cleanly across the first man's back. The second man's blade lashed out again and this time Mitsuo did not move quite quickly enough, a lash of blood welling across his left arm. His return stroke was deadlier still, his shining blade slashing from hip to shoulder and leaving Takuro's brother to fall in two pieces.

Mitsuo turned, blade still in hand, and faced Takuro again. The leader of the ronin still stood at the doors of the sake house, watching the battle placidly.

"These men were your brothers," Kakita Mitsuo hissed. "You would not fight beside them?"

Takuro laughed. "They had no chance against a Crane," he retorted. "Better that they should die than I. They served their purpose."

"I still stand," Mitsuo replied, moving toward the ronin.

Takuro began to back away. "Not for long," he answered. "You grow weaker every moment you bleed. A bit longer and even a Kakita will be easy prey."

"You will not live that long, ronin," the Crane snarled. He leapt toward Takuro, blade held high. The ronin drew his own blade in reply, deflecting the Crane's stroke. He drew a knife in his free hand and slashed it across the Kakita's stomach. The man's blue eyes widened with pain. Takuro expected the man to falter, but he did not. He felt a cold sensation in his shoulder as Crane steel severed his arm. A swift kick sent him sprawling to the earth.

Takuro laughed as the taste of his own blood filled his mouth. He looked up at the Crane defiantly. "Fool!" he spat. "You are days from any healer. You may kill me, but you will die of your wounds as well. You have given your life for nothing."

The Crane only smiled. "For the coward there is no life," he said in a steady voice. "For the hero there is no death."

Then Kakita Mitsuo's blade fell one last time, and ended Takuro's life.

Factions of Rokugan

The story of Legend of the Five Rings is ultimately the story of the Great Clans and other smaller factions, such as the Minor Clans, Imperial Families, ronin, and the Shadowlands. The character you play in Legend of the Five Rings will hail from one of these groups. While all of them will be discussed in detail later in this book, here is a brief synopsis of each of the major powers in Rokugan that might help inform newer players as they consider which of these groups they might enjoy playing.

The Crab Clan

Descendants of the mighty Kami Hida, the Crab Clan are the defenders of Rokugan. They patrol the Empire's southwestern border, where it meets the twisted Shadowlands. Daily, Crab warriors perish upon the Great Carpenter Wall, giving their lives that the other clans may live in peace and security, a security that has been purchased with a thousand years of Crab blood.

The Crab value duty above all — even above honor. To the Crab, victory matters more. If they fail in their duty, if they are defeated, then honor will do little to protect those who depend on them. As a result, many find the Crab gruff, unkempt, and downright rude, but no one questions their strength or courage.



The Crane Clan

The Crane pursue excellence in all things. Their founder, the Kami Doji, was the most beautiful and eloquent of her brothers and sisters, and it was she who established the traditions now customary in the Emperor's Court. Doji's husband Kakita established the formal dueling system of iaijutsu, and served as the Emperor's personal champion. Throughout history, the Crane have been intertwined with the Imperial line, providing beautiful brides for the vast majority of Rokugan's Emperors.

The Crane are the Emperor's Left Hand, defending his honor and his Empire in court and maintaining the traditions laid down by their founder. Their preferential status with the Imperial line is renown, as they tend to have fewer taxes and more gifts heaped upon them. They are the masters of court, and have the wealth commensurate with such a position.



The Dragon Clan

The Kami Togashi was the most enigmatic of his siblings, poorly understood even by the other children of the Sun and Moon. He and his followers among the Dragon Clan retreated to the mountains and remained there, interacting with the Empire only on rare occasions. The bushi of their clan practice the daisho technique, a unique fighting style that utilizes both swords at once, and are familiar with the techniques of shugenja. Dragon shugenja are likewise familiar with the weapons traditionally used by bushi, a distinction that sets them apart from other priests. Strangest of all, the Dragon have multiple orders of tattooed monks among their number, men and women who bear mystical tattoos allowing them powers and abilities beyond those possessed by mortals.

The Dragon mystify everyone, perhaps even themselves. Their methods and outlook stand out among those of the other Great Clans, often considered aloof and mysterious by outsiders.



The Lion Clan

If the Crane sit at the Emperor's Left Hand, then the Lion are surely to his Right. The Lion are the most militant and aggressive of all clans. They revere bushido and loyalty to the Emperor as life's two most essential governing principles. They maintain the largest standing army in the Empire, rivaled only by that of the Unicorn Clan. Many of history's most brilliant generals have been a product of Lion training, and while it is not strictly true, many still believe the old adage that no Akodo-trained general has ever been defeated on the battlefield.

The Lion's rigidity and strict adherence to tradition has resulted in difficult diplomatic relations with other clans, most notably the Crane and Scorpion, but in recent years the Unicorn as well.



The Mantis Clan

The Mantis were not created by Kami, but rather by the will and determination of a long line of extraordinary mortal men. Denied his rightful claim to leadership of the Crab Clan, Kaimetsu-uo instead forged the first Minor Clan along with his followers, carving out a meager existence from tropical islands off Rokugan's coast.



The Mantis became a Great Clan on the second Day of Thunder, when Yoritomo led the Mantis into battle alongside the other clans in battle against the Shadowlands.

Other clans consider the Mantis pirates and opportunists. Their naval strength is unmatched allowing them frequently contact with nations beyond Rokugan. While the Mantis struggle to cast aside their reputation as thugs and pirates, the truth remains that many are aware such practices are quite common among their members.

The Phoenix Clan

Shiba was unquestionably the wisest Kami, so much so that he cast aside pride and arrogance to vow to protect the descendants of Isawa, the greatest shugenja of his age. Since that day, the Phoenix have been guided by the Isawa family's desire for enlightenment, ensuring their position as the greatest shugenja in the Empire. Three of the clan's four families are devoted to studying the elements, with the Shiba working to defend and protect the clan's lands.



It was Shiba who recorded the conversation between the Emperor and Shinsei during the first war with the Shadowlands. His notes allowed the Isawa to become the preeminent shugenja in Rokugan, and all other clans recognize their mastery. The Phoenix are well-respected for this acumen, although many consider them arrogant and haughty as well. While the Lion are the Right Hand and the Crane are the Left, the Phoenix are surely his Voice, carrying the message of peace whenever the clans would turn against one another.

The Scorpion Clan

When the Empire was formed, the Emperor gave each clan a duty to perform in his name. The duty given to the Scorpion is the topic of much debate among other clans, and the Scorpion are not talking. Ostensibly, the Scorpion were given the duty of protecting the twelve Black Scrolls, powerful artifacts used to bind the power of Fu Leng. Others believe, however, that the Scorpion's true duty is to keep the clans continually at odds with one another, ensuring that none will ever have the strength to rise against the Emperor.



For this reason they are called the Emperor's Underhand, a family of spies, manipulators, and assassins who value loyalty above all else. Honor is not beyond them, but it is a tool to be used and discarded when convenient. They are the dagger that strikes from shadow and eliminates threats before they become dangerous. The Scorpion have a broad definition of "threat," however, and the true motivation behind their schemes is not often clear to say the least. Many clans despise them as a result, though their web of blackmail and secrets is wound so tightly that few would oppose them.

The Unicorn Clan

Once known as the Ki-Rin Clan, the samurai who followed the Kami Shinjo departed Rokugan a few years after the first Day of Thunder. It was Shinjo's hope that other threats to the Empire could be averted by discovering them first. For eight centuries, they roamed the world, exploring strange lands and cultures. Less than three hundred years ago, they returned to Rokugan as the Unicorn Clan and resumed their rightful place among the Great Clans. When Shinjo returned during the War against the Darkness, she purged her clan of subversive influences and appointed a barbarian from across the Burning Sands as the new Champion of her people.



The Unicorn are vastly different from other clans, influenced more than any other clan by gaijin cultures. The ruling Moto family have unique traditions and practices that cause many to mark them as gaijin or barbarians, an accusation that the Moto do nothing to refute. Many hold them in low regard, but fear them for their military might.

The Imperial Families

All clans serve the Emperor, but the Otomo, Miya, Toturi, and Seppun families serve him directly, with no need for a clan. Each family performs a vital function for the Emperor: the Miya are his heralds, carrying his edicts to the people; the Otomo are his courtiers, protecting and maintaining the Imperial Court even in his absence; the Seppun are his guardians, devoting their lives to protecting him from all harm; the Toturi, finally, are the Emperor's most elite and fanatical servants, sworn directly to his name and prepared to throw down their lives in his defense without question.

The Minor Clans

Save for the Mantis, the Great Clans have existed since the Empire was founded. Since that time, many Emperors have found cause to reward their most loyal subjects by permitting them to create a Minor Clan, tiny groups similar to the Great Clans but on a vastly smaller scale. Minor Clans typically control small tracts of land and are made up of a single family of samurai, often numbering only a few dozen at most.

Minor Clans in existence during the Lotus Era include the Badger, Bat, Fox, Hare, Monkey, Ox, Sparrow, and Tortoise Clans, with the Tortoise being ostensibly the most powerful given their position as the Minor Clan representative to the Imperial Court. Minor Clans that have been destroyed or absorbed include the Boar, Centipede, Falcon, Snake, and Wasp Clans.

The Ronin

No matter how prosperous or beleaguered the Empire becomes, there are always samurai who serve no master but themselves. To these samurai, known as ronin, or "wave men," the notion of a life without duty is far worse than death. Some ronin are born to this lot, the child of a samurai who chooses not to recognize his offspring for whatever reason. Others are cast out for failure, denied even the honorable redemption of seppuku. Still others choose to abandon all oaths for a life of personal freedom, a choice no true samurai could even make.

Ronin are generally regarded as a lower class by most clan samurai. Even the Minor Clans can look down upon ronin, for they have nothing to call their own and no lord or comrades to protect them. Peasants frustrated with a lifetime of service to arrogant samurai can celebrate petty victories against ronin, refusing them service or slighting them in other ways. Though a difficult lifestyle results from the decision to affiliate oneself with the ronin, for some the freedom they gain surpasses the awkwardness.

The Brotherhood of Shinsei

The people of Rokugan are very much a spiritual people, surrounded as they are by evidence of divine beings and elemental spirits. Some choose to devote their life to studying the balance of all things and the wisdom contained within the Tao of Shinsei, the compiled wisdom taken from the teachings of Shinsei, the Little Prophet. Some choose to study the Tao early in life, while many samurai shave their heads and enter a monastery at the time of their retirement.

The Brotherhood of Shinsei is the governing body that oversees thousands of shrines and temples throughout Rokugan, unconcerned with materialism, and with politics. Their only driving goals: foster spiritual enlightenment and cultural improvements.

The Shadowlands

For every light, a shadow falls. Just as the Kami created the Great Clans and Empire of Rokugan, the Fallen Kami created the Shadowlands. This vast region to the south of Rokugan is a twisted, nightmarish place corrupted by the power of Jigoku, the Realm of Evil. Somewhere deep within the Shadowlands lies the Festering Pit of Fu Leng, a vast portal into Jigoku, where demons and evil spirits cross freely from their realm into the realm of mortals.

The Shadowlands teems with life, all of it twisted and evil, demons called oni, goblins, ogres, trolls, and countless other creatures, many of them unique. In the past decade, a powerful new leader has taken control of the Lost, living humans who have succumbed to the Taint. This man, Daigotsu, has carved a vast empire of his own, a dark reflection of Rokugan, deep within the Shadowlands. Few mortal souls have seen his City of the Lost and lived to tell the tale.

Military Ranks

Though Rokugani military offices have no direct translation to western military ranks and units, the following list gives a rough translation of the ranks from the highest ranks to the lowest.

Position	Translation	Troops commanded
Daimyo	Clan Leader	Entire Clan
Rikugunshokan	General	Army (daimyo's discretion)
Shireikan	Commander	25,000 (five legions)
Taisa	Captain	5000 (1 legion)
Chui	Lieutenant	800-1000 (1 unit)
Gunso	Sergeant	50-200 (1 platoon)
Nikutai	Corporal	5-10 (1 squad)
Hohei	Private	none

The History of Rokugan

What has gone before (Pre-History)

Before the fall of the Kami, before the rise of man, there were others. The oldest civilization known to have existed in the land now known as Rokugan was that of the Naga. A race of mystical, pacifistic serpent-men, the Naga carved a great civilization that spanned the far western reaches of the modern Empire. Their history was marked by conflict just as any other history, but following their own struggles for supremacy and a war with the mysterious Ashalan from across the desert, the Naga established a peaceful and philosophical society that reigned for many centuries.

Eventually, the Naga entered an enchanted slumber in order to preserve their dying race and combat some unknown future enemy. In their wake, other civilizations emerged. The greatest was that of the Nezumi, also known as Ratlings by modern Rokugani. The Nezumi profess to have had a vast empire of their own, one in which they conquered the kingdom of the ogres that dwelled where the Shadowlands are today. Although many samurai refuse to believe that the abominable ogres that served Fu Leng might ever have been civilized creatures, there is some small amount of evidence to support the Nezumi's assertion. Whatever the truth may be, both the civilization of the Nezumi and that of the ogres was destroyed with Fu Leng's fall from heaven over a millennium ago, although both races continue to exist to this day.

At least one other civilization existed prior to that of mankind: the trolls. Whether created or merely corrupted by Fu Leng, the trolls nevertheless managed to forge a considerable kingdom throughout the Shadowlands. This kingdom bowed to the rule of the trolls, survived the reign of the Nezumi, was incorporated into the dominion of Fu Leng, and finally was shattered during the rule of Hida Osano-Wo, child of Hida himself, who led the Crab Clan in a vicious war against the trolls. Remnants of their civilization still exist, however, such as the dark city Volturum, site of the Battle of Oblivion's Gate.

First Century (1-100 IC)

Fall of the Kami: Established pre-calendar

The fall of the Kami marks the beginning of time, and the separation of the Celestial Heavens from the world of Hantei and his siblings.

The early tribes of Rokugan formed before this date which may seem apocryphal: mortal men were formed from the blood of Lord Moon's wounds and the tears of Lady Sun shed in the wake of the fall of their children. However, the ways of divinity are unknowable, and none can truly say how long it took for the Kami to fall.

One note overlooked for many centuries was the death of Ryoshun, the Tenth Kami. Ryoshun never fell as his siblings did, but died within his father's stomach. Ryoshun's spirit passed on to the Rift, an area of existence between all the Spirit Realms. He remained there to guard the spirits of the dead for all eternity.

Early Events

Lost Gisei Toshi, the ancient Phoenix Clan city is established in the calendar year '1', immediately after the fall of the Kami. This city, now thought destroyed by all but the Phoenix who dwell there behind walls of illusion and misdirection, remains the earliest sign of 'cultured' human habitation after the beginning of time.

Coronation of Hantei I

Following a tournament between the Kami (excluding Togashi, Fu Leng, and of course Ryoshun) the Hantei is determined to be the most worthy ruler of Rokugan. At the end of the tournament, Togashi speaks in words of prophecy: "When the last Akodo falls, so falls the last Hantei."

The War Against Fu Leng and Creation of the Shadowlands

Shortly after the fall of the Kami, waves of darkness issue from the Festering Pit, tainting the southern lands of Rokugan. The armies of the Lost Brother, Fu Leng, swarm across Rokugan and destroy all in their path. The servants of the Hantei fight valiantly for decades, but find that they are slowly losing the War.

The Tao of Shinsei written: year 42

A strange little man arrives in the court of the Hantei, promising that he can give the Kami victory over the armies of Fu Leng. First, however, he gains audience with the Kami themselves, and speaks to Hantei at length. Shiba copies down the little man's wisdom dutifully; this text later becomes the Tao of Shinsei, the foremost religious text in Rokugan.

The Day of Thunder: year 42

When the war looks bleakest, Shinsei gathers one mortal from each of the Seven Great Clans. Hida Atarasi, Doji Konishiko, Mirumoto, Matsu, Isawa, Shosuro, and Otaku join Shinsei on a journey to the Shadowlands to defeat the fallen god Fu Leng. All of the Thunders die there, save one.

Death of Shiba: year 42

After the defeat of Fu Leng, Shiba journeys into the Shadowlands in search of Shinsei and the Thunders. Shiba is mortally wounded slaying the First Oni, but ensures that Shosuro returns to the Empire alive.

Shosuro's Return: year 42

The final Thunder, Shosuro, returns from the Shadowlands with the Black Scrolls. Shosuro survives her journey only by making a pact with the Lying Darkness, and immediately thereafter casts off the persona of Shosuro to become Soshi, founder of the Scorpion Shugenja family.

Shinjo's Exodus: year 45

With the war against Fu Leng now effectively at an end, the Kami Shinjo determines that she must leave the Empire and explore the world to better prepare the Empire for its dangers.

Three families of the Ki-Rin Clan — the Otaku, Iuchi, and Ide — choose to follow her. Before leaving, Hantei granted Shinjo one of a pair of magical mirrors created by Shiba and Isawa. The mirrors would allow Shinjo to communicate with Hantei even in distant lands.

Death of Hantei: year 45

Crippled by a lingering injury during the War Against Fu Leng, Hantei spends the last months of

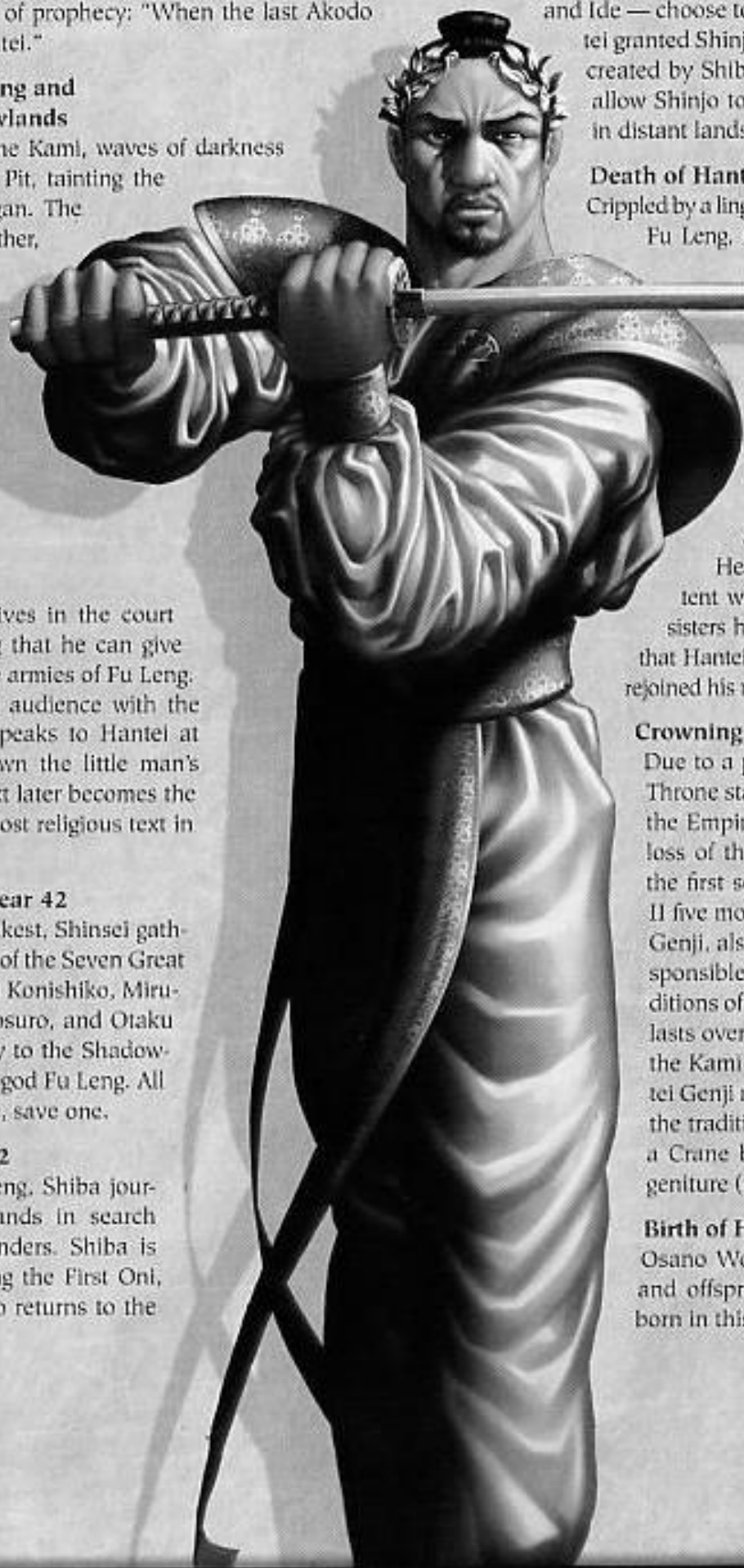
life bedridden. Unable to carry the news of victory to the Empire, Hantei charges a boy named Miya with the responsibility of bringing the joyous tidings to all. Shortly afterward, the Son of Heaven closes his eyes and dies content with what he and his brothers and sisters have done. Many believe, however, that Hantei simply tired of a mortal existence, rejoined his mother in the Celestial Heavens.

Crowning of Hantei Genji: year 46

Due to a period of mourning, the Emerald Throne stands empty for a short time while the Empire recovers from the war and the loss of the Son of Heaven. Hantei Genji, the first son of Hantei, is crowned Hantei II five months after the death of his father. Genji, also called the Shining Prince, is responsible for the majority of the social traditions of the modern Empire. Genji's reign lasts over two hundred years, the blood of the Kami Hantei strong in his veins. Hantei Genji marries a Doji woman, cementing the tradition of the Hantei Emperor taking a Crane bride and the concept of primogeniture (inheritance by the first-born).

Birth of Hida Osano-Wo: circa year 48

Osano Wo, second son of the Kami Hida and offspring of the Thunder Dragon was born in this year.



Hida steps down as Champion of the Crab: year 63

Though Hida is a powerful Kami, he recognizes many traits in his son Osano Wo that he himself lacks, in particular leadership and charisma. Particularly impressed by his son's great triumphs against the trolls, the Kami Hida steps down from rulership of the Crab to bestow the mantle upon his son. Hida thereafter is often seen leading large groups of specially selected samurai on brutal strikes deep into the Shadowlands (sometimes lasting up to a year). He otherwise leaves the clan in his son's hands.

The Phoenix Clan find Uikku, the Serene Prophet: circa year 72

Uikku, the prophet of Shinsel's Tao, is a young child cursed with the gift of prophecy. His ravings are alternately inspiring or baffling, but many of them involve the future or interpretations of the Tao. The Phoenix take him into their custody, and transcribe all of his pronouncements dutifully. Although Uikku was young and seemed out of touch with the world, his understanding of the Tao was legendary, and the scrolls containing his prophecies amaze scholars with their accuracy, even today.

Mantis Clan Founded: circa year 80

Osano Wo chooses to acknowledge his illegitimate son Kenzan as his heir rather than the legitimate Kaimetsu-uo. Though relations between Kenzan and Kaimetsu-Uo are not hostile, Kaimetsu-Uo leaves Crab lands and finds his own destiny. He finds it across the seas of Rokugan, on the islands he names the Isles of Spice and Silk. His followers call themselves the Mantis, though they are not currently acknowledged as a clan. (In fact, the very idea of creating Minor Clans is a precedent that has not yet been established.)

The Crystal Prison created: year 82

The Scorpion Thunder Shosuro, after passing through a dozen different faces and identities, has begun to realize that her mind is no longer her own. Fearing the influence of the darkness within her, she surrenders herself to the Kami Togashi for help. Togashi realizes that he cannot save her, but he creates a crystal prison deep beneath Kyuden Togashi to contain the danger she represents. Shosuro allows herself to be confined.

Disappearance of Bayushi: year 83

The First Scorpion is said to have left behind his mask and sword for his son, with the note "I have lost her forever" before disappearing completely.

Death of Uikku, the Serene Prophet: circa year 90**Fox Clan founded: circa year 90**

The Fox are the descendants of the Ki-Rin, those who remained behind when Shinjo led her people out of Rokugan. Those who would become the Fox are ousted from their ancestral lands by the Lion. They are granted new land in Mori Kitsune, a family name and Minor Clan of their own. The Emperor forbids the Great Clans from declaring war upon them (thus establishing the precedent by which Great Clans may not initiate war with Minor Clans).

Hida Osano Wo murdered: year 97

The Champion of the Crab is murdered by an unknown assassin. His father, Hida, is missing on a long expedition in the Shadowlands, and with the powers of darkness on the rise Osano Wo's son Kenzan is reluctant to abandon his post. Instead, he sends a message of distress to his half-brother, who eagerly leaps upon the chance to avenge their father. Hunting the traitor to Phoenix lands with a fleet of Mantis sailors beside him, Kaimetsu-Uo arrives at the

doors of Shiro Shiba itself. When the Phoenix refuse to open the gates, Kaimetsu-Uo cries to his father for vengeance. Thunder roars and a stroke of pure lightning opens the gates of Shiro Shiba. The Phoenix quickly back down and agree to assist the samurai who so clearly acts on behalf of the elements themselves. The traitor is released into Kaimetsu-uo's custody and painfully executed.

Shortly thereafter, Phoenix scholars request that the Hantei grant the status of Fortune upon the departed Hida Osano Wo. Osano Wo is hereafter the Fortune of Fire and Thunder.

Death of Akodo: circa year 99

While surveying the construction of the Hall of Ancestors and the Ikoma Libraries, Akodo One-Eye is caught in an unexpected fight with beasts of the Shadowlands. The monsters make their way through the Shinomen Forest, preparing to attack the fledgling borders of the Empire. Akodo stands against the horde with one hundred of his men, and meets his enemy in what was once the Seikitsu Pass through the Spine of the World Mountains. When the battle seems lost, Akodo calls out to his mother, the Sun Goddess, to witness how brave men died. As the advancing Shadowlands beasts reach him, Akodo's mighty roar collapses the pass, bringing down a mountain upon him and the enemy.

Kuni Nakanu notices Taint on corpses: circa year 100

The first signs of the Shadowlands Taint, and its effects, are studied by the Crab Clan as early as the first century after the Empire's founding. Their scholarly research has saved many lives, and the information they have been able to discover during the thousand years of peace have been truly remarkable.

Second Century (101-200 IC)

Reported Death of Togashi: year 101

When Doji travels to the land of the Dragon clan to visit with her brother, Togashi, she is turned away at the gate. This was the first news of the death of the Dragon Kami.

Disappearance of Doji: year 102

Lady Doji is wracked with depression after watching the fickle mortal world shift and change as she remains constant. As she has never been close to her sole remaining sibling, Hida, Doji begins to feel very alone. With that, Lady Doji imparts her final wisdom to her son Nio and walks into the sea, never to be seen again.

Creation of the Badger clan: circa year 110

The Badger Clan, one of the smallest of Rokugan's Minor Clans, is founded to guard the northern passes of the Empire.

Book of Sun Tao written: circa year 145

The origins of the man known as Sun Tao are open to speculation, but it is generally believed that he wrote his treatise on warfare during this period. The writings of the ronin general are valued as greatly as the observations of Akodo himself, sometimes even more so. The missing original copies of his manuscript are among the most greatly prized treasures in Rokugan.

Emerald Magistrates and Emerald Legions founded: year 153

Experienced military officer Doji Hatsu and skilled courtier Soshi Saibankan begin to draft methods by which quality soldiers could be conscripted and magistrates could enforce the law of the Empire. Hatsu and Saibankan soon devise the framework for the Imperial Legions and the Emerald Magistrates, respectively. The new system

guarantees that the Emperor's conscripts and magistrates will work closely, with powers that complement one another without being excessive. The system persists without radical change to this day.

The first mention of the Naga: circa year 200

A Crab named Kaitu Sudaro loses his son in the Shinomen forest. The boy is rescued by the Mara, a creature with a great snake tail and a human body. By all accounts, this is the first notation in the Empire of the Naga, who soon become deeply integrated into Rokugani myth and legend.

Third Century (201-300)

Disappearance of the Kami Hida: year 210 (traditional date)

In the year 210, the aged Kami of the Crab took up his tetsubo, announced he intended to seek out his lost son, and departed into the Shadowlands. He was never seen again.

Invention of koku: year 243

Yasuki Tanaka invents the koku. The system of exchanging items of worth for goods or services existed long before Tanaka, but it is he who designs the koku as it is recognized today. The koku's design features the kanji of the Fortunes on one side and the Kami on the other. Though they are simple and recognizable, Tanaka's coins manage to confound most attempts at forgery. When the Emperor inquires as to the nature of the strange little copper coin (which was, at that point, used exclusively by the Crane) Tanaka gladly provides the Emperor with his minting plates as a gift.

Death of Hantei Genji: year 247

Like his father, Genji is said to have ascended into the Celestial Heavens upon his death. The latter part of Hantei Genji's rule secures Shinseism and the philosophy of Shintao in the Empire, although it does not become widely popular until later in the history of the Empire.

Death of Isawa Akuma: year 283

This date is important to note, as it correlates directly with the first emergence of Oni Lord Akuma from the Shadowlands. Oni, the demons of the Shadowlands, gain great power when they steal a name from their summoner. Akuma, one of the most powerful of all Oni, reportedly stole his name in this year from an Isawa shugenja who paid the price for ambition and power.

Fourth Century (301-400)

Beginning of Nezumi-Crab Alliance: year 314

This is the beginning of the famed Nezumi-Crab alliance (the existence of which the Crab have only recently admitted openly). Twelve year old samurai Kazuma has a strange rapport with Ratlings, and forges the bonds of trust between man and Nezumi. The Nezumi believe that Kazuma possessed the soul of both human and Nezumi, and went on to become a Transcendent spirit after his death.

Founding of the Snake Clan: year 339

Imperial magistrate Isawa Chuda successfully saves the Emperor's life from the deadly threat of a maho cult. In reward for his years of service and valorous actions, the Emperor declares Chuda to be the daimyo of the Snake Clan after Chuda proclaims that he is the Emperor's serpent, "creeping into the hidden places and striking down your enemies."

Founding of the Centipede Clan: year 347

Centered around a modest shugenja school, the family of the school's original sensei is given the lands and title of a Minor Clan. The sun-worshipping Centipede are given their status mostly due to their isolation from the Phoenix, as several Otomo point out to the Hantei that it would be much simpler to record their events and tax their peasants if they were treated as a separate entity.

Crowning of Hantei Fujiwa: year 371

Hantei V (also known as Hantei Fujiwa) was an exceptional Emperor for many reasons. He believed that the more recent Emperors were too concerned with increasing the quality of life in the Empire for certain areas instead of improving the Empire as a whole. Hantei Fujiwa was the first Emperor since Hantei himself to actually engage the forces of the Shadowlands in combat. Hantei V himself slew oni with the powerful Sword of the Hantei, and led the Imperial Legions in combat side by side with the Crab.

When the Emperor returned to Otosan Uchi, his wrath upon the Lion and Crane was great. He accused them of weakening the Crab through political attacks, requiring as a result his direct intervention on their behalf. Fujiwa's first wife died childless during the time he was in Crab lands, only furthering the Hantei's anger. Late in Fujiwa's reign, his eldest son was kidnapped by a conspiracy of Crane, Phoenix, and Scorpion courtiers calling themselves the Gozoku.

The Yasuki split and the Crane-Crab War: year 387

The great Crab-Crane war was the first large-scale internal war in Rokugan. Caused by the Crab seizing territory along the Crane's southern borders (presumably to feed the Crab's beleaguered troops after a number of major battles against the Shadowlands), and the split of the Yasuki family from Crane to Crab, the war lasts for over a decade.

Rulership of the Gozoku: years 391-435

After the kidnapping of Hantei Fujiwa's heir, the Hantei Emperor had little choice but to concede to the demands of the Gozoku Alliance. Fujiwa fell ill and died shortly after capitulating to the Gozoku, leaving his aged uncle, Otomo Tohojatsu, as regent until Hantei Kusada could rightfully claim the throne. Tohojatsu quickly fell in with the Gozoku, as he had always coveted possession of the Emerald Throne. Hantei Kusada (Hantei VI) was destined to serve as nothing more as a figurehead — by the time he was of age to take the throne, Otomo Tohojatsu's concessions to the Gozoku had rendered them completely in control. The Gozoku themselves were interested in establishing the independence of the clans, with the Hantei Emperor to serve as a "face" for their rule over the clan provinces. The Gozoku's rule was a prosperous time for Rokugan. They encouraged a detailed system of roadways and new ways of conducting trade and travel so that the clans would be able to stand more apart from each other. Art and culture flourished. Unfortunately, so did crime and corruption as it became clear that even the Great Clans cared nothing for the Emperor's law.

The Gozoku were led by Doji Raigu (son of the Crane Champion and later Champion himself), Shiba Gaijushiko (the Imperial Scribe), and Bayushi Atsuki (the Emperor's spy master and Scorpion Clan Champion).

Coronation of Hantei Kusada: year 397

The son of Hantei Fujiwa's coronation was held completely under the power of the Gozoku Alliance.

Fifth Century (401-500)

End of the Crab-Crane War and Sparrow Clan founded: year 400

The war resulted in an Imperial Edict banning large-scale open warfare among the Seven Clans of the Empire. Since that time, only small battles have been permitted, and only with the Emperor's consent. The entire massed armies of the Great Clans were not turned against one another from that day until the day of the Scorpion Clan Coup.

During an earlier failed negotiation for peace, Crane official Doji Onegano was ousted from the Crane Clan. The Emperor grants Onegano lands stripped from the Crab and Crane for his own use. The lands are harsh, unforgiving, and largely worthless. Onegano retires to a monastery but his son, Suzume, stays behind to found the Sparrow Clan.

Snake Clan corrupted: year 401

Chuda Tamihei, great-grandson of Isawa Chuda, succumbs to the temptation of a spirit and voices a deadly prayer to dark forces, unleashing a dreaded Shuten Doji in the lands of the Snake Clan. The spirit begins extending its influence throughout the tiny Snake Clan, completely assuming control in a matter of a month.

The Five Nights of Shame: year 402

Alerted to the presence of the Shuten Doji, the Council of Elemental Masters devote considerable resources to the Snake Clan's destruction. Huge numbers of Shiba bushi are lost in the battle before the Masters discover the proper means to combat the spirit. In the end, however, the Snake Clan is utterly destroyed. No trace remains of the Shuten Doji, or of the Phoenix magistrate sent to discover its ultimate fate.

Hida Tadaka & Matsu Itagi in Shadowlands: year 412

This is the famous event wherein an arrogant Lion Champion ventured into the Shadowlands, only to be rescued by the Crab. Both Champions thereafter died from the wounds they sustained fighting the Shadowlands together.

Hantei Kusada's spies uncovered by the Gozoku: year 428

Though the Gozoku made many contributions to Rokugani culture, few notable advances can be attributed to Hantei Kusada himself save one. During Kusada's reign, he sponsored religion heavily and is responsible for the creation of over twenty-four temples within the walls of Otosan Uchi alone. These places were considered sites Shinsei either walked or performed some holy act at. During the year 428, Kusada hit upon the notion of using the Brotherhood of Shinsei as spies and agents, as no one would suspect a monk of such behavior. The Brotherhood had no choice but to obey (as the Emperor is the ultimate head of the Shintao religion). However, the "spies" were caught, and the Gozoku decided to make an example of the Brotherhood. This is seen as the Gozoku's first mistake, as it turned more attention to the darker side of their control of the Empire. Kusada had several sons and daughters, but his heir would be his first-born, a son that was also controlled by the Gozoku.

The Gozoku ensured that all of Kusada's sons were fostered by the Scorpion, Phoenix, or Crane, enabling the Alliance to retain their hold on the Emerald Throne. Kusada's daughters were wed or fostered off to other clans for political alliances, helping the Gozoku gain increased control over the politics of the Empire.

Hantei Yugo-zohime fostered to the Lion: year 432

Yugo-zohime, a daughter of Hantei Kusada's is fostered to the Lion. Rather than marrying her to a courtier and teaching her to be a quiet,

respectful woman as the gozoku intend, the Matsu and Ikoma train her in the tenets of bushido and the wisdom of the Heavens — the Lion teach Hantei Yugo-zohime how to be an Empress. When she learns of the true glory of the Hantei Emperors, the young Empress plans to one day defeat the gozoku.

Coronation of Hantei Yugo-zohime: year 435

When Hantei Kusada dies of old age, his heir is brought from Phoenix lands to take the throne (and maintain the Gozoku stranglehold on the power of the Empire). However, Yugo-zohime challenges her brother to a duel for the throne, and defeats him. With the support of the Lion and Dragon behind a confident and powerful Hantei Emperor, the strength of the Gozoku is swiftly and suddenly shattered.

Many members of the Gozoku's three clans either quickly retired to monasteries or die in duels within the year. Shiba Gaijushiko assists Yugo-zohime in dismantling the Gozoku's power base in return for his own pardon. No formal charges were brought against any Gozoku members, though Yugo-zohime's magistrates do arrest them for various criminal dealings. Yugo-zohime (Hantei VII) hands many functions of the Imperial Court that the Gozoku used to their advantage over to the Otomo family, effectively preventing any such attempt to make a pawn of the Throne in such a manner again.

Gusai family name awarded: year 438

Centuries after the Mantis were informally established, Gusai, current leader of the Mantis, is invited to Otosan Uchi. During a contest of wits with the Emperor, Gusai shows Yugo-zohime the strength of steel over words by drawing a blade to the Hantei's throat. Gusai wins his argument with the Emperor, as well as Minor Clan status and the Gusai family name. The Son of Heaven has the last word, however, and proves the strength of his words by ordering Gusai's execution.

Gaijin Ambassadors Arrive at Imperial Court: circa year 440

At the behest of the Mantis, a small group of gaijin explorers are allowed admission to the Imperial Court while their fleet docks in Golden Sun Bay. The Emperor opens limited trade and exchange of ideas with the foreign visitors. The gaijin are allowed two years to prove their honor and their respect for the Empire.

Battle of White Stag/Raging Seas: circa year 442

The gaijin are commanded to leave Otosan Uchi, and retaliate with violence. In the ensuing battle, Hantei Yugo-zohime is tragically slain. The united clans band together to slaughter the gaijin, driving the shattered remnants of their fleet to sea, where many of their number are consumed in a mysterious storm.

Yugo-zohime's uncle Hantei Muhaki assumes the throne. Shortly thereafter the Emperor bestows Minor Clan status upon Agasha Kasuga and his followers, despite the fact that they have apparently helped gaijin attackers flee to safety. The true reasons behind Muhaki's decision are known only to Kasuga and the Emperor himself. The Tortoise Clan is born.

Boar Clan founded: year 447

The descendants of a group of Crab explorers thought lost in the Twilight Mountains since the year 383 arrive in Otosan Uchi with three tons of jade and iron. Their leader, Heichi, presents these as a payment of back taxes to the Emperor. Heichi's followers refuse to return to their former clan. Amazed by Heichi's story and intrigued by his profound knowledge of bushido and law, the Emperor bestows Minor Clan status upon them.

The Emperor's Blessing written: year 472

The Emperor's Blessing, Miya Mai's most critically acclaimed work, tells the tale of the end of the War Against Fu Leng and describes the founding of the Miya household. Mai considered the work "too tame" and only completed it so that the commission promised by her patron would provide enough money for her to survive. The play is widely regarded to be Mai's best, and spawns a host of imitations.

Coronation of Hantei X: year 487

Hantei X was the first Hantei to give up his personal name to simply be referred to as "The Hantei." However, his name has been lost for all time, and in many texts he is referred to as "He who sacrificed his name for the Empire."

Kuni Nakanu's journals discovered: year 499

Otomo Jama, younger brother of the Imperial heir, finds his destiny taking a sudden turn when he happens upon the resting place of Kuni Nakanu's mahto texts. With the help of a Dragon and Crane shugenja, Jama translates the texts and discovers the secrets of power. A small cult forms, with Jama at the helm.

As leader of this secret society, Otomo Jama takes a new name — Iuchiban.

Sixth Century (501-600)**The Anvil of Despair is created: year 501**

The sinister Agasha Ryuden, a guest of the Boar Clan within their home in the Twilight Mountains, forges a mighty anvil from the ore formed by the blood of the First Oni. Ryuden sacrifices the entire Boar Clan to the foul creation, resulting in one of the darkest and most powerful nemuranai in all of Rokugan. Their tortured spirits combine into the Shakoki Dogu, a vengeful and malicious spirit that haunts the mountains for centuries to come.

Bloodswords Forged: year 508

Asahina Yajinden later uses the Anvil of Despair to forge the dreaded Bloodswords, Ambition, Passion, Judgment, and Revenge, for his dark master Iuchiban. The swords are given to the Scorpion, Crane, Crab, and Lion clan daimyo respectively.

Red Snow Battle: year 509

Akodo Meikuko violently reacts to a Togashi monk's casual statement in the court, mobilizing an army of 20,000 soldiers to attack Togashi Mountain. Only 2,000 survive the great winter battle. Meikuko takes her life with the sword given to her by Asahina Yajinden. Her name is thereafter synonymous with "mistake" among the Lion.

Death of Hida Tenburo: year 509

Crab daimyo Hida Tenburo suddenly murders his children in their sleep. He thereafter commits suicide with the blade given to him by Asahina Yajinden.

Suicide of Doji Tanaka: year 510

Crane daimyo Doji Tanaka confesses his love for an eleven year old geisha to his assembled court, and thereafter leaps from the cliffs of Kyuden Doji to his death on the foamy rocks below. He carries the blade given to him by Asahina Yajinden.

Battle of Stolen Graves: year 510

Scorpion Champion Bayushi Rikoji, who has not yet touched the blade given to him by Asahina Yajinden, suspects foul sorcery after the deaths of the daimyo who wielded the other three blades. Rikoji dispatches Scorpion magistrate and shugenja Soshi Takasho to find the creator of the blade. Together with Legionnaire Akodo

Minobe they discover the secret cult of the blood sorcerer Iuchiban, who plans to animate the bodies of the Imperial crypts as an army to be used against the Emperor himself. Rousing the armies of the clans, Iuchiban is eventually captured, killed, and entombed within a great structure that was enchanted to contain his blackened soul. The architect, Kaiu Gineza, is also entombed therein by Scorpion assassins so the secrets of the tomb will remain safe.

After Iuchiban's defeat, Asahina Yajinden's mind is erased. He becomes a gardener in the Emperor's gardens. The Emperor thereafter issues a formal edict that all corpses of the dead will henceforth be cremated rather than buried, to prevent the use of the bodies of honored ancestors as vessels of evil magic.

Mantis family name 'Gusai' removed: year 510

The Gusai family name, attributed to the nobility of the Mantis Clan, was revoked after only three generations after it was given. Gusai Roshida, Mantis daimyo, attempted a coup and held the Emperor's son hostage in the Mantis isles. The prince was returned and the Gusai family destroyed. Because the Mantis Clan chose to betray their Lord and execute his family because of their shame, the Mantis were allowed to retain their clan status.

Battle of Kenson Gakka: year 533

After a failed attack on Kyuden Ikoma, the Matsu retaliate and attack the Shiro no Meiyu. The Lion make an example of the Scorpion present, killing everyone within and renaming the city Kenson Gakka ("Humility's Lesson").

Birth of Hantei XVI: Year 569

The birth of the Steel Chrysanthemum (as Hantei XVI would come to be called) occurs under portents so ominous that their like has not been seen since the time of Iuchiban. The Shosuro, Ikoma, and Asahina quietly ignore this fact.

Reign of the Steel Chrysanthemum: from 589 to 597

Hantei XVI takes the throne when his father retires early at his son's request. Hantei XV believes his honest, clever, and capable son will usher in a new age of prosperity. Hantei XVI, however, proves a different sort of ruler. Plagued with paranoia since birth, the Steel Chrysanthemum's world is slowly overrun by ghost assassins, traitors in every corner, and enemies in each crowd. Hantei XVI enacts orders to mercilessly crush any threat to his power, real or imagined. Thousands die subjected to his cruel reign. Hantei XVI is finally deposed when the Imperial Guard assault the Hantei after ordering his own mother's death at the bare hands of Crab Champion Hida Tsuneo. Hantei, Tsuneo, and those few loyal to the Steel Chrysanthemum are all destroyed.

Those who follow the Steel Chrysanthemum into death are to be henceforth cursed to follow him forever.

Seventh Century (601-700 IC)**Seppun Hanako writes the Articles of Heaven: year 622**

Having endured the brutal reign of Hantei XVI during her youth, Hanako eagerly assists the young and inexperienced Hantei XVII with his rule of the Empire. Hoping to curb baser tendencies of Rokugani society, she pens the Articles of Heaven, a set of legal reforms that touches on every aspect of the Empire's legal system. Hantei XVII enacts the Articles of Heaven, resulting in a new foundation for law in Rokugan. Among the tenets of the Articles are sections that regulate the use of torture, increase quality of life for the helmin class, and place strict requirements on the treatment of prisoners and hostages.

The Kusatte Iru is defeated: year 634

Fearing that none other could possibly defeat the dreaded creature, Kuni Harike sets out to end the threat of the Kusatte Iru, perhaps the largest and most powerful oni ever spawned by the Shadowlands. Armed with his magic and a dark and sinister artifact, Harike sets out accompanied only by his friend and yojimbo, Kuni Ryute. Although Ryute is slain and Harike's soul irrevocably corrupted, the foul beast is placed in a deep slumber from which it may never awaken, ending the threat it poses to the Empire. Harike preserves his friend by encasing him in crystal, which unbeknownst to him prevents Ryute's spirit from entering the afterlife. Perishing after the twin feats of preserving his friend and defeating the oni, Harike's remains are eventually retrieved by monks who establish a temple in the shugenja's memory.

Yasuki Fumoki lost at sea: year 671

One of the most prolific pirates of his age, Yasuki Fumoki was responsible for raiding innumerable Crane trade vessels, sending their wealth to the coffers of the Crab Clan. In 671, his command ship is attacked by a gigantic sea serpent. Survivors report to the Crab daimyo that Fumoki was last seen burying his blade in the beast's gullet.

After Fumoki's death, Crab Champion Hida Tsuneko dispatches scouts to seek out the survivors of the pirate's rumored Nezumi crew. These Nezumi are offered positions in the Crab navy, as their great agility, adaptability, and cunning make them excellent sailors.

Otomo Madoko writes *The Subtlety of Court*: year 689

A powerful force in court and a student of the Book of Sun Tao by the renowned ronin general, courtier Otomo Madoko is dared by a Lion diplomat to compare Sun Tao's tactics to court politics. Recognizing parallels between a bushi on the battlefield and a courtier in the midst of court, Madoko pens *The Subtlety of Court*, an examination of the battlefield — the courts of Rokugan.

Eighth Century (701-800 IC)**The Dragonfly Clan is founded: year 704**

Despite her betrothal to a samurai from the Lion Clan, Phoenix shugenja Isawa Maroko marries her true love, Mirumoto Asijin of the Dragon. Their parent clans, notorious for their tolerant and enigmatic ways, permit the couple to settle in the plains south of the Dragon Clan. Maroko's jilted suitor, Akodo Yokutsu, leads an army of 5,000 Lions against the couple's holdings, only to be stopped by two armies, one Dragon and one Phoenix, preventing his attack. Furthermore, a huge force of shugenja prevents his retreat until Yokutsu swears never again to harass Maroko and Asijin. Pleased with the outcome of the Battle of Kyuden Tonbo, the pro-Crane Emperor awards the couple a family name, Tonbo, and Minor Clan status.

The Battle of the Great Climb: year 711

Insulted by an Agasha ambassador in court, the vengeful Lion general Akodo Yokutsu leads an army of Lion against the Dragon Clan, careful to avoid the lands of Mirumoto Asijin and Isawa Maroko lest he violate the oath he swore seven years previous. Laying siege to the Dragon, Yokutsu demands a duel with Asijin to redeem his honor. The Dragon daimyo Togashi Ayoko arranges the duel, in which Asijin is killed. This is part of an agreement between Ayoko and Asijin, one which extends the Dragon Clan's protection to the Dragonfly in exchange for Asijin's sacrifice. The arrogant Yokutsu declares himself the daimyo of the Dragonfly and states his intention to wed Isawa Maroko, but is challenged and killed in a duel by Asijin and Maroko's son, Tonbo Kiyuden. With the threat of violence from the Lion temporarily appeased, the Dragonfly Clan become the Dragon's official emissaries.



The Battle of the Tidal Landbridge: year 715

While a sizable force of Shadowlands creatures attacks the Crab forces elsewhere, a lone and sparsely defended watchtower near Earthquake Fish Bay is attacked by a cunning Oni no Kinjiro and his minions. Severely outnumbered, the Crab seem doomed despite their commander's battle prowess. Just when all seems lost, a hunting horn sounds across the bay. Dainyo Daidoji Masashigi and his guardsmen charge across the Tidal Landbridge and attack the foul creatures. The weary and battered Crab are quickly left behind as Masashigi forces the creatures onto the Landbridge. There, they fight the Oni no Kinjiro as the waves rise up around them, swallowing everything. The Crab wait, but no survivors emerge. Only a battered helmet, once worn by Masashigi, is found. The Crab build a shrine to the valiant hero, and henceforth have close relations with the so-called "iron cranes," the Daidoji family.

Hiruma Castle falls to the Shadowlands: year 716

Caught off-guard by a massive Shadowlands army, the samurai of Hiruma Castle are quickly overrun and completely routed. The dark army is greater than any witnessed since the days of the war with Fu Leng. The Hiruma are pushed back all the way to the Hida provinces, where the army is finally stopped by powerful magic from the Kuni family.

The Battle of the Cresting Wave: 716

After the fall of Hiruma Castle, the Crab Clan rallies around the provinces of the Hida. The great army of the oni lord Maw is delayed by a powerful young shugenja named Kuni Osaku, who creates a gigantic wave of water from the Saigo River to keep them at bay while the Crab scramble to create the Great Carpenter Wall. After 73 days, the wall is completed. Osaku collapses dead from the strain of her magic and the armies of the Maw attack the Wall. Despite their numbers, the Shadowlands creatures cannot overwhelm the entrenched Crab, bolstered as they are by hired ronin and samurai of the other Great Clans. The Maw's forces are eventually beaten back into the Shadowlands, where a hidden force of bloodthirsty Hiruma exact a terrible vengeance for the loss of their homeland. The Maw is slain in the battle — his army is shattered, but the Hiruma provinces remain under the control of the Shadowlands for centuries to come.

The Battle of Sleeping River: year 750

Two hundred years after his first defeat, the dreaded sorcerer Iuchiban again rises to threaten the Empire. Armed with the secret of moving his spirit from body to body, Iuchiban spends the two centuries following his defeat creating a massive cult throughout the Rokugan. The Bloodspeakers, his loyal followers, amass a great army of corpses on the plain near Sleeping River. An ise zumi discovers Iuchiban's spirit and alerts the clans to his treachery. After driving Iuchiban's forces from Ryoko Owari, the united clans converge upon the plains of Sleeping River and destroy the sorcerer's undead army. The ise zumi who first discovered Iuchiban manages to capture and hold his spirit until a suitable tomb can be erected, allowing the Bloodspeaker to finally be imprisoned for good.

Hare Clan founded: year 750

For his brave efforts against the armies of Iuchiban, the ronin Reichin is granted the family name Usagi, and Minor Clan status. The Hare Clan is born.

The death of Hiruma Sokokai: year 755

The last surviving student of the Hiruma bushi school, Hiruma Sokokai's death results in the loss of the advanced techniques of the Hiruma family. With no school or formalized dojo, the Hiruma begin training informally among themselves.

Kitsu Taiko becomes the Master of Fire: year 761

Born of peasant stock, Kitsu Taiko has an instinctive command of the kami. He is discovered by the Kitsu at a young age after a spirit leads them to him, and is quickly inducted into their ranks. Taiko is a dominant force among the Lion throughout his life, influencing many great battles and making numerous innovations in areas relating to fire magic. When he reaches the age of retirement, the Phoenix offer him the position of Elemental Master of Fire, which he accepts. He is the only non-Phoenix to ever hold such a position.

The Oracle of Fire falls to Fu Leng: year 774

A mere decade after having been selected as the new Oracle of Fire, a minor Isawa shugenja reappears in the land of the Phoenix. Apparently insane, the Oracle goes on a rampage, destroying several small villages and an entire legion of Shiba samurai before disappearing in a massive explosion that completely incinerates an entire shrine. At the same time, the Crab serving upon the Great Carpenter Wall witness an enormous explosion of fire from deep within the Shadowlands. The Phoenix theorize that the Oracle somehow became exposed to the Taint of the dark lord and was called to the Shadowlands to serve him. It is a grim reminder that no one is immune to corruption.

The fall of Morikage Toshi: year 782

Forsaken by her unloving and callous husband Shiba Kojiro, a young bride formerly of the Dragon Clan takes her life to escape the pain of the dishonor. Mad with grief, the bride's mother lays a powerful curse upon the husband's castle. Soon the vines and trees reach out and reclaim the castle, wrapping it in thick vegetation that renders it useless. All attempts to magically dispel the curse end in failure, and in the end the Phoenix abandon the castle rather than arouse the ire of the vengeful spirits there. The castle lies vacant for centuries, home only to the restless ghosts that wander the halls.

Ninth Century (801-900 IC)**The Unicorn Clan returns to Rokugan: year 815**

After eight centuries of wandering abroad, the clan once known as the Ki-Rin return at last to the Emerald Empire. Pursued by the hordes of the Shadowlands, the Unicorn know they cannot afford to take time to peacefully explain their approach to the Crab. Instead, the Unicorn return with a vengeance. Their powerful cavalry smashes through the Crab fortifications and speeds into Rokugan. Confronted by an army of the Scorpion Clan, the Unicorn display bizarre galjin tactics in another crushing victory at the Battle of White Shore Plain. As the Great Clans debate over whether or not to attack the strangers again, the Unicorn emissaries find allies among the Crane by returning a fan given to Shinjo by Lady Doji centuries ago. The Emperor decrees that the Ki-Rin have come home and restores their lands to them.

The Naga stir in their sleep: year 815

Distracted by the return of the Unicorn, a small force of Shadowlands creatures forge through the Crab's defenses and make it into Rokugan. Moving through the Shinomen Mori, the creatures destroy a large clutch of Naga eggs. Many Naga are awakened by the disturbance in the Akasha, and quickly crush all traces of the Shadowlands force. A foul, Tainted marsh is all that remains of the creatures' army.

A new Hiruma school established: year 816

After a full century with no formal school in which to train their Hiruma scouts, the Crab realize that the techniques of the Hiruma are seriously atrophied. Nothing remains of their once renowned techniques, and plans are launched to build a new school. The Hiruma, however, refuse to accept charity from their kin and will not attend a school occupied by another Crab family.

The newly returned Unicorn provide a solution. As a gesture of goodwill to assuage their earlier violation of the Crab's defenses, they offer to house and train Hiruma students among the Shinjo family. The Hiruma accept, and in return they assist the Unicorn in constructing their new homes in Rokugan. Within a matter of months, the techniques of the Hiruma swiftly improve with access to adequate training facilities and the advice of experienced Shinjo scouts.

The Kitsuki family of the Dragon Clan is formed: year 820

Agasha Kitsuki, a brilliant yet lackluster student of the Agasha shugenja school, is accused of murder. Given twenty-four hours to prove his innocence, Kitsuki produces both proof and testimony exonerating him. In recognition of his incredible powers of perception, he is given leave by the Dragon Clan to form his own family, the Kitsuki.

The Moto ride to the Shadowlands: year 825

Led by family daimyo Moto Tsume, a large force of Moto warriors from the Unicorn Clan ride to the Shadowlands, hoping to aid the Crab in their struggle against the dark forces there. He does not return.

Battle of the Chrysanthemum Petals: year 827

Moto Tsume returns from the Shadowlands at the head of a great Shadowlands army, brutally attacking the Crab and his former kin in the Unicorn. Though the Crab and Unicorn manage to fight off the invading horde, the surviving Moto are stained by the utter corruption of their daimyo. On that day, the White Guard are born, a group of Moto warriors who wear only white — the color of death — and will not rest until the last Dark Moto has been slain for good.

The Battle of the Broken Daisho: year 827

Faced with a conflict between the Lion and the Crane that might plunge the Empire into war, Phoenix Champion Shiba Toriko takes an army of Phoenix and intercedes. The Phoenix warriors keep the armies of the other clans from reaching one another, but do not lift a finger in their own defense, dying by the dozen in the hands Lion archers. Perplexed, both Lion and Crane pull back. The Crane general, Kakita Gosano, is incensed and enters a duel with Toriko despite her obviously superior dueling skills. Toriko never flinches, and is cut down. Deeply shamed by his pride, Gosano sends his forces home and enters a monastery, vowing to work toward the peaceful world Toriko desired.

The Shimushigaki is defeated: year 830

Twelve shugenja valiantly sacrifice themselves to banish the Shimushigaki, a powerful gaki returned from the spirit realms following its defeat with Iuchiban's armies. A shrine is erected in the shugenja's honor, and the monks there believe that so long as the Bells of the Dead ring regularly, the Shimushigaki cannot return to the mortal world.

Founding of the Falcon Clan: year 834

The Emperor grants the lands of the Toritaka province to the son of an ashigaru spearman who had saved the life of the Imperial Advisor. Yotogi (the peasant boy) quickly discovers the nature of the assassin — a peasant half-maddened by the possession of an evil

spirit. The Falcon quickly finds their meaning when their studies into the nature of ghosts and other supernatural occurrences leads them to be in high demand. The Falcon, as a result of their nature, have been allies of the Crab since the beginning.

Naga ruins are discovered: year 925

Shinjo Fujimaka and Ikoma Gohesu, while mapping the outer reaches of the Shinomen Mori on behalf of the Imperial Cartographers, discover ruins believed to have once been a great Naga city. Although ruins had previously been discovered west of the Unicorn lands and near the Plains above Evil, this is the first indication of a major Naga settlement near the Shinomen Mori. Scholars believe that this intrusion of mankind into the Naga's domain is what initiated its slow awakening process.

The Night of Falling Stars: year 960

After a three-week siege of Shiro no Yagin, the Akodo legions seem destined to capture not only the castle, but the Daidoji troops that occupy it. Preferring to risk death rather than surrender, every man, woman and child occupying Shiro no Yagin leaps from the castle walls to the raging river below. Their torches trace their path resembling a night of falling stars.

Eleventh Century (1001-1100 IC)

Hantei Jodan is born: year 1078

The infant Hantei Jodan is born to Hantei XXXVII, formerly Hantei Yatoshin. In his youth, Jodan proves to be an exceptional student of the court — a wise, compassionate man. His rule is expected to be long and prosperous.

The Battle at Kyuden Kitsune: year 1090

Each attempting to expand their holdings, the Hare and the Fox Clans begin a series of border skirmishes that threaten to explode into full-blown war. An attempt at mediation by the Crane results in a temporary truce unfortunately rendered null by the unforeseen assassination of many Fox dignitaries. Although the Hare deny involvement, the Fox immediately attack, supported by the Crane. The Fox are victorious, but their daimyo blames the Crane and challenges their emissary, Kakita Toshimoko, to a duel. Toshimoko wins easily. The Emperor decrees that Crane "advisors" will assist both Minor Clans in important diplomatic decisions henceforth.

Twelfth Century (1101-1200 IC)

The Battle of Fate's Gorge: year 1100

Following a slight to the Matsu family's generals, Isawa and Matsu forces meet on the field of battle to prove once and for all whether the Imperial shugenja are truly needed by the Emperor. In an attempt to interrupt the Lion's leadership, Master of Water, Isawa Kalyoko, magically teleports eight Shiba bushi into the war tent of the Lion to kill general Matsu Uniri and his wife Yunaki. The Phoenix fail to account for the couple's daughter, however, and ten-year-old Matsu Tsuko saves her mother's life by crushing the throat of the final Phoenix assassin with a boken. With Matsu Yunaki leading the Lion troops, the Phoenix are defeated on the field of battle the following day.

Hantei XXXVIII takes the throne: year 1103

At the age of 26, the rightful heir to the throne, Hantei Jodan, is crowned the 38th Emperor of Rokugan. A daring and spirited young man, Hantei XXXVIII finds his life force slowly crushed over the years by the relentless conflicts between the Great Clans.

Hantei Sotorii is born: year 1107

After the death of his third wife, Hantei XXXVIII took up the company of a Crane concubine. As soon as the boy is born and survives (infant mortality is always a factor in Rokugan), the Emperor marries his mother, making her the Empress and Sotorii the heir to the throne. Unfortunately, his mother dies victim of a mysterious fever a short three years after his birth.

The Wasp Clan is founded: year 1109

Born of a Scorpion father and a Lion mother, the young man named Tsuruchi survives both clans' treachery, losing both his parents and the castle that is his birthright. With cunning and stealth, he reclaims his home and kills the Lion that usurped it, his uncle. Tsuruchi presents his dilemma to the Emerald Champion, a Crane who shares his distaste for the Lion and Scorpion, and is given leave to create his own clan. The Wasp Clan is born, sworn into the service of the Emerald Champion.

The Yotsu family name granted: year 1111

A mountain-dwelling ronin, the warrior Yotsu discovers that the caravan of Empress Hochiahime (Hantei XXXVIII's second wife) has been attacked by a large Bloodspeaker cult. The cultists kill the Empress' infant children, and all the Seppun guardsmen attached to the caravan. The Empress Hochiahime and the young heir Sotorii are taken captive, intended for a sacrifice in order to fulfill an ancient prophecy. Yotsu creeps into the camp with the blade of a fallen guardsman. Though he knows he cannot possibly defeat the Bloodspeakers alone, he asks the Empress for permission to die in the Empress' name. The Empress forbids it, instead insisting the ronin rescue the heir Sotorii, passing Yotsu a message for the Hantei to mourn her and her unborn child.

With no other options, Yotsu exchanges his youngest son in Sotorii's place and leaves. Weeks later, the young heir is reunited with his true father, the Emperor Hantei XXXVIII. In recognition of Yotsu's sacrifice, he is given the name Yotsu Yatoshin, the name of the Emperor's father, and a small fiefdom in the Mountains of Regret as well as rule over a district in Otsan Uchi. Later explorations by the Imperial Legions find the Bloodspeaker Cult gone, and it is presumed that Empress Hochiahime was sacrificed to their blasphemous rituals.

Sword of Yotsu otokodate formed: year 1116

Yotsu Yatoshin begins swearing ronin outside his family to the Yotsu name and training them in the techniques he devised while living deep in the mountains.

Yoritomo becomes the daimyo of the Mantis Clan: year 1117

Well known for his anger over the Mantis' station as a Minor Clan, many in the Mantis feel that Yoritomo will lead them to greatness, perhaps paving the way for them to play a more significant role in Rokugan.

The Badger Clan daimyo is killed**while visiting the Crane lands: year 1118**

Although the Badger are a very minor influence in Rokugan, the dishonor of the daimyo's assassination while in their lands is a great embarrassment to the Crane. There are whispers in court that the assassination was a result of the increasing tension between the Lion and the Crane, but the killer is never caught.

Kitsuki Kaagi disappears: year 1120

Born a member of the Matsu family, Kaagi turned to the magistrates of the Kitsuki after his father died, poisoned. Many years later, Kaagi stumbles into several encounters with the mysterious supernatural

force known as the Living Shadow. He compiles a journal detailing his experiences and accumulated knowledge and dispatches his eta servant to carry it to the daimyo of the Kitsuki. She is the last person to see Kaagi, for he disappears without a trace after her departure.

Lion Champion Akodo Arasou is killed: year 1120

In an attempt to retake Toshi Ranbo wo Shien Shite Reigisaho, also known as Violence behind Courtliness City and the Castle of the Lion, a large force of Lion samurai attack the well-entrenched Daidoji troops. Despite the valor of Akodo Arasou and his intended bride, Matsu family daimyo Matsu Tsuko, the Lion are unable to retake the city from the Crane Clan. Furthermore, the Champion of the Lion is killed in the fighting. His younger brother, Akodo Toturi, is recalled from the monastery where he was sent years ago to become the new Lion Champion. Despite his impressive tactical skills, Toturi is despised by Matsu Tsuko, who compares him to her lost betrothed.

The Three Man Alliance is formed: year 1121

Following a series of minor squabbles over borders in court, the Scorpion Clan dispatches tactician Bayushi Tomaru to deal with the neighboring Sparrow Clan. Supremely confident that his forces can defeat whatever resistance the tiny Minor Clan can offer, Tomaru is caught completely off-guard when the Sparrow are aided in battle by the archers of the Wasp Clan and the shugenja of the Fox Clan, both of which have holdings near the Sparrow. Tomaru has no choice but to retreat. He is publicly rebuked by Bayushi Shoji for his failure against such minor opponents. The daimyo of the three Minor Clans meet following their unexpected victory and agree to form a permanent alliance against the aggression of the Scorpion Clan.

Opium War rages in Ryoko Owari Toshi: year 1122

Manipulated by outside forces, the three criminal opium cartels of the City of Lies turn against one another. For weeks, entire rows of warehouses are burned and many deaths occur under mysterious circumstances. The violence continues until the Emerald Magistrates of the city hunt down the responsible parties and bring the opium war to an abrupt halt.

The Darkfever plague strikes the Phoenix lands: year 1123

A solar eclipse releases Oni no Kuzushi from its prison in the spirit realm after two centuries of confinement. While bound to a forgotten estate deep within the Isawa woodlands, the oni uses its foul powers to unleash a lethal plague spread with magic. In the lands of the Phoenix, this proves a deadly curse and many lives are lost before clever magistrates locate and destroy the oni.

Pirates plague the Crane-Mantis trade routes: year 1123

Many important shipments between these two clans are lost at sea to pirates, causing each to question the other's honesty and intentions. Although the losses are light at first, they continue to escalate for two years until magistrates of the Emperor determine that a treacherous Lion, Matsu Shindoku, is the culprit. Shindoku had been attempting to threaten affairs between the Crane and the Mantis. This revelation further damages the relationship between the Crane and Lion clans.

The Oracle of Fire prepares to depart the mortal realm: year 1123

After several centuries as Oracle, the man who is known as the Oracle of Fire prepares himself for ascension into the Celestial Heavens. His choice of a successor, however, is discovered by a shocked and outraged Scorpion Clan: the Oracle has chosen an eta girl to replace him. The Scorpion attempt to manipulate the Oracle into declaring



one of their own the new Oracle of Fire, but the plan fails and the enraged Oracle destroys a large piece of the Scorpion Clan's countryside. He is eventually appeased by a group of industrious samurai, however, and balance is restored.

The Hare Clan is destroyed: year 1123

After the Soshi Yukio attacks and is killed by Usagi Ozaki, a Scorpion army under the command of Bayushi Tomaru arrives at Shiro Usagi. The castle is destroyed and the daimyo, Usagi Oda, is killed. Tomaru takes Oda's daughter Usagi Tomoe captive while Oda's son Ozaki disappears with the Hare ancestral blade. After the castle's destruction, the Emperor disbands the clan upon hearing sworn testimony from four sources of Hares practicing maho.

The Scorpion Clan Coup: year 1123

The Scorpion Champion Bayushi Shoji discovers an ancient prophecy that indicates that the Emperor will become possessed by the dark god Fu Leng. Eager to save the Empire and under the thrall of the Bloodsword Ambition, Shoji launches a devious plan to prevent the prophecy by ending the Hantei line. He secretly scatters his army throughout Otosan Uchi, the massive capital city. Using his friendship with the Emperor to ingratiate him, Shoji cuts Hantei XXXVIII down in cold blood, sending his troops throughout the city to suddenly and brutally seize control. Believing both the Emperor and his heir dead, Shoji declares himself Emperor. Shoji desperately stalls the armies of the clans until the Crab arrive, as he hopes Hida Kisada will ally with the Scorpion. The Crab do not, however, and the Scorpion army is crushed by the combined armies of the clans. Shoji himself is slain in a duel with Akodo Toturi, the Champion of

the Lion. Believing the Hantei line to have been exterminated, Toturi declares himself the Emperor of Rokugan to prevent the outbreak of a war among the clans.

Hantei Sotorii becomes Hantei XXXIX: year 1123

Having been rescued from the Coup by the Phoenix Clan, the heir to the throne returns to Otosan Uchi after a rushed gempukku ceremony. His first edict upon taking the throne is the dissolution of the Scorpion Clan following their treachery, and the disgrace of Bayushi Shoji by discarding his remains on a communal pyre. Akodo Toturi protests this treatment of an honorable foe, angering the new Emperor. As punishment for his insolence, the Hantei declares Toturi to be ronin and removes the Akodo family name from the Lion Clan. The new Lion Champion Matsu Tsuko quickly decrees that anyone bearing the Akodo name must either swear fealty to the Matsu, Ikoma, or Kitsu, join the Deathseekers, live as ronin, or die (either by seppuku or by her own hand). The renowned sensei Akodo Kage is the exception to this edict. As an afterthought, Hantei XXXIX takes Bayushi Kachiko as his bride to put an end to the traitorous Bayushi line forever.

Yogo Junzo opens the first Black Scroll: year 1123

In anguish over the death of Bayushi Shoji and enraged at the audacity of the Emperor to so dishonor gifted and visionary man by destroying his family and clan, Yogo Junzo violates his clan's ancient duty and opens the first of the twelve Black Scrolls. The scroll creates a deadly Wasting Disease that begins to spread across Rokugan, bringing misery and death to all who contract it. The spell also transforms Junzo, corrupting him and crafting him into one of Fu Leng's

undead servants. A short time later, Junzo opens a second Black Scroll to craft his base of operations, an Iron Citadel in the heart of the Shadowlands.

The Naga awaken: year 1124

Although scouts have been awakening and active for nearly two centuries, it is not until now that the Naga begin to awaken in significant numbers. It is still a slow process, and one that will require months or years to complete, but at last the serpent folk begin to stir from their sleep of ages and circulate in the world again.

The Lion-Crane conflict erupts into war: year 1124

The persistent conflicts between the Lion and Crane along their shared border explode after a pair of massive battles. The ancient rivalry between the clans is manipulated by Bayushi Sozui and the traitor Kitsu Goden, who instigate the Battle on the Plains of Gaiju Shindai and the Battle of the Forgotten Tide. Both battles are worsened by Goden unleashing the vengeful spirits of Toshigoku to possess the bodies of mortal warriors. Fortunately, a small band of samurai discover, expose, and defeat them before their foul plan corrupts all of Rokugan. The Lion and the Crane stand down from their battles for a few short months before eventually escalating once again.

The Hare Clan is reborn: year 1125

Following the heroic efforts of Usagi Ozaki and his companions to clear the Hare clan's soiled reputation, the Emperor reinstates the tiny clan's holdings and family name. Though their castle lies in ruins and many yet look upon the Hare with suspicion, they are a clan once more, and their pride is overwhelming. The Hare begin the long, painful process of rebuilding.

Preparation for the Clan War begins: year 1126

With the mysterious Wasting Disease raging across Rokugan and an ailing, heirless Emperor upon the throne, the Great Clans of the Empire begin preparation for the inevitable conflict. The Lion mass for war against their ancient enemies, the Crane. The Crab break their vows by forming a dark alliance with the Shadowlands. Hida Kisada believes that he can use the Shadowlands as a tool to seize control of the Empire for himself, then using his power to crush the Shadowlands once and for all. Late in the winter, the Crab army begins its march north.

The Badger Clan falls: year 1126

When Emerald Magistrate Kalu Osuki travels to the northern reaches of Rokugan to deliver an Imperial edict, he discovers that the strongholds of the Badger Clan have been destroyed. A monstrous oni, summoned by unknown parties, has destroyed virtually every living being within the northern mountains. The great beast is eventually destroyed, but at great cost: the Badger Clan is all but extinct. Due to the Emperor's failing health, the name and Minor Clan status of the Badger are never formally removed.

The Henshin are exposed: year 1126

Manipulated by the dire Kuni Yori, the families of the Phoenix Clan fight amongst themselves while the Empire deteriorates into war around them. Using the insane Asako Oyo as a pawn, Yori demonstrates the secrets of immortality held by the Asako family to the jealous Isawa, ensuring that the two families will spend the next few months completely occupied with their centuries-old rivalry and not the machinations of the Crab Clan.

The Elemental Terrors are created: year 1126

Coming together in an unprecedented meeting, the Dark Oracles of the Shadowlands combine their incredible power to corrupt the very essence of the elements themselves, creating massive elementals of pure Taint: the Elemental Terrors. The Terrors are responsible for the destruction of the territory belonging to the Crippled Bone tribe of Nezumi, sending the creatures north toward the Great Wall where news of the Terrors' creation reaches the ears of the Hiruma scouts.

The Battle of Beiden Pass: year 1127

As an enormous force of Crab and their Shadowlands allies move north through the Empire, they sack several cities in the Crane and Scorpion lands. Intent on seizing Bekken Pass and crippling the Empire's trade routes, the Crab are surprised to discover a massive army awaiting them. Led by the disgraced ronin Toturi, the army is comprised of Dragon Clan troops, large numbers of ronin, Unicorn cavalry, and a small force of recently awakened Naga scouts. The battle is brutal and continues on for weeks, but in the end Toturi's superior tactics win the day against Hida Sukune and Hida Yakamo. The Crab are driven south. Toturi pulls his forces away and departs north, leaving the Unicorn to control the Pass. This battle is widely regarded as the true beginning of the Clan War throughout Rokugan.

The Phoenix open the Black Scrolls: year 1127

With the Master of Earth Isawa Tadaka returned from the Shadowlands with a Black Scroll stolen from Yogo Junzo, the Elemental Masters decide to open all four of the foul artifacts in their possession in hopes of better understanding the threat posed by the Shadowlands. Only Isawa Kaede, the Master of Void, refuses to participate, certain that this path will result only in disaster. With Kaede absent, the remaining Masters open the four Black Scrolls thereby gaining access to much information. Unfortunately, the corruption of the spells runs rampant through their bodies and spirits, corrupting each of them with the Shadowlands Taint.

The Second Day of Thunder: year 1128

After two years of war throughout the Empire, the clans finally unite against their common foe: Fu Leng. Marshaling their combined forces outside Otosan Uchi, the Great Clans join forces with Yoritomo's Alliance, the Brotherhood of Shinsei, and the Naga to engage the huge armies of Shadowlands creatures surrounding the city. It is a massive and epic battle, one larger than any since the dawn of the Empire. Many heroes are lost and many threats to Rokugan are destroyed permanently. Within the city walls, the descendant of Shinsei leads the Seven Thunders to face Fu Leng, who has possessed the body of Hantei XXXIX. The Emperor duels with Dragon Champion Togashi Yokuni, at which time Yokuni reveals that he is in fact the Kami Togashi. Fu Leng slays Togashi and then turns to finish off the others who dare face him.

Hida Yakamo, Doji Hoturi, Miramoto Hitomi, Toturi, Isawa Tadaka, Bayushi Kachiko, and Otaku Kamoko confront Fu Leng. Somewhat weakened after his fight with Yokuni, Fu Leng manages to mortally wound Tadaka and Hoturi before he is blinded by a vengeful Bayushi Kachiko. Taking advantage of their foe's blindness, the dying Hoturi slices deep into the dark one's chest while Toturi claims Fu Leng's head with a single strike of his sword. The dark god is at last defeated.

Coronation of Toturi I: year 1129

After a bitter winter attempting to rebuild the Empire, Toturi I is crowned Emperor of Rokugan, Master of the Chrysanthemum, and Lord of the Seven Hills. His coronation is blessed by the appearance

of Lady Sun hovering above Otsan Uchi for a full day, which all agreed was Amaterasu's show of support of the new Son of Heaven. The conversations between Toturi and Shinsei's descendent over the winter are transcribed and compiled by Isawa Osugi, and collected as the New Tao. Toturi's first edicts as Emperor are to rebuild what was lost during the Clan Wars, and to detail the duty of each of the clans to the Empire. To symbolize the Empire's new dedication and survival against the Dark Lord, a new throne of jade is crafted for Toturi I, and Rokugan becomes known as "The Jade Empire".

Banishment of the Togashi: year 1129

Hitomi (who cast off her Mirumoto family name shortly after the Day of Thunder) appears from the mountains at last. She renames Kyuden Togashi as Kyuden Hitomi, and commands those with the Togashi name to swear fealty to her name. The alternatives are banishment or death. Some Togashi swear fealty to Hitomi, taking her name, while most flee the lands of the Dragon or are executed for treason by their new Champion and her enforcers. Those who escape are given refuge by the Brotherhood of Shinsei, as many of them are already far from Dragon lands working side by side with the monks. Among the banished is Togashi Hoshi, son of Togashi. Hoshi uses his long-standing close relations with the Brotherhood to accommodate the exile of his family, and gathers the former Togashi together.

Falcon Clan absorbed by the Crab: year 1125

After an unknown *maho-tsukai* ritual opens a rift to the spirit world, many members of the Falcon Clan are possessed by *shuten doji*. Although the ritual is reversed, many Falcon and peasants are killed, leaving the clan's lands in disarray. Acting on authorization from an Imperial *shikken* (one of the Emperor's peacekeepers), the Crab Clan formally absorb the minor clan with the blessing of the Falcon *daimyo*. In time, the Falcon become the Toritaka family of the Crab.

Naga at the Wall: year 1129

With Fu Leng's defeat, the Crab and Naga move to end the threat of the Shadowlands forever. While Kaiu engineers spend most of the year rebuilding the Kaiu Wall (which was severely damaged during the Clan Wars), the Naga work with Crab generals and *sensei* to combat the Shadowlands. The Naga leader, the Qamar, pledges that every Naga that is able will strike out against the Shadowlands with their new Crab allies when all are ready. As the Crab were forced to spend their resources on this rebuilding most of the year, plans are laid for an assault the following spring.

Creation of the Monkey Clan and founding of the Fuzake: year 1129

When Toturi offers the position of Captain of the Imperial Guard to his loyal follower Toku, Toku respectfully declines and confesses that he is not a true samurai. He is, in fact, a peasant wielding a katana taken from a dead bandit years ago. The bravery and honor Toku displayed during the Clan War leads Toturi not only to pardon Toku for his crimes and offer the position of Captain of the Imperial Guard a second time, but to bestow Minor Clan status upon the young samurai and his followers.

Shortly thereafter, a remarkable Yasuki named Garou (who had become a loyal follower of Toku during the Clan War) is also granted the Fuzake family name. This is mostly due to the sponsorship of the Doji, who found his tireless efforts to tend the wounded and bring humor to the Empire during the war inspiring. Fuzake Garou swears fealty to Toku and joins the fledgling clan.

Opening of the Phoenix Gates: year 1130

After suffering the highest loss of life during the Clan War, the Phoenix clan (led by Shiba Tsukune) struggled throughout the first year of rebuilding due to lack of manpower. The Grand Master of the Elements, Naka Kuro, pledges his aid in helping the clan rebuild, swearing fealty to Lady Tsukune. With Kuro's help, and Tsukune's offer of fealty to any *shugenja* that proves themselves worthy, the Phoenix slowly begin to reclaim their rightful place in the Empire.

Death of Hida Kisada: year 1130

His health failing since being wounded by Fu Leng, Kisada finally loses his struggle against death near the end of the winter. Though some see him as a traitor against the Empire for attacking Otsan Uchi during the Clan Wars, others (including Emperor Toturi) have come to understand Kisada's actions. In a funeral led by his son, Yakamo, Hida Kisada is given the funeral pyre of an honorable samurai. In thanks for his invaluable aid in planning the assault on Fu Leng's forces on the Day of Thunder, Kisada's name is granted minor Fortune status by Toturi I. Kisada is now and forever the Fortune of Persistence.

Crab Assault the Shadowlands: year 1130

Preparations complete, the Crab and Naga combined forces march off past the wall into Fu Leng's Realm. Initial combat shows nearly no casualties for the Crab and Naga, and the beasts of the Shadowlands seem unprepared for such a large invasion party. With the assault underway, the Naga and Crab army forges its way to lost Hiruma Castle to reclaim the ancestral home the Hiruma lost centuries ago.

Disappearance of Toturi I: year 1130

The new peace of the Empire is shattered when the Emperor's chambers are found ruined, with blood left behind where Toturi had slept the night before. A thorough search of the entire city of Otsan Uchi turns up clues implicating the Scorpion. Bayushi Kachiko is brought to answer for her clan as countless courtiers and nobles assemble to bring testimony against the Scorpion. The Emerald Champion, Kakita Toshimoko, brings the counsel of the Kitsuki family into the investigation, acknowledging the controversial Kitsuki Method of evidence for the first time in history. Though the Kitsuki can bring no evidence to accuse the Scorpion (or anyone else) to fight, the Scorpion are completely unable to answer for the testimony brought against them. Many claim that the Scorpion have finally enacted their revenge upon Toturi for the death of their beloved Bayushi Shoji, while others imply that it was simply the first step in placing Bayushi Kachiko herself on the Jade Throne.

In the absence of Emperor Toturi, his lieutenant, Takuan, assumes the position of chancellor of Rokugan. Bound by the tenets of Imperial Law, he commands Toshimoko to convict the Scorpion. The Emerald Champion shows mercy, and orders their exile to the Burning Sands instead of their deaths. To ensure that none of the Scorpion's famed ninja will retaliate against the Empire, Toshimoko orders all children of the Scorpion clan under the age of 12 to become the foster children of Crane houses. The Scorpion children become insurance against their clan's obedience. Shortly after pronouncing his judgment, Kakita Toshimoko pens his final haiku standing upon a cliff near the sea. The Emerald Champion's armor and swords are found on that cliff the next dawn, along with a petition to the Fortunes to forgive him for his failure to his lord. In the absence of both the Emperor and the Emerald Champion, Shinjo Shirasu leads the Emerald Magistrates and attempts to hold the law of the land.

After faking his death, Toshimoko disguises himself as a ronin. He wears a mask at all times, and calls himself simply the Grey Crane. He begins a search for the truth. At this time, Toturi's lieutenants Matsu Hiroru and Ginawa also set out in search of their lost master.

The Kazaq visits Kyuden Hitomi: year 1130

Led by a dream, the son of the Qamar leaves the Shinomen and climbs Kyuden Hitomi. The dark lady of the Dragon Clan greets the Naga with open arms, as if he were an expected guest. Kazaq soon emerges from Kyuden Hitomi with mystic tattoos, severed from the Akasha forever.

Naga Abandon the Crab: year 1130

The retaking of Hiruma Castle complete, the banners of the Crab once again fly upon the parapets of Shiro Hiruma. As the Crab forces move to restore order to the ruined castle, a sudden shift in the Naga's attitude is apparent. Some Naga comment that their Akasha has commanded them, and the Naga quickly and silently withdraw from the land. The Crab, unsure exactly what has occurred, can only watch helplessly as their allies abandon them to stand alone, deep in the territory of the Shadowlands. Scouts are quickly dispatched to Kaiu wall demanding more soldiers and supplies, but none of the messengers make it to their destination alive.

Siege of Hiruma Castle: year 1130

The forces of the Fu Leng's Realm surround the Crab now deeply entrenched in the ruins of Hiruma Castle. The oni, goblins, and trolls toy with the samurai, knowing that help from the Empire will be a very long time in coming. Only the brave Third Whisker Nezumi, who bring food, water, and jade through the tunnels beneath the castle, give the Crab the slightest hope for survival.

Mantis, Scorpion and Crane Relations: year 1131

Citing their charter from Emperor Toturi, the Mantis claim the right to tax and regent "unaligned lands", including the now-empty provinces of the Scorpion. Known to very few in the Empire, the Scorpion have bargained with the Mantis Champion, Yoritomo, in order for him to protect the Scorpion lands until such time they can reclaim them from their exile. In order to seal the bargain, Bayushi Aramoro (the most respected member of the Scorpion next to Bayushi Kachiko) fosters his only son to the daimyo of the Mantis. Bayushi Aramasu, Aramoro's son, arrives in Mantis lands holding Yoritomo's "payment" for the alliance — Scorpion maps of Rokugan, and other secrets the Mantis Champion demanded to further his power in the Empire.

The Mantis are escorted through Crane lands by Crane Champion Doji Kuwanan and his armies. As Yoritomo reaches the Scorpion lands at the head of his army, he turns to thank the Crane for their assistance, but finds Kuwanan has laid his own plans for the Scorpion provinces. Hoping to use the Scorpion children as the means to claim the lands for his own, Kuwanan ambushes Yoritomo's forces once their arrangement (for Kuwanan to guide Yoritomo to the Scorpion lands) has been fulfilled. Yoritomo, caught completely unaware and unprepared for war, is forced to withdraw.

Though he does not realize it at the time, many of Doji Kuwanan's actions result from poor advisement by impersonators dispatched by Lying Darkness to cause strife and chaos in the Empire. This battle thus marks the initiation of the "War Against the Shadow."



Naga and Monks attack the Dragon: year 1131

The result of the Naga disappearance becomes clear when a massive Naga army lays siege to the lower Dragon provinces. Three minor strongholds in Dragon provinces are destroyed before the Naga are halted by a sudden emergence of representatives of the Brotherhood of Shinsel. These monks, comprised mostly of former Togashi *ise zumi* parley with the Naga in what was thought would be a swift end to the Naga's sudden and confusing attack. However, it was only days before Togashi Hoshi himself came to the fore to stand beside the Qamar and continue the attack on Dragon lands. It is notable that Mirumoto Daini, Hitomi's own brother, chose to side with the Naga instead of defending his sister. The war continues, with the Dragon responding slowly due to the lack of organization within the leadership of the clan. It becomes quite clear within weeks of the fighting, however, that like Hitomi, Hoshi has mastered the art of creating *ise zumi*, bestowing tattoos of power among their followers. Like Hitomi's followers, Hoshi's monk acolytes take his name.

Test of the Jade Champion: year 1131

In an effort to hold together the crumbling peace of the Empire, the Seppun and Otomo call the first Test of the Jade Champion in centuries. The post of the Jade Champion had long since been defunct, as its position of regulating spellcraft and hunting maho throughout Rokugan, were seen as an affront to the Phoenix clan's power. Each Great Clan sends shugenja to claim the prize. The Championship ends with the defeat of Iuchi Karasu, called "The Doomseeker" by a Lion shugenja, Kitsu Okura. Rumors of Okura's power being owed to a dark allegiance persist, though the Lion shugenja is awarded the post.

Lion march to the Wall: year 1131

Without preamble or explanation, Ikoma Tsanuri (the Lion Champion) gathers a legion of her most loyal soldiers and sets off to the southwest of Lion lands, presumably directly into the heart of Crab territory. The move is unexpected by those Tsanuri leaves behind, including the newly initiated Jade Champion and the daimyo of the Matsu, Ketsui. The Unicorn, in an attempt to prevent what appears to be an attack on the weakened Crab, demand an explanation that the remaining Lion cannot give. Combined with the growing reports of maho and other foul activities in Lion lands, Shinjo Shirasu attempts to investigate deep into Lion lands only to be intercepted and forcibly escorted back to the Lion border.

Defection of the Agasha: year 1131

Outraged by the actions of their Champion, the Agasha argue amongst themselves until a clear majority chooses to leave before they are exterminated like the Togashi. Daimyo Agasha Tamori, refuses to allow the Agasha to leave the Clan. However, Tamori's student Gennai offers to take any who wish to follow him to the Phoenix lands to kneel before the sword of Shiba Tsukune. Within the week, less than ten who bear the Agasha name stand with the Dragon clan. Agasha Gennai is rewarded by Naka Kuro with a position on the Elemental Council as Master of Air.

Shinjo Morito leaves Unicorn territory: year 1131

With the objective of carving out a destiny of his own, the ambitious Unicorn Shinjo Morito gathers a group of like minded bushi and stakes a claim to lands once occupied by the Phoenix. As the Phoenix no longer occupy those lands, Morito holds, they no longer can protect them in the Emperor's name. Thus, by right of his superior ability to maintain and control them, they must be his. The Phoenix disagree, but the strong defenses Morito has already constructed lead them to abandon the matter for now.

Rescue of Emperor Toturi: year 1132

Toturi I is found shackled and beaten in the ruins of Mori Kage Castle by Unicorn scouts. The forest and the castle are filled with apparitions of ghosts and shadows, which the Naga call The Foul. The truth is revealed that Toturi I was held captive by the Lying Darkness to allow the Empire to fall into chaos. The Unicorn, led by Otaku Kamoko, bring the weak and sickened Emperor to Otosan Uchi, igniting a small flame of hope in a darkened Empire.

Imperial Edicts: year 1132

Captain of the Imperial Guard Toku is commanded to take the Monkey clan and end the fighting in the Dragon mountains by attacking the Naga. Toturi then commands the Unicorn magistrates to force the Lion to answer for their crimes in his absence — the rumors of maho had proven true, and the Jade Champion himself had taken a hand in corrupting the heart of Lion lands. Lastly, Toturi breaks with tradition by naming the Emerald Champion without a tournament. Seppun Toshiken, a prodigy with the blade and illegitimate son of Kakita Toshimoko, is given the sword and armor of the Emerald Champion.

Shortly after his return, Toturi begins a cleansing of the Imperial City, summarily executing anyone he deems to be a "Kolat" (a word nearly unheard of in Otosan Uchi) on even the loosest evidence. Among the slain are Isawa Osugi, author of the New Tao. The former chancellor, Takuan, is horrified by his lord's actions and commits seppuku in defiance.

Storms over Matsu Castle: year 1132

By the command of Toturi I, the Unicorn engage the Lion near Shiro Matsu. The Lion's corruption becomes clear as oni take the field beside Tainted bushi and shugenja under the command of Kitsu Okura, Matsu Ketsui, and Kitsu Motso. The battle is fierce, and the oni that bears Okura's name slaughters one hundred Battle Maidens single-handedly. The Unicorn are finally defeated, but the Lion's power is severely compromised.

Mantis siege of Phoenix lands: year 1132

To expand his power, Yoritomo seizes the lands of the Phoenix, claiming they are too weak to maintain their provinces on their own. The Mantis hope to quickly take the Phoenix under the umbrella of their mercy, but Shiba Tsukune views Yoritomo's movement as an act of war and responds in kind. However, the Phoenix are nowhere near as combat-ready as the Mantis, and Yoritomo's forces slowly make their way into deeper Phoenix territory. It is later concluded that Yoritomo's brash actions against the Phoenix are also the result of advisement by shape-shifting minions of the Lying Darkness.

Gift of the Emperor: year 1132

Toturi I holds a contest to win a boon from the Jade Throne. All clans are invited to attend, and the winner of a single combat tournament is awarded a favor from the Emperor. The clans gather one entry apiece, attempting to use the Emperor's gift to gain an advantage as the whole Empire is engulfed in war. In the end, the winner is revealed to be Bayushi Aramoro disguised as a ronin, who was able to enter and win with assistance from the Dragon clan. Aramoro requests that he and his clan are allowed to retake their lands, and the Scorpion are restored to their place in the Empire.

Crane Civil War: year 1132

Driven by the voice of his ancestor, Daidoji Uji leads troops away from Doji Kuwanan's command and toward Shiro no Yugin to reclaim it in the name of the Crane. This slowly creates a division in the Crane which turns into outright war as the bushi of the clan are split between their loyalty to the two lords. The fighting continues,

and the dishonor and shame caused by such actions eventually causes the Great Sea Spider to wake from its slumber near Golden Sun Bay. Once again, shape-shifters are later blamed for miscommunication between the two Crane leaders.

Death and rebirth of Hida Yakamo: year 1132

After escaping Hiruma Castle in search of reinforcements, Crab Thunder Hida Yakamo is captured by the Shadowlands. The Lion reach Crab lands in time to assist in launching a second assault towards Hiruma Castle, and the combined might of the two clans make a quick and easy victory. Hida Yakamo's body is recovered, but is taken by the Naga as they appear from the forests near Crab provinces. The Naga use an ancient artifact to restore life to Hida Yakamo and merge his soul with the Akasha in order to atone for the damage they caused to the Crab. Though many Crab still consider the Naga unreliable traitors, Yakamo assures his people that only by working alongside the Naga can the Lying Darkness and the Shadowlands be defeated.

War in the Heavens: year 1132

The main force of the Scorpion reach the Empire on the heels of Bayushi Aramoro's victory in the Emperor's tournament. Shinjo herself leads the Scorpion, freed from imprisonment in the Burning Sands. Shinjo's arrival brings further chaos into the Empire as she personally executes hundreds of members of her own Clan, revealing them as agents of the Kolat. With the aid of the Scorpion, Shinjo also learns of the presence of the Lying Darkness in Rokugan, and its control over Emperor Toturi. Shinjo assembles combined forces from all the clans to assault Otosan Uchi, which has grown bleak and shadowed since the return of Toturi.

At the same time, the Naga reach the base of the mountains where Hitomi's last fortress stands. During the attack, the dark influence of Onnotangu from within the Obsidian Hand leads Hitomi to inadvertently release Shosuro from her crystal prison beneath the castle. Laughing triumphantly as he sees his dark mistress succumb to temptation, the Kokujin steals Togashi's daisho. Shosuro also vanishes, leaving Hitomi alone with her failure.

By the time Hitomi realizes what has happened, it is too late. Her mind is now clear of dark influences, and with this clarity comes a realization of how to undo the damage she has wrought. She sees the entire existence of the Lying Darkness laid out before her. She witnesses the day when Onnotangu hid the Shadow's existence from the Sun. She sees the Shadow's subtle influence in the death or downfall of each of the Kami. She sees the slow growth of its power throughout the history of the Empire. She knows that only an enemy of equal power will have the strength to defeat it. She determines to challenge Lord Moon himself, for in doing so she will not only call him to task for his alliance with the Darkness but, if she succeeds, gain the power she needs to defeat the Shadow itself.

Putting her plan into action, Hitomi assembles several powerful artifacts born of the power of the Moon. Calling Onnotangu from the Heavens, she challenges him to personal combat. Eager to crush the upstart Hitomi (as well as to reclaim the Obsidian Hand from her) the Moon answers Hitomi's challenge. With the powerful artifacts of Onnotangu and the wisdom of Togashi on her side, Hitomi triumphs, and slays the Moon.

Meanwhile Takao, Acolyte of Fire, faces a champion of the Moon in single combat in Otosan Uchi. Though the duel seems hopeless, Takao reaches enlightenment during the battle, defeats the Champion, and breaks the Shadow's control over the city. Takao is thereafter granted the title "Master of Five."

Shortly after this event, Toturi is spirited away to Phoenix lands by Isawa Kaede, now Oracle of the Void.

Twenty-Seven Days of Darkness: year 1132

With the death of Lord Moon, Amaterasu flees from the Celestial Heavens. Angered that the mortal descendants of her children have betrayed her by killing Onnotangu, she takes the Ancestral Swords of the Clans and scatters them to the heavens. Rokugan is shrouded in total shadow, increasing the power of the Lying Darkness tenfold. It soon becomes clear that even Onnotangu himself was only a pawn, and even this was part of the Darkness' plan.

Hitomi begins a great quest, crossing the entirety of Rokugan in twenty seven days. At the end of the quest, she arrives at the Shrine of the Three Sisters, who help her discover her true destiny. Hitomi ascends into the Celestial Heavens to fill the void left by Onnotangu, and becomes Lady Moon.

At the same time, Amaterasu commits jigai (the seppuku of noble women). Hida Yakamo appears, led to the pain of the Bright Eye by his link to the Akasha, and becomes her second. He ascends into the heavens as Lord Sun.

Loss of the True Tao: year 1132

The Tao of Shinsei is stolen by the Kolat in an attempt to protect it from the Shadow. Some within the Kolat plan to revise the Tao, but others heartily disagree. Half of the True Tao is given to Daidoji Rekai by a traitor among the Kolat, but the other half is intercepted by the Lying Darkness and presumed lost.

Loss of the Ikoma Histories: 1132

A sudden attack by the Lying Darkness leaves the great histories of the Ikoma family lying in ruin. With the Empire's past lost, the Lion historians can do little but pick up the pieces.

Reunification of the Dragon Clan: year 1132

Togashi Hoshi claims leadership of the Dragon. Hoshi restores the Togashi to their rightful place, and brings those who swore fealty to his name to the Dragon. Using the wisdom Hitomi learned through failure and triumph, Hoshi begins preparing the Dragon for the upcoming conflict with the Lying Darkness.

Oblivion's Gate opens: year 1132

Several reports of the physical incarnation of ancestral spirits arise, pointing to the crumbling of the barrier between Ningen-do (the mortal world) and various other Spirit Realms. The Tenth Kami, Ryoshun, is found by Ginawa and Matsu Hiroru. If his strength should fail, it would allow the Lying Darkness to begin to assault Yomi itself, bleeding the past into Nothing. Despite the hopeless battle, Ryoshun stands alone against the Darkness and its assault upon the Spirit Realms.

Mantis repelled from Phoenix lands: year 1133

The Mantis, after holding the Phoenix provinces for half a year, are finally broken by the guerrilla attacks of small Phoenix bushi and the magic of their Elemental Guards. Yoritomo is offered the Jade Throne by Shinjo, but the Mantis Champion refuses, claiming he will never be the pawn of the Kami.

Death of Toturi I: year 1133

In a lucid moment, Toturi breaks free of the control of the Lying Darkness. He realizes that if Darkness were to take the soul of an Empire, the soul of the Empire itself would be forfeit. In a hasty ceremony, Toturi marries Isawa Kaede, and commits seppuku — denying Lying Darkness his soul and leaving the leader of Rokugan as the one person it cannot touch, the Oracle of the Void.

The Battle of Oblivion's Gate: year 1133

Their enemy now in plain sight, the forces of the Empire marshal together under the guidance of Toturi's general, Saigorel. As Lying Darkness undoes all of creation by turning the land of the dead into nothing but a lost memory, the forces of Rokugan assault the armies of the Lying Darkness and the Shadowlands in the ruins of the troll city, Voltumnus. The battle is fierce, and the boundaries between the Spirit Realms crumble. Spirits from Yomi and Toshigoku emerge in great numbers, and more than one hero from Rokugan's past crosses Oblivion's Gate to battle the enemy. One such man is the Emperor, himself, Toturi I — free of the Shadow's grip on his soul. Many die, and the Air Dragon allows itself to be consumed by corruption so that the Master of Fire, Isawa Hochiu, is able to reach and Goju Adorai, the master of the Darkness. With the aid of a Shosuro actor, Hochiu strikes the killing blow and destroys Adorai.

With the loss of Adorai, the Lying Darkness is now weak enough that it can be named. Lady Moon gives the Darkness the name "Akodo," which not only destroys the darkness but releases a large number of lost Akodo ronin previously consumed by the Darkness (and now amnesiac). The weakened Goju and Ninube minions of darkness flee to plan their vengeance.

Moto War: year 1133

While the Clans fight against the Living Darkness at Oblivion's Gate, the Moto family of the Unicorn engage in their own war. Shinjo's return brings the nomadic Moto from the Burning Sands, who ride beside their cousins of Rokugan as they meet the Dark Moto of the Shadowlands in combat. The Dark Moto are led by none other than Otaku Kamoko, who has sacrificed her own honor to lead the corrupted Unicorn to destruction. Using fierce tactics of Khan Moto Gaheris, the undead Moto are crushed, unifying the line of the Moto once and for all.

Shinjo departs: year 1133

The Kami Shinjo leaves the mortal realm to return to the Celestial Heavens. She places Moto Gaheris in command of the Unicorn Clan, as she does not believe that those who bear her name have disposed of all Kolat influence. Unicorn Thunder Otaku Kamoko is set among the stars by Shinjo. In honor of Kamoko's sacrifice, the Otaku family change their name to Utaku, as a reaffirmation of their vows to Shinjo and so that Kamoko can be the last Battle Maiden to hold the Otaku name.

Rebuilding the Empire: year 1134

After suffering two extended periods of war within ten years, the Empire once again turns to rebuilding as Emperor Toturi reclaims his throne.

Spirits walk the earth: year 1134

Before Oblivion's Gate is sealed, countless spirits make their way from Yomi into the land of the living. Some are able to adjust to living in an era far more sophisticated than their own, while most (particularly those who escaped Toshigoku) attempt to renew old schemes and vendettas.

Gift of the Naga: year 1135

Before the Naga enter their slumber, they gift a great golden pearl to the Unicorn, in exchange for the Unicorn swearing to defend the Shinomen Forest during the Naga's great sleep.

Birth of Toturi Tsudao: year 1136

The first of Toturi's children, Tsudao quickly shows an aptitude for both single combat and large scale tactics. She memorizes the Book of Sun Tao and Akodo's Leadership by the age of six.

Fall of the Alliance: year 1137

Since the death of Yoritomo during the Battle of Oblivion's Gate, the Mantis Clan have slowly lost power and influence among the Great Clans. Even with the assimilation of the Wasp and Centipede Clans, the Mantis are not what they once were. With no conflict to unify Yoritomo's former alliance, the other Minor Clans gradually withdraw their support from the Mantis Clan. By this point in time, the Mantis once more stand alone.

Birth of Toturi Sezaru: year 1137

Toturi's second child is born under the signs of great fortune. The boy's hair becomes white shortly after birth and his aptitude for magic study surpasses even his mother's at the same age.

The War of Spirits begins: year 1138

After years of preparation and monitoring the political climate of Rokugan, the returned spirit of the Steel Chrysanthemum, Hantei XVI, demands that the Jade Throne be ceded to him. Toturi refuses, stating that the Hantei dynasty is dead, and the blessing of the Heavens is upon himself and his line. With the power of most of the reborn spirits and the assistance of the spirit of Hida Tsuneo, Hantei XVI declares war upon the Empire to claim the throne for himself. Thus begins a long, slow war of attrition between the armies of the living and the dead.

Birth of Toturi Naseru: year 1139

The second son of Toturi is born shortly after the beginning of the War of Spirits. Naseru is easily the most intellectual and serious of all the children.

Ox Clan founded: year 1145

After proving himself in valorous combat against Lion spirit armies attacking Shiro Iuchi, Emperor Toturi validates Shinjo Morito's claim to the unoccupied lands he and his followers have occupied for the last fourteen years. Morito immediately grants several expensive gaijin artifacts to the Phoenix as a gesture of friendship to cushion the shock of losing their land. Thus the Ox Clan is born.

Phoenix children kidnapped: year 1150

With the War of Spirits turning decidedly in Toturi's favor, Hantei XVI retreats to Phoenix territory. With the help and advisement of the Tainted Dragon Agasha Tamori, Hida Tsuneo kidnaps the children of the Phoenix clan and murders Isawa Taeruko's daughter, Yaruko, as an example. The Phoenix grudgingly agree to assist Hantei XVI.

Devastation of Beiden Pass: year 1150

The end of the War Against the Spirits came when the majority of the spirit army was led into Beiden Pass. With the assistance of the Phoenix, a cadre of Scorpion shugenja collapses the pass upon the spirits, destroying the majority of Hantei's armies.

Treaty with the Spirits: year 1150

The bulk of their forces gone, Hantei XVI enters into negotiations for peace with Toturi I. Though the Empire could easily crush the remains of the spirit army, Toturi shows mercy upon them by allowing them to return to Yomi in peace by leaping off of what is now called the Leaping Place — a cliff near the sea of Otosan Uchi. As part of Hantei's treaty, Toturi's child Naseru takes the Hantei name and is fostered in Hantei XVI's home in Otosan Uchi. Also, the Tamori name is granted to the descendants of the Tainted Agasha Tamori, who disappears shortly thereafter.

Creation of the Great Crater: year 1150

With no way left to get over the Spine of the World Mountains, Lord Sun hurls fire from the sky near what was once the Seikitsu Pass. This act creates what is called the Great Crater, and allows a northern and southern pass around the crater and through the mountains. Though the territory is disputed, it is claimed by the Unicorn.

The Imperial Bastard is revealed: year 1155

Toturi's liaison with the geisha, Hatsuko, before the Clan War resulted in the birth of a child that Toturi was not aware of until he is announced in Ryoko Owari. Kaneka's claim is supported by several sources, and the Akodo offer the boy fealty. This causes a disturbance among the courts, as Kaneka is now the Emperor's eldest child. Toturi himself never officially acknowledges Kaneka as his son.

Death of Toturi I: year 1158

On a visit to Scorpion lands (possibly to visit and acknowledge Kaneka in Ryoko Owari), Emperor Toturi I is slain in combat with a force of Shadowlands creatures. The oni responsible for the Emperor's death is of a breed never seen before, and escapes before the Scorpion rout the beasts and recover the Emperor's body. As Toturi Kaede, the Empress, disappears shortly after taking the throne, leaving the Empire with no clear leader. Toturi's children, Toturi Tsudao, Toturi Sezarū, Hantei Naseru, and Akodo Kaneka begin vying with one another for support among the Great Clans so that one of them might assume their father's throne.

City of the Lost discovered: year 1158

Shortly after the death of the Emperor, the Crab Clan commands its Hiruma scouts to scour the Shadowlands for any sign of what force could possibly execute such an organized attack so deep within Rokugan. After months, the answer is hardly comforting — the Crab find an organized city deep within the Shadowlands, maintained and inhabited by the Lost, mortals completely corrupted by the Taint. Until this point, the Lost had rarely shown such organization and unity of purpose, but it soon becomes clear that a new force drives the Shadowlands — the Dark Lord, Daigotsu. His followers view themselves as samurai, dedicated to the memory of the Ninth Kami, Fu Leng. Well trained, intelligent, and possessed of a twisted sense of honor, the servants of Daigotsu are the greatest menace yet to threaten the Empire. Most shockingly, the Hiruma realize that the Lost have begun to construct a shadowy reflection of the Kaku Wall, the Wall of Bones, to keep the Crab scouts from venturing too deeply into their territory.

Fall of Otosan Uchi: year 1159

While the Empire is divided by the four feuding children of Toturi I, Daigotsu strikes at Rokugan's heart — Otosan Uchi. It is here that he reveals his true plan and purpose. As the ancestral home of Emperors and the place where Fu Leng perished, the Dark Lord is able to use the city as a nexus between Spirit Realms and frees the Dark God from the Fortune of Death's prison in the Realm of the Dead. Fu Leng burns for revenge against his enemies but finds the mortal realm now forever barred to him. Instead he turns his anger against his celestial kin, and stages a massive attack on the Heavens while Daigotsu's army ransacks the Imperial City. Alerted by what has transpired, the armies the Lion Clan, as well as those who follow Akodo Kaneka and Toturi Tsudao make a fateful choice — to burn Otosan Uchi, which now stands beyond reclamation, to the ground to prevent further blasphemies from taking root. Having accomplished his objectives, Daigotsu withdraws before an organized counterattack can be mustered.

The Dark Lord's Vision: year 1159

Following his success in Otosan Uchi, Daigotsu comes to a realization. Though the Lost have become a formidable force, only his power and charisma have driven them to set their own obsessions aside and act as one. Should he perish, he knows the City of the Lost and the Empire of the Shadowlands will perish with him. Turning to the Dark Oracle of the Void, he gains knowledge of his own death. Though he knows this fate cannot be avoided, he forges contingencies nonetheless, offering the mysterious Shadow Dragon one half of his immortal soul for safekeeping.

Heaven and Earth: year 1160

Fu Leng continues his assault, pressing further into the Heavens, and Daigotsu's power only seems to grow with each passing day in the Realm of Mortals. With the balance of the universe so wildly tilted, the Oracle of the Void, Empress Kaede, is now free to return to Rokugan and guide her children and set things right. The Empress instructs the Four Winds, Toturi's heirs, that the key to defeating Fu Leng lies in Daigotsu. The worship of Fu Leng's Lost followers is what makes him strong, but those followers truly believe in Daigotsu, not Fu Leng. If the Dark Lord can be defeated, Fu Leng's base of power will be shattered and he will be cast down from the heavens.

Their path clear, the Four Winds pool what they have learned about the enemy and realize their course is clear. Toturi's children lead an attack upon the heart of the Shadowlands, aided by the living statues known as Tadaka's Children. With the small army of statues distracting the forces in the City of the Lost, the Four Winds confront Daigotsu and defeat him. Naseru's words weaken Fu Leng's own faith in his follower, which gives the Winds the chance to confront him without the Dark God's interference. Though Toturi Tsudao sacrifices herself in the final battle, Daigotsu is slain.

Coronation of Toturi III, the Righteous Emperor: year 1160

Stricken by the loss of their sister, the remaining Winds return to Toshi Ranbo, the new Imperial City, and agree amongst themselves that Naseru is the most worthy to lead. Kaede returns to the Celestial Heavens, and Naseru declares that he will be known as Toturi III. The new Emperor decrees that his older sister, eldest heir of Toturi and paragon of true nobility, will forevermore be recognized as Empress Toturi II and successor to the Splendid Emperor. Toturi Sezarū swears fealty to the Phoenix Clan to honor his mother and takes the name Isawa Sezarū. Toturi III recognizes the Phoenix Clan as the Voice of the Emperor and his brother Sezarū as the representative of that title. His half-brother Kaneka is recognized as Shogun, but in an attempt to curtail Kaneka's ambition the Emperor forces him to abandon his current armies and swear fealty to the peaceful Phoenix Clan. Kaneka grudgingly agrees.

Return of Daigotsu: year 1161

Daigotsu's most loyal follower, Goju Kyoden, offers his life to the Shadow Dragon in return for restoring Daigotsu's life. Though the Dark Lord is restored, he is not as he was. Resentful at how Daigotsu masterminded Fu Leng's escape, the Fortune of Death keeps the remainder of the Dark Lord's soul imprisoned in Meido. As a strange side effect of this, Daigotsu finds that he has been purified of the Shadowlands Taint, and can no longer draw upon Fu Leng's blessings. Whereas another man might seize upon this opportunity to be free of the Shadowlands, Daigotsu's faith and loyalty in the Dark God is not diminished. He hides his new 'weakness' to all but his closest followers and resumes rulership of the City of the Lost.

Return of Iuchiban: year 1165

In an attempt to return Daigotsu to his full power, the Bloodspeaker Shahai bargains with the entombed spirit of Iuchiban. Shahai offers Iuchiban his freedom in order to fulfill her own goals, but is betrayed. Iuchiban comes to the City of the Lost, to assume control of Daigotsu's armies. Daigotsu barely escapes with his life, and the Bloodspeakers quickly rise to claim everything the Dark Lord has built. To herald a new age of darkness, Iuchiban enacts a ritual that covers the Empire in a rain of blood, corrupting many souls consumed with desire, regret, or fear and shackling their will to his own. Bloodspeaker cults, previously hidden in order to remain alive, surge from every corner of Rokugan to unite with their returned leader, and the Empire is consumed by a bloody conflict as samurai turn upon one another under the Bloodspeaker's dark magic. The Dragon Clan, who are relatively unaffected by the catastrophe, are charged by the Emperor to hunt those responsible.

War of the Rich Frog: year 1165-1166

In an unexpected assault, the Unicorn Clan attack the Lion city of Kaeru Toshi. Until a few years previous, the city had been Unicorn territory, but the nomadic Unicorn had left its rule mostly in the hands of the ronin Kaeru family. During the period of the Four Winds the Ikoma family of the Lion moved into the city and named the Kaeru as their vassals, an act that drew much ire from Moto Chagatai, Khan of the Unicorn Clan.

Though courtiers decry the Unicorn invasion as an illegal act, a clever Unicorn courtier counters that the treaties which forbid war between the Great Clans were drafted during the centuries when the Ki-Rin (who later became the Unicorn) were assumed forever lost to the Burning Sands. The Scorpion Clan secretly ally themselves with the Unicorn in return for the Khan returning rulership of Ryoko Owari to their clan. The Unicorn might have conquered the city in short order, but the Rain of Blood throws their attack into chaos and instead dissolves the confrontation into a long, grueling war.

The Emperor knows the war must be brought to an end, but realizes that faith in his rule has already been gravely shaken by the Rain of Blood. He cannot afford to show favor to either the Unicorn or Lion, lest they turn against him. Thus he calls upon the Dragon Clan once again, asking that they do whatever they can to undermine both clans in the war, making the conflict too costly for either to pursue. In the village of Sukoshi Zutsu the war finally comes to a head, with the Unicorn Khan slaying Lion Clan Champion Matsu Nimuro in personal combat. The Khan seems strangely disheartened by his victory and does not move on to conquer Kaeru Toshi, instead satisfying himself with the small Lion village.

Rise of the Gozoku: year 1166

Coordinated by the returned spirit of Bayushi Atsuki, the Gozoku are reborn in Rokugan's modern age. The Gozoku move in secret to undermine faith in Toturi III, citing the rise of the Bloodspeakers and the War of the Rich Frog as tragedies that could have been prevented under a stronger ruler. Kaneka reluctantly allies himself with the Gozoku, as he too doubts his brother truly has the strength to rule. Before Naseru realizes the power of this new enemy, he finds his influence in the Imperial City greatly reduced. Without any other choice, Toturi III watches his power and influence wane. All he can do is call upon those loyal to him in hopes they might find a way to defeat his opponents. Scorpion Champion Bayushi Sunetra steps down at the Emperor's command, freeing herself of the responsibilities of ruling her clan so she might scour the shadows for the true leaders of this Gozoku.



Customs and Culture

The Celestial Order

It is believed that everything and everyone plays its proper role in a great Celestial Pattern. All souls have their place, as decreed by the Celestial Heavens. Those who defy the Celestial Order shame and befoul the purpose of their existence. Not only is such a soul without honor, but they risk being allocated to a lower station after reincarnation.

Rokugan's social order is composed of three distinct groups: samurai ("those who make war"), clergy ("those who pray"), and bonge ("those who work"). There is also one non-group, referred to as hinin ("non-people").

Samurai

Of Rokugan's social classes, samurai assume the top rank. The symbol of a samurai's office is the *daisho*, the two swords, *katana* and *wakizashi*. Only a true samurai owns or carries such weapons. Any other individual found guilty of possessing them or even touching them will be executed. All members of the samurai class are entitled to trial if brought up on charges by another samurai. Charges against samurai brought up by members of lower classes are simply ignored, unless a samurai wishes to acknowledge them (which is rare).

This is not to say that a samurai who commits a crime against a peasant is always immune to punishment. If a samurai murders a farmer who serves another lord, he has harmed that lord's income and ability to feed his troops. Thus he has, in effect, committed a crime against another samurai and will face justice. On the other hand if a farmer steals an apple from a peasant, he is unlikely to face any punishment whatsoever, though his fellow samurai will disdain him for such shameful behavior.

THE EMPEROR

The Emperor holds the highest position. He owns all of the land in the Empire, and permits those who owe him fealty to manage it. Those who manage the land must pay yearly taxes. The Emperor also controls Rokugani religion. Effectively, the Emperor channels the voice of the Celestial Heavens — thus his title "the Son of Heaven." Though custom, law, and tradition define Rokugan, the Emperor is the final arbiter of these things.

Any command the Emperor makes is immediately considered Imperial Law. Naturally many Emperors wield this power cautiously to prevent contradicting themselves or eroding the faith their followers place in them. Emerald Magistrates enforce the Emperor's Law, and the Imperial Legions are his personal armies. Those who defy the Emperor face the wrath of the Magistrates and the Legions, if not all of Rokugan.

Upon taking the throne, most Emperors set aside their former name and are referred to only by the name of their dynasty as well as take on a unique title, usually an adjective that describes their style. The current Imperial Dynasty is the Toturi Dynasty. The current Emperor is Toturi III, the Righteous Emperor. The Toturi have ruled the Empire only for the past few decades. Their predecessors, the Hantei Dynasty, ruled Rokugan since its founding.

THE KUGE

The kuge represent the most elite of the samurai class, inherited nobility with powerful positions within the government. The Emperor is a member of the kuge, though he carries far more importance than any other member. Ranking just below the Emperor are his functionaries, including the daimyo of the Imperial Families, the Voice of the Emperor, the Emerald Champion, the Jade Champion, the Imperial Chancellor, and the Imperial Advisor. The Shogun is a special case, ranking just above the rest of the kuge but just below the Emperor. In many cases it could be argued that the Shogun has more power than the Emperor, since he commands the Emperor's armies and maintains a far more visible profile. In theory, however, even the Shogun ultimately offers his fealty to the Emperor and thus the Emperor reigns supreme.

Directly beneath these individuals rank the Clan daimyo. Great Clan daimyo slightly outrank Minor Clan daimyo, but in practice the difference between them is extreme. Great Clan daimyo have far greater resources, political capital, and more followers than their Minor Clan brethren. Their nearly "equal" social status figures as a gesture of respect, nothing more. Major family daimyo rank just beneath clan daimyo. Again, Great Clan families outweigh Minor Clan families in most political arenas despite their equal status.

The lowest ranking members of the kuge are the immediate families of the leaders of each family. While many samurai are allowed to carry the name of a noble house, only a handful — the kuge — are actually directly related to the founders of the house. The rest have servant status, comprising the buke. It should be noted that all Minor Clan samurai other than the daimyo count as buke, not kuge.

THE BUKE

The majority of samurai are members of the buke. Buke are samurai who have not been awarded land and titles, but serve another household. Samurai in service to a house are typically allowed to bear that house's name. While there are relatively few samurai with blood ties to the original Matsu, thousands of buke bear the Matsu name. The rest are lesser vassal families of the Matsu. Though vassal families may maintain their own family name, it is seen as impolite and disloyal to use that name in favor of their lord's when interacting with others outside their clan, or at best use both with their vassal name given inferior status. For example, Ikeda Seijuro, vassal of the Matsu family, will refer to himself as Matsu Seijuro, or Matsu Seijuro of House Ikeda, when interacting with those outside his family or clan.

The highest ranking samurai of the buke serve as bureaucrats and military personnel, including provincial governors, officers, hatamoto (honored advisors), city governors, karo (advisors to a daimyo), Emerald Magistrates, and clan magistrates primarily experienced warriors and courtiers who have earned their positions. Lesser sons and daughters of noble houses are delegated to the rank of buke by default. As they have no inheritance, and serve no direct purpose, they must prove their worth to receive the same respect and station as their more fortunate siblings.

Rank and file samurai make up the remainder of the buke membership, many of these are ji-samurai ("half samurai"), members of vassal families who have not yet earned the right to carry their lord's family name.

Expected to increase their holdings and earn the respect of their lord, many ji-samurai are extremely ambitious warriors.



RONIN

Ji-samurai also include lowly ronin, samurai who by fault, birth, or circumstance serve no noble lord known as samurai without masters, a phenomenon that generally invokes distrust or disgust among true samurai. While ronin have no true place in society, they are samurai and must be treated as such. As a result, many Rokugani are uncertain exactly how to deal with ronin. Many clan samurai find them offensive reminders of the price of failure. Peasants consider them dangerous, loose cannons who answer to no one and could wreak terrible violence without warning. Ironically a ronin is almost invariably forced into the life of a bandit or mercenary. As samurai, performing mundane labor would be beneath their station, a violation of the celestial order. Thus their honor compels them to make a living as befits their status — as warriors. Some samurai will leap at any chance to accuse a ronin of a crime so that he can be executed and forgotten. Others see them as useful tools, disposable mercenaries that can be drawn upon to do unsavory work when it is too risky to waste a loyal servant.

ASHIGARU

The absolute lowest ranking members of the buke are ashigaru, or career soldiers. Technically peasants, they possess far keener training than the average peasant or carpenter. While hardly comparable to samurai by any stretch of the imagination, ashigaru are skilled warriors in their own right. Many ashigaru families have served their samurai lords for generations, and bear themselves with fierce pride and loyalty comparable to samurai. Most houses have several families of hereditary ashigaru, serving as guardsmen, doshin (soldiers serving magistrates), and scouts during times of peace.

The Clergy

This class is comprised mostly of the Brotherhood of Shinsei, an order of monks dedicated to the writings of the Little Teacher. Though shugenja belong to this group, they are also technically samurai due to the special relationship their ancestors shared with the Kami. As members of the samurai caste, shugenja naturally maintain some distance between themselves and members of the peasant classes while in sharp contrast, both the samurai caste and peasants alike warmly welcome monks in to their homes. In a land where noble houses constantly vie with one another in violent conflict, the Brothers of Shinsei represent the single constant. Even in the darkest times of war, their simple wisdom is both valued and respected. Though clans such as the Scorpion and Lion might not have the greatest respect for the Tao, even they cannot deny that its students are worthy and enlightened souls.

Most monks take vows of chastity and poverty, though practices vary by sect. The only goal expected of a monk in the physical realm is the pursuit of enlightenment, and helping others on their own path is a necessary step. Thus monks fall naturally into the roles as advisors, teachers, and spiritual guardians. Monks occupy a special place in the Rokugani social system. Though samurai outrank them, they still recognize the monk's role as teacher and wisdom holder. Thus while a samurai may technically command a monk, most samurai do not do so out of respect for Shinsei and his teachings. Monks do not pay taxes — left to their own devices. In turn, monks do what they can to serve samurai by keeping peace among the peasant populace. They distribute Shinsei's teachings of enlightenment and gentle wisdom, doing their part to promote order in the Emperor's lands.

Though they do not practice the flamboyant shugenja magic, a monk's path grants him an understanding of the spirits and elements beyond mortal men. This is embodied most obviously in the form of kiho monks practice. Restless spirits seem to be drawn to the enlightened souls of the Brotherhood, their balance and harmony shining as a beacon to spirits who find themselves out of place. Thus, inevitably most monks have experiences with the supernatural at some point in their lives, either in battling evil spirits or helping tormented souls find peace. As peasants regard monks with less terror than they do shugenja, they will often report strange supernatural occurrences to local monks.

The Bonge

This class comprises peasants, merchants, and craftsmen collectively referred to as heimin ("half-people"). The highest rank of commoner is the farmer, whose labor feeds the Empire. The farmer is followed by the artisan, and finally by the merchant, who creates nothing and is thus the least worthy. Though some samurai (particularly among the Yasuki and Ide families) do engage in commerce, they sidestep the technicality of such dishonorable labor by presenting themselves as "merchant patrons." While the samurai conducts trade negotiations and convinces his customer of the worth of his products, peasant merchants actually conduct the lowly business of exchanging coin for goods.

A heimin may file charges against another heimin if he feels wronged, but a heimin wronged by a samurai has no legal recourse. A samurai wronged by a heimin need not bother with a trial. Samurai may technically execute heimin if they feel they have been wronged in any way, and the definition of "wronged" is left to the samurai's discretion.

Needless to say, heimin act politely in samurai company.

Eta

This non-group is comprised of hinin ("non-people") those whose professions cause them to be considered "unclean" including any person whose work regularly involves contact with blood or flesh as well as criminals, entertainers, and assorted ne'er-do-wells. Eta are technically not human, so even heimin tend to be abusive toward them. Killing an eta is not a crime, because they do not participate in the Celestial Order. Eta are not allowed to speak to samurai unless the samurai commands it.

Eta avoid samurai, if possible.

Exempt from much of the above, geisha fall under the protection of a samurai patron, so any insult or violence toward her is in fact directed toward their master. Geisha serve as entertainers and companions, with an expectation therefore to engage samurai though they do not perform the duties of a consort, despite the unsavory reputation many geisha houses have cultivated. Geisha shine in their conversational charm, in dance, and music, and are rewarded for the peace they bring a troubled samurai's soul with many gifts. Even a married samurai suffers no shame for associating with geisha, so long as he keeps his association discreet.

Eta torturers also frequently associate with samurai, as their efforts complement magistrates in their work.

Home and Hearth, Customs and Laws

Government

The government of Rokugan legislates on simultaneously simple and complex levels. On the surface, the Emperor bears the responsibility for the final authority on all the laws of the land. The Empire belongs to the Emperor, who rules with the consent of the Celestial Heavens. As the Heavens put their faith in the Emperor, his word reigns with absolute authority and carries the weight of Lord Sun and Lady Moon. While this absolute power seems easy to abuse, it has only been notably perverted a few times in the history of the Empire, most notably, the rulership of the Gozoku Conspiracy, who undermined the rule of Hantei V and VI entirely, the bloody reign of Hantei XVI, the man Steel Chrysanthemum, the reign of Hantei XXXIX, who was possessed by the Dark God, Fu Leng, and the short period of time in which Toturi I was influenced by the Lying Darkness. Outside of these isolated events, the Emperor has always taken great pains to ensure that his son would do the ruling dynasty's name honor, and the Imperial Families have eternally acted as a balancing influence, steering the Emperor subtly away from his darker desires.

A busy figure, the Emperor cannot handle all affairs of justice. While the Shogun enforces the Emperor's will in all military matters, the Emerald Champion acts as the Emperor's highest agent of justice and the Emperor's personal bodyguard, but more commonly is dispatched far from the Emperor's side to enforce Imperial Law throughout Rokugan. Under the domain of Emerald Champion, thousands of Emerald Magistrates roam the Empire, helping the Emerald Champion fulfill his duties. Those appointed to the position of Emerald Magistrate are expected to act with the justice of the Imperial Son of Heaven in mind, and nothing else. Magistrates often must put aside matters of clan or family politics or loyalty when they assume this station. Clever Magistrates, however, find ways to use their position to gain favor and honor for their clan without compromising the honor of their office.

The clans also have their own magistrates, selected by daimyo across the provinces. These magistrates carry out the law of the Emperor as well, but generally only within the borders of their family. These clan magistrates are slightly lower in station than the Emerald Magistrates, but still command respect within their own territories. They are considered the hand of their lord, and act with the full authority of the daimyo they represent in all matters (the daimyo, in turn, trusts them not to abuse that authority lest it be revoked). Unlike the Emerald Magistrates, however, they almost never have to work in a manner that may harm their family or clan.

An office similar to the Emerald Champion is the Jade Champion. The Jade Champion's duty is to police all illegal use of magic in the empire, particularly maho (blood magic). The Jade Champion's Jade Magistrates and Inquisitors are to him as the Emerald Magistrates are to the Emerald Champion.

Each bit of land is usually governed by a minor daimyo that is given the duty of making sure the peasants pay their taxes, and the province keeps in line with the Emperor's law, and the law of the clan. These minor daimyo, in turn, report to either a more important lord, or even the daimyo of a family. The family daimyo is responsible for all the lords under his command, and reports to the Champion of the clan. The Champion of a clan answers only to three people — the Emperor, the Emerald Champion, and the Jade Champion.

Crime and Punishment

Rokugan tolerates no aberrant activity. Deviance from custom and tradition encounters stern disapproval and harsh punishment for criminal behavior. Robbery, forgery, murder, rape, and kidnapping are all punishable by execution. To salvage his honor if not his life, a samurai can offer to commit seppuku, though particularly vile criminals are denied this opportunity. Imperial Law grants a magistrate the exclusive right to punish a criminal's spouse and children as well in the case of serious crimes, a common practice.

Lesser crimes, extortion, vandalism, minor derelictions of duty, trespassing, generally merit a fine and either house arrest (for a samurai) or a savage public beating (for peasants). Minor crimes come at the cost of manacles or house arrest.

Technically not human, eta cannot be tried as criminals and thus stand outside the normal Rokugani justice system. However even the most innocent eta can be killed by a samurai with little or no repercussions. Eta that would use their status as an excuse to begin a life of crime should be wary.

Testimony is the strongest arbitrator of justice in Rokugani law. Though the evidence suggesting an individual's guilt may be insurmountable, it is nothing if a reliable witness testifies as a witness to their guilt. Likewise a reliable witness might single-handedly convict a person despite any lack of evidence. Naturally many enterprising criminals take advantage of this, using their influence to manipulate potential witnesses into ignoring their activities or shifting blame to their competitors. While this is not easy in a land of samurai, where personal integrity is a highly praised virtue even for the humblest peasant, it is far from unknown.

Of course, this is not to say that samurai do not completely ignore the importance of evidence. However, evidence is regarded as secondary to testimony. Essentially, this boils down to the Rokugani perception of honor. Evidence lies but samurai don't. Thus a samurai's sworn testimony supersedes evidence obtained by any other means.

In recent years, Emerald Magistrates (mostly hailing from or trained by the Kitsuki family) have begun to reverse this tradition, revealing that subtle evidence can paint a clearer picture of what has truly occurred in a crime scene. While this has not reversed Rokugan's preference of testimony over evidence, the testimony of a Kitsuki-trained magistrate who observes a crime scene now bears as much weight in a criminal investigation as an eyewitness.

Whatever evidence or testimony might be at hand, no crime can be punished without a confession from the suspect. In a case where guilt is clear and the testimony is above dispute, an eta torturer is brought in to torture the suspect until he either confesses or perishes. High ranking samurai — obviously guilty might be spared this indignity, but placed under indefinite

house arrest until they make a confession. Such a state causes such shame for the samurai and his family that the suspect will generally either confess or commit seppuku.

A samurai accused of a crime outside his homelands can only stand trial by an Emerald Magistrate or a magistrate from his own clan. For a clan magistrate to punish a foreign samurai (especially with execution) is tantamount to a declaration of war, an action only a fool would take lightly. If a foreign samurai is found guilty of a crime and an Emerald Magistrate is not available to arbitrate, it is within a clan magistrate's rights to declare the suspect exiled from the lands of the magistrate's clan and escort him to the border, or detain him until an Emerald Magistrate arrives to arbitrate the matter.

The Rokugani legal system places ronin in an awkward position. While they are technically samurai, most ronin have no superiors or brethren to stand by them should they find themselves falsely accused of a crime. Many magistrates automatically assume all ronin are guilty of some crime (after all, why else would they be ronin?) and seize upon the earliest opportunity to accuse, imprison, and execute any ronin who linger too long in their territory. While this attitude leads many ronin to extreme caution in their travels, it also ironically encourages many others to lead a life of crime. If they must suffer punishment for a life of crime regardless of what they do, why not also enjoy the benefits?

Travel

At the dawn of the Empire, the first Hantei constructed and maintained an excellent system of roads designed to connect the Imperial City, Otosan Uchi, with the palaces of the Great Clans with the idea that the Emperor himself would be traveling upon them. Wherever possible, trees border the roads, creating a canopy to protect the Emperor from foul weather and shade him from the midday heat of the sun.

Way stations staffed by younger samurai, usually low ranking Emerald Magistrates are places at regular intervals along the roads. These samurai serve as scouts in the event of an invasion, and patrol the area against bandit incursions. They assist travelers and maintain order in the general area. Larger way stations have one or two shugenja on hand to serve as healers and defense against supernatural threats.

Those who wish to travel over clan borders must carry official travel papers. These papers can only be drafted by an Emerald Magistrate or an official representative of the lord of the lands in question. These papers are checked each time a traveler passes a way station or encounters a patrol. How much access a lord can offer depends upon their jurisdiction. The Governor of Musume Mura in Crane territory, for example, could grant a Scorpion an invitation to that city, and he could pass through Crane lands to arrive there so long as he traveled swiftly and remained upon the road. The Kakita daimyo could grant access to all roads in the Kakita provinces. The Crane Champion can grant unlimited access to any of the roads in the lands of the Crane clan. The Emperor, of course, can grant access to any road, anywhere. Though Emerald Magistrates can grant a samurai travel papers usable anywhere in the Empire, such papers maintain a temporary status and require regular renewal.

Traveling off the Emperor's roads increases one's chances of attack. Close to the Shadowlands border in Scorpion and Crab provinces, one can easily run afoul of any manner of beasts. Elsewhere in the Empire, one runs the chance of being waylaid by bandits on unfriendly terrain. Navigating the rocky mountains of the Dragon and Phoenix lands represents considerable challenges, as do the forests of the Unicorn and Scorpion lands. Further, those who remain on the roads are typically assumed to be there on honorable business, and are granted some lenience if their papers are not in order. A Scorpion on the road in Unicorn lands who claims to be on his way to Toshi Ranbo might be politely escorted on his way, while a Scorpion skulking through the Shinomen Forest without papers will be granted no such mercy.

On (Face)

Despite the emphasis on truth in both Rokugan's texts and laws, the Empire has customarily emphasized appearance over fact. Those who speak sincerely garner favor over those who speak poorly. A character's on (which loosely translates to "face" or "respectability") measures one's reputation — a mark a little different than honor or concerns of glory. Though Akodo Hideyoshi possesses all the markings of an honorable man and capable general, if anyone uncovers the truth: he stammers and stutters in court, his on suffers, and he loses respect accordingly.

By contrast, a worthless, dishonorable lout could still command respect if capable of keeping proper appearances with the right people. The battlefield of the court tends to be taken most seriously, as a man's reputation can kill another's before the chance to engage in a formal duel even appears. A samurai in high standing with his peers will carry weight far beyond his own status, as those of higher status embrace his word as their own. Others will not even bother to challenge them, for fear of appearing foolish. A samurai's reputation figures as his most valuable asset, and any samurai worthy of his swords will not allow any harm to come to his reputation.

Dishonor

To a samurai, honor is more precious than life itself. To fail in battle, to betray one's duty, or to suffer a loss of face can all lead to disgrace and dishonor. Each clan maintains its own interpretation of honor, and thus each clan's definition of honor and dishonor varies. A dishonored samurai must act immediately to restore his honor. If the source of his dishonor was an insult or betrayal, he must challenge the party responsible. If the source of the dishonor was his own actions, then he must redeem his mistakes. Even redemption, however, may not suffice. A dishonored samurai may ultimately commit seppuku to atone for his deeds or, even worse, face exile as a ronin.

Bushido

The customs and protocols surrounding honor could take up volumes. Of all the questions in the Empire, the most debated questions circulate around topics such as "What is enlightenment?" and "What is honor?" — similar in that mere words can never satisfactorily unpack the concepts. Those enlightened simply manifest it, as do the truly honorable. The Seven Tenets of Bushido set down by Akodo come closest to defining the concepts of enlightenment and honor.

GI (HONESTY)

In Rokugan, truth measures the meaning of life so adhering to the truth defines the course of a samurai's existence. However, common sense accepts that those who lead an honorable life, carry within them a pure soul and thus have nothing to fear from the truth. Lies are a tool of the weak and shameful. Even the most dishonest courtier would heartily agree, as misdirection crafted from half-truths works much better than a lie.

YU (COURAGE)

Samurai and shugenja place their lives on the line for their lord, and even the courtier in the protected heart of Otosan Uchi must take risks that could lead to the downfall of his house and family. Fear touches the hearts of all who must stand for what they hold dear, but the samurai must stand above his emotion. Courage is not the absence of fear, or the willingness to throw one's life away in the face of impossible odds, but the ability to continue onward regardless.

JIN (COMPASSION)

A wise person tempers power with mercy. A great leader won't overwork and tax his peasants towards selfish ends. So, too, are the wisest samurai those who understand that mercy is a fundamental principle of the Celestial Order, and the law of the Emperor. A samurai who spares the life of an enemy proves himself the better man.

REI (COURTESY)

Though strength of arms is the domain of the samurai, respect must also take its place, as the Empire would quickly dissolve into chaos without a strong tradition of courtesy.

MEYO (HONOR)

Honor is the binding force that defines all samurai, the shining virtue that elevates them above the common man. Honor cannot be truly defined, for those without any concept of Honor will never understand.

MAKOTO (SINCERITY)

For a samurai, word and action coincide to complete the true meaning of sincerity. A samurai need not make promises, for every word he speaks should breathe sincerity. A samurai's word is the cornerstone of his reputation, and cannot be violated.

CHUGO (DUTY)

All that exists has a purpose: to recognize and fulfill that purpose insures the virtue of duty. Even the Emperor must bow before the might of the Heavens, and a samurai can do no less than follow his example.

Gempukku

The most significant ceremony of a samurai's life, gempukku, celebrates the passage from childhood to adulthood. This ceremony typically occurs at fourteen years of age, though depending on the circumstances it can take place earlier or later in life. Though most samurai children begin training long before this ceremony, a samurai need not go through an apprenticeship; upon completion of the ceremony, his elders give him his swords and consider him henceforth an adult in all ways. Naturally inexperienced samurai are rarely given the same responsibilities of their older

brethren, but they are otherwise granted the respect and station of a samurai immediately upon reaching adulthood. The nature of the gempukku ceremony varies greatly by clan and family. While the Doji prefer elaborate ceremony offering opportunity for courtly interaction, the Hida gempukku involves surviving an expedition into the Shadowlands and returning with an enemy's head. In times of war, gempukku ceremonies are often disposed of altogether as young samurai-to-be are handed their daisho and sent immediately to the front lines.

Seppuku

When a samurai experiences dishonor, there is often little recourse but seppuku — a ceremony of ritual suicide. This ritual involves long prayers of solitary purification, after which the samurai kneels and slices his abdomen three times with his wakizashi. A chosen assistant called a second is generally on hand with katana at the ready. If the samurai performed the three cuts admirably and without crying out, the second immediately takes his head and ends his pain; otherwise the samurai is left to bleed to death in shame.

The ceremony of seppuku occurs rarely and is often misunderstood. Seppuku doesn't preserve a samurai's honor; in fact it is the ultimate admission of one's shame and dishonor, rather, performed in hopes of cleansing one's family and clan of the shame that your actions have brought upon them. A samurai must ask and be granted permission to commit seppuku from his lord, or can be commanded to do so by his lord. A samurai who commits seppuku without permission has effectively stated that he can stand to serve his lord no longer, and implicates them in his own shame. That said, more than one samurai forced to serve a cruel or dishonorable samurai has committed seppuku without permission as the ultimate denouncement of their lord's actions.

Customarily when asking permission to commit seppuku, a samurai offers his wakizashi to his lord first. The sword will then be returned and used to perform the act. The samurai's lord may also opt to give the samurai a different weapon to perform the act. A samurai offered the ancestral wakizashi of the clan for this ceremony has been shown the ultimate gesture of forgiveness (though it will not save his life). A samurai given a wooden sword for his seppuku experiences the gravest insult, as his lord implies that he does not possess the courage to go through with the act.

Games

Like many things in Rokugan, the games of the noble class are far more meaningful and complex than they appear on the surface. Samurai must indulge themselves in intellectual pursuits as well as the study of warfare, and a shugenja or monk who cannot participate in the pastimes of the noble elite loses face and winds up the butt of many jokes.

GO

The most common strategy game in Rokugan is Go — everyone knows how to play. Basic rules, and the simple matters of strategy make it easy enough to grasp and thus a popular pastime.

Go is played on a flat surface, with the playing field consisting of nineteen horizontal and nineteen vertical lines, creating 361 intersections. Both players command a set of colored stones, traditionally black and white, which they take turns placing at the intersections of the lines. To win, one must control the high-

est number of contiguous intersections by surrounding them. Once a player places a stone on the board, it will not move unless the other player's stones surround it, in which case it is removed from the board. In Rokugan, every game of Go continues to its fatal conclusion no matter the futility in one's position. When each player plays all his stones, the game is over.

Go serves an excellent venue for studying tactics and strategy. Anticipating the other player's moves is key in becoming a master of the game, an essential quality for any would-be general. Go tournaments are frequent, though Shiro Akodo hosts the all-time favorite. Emperor Toturi III has rightfully earned a reputation as the most skilled player in Rokugan, though he rarely plays publicly since his coronation.

SHOGI

A game similar to chess, the more scholarly citizens of the Empire favor Shogi, a tactical game, played on a surface of eighty-one squares, nine across and nine high. The wooden obelisk-shaped pieces are played in the squares of the board, with both players controlling nineteen pieces of ten different functions and names. The pieces are usually have a point on one end and kanji on opposite sides of the obelisk — one denotes the piece's regular value and the other the promoted value.

The ten pieces are named, and move and capture as follows, with the starting number for either player in parenthesis:

- **King (1)** Moves one square in any direction
- **Rook (1)** — Move forward or sideways as far as the player wishes
- **Bishop (1)** — Move diagonally as far as the player wishes
- **Gold General (2)** — Move one square in any direction, except diagonally backward
- **Silver General (2)** — Move one square forward or diagonally
- **Knight (2)** — Move two spaces forward or backward, then once space to the side. May move over other pieces
- **Lancer (2)** — Move any square forward
- **Pawn (9)** — Move forward one square at a time

The object of Shogi is to capture the other player's King piece. Akodo Soko drew up the official rules of Shogi 200 years ago, some time after the Unicorn brought the game to the Empire after their return. The grand master of Shogi earns the title soko-meijin and honorary fealty to the Lion Clan in honor of Akodo Soko's work. A new soko-meijin is determined when the current one turns forty years old. Currently Akodo Kuemon, a brilliant young officer of the Lion Clan, holds this honored position.

KEMARI

For those with a taste for more physical contests, the Winter Court offers an odd game called kemari. The Shinjo family introduced the rules of the game several decades ago, and it has since risen in popularity. Kemari resembles soccer, in that it uses a large leather ball, which players may not touch with their hands. Players stand in a circle and kick the ball about, attempting to keep the ball from touching the ground. Perhaps the strangest part of kemari is that it is played in full courtly dress, kimonos and peaked black caps. Many players find that maintaining one's dignity during a game as much of a challenge as keeping the ball in the air, a subtle metaphor for the complex life of a samurai.

SUMAI

Sumai wrestlers (also called sumo) go through intense purification and meditation rituals before a sumai bout, and spectators come for the ceremony as much as the sport. An actual bout of sumai is over in seconds, as two massive wrestlers slam into one another with the intent of knocking the opponent off his feet or pushing him out of the ring. Matches are separated into four categories according to the skill and reputation of the wrestlers. In ascending order, these are juryo, maegashira, sanyaku, and yokuzuna. Winter Court only allows bouts of yokuzuna. Sumai tournaments take place between two teams of wrestlers who perform seventeen bouts before the Emperor and his entourage. A beautifully crafted masterwork bow goes to the victor whereupon they receive an invitation from the Imperial court to perform bugaku, a complex ritual of ceremonial songs and dances; the champion dances while twirling the prize bow.

SADANE

Another popular courtly game, sadane promotes the art of impromptu criticism. Sadane constitutes more substance than mere insult, and stands for rather biting denunciations of the value of a piece of art, a book, or even the ethics or morality of an individual based upon the legitimate faults of the target. If a person or piece of art is genuinely without fault, effective Sadane may be impossible. At night during Winter Court, many young courtiers meet secretly to engage one another in bouts of Sadane.

Etiquette

In Rokugan, etiquette is all-important, for a samurai who does not treat others with respect is worthy of none. All samurai study etiquette beginning at an early age. Failure to display proper etiquette in the presence of one's peers and superiors will result in dishonor and exile, if not seppuku. The following delineate basic elements of courtesy in Rokugan that every character of samurai birth will adhere to if they know what is good for them.

BOWING AND KNEELING

It is customary when greeting another person to bow as a gesture of respect and trust, although many bow merely as a formality. This practice began during the dawn of the Empire, when samurai would bow or kneel before their lord with their hands held to their sides. This was a way to demonstrate their loyalty by offering their unprotected neck and thus their lives to their liege. The practice has continued to this day.

Bowing is a show of respect between two individuals of equal social standing. The lower the bow, the greater the respect shown to the person to whom one is bowing. Bowing only very slightly to another is a sign of inferior status and is commonly interpreted as a thinly veiled insult.

Kneeling is done before a person of obviously superior rank. Samurai always kneel before their lord, just as they would to any daimyo of a family or clan, regardless of their affiliation or relation to that clan. Even if two clans are at war, it would be expected for a samurai of one clan to kneel or at least bow very deeply to a daimyo of the other. Doing otherwise would be very risky indeed. It goes without saying that everyone in the Empire bows before the Emperor, just as the peasants of the helmin class bow before all samurai. Eta sometimes prostrate themselves on the ground completely, just to be safe.

TERMS OF ADDRESS

How a samurai addresses others can be either a sign of great respect or enormous insult. Samurai of different clans would be expected to address one another by the name of their clan unless it was obvious from their clothing to which family they belonged. For example, calling another samurai "Dragon" when his kimono clearly bears the Kitsuki family mon would be an insult, implying that his family was beneath notice or unknown to the speaker. Unless two individuals are close, or permission has been given, they will typically refer to each other by their family names rather than their personal names. Two samurai of differing clans who refer to each other by their personal names in public are acquainted with one another, distantly related, or are publicly displaying an alliance with one another.

When addressing someone, one traditionally adds a suffix to their name in order to reflect the relationship between the two samurai. If one is speaking to a friend or at least another of equal rank, then *-san* should be added to the end of their name. For example, a Lion magistrate working with a Phoenix might refer to him as "Shiba-san." To a superior, the *-sama* suffix should always be added as a symbol of respect, and to refer to a superior as *-san* would be dishonorable. Referring to an equal with the *-sama* suffix comes across as a great compliment, though it can occasionally bring shame if the compliment embarrasses the recipient instead. Between members of the opposite sex who are closely involved or related, different suffixes come into play. Referring to a female loved one should use the *-chan* suffix. Conversely, referring to a male loved one should employ the *-kun* suffix in colloquial use between siblings, relatives, spouses, or close bonds between friends. When a samurai wishes to insult an enemy of the opposite sex, implying that they are such a minor threat that the speaker finds them adorable, he will use the *-kun* suffix as well.

One other consideration as a term of address is the prefix *O-* being added to another's name. This means "great one," a show of enormous respect and admiration to the individual addressed as such. Typically, this prefix can

only be bestowed by one's daimyo after a demonstration of exceptional service and loyalty.



GIFT-GIVING

When meeting a host or a superior for the first time, customarily one offers a gift. Gifts are also given to demonstrate good favor to another or to reward loyal service. The more personal and sentimental the gift is, the more meaningful it is. A daimyo that gives his loyal retainer a gift purchased from the market could be expressing his indifference, but the same lord awarding his retainer with a sword-guard worn by his own father or a poem written in his own hand would be showing extraordinary favor, even if the recipient had no use or desire for the gift.

The gift of a weapon or even armor can be taken as an insult, implying that the recipient either requires protection or that their lord is unable to meet their needs accordingly. A gift of a katana implies the insufficiency of the very symbol of the recipient's status. In contrast, the gift of a katana is the most favored of gifts when rewarded by one's daimyo. A katana offered as a gift by the Emperor ranks as the rarest and most treasured gift; samurai have boasted about such treasures for generations after they were received.

When accepting a gift, one customarily refuses the gift two times before acquiescing. This allows the person presenting the gift to demonstrate their sincerity by continuing to offer it. A person who offers a gift once and then stops clearly was not particularly interested in parting with the object in the first place. A recipient who denies the gift a third time, or who does not invent particularly clever reasons to deny the gift, has delivered a thorough and resounding insult. In Crab or Unicorn lands this tradition is rarely observed, as these clans consider the tradition a waste of time.

Learning

There are two distinct methods to learn a trade in Rokugan. The first and most common among samurai is the use of the dojo. When a samurai reaches a suitable age, normally somewhere around seven years old although some families choose to wait until the children are considerably older, they are sent to a school that will teach them the skills they will require to serve their family and clan. The vast majority attend bushi schools, where they gain the martial training they will require as soldiers, magistrates, and sentries. A small number go elsewhere, to various clan-specific schools for courtiers, *yojimbo*, or even merchant patrons. Finally, a blessed handful with the supreme ability to speak to the kami, undergo the rigorous training that will allow them to serve their clan as *shugenja*. Whatever the training, these schools usually teach their students for at least six years, sometimes as many as nine before granting them their *gempukku* ceremony.

A samurai taught in a dojo continues his education throughout his lifetime, even though he may leave the school for extended periods of time. It is generally accepted that students who return to their sensei and demonstrated a certain level of skill and proficiency are ready to advance. Such students are taught more intricate and complicated techniques of the school's style, increasing both their individual prowess and their value as a servant of the clan. The sensei of a clan's schools stand as highly respected individuals who may have hundreds of different students serving the clan in various positions. Learning a technique is a sacred trust. For a samurai to share his techniques with others is both an insult to his sensei and a betrayal of his clan's trust. Any samurai who perpetrates such a betrayal can expect retribution from the other students of his school if caught.

The other primary system of instruction, less common among samurai but used almost exclusively by the *heimin* and *hinin* classes, is that of the master and apprentice. Samurai craftsmen and artisans use this system to pass on what they have learned, choosing suitable apprentices to study with them for years and master the techniques they have spent their lives developing. Among the lower classes, various types of craftsmen including smiths, carpenters, and stonemasons employ similar methods to ensure that their talents do not die with them, but that their village will continue to have such skills at its disposal.

Gender Roles

Gender discrimination doesn't figure as a huge issue in Rokugan for the most part though it is for the most part a traditional society. Males assume a slightly dominant role in the majority of families without undermining feminine strengths. Female bushi are commonplace, the courts boast powerful courtiers of both sexes, and the *kami* do not discriminate between *shugenja* of either gender.

That said, some families and clans discriminate more than others. The Crab, for example, have been known to underestimate the strength of women; the Crab tend to view *everyone* else as weak. But once one's strength has been proven the Crab show the proper respect. The Utaku and Matsu families swing to the opposite extreme, viewing men as weak and inferior beings. The Moshi family of the Mantis Clan does not discriminate as openly, but only women (particularly women who display talent as *shugenja*) seem to have any true hope for political advancement in their family.

Love and Marriage

Among members of the samurai caste, marriage is almost invariably a tool of political convenience rather than the result of true love. Among influential families, marriages are often planned out as early as childhood. Those who do not make a match early in life either do not have the necessary political connections to find a beneficial match or are members of such influential families that their parents are holding out for the most equitable arrangement possible. A select few samurai are given permission by their parents to select their own spouse. This is common if the child already has several older siblings who have undertaken arranged marriages, or in the case of a particularly indulgent parent.

When a samurai takes a spouse, typically one of the members of the partnership swears fealty to the new clan and takes the spouse's name. In most cases, the female takes the male's name, but not always. In matriarchal families such as the Utaku, Matsu, and Moshi, the male is expected to marry into the female's household. The Doji family generally expect anyone who marries into their household to take the Doji name, whether they be male or female. In some cases the bride swears no new vows of fealty at all outside her wedding vows. This is usually limited to very powerful individuals, such as the Shogun's bride, Doji Yasuyo. Such arrangements are always ironed out well in advance of the marriage, and the topic of who will swear fealty to whom has buried more than one marriage arrangement long before it became public.

It is a common arrangement for one member of a union to take charge of the household while the partner assumes responsibilities beyond. For example, the husband might continue to serve his clan as an officer in the armies while the wife takes charge of problems that arise in the home village and coordinates the family's finances. Which spouse assumes which responsibility varies wildly depending on the clan, family, and individuals involved. In some cases, both spouses might continue an active life as bushi or courtiers and leave underlings to maintain their household.

Though most marriages are arranged, this is not to say that love is not known or valued. Love is seen as a grand thing, especially if a samurai has the strength to set love aside when duty calls. Samurai romances that end in tragedy are the subject of many popular plays, but they are generally viewed as a warning of what can befall a foolish samurai rather than an example to be embraced. Peasants marry for love offering a least one thing to ignite little envy for the well-stationed samurai.

Due to the loveless nature of many samurai marriages, infidelity is commonplace, a matter commonly accepted, if not dwelled upon. So long as a samurai keeps his affairs secret, the matter is politely ignored. Should his affairs spill into the public eye, however, he brings shame not only upon his own family but upon that of his spouse as well. Such romantic catastrophes rarely end well for any of the individuals involved.

Adventurers

It goes without saying that Rokugan thrives with adventure. However, with all samurai sworn in service to a lord, some might wonder how intrepid young samurai wander the land in search of said adventure. Fortunately, there are a number of ways that young and enthusiastic adventurers can use as a pathway to find intrigue and excitement across the Empire.

MUSHA SHUGYO

The tradition of *musha shugyo*, or "warrior pilgrimage," is nearly as old as the Empire itself stating that warrior will leave behind all his allegiances, to family, clan, or anything else, and wander the Empire as a *ronin* thus perfecting the warrior's art.

While the clans all recognize the tradition of the *musha shugyo*, they will not allow just anyone to undertake one. The *daimyo* of the individual in question must first receive testimony from the samurai's *sensei* that clearly states the *sensei* believes that the pilgrimage will greatly improve the samurai's skills, thereby allowing him to fulfill some crucial function for the clan. Even with this testimony, the *daimyo* may refuse, as sometimes every sword is needed in service to the clan.

A samurai on a *musha shugyo* travels without any indication of his former clan or family. He is treated as a *ronin* by all he meets. For all intents and purposes, he is a *ronin*, and cannot betray his origins or the sanctity of the pilgrimage is broken. He may travel with others, or he may travel alone. On rare occasions, several samurai on a pilgrimage may travel together. Once they have completed their journey and feel they have little else they can learn by wandering, they return to their *sensei* and demonstrate their knowledge. Then they may be accepted back into their clan once more.

EMERALD MAGISTRATES

The Emerald Magistrates enforce the Emperor's laws. Some are assigned specific regions throughout the Empire to police, which can range from entire provinces to specific large cities like Ryoko Owari, while others are given leave to wander the wilder sections of Rokugan, bringing law to the lawless.

New Emerald Magistrates recruits often work in assigned groups. This allows them to pool their talents and also allows the new magistrates to forge close bonds with their fellow officers, hopefully creating a more cohesive, cooperative force.

IMPERIAL CARTOGRAPHERS

A less common but still very valid purpose for adventurers to wander the Empire is in service of the Imperial Cartographers. By Imperial Edict, the Imperial Maps are infallible and nothing in the Empire truly exists that is not recorded upon them. The cartographers recognize the reality of the situation and constantly struggle to keep the maps updated. Although few young samurai from the Great Clans will actually find a place among the Imperial Cartographers, cartographers commonly require the assistance of several samurai in the rough lands they must explore. Cartographers have unlimited travel authorization, but are often the victim of bandits or other unsavory groups, hence the need for traveling companions. They also face less predictable threats, such as the possibility of gaijin barbarians when mapping the northern and western borders of the Empire, or Shadowlands creatures when mapping the southwestern regions.

YOJIMBO

Young samurai are often assigned as bodyguards for a wide variety of individuals. Important courtiers or shugenja often require protection. Even prominent merchants can require yojimbo to escort them across the Empire, such as the famous Shinjo caravans of the Unicorn Clan. Samurai who choose to see Rokugan in this way (or perhaps are assigned to do so) have little choice in their destination, but at least they are always provided accommodations.

OTHER ADVENTURERS

Nothing prevents a samurai from wandering the Empire along less traditional lines, perhaps as scouts for their daimyo, or even as members of an army on reconnaissance. They might be members of the Imperial Legions assigned to locate specific items or individuals for their commander. They could be ronin seeking a cause to serve or merely looking for a way to afford their next meal or ambassadors, diplomats, magistrates, spies or even bounty hunters. Whatever their calling, one always finds it absolutely necessary to travel and adventure in the Empire.

Languages

It is extremely unlikely that when traveling in Rokugan one will encounter any language other than the native tongue, understandable given the Empire's somewhat xenophobic view of other peoples and their customs. There are other languages that are spoken in Rokugan, but they are exceedingly rare and generally only spoken in very specific locations or circumstances.

In Rokugan you won't encounter secret spoken languages; however, each clan has its own code to use in the encryption of spell scrolls and other important documents. This cipher is writ-

ten, not spoken. There has never been sufficient need among the people of Rokugan to develop secretive languages, not even among the duplicitous Scorpion Clan.

Common Rokugani: This is the language most often used by the people of the Empire, spoken by the peasants in the field, guards in the barracks, merchants in the city, and even in informal court settings. Numerous dialects make it possible to determine where a particular individual might be from based on his diction and enunciation. Most dialects are clan-specific, although there are provinces throughout the Empire that have developed their own variants.

High Rokugani: Very similar to the common tongue, the so-called high language is the particular dialect of Rokugani used in court and legal proceedings. It is virtually identical to the common tongue except for its reliance upon long, flowery terms of address and overemphasized pronunciation. This dialect is always used at the Emperor's court. Using the common tongue in the Emperor's presence assures great dishonor.

Kami: This is the language spoken by all shugenja when interacting with the elemental spirits, ancient tongue, spoken long before mankind walked the world. During the dawn of the Empire great minds like Isawa and Iuchi learned to decipher it and speak, now taught to all shugenja in training, and any shugenja characters know how to speak it. Non-shugenja could conceivably learn it, but they would not be able to perceive the kami's reaction to their words.

Nonhuman languages: Numerous reclusive races in Rokugan have their own language, most notably the Naga and Nezumi. The Nezumi language is understood and even spoken by many Crab, but the Naga tongue is very difficult to master because of its reliance upon the Akasha, the group-mind shared by the Naga people. Although humans can speak a crude version of Naga, they can never master it. To a Naga's ears, to speak Naga without the Akasha is much like attempting to speak Rokugani without verbs. Naga will invariably become frustrated attempting to comprehend the human babblings and will generally prefer to communicate with humans in Rokugani if they can.

Other races also have their own tongue, such as the secretive kenku and the sinister Tsuru. Oni speak a language of their own as well, a language that must be learned if one intends to summon these demonic beings with any measure of safety.

Barbarian languages: The rarest of all languages in Rokugan are those spoken by the gaijin. Few outsiders in Rokugan means that very few such languages are ever heard, much less understood. The Unicorn Clan purportedly has knowledge of a great number of languages mastered during their centuries of travel, although they do not speak of them. The Phoenix and Tortoise clans are familiar with the tongue of the Yobanjin, the barbarian tribes to the north of Rokugan. Likewise the Mantis have been exposed to the bizarre tongue used by the Ivory Kingdoms far to the south and west of the Empire. The Scorpion might understand the Senpet language, used by a race of conquerors from the deserts, and the Ashalan tongue, a language spoken by a race that they encountered during their banishment across the Burning Sands, but again this cannot be substantiated as the Scorpion will not discuss their exile with those outside the clan.

Coin and Commerce

The Rokugani economy shifts constantly. The basic monetary unit is known as the koku, and is based on the value of a bushel of rice. Therefore, the value of a single koku fluctuates wildly from year to year. If the harvest has been bountiful, a single koku might be worth relatively little due to the influx of money in the market. During sparse years, however, a single koku can purchase a great deal.

LABOR

For the most part, labor is strictly the domain of the heimin class. Physical exertion in the form of manual labor lies well beneath the inherent nobility of the samurai with notable exceptions. During times of war, samurai commonly take up repair on fortifications alongside their peasant workers, but only under duress. Among the Crab Clan, it is a common occurrence for samurai to aid in the constant maintenance the Kaiu Wall requires, just as the peasants must constantly aid in the Wall's defense. In the lands of poor Minor Clans, such as the Sparrow or Badger, engaging in labor beside the heimin to assure the clan's survival is a virtual necessity.

Other than manual labor, peasants have few options. The crafting of steel into weapons, for example, is an art form, not a labor elevating the smithing of weapons and armor to the exclusive domain of samurai.

It is important to note that peasant laborers are not paid. Their labor, together with the moderate taxes upon the crops that they grow, repays their lord for allowing them to live upon and work his land, a feudal system with proven viability over the centuries. In some cases a peasant may demand money in return for services rendered to a samurai who does not serve his lord. Most of this money is then passed on to the peasant's lord, with only a small percentage retained to feed the peasant's family.

AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRY

The lifeblood of Rokugan, Rokugani farmers work tremendously hard, and industriously — expected to provide up to 60% of their annual yield as taxes. This is necessary to provide the family and clan upon whose land the farmers work with enough sustenance for the samurai under their command. This means that the farmers must redouble their efforts during the year to ensure that they have sufficient crops to not only pay their taxes, but also to feed their own family.

Industry is largely unknown in Rokugan. For the most part, material goods are hand crafted on an individual basis. Because of the perception of craftsmanship as either an art form or a labor beneath the samurai class, no one has yet stumbled across the notion of mass production, though the engineers of the Kaiu family have begun to consider the possibilities. Fortunately, craftsmen and merchants in the Empire still manage to fulfill the majority of such needs.

TRADE

Although official coinage exists in the Empire, barter still stands as a very commonly used means of exchange. The basis of the koku on foodstuffs makes it more attractive to deal in material goods during times of strife, as the value of these items is less likely to fluctuate.

War

Though both the Code of Bushido and the Tao of Shinsei stress the virtue of compassion, the simple fact that samurai are career warriors cannot be avoided. With so many powerful factions living in close proximity, vying for resources and political advantage, open warfare rages quite commonly in Rokugan.

The Champion of a Great Clan may declare war upon another Great Clan, but he must seek permission from the Emperor before full scale war begins or the conflict is viewed as illegal. For the most part, the Emperor does not approve of his vassals slaughtering one another, so he denies most of these requests. Against a weaker opponent, a clan may opt to resolve their attack so rapidly that the Emperor has no time to intervene. Alternately, a general might draw upon his courtiers to find any number of legal loopholes excusing the attack as legal, that present an enemy's previous actions as an attack (painting the clan's aggressive actions as nothing more than self defense) or present an argument that the attack is not technically an attack at all. The Lion Clan, for example, are charged with protecting the Emperor's interests, and have often seized upon a poorly defended village as a threat to the Empire's defense.

Minor Clans fall under the protection of the Emperor, protected by extremely stringent laws forbidding invasion into their territory. No Great Clan may declare war upon them for any reason, though most Great Clans are quite adept at interpreting rather innocuous actions as "acts of war." As a result, most Minor Clans tend to avoid the court when possible to avoid drawing the wrath of ambitious, land-hungry samurai.

LEADERSHIP AND THE BOOK OF SUN TAO

There are two primary texts on warfare which competent generals study, Akodo's *Leadership*, a massive volume begun by the Kami Akodo and appended by every Lion Champion since and the *Book of Sun Tao*, a compendium of philosophy and strategy written by the near-mythical ronin, Sun Tao. Each of the two books has a wealth of wisdom regarding terrain, tactics, and reading the intent of one's opponent. *Leadership* is certainly the larger of the two texts, the *Book of Sun Tao* is much more focused and concise. Which of these two volumes holds the greater wisdom continues to be a matter of some debate; most cunning generals draw liberally from both.

The original copy of Akodo's *Leadership* is the possession of the Champion of the Lion, though lesser copies can be found distributed throughout Rokugan. The original copy of the *Book of Sun Tao* was lost, though the manuscripts the ronin general copied for the Dragon, Scorpion, and Hantei remain intact, and numerous copies have been made from these.

SIEGE WARFARE

The *Book of Sun Tao* states that "a desperate general besieges an enemy's city." Indeed, most Rokugani generals dread siege warfare, and prefer to meet their opponents on even ground when possible. Siege warfare is long, tedious, and tiresome for both sides involved. Indeed, some samurai consider the idea of hiding from the enemy behind walls of stone and wood to be somewhat dishonorable. Most samurai are somewhat more practical, and will take advantage of the defenses their lord provided for them.

The exception to this rule is the Crab Clan. Their engineering expertise and generations of experience fighting defensively on the Kalu wall have made their clan the undisputed masters of siege warfare. It could be said, in fact, that their clan lives in a constant state of siege. Their catapults, fire breathers, and battering rams are leagues ahead of the siege technology of any other clan. The Lion, aware of the Crab's expertise, attempt to glean a bit of the knowledge of the Kalu siegemasters whenever possible.

SURRENDER

Surrender is dishonorable for a samurai. Indeed, even the act of offering surrender to a clearly superior opponent is dishonorable, for it suggests that the opponent would attack a foe that was beneath him. Such an insult can be answered only with wholesale slaughter. An attacking force can request surrender without any implication of shame or dishonor, but most defenders, thoroughly conditioned to protect their land, rarely accept the offer. Rokugan encourages diplomatic solutions to conflict, but most samurai would rather die than consider surrender as an option. Naga share a similar philosophy, and would rather die together than stand defeated. Nezumi do not have any of these qualms, though they prefer escape to surrender.

Commonly, a losing army purchases the safe retreat of their troops via a formal duel. The army's general (or his champion) challenges an opposing officer to a formal duel, with the lives of his followers as the stakes. If the challenger wins, then the followers are allowed to leave the field of battle with honor. If the challenger loses, the victor may do as he pleases with the lives of the challenger's followers.

SHUGENJA IN WAR

Most large armies keep a unit of shugenja on hand, both as a potent weapon against the enemy and to call upon the blessings of the Fortunes for the battles ahead. Shugenja also serve as healers during combat. Once the battle is done, they give thanks to the kami and purify the taint of blood and dead flesh that inevitably stains a victorious army.

During combat, shugenja are always well protected. Though they usually wear little more than light armor (heavier armor interferes with their connection to the kami) yojimbo protect them well as a yojimbo exists exclusively to give his life for a shugenja without hesitation.

Shugenja stand out as the one exception to the samurai's usual aversion to surrender. As servants of the kami, they are always treated with respect and offered the option of being taken prisoner when possible. Most shugenja realize how rare and precious their gift is, and how wrong it would be to deny the clan their gifts, and accept the offer even if the idea of being held hostage is otherwise intolerable.

HOSTAGES

In Rokugan, the ethics of hostage-taking and kidnapping diverge. Kidnapping is the illegal theft of a living person, a crime punishable by execution. Hostages are taken legally with notification to the hostage's family, most often to insure good behavior in a defeated enemy. However, hostages are just as frequently used to cement an alliance. Typically the second son of the allying daimyos is captured, symbolizing that each daimyo takes his wish for peace seriously while remaining practical enough

to protect his primary heir. Occasionally these hostages are required to swear fealty to their captors, and learn the school techniques of their new clan. Should one clan betray the other, hostages will pay with their lives.

During violent periods, it is the Emperor's right to invoke the Hitojichi (Hostage) Laws, requiring each daimyo to spend a month of every year in Otosan Uchi. After the daimyo returns home, his family remains in the city for another month as hostages of the Emperor. The Emperor could thus greatly reduce the chances of an organized attack by holding the loved ones of important figures; at any given time the relatives of a Clan Champion or his supporting families would be held hostage, thus the Emperor could rely upon that clan to protect him.

Hostages are treated as honored guests, not prisoners. To treat a hostage well shows true mastery of the virtue of courtesy. A samurai held hostage knows that his presence protects his clan's interests, and would not endanger his clan by attempting escape. Most of these hostages are actually quite welcome among their captors, and are invited to train at their captors' dojo, leading to the occasional incidence of a samurai adept in the techniques of a rival clan. No shame whatsoever emerges as the after effect of being held as a hostage, and in fact those who undertake such a duty gain much respect among their kinsmen for risking their lives in such a manner.

TRAVEL DURING WARTIME

With the constant possibility of war erupting in the Empire, the Clans protect themselves by keeping strict accounts of any samurai visiting in their lands. Samurai on official business must obtain travel papers (as mentioned previously) indicating their destination and business. These travel papers are checked at all way stations and province borders. In times of war, members of certain clans may be forbidden passage across province borders, or may be detained for verification of their mission.

Emerald Magistrates possess permanent travel papers allowing them to journey anywhere in Rokugan they deem fit, even during wartime, regardless of their clan. Imperial Legionnaires require no travel papers so long as they remain with their unit. These samurai represent the Emperor, not their clan, and their duties are not to be trifled with.

DUELING

When one samurai disputes with another, the standard means of rectifying the problem is through a formal duel. It is not acceptable to challenge a samurai of higher station. Insults from superior samurai are expected to be borne with honor, or resolved by one's lord. A formal duel must have witnesses; with no witnesses, the duel technically has not taken place and the matter remains unresolved.

The challenged party determines the nature of the duel. In the case of two bushi, it is assumed that the duel will be trial by combat, in the case of two shugenja, a duel of magic. Courtiers and artisans generally have contests of wits. A challenged bushi who decides to greet his challenger with a contest of flower-arranging is in his right to do so, but will likely be branded a coward and lose a great deal of face. A courtier or shugenja challenged by a bushi may call upon a second, usually a yojimbo or other close relative skilled in combat. This challenge is waived if the courtier or shugenja wears his katana in public as such a symbol implies the individual in question is prepared to wield

his own sword. If a second is named and the duel is lost, the challenged party and his second share whatever fate is determined for the loser of the duel (meaning that if it is a duel to the death, the challenged party must commit seppuku should his second be defeated).

Typically, bushi duels are resolved with jujutsu, and are taken to the first blood (*ketsuki*). The first combatant to injure his opponent wins. Shugenja duels (*taryu-jiai*) are also usually non-violent, as each shugenja attempts to subjugate the other's will through the power of magic. Duels to the death are technically illegal, as a samurai's life is not his own to throw away. However, should the parties in dispute obtain permission from their lords, a duel to the death becomes perfectly legal.

When a duel is complete, the matter is considered to be resolved. For better or worse, a duel arbitrates and defines the code of justice between two samurai.

BLOOD FEUDS

When a samurai is killed in an illegal duel, or due to the gross incompetence of another samurai, it is the right of his immediate family to declare a blood feud. A formal blood feud requires the written consent of one's daimyo and functions essentially a declaration of war between the dead samurai's immediate family and the offending party. Those who interfere in a blood feud threaten the honor of the offended, and may be dealt with as the offending party deems fit. (The Emperor, his magistrates, Imperial Legionnaires, and other assorted personages of the Imperial Family are exempt.) Once the offending party has been killed, the feud has been resolved and the offended parties are expected to leave the lands of their enemies peacefully.

The most famous blood feud in history is that between the Lion and Crane Clans, dating back to the naming of Kakita as the first Emerald Champion. This feud was secretly instigated by Scorpion manipulation, but nonetheless has grown such that it is a rare period indeed that the Lion and Crane are not at one another's throats. The Lion Clan and Crane Clan are currently under an uneasy peace due to the actions of Crane Champion Doji Kurohito and Lion Champion Matsu Nimuro, but since Nimuro's recent death it is unknown what the future for these two clans holds.

COINAGE

As mentioned above, Rokugan's economy is based on the koku. A single koku measures the approximate amount of rice necessary to feed a single man for a year, or roughly five bushels of rice. A koku can be broken down into five bushels, or silver coins called ichibukin (commonly referred to as bu). A bu is further broken down into twenty small copper coins called zeni.

Individual clans mint their own coins at the conclusion of every harvest season. These coins are usable anywhere in the Empire, but all have very distinct markings so that the value of a Lion farm, for example, will not be confused with the value of a Crane farm. In theory, these coins can be redeemed for an amount of rice equal to their value from the clan that minted them at any time. In practice, however, this is not done with any regularity. Instead, the coins remain in circulation, their value as a representation of food overlooked in favor of their perceived value as a medium of exchange.

Magic in Society

Magic, in Rokugan, is not simply a shugenja bending the elements to his will, magic underlies all activities: the bird taking flight, and the Sun rising each morning. Man too comes from the confluence this magic projected in the blood and tears of the first Moon and Sun mixing together to create something new. Magic spirits dwell everywhere, simply waiting to be called upon.

In a more common definition, however, magic is the art of shugenja, and even the monk's kiho. While the average Rokugani understands that magic surrounds them every day, it is still a holy practice, and something to be looked upon with wonder. Shugenja, the most common practitioners of magic, bring with their vocation the blessings of the kami upon the Empire.

The samurai caste holds the keys to the magic realm, proof that the greatest blessings of the Sun and Moon are reserved for the nobility. Occasionally, peasants have a strong affinity for the kami and in all but the rarest cases this is the same inner path that the monks follow. The peasant then goes on to study among the peaceful Brotherhood of Shinsei. Peasants who show true magical affinity are quickly granted samurai status and trained as shugenja.

As a force, magic represents a tool and a blessing as a genuine gift from the Heavens. With the power of magic, a shugenja can purify foul water, tell truth from fiction, hurl fire into their enemies, and convene with the wisdom of the Celestial Heavens. This immense power commands respect both for the shugenja who wields it, and for the kami who provide such strength.

MAGIC AND LAW

Testimony is the ultimate standard of Rokugani law so those trusted to speak the truth in matters of criminal offense can sway judgments with a simple word. Because shugenja are holy men, their testimony is given more weight than the average samurai based on the responsibilities and purity of soul a shugenja supposedly possesses.

This is not to say, however, that magic solves all the mundane problems in Rokugan. Magic can be used to hunt down a criminal and bring him to the proper authorities, but if magic is involved in a direct manner to ascertain testimony, the information is not valid. The precedent for this goes back to the time of Hantei Genji, the Shining Prince. When a minor Scorpion shugenja was accused of murdering a powerful Lion general, the Kitsu summoned the murdered Lion's spirit from the afterlife. The spirit gave testimony against the Scorpion, who was put to death. It was revealed shortly after that the Lion samurai was in fact alive, as the Soshi had held him hostage the whole time. The Scorpion accused the Lion of practicing imperfect magic, while the Lion cried that the Scorpion had perverted the Kitsu magic. In either case, the Hantei was faced with the obvious conclusion — magic was not foolproof, and using it in such a manner was an affront to the kami and the Order.

To this day, testimony gleaned by magical means is considered useless even in the lands of the Phoenix. Spells that reads men's souls or tells lies from truths lead nowhere, though magistrates often utilize such things as clues while hunting more concrete leads. Even the noble spirits of deceased ancestors cannot be heeded in such affairs, as only the shugenja can bring their words to the land of the living appropriately.



MAGIC AND COURTS

A shugenja is a valuable tool for a daimyo. Using magic, a shugenja can spy on his lord's enemies, detect when the daimyo is being lied to, and muddle the minds of enemy generals attending the lord's court. Since the dawn of the Empire, shugenja have counted on magic to gain power and position for their daimyo making the idea is far from novel, and every competent courtier has already taken into account the possibility of supernatural interference in his political gambits.

Daimyo who wish to regulate spell casting in their presence must act carefully. As magic is a form of devotion and prayer, banning magic would be the same as denying the religion of the kami and Fortunes, which would be a monumental crime. The best approach so far is to simply restrict prayers and scripture recitation (such as spells) to those who the daimyo trusts and knows. It is well within a lord's right to forbid all religious practices in his household save those conducted by his chosen household shugenja. To violate such an edict would betray the lord's courtesy and be grounds for banishment from the household or worse. The Emperor allows only a select few to practice magic in his presence. Usually these are limited to the Elemental Masters of the Phoenix, the Voice of the Emperor, and the Seppun Shugenja of the Hidden Guard, sworn to protect the life of the Emperor. From time to time, the daimyo of major shugenja families are also allowed such honor.

Daimyo, in their own court, can simply interrupt a shugenja openly using magic without losing face. Clever lords simply request that their own priests join in the recital, forcing the caster to wait until the daimyo's shugenja come to interfere with the first. The daimyo can also request that a different sutra or prayer be chanted, ruining the chance that the first shugenja will ever succeed with his spells.

Spellcasting in courts is thus often a hidden affair, one that many shugenja indulge in but nearly none admit to performing. Hiding such an action is dishonorable, and to admit publicly to that sort of behavior can have dire consequences. Many shugenja, however, feel that the sacrifice of their honor pales in comparison to the service they are performing for their clan or family.

THE ROLE OF THE SHUGENJA

As mentioned previously, shugenja do more than simply cast spells. They are the priests of the kami, their very power a testament to the wisdom and truth of their beliefs. Shugenja record and keep the names of the Fortunes, act as intermediaries between the world of mortals and spirits, and carry the wisdom set down by the Celestial Heavens. Though not the official keepers of the Tao of Shinsel (a duty held by the Brotherhood of Shinsel monks), almost all shugenja are familiar with the text, and view it as a valuable guide to life.

Shugenja bless villages many times during a year, to help bring about a greater harvest, healthier livestock, and protect the village against threats both mortal and supernatural. They also commune with spirits of the dead, creating a link between the living and the revered ancestors of the family. Such a duty falls to them as both a great honor and a staggering burden, as many souls of the dead are troubled with unfinished business, and will seek a shugenja's aid in fulfilling it in return for their wisdom.

Shugenja tend to be peaceful men. While most clans have their shugenja trained for war and capable of casting impressive battle magic (The Crab, Dragon, and Lion have more such shugenja than other clans), the path of the Fortunes and kami impresses a shugenja with a strong reverence for life in all its forms. Shugenja believe life is a gift, and should never be squandered for any reason.

MAHO

For those who crave an easier route to power than the kami offer, there is maho: blood magic. Maho defies the Celestial Order by drawing power from Fu Leng and Jigoku, the twisted realm where the Dark God dwells, drawing spirits from their banishment to plague the world of men. It is thus outlawed by the Emperor, and practitioners of maho can expect no mercy from the Emperor's loyal servants.

A maho-tsukai (one who practices maho) draws his blood and swears fealty to a kansen (evil spirit) in exchange for power. These kansen usually boast the power they offer, and gloss over the costs of such dealing. All such bargains inevitably end in the eternal damnation of the tsukai's soul as they are gradually tainted by their magic. Even those who try and use the power of maho for good ends are eventually twisted by its influence, turning their back on family and clan to embrace the darkness of the Shadowlands.

Maho-tsukai usually keep their power secret, attempting to sow pain and misery in the name of Fu Leng. Maho involves curses, manipulation of the dead, dominion over the forces of the Shadowlands, scrying, and other dark magic. Each time a maho spell is used, the caster must make a sacrifice of blood (any blood will do, though the blood of intelligent beings promises more potent magic), and many times, each spell inflicts a small amount of the Taint on the caster.

Superstition

In a land where supernatural events are a part of everyday life, it is not unusual that the average man would devise his own defenses against a strange and unpredictable world. Thus peasants and samurai alike have invented a vast range of customs and superstitions to protect them from the attention of unwelcome spirits. Though shugenja scoff at such practices as 'folk magic,' even they cannot completely discount the merits of such activities. Superstitions vary greatly from one clan to the next, but some examples of the more common practices follow, are universal and practiced throughout the Empire.

For example, to travel directly northeast means to walk the same direction as the foul spirits that flow from the Shadowlands. A wise soul travels north, then east, so that the spirits will not see him. The number seven is seen as extremely lucky, for it is the number of Fortunes, Virtues of Bushido, and original Great Clans. To speak the name of Fu Leng for any reason attracts misfortune, and draws the Dark God's attention.

A number of superstitions revolve around the impurity of flesh. It is believed that any contact with flesh, especially dead flesh, is impure. For this reason Rokugani avoid touching one another and disdain items (especially clothing) crafted from leather or hide. A samurai returning from battle will likely visit a temple immediately, seeking to purify himself for the blood and flesh that has touched him. Rokugani shy away from consuming red meat, believing that consuming such food will make one smell bad. Some clans and families embrace these superstitions less than others. The Unicorn in particular have no aversions to leather and frequently consume beef as part of their diet. Both the Crab and Dragon Clans, dwelling as far from bountiful supplies of fish as they do, also supplement their diets with small amounts of red meat.

CRAB SUPERSTITIONS

The Crab consider obsidian an extremely unlucky stone, for it is a perversion of pure jade. A person struck by lightning who survives is believed to be blessed by Osano-Wo, and can see the future. Many Crab farmers hang bowls of rice at the edge of their fields to keep goblins away (this is in fact quite effective for it attracts friendly Nezumi, who kill the goblins). To embark on any important task while in a foul temper invites misfortune, for it wastes anger that could otherwise be used to gain strength against one's enemies. The Toritaka family believe that a man with one eye is destined to bring troubled ghosts to rest.

CRANE SUPERSTITIONS

A woman who sticks herself with a sewing needle while speaking has been unfaithful. If you see a fox in the wilderness and toss it a handful of rice, the fox will bring the rice to Inari, Fortune of Rice, and you will have good luck for one year. One should never pour one's own sake, but always ask a drinking companion to fill your cup for you. To bleach one's hair white draws the strength of Hayaku, founder of the Daidoji family.

DRAGON SUPERSTITIONS

A Dragon who wears tattoos always has a reason and story behind each tattoo, but to tell another the story is unlucky. A Dragon will always meet any unquiet spirit or ghost with the same respect they would show a samurai of higher station, bowing deeply and referring to the ghost as "sama" even if it is the spirit of a peasant, or leaving gifts in areas known to be haunted as if visiting the land of a foreign lord. The monks of the Three Orders play something of a game with superstitions, spinning new ones on a whim merely to see which ones take root in belief.

LION SUPERSTITIONS

A Lion must not enter battle with an untested weapon or he is doomed to defeat; even a tanto carried in his obi and not used in combat will attract ill fortune. Ikoma diplomats keep their hands pressed flat against their obi when addressing a crowd in an attempt to invoke the spirit of their family's founder. A bridge constructed without a living person buried in the foundation will draw wicked spirits; a criminal to be executed or dishonored samurai generally will volunteer for this task, washing away the guilt of their crimes as their spirit becomes the bridge's eternal protector. If a peasant crosses a Lion horseman's path on the road, the horse will trip and break its legs. Wise peasants learn to look both ways in Lion lands.

MANTIS SUPERSTITIONS

A sailor who leaves port without praying to Suitengu will never see home again. Members of the Moshi family will not conduct any ceremony of importance at night. Tsuruchi family members view scorpions as unlucky creatures, and kill them on sight. Though the Mantis agree that the number seven is lucky, they believe the number eight is luckier.

PHOENIX SUPERSTITIONS

A Phoenix will often carry a lucky grain of rice, carved to resemble a Fortune. Lashing at trees with a sprig of pine as you enter a forest will drive away curious ghosts. The first snowfall of winter is said to be the luckiest day of the year, but a samurai unfortunate enough to see the Snow Maiden, Yuki no Onna, is doomed to be haunted by her until her cold embrace finally claims him. Only a truly pure samurai can hope to melt the Maiden's icy heart. A child born with white hair is destined to possess great magical power.

SCORPION SUPERSTITIONS

Rats are very lucky, for they are servants of Daikoku, Fortune of Wealth. Those who kill rats must pray to Daikoku for forgiveness. If one keeps a cat as protection against rats, the cat must be given a rude and unflattering name. A girl with green eyes cannot tell a lie. A woman who does not cut her hair will be faithful to her husband. Any samurai who resembles his or her mother more than his or her father is loyal and trustworthy, particularly if the mother was beautiful. Twins are extremely lucky, but triplets are not, for the number three is a number of ill omen. It is unlucky to wear a mask once worn by another Scorpion, unless that Scorpion has shared a secret with you.

UNICORN SUPERSTITIONS

Good luck and bad luck are not random things — luck is a skill that must be cultivated like everything else. An unlucky man might become lucky if superstitious enough. All Unicorn carry a lucky charm, such as dice that won a great fortune of koku, an arrowhead which won the Naadam archery contest, or the like. These items must not be used for their original purpose, or the luck will go bad and are generally bound with a ribbon, carried on the obi, and never spoken of. To find a coin is great luck. A frog that has swallowed a coin is an unparalleled good omen, for frogs are lucky creatures indeed. Horses are, unsurprisingly, the luckiest animals of all and it is said that a Shinjo who becomes lost and lets his horse lead the way will always find home again.

MINOR CLAN SUPERSTITIONS

The Hare believe that if one sees a single star in the sky, an enemy is watching, and you should hide from the sky until more stars are visible. The Badger believe that to spend too long looking to the north attracts the attention of dark spirits, particularly Hideo no Oni, and one should never, ever sleep facing north. The Monkey Clan believe that reciting the names of the Seven Virtues of Bushido over and over in one's mind will ward away all confusion, doubt, and evil spirits. The Sparrow Clan believe that a man who awakens and immediately knocks a pine cone from a tree with the first shot of his sling will have good luck for the rest of the day.



Time and Seasons

Time in Rokugan

It is said that time began when Lady Sun and Lord Moon brought about the Ten Kami, though the Nezumi, Naga, and other ancient races would argue this point strongly. The first recorded event in the history of the Empire is the fall of the Kami from the Heavens, shortly after which they began to build Rokugan. The Tribe of Isawa developed the first method of recording the passing of time, though at one point or another all the clans have made their own reckoning of time, usually measured against the lifetimes of important ancestors or other significant events in their own history. For the purpose of simplicity, the Isawa Calendar is most commonly used, for it coincides perfectly with Imperial texts, as well as being the most comprehensible and reasonable system available.

DAYS

The Rokugani day is divided into twelve hours. These hours take up the same amount of time as two hours of our traditional time. Each of these hours has a common name that is used by the peasantry, and a formal name that is invoked during matters of ceremony and formal occasion. Nobles generally use the formal name of the hours as a matter of habit.

Hour	Common	Formal
6 – 8 AM	Hare	Sun
8 – 10 AM	Dragon	Moon
10 AM – Noon	Serpent	Hantei
Noon – 2 PM	Horse	Akodo
2 – 4 PM	Goat	Doji
4 – 6 PM	Monkey	Shiba
6 – 8 PM	Rooster	Bayushi
8 – 10 PM	Dog	Shinjo
10 PM – Midnight	Boar	Hida
Midnight – 2 AM	Rat	Togashi
2 – 4 AM	Ox	Fu Leng
4 – 6 AM	Tiger	Ryoshun

The hour of the Hare is generally when most villages, houses, and castles begin to perform their morning acts. Samurai awake and perform their morning kata, farmers begin the tasks of the day before breakfast, and the night watch is sent off.

In the eyes of the peasantry, there is no need for a formal arrangement of days, weeks, or months. Winter begins when fall finally turns bitterly cold in the morning, and summer arrives when there are no more cold spring dews. A farmer only cares about the season, and draws upon experience and instinct to know when to plant or harvest. Having spent his whole life working the fields, a peasant's sense of season and timing in such matters is rarely wrong. Since the peasants do not bother to keep formal track of days, they work during Imperial Holidays, which is fine with the peasants and samurai alike. The samurai are able to get another day's work from the farmers, and the peasants are not bothered by their lords.

THE SEASONS

Through reverence and force, nature dictates the pace of the Empire. Farmers must plant and harvest when the time is right, and those who wish to wage war have only the days that nature provides. The seasons do not change their pattern to suit a mortal's wishes, not even the Emperor (though the Voice of the Emperor might claim some small amount of influence).

The year is divided into twelve months, just as the days fall into twelve hours. Unlike Rokugani hours, their months match up much more with our own. A Rokugani month is 28 days, and is regarded by a more common name and a formal name. The year begins with the month of the Sun, commonly referred to as the month of the Hare, which matches up with April in the spring.

Season	Common	Formal
Spring	Hare	Sun
	Dragon	Moon
	Serpent	Hantei
Summer	Horse	Akodo
	Goat	Doji
	Monkey	Shiba
Fall	Rooster	Bayushi
	Dog	Shinjo
Winter	Boar	Hida
	Rat	Togashi
	Ox	Fu Leng
	Tiger	Ryoshun

The proper names of the months were only made official recently, by decree of Hantei XXXV, so in many provinces the more common names are all peasants know. In other lands, peasants and samurai alike will have different common names for some months, the three most popular differences being Crane (instead of Rooster), Tortoise (instead of Dragon), and Sheep (instead of Goat).

SPRING

When winter thaws, Rokugan blossoms into its new year. Farmers in the fields face their hardest season, for this is when the planting must begin. Each helmin must be sure to plant quickly and carefully during this time. The land must be seeded so it may be properly harvested in the fall, and enough must be grown. Too much planting, however, can lead to a daimyo either accusing the village of attempting to use more land than they were granted, or the lord expecting them to further increase production the following year.

Bushi begin the slow task of performing spring patrols. Often a young samurai's first post after passing gempukku, and it can either be a season of utter boredom or a difficult, dangerous time depending on whether or not the clan is currently at war. While mass movement of troops is practically impossible during the winter, smaller groups are historically sent by particularly ambitious daimyo in order to get a "head start" on the inevitable skirmishes the summer season brings. A small group of Daidoji saboteurs could strike quickly at the production of a rival's farm in the spring and quickly retreat to their homeland before an unwary daimyo knows what has happened. Bandits also take advantage of this time where many clans are not fully prepared to defend the entirety of their lands. That is why the custom of the spring patrol was begun long ago. Small units of fledgling bushi are led all over the borders of their provinces, attempt-

ing to prevent such strikes against their lord's lands. More often than not, however, these patrols return home safely with nothing of interest to report.

As the winter courts are dismissed, the courtiers must do everything in their power to make sure that alliances, agreements, and other negotiations achieved over the winter months are not wasted. Usually, the more important treaties are brought to the attention of the Clan Champions, to ensure that the agreements will be followed and honored. Such arrangements are altered several times by the Champions until all parties involved are satisfied. Such matters can occupy the entire spring season. Less demanding negotiations are handled by family and provincial daimyo, and are usually simply acknowledged and acted upon without much alteration.

Oshogatsu, the New Year's Celebration, marks the beginning of spring. The first day of the Month of the Hare brings this, the most important celebration of the Empire, to the people of Rokugan. Since all Rokugani celebrate their 'birthday' on the New Year, the festivities are the most elaborate of the year, as families gather to celebrate another year given to them by the Heavens. There are fireworks, parades, festivals, and other activities as Rokugani visit family shrines and holy temples, praying for the blessings of the ancestors and Celestial Heavens upon their family. It is considered proper to spend the following day in the family home, thanking the Fortunes, ancestors, and Heavens for their blessings and another fruitful year. The Emperor traditionally cloisters himself in his chambers after dusk on the first day of the Hare, speaking to Lady Sun directly on behalf of the Empire. The Toturi Dynasty continues to follow this tradition. Though the Toturi Emperors bear no blood relation to the Sun and Moon, the current Sun and Moon were, along with Toturi I, members of the legendary band of heroes known as the Seven Thunders. Thus they continue to watch over the current dynasty.

SUMMER

Rokugan is a land of climactic extremes, and summer is perhaps the most obvious proof. Though not as physically taxing as the planting season, farmers relish this time no more than spring. The midday heat can be staggering, bringing heat exhaustion or parched fields. The humidity in Lion and Crane lands can be quite oppressive, while in Crab and Unicorn lands the dry heat is such that a simple spark can start an uncontrollable brushfire. For the most part, farmers use this season to rest when they can, for most of the work involves undoing the damage nature brings to the harvest.

For samurai, summer is warfare season. It is impossible for a summer to go by in Rokugan without one daimyo insulting another, intentionally or not. Though the Hantei outlawed large-scale land war long ago, many small skirmishes explode during this time, as the unforgiving heat only adds to the tempers of proud samurai and their masters. Most of these squabbles do not lead to the larger wars or blood feuds that checker Imperial History, and some even occur between allied clans. It is the eternal business of courtiers to bring these skirmishes to diplomatic resolution, smoothing ruffled feathers and repairing the damage done by arrogant bushi.

The Lion are infamous for taking insult at any small offense, or attempting to wrestle nearby farmlands from other clans. Often, a Lion ambassador will decree that Lion farms will not be

able to support the armies of the Emperor, and demand another clan (usually the Crane) allocate some of their land to the Lion. Alternately, they will present evidence and testimony that another village is poorly defended or maintained, and thus must be seized by the Right Hand so that its full potential can be realized in the name of the Emperor. More often than not, other clans will refuse flatly and the Lion invade. The Crab are also known for aggressively seeking to expand their borders, citing their never-ending battle against Fu Leng as a constant drain on their resources, though recent alliances with their closest Great Clan neighbors, the Unicorn and Crane, have made this almost unheard of.

Other small skirmishes develop over border disputes brought up during the previous winter courts, or insults suffered during that time. All of these are generally allowed by the Emperor, for it is wise not to allow the clans to forget the art of war in times of relative peace. However, if the fighting escalates too much, the Emperor will dispatch the Emerald Champion to intervene for the good of the Empire. This demand comes only once from the Imperial City — if the Emperor's words are not heeded, the full might of the Imperial Legions will be unleashed to end the conflict, permanently.

Courtiers spend the summer generally acting as messengers for clans at war. Depending on a clan's position and attitude, a courtier could be desperately seeking alliances, offering peaceful resolution to conflicts, or smugly goading to the emissaries of his clan's rival. Less important courtiers travel the countryside, carrying the favors and treaties of their lord to foreign provinces. Though there is much to do, this is the most inactive time for the courtier when compared to the intensity of the winter courts. Many courtiers use this time to improve their position in their own family or clan, or sow favors to be called upon during the critical winter months.

On the sixth day of the Horse, the Chrysanthemum Festival takes place in honor of the day the Kami were believed to fall to the earth. It lasts one day, but the customs of the Chrysanthemum Festival make it perhaps the most popular celebration of the year. For seven days, four days before the festival and three after, all labor stops and not even the peasants take up their tools. Originally, this festival was a great celebration of both the founding Kami of the clans and the Hantel Dynasty's connection to Lady Sun. However, since both the Hantel Dynasty and Amaterasu have passed into history, the festival focuses more on the connection of mankind to the Celestial Heavens.

This festival also has a somewhat darker connotation. On the fourth day following the festival, the minions of Daigotsu create a bonfire and perform foul and bloody rituals in honor of their dark master. Unfortunate captives are thrown into the fire to burn as sacrifices to the power of the Ninth Kami. Throughout the Empire, peasants and samurai alike shutter their doors and windows to protect themselves from evil spirits.

FALL

The end of the summer hosts the yearly monsoon season. The tremendous winds and rains provide what is needed for the rice paddies to finally reach proper harvest. However, other crops are destroyed if not tended properly by the peasants. Wheat can easily be drowned by the rain, or ripped from the soft ground by the wind. Fall is also the season of harvest and tax collections. Farmers must have their share of the crops ready for the Impe-

rial Magistrates to collect, as well as any other taxes that they bear responsibility for. Generally, taxes are levied in the form of crops harvested or other resources of food (such as fish), but certain large villages known for their artisans or other services must pay an amount of tax in koku.

Autumn arrives with an ultimatum to the skirmishing clans — end your battles or starve and freeze. The clans all have fresh foodstuffs to bring to their armies now, but time rallies against those who wish to continue fighting. Large scale troop movement becomes nearly impossible in the heavy winter snow, and if troops do not withdraw in time, they may be trapped. It could then take months to return to their homes, in which time most of the army would have starved. It is said there is no diplomacy as expedient as fall diplomacy, as courtiers rush to end conflicts in time to save the lives of their soldiers while maintaining the honor of their clan. A failing clan on the attack will withdraw tactfully, stating that the enemy has defended itself honorably and that the glory of battle was reward enough. Alternately, the courtier may claim that his army's general was blessed by a visitation from a Fortune who beseeched an end to the conflict. Few clans can take truly argue with such claims without appearing disgraceful or impious.

Preparations for the winter courts take precedence at this time. Only the truly honored and gifted receive invitations to the Emperor's Winter Court, and travel arrangements must be made swiftly for the various other winter courts. Though the Emperor's is the most important, most clans attempt to send some of their most capable courtiers to winter courts in the lands of other clans. The Scorpion and Crane present themselves at nearly every winter function, as they seek to intimidate or ingratiate themselves in the hearts of as many other samurai as possible.

On the final day of the month of the Dog, the last day of fall, the Bon Festival is held in honor of the dead, a time for communing with the wisdom of the ancestors. It is the most ritualistic of the festivals, as calling upon the guidance of the dead is a very serious matter. Toshi Ranbo and every other major city of the Empire are filled with representations of the Elemental Dragons, the Great Kami, white-faced ghosts, and famous spirits of the past. Great basins of seawater fill Kyuden Doji to represent the final resting place of Lady Doji just as the inner rooms of Kyuden Bayushi are filled with basins of water from Sleeping Lake, where Bayushi's spirit is said to rest. During this time the spirits of the dead are closest to the lands of the living, and the ancestors look down upon every action of their living heirs. The festival ends by lighting small, colored paper lanterns, marked with the names of the spirits of those who died within the past year. The light of these lanterns allows the spirits of the dead to see the living world clearly one final time, a final blessing to carry them into eternity.

WINTER

Winter is perhaps the only respite that a farmer will ever know as Rokugani winters settle in like a bear, as terrible as the summers, with fierce snowstorms and sleet making outdoor labor nearly impossible. During this season the peasants make repairs on structures in the area, fix their tools, and set about crafting things for the village. Forced by circumstance to spend the majority of winter season indoors, a custom of many people gathering in one peasant's hut for the night has evolved. This not only conserves resources as only one house need be warmed,

but builds friendships between the people and gives everyone someone to talk to while waiting out the cold, dark months.

Bushi spend the summer engaged in one of two affairs — training or braving the winter courts. Though large scale troop movement across the Empire is nearly impossible during this time, most militant families ensure there are several large areas conducive to the training of armies. Training starts with promotions; those soldiers who performed exceptionally well during the summer campaigns are awarded titles of honor, land, or position. These samurai so honored are expected to share their experience with bushi who are deemed less capable or fresh from gempukku.

Winter courts serve the courtier as the summer campaigns serve the generals of the clan, and the very term "winter court" fills those who avoid politics with cold dread. While the harsh weather keeps the most powerful members of the court in one place, diplomats conduct dangerous plots and intrigue, pit their enemies against one another, curry the favor of clans they wish to ally with, and generally promote the position of their family and clan. Ambitious courtiers gamble much for the sake of their own personal glory, as this is the true battlefield of a courtier.

These courts are not the exclusive domain of courtiers, of course. Bushi who attend winter court are either well versed in the ways of politics, or serve as yojimbo to the courtiers and shugenja who attend such matters. More often than not, every winter court leads to at least one duel of honor, and those who follow the way of the sword must be present to ensure such things are settled properly and correctly. Generals who can maneuver the battlefield of the court are extremely invaluable to the clan, as they can balance awareness of the clan's military needs with their lord's political aspirations.

The most famous of these winter gatherings is the Emperor's own Winter Court. The exact location of the Emperor's Winter Court each year represents a great, though quiet, contest between the political engineers of the clans, as it is an unparalleled honor to have the Emperor spend the winter in your lands. The best and brightest of Rokugan's courtiers, intellectuals, artisans, and others are showcased here, and move in an intricate dance of politics around the Emperor and his closest advisors. Generally, the Champions of the Great Clans are present, as are direct representatives of the major families of Rokugan. The maneuvering done during the long winter months will certainly be felt during the coming year, if not longer.

The year-end festival, called the Toshi no Ichi, commences on the day before the New Year's Festival (the twenty-eighth of the day of the Tiger). Participants invoke rituals meant to prepare Rokugan for the visit of the Sun, the Fortunes, and the Kami, as it is said they look down upon the Empire with great interest on the first day of the New Year. Peasants hang a rope of straw known as the shimenawa inside their houses so that the evil spirits of the old year cannot enter. These ropes are burned at the end of the festival. Homes prepare a toshidana, a special altar covered in rice cakes and sake to honor the spirits of the New Year. At dusk, the temples of the Brotherhood of Shinsei are emptied, and their walls and floors scrubbed clean with fresh water. The monks then ring the bells of the temple forty-nine times, seven times seven in respect for the benevolent and wrathful aspects of the Seven Fortunes. They then invite the peasants and nobles back into the temples.

Lore of the Land

Terrain varies widely within Rokugan's borders along with a dizzying array of natural and supernatural creatures. Although those traveling through the Empire have a general idea of what can be expected in terms of weather and wildlife, there are always surprises to be had, and they are not always pleasant.

Climate

The weather in Rokugan is as varied as in any other land. The lengthy coastline along the Empire's eastern border ensures that enough moisture moves inland to keep Rokugan a largely temperate region. Drought is uncommon although the far western reaches of the Empire, such as the Unicorn and Crab holdings, occasionally see such misfortune, especially during the hot summer months. The northern territories of the Phoenix are snow covered year round, and the islands where the Mantis Clan dwell boast tropical climates year round.

Apart from normal weather and climate, natural disasters are quite common in Rokugan, including the following:

Earthquakes: While some regions are more prone to such incidents than others (such as the ruined city of Otosan Uchi), there is no area of the Empire that has not experienced at least mild tremors. Osano-Wo, Fortune of Fire and Thunder, is attributed as the source of many earthquakes. Supporters of Toturi III have been known to smugly point out that the new Imperial City, Toshi Ranbo, has experienced no earthquakes since his coronation — surely a sign of approval from the Thunderer. In mountainous regions, earthquakes often cause a secondary problem: landslides.

Tsunami: Significant earthquakes that occur at sea result in gigantic waves known as tsunami. These waves destroy virtually everything in their path. Entire villages or cities can be completely wiped out by such waves. Unfortunately, there is very little warning when such a wave approaches barring the presence of extremely powerful shugenja sensitive to the element of Water, or being lucky enough to feel the preceding tremor. For the most part, tsunami are only recognized when dockhands see them approaching on the horizon and there is little recourse for coastal villagers except to flee for their lives.

Taifun (hurricanes): Moving in from the sea, taifun can be a force of unbridled destruction. The powerful winds they produce can shred buildings with frightening ease, and the massive waves and subsequent flooding that follows such a storm can often finish off what little remains when the winds are finished. Fortunately, tropical storms can be predicted by talented shugenja or experienced fishermen, so often those in its path have an opportunity to flee.

Flooding: In the aftermath of a tsunami or a severe taifun, flooding is not uncommon. With the Empire's primary food source, rice, being an aquatic crop, the people of Rokugan have developed great skill in the use of dykes, canals, and dams to protect against this disaster. Although flash flooding is occasionally a problem, such as when the rare areas of drought are suddenly exposed to torrential rain or the rivers of melted snow from the mountains, most flooding can be diverted appropriately.

Flora

Rokugan is home to an incredible variety of plant life. Nearly every type of flower, shrub or tree symbolizes something crucial to Rokugani culture, and all serve a special purpose in the Empire's society, even if merely a decorative one. The gardeners among the Kakita and Shiba are greatly skilled at combining different forms and types of plants to create majestic beauty in even the simplest of gardens. The Shosuro are also renowned for the beauty of their gardens, though they recommend visitors do not approach the plants too closely.

Flowers/Plants: Arrowroot, azaleas, barley, bellflower, bramble, camellia, carmine, cattail, cherry, cherry blossom (sakura), chrysanthemum, cinnabar, cucumber, cumin, fruit trees, grass, harju root, hay, hemlock, hollyhock, honeysuckle, iris, kempfi, lichen, lily, lime, lotus, morning glory, moss, mulberry, oats, oleander, onion, orchids, peony, persimmon, plum, poppy (keshi), reed, rose (bora), saffron, snapdragon, sorghum, straw, vines, waterlily, wheat, wisteria, and yarrow.

Trees: Apple, ash, balsa, bamboo, bonsai, cedar, cypress, ebony, fir, hackberry, juniper, lacquer, mahogany, maple, oak, orange, peach, pear, pine, poison ivy, rattan, sandalwood, spruce, teak, and wicker.

Rokugani architects use wood magnificently when designing the interior of palaces and estates, although wood is less frequently utilized in the construction of military structures. Bamboo paper, rice paper, and vellum are also highly prized as decorative and delicate interior design materials.

Fauna

Rokugan is a land where spirits are active in the lives of mortals every day and even the gods can intercede if the affairs of man catch their interest. In such a setting, it can be easy to forget that a very wide variety of natural creatures call the Empire their home. Although most species found in Rokugan have a wide distribution range, there are animals that can generally be found in one region more so than others.

Mountainous regions, such as those held by the Crab and Dragon clans, are often home to hardier and somewhat more aggressive species such as bears, cougars, mountain goats, badgers and the like. While not necessarily hostile, these creatures present peril to an unwary traveler.

Regions with open plains, such as those held by the Lion and Unicorn clans and to a lesser extent by the Crane and Scorpion, tend to have much milder wildlife. The plains of Rokugan are urbanized and see a fair amount of travel, preventing great numbers of animals from settling there. Deer, wild horses, gophers, and a wide variety of small game frequent these areas as well as the occasional predator such as a cougar, lynx, or wolf. The lands of the Lion Clan, quite appropriately, boast large prides of the animal whose name they bear.

Dense forests such as those held by the Phoenix and Fox Clans see a much broader range of animal populations. Virtually anything can be found within such places, although bears, boar, stags, foxes, wolves, and small game are the most common. The jungles and islands of the Mantis Clan feature even more exotic creatures, such as panthers, monkeys, tigers, parrots, vampire bats, and apes. The ocean, also a Mantis domain, teems with aquatic wildlife, including dolphins, porpoise, sharks, sea turtles, and beautiful tropical fish which the Mantis catch and export as pets for wealthy nobles.

A representative list of animals generally found throughout Rokugan includes: badger, bat, bear, boar, cat, chameleon, chicken, cougar, deer, dog, donkey, fox, frog, goat, gopher, horse, lion, lizard, monkey, mouse, mule, ox, pig, pony, rabbit, rat, sheep, snake, squirrel, stag, tiger, tortoise, turtle, wolf, and yak.



The Clans

The Empire of Rokugan falls under the dominion of a single Emperor, but a number of powerful factions constantly vie with one another for influence. The eight Great Clans, four Imperial Families, and nine Minor Clans are the most notable among these, though the various factions of the Shadowlands are also a constantly dangerous factor. Though many of these factions were briefly outlined earlier in this book, this section goes into a greater detail.

Each Great Clan is comprised of a number of smaller families. These families are not families in the sense that all members are blood relatives, but in the sense that all of them have sworn fealty to a single lord within that family. Thus it is not uncommon for marriages to take place within the same family between spouses of different bloodlines. When referring to himself, a samurai always gives his family name first, then his given name. Thus Kisada, a member of the Hida family, is called Hida Kisada.

The Crab Clan

CLAN CHAMPION: Hida Kuon

Of all the Great Clans, the Crab Clan has the least enviable duty of all. Their clan guards the southwestern borders of Rokugan, where the Empire borders upon the sinister Shadowlands. The Crab are charged with protecting this border, holding back the dark forces of Jigoku that would otherwise consume and corrupt all that they touch. It is an endless, thankless, violent task but the Crab have risen to the calling admirably. They are a tough, independent people tempered by the fires of a thousand year war.

Their soldiers keep vigil atop the Kaiu Wall, an enormous barrier that covers the entire Shadowlands border, perhaps the most remarkable feat of engineering that Rokugan has ever seen. Though the Kaiu Wall has been broken, it is always repaired and built stronger than before. The basic Crab philosophy is one of strength and determination. To be steadfast like the mountain is the greatest virtue, to hold the line against impossible odds while one's comrades escape to carry the fight another day is the most heroic fate a Crab can hope to meet.

To the other clans, Crab bushi have a reputation for being uncouth and boorish, a reputation not entirely undeserved. A Crab has little time for etiquette and bureaucracy while the battle on the Wall continues. They are rude and blunt, always speaking their minds, ignoring most, if not all, rules of decorum. However they are not, for the most part, stupid. A Crab recognizes his limitations and will tend leave matters of politics in the hands of those equipped to deal with them. Among their own people, these duties fall to the Yasuki family.

While the Crab Clan is not a poor clan, many of their resources are dedicated to maintaining the Wall and supplying troops for their endless battle. The Crab are forced to constantly seek alliances and favors from other clans in order to maintain their large armies, a fact that sits poorly with many Crab, as

they feel that the Empire owes them a great debt for the task they routinely perform. To be forced to beg in the courts simply so that they may continue to perform their assigned duties is intolerable for such an independent-minded clan.

One trait shared by almost all Crab is a complete and utter hatred of the Shadowlands. The Clan was almost destroyed once by a well-intentioned alliance with certain factions of the Shadowlands Horde, and the succeeding Champions have sworn that there will never be a compromise with the Shadowlands again. Even away from the Wall, Crab are recognized as the foremost enemies of the Shadowlands. When something goes awry and the Taint seems to be involved, the first impulse of many a magistrate is to seek the advice of any Crab in the area.

Members of the Crab Clan tend to be larger than average Rokugani, their skin darkened from constant exposure to the elements. Facial hair is commonplace, with long beards, moustaches, or even scruffy stubble being the norm. Their speech is gruff and simple, resembling the speech of common peasants more than the elegant High Rokugani of the courts. As Crab samurai spend a great deal of time fighting beside their peasant brethren, this is not entirely a surprise.

THE HIDA FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 STRENGTH)

CURRENT DAIMYO: Hida Kuon

The Hida family rules the Crab Clan. Descended from the Kami whose name they bear, they are fierce warriors with an extreme range of emotions, a fact that often makes problems for them in the courts where to maintain face is all-important. Their rage in battle is legendary as is their joy in the face of triumph. Hida celebrations are the most boisterous in all the Empire. To those outside the family, who only see the results of such outbursts, the Hida appear as if they have no self-control but this is untrue. A Hida is taught to recognize the power of emotions, but to always control them. A fierce temper is a powerful weapon, one that can turn the tide of battles, but must be kept in check until the proper time arrives.

The Hida family's rule of their clan has never been questioned, for the Hida have always recognized the talents of each family that serves them. Responsibilities among the clan are clearly defined, and the expertise of each family is recognized and highly valued. In matters of siege and defense, for example, the Hida trust the Kaiu implicitly. In matters of magic, the Kuni are heeded, and in matters of trade the Yasuki are given free reign. In return for this trust, the other families show the Hida unflinching loyalty.

Hida are the largest of the Crab families, forming the backbone of the Crab armies. Whereas many Crab are larger than average, Hida bushi tend to be even taller and more muscular. Some wonder if their proximity to the Shadowlands has conferred the strength of demons upon their family over the generations, but never within earshot of a Hida.

THE HIRUMA FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 STAMINA)

CURRENT DAIMYO: Hiruma Todorii

The Hiruma are a grim and humorless family, and for good reason. Their lands were completely destroyed and dominated by the Shadowlands during the same battle that led to the creation of the Kaiu Wall. Those lands were later retaken and purified, but the dark memories of their failure still remain. The Hiruma lands are desolate and lifeless. Even the stones of Hiruma castles seem darker, as if stained by a shadow that will never wash away.

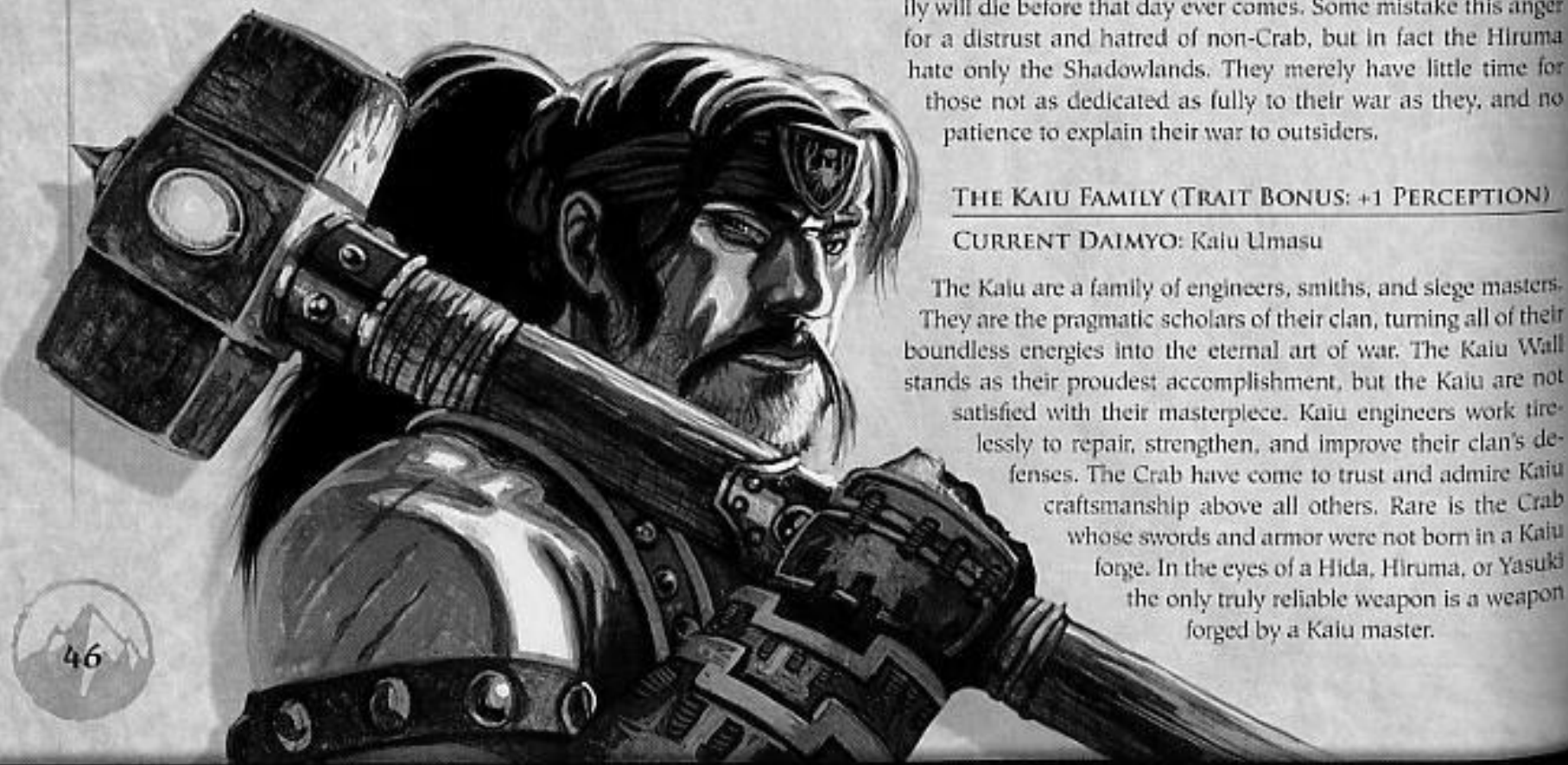
As their territories lie beyond the formidable protection of the Kaiu Wall, the Hiruma must be ever vigilant and prepared for attack. Their scouts are among the finest in the Empire, able to move quickly and tirelessly through the most hostile of terrains without detection. While the other families all bear great knowledge of the enemy, none know the terrain of the Shadowlands as they do.

Though Hiruma are strong in the way of all Crab, they tend to be lean and tough where the Hida are massive and powerful. Hiruma have a reputation for speaking few words, though when they do speak they do so with a bitter, cynical view. While the Hiruma never doubt that the Crab Clan will ultimately defeat the Shadowlands, neither do they doubt that many of their family will die before that day ever comes. Some mistake this anger for a distrust and hatred of non-Crab, but in fact the Hiruma hate only the Shadowlands. They merely have little time for those not as dedicated as fully to their war as they, and no patience to explain their war to outsiders.

THE KAIU FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 PERCEPTION)

CURRENT DAIMYO: Kaiu Umasu

The Kaiu are a family of engineers, smiths, and siege masters. They are the pragmatic scholars of their clan, turning all of their boundless energies into the eternal art of war. The Kaiu Wall stands as their proudest accomplishment, but the Kaiu are not satisfied with their masterpiece. Kaiu engineers work tirelessly to repair, strengthen, and improve their clan's defenses. The Crab have come to trust and admire Kaiu craftsmanship above all others. Rare is the Crab whose swords and armor were not born in a Kaiu forge. In the eyes of a Hida, Hiruma, or Yasuki the only truly reliable weapon is a weapon forged by a Kaiu master.



Though they rule their own home provinces as do any family, the Kaiu are often scattered throughout their clan's territories working on a countless projects. They are relentless perfectionists, keenly focused upon fighting the war against the Shadowlands in their own way — by providing their brethren with the weapons and defenses they require to survive.

A Kaiu tends to pick a certain area of craftsmanship or siege craft and focus on it thoroughly. Ironically they often carry themselves in a more scholarly manner than their Kuni cousins, obsessed as they are with the relentless pursuit of knowledge. Kaiu are keen, patient strategists and will observe a problem from all angles before considering a solution. For this reason they also make excellent courtiers and magistrates, approaching politics and law with the same methodical patience that they would use to construct a fortress.

Kaiu are large like most Crab, but generally do not have the time to hone their physique like their Hiruma and Hida cousins. Thus Kaiu tend to be large and thick, but not well toned. The typical Kaiu has the mammoth physique of a warrior, but the ink stained hands and sleeves of a scholar.

THE KUNI FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 INTELLIGENCE)

CURRENT DAIMYO: Kuni Tansho

The most infamous family of the Crab, the painted kabuki faces of the Kuni family are met with fear and suspicion in almost every court. They are the Crab Clan's shugenja, mystics with deep insight into the dark horrors that the Crab Clan faces every day. Some wonder if the Kuni study their enemy with too much vigor. Every child knows the tale of Kuni Yori's descent into corruption and madness. For their part, the Kuni refuse to let the tale of their most notorious fallen daimyo be forgotten. Some would say that Yori's was a solitary, if catastrophic, corruption but the Kuni know better.

More members of the Kuni family have become practitioners of maho, or black magic, than all other shugenja families combined, a simple matter of their proximity to the Shadowlands. So close to the whispers of the Dark God, the temptation of such power is very difficult to resist. The Kuni understand the risks, but they also know that if they were to withdraw from the war, the Crab Clan would have no defenses against the mystical forces they face with regularity. All the Kuni can do is police themselves strictly and see to it that those who falter are punished without mercy. While every Crab risks his life against the Shadowlands, the Kuni risk their souls as well.

The Kuni are hardly typical as shugenja families go. Their studies take them into the harshest of terrains, thus they must be as strong and hearty as their bushi brethren. Kuni move with a constant, hyper energy. Their eyes are sharp and piercing, always searching for any sign of corruption. They often paint their faces with ghastly makeup and wear their hair long and loose. The Kuni do this both to intimidate their foes and to mimic the demons they fight — a constant reminder of what they might become if they lose their courage.

THE TORITAKA FAMILY (+1 PERCEPTION)

CURRENT DAIMYO: Toritaka Tatsune

The youngest and smallest of the Crab families, the Toritaka were once known as the Falcon Clan. A strange catastrophe in the Twilight Mountains led to the Toritaka turning to their Crab neighbors for support and later officially swearing fealty to them. Though the Crab's resources were already stretched thin supporting their existing families, they were eager to absorb the unique talents of this strangest of bushi families.

The Toritaka dwell in a place called Tani Hitokage, or the Valley of Spirits. In this serene valley, the barriers between Rokugan and the other Spirit Realms are very thin. All manner of strange ghosts and spirits wander regularly into the valley and rather than abandon their haunted home, the Toritaka long ago took it upon themselves to understand these strange spirits and, when left with no other choice, fight them. While the Crab have unparalleled expertise in fighting the agents of Jigoku, only the Toritaka truly knew how to counter the many ghosts and demons from other realms of existence, creatures that the Horde occasionally calls upon as allies.

The average Toritaka greatly resembles a Hida in size and build, for their clan's bloodlines frequently mixed with their closest neighbor's over the generations. Here the resemblance ends, for while Hida thrive on emotion, the Toritaka are withdrawn and reserved. They see themselves as mediators between mortals and spirits, and know that undue emotion can cause great distress in both the living and the dead. A Toritaka is always calm, focused, and controlled.

THE YASUKI FAMILY (+1 PERCEPTION)

CURRENT DAIMYO: Yasuki Hachi

Once members of the Crane Clan, the Yasuki family is the most curious of the Crab families. During a recent conflict within the family, leadership reverted to a Crane, Daidoji Hachi. Hachi took the Yasuki name along with many other Crane, and for a time sought to rule the Yasuki as Crane. When it became clear that the Crab could not function without the Yasuki family, Hachi swore fealty to both Crab and Crane. Thus while there are Crane and Crab who bear the name Yasuki, only one man, Hachi, serves both clans.

The Crab Yasuki are obsessed with wealth and commerce, a family of wily traders and smooth businessmen. The Yasuki have a reputation for aggressive bargaining, and will not balk at bending the occasional law to get a better deal. While their reputation as shady dealers precedes them, it is difficult to maintain one's distrust in a Yasuki's presence. They seem to have a way of convincing potential customers that they are, at least this time, entirely trustworthy. They also have a seemingly unflinching habit of having exactly what their customer wants.

To the Crab Clan, this makes them indispensable. They are the economic masterminds that maintain the delicate web of trade and negotiation needed to keep the mighty Crab war machine fueled and ready. While it may seem that the Yasuki are embroiled in their world of trade and profit far from their cousins' war, nothing could be further from the truth. Every Crab Yasuki knows what his fellow Crab face on the Wall every day. Every Yasuki knows how much his brethren rely upon him. They make the deals they do so that the Hida and Hiruma warriors will be well fed, so that the Kaiu will have steel to work their forge, and so that the Kuni and Toritaka will have the crystal and jade they need to protect the clan from evil. It is a unique battlefield, but the Yasuki fight battles of commerce with all the relentless determination of a Crab.

In appearance, the Yasuki are least like they typical Crab. Their Crane blood still runs strong in their veins, and Yasuki tend to be small, thin, and beautiful. Though they do not bleach their hair in the manner of Crane, they do wear their hair long and dress in fine clothing. This is all for the sake of appearance, of course, for rare is the Yasuki who is not ready and able to take up a weapon and aid his fellow Crab in the defense of the Wall in times of need.

The Crane Clan

CLAN CHAMPION: Doji Kurohito

The most graceful, beautiful, and charming creature to ever set foot on the face of Rokugan was Doji, Hantei's sister and founder of the Crane Clan. Though the armies of her brothers may have tamed the land of the nascent Empire, it was Doji that brought art and civilization to the barbaric tribes the Kami found. Though Hantei's heart was eventually won by a mortal, it was clear that Doji was his favored sibling of all, and the descendants of the First Crane always stood close to the Hantei Dynasty. Even to this day, with the rise of the Toturi Dynasty, the Crane Clan remains a powerful figure in the cultural and courtly aspects of the Empire. They are known as the Emperor's Left Hand, the hand of peace, and the powerful among the Crane are nearly inseparable from their Imperial allies. Drawing from the image of their founder, samurai of the Crane Clan engage in wars of clever words and often win battles by their wit and honor alone. Few courts of any significance are without a Crane representative — indeed, generally the mere presence of a Crane ambassador assures a court's significance. The charm of Crane ambassadors combined with their artisans, storytellers, and other samurai ensures that they are well received in nearly any land, and the Clan as a whole can draw favors from almost any samurai in all of Rokugan — even the Emperor with alarming frequency.

This is not to say the Crane survive on their words alone. Just as Lady Doji brought the way of peace and the arts to Rokugan, her mortal bride, Kakita, established the first formal academy of the blade. Much of what is considered acceptable in the way of single combat was dictated centuries ago by Kakita, just as Doji laid down many nuances of courteous behavior. Combined with the cunning Daidoji warriors, bushi capable of outwitting and outmaneuvering forces much larger than their own, those who think the noble Crane as little more than pampered nobles often realize the reality of their mistake far too late.

On the whole, Crane samurai have excellent grooming habits. They tend to be slight of build and athletic rather than muscular, and favor long, flowing hair that they tie back in combat. Crane artisans are the finest in Rokugan, so it is rare to find a Crane who is not well dressed.

THE ASAHINA FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 WILLPOWER)

CURRENT DAIMYO: Asahina Sekawa

The line of Asahina was not part of the Crane Clan at the dawn of the Empire. The tale of the Asahina family's birth begins centuries ago with an invasion by Lion into Phoenix lands over some forgotten insult. Isawa Asahina, the Phoenix Master of Air of the time, turned his talents for air, fire, and magical artifice to war against his clan's enemies with the dedication of a man who knew he was facing a superior foe. In time, the intervention of the Crane Clan ended the attack and fostered a treaty between the Phoenix and Lion. Though many Phoenix thanked their Crane allies for the reprieve, Asahina was furious that thousands of Phoenix deaths would now go without being avenged. In a shocking move, the Master of Air began a rampage through Crane lands, demanding blood for blood. With their army readied in the south against a possible Crab attack, the Crane had few bushi to stand against the powerful Master,

and their villages began to burn. A single warrior, Doji Kiriko, chose to stand against the Phoenix, demanding he stop his attacks and making no move to draw her blade. As the Master of Air's magic burned the woman again and again, Asahina's rage finally withered and was replaced by a single, cold feeling — deep remorse for his actions.

So deep was Asahina's shame that he forsook his Phoenix heritage and declared himself a lowly ronin servant of the Crane. He nursed the Doji samurai-ko back to health over many months and spent a great deal of time fashioning a set of fantastic artifacts for each of the Crane families. The masters of the Crane Clan were so impressed with Asahina's dedication that they eventually allowed him to swear true fealty to the Clan and marry the woman he nearly murdered. In time, Asahina's talents made him a clear choice to found the Crane's first true shugenja school, and before the former Master of Air's death, the Crane Champion named Doji Asahina the master of his own family for his efforts and significant contributions to the Crane.

Since that time, the Asahina family has been known for their zeal for peace and the introspective arts of crafting and divination. Even among the peaceful Crane, members of the Asahina are notorious pacifists, at times even refusing to defend themselves against an enemy that is clearly threatening their lives. During the Clan War, only a direct order from their Champion, Doji Hoturi, stirred the Asahina to rise up and crush the armies that would have set their fields and cities afire. The one exception the Asahina allow to this oath of peace is the corrupt minions of the Shadowlands — physical manifestations of the sin and corruption, diametrically opposed to the Asahina's philosophy of peace. The family also honors its founder by studying and perfecting his art of *tsangusuri*, the art of creating *nemuranai* (magic items) as minor fetishes and charms meant to protect and fortify the bearer.

The Asahina are by far the most reserved Crane family. They typically wear priestly robes, even those who are not shugenja. They often bleach their hair white, and prefer more subdued, simpler fashions than their more elaborate kinsmen.

THE DAIDOJI FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 REFLEXES)

CURRENT DAIMYO: Daidoji Kikaze

After the war against Fu Leng, Lady Doji's cheerful smile and mirthful eyes were shadowed so deeply that even the First Crane could not hide her sorrow. Every night when she closed her eyes, she saw visions of her daughter, the Crane Thunder Doji Konishiko, alive in the Shadowlands and in great peril. One of Doji's children, the silent and brooding Hayaku, could not bear to see his mother in this state. He pleaded with his father for permission to travel to the Crab lands and scour the Shadowlands in order to uncover the source of his mother's visions. Clearly, he reasoned, this was a trick by the dark forces of Fu Leng meant to rob the Empire of its spirit, Lady Doji, and claim a small victory even though the Dark Kami had been defeated. In time, Kakita agreed to allow yet another of his children to venture into Fu Leng's lands, but he could not bear to tell his wife. Alone and unannounced, Doji Hayaku traveled to the Crab lands and convinced the warriors there to allow him entry to the Shadowlands — no small feat, indeed.

Three years passed, and Kakita's heart grew as cold as his wife's, fearing that not only had he sent another of his children

to die, but he had lied to his wife in doing so. In the winter of the fourth year, Hayaku returned to the Crane, but his journey had changed him. His hair had turned stark white, and his face was lined as if he had aged twenty years. A scar marked Hayaku's throat, a wound from a fierce battle that had robbed him of his voice forever. The young bushi had sacrificed his innocence, his beauty, and his voice for a single thing — the sword of his sister, Konshiko, which he silently laid at the feet of his mother. When the First Crane's hand touched the untainted weapon, the steel sang as if it was a chime, and all assembled knew that the Crane Thunder had finally returned home.

This spectacular act moved Doji to declare her son's name was now Daidoji — "Defender of the Doji". He founded his own family, a lineage of warriors dedicated to the subtle arts of combat and tactics that would carry their clan through conflicts against superior numbers and stronger foes. In time, the Daidoji have become the strong right arm of the Crane Clan, serving as their yojimbo, war parties, and enforcers. The Daidoji are respected on the battlefield by wise generals, as the Crane bushi are well known for their ability to use terrain, guerilla tactics, and other such resources to turn the tables on enemies that should clearly crush them. The Daidoji take their traditions from their founder, causing many of them to bleach their hair white in tribute and learn the way of the yari (Hayaku's favored weapon) as well as the sword. Because of their practical mindset and obvious skill, many Daidoji were ordered to assist the Imperial families in guarding Toshi Ranbo when it was named the new Imperial City. Side by side with the vigilant Sep-pun guardsmen, the mere presence of Daidoji bushi is said to play a large role in the city's defense.

The word best used to describe a Daidoji might be stark. They look decidedly out of place in typical Crane finery, as they tend to have a severe look about them even in the best of situations. Training in heavy armor results in most Daidoji being of heavier build than other Crane.



THE DOJI FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 INTELLIGENCE)

CURRENT DAIMYO: Doji Kurohito

Descendents of the Lady Doji, the Doji strive for a single goal — excellence. When the Kami fell to the mortal world from the Celestial Heavens, it was Doji who turned the unorganized tribes into civilized men and women. When the First Crane had completed that seemingly impossible task, she set about sowing peace and understanding between her wildly diverse brothers and sisters in the face of Fu Leng's invasion. Effortlessly, she helped Hida and Bayushi set aside their distrust of one another in order to minimize the advances the Dark Kami made into the fledgling Empire. After Fu Leng's defeat, she and her son Nio turned their attentions towards creating everything that would eventually be considered "civilized behavior" for centuries to come. The art of negotiation, the ways of alliances and treaties, as well as a system of trade and barter were all devised under the scrupulous eye of Lady Doji. With her help, her descendents became talented, revered artisans, forging works of breathtaking beauty from the simplest of materials. Hantei even commented once of his sister, "She cannot touch a thing without it becoming more worthy, if only for being in her presence."

Even in death, Doji's reputation of perfection was unmarred. As the years passed and her brothers and sister aged and passed as well, the First Crane finally understood that her place was no longer in the mortal world. One day, she brought her son Nio to a cliff side where she divulged to him a great many of her secrets and plans as yet unfulfilled, then walked into the ocean, serenely fading into the waters. Since that time, the Doji have become not only the face of

the Crane Clan, but the symbol of perfection in Rokugan. The descendents of Doji excel in all their endeavors — it is common for a Doji samurai to be adept in courtly maneuvering, the serene arts, and the way of combat. Underestimating a Doji is a sign of profound stupidity, as one Shiba diplomat once remarked, "The only thing the Doji seem incapable of is dishonor."

Since the beginning of the Empire, the Doji family has always maintained a close relationship with the Imperial Throne. The Emperors of the Hantei Dynasty almost always take Crane as brides, and the children of the Emperor trained among the Doji artisans and warriors with few exceptions. With the rise of the new Toturi Dynasty, the Doji's connection to the Throne is not as direct, but a thousand years of tradition have left the family with staunch allies in every Imperial House. After the decimation of Otosan Uchi, the Otomo family moved as honored (and possibly permanent) guests of the Doji, strengthening Crane-Imperial ties even further.

The image that most have of a Crane is the picture of a Doji samurai: beautiful, graceful, and immaculate. The Doji almost always bleach their hair white to honor Daidoji Hayaku, who retrieved the Ancestral Sword of the Crane from the Shadowlands. The Doji dress each day in their finest, as if they were appearing in Imperial Court.

THE KAKITA FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 AGILITY)

CURRENT DAIMYO: Kakita Noritoshi

Like all Clans, the Crane were wounded to their very core by the first war against Fu Leng. When Shinsei came to the lands of the Crane Clan to gather Doji Yasurugi to be one of his Thunders, the young warrior accepted without hesitation. For the simple act of being named by Shinsei as a hero of the mortal race, Yasurugi was rewarded with death by a demon assassin sent by Fu Leng to stop the Little Teacher's plans. As Kakita and Doji watched in horror, even after the assassin was destroyed, their first son bled to death on the floor before them. All was not lost, however, as Yasurugi's twin sister, Konishiko, picked up her fallen brother's blade and proclaimed that his spirit lived on within her and within his sword. The tale of Doji Yasurugi is a definitive one for the spirit of the Kakita family, as it emphasizes the family's dedication to hope, honor, and the blade. Even in the darkest times, the spirit of the Kakita family is that of searching for hope and worth in everything.

Outside of the Crane, the Kakita are known primarily as swordsmen due to their founder and the powerful Kakita Dueling Academy. Possibly the largest and easily the most prestigious school of swordplay in Rokugan, the Kakita Academy teaches the ancient secrets of Kakita's own technique — a style as old as the Empire. Kakita was a humble and multi-faceted man and even though he is known primarily for his skill with the blade, he also practiced the arts of crafting and other peaceful pursuits. In Kakita's image, the family consider themselves artisans and not necessarily warriors, even those who study the way of the sword to the near exclusion of all other things. They take every endeavor as seriously as any samurai's sworn duty, and as a result excel in whatever they apply themselves to.

The Kakita have a rivalry with the Matsu family that spans back to the dawn of the Empire when Kakita and Matsu faced one another in the First Emperor's tournament. Kakita watched from a distance and Matsu defeated then humiliated every opponent that rose to challenge her, and just before Akodo's vassal was declared champion, Kakita emerged to duel her himself. Kakita's prowess was easily enough to overcome Matsu, who had severely underestimated the little man, and as punishment for Matsu's poor treatment of her previous competitors, Kakita insulted her by refusing to acknowledge her at all once the duel was over. The insult has not been forgotten by either side to this day, and the rivalry has grown to involve both the entire Lion and Crane Clans at times.

While not as extravagant as their Doji cousins, the Kakita also place great emphasis on their personal appearance. They do not often bleach their hair as other Crane do. Kakita are lithe and graceful in their appearance, the most elegant predators.

THE YASUKI FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 PERCEPTION)

CURRENT DAIMYO: Yasuki Hachi

The smallest family of the Crane Clan traces its ancestry back to a crone that Kakita happened upon during his quest to win Lady Doji's heart. Yasuki promised to aid Kakita on his path if the man promised to accept the fealty of her and her sons and protect their family in return. Kakita agreed, and the Yasuki house was born shortly thereafter. The origins of Yasuki are something of a dispute between historians, as there is no real proof that she and her family were anything more than fishers and traders. Some use this to slander the Yasuki as born of common blood and not from the founding of heroes such as the Kami or their vassals, while others remark upon the rather humble origins of figures such as Shosuro or even compare her to the wise Lady Seppun. In any case, the Yasuki are not overly sensitive to such comments, so long as they do not slander Yasuki directly. Men and women of the Yasuki tend to be far less accustomed to a pampered lifestyle than their kin in the rest of the Crane Clan, and often prefer to do something themselves instead of working through intermediaries. Like Yasuki, they are wily and down-to-earth, which makes them excellent at the one thing their family is known for — trade.

The history of the Yasuki family after its founding is an interesting one, most notably the centuries after the family was denounced as honorless smugglers by the Emperor in 387. Given little choice, the Crane Champion agreed with his Emperor's assessment of the Yasuki's myriad illicit dealings and demanded such activity cease at once. The Yasuki were summarily banned from Crane lands before they even had a chance to comply (though it was clear they had no intention to), and the Crab quickly offered the small family fealty. War exploded between the Crab and Crane as a result, and only a command by the Emperor halted the violence — but not until the Crane lost much of their territory. Even in the new peace, the Crane suddenly found themselves on the wrong end of Yasuki practices that they had come to rely on to keep their coffers full.

Several centuries later, in 1158, the daimyo of the Yasuki died with no close relative at all — until a startling discovery by Otomo historians revealed the closest relative to be a young Daidoji man named Hachi. The Emperor declared Hachi daimyo of the Crab family, and war erupted between the two clans once again as the Crab repel what they see as a hostile invasion by Crane soldiers who argue that they are merely retaking what is now theirs once again. The family was split between Daidoji who swore fealty to the Yasuki in Hachi's name, Crab Yasuki loyalists, and a small handful of Crab who swore fealty to the Crane. Yasuki Hachi ended the conflict by swearing fealty to the Crab Champion — but not forsaking his allegiance to the Crane. Thus, the Yasuki family became split between the Crab and Crane, and Hachi serves two Champions and Clans to this day. Hachi is the only member of the Yasuki with such a dual alliance; all others serve either Crane or Crab, and a friendly rivalry has developed among family members on either side of the division.

The Crane Yasuki are a practical lot, perhaps closest in their appearance to the Daidoji. They are not as severe as their cousins, however, nor as martially inclined. Among other Crane, a Yasuki might well blend into the background, which is exactly how they prefer it.

The Dragon Clan

CLAN CHAMPION: Togashi Satsu

The most mysterious of all Great Clans, the Dragon have not experienced a great deal of interaction with the Empire at large throughout their history. Unknown to most, the Kami Togashi remained in direct control of their clan for over a thousand years, periodically changing bodies and names to avoid suspicion. Togashi could predict future events, but could never see his place among them, and thus he and his followers remained apart from the Empire to avoid affecting its development. It was not until Fu Leng returned that Togashi came forth, giving his life in combat against his fallen brother to demonstrate to the Seven Thunders that the dark god had been made mortal.

The Dragon have struggled to find their place in the world since Togashi's death. The Kami's successor, a samurai-ko named Mirumoto Hitomi, came under the influence of the Lying Darkness and led the clan into conflicts against the Naga and conflicts within the tattooed orders. Hitomi's reign ended with her defeat of Onnotanug, the Lord Moon, and ascension to take his place. In the wake of her departure, Togashi's son Hoshi took his rightful place as the Dragon Champion until his mortal son, Togashi Satsu, came of age to assume control.

During the War of Spirits, the Dragon were coerced into supporting the Steel Chrysanthemum's rebellious forces because of Agasha Tamori, a traitorous Dragon shugenja who gave the Hantei the information he needed to force many Dragon into submission. The Emperor recognized their position, however, and did not punish the clan for the actions of a few, and those few were given the opportunity for honorable seppuku.

Since Togashi Satsu has come of age, Togashi Hoshi and his wife ascended to the Celestial Heavens to join Togashi. His rule has been unpleasantly eventful. Tamori's legacy resulted in a volcanic explosion in Dragon lands, driving refugees into nearby Phoenix territory and sparking a war between the two clans. The lengthy conflict was extremely taxing on the Dragon because of Isawa's Last Wish, an artifact of nearly infinite power that the Phoenix brought to bear. Fortunately, the war came to an end before the damage was irreversible. More recently, the Dragon's military might was brought to bear again, this time at the Emperor's behest. For nearly a year, the Dragon armies harassed both the Lion and Unicorn forces at the War of the Rich Frog. While the Mirumoto did not claim victory, they did gain much respect for their military power.

Dragon samurai are a varied lot. There is no uniform philosophy among them, although generally speaking they place more emphasis on individuality than a typical samurai. This is not to say that they do not revere bushido or service to their lord; far from it. The Dragon are as loyal as any Lion or Scorpion in the Empire, and never hesitate to lay down their life if the situation calls for it. Simply because an individual is important does not mean that one is more important than another. Giving one's life for one's lord or one's family is considered the ultimate demonstration of loyalty.

If the Dragon can be said to have any truly common qualities, then appearance factors in. Dwelling in the mountains is a difficult life, and Dragon tend to be lean and muscular as a result. Their complexion is dark, and they rarely bleach or dye their hair as the Crane and Lion do.

THE ORDER OF HITOMI, LADY OF THE MOON (TRAIT BONUS: +1 STRENGTH)

CURRENT DAIMYO: Hitomi Kagetora

None among the Dragon are feared so much as the tattooed warriors from the Order of Hitomi. Known as kikage zumi, these tattooed men are far more sinister and threatening than their brothers among the other orders, and are poorly understood by the other Dragon families. In truth, they do not fully understand themselves.

The Hitomi order was created during the tumultuous period when Hitomi served as the Dragon Champion. Influenced as she was by the Lying Darkness, Hitomi made many decisions that were seemingly the act of a madwoman. She began tattooing monks loyal to her with her blood, just as her predecessor Togashi had done. The effect was comparable, but tended to create ise zumi that were far more fanatical and zealous than those among the Togashi. The Hitomi served their mistress loyally despite her madness, even to the moment of her ascension as Lady Moon. The Battle at Oblivion's Gate nearly destroyed the order, but Hitomi had commanded the eight strongest kikage zumi to remain behind, and from them came the new order.

Despite conflicts during the War against the Darkness, the Hitomi now exist in harmony with the Togashi and Hoshi orders. Although Hitomi no longer dwells in the mortal realm, her blessings are still upon her followers, as is made evident with the spontaneous development of new tattoos that frequently occurs with kikage zumi. It is not unheard of for infants to be born among the Dragon bearing tattoos. These infants are surrendered to the Hitomi immediately, for others fear them. Even members of other clans are not immune, and occasionally develop Lady Moon's tattoos for no apparent reason.

The Hitomi are typically surly, unpleasant sorts who have little patience for outsiders. They fixate on goals that no one else understands and pursue them with unmatched and obsessive zeal. Many wonder if their reverence for Lady Moon has not driven them to the madness so often associated with Lord Moon, her predecessor, but no one speaks of this to the Hitomi.

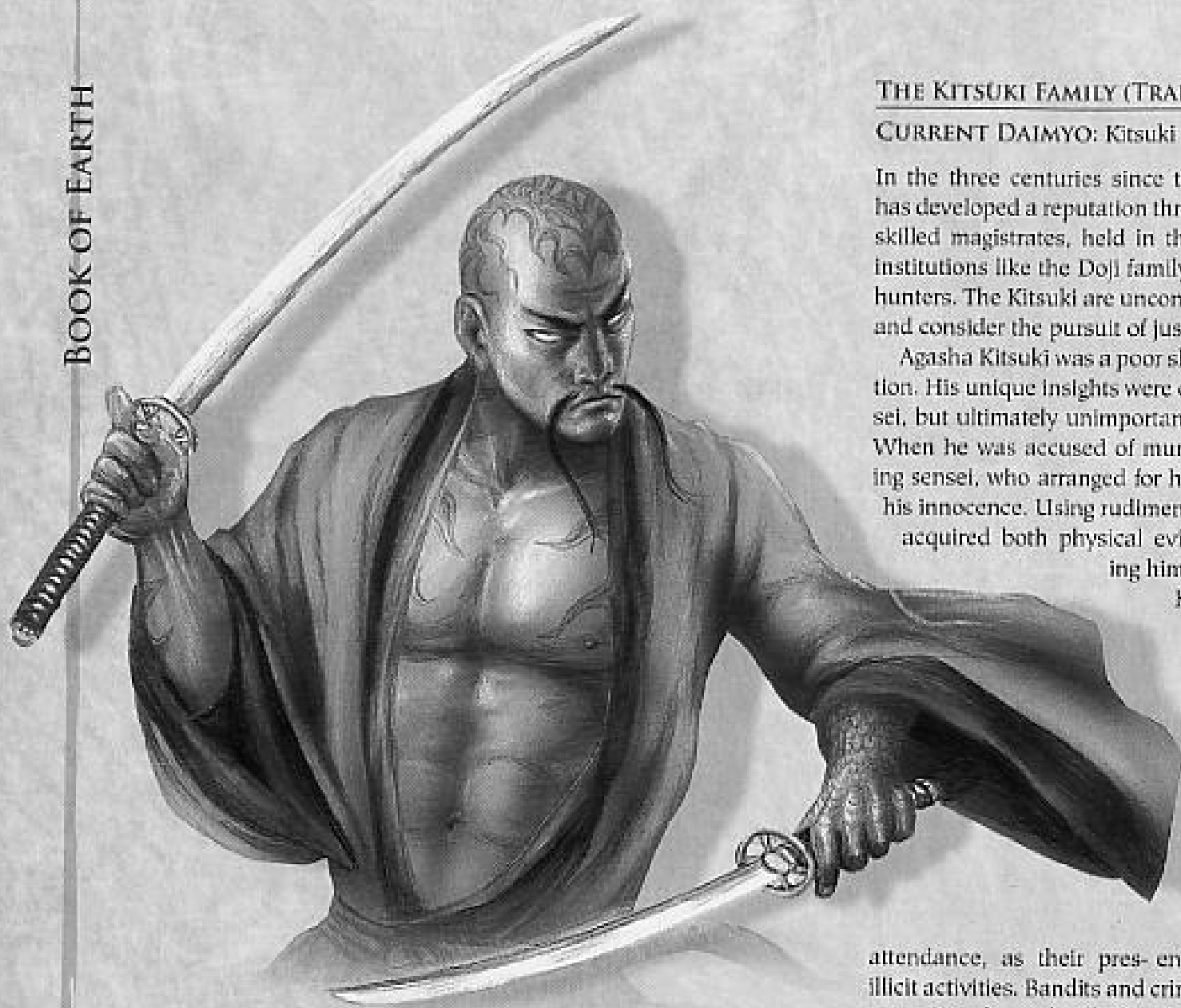
The Hitomi are hulking brutes that bear a striking resemblance to Crab warriors. It seems that Lady Moon only chooses the truly fit to bear her blessing, as most Hitomi are both tall and extremely well muscled. Their tattoos tend to be large and sinister, often covering much of their torso and depicting violent, disturbing patterns. Particularly devout Hitomi sometimes have shimmering golden eyes, symbols of Lady Moon's favor. Like the other tattooed orders, Hitomi monks frequently eschew any covering for their upper bodies.

THE ORDER OF HOSHI, THE CELESTIAL WANDERER (TRAIT BONUS: +1 AWARENESS)

CURRENT DAIMYO: Hoshi Wayan

By far the smallest Tattooed Order, the Hoshi balance the puzzling nature of the Togashi and the sinister nature of the Hitomi. Far more reclusive than other orders, many in the Empire are unaware that their order still exists.

The Hoshi were created during the War against the Darkness, when Hitomi banished the Togashi from her mountain and gave rise to the Hitomi order. Togashi Hoshi permitted this to occur while he was absent, waiting to see what events would unfold.



When his suspicions were confirmed regarding Hitomi's corruption by the Lying Darkness, he gathered those monks loyal to him, tattooing many with his blood in the same manner his father had done for a thousand years. The Hoshi order was born.

Devotees of Hoshi, known as *tsurai zume*, have rarely taken part in major events of the past several decades. Their presence in the War of Spirits and the conflicts during the Four Winds Era was almost non-existent. This stems from the Hoshi philosophy of seeking enlightenment through balance and moderation, not conflict. Rather, they see conflict as an unnecessary and ultimately corrupting influence that hinders mankind's spiritual development. This attitude, together with the order's mystical nature, makes them difficult to comprehend for the average citizen of Rokugan, and few ever attempt to join their ranks.

Although Togashi Hoshi has left the mortal realm to join his father in the Celestial Heavens, he has not abandoned his order. Once per year, three *tsurai zumi* are selected by the head of their order to ascend a particular mountain and meet with Hoshi's manifestation. At that time, they receive new tattoos, and the line is perpetuated.

Slight of build and stature, the Hoshi are the most blandest of the Dragon tattooed orders. They do not place the same emphasis on martial prowess that the Hitomi and Togashi do, so they tend to be considerably smaller in terms of development. They wear drab colors with only a token of Dragon colors, and are generally unremarkable in their physical appearance.

THE KITSUKI FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 PERCEPTION)

CURRENT DAIMYO: Kitsuki Iweko

In the three centuries since their creation, the Kitsuki family has developed a reputation throughout the Empire as incredibly skilled magistrates, held in the same regard as long-standing institutions like the Doji family magistrates and the Kuni witch hunters. The Kitsuki are unconcerned with reputation, however, and consider the pursuit of justice to be the ultimate reward.

Agasha Kitsuki was a poor shugenja with a talent for observation. His unique insights were considered interesting by his sensei, but ultimately unimportant in the grand scheme of things. When he was accused of murder, he sought favor with a doting sensei, who arranged for him to have one full day to prove his innocence. Using rudimentary forensic techniques, Kitsuki acquired both physical evidence and testimony exonerating him.

So impressive was his feat that Kitsuki was granted permission to found a new family within the Dragon, signed by both the Dragon Champion and the Emperor.

The Kitsuki family supplies magistrates and ambassadors for the Dragon, serving in courts all around the Empire. Most hosts delight in having a Kitsuki in

attendance, as their presence is a strong deterrent for any illicit activities. Bandits and criminals across the Empire fear the name Kitsuki, and will often leave the area if one arrives, if for no other reason than that the Kitsuki absolutely will not relent until they have found their prey, and they are rarely wrong.

While the Kitsuki largely forsake martial pursuits, there is a small faction within the family who study dueling alongside the Mirumoto. By tracking down and dueling fugitives to the death, they simultaneously prove their guilt and bring them to justice. This elite group of magistrates are known as justicars, and are among the Emerald Champion's most trusted agents.

The Kitsuki pride themselves on their open demeanor and appearance. They wear modest clothing and use traditional styles to make themselves more appealing to potential allies. They have small to medium builds and a piercing stare that can unnerve even the most adamant samurai.

THE MIRUMOTO FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 AGILITY)

CURRENT DAIMYO: Mirumoto Rosanjin

In a clan famous for its non-traditional practices, the Mirumoto are the anchor that connects the others to the rich culture and traditions of Rokugan. This might seem an impossible task given the oddities of other Dragon families, but for all the attention the others draw to themselves, the Mirumoto comprise nearly three-quarters of the Dragon Clan's numbers.

The Mirumoto family's history is one of unquestioning service and obedience to a master they could not understand. The warrior Mirumoto was an incredibly gifted warrior who never hesitated to follow even the most enigmatic command of his master Togashi. Before he left to accompany Shinsei into the Shadowlands, Mirumoto passed on his unique fighting style to

his son Hojatsu, who in turn taught it to hundreds of promising young Mirumoto warriors before he died in a duel with Kakita. The *daisho* style, wielding both blades at once, has remained unique to the Dragon for over a thousand years.

On the rare occasions prior to the Clan War when the Dragon took an active role in events, it was the Mirumoto who descended from the mountains in flawless ranks, taking up arms against any threat identified by their lord Togashi. Before Togashi's death, the Dragon were belittled by many because of their enigmatic nature and the rarity of their appearances in the Empire at large, but there were few who did not respect the military power of the Mirumoto armies.

The ascension of Togashi Satsu to the position of Champion has significantly altered the Mirumoto's role within the clan. Satsu is nowhere near as reclusive as his father and grandfather before him, and takes an active role in the clan's day-to-day activities. This has freed the Mirumoto from the burden of minutia they bore for a thousand years, a freedom that Mirumoto Rosanjin finds almost stifling.

In a clan of tattooed men, martial shugenja, and contemplative investigators, the Mirumoto establish the base from which other families deviate. They tend to be well-muscled, but not overly so. Like other Dragon families, they favor elaborate tattoos, but are more likely to keep them concealed than go bare-chested. The Mirumoto, known for their calm outward appearance and straight-forward nature, can often spring into a ferocious rage if their honor is called into question. They are yet another living contrast, another oddity among the enigmatic Dragon Clan.

THE TAMORI FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 WILLPOWER)

CURRENT DAIMYO: Tamori Shaitung

Younger even than the Kitsuki, the Tamori family is the subject of much controversy among many loyal servants of the Toturi Dynasty. The story of their creation is the story of Agasha Tamori, the last daimyo of the Agasha family before the vast majority of them abandoned their oath of loyalty and swore fealty to the Phoenix Clan. Tamori was enraged at their betrayal, but the tempering influence of his wife stayed his hand. When she died, his fury was truly unleashed, and he threw in his lot with the returned spirit Hantei XVI, who was leading a revolution against Toturi I in the War of Spirits. Tamori's aid helped the Hantei coerce cooperation from both the Dragon and Phoenix Clans. When the spirit armies were defeated, one term of Hantei XVI's treaty was that his loyal subject be remembered by a family created in his name among the Dragon.

For their part, the Tamori despise the man who created their family, including the family's daimyo Tamori Shaitung, Agasha Tamori's daughter. She was instrumental in defeating her father, even though he possessed the power of a Dark Oracle. Her strength of will and force of personality have made her many enemies, but all who have met her respect her power and honorable nature.

The Tamori are a varied lot. Among the Empire's most martial shugenja, they draw much criticism from more traditional families. True to their Dragon nature, they show little concern for the opinion of others, and continue their strange magical practices. Although the Tamori do not have the same zeal for non-conventional magical pursuits as their predecessors the Agasha, they still practice the same traditions of alchemy and unusual item creation, just not to the same extent.

The Tamori are somewhat notorious for their unusual dress, although this reputation is actually based more on their daimyo than any real tradition. The Tamori dress in practical clothing and eschew robes more than other shugenja, as their training has a more martial component. This training also ensures that they are more well-toned than many shugenja in the Empire.

THE ORDER OF TOGASHI, THE ETERNAL DRAGON (TRAIT BONUS: +1 AGILITY)

CURRENT DAIMYO: Togashi Satsu

The Togashi are the oldest of the Tattooed Orders, having been established shortly after the first war with Fu Leng ended during the Empire's earliest days. The first members were samurai disillusioned with the horrors they had seen during the war, seeking wisdom from the enigmatic Togashi. A monastic order soon formed following the reclusive Kami's teachings. It is unknown when he first began to grant tattoos using his blood to the monks, called *ise zumi*, but the result was nothing less than spectacular.

Of the three Tattooed Orders, the Togashi are the most widely known by outsiders. Legends of *ise zumi* have existed for centuries, and they are well regarded by peasants throughout the Empire. One such monk, Togashi Kaze, developed basic unarmed combat techniques and began teaching them to peasants all across the Empire many centuries ago, teaching them to defend themselves against the predations of corrupt or abusive samurai. This level of devotion to the well being of individuals, regardless of their station is the defining quality of the Togashi order.

Recent decades have been unkind to the Togashi. When their founder finally died on the second Day of Thunder, Mirumoto Hitomi assumed the Championship. Hitomi was gradually succumbing to the Lying Darkness's influence, and the stress nearly drove her mad. She banished the Togashi from their home and established the Hitomi order to replace them. The Togashi remained in exile for quite some time, finally rallying behind Togashi Hoshi, Togashi's son. The chaotic events that followed saw Hitomi ascend to the position of Lady Moon and the Togashi return to their rightful place among the Dragon.

The Togashi are an energetic, enigmatic group, most likely of all tattooed men to take an active role in the Empire, and yet are the most likely to act seemingly at random, without rhyme or reason. While they are well liked by many peasants, they are rarely understood.

Save for their fantastic tattoos, Togashi are much like monks in their appearance. Their intensive focus on feats of agility results in a much more toned and athletic appearance than other monks, perhaps, but they do not bear the same huge physiques demonstrated by the Hitomi. There are few common elements of height within the order, given that membership draws from all manner of families.

The Lion Clan

CLAN CHAMPION: Ikoma Otemi

There has never been any question that the dominant military power in Rokugan has throughout the Empire's history belonged to the Lion Clan, the Right Hand of the Emperor. Despite the hardships the clan has suffered throughout the past decades, with the Akodo family's dissolution and reformation, the use of maho by Kitsu leaders during the War against the Darkness, and other such difficulties, the Lion have never wavered or hesitated, contributing more troops to the Empire's defense than any other two clans combined.

The Lion have experienced a tremendous change in leadership over the past two years. Akodo Ginawa, Ikoma Sume, and Matsu Ketsui, each the daimyo of their respective families, have retired. Matsu Nimuro was killed by the Unicorn Champion at the Battle of Sukoshi Zutsu, and Kitsu Juri died under mysterious circumstances shortly following the battle. The change in leadership has not been difficult thus far, due mostly to the appointment of Ikoma Otemi as the Lion Champion, an appointment that pleased every family in the clan. The blossoming political conflicts between the Emperor and Shogun are beginning to stress relations within the clan, however, and the final outcome of this division remains to be seen.

The Lion are consummate soldiers. Every major decision in their lives is made with bushido as the instrument to measure their outcome. Their current Champion, for example, turned away from his true love to marry an enemy because it was a strong political match for his family. The majority of Lion samurai have little or no talent at deception, and tend to be forthright almost to the point of rudeness. Yet the Lion are not the war-mongering braggarts that other clans make them out to be. Even the long-standing enmity between the Lion and their rivals, the Crane and Scorpion, stems from the Lion's distaste for flowery language and deception. The Lion prefer an honest and dedicated approach to life that leaves no room for such things.

The Lion are consummate soldiers, and appear as such. Every aspect of their appearance speaks to discipline and control. They tend to be of average height and slightly heavier built than many families due to their years of military training. Some Lion dye their hair brilliant red colors or achieve that affect naturally via strong Kitsu ancestry.

THE AKODO FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 PERCEPTION)

CURRENT DAIMYO: Akodo Shigetoshi

Ever stoic and unshakable, the Akodo have suffered considerable trials during the last century, trials that have nearly destroyed a family with a long, rich history of stability and adherence to bushido. The Akodo are the descendants of Akodo One-Eye and his sworn followers. There was no greater proponent of bushido in the early Empire than Akodo, and his courage and conviction were soon adopted by the family that bore his name.

The Scorpion Clan's attempted coup in 1123 was not something that could easily have been prevented, but the young Emperor Hantei XXXIX did not consider that to be the case. When the absent Akodo Toturi arrived and defeated Bayushi Shoju, then objected to the Emperor's disgraceful treatment of his family, the Emperor dissolved the Akodo in a fit of rage. The

entire Akodo family was punished for the perceived failure of one man. The Akodo scattered, joining other Lion families or becoming ronin to escape execution. Many were consumed by the then-unknown entity called the Lying Darkness, only to be released from its control decades later at the Battle of Oblivion's Gate, when the Dragon Champion Hitomi named the Lying Darkness Akodo to destroy its power.

Since the family's reformation, the Akodo have struggled to regain their place in the world. Akodo Ginawa, the daimyo appointed by the Emperor after the family was restored, made no attempt to secure the Lion Championship. Some Lion detractors have commented in the past that the loss of Akodo leadership has led to a loss of stability within the clan, as the Championship has wandered from the Ikoma, to the Kitsu, to the Matsu, and now back to the Ikoma. The Akodo are among the most vocal opponents of this viewpoint.

The Akodo family ruled the Lion Clan for a thousand years, with only rare exceptions. They were widely regarded as the finest tacticians in the Empire, and the oft-repeated adage that no Akodo-trained general had ever been defeated on the battlefield is widely believed, even if apocryphal.

The Akodo are among the most traditional bushi families. They train regularly and are extremely fit and toned in appearance. They favor shaved heads with topknots and traditional dress, with a quiet demeanor that suggests tranquility and serenity. More so than any other Lion, they embody the disciplined appearance for which their clan is so well known.

THE IKOMA FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 INTELLIGENCE)

CURRENT DAIMYO: Ikoma Korin

The Ikoma are an exercise in contradictions. The family produces equal numbers of historians and tacticians, choosing two wildly different paths of study that the family considers inextricably linked. Both traditions can be traced all the way back to their progenitor, the warrior Ikoma who served the Kami Akodo One-Eye. The first Ikoma was equal parts storyteller and cunning warrior, much beloved by the samurai who followed Akodo's banner. Many quietly point out the many tales of Ikoma's sordid career that indicate he was somewhat less than the paragon of honor that his descendants remember, but few risk the Ikoma's wrath by discussing it openly.

The majority of Ikoma are exactly what they appear to be — devoted to bushido utterly. They pursue their chosen profession with the passion that only a true zealot can muster. Those Ikoma who study tactics have served as the lieutenants and adjuncts for Akodo generals for centuries, and assumed command of many Lion forces while the Akodo were in exile during the Clan War. Those who study history instead focus on remembering the tales of Lion ancestors, dutifully recording new tales in the Lion historical records and serving as storytellers and morale officers for Lion armies. These storytellers, also called *omoidasu*, are the only Lion samurai for whom it is considered appropriate to show emotion on a regular basis. They officially serve as the voice of the Lion Clan.

The current Lion Champion is an Ikoma, a phenomenon that has happened only twice in the clan's history. Ikoma Otemi's service to the clan has been nothing short of exceptional. Many Ikoma have celebrated his appointment openly, believing it to be validation for their family's rich tradition of service.

Ikoma are huskier than other Lion, verging toward heavysset. This stems from their tendency toward study rather than action, although younger Ikoma are more fit and rarely begin to gain weight noticeably until later in life. Older Ikoma appear to prefer beards, which is not particularly common among other Lion families.

THE KITSU FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 AWARENESS)

CURRENT DAIMYO: Kitsu Katsuko

The Kitsu have perhaps the most bizarre creation story of any family in existence in the Empire. Their history is inextricably tied to the Lion's early history, when Akodo led his armies against a mysterious race of lion-like creatures called the Kitsu. These creatures were misunderstood by mankind, and believed to be dangerous predators. Certainly the initial encounters with the creatures went poorly, and several accidental deaths as a result of panicked ambassadors were blamed on the Kitsu. At his Emperor's command, Akodo took it upon himself to wipe the creatures from the mortal realm. The fighting was intense, as the Kitsu were elusive and possessed of many mystical abilities. It was not until a terrible battle in the mountains, when Akodo faced the Kitsu's leader in personal combat, that the Kami realized what a terrible mistake he had made.

The Kitsu were not bloodthirsty animals but intelligent, mystical creatures with a rich history and traditions all their own. Akodo made what reparations he could to the Kitsu, but the damage to their numbers was too severe. The Kitsu were dying. During the days of the first war with Fu Leng, when it seemed that the Lion Clan would disappear as well from the terrible toll of war, Akodo made one final attempt to save both. He offered his daughters to the five surviving Kitsu, who transformed into men in order to marry the young women. Thus, the Kitsu family was born.

The spiritual legacy of the Kitsu race has not been lost. The Kitsu have a rich magical tradition, producing powerful shugenja who aid the Lion armies on the battlefield. A small number, however, are born with something more. These individuals are trained as sodan-senzo, shugenja with the power to breach the barriers between the spirit realms and travel beyond Ningen-do. They can also see and interact with the ancestral spirits that are such an omnipresent element of samurai life.

Despite their average and largely unremarkable physical appearance, many Kitsu have a strange air about them that others describe as "otherworldly." This is mostly due to the story of their origin, and is more a result of observer bias than anything else. Kitsu are of average build, and dress even more conservatively than other Lion, giving them a somewhat drab appearance. Kitsu with bloodlines strongly tied to their family founders sometimes have red hair and brilliant red-golden eyes.

THE MATSU FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 STRENGTH)

CURRENT DAIMYO: Matsu Kenji

In many ways, the Matsu are the most straightforward family in the Empire. They hide nothing, presenting their true nature to the world, their thoughts and opinions laid bare for the world to see. This outlook attracts few admirers, however, as the true nature of a Matsu tends to be a furious, unrelenting warrior who is quick to criticize others for their failings.

The Matsu line began with a woman named Matsu, who was regarded by all as the fiercest follower of Akodo, an exceptional warrior, hot-tempered and arrogant, but few could deride her for her social shortcomings without risking her wrath, a fate that few survived. The confrontation between Matsu and Kakita at the first Test of the Emerald Champion created a thousand-year rift between the Lion and Crane. It was the vendetta Matsu Tsuko had against Akodo Toturi that made the dissolution of the Akodo prior to the Clan War so brutally effective. And yet, it has been the Matsu's fury that has borne the Lion through innumerable conflicts during their long history of warfare.

The Matsu have flourished in recent years. The multiple conflicts of the past decades have given them ample opportunity to sate their lust for battle, noticeably reducing the oft-seen smoldering rage that was so present among their number prior to the Clan War. Many are still stinging from the outcome of the War of the Rich Frog, however, and several key figures among the family advocate going to war with the Unicorn once more to avenge the death of Matsu Nimuro.

Matsu Kenji's recent appointment as daimyo has been bitter-sweet. Her predecessor, Matsu Ketsui, had a powerful and noble family brought to ruin over a short period of time. Her daughter Satomi was lost to the Reign of Blood, and her two sons, Domotai and Nimuro were lost to the seppuku and battle, respectively, and none of her grandchildren have yet reached the age of gempukku.

Although the Matsu and Akodo have reconciled their differences as families, their appearances remain in stark contrast to one another. The Matsu are more muscular, with a generally heavier build. They favor wild, elaborate hairstyles that are often died in the manner of their clan's name-sake. Their appearance, even when calm, suggests the potential for sudden violence, which many ascribe to their wild stare.



The Mantis Clan

CLAN CHAMPION: Yoritomo Kumiko

If any Great Clan can be said to rival the Scorpion for an unsavory reputation, it is the Mantis Clan. And like the Scorpion, this reputation is not altogether undeserved, as the Mantis have nearly a thousand years of piracy and general malice to back it up.

The Mantis Clan was formed by Hida Kaimetsu-uo, the son of Hida Osano-Wo and grandson of Hida. When he was denied his birthright in favor of Osano-Wo's second son, Kaimetsu-uo left the Crab lands and sought his fortune among the distant Islands of Silk and Spice. There, he met the storyteller Unmel, who shared with him tales of heroism witnessed firsthand before the Day of Thunder. Inspired, Kaimetsu-uo vowed to create a dynasty worthy of his uncle, the Thunder Hida Atarasi. Followers gradually came to his banner, and in time the Mantis were recognized as the first Minor Clan in Rokugan (although the Fox insist they were the first to be recognized).

Kaimetsu-uo's legacy has been a checkered one. In time, his people have been both heroes, standing against the gaijin at the Battle of White Stage, and villains, when their daimyo Gusai Rioshida attempted to assassinate the Emperor. By and large, however, they have remained out of sight of Rokugan, carving a profitable if solitary existence from the sea and the coastline, gradually accumulating great wealth through trade and the occasional acts of piracy.

During the Clan War, the Mantis Champion Yoritomo gathered many Minor Clans to his cause and forged what was known as Yoritomo's Alliance, a force that could rival that of any Great Clan. Together with his allies, Yoritomo fought against the Shadowlands enemies that plagued the Empire and, on the second Day of Thunder, stood before the Great Clan Champions and demanded that he be given a place among them. Perhaps due only to the unique circumstances, Yoritomo's claim was recognized, and the Mantis Clan became the eighth Great Clan.

Life as a Great Clan has not been without hardship. The Mantis suffered flagging numbers after the War against the Darkness and the War of Spirits, eventually absorbing the Centipede and Wasp Clans into their ranks. Just as the clan began to recover, Yoritomo's chosen heir, Yoritomo Aramasu, was assassinated, and the Championship fell to a veteran sailor and merchant named Yoritomo Kitao. Order might quickly have been restored had not Yoritomo's daughter, the previously unknown Yoritomo Kumiko, appeared as well. A brief but intense civil war followed, and Kumiko eventually gained the upper hand. The Son of Storms' daughter, the Daughter of Storms, was the new Mantis Champion.

The Mantis are an intensely practical and pragmatic people. Having survived centuries in isolation, they believe very strongly in individualism. They look upon the other Great Clans with a mixture of disdain and envy, which does little to improve relations with the mainland. Many younger Mantis frequently have innate insecurities that drive them to prove themselves to the world at large, driving them to either great heroism or to become insufferable bores.

Mantis samurai vary wildly in appearance according to family. The Yoritomo tend toward a gruff, burly demeanor, individuals who have a look hardened by years of experience on the high seas, due mostly to the conditions on their home islands. Tsuruchi are more lithe and athletic, quiet and introspective. The Moshi stay with a far more traditional style, with the air of serenity and calm that one might expect from a shugenja family.

In the Empire's current political climate, the Mantis are in the midst of a slowly smoldering conflict with the Phoenix Clan. This dates back to the infamous Rain of Blood, when the evil sorcerer Iuchiban unleashed a ritual that corrupted thousands of samurai, driving them insane and pushing them to acts of violence. A sizeable Mantis force were in the Agasha lands at this time, and held responsible for the virtual destruction of the City of Remembrance. The Phoenix have not yet forgiven the Mantis, and increased trade difficulties off the coast have only exacerbated the situation. Other than the Phoenix, the Mantis have few outright enemies, and participate in an economic alliance of sorts with the Crane and Unicorn.

The Mantis maintain a motley appearance, as the three families comprising the clan have radically different origins and backgrounds. It is rare that any rule of thumb can be used to identify a particular individual as a Mantis beyond their traditional colors or equipment.



THE MOSHI FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 INTELLIGENCE)**CURRENT DAIMYO:** Moshi Amika

The most traditional family — some might say the only traditional family — of the Mantis Clan, the Moshi are matriarchal, at one time devoted almost exclusively to reverence of Amaterasu, the Sun Goddess. The Moshi, formerly known as the Centipede Clan, provided much-needed shugenja for Yoritomo's Alliance during the latter portion of the Clan War. The Centipede remained close allies with the Mantis during subsequent years, but suffered tremendous cultural upheaval when Amaterasu committed Jigai and was replaced by Hida Yakamo, the new Lord Sun. When the Mantis offered to accept the Moshi into their ranks as an equal family, the flagging family accepted eagerly.

The Moshi continue to comprise the bulk of all shugenja among the Mantis, supplemented by a strong shugenja bloodline in the Yoritomo. The Yoritomo's devotion to lesser-revered Fortunes such as Osano-Wo, Suitengu, and Isora has given the Moshi new focus. The welcome acceptance of Moshi males into Yoritomo Schools has dramatically improved relations between the two families.

The Moshi are highly conservative and traditional, women in particular. Physically, they most resemble their Phoenix ancestors. They dress in loose, airy and conservative robes. Male Moshi, slight and athletic, and frequently train with the Yoritomo, gaining considerable upper body strength as a result.

THE TSURUCHI FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 REFLEXES)**CURRENT DAIMYO:** Tsuruchi Nobumoto

The Tsuruchi are a strange family, one born of unique circumstances that are unlikely to be repeated ever again. The family began as the Wasp Clan, a minor clan the result of one man's campaign of vengeance against the Lion and Scorpion, two clans that betrayed his parents. Supported by an Emerald Champion who had his own reasons for despising the two clans, Tsuruchi took back his parents' home from their betrayers and created the Wasp Clan, samurai who cast aside bushido and the daisho for their own code of honor and mastery of the bow.

Tsuruchi, ever an ambitious man, gladly accepted the Mantis Clan's offer to join with them and become the Tsuruchi family, casting aside the limitations of a Minor Clan in one fell swoop. Since that time, the Tsuruchi have reinvented themselves, out of necessity rather than desire. When interacting with others in the Empire, the Tsuruchi bear a wakizashi to signify their status as proper samurai. Many Tsuruchi, particularly those old enough to remember the Clan War, wear the wakizashi grudgingly and have no real relationship to it whatsoever.

The Tsuruchi are a particularly athletic family, accustomed to rough mountain living and the vigorous tracking of criminals throughout the Empire. Speed is highly valued, and traditional Tsuruchi training places great emphasis on feats of dexterity. The Tsuruchi range from average to slightly above average height. Many Tsuruchi wear yellow and black striped armbands, a reminder of their family's origins as the Wasp Clan.

THE YORITOMO FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 STRENGTH)**CURRENT DAIMYO:** Yoritomo Kumiko

The Mantis Clan's ruling family, very much aware of their unique status in the Empire, are the only ruling family not descended from the blood of a Kami, and they are proud of that fact. The Yoritomo proud of their long and illustrious history as any other family, can trace their ancestry back to the Crab Clan during the Empire's formation. Ironically, their claim to lack the Kami's blood is essentially rendered moot by the validity of their claims to be descended from Hida Kaimetsu-uo, the grandson of Hida. Not surprisingly, few people mention this in the company of a Yoritomo.

Rare indeed is the Yoritomo that has not served on a Mantis kobune for at least part of their studies. The fighting style their family practices incorporates athletic maneuvers that demand a superior sense of balance, exactly the sort of skill that can be learned on one of the hundreds of Mantis vessels that scour the Rokugani seas. The hardships of their training tend to make Yoritomo large, powerful individuals with little regard for social niceties, much like their Crab cousins. There are many exceptions to this rule, of course, as demonstrated by the family branch that trains courtiers to represent the clan in court, but in general terms it is most accurate.

Life at sea tends to give the Yoritomo a distinctive appearance. They have great upper body strength and tremendous balance, both reflected in their build and the way they carry themselves. Many have a leathered, scarred appearance from the hardship of their chosen profession, with an attitude to match.

The Phoenix Clan**CURRENT CHAMPION:** Shiba Mirabu

When the Kami fell to the mortal world, they went about organizing the scattered tribes they found into what would become the Clans of Rokugan. All of Sun and Moon's children were attended by followers that swore fealty to them and the Kami declared themselves the masters of their Clans... save one. Shiba gathered those who would follow him, but was refused by the mystic called Isawa. Isawa refused to bend his knee to the Kami, even when Shinsai came to him to proclaim he was the Thunder of the Phoenix Clan, and the race of men would be doomed without his help. Isawa said that without him, his people would suffer, and it was then that Shiba did the unthinkable — he knelt before the mortal Isawa and pledged an oath that the Kami's descendents would always protect Isawa's. Since that time, the Isawa have ruled the Phoenix Clan through their Council of Elemental Masters, and the Champion of the Clan (born of the Shiba line) has remained a figurehead to help maintain the Phoenix's place in Rokugan. Among other Clans, such an arrangement would cause insurmountable disputes within the Clan, the Phoenix have little such difficulty. There are often struggles between the families of the Phoenix, but they fight amongst themselves like loyal siblings — never going far enough to harm another and always closing ranks in the face of outsiders.

As Shiba and Isawa were men of peace and study, the Clan of the Phoenix has evolved into a Clan of scholars, pacifists, and mystics. Those that seek knowledge on obscure and even dangerous topics often turn to the Phoenix for answers, and the Clan produces the finest shugenja known to the Empire. Like the Crane,

the Phoenix is dedicated to the ideal of peace, but is much more resolute in the face of violence. Men and women of the Phoenix gladly and freely give their lives if they feel their deaths will serve the cause of peace, and more than one conflict has been brought to a stunned halt as a Phoenix commander or battalion was cut down without even reaching for a weapon. Recently, the Righteous Emperor, Toturi III, rewarded the Phoenix's centuries-long adherence to such ideals by fostering his two siblings to the Clan and naming the Phoenix his voice in the Empire along with the Miya family. Though somewhat unaccustomed to taking a direct role in the politics and machinations of the Empire, the Phoenix Clan has risen to the challenge with the nobility of its founders.

The Phoenix are conservative in appearance, with elaborate but reasonable clothing and sharply pointed features. They frequently have a contemplative air, as if considering some mystery that others cannot fathom. This gives others the impression that Phoenix are arrogant, which is not always an unfounded assumption. Phoenix tend to have slight builds and are slightly shorter than average.

THE AGASHA FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 INTELLIGENCE)

CURRENT DAIMYO: Agasha Chieh

The smallest and youngest family of the Phoenix Clan, the Agasha family is descended from shugenja who left the Dragon Clan during the reign of Hitomi. The Agasha cut their ties with the Dragon, citing that Hitomi betrayed everything Togashi had built the Clan upon, and swore fealty to the weakened Phoenix Clan. Their defection earned them the gratitude of the Phoenix, who were decimated almost beyond recovery during the Clan War, as well as a place for an Agasha among as the Master of Air. Since their acceptance into the Phoenix, the Agasha have quickly found themselves caught between the constant struggles of the other three families. The innate patience and understanding nature of the Agasha has served them well in this regard and the family has slowly grown into the role of mediators between the other families. They have continued to study the unusual style of magic and alchemy that they were known for among the Dragon Clan, and the Isawa have alternately commented on their practices as both "surprisingly insightful" and "peasant trickery." The Agasha had already spent generations being misunderstood by the rest of the Empire, so the views of the Isawa have done little to influence their ways.

Agasha are rarely seen outside the lands of the Phoenix, preferring to remain among themselves and their new clan. Despite their seclusion, the Agasha have quickly garnered a reputation among the Phoenix (and through them, the Empire) as versatile and canny researchers of unusual magic. One of the Agasha's first gifts to their new lords among the Isawa was the theories of "combined element" magic, causing a stir among the Elemental Council at first. After the initial shock of such a radical theory passed, the Isawa recognized the usefulness of such untraditional thinking... so long as it remained in such a small family. Though the Isawa and Shiba keep vast libraries of forbidden and obscure knowledge, when something truly bizarre is uncovered, an Agasha is always called upon to assist in the study.

Resembling their Dragon fore bearers, Agasha samurai have a slightly huskier build than most Phoenix, although they are by no means overweight. They favor elaborate tattoos, a holdover from their days of fealty to the Dragon, which further sets them apart. As a result of these tattoos, they have a custom of exposing more flesh than most Phoenix consider appropriate.

THE ASAKO FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 PERCEPTION)

CURRENT DAIMYO: Asako Toshi

Shiba's closest friend was a mortal woman named Asako, who was known for her kind nature and her talents in the healing arts. When Shiba marched into the Shadowlands to discern the fate of the Thunders and Shinsei, Asako wept, having already lost her husband to the conflict with the Dark Kami. When Shiba's soul returned in the body of one of his followers, Asako was shocked by the discovery her friend brought back to her — Shinsei had whispered the secrets of the universe in Shiba's ear when his mortal body died. With such knowledge, Shiba would know eternal life, but he also knew Asako could unravel the mystery even further. Like the monks of Shinsei and the tattooed orders of the Dragon, Asako and her followers withdrew themselves from the Empire to contemplate the wisdom Shinsei had left behind for the Phoenix. They discovered that mortal man's place in the universe was such that ultimate enlightenment awaited every one of them when they were ready to embrace it... but the Asako were overcome by their arrogance and believed this meant they were destined to become Fortunes in their own right some day. This teaching was passed on through the Asako for generations, guiding many on the path to enlightenment but dooming others to a darker destiny. A generation ago, the secret of this misunderstanding was revealed to the Asako by their current daimyo, Toshi, and the Asako once again have found themselves walking correctly down the Path of Man. The Asako see themselves as the custodians of mankind's fate, but do not divulge the secrets of the Path of Man to any outside their family. They believe that most mortals are not ready for such knowledge — indeed the Asako were not prepared for it at first even with their innate insight.

The Asako pride themselves on their reputation as scholars and healers, much like Asako was. Few are equal to their skill in natural and supernatural medicine, with even Imperial families requesting their knowledge with great frequency. Their meditative studies also afford them the opportunity to catalogue a great deal of the Empire's knowledge and history. Though they have no formal role as historians like the Ikoma family, the Asako's libraries are impressive and thorough. Dealing with the Asako to gain access to such information is another matter entirely, however. Members of the family tend to be either the gregarious and outgoing emissaries they send to the courts or to secretly guide others down the Path of Man, or recluses who would rather deal with parchment than people.

The Asako have a strong ascetic tradition, and their appearance reflects this. Many shave their heads, and wear only the humblest robes. This places them in stark contrast to the Isawa, emphasizing the long-standing division between the families.

THE ISAWA FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 WILLPOWER)

CURRENT DAIMYO: The Elemental Council — Isawa Nakamuro (Air), Isawa Sachi (Earth), Isawa Ochiai (Fire), Doji Akiko (Water), Shiba Ningen (Void)

Few families have histories and traditions as proud and complex as that of the Isawa family. As scholars and masters of the arcane, they are well aware of the difference between perception and reality. Some point to Isawa's actions as the hallmark of a selfish and honorless man, but the Isawa understand that their founder's motivations were nothing of the sort. To Isawa,

what Shiba wanted was his aid in defeating a problem that the Kami brought upon themselves and now threatened all of creation, and this same man wanted Isawa's allegiance as well. What the Isawa understand and many don't grasp is that it was not Isawa who should have realized his arrogance, but Shiba — who did. Since their founding, the Isawa have guided the Phoenix along their duties to the Empire, but none so carefully as in their role of custodian to the world's magic. So great is their wisdom and skill that the word of an Isawa shugenja is often considered the end of the matter when it comes to magic. Experienced Isawa shugenja are often invited to investigate when a supernatural disturbance is uncovered, and though they have no official authority (such would be the role of a Jade Magistrate), most feel an Isawa's presence ensures the matter will be handled properly.

From their own point of view, the Isawa realize they are not necessarily the most powerful shugenja in Rokugan, but believe themselves easily the most responsible. The family's history is not unstained by corruption or abuse of power, but nearly every incident is handled quickly and internally. They understand that power draws those who would seek to misuse it, and prepare themselves in advance. The Isawa also contend that preparation involves study, and a great many cursed or corrupted artifacts are brought to the family for investigation. The most dangerous such items are secreted away in Gisei Toshi, the City of Sacrifice, a place few realize even exists still. In many ways, the Isawa see themselves as guardians of the Empire much in the way the Crab guard Rokugan from the Shadowlands, but the threats the Phoenix face are far more subtle and pervasive.

The Isawa generally garb themselves in flowing robes with dramatic, fiery designs. Their hair is dark in color almost without exception, and it is not uncommon for Isawa to be thin and pale as a result of excessive devotion to their work at the expense of their physical bodies.

THE SHIBA FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 STAMINA)

CURRENT DAIMYO: Shiba Mirabu

The Shiba hold an unusual position for a family descended from their Clan's Kami. When Shiba bent his knee before Isawa, he swore an oath that his family has maintained for the entire history of the Phoenix Clan, one that leaves them as both the servitors and protectors of the Isawa. Because of Shiba's sacrifice, his family rarely shows any trace of needless pride, but they do maintain the stubbornness common to the Clan. More than

once has the Shiba's roles as protectors clashed with the Shiba's role as subordinates to the Isawa — after all, the Shiba have no right to tell their lords where they can and cannot go, even for their own safety. This struggle has defined the relationship between the Shiba and Isawa since the Clan's founding, but it is not a rift the Shiba regard with hostility. Indeed, the family realizes their place and the bushi of the family approach each situation with patience and understanding. Even the Isawa cannot question the earnest intentions of their guardians, as countless Shiba lives have been given over the years for the protection of the Isawa.

Many Shiba emulate their ancestor by applying themselves to peaceful arts and study alongside their martial training. While many bushi embrace warfare and conflict as a way of life, the Shiba only see it as part of their duty to the Isawa. Due to a Shiba's scholarly mindset, they have a hard time seeing death as glorious and see it only as the end of a life full of experiences and possibilities. It is due to this understanding that the Shiba embrace their role as guardians so thoroughly and are willing to throw away their own lives so that another might live and continue to contribute to the world. Naturally, while the Phoenix are close allies of the Crane, the Shiba are closer to the Crane than any of the other families. The Crane often arrange to have yojimbo from the Shiba assigned to Doji courtiers or Kakita artisans, and the Phoenix always relishes the chance to study the arts alongside their allies.

The Shiba are the definition of average in terms of modern samurai families. Their build and features are largely unremarkable, and they favor traditional hair and dress. The defining quality that sets many Shiba apart is their armor. Having only one family of bushi means that the Phoenix can take more time in crafting armor, and it is frequently extremely elaborate and individualized.



The Scorpion Clan

CLAN CHAMPION: Bayushi Paneki

Also referred to as the Emperor's Underhand, the Scorpion are a clan of secrecy and manipulation. Though the clan indulges in a number of various industries to support itself, the main source of the Scorpion Clan's power is information. They are master politicians, with eyes and ears in every court. It is said that if you possess a secret, there is a Scorpion somewhere who knows it. Though they have a reputation as blackmailers it is rare that they ever need to be so obvious. Threat and coercion are the tools of a desperate man; more valuable is to truly know one's opponent better than he knows himself so that he might be more easily manipulated.

This said, Scorpion samurai have earned quite a reputation as villains throughout the Empire's history. This is in no small part the Scorpion's intent, carefully cultivating an aura of fear and intimidation so that others will avoid opposing them. This reputation is everything to the Scorpion Clan, a careful mix of threat, illusion, and true power that keeps enemies confused and unbalanced. A Scorpion does not make a threat he is not prepared to act upon, and Scorpion vengeance is legendary in its swiftness, brutality, and inevitability.

Of course all of this manipulation and deception is not without purpose. The Scorpion are unwaveringly loyal to the Emperor, and work tirelessly to seek out potential threats to the throne. Thus they maintain a balance by subtly pitting the clans against one another. This loyalty defines Scorpion honor. All sins will be forgiven if loyalty to one's family, clan, and Emperor are maintained. Thus while it may be difficult to gain the true trust of a deceptive Scorpion, they are in the end the most loyal allies a samurai can hope to call

upon. An honorable samurai who befriends a Scorpion might find many of his problems mysteriously melting away, enemies having accidents on the way to the battlefield or mysteriously reconsidering the matter altogether. The Scorpion, of course, will keep his hand in the matter concealed so that his honorable friend need not worry over the details of what he has done.

The Scorpion do not necessarily enjoy the dishonorable acts they must perform on a routine basis, but they recognize the need for them. It is not uncommon for Scorpion samurai to become bitter and cynical as they watch the Empire prosper from their secret activities, yet continue to criticize them for their "dishonor."

Some might question how a clan that purports itself as the Clan of Secrets can possibly accomplish anything in secrecy. Again, it is a matter of reputation and manipulation. The Scorpion are quite adept at putting potential opponents at ease, at assuring them that they are in control until there is a pressing need to reveal otherwise. The Scorpion use their reputation as a shield as well as a blade. A typical Bayushi strategy is to shamefully admit that many among the clan are indeed dishonorable and untrustworthy — but that they are the exception. The courtier will beg that only a small modicum of trust be shown so that he might protect his new friends from his disreputable brethren. In other words, a Scorpion makes certain everyone knows how fiendish all Scorpion samurai are, but also that those around him believe he is the exception to the rule.

Members of the Scorpion Clan tend to be pale and thin, with regal, delicate features. All Scorpion samurai wear masks, as the Kami Bayushi did, to honor their immortal founder. The style of the mask varies wildly by the wielder, and is always an extremely personal choice. Scorpion take their masks very seriously, and some would no sooner be seen without their mask than without their daisho.



THE BAYUSHI FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 AGILITY)**CURRENT DAIMYO:** Bayushi Paneki

The Bayushi are the unquestioned rulers of the Scorpion Clan, as they have been since the time of their namesake. They are a proud family, well aware of the unique reputation their clan holds and eternally prepared to preserve that reputation. As the main body of the Scorpion Clan, they boast the most educated courtiers and keenest bushi. In many cases, it is difficult to tell one from the other. Even dedicated Bayushi warriors make it a point to learn the subtleties of the court, and even the most sheltered politicians realize that it is a good idea to know how to defend oneself, given their often aggressive style of political manipulation.

Ironically in many ways this family, seen by many to be the most dishonorable of families, directly embodies what it means to be a samurai — a master of the pen and of the sword, prepared for any threat, ever ready to spill their blood for the Emperor but even more prepared to spill the enemy's. They are an extremely wealthy and powerful clan, rivaled only by the Doji and Imperial Families for raw political might. Even those who despise the Bayushi rarely oppose them, for one never truly knows who they might count as allies. Keen masters of politics, they never forget to collect on a debt, and they never betray their obligations. While they might not repay a favor in exactly the manner that was expected, those who seek the favors of the Bayushi are rarely disappointed with the results.

The Bayushi family is renowned for its beauty, but it is a dark, oil slick beauty. Scorpion men are handsome rogues and Scorpion women possess an aching, seductive quality that drives honorable samurai to have most inappropriate thoughts.

THE SHOSURO FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 AWARENESS)**CURRENT DAIMYO:** Shosuro Yudoka

This family is as misunderstood as the Scorpion Thunder who founded it. To the public eye, the Shosuro seem little more than aides de camp to the Bayushi, a lesser family of courtiers and warriors who further Bayushi goals. The truth, which the Shosuro labor tirelessly to conceal, lies in something much darker. The Shosuro are a family of spies, saboteurs and assassins. Those who call them ninja, however, will swiftly regret it. To the Shosuro, a bears no loyalty to any lord, no honor to forgive their terrible actions. The Shosuro are not ninja — they are samurai. If their lord's commands drive them to dress in dark clothing, skulk through the shadows, and kill their enemies silently with virulent poison then so be it. In their eyes, their honor is that much stronger for not questioning what must be done, for being prepared to make any sacrifice in the name of loyalty.

Where the Bayushi are elegant and beautiful, the Shosuro are frequently bland and unassuming sorts. It is quite easy to have an extended conversation with a Shosuro and later forget what he looked like, exactly what the Shosuro hope for.

THE SOSHI FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 PERCEPTION)**CURRENT DAIMYO:** Soshi Uidori

A family of shugenja, the Soshi family is the religious heart of the Scorpion Clan. As might be expected from a Scorpion, the Soshi have a rather unique view of religion. The Scorpion view the Tao and Fortune worship as another form of manipulation. Shinsei's wisdom keeps people calm, thoughtful, and easily controlled.

The Fortunes in their heaven keep samurai in check, the same way a samurai keeps peasants in check with the threat of the sword. These things are thus valuable because they can be used as a means by which to control others. A Soshi shugenja will provide advice and counsel as eagerly as any holy man, all the while listening very carefully to determine how the situation might be turned to his clan's advantage. To possess such an enlightened sense of the elements and universe yet be forced by circumstance to use that power to manipulate others is a paradox that makes the Soshi even more cynical than most Scorpion.

The Soshi are particularly talented in the use of Air magic. Illusions, misdirection, and observation are the sorts of magic they relish using. However, whereas Iuchi and Isawa shugenja have a reputation for turning the tide of battles, the Soshi have no such reputation. This is not to say the Soshi do not accompany their samurai into combat, but that when they do, they take great pains to make certain the enemy does not realize they were there. The victories of many a brilliant Bayushi general can in fact be credited to a Soshi who used his magic to spy upon the enemy general's planning session, or wove illusions to hide reinforcements until it was too late to withdraw.

The Soshi greatly resemble the Bayushi in appearance, though they tend not to be as dazzlingly beautiful. Soshi can be described as having a vaguely "hard" appearance, an outward expression of the bitter cynicism that drives them.

THE YOGO FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 WILLPOWER)**CURRENT DAIMYO:** Yogo Koji

At the dawn of the Empire, there was a shugenja named Yogo who was descended from the Tribe of Isawa. When Isawa joined the Phoenix Clan, Yogo was among the first to stand beside him, swearing fealty to the newborn Asako family. In a battle against Fu Leng, Yogo was struck with a savage curse. Whoever he loved, he would be doomed to betray. Isawa discovered that the curse not only could not be removed, but would follow Yogo's bloodline for eternity. Distraught, Yogo retreated into solitude. After a time, the Kami Bayushi sought out Yogo in the shadows. Having suffered severe losses in the war, the young Scorpion Clan was in need of capable shugenja. Bayushi promised Yogo that he would have a place among the Scorpion with no fear of betrayal, for Yogo did not love the Scorpion.

The Yogo family has borne the curse of its founder for centuries. They turned their magical studies toward battling maho and the Taint out of vengeance for their terrible curse, and in time became entrusted with the Twelve Black Scrolls. In each generation there are a handful of tragic tales that revolve around the curse fulfilling itself. None is perhaps quite so notable as that of Yogo Junzo, the madman who began opening the Twelve Black Scrolls and brought about the return of Fu Leng. Junzo brought the legend of the Yogo Curse to the forefront of Rokugan's awareness. The family became pariahs outside their clan. Now few would willingly trust a Yogo, for any reason. The Yogo endure this distrust with quite resolve, for in their hearts they suspect they do not truly deserve trust.

Members of the Yogo family tend to be very thin, with angular facial features reminiscent of the Phoenix. They tend to have a slight air of uneasy paranoia and give their trust even less easily than do most Scorpion, for they know that trust may lead to love, and love leads always to betrayal...

The Unicorn Clan

CLAN CHAMPION / KHAN: Moto Chagatai

The Clan of the Unicorn was once known as the Clan of the Ki-Rin when it was founded by the Kami, Shinjo. Unlike the other Great Clans, the Clan does not have an extensive past in Rokugan, but instead traces most of its traditions and history to the time that Shinjo's followers roamed the lands far beyond the Empire. When the first Thunders defeated Fu Leng, Shinjo found herself stricken by grief and worry. She had loved her brother, Fu Leng, and had even hoped to the last that there would be some way to redeem him. Further, the surprising corruption of the Ninth Kami hinted to Shinjo that there were possibly other dangers that could threaten Hantei's new Empire. Unable to live in an Empire built on the blood of her siblings and wary of what lie beyond the next horizon, Shinjo gathered what followers that would follow her into the unknown and began her journey to the north, to the Burning Sands and beyond. The trials of the Ki-Rin Clan shaped what they would eventually become, and their bizarre adventures and encounters made the Ki-Rin into something completely new. After spending generations outside the Empire and adopting the customs of those that flocked to the Ki-Rin's banner, the Clan realized they were neither Rokugani nor completely different. Shinjo's children took the symbol of the Unicorn as their totem and introduced themselves thus to the Empire when they returned after eight hundred years of self-imposed exile.

The confusion and distrust the Unicorn encountered over three hundred years ago upon their return has abated only a little subsequently. The Unicorn are constantly rebuked for their "barbarian" ways and general refusal to give up their traditions to become more like the other Clans. The Unicorn are also a very nomadic people, causing them to eschew permanent structures and cities whenever possible. Naturally, this causes a serious problem for outsiders who wish to locate a specific Unicorn samurai, or those who wish to even find a mark of Unicorn civilization in their lands at all. Though the Clan has cities, they are far between and mostly for the purposes of farming or just for the convenience of visitors. Despite the Empire's general distrust of the Unicorn, none can deny the strength of their cavalry warriors or their skill in wilderness arts such as hunting and tracking. The Unicorn's return to Rokugan brought disorder to even the most cunning Akodo generals, and the famed Hiruma scouts have long since formed a strong bond with the Unicorn in order to train among their hunters. In effect, the reason why the Unicorn tend to be scorned is the same reason they are respected and feared — they are a strong, independent Clan full of unpredictable and exotic resources and tactics.

In recent generations, the influx of Moto family members who have dwelled for centuries beyond Rokugan's borders has caused the Unicorn to embrace their gaijin traditions as never before. Though they do not disrespect the paths the other clans take, the Unicorn prefer to do things in their own unique manner. Though they will meet with foreign diplomats within their castles and cities and refer to Chagatai as their champion, they prefer open fields, dwelling in a warm yurt, and answer to Moto Chagatai by his true title — the Khan.

Unicorn stand out from samurai of other clans in any situation due to their gaijin ancestry. For most families, this is a matter of dress and demeanor as much as physical characteristics. Unicorn tend to be shorter and of stockier build than most, with broader features and long, bushy hair.

THE HORIUCHI FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 WILLPOWER)

CURRENT DAIMYO: Horiuchi Shem-Zhe

The youngest family of the Unicorn Clan, the Horiuchi were founded three generations ago when a young Iuchi shugenja named Shoan saved the children of the Clan Champion from a bandit raid. The Shinjo daimyo was so impressed by the young, quiet woman's courage and skill that he declared her the daimyo of her own family line, a reward that both honored and terrified the quiet Shoan. Though she was a likable and intelligent woman, Shoan did not have the ambition to become a powerful samurai at all. Though the honor guard Shinjo Yokatsu assigned to her swore fealty to the Horiuchi name, most believed the name would die with her. It was during the War of Spirits that Shoan found her true destiny along with that of her family. The protracted, bitter war between the armies of Toturi I and Hantei XVI caused a great number of families to be torn apart by death so completely that orphans with nowhere to go began to accumulate in unprecedented numbers. As one of the Clans least wounded by the war, the Unicorn opened their doors to what orphans they could afford to support, and Horiuchi Shoan in turn became the leader of the Unicorn's mercy efforts. Eventually, these children came of age and in gratitude swore fealty to their caretaker's family name.

Because of the mix of children that founded the first real generation of Horiuchi, the family is not necessarily a shugenja family, despite being dominated by shugenja. Most Horiuchi are at least scholars to some degree and quite well versed in several supernatural topics, but there are a great many bushi among their ranks. As such a small family, they are largely left out of the politics of the Empire, allowing them to pursue their research undisturbed. This has led the Horiuchi to several breakthroughs in the art of *meishodo*, the Unicorn art of magic produced through charms and fetishes instead of scrolls. Shinjo Yokatsu's successor as Champion also recognized the worth of the small family, and shortly after the War of Spirits charged them with patrolling the borders of the Shinomen Forest to guard their sleeping Naga allies. The duty is largely ceremonial — more than enough Naga remained out of their race's sleep in order to deter invaders that the Shinomen's wildness did not drive away — but the Horiuchi value the chance to serve their Clan and study the majestic woodlands at the same time.

Coming from a variety of different families, the first generation of Horiuchi and their children have few common physical characteristics. As a group, they favor humble attire that gives them a veneer of uniformity, even if they do not truly resemble one another.

THE IDE FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 AWARENESS)

CURRENT DAIMYO: Ide Tang

The Ki-Rin Clan's journey through the Burning Sands and beyond was a crucible in which heroes were born and the destinies of many family lines were shaped. Ide, one of Shinjo's closest advisors, emerged from among these men and women who found their true calling in these times. Ide had always been a clever and emphatic man, and these two talents were crucial during Shinjo's many encounters with gaijin cultures. The young man quickly grew adept at deciphering foreign languages and finding ways to avoid social gaffes in societies he had never before dealt with. Ide's silver tongue saved countless

lives on more than one occasion, and his intuitive understanding of other people's emotions made sure the Ki-Rin never exhausted their welcome (when they had such a thing). Ide often clashed with Shinjo's other advisor, Otaku Shiko, because Ide valued peaceful resolution while Shiko did not hesitate to solve problems with violence when necessary. When bloodshed was unavoidable, Ide turned his talents to making the eventual surrender of Shinjo's enemies as clean and binding as possible. Those that challenged the strength of the Ki-Rin either walked away apologetically realizing their foolish error, or lived in fear of it for the rest of their lives.

Through much of the Unicorn's history since returning to Rokugan, the Ide have been key in keeping relations between their Clan and the rest of the Empire as cordial as possible. The Ide serve the Unicorn primarily as diplomats and ambassadors, though some take to the way of the warrior and Ide shugenja are not unheard of. In any role, the Ide usually achieve the upper hand with their inborn ability to relate with others on a personal level. Ide courtiers appeal to whatever hidden facet of their quarry's nature is most likely to produce results, and Ide warriors are somewhat notorious for their ability to "read" an opponent within moments. Though historically dedicated to the ideals of peace and tranquility, the ambitions of Ide Tang have taken the family more closely in line with the visions of the Clan's warlike Khan, Moto Chagatai. Though this has caused some rumblings among the family, Tang nor Chagatai have done anything to truly betray the traditions of the Ide.

Many have commented that the Ide bear a striking resemblance to Hotei, the Fortune of Contentment. They have wizened features and an easy smile that makes their job as ambassadors and emissaries far easier. They favor priestly robes that further their peaceful appearance.

THE IUCHI FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 AWARENESS)

CURRENT DAIMYO: Iuchi Yue

Like the rest of the Unicorn, the Iuchi are both notorious and respected for their unique approach to their arts. During the Ki-Rin's journeys beyond Rokugan, Iuchi was exposed to a great many different perspectives on the art of magic and the supernatural in general. Though he never abandoned his devotion to the way of the kami and elemental magic, the distance he and his students traveled from Rokugan forced him to become inventive and adaptable to a great many situations. Far from the power of the elemental spirits, Iuchi supplemented his power with gaijin knowledge, though not so much as to show blasphemy to the Celestial Heavens. One of the more curious aspects of gaijin magic that Iuchi stumbled upon was an attitude shared by Shinsei in the Tao — that though a great many things in the universe seem separate, they eventually fall together as one. This approach made the divisions between the elements seem much smaller to Iuchi, and before he died he passed on his discoveries to his brightest student. After spending generations dealing with petty magicians posing as would-be gods and tyrants, the Iuchi family also developed a deep sense of responsibility where their magical gifts were concerned. Coupled with their Unicorn nature, the Iuchi have a somewhat contradictory view of magic as something that should be free and natural, but also controlled and tightly monitored. For this reason, the Iuchi avoid using their gifts for destructive applications and instead

focus on the arts of healing, fortification, and study. Even those among the Iuchi who do not become shugenja heed the lessons of their ancestors well, and do not commit themselves needlessly to violence.

This is not to say the Iuchi are pacifists or in any way unwilling to join in a conflict when battle is unavoidable. The smallest of the Khan's Three Armies, the Baraunghar, is primarily comprised of battle-ready Iuchi. Shugenja of the Iuchi are quite capable in a battle, using their arts to stymie foes and bolster their allies but only causing direct harm to foes with their martial training. The Iuchi are also extremely curious scholars and will search as long as it takes to find the answer to some mysterious subject that is presented to them. Because of the Iuchi family's experiences in foreign lands, they also tend to disregard the difference between acceptable and "forbidden" topics of knowledge. Iuchi scholars surprise others with the wide range of subjects they are knowledgeable in, and not always in a good way.

Many Iuchi have a perpetually wind-swept look, as if they had just come in off the plains. They favor longer hair and practical clothing in lieu of more traditional trappings. They are often martially trained and have a more athletic look than many shugenja.

THE MOTO FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 STAMINA)

CURRENT DAIMYO: Moto Chagatai

The history of the Moto begins with the Unicorn's journey into the Burning Sands, but not as allies of Shinjo coming from the Empire. Instead, the Moto were part of a band of nomadic raiders called the Ujik-hai that the Ki-Rin Clan encountered early in their journey. The Moto vastly underestimated the courage, ability, and power of the Kami's army, and the frequent raids they Ujik-hai made on the Ki-Rin eventually gave way to a wary respect... and finally peace. The Moto and Shinjo's followers learned much from one another, and when the Ujik-hai and Ki-Rin parted ways, many Moto chose to follow the divine Kami wherever she and her children would go. Since that time, the history of the Moto has been a remarkable one, but not always to the benefit of the family. The daring of the Moto led them to glory whenever the Ki-Rin, eventually the Unicorn Clan, encountered battle, and after the Clan returned to Rokugan, they were considered the fury of the Unicorn. Moto warriors were fierce enough in battle to give even the Hida pause, and cunning enough to outmaneuver the traps of Scorpion commanders. Such a glorious rise was ended by an equally stunning fall — the corruption of a great portion of the family and the curse on its living bloodline. In an effort to aid their Crab allies, the Moto sent a war party into the Shadowlands, only to be driven insane and Tainted to the last man. For generations, the pure Moto were harassed and haunted by their Lost kin, until the return of Shinjo from the Burning Sands brought forth the last remaining Moto from that place to crush the corrupt Moto once and for all.

Since Shinjo's departure back to the Celestial Heavens, the Shinjo family was left in disarray and the Kami proclaimed the Moto as the new leaders of her Clan. The Moto have since led the Unicorn in a more regimented direction, and more recently the Khan, Chagatai, ordered the assault of Lion lands in order to show the Empire the Unicorn Clan's worth and strength. The Moto were pleased with the result of the conflict, gaining one

of the Lion's cities and showing the Right Hand of the Emperor that they are hardly the uncontested military power of Rokugan. More than any other Unicorn family, the Moto wish to prove themselves to those who would mock the Clan, and apply themselves fully to any endeavor as a result. They are skilled hunters, trackers, warriors, horsemen, and survivalists. Though they tend not to be adept in the ways of courtly life, they are hardly the bumbling barbarians others imagine. The Moto, however, do nothing to dispel these false notions, preferring to maintain any advantage they can.

The archetypal Unicorn, Moto embody the most exotic elements of their clan. Their appearance is so different than most samurai that some speculate they may be of another race. They are short, with thick, squat bodies and wide, menacing features. They favor clothing that incorporates fur and other gaijin elements, bringing even more attention to their physical differences. The White Guard of the Moto Family are immediately recognizable in their ghostly white armor and makeup.

THE SHINJO FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 REFLEXES)

CURRENT DAIMYO: Shinjo Shono

The descendents of Lady Shinjo possess many of the qualities that she was well known for. Shinjo was compassionate enough to walk into the Shadowlands alone to find some spark of goodness left in her corrupted brother, Fu Leng, brave enough to turn her Clan to battle left with no other choice. Finally, she was both inquisitive and wise enough to journey beyond the Empire to explore in her brother's name and seek out any other unknown threats that would threaten Rokugan. It was during this time that the Lying Darkness assaulted Shinjo's followers, and she sacrificed herself to their trap so that her Clan might escape. When the Shinjo returned to the Empire at the head of the Unicorn Clan, the only proof they had that they were the descendents of a Kami was

the gift Doji gave to Shinjo before the Ki-Rin Clan departed. For over two hundred years after their return, the Unicorn were guided by the Shinjo family, which kept the Clan from possibly exploiting their power to upset the delicate balance between the other Clans. It was also during this time that the Shinjo family was heavily infiltrated by the Kolat, a group that conspired to sever the connection between Rokugan and its spiritual ancestry from the shadows. When Shinjo returned from imprisonment at the Lying Darkness' hands during the Empire's war against the Lying Darkness, her first act was to purge the Shinjo with her divine fury. The infiltration of the family was severe, however, and the purge left their numbers severely diminished and the family name deeply dishonored. Because of this, Shinjo was forced to name the Moto as the leaders of the Unicorn until such a time that her descendents could prove themselves worthy once again.

Today, the Shinjo exist in a shadow of their former glory. Their skills as hunters, trackers, and scouts are now turned to the command of their Khan in the name of war and glory. The family name of Shinjo is synonymous with 'Kolat' in most of the Empire, and the former leaders of the Unicorn Clan are afforded only the slimmest thread of respect if any. While this would be enough to drive any other family into despair or even forsaking their name out of shame, the Shinjo carry another aspect of their ancestor's spirit that cannot be conquered — hope. Through the trials their family has faced, they have yet to lose their joyful spirit, even if it has dimmed somewhat. Those that allow themselves to know the Shinjo well realize the family is not a band of corrupt and broken criminals that many believe. The Shinjo remain compassionate, wise, and courageous as ever, awaiting the time that they may once again bring honor to the name of their family. If anything, the events of the past several generations has only served to strengthen the soul of the Shinjo. Few things can dampen the mood of a Shinjo, and there are no finer travel companions in all of Rokugan or beyond.



The Shinjo are lean and rangy, with an easygoing attitude that allows them to blend into the background easily. They have gaijin customs just as the other Unicorn, and have a slight exotic element to their features, but for the most part they are average in appearance. They rarely shave their heads or wear topknots, preferring to let their hair blow in the wind as they ride.

THE UTAKU FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 AGILITY)

CURRENT DAIMYO: Utaku Xieng Chi

The first Unicorn Thunder was a nearly silent woman named Otaku that impressed Shinjo with her limitless capacity for both fury and mercy, a walking contradiction in her actions, changing direction and attitude as quickly as the winds on the plains. Others found her behavior perplexing, but Shinjo understood her lieutenant well. Otaku did not hesitate where warfare, peace, or learning came into play. Like Shinjo, Otaku preferred the idea of peace to war, but she was much quicker to draw her steel and cut down the enemies of the Ki-Rin when necessary. When her enemies knelt in defeat before her, she was always the first to put aside her weapon and accept surrender. Shinsei saw the keen insight behind Otaku's decisiveness, and it did not surprise Shinjo when the Little Teacher came to claim Otaku as one of his Thunders. When the Thunders ventured into the Shadowlands, there were no words between Otaku and Shinjo — the Kami knew her follower's mind and that words were needless between them. Otaku's daughter, Shiko, replaced her mother at the right hand of Shinjo, and continued Otaku's philosophy of action and determination. Since that time, the family has been dominated by the women in the family, and only female warriors of the family are allowed to ride mounts into combat. Men raise and care for the legendary Utaku steeds, making them equal to their female counterparts.

During the war against the Lying Darkness, Shinjo returned to the Empire and Otaku's descendent Otaku Kamoko stood beside her to strike down the enemies of Rokugan. When Kamoko sacrificed herself to lure the corrupted Moto into a war against the Unicorn so that the Moto and Unicorn would be whole again, Shinjo declared that the Kamoko would be the last to carry the name of Otaku. Her courage and life was honored on that day, and none other would be allowed to sully the name of Otaku as the name of Shinjo had been. The Otaku renamed themselves as the Utaku, rededicating themselves to their Kami with a new name and purified purpose. Today, the Utaku are considered the most elite of cavalry warriors.

In appearance, the Utaku stand in stark contrast to other Unicorn families. Their founder, Otaku, was incredibly beautiful, and many of her descendants of both genders share this quality. Utaku possess a quiet beauty, serenity, and inner strength at all times. The Utaku as a whole are a practical lot who prefer functional clothing and equipment, which can scarcely hide their natural beauty.

The Minor Clans

Each of the Great Clans was founded to serve a specific Kami and perform a unique duty. Throughout history, the Emperor has also declared the formation of many other, smaller clans. There are the Minor Clans. The Minor Clans have samurai and provinces much like the Great Clans, with smaller and less populated holdings. Even the largest of the Minor Clans cannot compare with the wealth and prestige of a Great Clan samurai family. A Minor Clan does not officially exist until recognized and granted a clan name by the Emperor. This name and status can likewise be revoked by the Emperor at any time.

In the dangerous landscape of Imperial politics it can be difficult for these small clans to survive. Fortunately the Emperor has issued a number of edicts protecting Minor Clans from aggressive Great Clans. Most notable among these is that a Great Clan cannot declare war or initiate combat against a Minor Clan; the Great Clan can fight only to defend itself. This edict secures the borders of Minor Clans from aggressive clans such as the Lion and Unicorn. It has also had the side effect of causing Minor Clan samurai to be almost invisible in the courts. One never knows what a Great Clan samurai might intentionally misinterpret as an insult or an act of war, thus wise Minor Clan samurai keep to themselves and avoid the activities of Great Clan samurai.

This is not to say that Minor Clan samurai behave like cowards. The more pragmatic among them simply realize that Great Clan politics is not an arena intended for them. A Minor Clan samurai must guarantee the safety of his own small territory and subjects before worrying about matters that concern an entire Empire. There are always exceptions, of course, and no Minor Clan samurai can forget the example of the Mantis Clan. Once an alliance of Minor Clans, the Mantis Clan earned the Empire's respect through courage, determination, and ambition and were rewarded Great Clan status. The Mantis stand as an example of what the other Minor Clans might hope to become, strong and independent instead of scurrying fearfully in the shadows of Great Clan samurai.

THE BADGER CLAN

ICHIRO FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 STRENGTH)

CLAN CHAMPION: Ichiro Kihongo

Hida Domogu, founder of the Badger Clan, was granted the right to rule the new Minor Clan after winning a contest of strength at the Emperor's decree. The Badger were given the Ichiro family name and set to guard the northern mountains of Rokugan, a barren land far from the rest of the Empire. In the event of a gaijin invasion from the north, the Badger would be the first line of defense. An attack never came. Unfortunately after centuries of peace, the Badger became somewhat lax in their defenses and were unprepared when an attack came from within. The demonic Hideo no Oni, a creature of Jigoku wearing the name of a Badger samurai, rose up on Badger lands and systematically destroyed their holdings.

Though the creature was ultimately defeated, the Badger were left scattered and broken. Those who know of the Badger's fate consider it a mercy that the Emperor allowed them to even retain their Minor Clan Status. Many Badger bushi were forced to seek their destiny outside their homeland to survive. Thus the

Badger began careers as wandering mercenaries. Unlike other Minor Clans, the Badger do not fear such work. Entering combat with Great Clan samurai risks little, for what Great Clan would make the long journey to Badger lands simply to destroy holdings that have already been destroyed? The Badger work for the highest bidder and send the money back to rebuild their home. So extensive was the damage that even after several decades, their work is far from complete. The Badger maintain a dojo in the city of Kaeru Toshi and can otherwise be found wandering anywhere in the Empire, alone or in small groups.

True to their Crab heritage, the Badger are stubborn, determined, and often rude. Though they are not as tall as Crab samurai, Badger are often stocky and thick with muscle. As a whole the Badger represent a rather morose and pessimistic lot. They do not trust others easily, though they never fail to fulfill a mercenary contract. Even while on a job, a Badger will usually merely take orders, answer questions when asked, and otherwise keep to himself or the company of other members of his Clan.

THE BAT CLAN

KOMORI FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 INTELLIGENCE)

CLAN CHAMPION: Komori

The Bat Clan is the youngest of all Minor Clans, having formed only within the last year. It was formed after the elderly shugenja, Yoritomo Komori, performed an incredible feat of magic for the Emperor. Komori hailed from a bloodline intermingled with that of powerful bat spirits, and this heritage gave him extraordinary talent in summoning spirits. Komori used this magic to allow the Emperor a final chance to speak with his beloved sister, the previous Emperor, and so grateful was he that he immediately granted the shugenja Minor Clan Status.

Bat territories lay on the remote island where Komori's monastery stands, the same monastery where the Daughter of Storms was raised in secrecy. Yoritomo Kumiko has permitted Komori to invite any Mantis Clan members who wish to join his new Clan, and many have already answered the call. Most, like Komori, are shugenja. With no shugenja school of their own as of yet, they practice in the schools of the Moshi and Yoritomo. Bat shugenja focus strongly upon magic that summons kami and other helpful spirits directly.

As the Bat Clan is still young, their responsibilities are not clearly outlined. Their primary priority at the present time is to establish their own shugenja school. Outside of this, Komori sees a great deal of potential in his summoning magic. Perhaps he might devise spells that would transport samurai across vast distances with greater ease than currently possible. Study of such magic has become his primary concern, and any shugenja with a similar interest will likely find a welcome home on Komori Island.

As the Bat have existed so briefly, there truly is no unique, typical appearance for a Bat Clan samurai. However, as most of the current members of the clan are former Mantis Clan shugenja, they obviously resemble their Yoritomo and Moshi cousins. Bat Clan members are extremely curious and inquisitive, for Komori seeks out those with keen minds to build the ranks of his young clan.

THE DRAGONFLY CLAN

TONBO FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 PERCEPTION)

CLAN CHAMPION: Tonbo Dayu

The Dragonfly are a clan with rather curious origins. A Phoenix maiden betrothed to a Lion samurai instead married a Dragon and fled to the mountains that would become the Dragonfly's home. When the Lion sought retribution, the armies of the Dragon and Phoenix inexplicably gathered to defend their kinsmen's betrayal. Even more curious, the Emperor not only blessed their actions but forgave them and granted them Minor Clan Status. Though the Lion could not attack the Dragonfly directly, they labored tirelessly to weaken the Dragonfly's allies, inevitably leading the Dragonfly into a handful of confrontations.

The Lion have never forgotten the terrible insult that Dragon, Phoenix, and Dragonfly delivered against them by breaking their word and then assembling their armies to defend their dishonesty. The Lion make it a point to shed the Dragonfly's blood whenever possible. During the Time of the Four Winds they destroyed Kyuden Tonbo and slaughtered every Dragonfly within the household. Fortunately many Dragonfly were abroad on diplomatic missions and could return to rebuild their home. With the aid of Isawa Sezaru, Kyuden Tonbo was rebuilt and restored. In the meantime, many Lion still do not feel that their honor will be cleansed until the Dragonfly are no more, and bide their time until the next opportunity for attack.

The Dragonfly have few bushi. Most of their number train as shugenja, focusing strongly upon Water magic. Living in the foothills between Dragon and Phoenix lands, they serve as mediators and representatives. Those who wish to speak to the Dragon Champion but do not wish to endure the grueling climb only to find that he is occupied speak with the Dragonfly first. Since Kyuden Tonbo's renewal, they have also performed these services for Sezaru. The Wolf is a notoriously difficult man to find, but he regularly returns to his libraries in Kyuden Tonbo. Thus, those who need to see him urgently would be wise to call upon the Dragonfly's hospitality.

Dragonfly samurai tend to have a rather plain and unassuming appearance. They have somewhat rugged features reminiscent of their Mirumoto ancestors, but carry themselves in the calm manner of a Phoenix. It is interesting to note that while the Lion hate the Dragonfly with a fury that cannot easily be measured, the Dragonfly do not return their hatred. Even after their clan was nearly exterminated, their efforts were focused entirely on rebuilding, not revenge. Most Dragonfly realize that a battle with the Lion is a battle that they cannot win. As all of their past confrontations have only made their relationship with the Lion even worse than before, most realize they are better off avoiding the Lion altogether.

THE FOX CLAN

KITSUNE FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 WILLPOWER)

CLAN CHAMPION: Kitsune Ryukan

Following the first War Against Fu Leng, the Lady Shinjo took the Ki-Rin Clan and resolved to explore the lands beyond Rokugan. Not all Ki-Rin, however, joined the perilous journey. A handful remained behind to protect Shinjo's lands. After a time, many began to look upon the small band of samurai's vast holdings with jealousy. When the remaining Ki-Rin were unable to pay the Emperor's taxes, the Lion immediately invaded and claimed the lands. The Ki-Rin withdrew rapidly, unwilling to be crushed by the Lion armies.

The Ki-Rin beseeched the Emperor for support, and he granted them unoccupied lands. These lands, unfortunately, were in the depths of the haunted Kitsune Mori. They were granted the Kitsune family name and were the first group of samurai to receive official Minor Clan status. (The Mantis Clan would argue this point, for they referred to themselves as the Mantis Clan for some amount of time beforehand but were not officially recognized as such till later.) Unafraid of the challenges the haunted forest presented, the Fox Clan built their home there.

In the deep shadows of the Kitsune Mori, the young Fox Clan discovered strange things. Their blood came to mingle with the ancient spirits that dwelled in the forest, the shape shifting fox spirits for whom the forest was named. Through their connection with these spirits the Fox have formed a bond with nature unlike any other in Rokugan. They understand the ways of animals and are expert hunters, trackers, and woodsmen. Though most are shugenja, even their shugenja undergo some combat training and wield a wicked nagamaki. The Fox also serve as unofficial guides to the animal spirits; when a shapeshifter crosses over into the mortal realm and wishes to explore it is not uncommon for them to seek out a Fox, for they seem more approachable than other humans.

The Fox are a peaceful clan, but have difficulty keeping to themselves. Combining the explorer's spirit of their Unicorn cousins with the boundless curiosity of their spirit ancestors, the Kitsune frequently strike out of their forest to see what lies beyond. They have a reputation for meddling in the affairs of others, as well as a boundless capacity for mischief. Though their relation to the fox spirits is not publicly acknowledged, most suspect that the Fox have been changed by living in their haunted forests for so long, and do not fully trust them.

Members of the Fox tend to have a somewhat wild appearance, with dark skin, long hair, and a piercing gaze. They move with supple grace and fluidity borne of a life running through the forests.

THE HARE CLAN

USAGI FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 REFLEXES)

CURRENT DAIMYO / CLAN CHAMPION: Usagi Ozaki

UJINA FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 AGILITY)

CURRENT DAIMYO: Ujina Yoshimitsu

Of all the Minor Clans, perhaps none other is such a fixture of peasant legend as the Hare. Many tales tell of how an insidious maho tsukai or manipulative crime lord seized a village in the grip of fear, only to be undone by a clever wandering Hare. Though the Hare do not brag of their exploits, many of these tales are true, and paint a portrait of the unique duty the Hare have taken upon themselves. They are finders of secrets, rooters out of conspiracy. Those who are hidden and work against the peace of the Empire have named themselves enemies of the Hare — and the Hare will find them.

This duty has always fallen upon the hare. The ronin, Reichin, was one of the first to witness Iuchiban's return. He joined with the armies of the Empire in fighting the Bloodspeaker. Realizing that his own strength was limited and that he was merely one man, he did what he could. He sabotaged Iuchiban's supply lines, made distractions to misdirect his troops, and spied upon troop movements so that the Emerald Champion would know precisely when and where to strike. So frustrating were Reichin's activities that the Bloodspeaker Jama Suru swore personal vengeance upon Reichin and all who followed him. The Emperor also took note of Reichin's activities and awarded Minor Clan status upon him.

Though the Bloodspeakers have always been the Hare's primary enemy, they have not limited themselves to fighting maho tsukai. When well meaning investigation led the Hare to accidentally stumble onto a Kolat splinter cell, the Kolat struck back by manipulating the Scorpion into destroying Shiro Usagi. Yet the Hare did not pass easily into memory. Hare Clan Champion Usagi Ozaki fled the final siege in a brilliant escape, losing an eye as the price for carrying his ancestral sword to safety. He then began a relentless, remorseless hunt for those truly responsible. Though details of how the matter was resolved are sketchy at best, the splinter cell was completely exterminated and the Hare were restored with Ozaki as their Champion.

The rest of the clan follows Ozaki's philosophy — to be fearful of the unknown signals defeat. Secrets are the weapons of the cowardly; remove their secrets, and they have nothing. While the Bloodspeakers and Kolat are their primary enemy, any clandestine criminal organization or cult would be wise to avoid the Hare's eye.

The Hare are currently the only Minor Clan with two independent families. The Usagi are the ruling family, larger and older than the Ujina. While the two families resemble one another, the Usagi focus more upon investigating the enemy while the Ujina are skilled, stealthy warriors. Together, they add up to a fearsome combination.

Members of the Hare Clan are typically smaller and slighter than the average Rokugani. Despite their size, they possess remarkable strength and agility. The Hare fighting style must be seen to be believed, incorporating incredible leaps and flips with savage kicks.

THE MONKEY CLAN

TOKU FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 WILLPOWER)

CLAN CHAMPION: Toku Inao

Among the many heroes of the Clan War, few are so highly honored as the simple ronin known as Toku. Though not the strongest nor wisest of Toturi's followers, he possessed boundless courage and fighting spirit. When all seemed darkest for Toturi's Army, Toku's example led the others to fight on. When victory looked impossible, Toku stood up to lead the charge. When the war was won and Toturi became Emperor, he offered Toku a position as Captain of the Imperial Guard.

Toku refused.

A confession followed. Toku was no samurai at all but a peasant born in a remote farming village. When bandits threatened to exterminate his friends and family, a small band of samurai rose up to stand against them. They were not the lords of his village; his village was so remote none even knew who they

served, merely men and women who found themselves in the wrong place at the right time, and did what must be done. They stood with the farmers, though outnumbered heavily, and fought beside them till the last. The spirit of the samurai inspired Toku, and when the samurai gave their lives to save his family, he promised to live up to their example. He took the swords of the bandit king and marched out to find his destiny.

It was only later that Toku realized what a crime he had committed in pretending to be a samurai. With the Clan War upon the Empire, he could not confess. He knew the Empire needed every sword at its disposal, and so he fought on though he promised he would make things right in the end. And thus, following Toturi's coronation, he denied the invitation to lead the Guard, surrendered his swords, and begged to be allowed seppuku — his final act as a samurai.

Toturi refused.

Though Toku had not been born a samurai, the Emperor said, he had proven himself more worthy of the title than any other born to the name. Emperor Toturi thus proclaimed Toku's samurai status official, retroactive throughout the Clan War, wiping Toku's crimes away. Further, he commanded Toku to take his position as Captain of the Guard and daimyo of a new Minor Clan — the Monkey Clan. Toku proudly accepted, and led his clan admirably until his recent death in battle with the Bloodspeaker, Yajinden.

When Emperor Toturi was driven mad during the War Against the Darkness, he granted the Monkey Clan territory in the Scorpion lands in an effort to cause strife. When the war was complete, Toku offered to return the lands but the Scorpion demurred. Instead, they asked only the right to arrange several marriages within the Clan, including a marriage between Toku himself and Shosuro Inao, sister of Shosuro Yudoka. Thus has followed a strange relationship between the Clan of Secrets and Toku's Clan.

Never have the Scorpion sought to manipulate or betray their Monkey allies; rather they have appointed themselves the Monkey's secret protectors. The Scorpion have often provided subtle hints to lead Monkey magistrates to the right track, or acted discreetly to eliminate threats their honorable little cousins could not confront directly. Many among the Scorpion believe that the Monkey represent something noble, honorable, and pure, as far from a Scorpion as a samurai can be. Thus their honor must be preserved at all costs, so that the Monkey might continue to stand as an example to all others.

The Monkey Clan follows their founder's example in all ways. They are a clan of magistrates and soldiers, dedicated to upholding the Emperor's justice with a tenacity even some Lion bushi would find intimidating. The Monkey pursue all endeavors with a boundless energy, an infectious determination that serves as an inspiration to all others. Though they are a young Minor Clan, they have earned the deep respect of the Great Clans, and most consider them only a step below the Imperial Families.

Following Toku's death, Emperor Toturi III bestowed the Toku family name upon the Monkey Clan. Inao was the first to assume the name and now leads the Monkey by her husband's example.

Members of the Monkey Clan are either small and wiry or tall and graceful, the latter having much to do with heavy intermarriage with the Scorpion Clan. Monkey samurai are quite friendly and talkative. They have a way of making friends easily with their relentlessly easygoing nature.



THE OX CLAN

MORITO FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 STAMINA)

CLAN CHAMPION: Morito

During the War Against the Darkness, an ambitious Unicorn samurai by the name of Shinjo Morito struck out to make a name for himself and his clan. With a small army of loyal troops, he claimed unoccupied lands in the northern Phoenix territories and constructed a castle there. He proclaimed himself the daimyo of "The Ox Clan" though of course the proclamation was not official. Few took note of Morito's activities. He later returned to the public eye in the War Against the Spirits, when his heroism in the name of Emperor Toturi was such that the Emperor finally recognized his clan's claims.

Few realize the true motivations behind Morito's actions. On the Day of Thunder, the Phoenix Clan were decimated. Many other clans, including the Mantis, turned their eye toward the unoccupied Phoenix lands. This indirectly threatened the remote Hidden Temple of the Kolat, which had heretofore been hidden deep in Phoenix lands. Morito, a member of the Kolat, reasoned that none could find and conquer the temple if he did so first. Thus he led his army of loyal Kolat followers to secure the lands around the Kolat stronghold. As a result he was promoted to the rank of Master Steel within the secret organization, charged with protection of the Hidden Temple.

Thus the Ox Clan are something of a paradox. Not all of them serve the Kolat; only those who have proven personal loyalty to Morito learn the truth of what lies deep within their mountains. Despite his Kolat affiliation and various criminal activities, Morito and his followers consider themselves patriots. When the throne was threatened in the War of Spirits, Morito stepped forward to defend Toturi without hesitation. Though not all Kolat agree with his philosophies, Morito and his Steel Sect believe that Toturi's Dynasty is exactly the Empire of Man the Kolat have sought to build for centuries. With that goal accomplished, his new objective is to insure that the throne is protected and that the Kolat remain strong.

Publicly, the Ox Clan are a clan of explorers and couriers. Their Unicorn heritage makes them extremely reliable messengers and worthy scouts. They are a peaceful clan (because the Ox do not wish to draw attention to themselves) who also gladly act as mediators if the need arises. Like their Unicorn ancestors they are excellent horsemen, and have become adept at traveling the rugged mountain terrain where they make their home.

The Ox Clan were only recently rewarded a family name, and rather quietly at that. After the Toku family name was rewarded, it was realized that only the Ox did not have a family name. Rather than slight Morito, a fervent supporter of the throne, Emperor Toturi III awarded the Ox their name shortly thereafter.

The typical Ox Clan samurai is squat and solidly built, hardened from a life of mountaineering and horseback riding. The Ox have an irrepressible sense of humor, booming voices, and often make lewd jokes with little or no provocation.

The Dead Clan

There is one other Minor Clans, the Boar, which is not listed here. This clan was wiped away by a supernatural tragedy, the Heichi family name lost and gone forever.

THE SPARROW CLAN

SUZUME FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 AWARENESS)

CLAN CHAMPION: Suzume Yugoki

The Sparrow Clan occupies the Suzume hills, a desolate area located just west of the fertile Golden Sun Plain. It is the Sparrow's duty to oversee these lush fields, teeming with life but sacrosanct to the Emperor, while scratching a living out of the merciless hills. It is a sour duty indeed, but the Sparrow offer no complaint. They are a clan well accustomed to poverty and hardship. They prefer things that way.

Early in the Empire's history, the First Yasuki War turned the Crab and Crane against one another. During the peace discussions that followed, a Crane named Doji Suzume made a flippant but fateful comment: "Maybe the world would be a better place if samurai just gave their wealth to the peasants and allowed them to rule?"

Sadly, Suzume did not realize the politics of the situation, and that his father, Onegano, was a fierce opponent of the Crane Champion's economic policies. The Crane Champion assumed it was some form of subtle attack, meant to undermine his authority in the presence of the Crab, and suspended all negotiations.

A flurry of moves and countermoves followed as each side sought to turn events to their own advantage, and it seemed for a time as if the war would recommence. It was the Emperor who finally intervened. He demanded both Crab and Crane surrender territories as punishment for their war, and granted Doji Onegano a position as Minor Clan daimyo, ruling these lands. Ostensibly this was to reward Onegano for his wisdom and honor; in reality it was to remove Onegano and his foolish son from the delicate political climate altogether. The Emperor realized the Crab and Crane would set aside only the poorest and most uninhabitable portions of their land for Onegano to rule, and thus he would no longer be a concern.

Onegano retired to a monastery in disgust, leaving his idiot son in command of the new clan. Fortunately, Suzume's aunt, Masako, joined him. Masako believed there was true wisdom in Suzume's concept of honorable poverty, and saw the Sparrow Clan as an opportunity to make it work. Other samurai, disgusted with the civil war that had resulted from greed and ambition, flocked to Suzume's banner. Thus the Sparrow Clan was born.

Life is difficult for the Sparrow, but they see this difficulty as the truest test of a samurai. They survive in a continual contest with the elements for their very survival, struggling to wrest a living out of their barren territories. All the while the Golden Sun Plain lies in clear view, a constant temptation, but the Sparrow have never forsaken their honor and violated the sacred ground. They are a proud family, the holders of a strong storytelling tradition. Their histories are all communicated orally, and master Sparrow storytellers have countless stories to tell.

Of course to a Great Clan samurai, stories of farming or guarding rocks are hardly interesting fare. It has become something of a running joke among the courts that the Sparrow storytellers are a courtier's most powerful weapon. If one can be unleashed upon an enemy, he will be bound for hours, listening to the Sparrow's interminable tales, unable to find an honorable way to escape them. The Sparrow are aware of this reputation and do resent it slightly, but see it as merely another test of their honor in a hostile and difficult world.

Sparrow samurai resemble their Crane ancestors, though their beautiful features are often weathered by the elements and a Sparrow with soft hands is unheard of. As fits their reputation, many Sparrow do tend to tell lengthy tales with regularity, often unaware that the listener might not necessarily care to hear what they have to say.

THE TORTOISE CLAN

KASUGA FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 PERCEPTION)

CLAN CHAMPION: Kasuga Taigen

The Tortoise Clan is a clan regarded with a great deal of disdain by much of the Empire. Some consider them as pitiful as ronin. Others consider them even worse, as many ronin do not choose to be what they are. The Tortoise are a clan of merchants and sailors. Some would call them pirates and smugglers. They frequently trade and negotiate with gaijin, an act that fills many samurai with disgust. The Tortoise do not care, for all of their activities are done with the Emperor's consent. They are the Emperor's personal smugglers, information gatherers, and spies in lands beyond the Empire. If others consider them dishonorable, then so be it, as none other is blessed to see the world as a Tortoise is.

Their unseemly reputation rarely bars them from their objectives, even in the Imperial Court. Tortoise courtiers have a relentless, methodical style of negotiation and have a way of making others see that allying with them is worthwhile despite

the stigma their clan bears. They have put their skills to good use in forming an official alliance between the Minor Clans, an alliance which has named the Tortoise as their representatives in the Imperial Court. The Tortoise do not take this responsibility lightly, nor do they abuse their fellow Minor Clans' trust. Tortoise ambassadors are now a regular sight in Toshi Ranbo lobbying for fairer treatment of the Minor Clans or seeking allies against harassment by Great Clan samurai.

The Tortoise Clan makes its home near White Stag, close to the ruins of the former capital city of Otsan Uchi. When Otsan Uchi was corrupted and destroyed, the Tortoise took the responsibility of policing the ruins for any sign of Shadowlands influence. Their efforts do not go unrecognized, for the Yotsu ronin, Wolf Legion, and some Nezumi tribes also aid them in their patrols. Even with all of these allies, the ruins are a terrifying place, as foul Shadowlands creatures often spill forth through the passages Fu Leng left behind.

Members of the Tortoise Clan are small, tough, and lean, with skin like leather dried by relentless sea winds. With the exception of their courtiers they disdain fancy clothing, and their samurai can often be mistaken for peasants when their dalsho are stored below deck to protect them from the spray. More than one ignorant samurai has unintentionally insulted a Tortoise bushi, believing him to be a peasant sailor, only to be later challenged and cut down in a duel. Such stories are the source of the most popular Tortoise jokes.

The Imperial Families

EMPEROR: Toturi III, The Righteous Emperor (Toturi Naseru)

When the Kami fell to the mortal world, they held a great contest between them to see who would be the most suited to rule the land they had found. It was clear to the children of Sun and Moon that the scattered tribes of humans would need to be unified under a strong and capable leader. To this end, the Kami fought between themselves until only the most worthy of them remained standing — Hantei. None of his siblings could deny their brother's right to rule: his might, honor, wisdom, and grace outshone all of the other Kami. Hantei knew that though he was individually stronger than any one of his brothers and sisters, together they were more than merely the sum of their parts. Hantei commanded his siblings to organize their followers into the Clans, and those Clans would serve him and his descendents for all time. Though Hantei did not wish any of his brothers and sisters to attend him directly, he was impressed by two mortals early in the founding of the Empire — wise Lady Seppun and cunning Otomo. The two mortals became the right and left hands of the First Emperor in the day-to-day functions of his new Imperial City, serving as his personal guards and advisors. Though the children of the Clans have power and authority as samurai, they only have such at the whim of the Imperial Families, the source from which all true authority on the mortal world stems.

It is hard to categorize the Imperial families as a single unit. Unlike the Clans, they have no prescribed duty but to rule the Empire in all ways. To this end, Imperial bushi, courtiers, and shugenja are free to focus their attention in whatever way best serves their Emperor. The samurai of the Imperial families radi-

Clan Colors

The general Sun Tao once said that when a samurai sees himself surrounded by a sea of his clan's colors, he cannot fail, and when he sees the horizon blanketed in a sea of his enemy's colors, he truly knows defeat. It is thus that every Great and Minor Clan have colors that symbolize membership in their clan. A samurai's armor will always be crafted in the colors of his clan, as will most of his courtly attire. While it is not expressly forbidden for a samurai to wear other colors in more casual settings, most wear their clan's colors as often as possible as a sign of loyalty.

GREAT CLANS

Clan	Colors
Crab	gunmetal grey, blue, brick red
Crane	sky blue, white
Dragon	emerald green, yellow
Lion	gold, earth tones
Mantis	sea green, black
Phoenix	red, yellow, orange
Scorpion	blood red, black
Unicorn	purple, white
Shadowlands	black, white

MINOR CLANS

Clan	Colors
Badger	brown, black
Bat	black
Dragonfly	blue, brown, gold
Fox	brown, green
Hare	red, white
Monkey	orange, brown
Ox	blue, black
Sparrow	shades of brown
Tortoise	light green, white

ate authority and power wherever they go, not only because they carry the authority of the Imperial Throne but also from over a thousand years of such authority running through their veins. Imperial warriors are said to have the eyes of the Elemental Dragons, and the politicians of the Otomo house have the reputation of being able to see your thoughts as plainly as kanji written on a scroll. Where the Clans may boast to be the greatest in one thing or another, the Imperial families need make no such claims. Only a fool challenges the authority, power, and skill of those who attend the Throne directly. It is a mistake that would surely cost the offender his life, his honor, his name, and even his existence in Rokugan's history.

The Imperial bloodlines are carefully preserved, marrying for political gain for the most part. As a result, they tend to have a more variable appearance than many clans. Generally speaking, they dress in a traditional manner and maintain a modest personal appearance.

THE MIYA FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 AWARENESS)

CURRENT DAIMYO: Miya Shoin

At the end of the war with Fu Leng, the mortally wounded Hantei listened to the news of his brother's defeat with mixed feelings. Though the Empire was surely rid of the most powerful enemy that would ever threaten it, the destruction of the Dark Kami's hordes caused could easily rot Rokugan into nothing before it had fully emerged. The First Emperor turned to one of his attendants and commanded him to immediately spread word of the Thunders' victory over Fu Leng across the Empire. Hope, Hantei believed, would help allay the problem faster than anything. The young courtier, a man called Miya, rushed from the Emperor's chambers and immediately took a horse from Otsan Uchi to do what his master commanded. Bearing the seal of Hantei's authority, Miya traveled across the land, proclaiming the threat of the Shadowlands banished for all time. Miya was a compassionate man, and thus his race across the Empire slowed as he stopped whenever his hands could aid people with their recovery. As Miya stopped between cities and villages, he gathered a small following of samurai and peasant alike that vowed to follow him and support him in his efforts. More than a year later, Miya returned to Otsan Uchi with an army of laborers and nobles behind him as a testament to the unbreakable spirit of Rokugan's people. Though Hantei had died in Miya's absence, Hantei Genji was deeply impressed by Miya's devotion to the First Emperor's word. The Shining Prince, Genji, declared Miya the lord of his own family, and commanded those who followed him to swear fealty to the new daimyo's name. Miya's journey through Rokugan has been enshrined as a yearly tradition named "The Emperor's Blessing," where samurai and peasants of the Miya lands travel to an area of the Empire particularly ravaged by war or weather and spend Imperial funds in restoration efforts.

Founded on the principles of mercy and peace, the Miya have evolved into the role as moderators and peacekeepers between the Clans whenever the attention of the Emperor is brought to bear on some conflict. When the Miya speak, few are willing to contradict the small family in any way. Enraged Hida generals and vengeful Bayushi commanders alike shrink down when a Miya herald enters into a mediation effort and begins issuing edicts. Compared to the other Imperial Families, the Miya hold little influence in the Empire, but they are still more closely al-

lied with the Throne than most. Additionally, their sincere dedication to the ideals of harmony and almost complete guilelessness, means that the Miya have few enemies. Others realize that the Miya tend to be the "front line" of Imperial contact, and to spurn them invites the anger of the less peacefully-inclined Seppun and Otomo families.

The Miya are a practical family, given to simple clothing and a simple lifestyle. They are short, with a slight build and dark complexion. Their duties require frequent travel and a great deal of riding, which helps keep them physically fit if not particularly muscular.

THE OTOMO FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 INTELLIGENCE)

CURRENT DAIMYO: Otomo Hoketuhime

Though many say Rokugan is an Empire forged by war and warriors, the Otomo understand the much less glorious reality of the world. One of Hantei's first followers was the clever Otomo, a man who quickly gained a reputation as a skilled politician and manipulator. Those who attempted machinations in the shadows of Hantei's city often found themselves stymied by Otomo and his followers. No matter how cunning a would-be puppeteer was, Otomo ensured that Otsan Uchi knew only one master — the Emperor. As one of Hantei's personal attendants, the courtier held both immense influence and the freedom to use it how he saw fit. Where many lesser men would have quickly abused such power, Otomo realized the responsibility that he carried with such authority. Though warriors dictated the fate of Rokugan outside the Imperial City, nothing moved without Otomo's knowledge within it. Otomo understood that he was hardly the only man who could muster such awareness of the city, however, and took steps to correct that small problem. Before Otomo passed away, the complicated bureaucracy of Otsan Uchi had become exponentially more confusing... to those who Otomo and his family did not trust.

The family of Otomo and his descendents quickly grew into their role as the administrators and politicians of Hantei's dynasty, but it was centuries later that they would find their true purpose. When the Gozoku wrested control of the Empire away from the Emperor with the combined effort of three Great Clans, it became clear that such a threat to Imperial security would never be allowed to rise again. Since that time, the Otomo have made it their primary duty to ensure the Clans never become able or motivated to challenge the power of the Imperial Throne ever again. Through subtle manipulation and trickery, their diplomats ensure there remains enough awe surrounding the Emperor to discourage such a coup and enough tension between the Clans to make such a thing impossible. The Otomo realize their duty is not particularly glorious, but they serve no one but the Son of Heaven, the Emperor. So long as their service is selfless and righteous, none can judge them but the one who rests on the Throne.

The Otomo are an opulent family, and their appearance reflects this. They tend toward a heavyset frame, with virtually no military training to help them maintain their physique. They favor elaborate clothing and the traditional shaved pate for samurai. They project a warm, welcoming exterior as genuine in appearance as it is manipulative in nature. Among the Otomo, arrogance and vanity are not seen as negative traits — such things are the earned rights of men and women of their uniquely elevated station.

THE SEPPUN FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 PERCEPTION)**CURRENT DAIMYO:** Seppun Kiharu

The fall of the Kami to the mortal world came as a shock to many of the unorganized tribes of humans, but one such group awaited them. Seppun and her tribe took a post close to the spot where the children of Sun and Moon fell, quickly kneeling in supplication to the gods that stood before them. Seppun was a wise woman and a seer, and her visions had brought her to Hantel in service to the new order projected to shape the land. The old woman could hear the voice of Lady Sun in her heart, and Hantel agreed that Seppun would be his first vassal in the fledgling Empire. Since that day, the descendents of Seppun and her tribe have guarded the Emperor and his kin with their lives. Like Seppun, they have done so with wisdom, vision, and vigilance that stretches beyond normal human performance. Their sole duty is to the Emperor, and every action a Seppun takes, be it in learning art, lore, or warfare, is solely with this interest in mind. The Seppun daimyo usually serve as either the captain of the Imperial Guard or the Emperor's personal yojimbo, if not both. A secret order among the Seppun, called the Hidden Guard, train shugenja of their family to protect the Emperor's person from supernatural threats that their bushi kin cannot combat. In either case, the Seppun are known for their supernatural powers of perception, making them nearly impossible to surprise or catch off guard.

The Seppun rarely venture outside Toshi Ranbo on Imperial business, leaving such matters to the Miya and Otomo. When encountered, however, the Seppun command more respect and admiration than their Imperial cousins for a variety of reasons, not the least of which being their Imperial blood. Among the more martially inclined families, the Seppun bushi are considered legendary in skill and dedication. To those families who value wisdom and learning, the Seppun are well known for their devotion to the Tao, Shinsei, and the Fortunes. Like the samurai of the Mirumoto and Shiba families, the Seppun have close ties to the Brotherhood of Shinsei, and more than one of the Little Teacher's temples have elite Seppun Miharu bushi guards.

The Seppun perhaps most resemble the Lion in their appearance, although they would claim that the Lion emulate them. A Seppun's appearance is flawless in every respect, from their muscular build, to their close-cropped hair, to the immaculate condition of their armor. To appear otherwise would disgrace the Emperor they defend.

THE TOTURI FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 PERCEPTION)**CURRENT DAIMYO:** Toturi III

On the second Day of Thunder, the last Hantei Emperor was destroyed by the combined act of the Seven Thunders. Corrupted by Jigoku to serve as Fu Leng's mortal vessel in Ningen-Do, Hantei the 39th perished beneath the blades of Akodo Toturi and Doji Hoturi, ending the line of Hantei Emperors. Close relatives of the Imperial Line were all killed or corrupted during Fu Leng's occupation of Otsan Uchi, and the Otomo, Seppun, and Miya were unable to find a clear successor to Hantei's Throne. In a bold move, the Imperial families agreed that a single man was both experienced and wise enough to lead the nearly shattered Empire in the wake of the Clan War — Toturi. At the behest of the Imperial families, Toturi I was crowned and Lady Sun hovered over Otsan Uchi for a full day, marking Toturi's new dy-

nasty with her blessing. So installed as the new Son of Heaven, Toturi I, the Splendid Emperor, took great strides in healing the physical, emotional, and spiritual wounds Fu Leng's second assault left on Rokugan. Though some protested the end of the Hantei dynasty, after several years under Toturi's careful eye, it became clear the right choice had been made.

The Toturi family is exceptionally small, consisting only of Toturi's youngest son, Naseru, and a rare few individuals who swore fealty to the Winds before Toturi I's successor was chosen. Though no defining traits connect these few individuals, each of them carries the name with the honor due to an Imperial Dynasty. It remains to be seen if the children of Toturi III choose to surrender their Toturi name and join one of the other Imperial Families as the Hantei Dynasty did in order to clear a line of succession. Toturi Naseru is at once a traditional and practical man, and it is unlikely he will fail to heed the mistakes that led to the demise of the Hantei's name.

As there are no familial bonds between those who bear the Toturi name and the Dynasty is too young to boast many members, there are no unifying physical features among the Toturi besides a mutually intense gaze and accompanying activity.

The Brotherhood of Shinsei**CURRENT LEADER:** Shoan

To many, the little man known as Shinsei is a mystery that surpasses the Kami, the Celestial Heavens, and the great unknowns of the universe. He was a homeless old man that befriended the First Emperor, instructed Hantei how to save his Empire, and led seven mortal men and women to victory against the most powerful of the Kami. When Shosuro returned with the Black Scrolls that held the key to Fu Leng's imprisonment, Shinsei disappeared into the confusion, only adding to the mysteries surrounding him. Between his arrival in the Empire and subsequent vanishing, many others followed the Little Teacher to hear some scrap of the wisdom that seemed to tumble from his lips like water over a fall. These men and women shaved their heads and abandoned worldly fortune in recognition of Shinsei's ways, and studied the Tao after he was gone. Hantei Genji, the Second Emperor, took great steps to incorporate the Little Teacher's wisdom along with the existing worship of the Fortunes, and to this end went about organizing Shinsei's followers into a recognized group. These disciples were called monks, and Genji named them collectively the Brotherhood of Shinsei. They were not equal to the Great Clans in status or even organization, but it mattered little to the selfless and pious monks. In homage to Shinsei, they devoted themselves to the study of his wisdom, the purification of self, and worked to establish the means for world of peace and harmony.

It is somewhat ironic, then, that such a group would so quickly become divided amongst itself. Such a diverse group of mortals did not always agree on the interpretation of Shinsei's words, and many claimed to have secret dialogues from the Little Teacher that had been previously unrecorded. Further, there were disagreements on just how the mercy and selflessness of the Brotherhood should be applied to the world around it. Some theorized that withdrawal and patience was key and that the hand of destiny would guide the mortal world, while others claimed that the Brotherhood's purpose was to be the force guiding the Empire. Though the philosophical differences

were staggering in their number and strength, the monks never fell prey to violence against one another. Such wise scholars agreed upon one another on things with certainty, that killing would solve nothing, and thus the only solution was to create several sects among the Brotherhood to house its respective philosophies, practices, and studies. Like the samurai Empire had its Clans, the Brotherhood soon became a coalition of sects that were allied towards a common goal but took many different paths to get there. To this day, the Brotherhood carries the distinction of never allowing petty differences to result in bloodshed, and their dedication to the ways of peace and enlightenment has unfailingly served as a beacon in Rokugan's darkest days.

Monks come from all walks of life, so there is no typical appearance for these men and women. Most monks shave their heads as part of their vows, but even this is not universal. Those monks who take up life as adventurers tend to be the wandering sort, and thus are lean and well muscled from years of rough travel.

THE ORDER OF OSANO-WO (TRAIT BONUS: +1 STRENGTH)

CURRENT LEADER: Ageku

Dedicated to the Fortune of Fire and Thunder, the Patron of Bushi, and the holder of countless other violent titles, the Order of Osano-Wo is something of a contradiction to the more accepted stereotypes of monks. Monks of Osano-Wo are often *sohei*, monks trained primarily in the art of combat, easily distinguished by their ritual scarification in addition to many, many permanent wounds gained through both regular training and combat. The monks see themselves as the ultimate physical expression of the soul's trials through the mortal world, toughening their flesh just as they harden their spirit to temptation and corruption that runs rampant. Many take oaths of silence, sobriety, celibacy, or a number of other vows that center on denying physical and tangible experiences or benefits. They study the Tao and the ways of the Fortunes like any other monk order, but believe that ignoring the body amounts to crass ignorance of the real world. Focusing on the spirit realms and communicating with the kami is admirable, but a mortal's spirit is anchored in his body, and there will be plenty of time to wander through amongst spirits when one dies and becomes a spirit.

The Order of Osano-Wo is based primarily in the lands between the Scorpion and Crab Clans. Because of their nature, the Crab treat them with respect and the Scorpion with caution. Elsewhere, the Order tends to hold great influence with more martially minded families — it is not uncommon for a Moto or even Matsu commander to have a monk advisor from the Order. In the rare event that the Brotherhood feels they must enter a conflict for one reason or another, it is almost always the *sohei* of Osano-Wo that either lead or commit themselves alone. During the Clan War, when the armies of the corrupted Yogo Junzo began to burn the Brotherhood's temples in hopes to find Shinsei's descendent, the Horde only managed a few uncontested raids before the Order of Osano-Wo was roused. Though the Dragon and Phoenix Clans leapt to the Brotherhood's aid, their help was minimal compared to the terrifying result of the Order of Osano-Wo finally being able to unleash their full fury on an enemy that was beyond mercy or redemption.

THE ORDER OF THE SEVEN FORTUNES (TRAIT BONUS: +1 INTELLIGENCE)

CURRENT LEADER: Iko

Before the time of Shinsei and his Seven Thunders, the scattered human tribes shared a single thing in common — awe and respect for the powerful Fortunes. Though these Fortunes were countless in name and form, seven of them were clearly the most powerful and influential, thus deserving of the greatest fear and most respect. After the emergence of Shinsei and his Tao, many began to see the words of the Little Teacher as a threat to their sacred religion because of the following it began to gather. Those that turned to the Fortunes for guidance now sought out Shinsei's mysteries for their wisdom. Understanding between the Shinseists and Fortunes' worshippers seemed impossible until the Shining Prince stepped forward to finally bring true organization to the Brotherhood of Shinsei. Shinsei's words, Hantei Genji reasoned, did not exclude the wisdom of worshipping the Fortunes, nor did the Fortunes ever seem to be displeased with mortals studying the words of their own kind. The true division came not from the philosophies, but from the segregation the monks were forcing upon themselves. Genji declared that the Tao and Fortunes would be observed equally, and the religion of the Empire was thus defined.

Monks of the Order of the Seven Fortunes do not exclude the words of Shinsei and his Tao from their study, but seek communion with the Fortunes as their primary goal. They are far more structured and traditional than other monk orders, and the Order has a structure of several subgroups within itself, one for each of the Seven Fortunes. Initiates to the Order generally dedicate themselves to one Fortune or another, which in turn dictates their role among the monks. For example, the monks of Daikoku, the Fortune of Wealth, tend to handle the matters of money and trade when such matters present themselves. The Order is spread out over the entirety of Rokugan, forcing each group to act independently enough to almost be considered a whole other Order of the Brotherhood.

THE ORDER OF THE SEVEN THUNDERS (TRAIT BONUS: +1 PERCEPTION)

CURRENT LEADER: Fumilaki

Where Seven Fortunes Monks value the wisdom of the Fortunes above Shinsei's Tao, the Order of the Seven Thunders studies the words of the Little Teacher primarily. The Order was the first major group within the Brotherhood of Shinsei, and its monks are the most likely to be found wandering the Empire between its countless shrines and temples. Monks of the Order value one of Shinsei's teachings above all else, a dictum that found ultimate expression through the Seven Thunders — that the mortal soul is a force that can alter the course of the universe. These monks pore over every word attributed to Shinsei and attempt to find new and insightful interpretations of the Little Teacher's lessons while at the same time trying to seek the unique path of their own life. It is a dichotomy that many monks find daunting and even impossible to manage, causing some to cast their lot with another Order. The reactions of retired samurai entering the Order are mixed, but never unremarkable. To some, the life of a wandering, questioning *inkyō* is not at all acceptable after a career of violence and warfare, preferring to spend their final years in silent reflection. Others find that such an outgoing and inquisitive outlook is exactly the "new life" that a retired samurai should seek after a lifetime of courtly studies or similar, quiet activity.

Seven Thunders monks make up most of the population of wanderers among the Brotherhood of Shinsei. Stories of monks happening upon a village just in time to turn back a bandit lord are mostly centered on such men and women, though they usually take great pains to draw attention away from themselves in such cases. They also tend to be the most likely to volunteer to aid samurai or peasants in "worldly" affairs that other monks would avoid. Seven Thunders monks have no qualms about walking amongst sin and corruption in the name of helping another mortal soul. It is this willingness to face the realities of the mundane world that make the monks of the Order resistant to its temptations... and able to elevate others from such impure pursuits.

THE ORDER OF THE TEN THOUSAND TEMPLES (TRAIT BONUS: +1 AWARENESS)

CURRENT LEADER: Seppun Kiharu

When Hantei Genji founded the Brotherhood of Shinsei, it became clear that the Emperor was of central religious significance. As the direct descendent of the Sun and Moon, ruler of the mortal world, and divine connection between the Realm of Mortals and the Celestial Heavens, the Emperor was clearly the most holy figure alive. The Shining Prince took to this role well, largely allowing the Brotherhood to maintain itself and only intervening as their recognized leader when matters required his divine wisdom. Because of the importance of the Emperor, an Order was created to surround the Emperor, serve his whims, and attend the Son of Heaven as befitted his position. Originally, these monks were known as the Order of the Four Temples, taking their names from the holy shrines at the Imperial City of Otosan Uchi. The Four Temples were considered the most holy places in Rokugan and while the Emperor has the right to claim any property for his own use, the Temples were also seen as the Son of Heaven's personal religious sanctuaries. While a place among the Order meant the distinct honor of serving the Son of Heaven (or serving those who served him directly), it also bore the burden of dealing with the constant political intrigue that surrounded the Emperor. Only monks that were seen as able to balance their vows and the ability to deal with the harsh realities of the Imperial Court gained entry into their elite ranks.

When Otosan Uchi was destroyed, the Four Temples remained, but their significance dwindled. Once Toshi Ranbo was declared the new Imperial City, a new center of Rokugan's worship had to be constructed to serve as the personal temple for the Emperor, who remained the central religious figure if not a Hantei. To this end, a middle aged monk named Seppun Kiharu ordered the construction of a modest temple surrounded by over ten thousand shrines — one for each known Fortune, Greater or Lesser. Members of the Order of the Seven Fortunes, as it came to be known, originally constructed the Ten Thousand Temples, but it was swiftly to become the home for much of the old Order of Four Temples. The Order has renamed itself accordingly for its new home, and has resumed their place as advisors and attendants to the Son of Heaven. Kiharu and his monks remain a steadfast anchor of serenity and peace in the bustling Imperial City, a fact that Toturi III has relied upon on more than one occasion. Despite Kiharu's later appointment to leadership of the Seppun family, the care and maintenance of this most sacred of temples remains his highest priority.

Ronin

The ronin is a contradiction in terms. A ronin is a samurai who serves no lord, and yet the word samurai means "servant." What, then, is a samurai who serves no one? In the minds of the Great Clans, a ronin is an honorless dog that cannot be trusted and should be driven before an honorable man like a serpent before a grass fire. It is a simple matter to persecute ronin, however unfairly. After all, they have no lord to take insult at their death, nor brothers in arms to seek vengeance. Because of the constant threat to their well-being, ronin tend to move around a great deal. This movement allows them to avoid making long-term enemies and to seek employment, as they have no source of regular income or lord to keep them fed, housed, and equipped. The term ronin means "wave man," and stems from the tendency of a ronin to move in like the tide and leave just as quickly.

Ronin can be created or born. Under certain circumstances there are even those who choose the ronin way of life over the far more pleasant life of service to a daimyo. Most frequently, however, samurai become ronin by being cast out of their family and clan for some failure of duty. Another origin of a ronin is by birth. When a samurai has children with a partner not of samurai caste, their child is still considered a samurai. All too often, however, these wayward children are not recognized by their parents, who may be embarrassed at such evidence of indiscretion. Thus, the child is condemned to the life of an outcast. These two paths to becoming a ronin are by no means all inclusive, however, as it would seem there is an almost infinite variety, nearly as many as there are actual ronin in existence at any one time.

RONIN-BORN

Children born to samurai parents but not recognized for one reason or another are tragic figures indeed. Despite their samurai status, many choose to ignore it and live as a peasant rather than face the terrible hardship that a ronin must endure. As a peasant, at least, they will be provided for by the master they serve.

Perhaps the greatest barrier between these ronin and the life they desire for themselves is poverty. Most are forced to make do with a cast-off katana discarded by a smith due to its substandard quality. Ronin-born samurai have no lord to provide for them and no source of income save what they can earn selling their skills to whomever will pay them. Given that these individuals have no formal training, any living they can make is meager at best.

WEALTHY RETAINER

Merchants in Rokugan possess more power now than ever. Wealth has become a reality for many who choose to perform the unsavory duties of commerce in the name of their family and clan. It is rare for a samurai proper to be responsible for such things, but not unheard of. In some cases, these individuals can gain substantial wealth and influence as a result of success at their chosen field. Honorable men are expected to surrender unexpected profits to their lord, but not all men adhere to this code of honor. Sometimes, those who have accumulated a personal fortune will retire from their duties at a young age, and instead of joining a monastery, simply move on. As they have forsaken their family and clan, these individuals are considered ronin.

Ronin of this nature are not prohibited from revealing their former affiliations, but most choose not to do so out of fear that someone from their clan will take offense at their accumulation of wealth. Ronin of this nature experience the harshest criticism. At the very least, many are jealous of the wealth and influence they command. At worst, their former clan consider them traitors and thieves. As a result, most wealthy retainers disguise their former affiliations as well as their wealth.



DISCORDANT SAMURAI

Samurai guilty of minor infractions, which can range from such things as inappropriate displays of emotion to demonstrating a temper that causes undue strife among their lord's other followers, may find themselves temporarily cut off from any support from their lord and family.

Discordant samurai are not truly ronin, but forced to live as such for a short period of time depending upon the severity of their crime. This type of punishment is typically levied toward young, brash samurai who have potential to grow into tremendous assets to their lord if only they can overcome their shortcomings. Samurai banished in such a manner bear their colors and mons as they would normally, but must tell anyone who inquires of their current status and the nature of their banishment. Failure to do so constitutes denying the allegations one's lord has made regarding the behavior, and can result in the temporary ronin status becoming permanent.

DISHONORED SAMURAI

Some among the peasant classes might consider a samurai who fails his duty and is cast out of his family and clan to have been given a more forgiving sentence, particularly when considering that the other options are execution or at best seppuku. Unfortunately, this is far from the case. This is the most severe of punishments, never levied lightly. It is typically reserved for the most heinous of failures, as it condemns a samurai to a pathetic existence with the knowledge that he has shamed not only himself, but his family and ancestors as well. For a samurai, there is no worse fate to endure.

Ronin who have been cast out from their clan and family are forbidden to reveal their former affiliations upon pain of death. Many often change their names completely in hope that doing so will prevent others from discovering their enormous shame. In every way that truly matters, they are dead. When a samurai asks a ronin who he last served and the ronin does not answer, the samurai knows the truth about that ronin immediately. These ronin most often turn to a life of crime to support themselves, lashing out in bitter rage at the world that has turned its back on them.

DEAD MASTER

According to the strictest interpretation of law, the retainers of a samurai that dies without an heir any longer have a master and are therefore cast to the waves as ronin. Realistically, this rarely occurs, as any samurai from a clan is not only sworn to his lord but to his family as well, and will be assigned a new duty following his master's death. Some samurai take their vow to their lord so seriously, however, that upon his death they consider themselves ronin. This is a rare occurrence, but has been highly romanticized in literature, and has been the subject of many famous plays throughout history.

When this tragedy does occur, it is most often conditional upon the death in question. A lord who dies as a result of some dishonor can inadvertently pass the dishonor on to his followers, effectively tainting them in the eyes of others who would normally be in a position of adopting their service. A death by assassination virtually ruins the reputation of any yojimbo in the subject's service. Occasionally the relatives of the deceased are too poor to afford additional servants, but again this is virtually unheard of among the Great Clans.

Ronin servants of a dead master are often permitted to display the colors and mons of their former family and clan, although most choose not to do so out of respect. Some occasionally find employment with other clans, but many regard such ronin as being possessed of bad karma, and leave them to their lonely fate.

MUSHA SHUGYO

The musha shugyo, or "warrior pilgrimage," is more common during long periods of peace, when a samurai can focus on the purity of his art rather than be concerned with claiming victory for his lord. Obviously, recent years have seen far fewer of these instances than the days prior to the Clan War, when they were more common.

Pilgrims on a musha shugyo are actually not ronin, although they present themselves this way and are often treated as such by others. The notion of this pilgrimage is to hone one's skills through example, using them and them alone to sustain oneself after putting aside all worldly concerns. This begins with seeking permission from one's lord, another reason that such instances come up rarely during times of conflict. Few daimyo, after all, who would release their soldiers to pursue personal quests when they could be claiming the lives of enemies.

Assuming that the pilgrim receives his lord's permission, he first sets aside anything that would identify him by his family or clan. Dependence upon reputation or fear contradicts the quest's purpose. While divulgence of such things is not strictly forbidden, the revelation that a samurai is on a *musha shugyo* should sufficiently allay the curiosity of most.

RONIN AGENT

Technically, a ronin has no lord, no protection, no affiliation of any sort. This is not always actually the case, however. Instances come emerge when powerful leaders require agents who have no formal ties to them, and that cannot be traced back to them in the event that the agent is captured or killed. This may or may not result from the lord's own choice, as politics can often force them into situations where they may endure terrible insults and be forced to allow them to go unpunished. Virtually every daimyo has followers so loyal, so dedicated, that they would sacrifice everything to deal with the situation by whatever means necessary.

These particularly loyal servants may be called upon or choose to take up the mantle of a ronin in order to seek vengeance. Such men have little save their skill to protect them, and thus tend to be very good at their chosen task. Any who are compromised while on their mission either fight to the death or assume full responsibility for everything they have done. As might be expected, ronin of this nature tend to have a very short lifespan and are generally considered expendable. This practice is most often seen among the Scorpion Clan.

Prominent Ronin Families

If the term ronin has inherent contradictions, then the idea of ronin families is an absurd. True samurai find the idea laughable at best — offensive at worst. Nevertheless, a handful of such groups have existed over the course of Rokugan's history. The circumstances surrounding such instances are rare, and the recognition of such a group is more uncommon than even the creation of a Minor Clan by the Emperor. Every honorable ronin dreams of establishing such a legacy for his descendants, but in reality they have no hope of attaining such a thing.

Ronin who are members of established families are generally regarded as slightly more acceptable than solitary ronin, as most samurai accept that they have been recognized as a functional and suitable part of society. Such samurai are still not regarded as equals, of course, but significantly better than the average wave-man.

THE KAERU, LORDS OF THE RICH FROG (TRAIT BONUS: +1 AWARENESS)

CURRENT DAIMYO: Kaeru Shioko

Exactly when the ronin who governed Kaeru Toshi, the City of the Rich Frog, began referring to themselves as the Kaeru is unknown simply because the presumption of granting themselves a family name would have been seen as a criminal act by more vigorous advocates of bushido. Still, the ronin within that city have been known by the name Kaeru among other ronin for centuries. As ronin, the Kaeru possessed far more insight into matters of commerce than most samurai, allowing them to establish the city as a trade center between the Lion and Unicorn, and using the oft-overlooked Iuchi pass to move merchandise to the southern Empire without paying the higher tariffs at Beiden Pass.

During the Four Winds Era, the uncertainty of an Empire without an Emperor concerned the Kaeru greatly, particularly in light of heavy bandit activity and attacks by the Shadowlands. The Kaeru petitioned Toturi Naseru, then known as Hantei Naseru, for protection. In turn, Naseru declared that the city would belong to any who could defend its citizens properly. The cunning daimyo Ikoma Sume quickly capitalized on the edict and adopted the Kaeru as a vassal family in service to the Ikoma and the Lion.

The Kaeru nearly lost their vassal family status during the War of the Rich Frog, when the Lion and Unicorn went to war over possession of the city. The Kaeru daimyo, Kaeru Tomaru, was a vigorous supporter of the Lion, resulting in his assassination by his son Meiji, who desired the Kaeru to return to independent status or to serve the Unicorn. In the end, the Lion were victorious and the Kaeru remained Lion vassals. Meiji was killed by a Scorpion duelist and was replaced by his cousin Shioko, who has vowed to honor the Lion's patronage.

THE TSI, SMITHS OF DESTINY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 WILLPOWER)

CURRENT DAIMYO: Tsi Zutaka

The Tsi are a small ronin family that might never have been known to the Empire if not for the accomplishments of their founder, a simple ronin with a talent for smithing. Due to a fortunate series of events, the ronin gained the attention of a Crane artisan, who made the young man his apprentice. As fate would have it, the Crane was commissioned by the Emperor, Hantei XXX, to craft a blade for his son. The Crane smith did so, permitting his apprentice Tsi to create the *saya*. The Emperor, so taken with the beauty of their creations, he made the Crane his personal smith and the ronin was given the right to a family name, that his blades might be remembered forever.

Ironically, the Tsi are not universally smiths. The family daimyo is always a master smith who takes several apprentices, each of whom takes the family name. Other ronin are permitted to bear it as well if they swear fealty, and serve as attendants, *yojimbo*, or other necessities. When the daimyo prepares to retire, he selects his successor from among his students, and the cycle begins anew. In recent history, one of the Tsi daimyo's students, Tsi Xing Guo, was selected by the Celestial Heavens to ascend and become the Fortune of Steel. Since that time, the Tsi's fortunes have improved considerably, and their work is in constant demand across the Empire.

Ronin Family Benefits

There are two types of ronin characters: clan ronin and true ronin. Clan ronin were once members of a Great Clan or Minor Clan, but either left or were cast out. They are created as if you were making a character from that clan, complete with a family benefit. True ronin, such as the ronin-born described earlier, were born to one or two parents of samurai status, but were never recognized as samurai by a clan. True ronin typically have no family. A character can be made as a member of the Kaeru, Tsi, or Yotsu families, however, and gain the benefit accordingly. When selecting a School for such a character, a true ronin with a family only gains 10 additional Character Points rather than 15 if they choose not to take the first rank of a Ronin School (see the Book of Water, page 150 for more details on Ronin Schools).

THE YOTSU, GUARDIANS OF THE WEAK
(TRAIT BONUS: +1 INTELLIGENCE)

CURRENT DAIMYO: Yotsu Seou

The Yotsu have ascended farther in Rokugani society than any ronin in history, and it is unlikely that any shall ever transcend their high-ranking position. The family's founder, Yotsu, was a simple man who eked out a meager living with his wife and many children in the mountains north of Otsan Uchi. Yotsu and his family never went hungry, for he was peerless hunter and tracker. It was on one such hunting trip that the ronin made a startling discovery: Bloodspeakers. A large number of cultists had apparently ambushed a caravan traveling through the mountains. When he saw the bodies, Yotsu realized that it was an Imperial caravan. Since he lived alone, he had no way of knowing that the Empress was returning home from the Phoenix lands, not until he saw the dead Seppun guardsmen.

Yotsu attempted to rescue the Empress, but she would not leave. She knew that the cultists would only follow them, capture them again, and kill the ronin and his family. She would not have innocent blood on her hands. Desperate to do something, Yotsu did the only thing he could: he exchanged his youngest son for the Empress's son, leaving him to fool the Bloodspeakers. With the Imperial heir in tow, he and his other children left south for Otsan Uchi with all due haste.

So great was the Emperor's joy to see his son alive that he renamed Yotsu as Yotsu Yatoshin, granting the ronin both a family name and the personal name his father had once used as a child. Thus the Yotsu were born, and their mission was born as well: protectors of the innocent, the weak, and the defenseless.

The Yotsu family once held sway over a province in Otsan Uchi, where the daimyo's twin daughters served as governors. Since the city's destruction, however, they Yotsu have refused to abandon the city's ruins. Instead, they remain there, looking after their charge and the few citizens who live within the ruins. Their favored status with the Emperor has not changed, however, as one of their number, Yotsu Irie, serves as the Emperor's personal yojimbo.

The Shadowlands

DARK LORD: Daigotsu

Beyond the Empire to the Southwest extends the vast, unknown region of the Shadowlands. At the heart of this land lies the Festering Pit of Fu Leng, a gaping wound that opens into the heart of Jigoku, the Realm of Evil. The corrupting power of this place wells out of the pit and infests everything it touches. Anything that remains too close to the Pit for too long is inevitably suffused by the Taint. Those mortals who are corrupted by its power become willing servants of Fu Leng, known as the Lost. The Taint twists all living creatures, body and soul, turning them into monstrous new beings of its infernal design. The land possesses a will and mind of its own, driven by a dark desire to humiliate, terrify, and ultimately consume any who cross its borders.

Countless varieties of strange creatures wander the Shadowlands. Many are mindless predators or pursue their mysterious objectives alone. Traditionally the one truth that has offered the people of Rokugan some measure of security was that the various forces of the Shadowlands were an internally divisive and treacherous lot. They possessed no loyalty to one another beyond that earned by raw power or intimidation, and any large, organized

force that rose from beyond the Wall would ultimately crumble due to infighting. In recent years, since the arrival of the Dark Lord Daigotsu, the people of Rokugan have been forced to reconsider this truth.

The youngest son of a Hantei Emperor, kidnapped by Bloodspeakers and cast into Jigoku itself, Daigotsu is a willing adherent of Fu Leng who possesses incredible mastery over dark magic. He also has an extraordinary charisma and a twisted sense of honor that many Lost samurai find appealing. Following the Battle of Oblivion's Gate, the Taint corrupted many samurai and left them wandering in search of purpose; Daigotsu offered them the purpose they sought. In the depths of the Shadowlands he has built the City of the Lost, and countless corrupted men and women have rallied to his cause. Even the demonic oni and the mindless bakemono bow to his will, and for once the Shadowlands stands strong and united. Ironically, though Daigotsu despises Rokugan, he cares little for the subjugation of the Empire. This is not to say that he is not extremely dangerous, but he feels that for the Shadowlands to flourish, Rokugan must survive — much like a predator cannot survive if all prey has been consumed.



Since the Dark Lord's ascension, the City of the Lost has become a nightmarish reflection of the Rokugani Empire. The Lost view Daigotsu as their Emperor, and worship Fu Leng with all the devotion other samurai show their founding Kami. Daigotsu has even granted a handful of family names to those who serve him.

While members of these families are inappropriate choices for player characters in most campaigns, they are presented here in respect for completeness and so that the GM might utilize them to create Non-Player Character (NPC) villains. As members of these families can hail from any family in Rokugan prior to their corruption, they can study the techniques of any single school without requiring the Different School Advantage. It is recommended that Order of Kokujin characters use the Three Orders Tattooed Man School. All members of these families will have some degree of Shadowlands Taint.

DAIGOTSU FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 STRENGTH)

CURRENT DAIMYO: Daigotsu

Though Daigotsu himself is a powerful shugenja, the samurai who have sworn fealty to his name are almost invariably bushi. These lost souls have firmly embraced Daigotsu's warped version of bushido. The samurai of Rokugan fill them with disgust, for in them they see the same ignorance, confusion, and pointless compassion that once filled them before their eyes were opened by the power of Fu Leng. The samurai of the Crab Clan are particularly hated, for they have dedicated their lives to fighting the same power the Daigotsu have embraced.

The Daigotsu are the largest Shadowlands family. The Dark Lord invites any who enter the City of the Lost and wish to prove themselves the right to earn his name, and many have accepted the challenge. It is unknown what tests await those who swear fealty to the Dark Lord, and those who pass the test will not speak of it. It is known that the ritual strips them of all former ties to their ancestors and family, and suffuses them with an unholy strength granted by the Dark God himself.

As the family is currently too young to share a single bloodline and draws adherents from all the Rokugani clans, there is no truly "typical" appearance for a Daigotsu samurai. However, as a general rule those who join the Daigotsu family tend to be less obviously marked by the Taint than most. They are the most human of the Lost, and some can even pass for normal samurai.

CHUDA FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 WILLPOWER)

CURRENT DAIMYO: Chuda Mishime

The leaders of the Chuda family are descended the fallen Snake Clan. Once a proud Minor Clan dwelling in northern Rokugan, the daimyo of the Snake doomed his clan when he delved too deeply into the art of maho. A demonic spirit known as the shuten doji possessed the Snake Clan. What followed was an event the Phoenix Clan remembers as the Five Nights of Shame. Unable to banish the spirit and left with no other recourse, the armies of the Shiba family were forced to completely exterminate every man, woman, and child of the Snake Clan — or so they believed.

A handful of Chuda family members survived. Their mastery of maho was such that they were able to resist the shuten doji's control for a time. The Chuda believe they could have freed their family from the spirit's influence, if not for the Phoenix Clan's murderous intervention. The Chuda swore revenge, but realized that for the time being they could do little. The few remaining Chuda faded into the shadows, eventually marrying into the Asako family of the Phoenix and passing down their lessons in secrecy.

One of these descendants, an Inquisitor named Asako Mishime, became intrigued by rumors of a new Dark Lord. Through skill and daring he entered the Shadowlands and infiltrated the City of the Lost, but Daigotsu immediately saw through his disguise. Mishime begged Daigotsu to spare him in return for his fealty. Intrigued by Mishime's talent and feeling a strange sense of pity for the fallen Snake Clan, the Dark Lord agreed.

Mishime proved an extremely loyal and invaluable follower. Daigotsu gave the tsukai leave to recreate the fallen Chuda Family from the ranks of the Lost. The Snake would rise again but no longer would they serve the decadent Empire. Now and forever they would serve the sinister majesty of Fu Leng.

Following Mishime's example, the Chuda are a family of maho tsukai (blood sorcerers). Even Daigotsu recognizes that he does not know all the mysteries of the Shadowlands, and it has fallen to the Chuda family to collect and archive such knowledge. The Chuda possess a voracious curiosity and appetite for the unknown. Their drive to study the Shadowlands would make them kindred spirits with the Kuni family, if the two families were not so firmly dedicated to one another's destruction.

GOJU FAMILY (TRAIT BONUS: +1 AGILITY)

CURRENT MASTER: THE SHADOW DRAGON

At one time, the Goju Family served the Lying Darkness, an enigmatic force spawned directly from the power of Nothing. The Darkness would sap the souls and identities of mortal men, causing them to become formless, nameless things like itself. A handful of these servants were allowed to take the name Goju, the name of a Scorpion ninja who swore himself to the darkness. From this name they gained some measure of independence from the Darkness, as well as the ability to move more easily in the mortal realm than the Darkness could.

At the Battle of Oblivion's Gate, Lady Moon named the nameless Darkness and stripped it of its connection to Nothing. Its many nameless followers became mortal once more, lost souls without any memory of what they had been. The Goju, ironically, were left unchanged. The same names that let them operate independently also protected them from the Moon's naming. They retained their ability to draw upon Nothing to move through the shadows or alter their appearance. However, once the battle was done the Goju found themselves trapped in the heart of the Shadowlands without the Darkness' protection. They quickly became corrupted.

During the Battle of Oblivion's Gate, the Immortal Air Dragon was also corrupted. Severed of its connection to the Celestial Heavens, the dragon was also trapped in the Shadowlands. The dragon filled the void left behind by the Darkness, becoming the new master of Nothing. Reborn as the Shadow Dragon, it came to the Goju and offered them a chance to serve it, to one day earn their vengeance against Rokugan. Left with no other options, the Goju agreed.

When the Shadow Dragon chose to ally itself with Daigotsu, the Goju entered his service as well. Able to alter their appearance at will, they serve as the perfect spies and assassins for missions into the Empire. Though their service is invaluable, Daigotsu is cautious not to trust them too far, for their alliance represents one of convenience, and their allegiance belongs to the Shadow Dragon alone.

The Scorpion hold a special, burning hatred for the Goju. These lost souls represent everything that the Scorpion despise — pitiful things without a hint of loyalty or morality. The Lying Darkness almost brought about the destruction of the Shosuro house once, when they almost became seduced by its power, and it is a lesson the Scorpion will not soon forget. The Shosuro family is quite adept at detecting and destroying the Goju, and the Goju thus avoid Scorpion whenever possible.

THE ORDER OF KOKUJIN (TRAIT BONUS: +1 TO ANY TRAIT)

CURRENT LEADER: Kokujin

From the heart of madness comes Kokujin.

The Dragon Clan are a clan of serenity and enlightenment, but with a darker aspect. On the road to enlightenment there are many false paths, and when the scholars of the Dragon teach the dangers of too much wisdom there is one name they always repeat — Kokujin.

Born a tamashii, one of the select few Togashi with the capacity to house the immortal soul of the Dragon Clan's founding Kami, Kokujin possessed both great strength and enormous cunning. However, when Togashi revealed his destiny, Kokujin denied it. The idea that a god must rely upon his charity to survive proved, in Kokujin's mind, that such gods were inferior and unworthy of survival. He fled the mountains of the Dragon. Realizing that the magic of his Dragon tattoos helped him to resist the influence of the Taint, Kokujin intentionally entered the Shadowlands in a quest to master Fu Leng's power as well. His experiment was successful. Kokujin learned to draw upon the unholy power of the Taint, but his will remained free of Fu Leng's control. In time, Kokujin mastered the art of creating mystic tattoos from his blood. These tattoos allowed him to enslave those so marked. He is particularly fond of applying them to members of the Dragon Clan, who still hunt him tirelessly. These pathetic tattooed slaves take the Kokujin name.

Though a series of strange circumstances, Kokujin has come to consider the Dark Lord Daigotsu a friend. Strangely, Daigotsu takes no offense at Kokujin's refusal to worship the Dark God. He sees the presence of Kokujin and his followers as a necessary attribute to the City of the Lost. Their peculiar brand of enlightenment serves a necessary purpose, much as the enigmatic Dragon Clan serve in the Empire.





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BOOK OF WATER



Yasuki Sadao sighed dejectedly. How had she come to be in such a situation? It was not unusual for a Crab with political aspirations to seek her fortune outside her homelands. Such was a virtual necessity. There was little room for a courtier to find advancement on the Wall, unless one considered advancing into an on's awaiting man a form of political mobility. When she had received an invitation to enter the service of none other than the renowned magistrate, Bayushi Norachai, she had hoped that her efforts to seek out new allies and political contacts for the clan might bear some serious fruit. Instead, she found herself waiting here, surrounded by the strangest assortment of individuals she had ever seen.

First there was the Dragon, Hitomi Ryo. Wearing only rough hakama and a scandalous fleshy tapestry of swirling tattoos, the half-naked lunatic spoke only in irritating riddles. Next was the Unicorn, a massive beast by the name of Moto Shun, clad in the disgusting fur and leathers his clan so favored. She had not even bothered to speak with him, and he seemed content to return the favor. After that came the Lion, Matsu Seiho. He seemed a normal sort of samurai, but all of Sadao's attempts at conversation were coldly rebuffed with the claim that he was not interested in whatever she hoped to sell. Obviously, she concluded with some irritation, her family's reputation had preceded itself. The last member of the group was a petite young Fox maiden, Kitsune Asami. She sat quietly in the shadows of the chamber, nagamaki held across her lap, eyes closed in communion with the spirits. She had answered Sadao's questions with polite courtesy, only to return to her meditation shortly thereafter. That one struck Sadao as perhaps the strangest of all, if only because she seemed so out of place among these warriors.

The door of the chamber slid open. A handsome samurai in blood red silk entered. Unlike many Scorpion, he seemed to wear no mask. Sadao rose and bowed with the others. He bowed in turn and seated himself at the head of the low table.

"Konnichiwa, my friends," the man said. "I am Bayushi Norachai, servant of the Emerald Champion. I am pleased that all of you answered my invitation."

"How could we refuse?" Sadao asked in a pleasing tone. "To serve the Emerald Champion is the greatest honor one could desire."

"No," Ryo replied in a vacant tone. "The greatest honor is to serve the Lady. I go where the Lady wills."

"Then let us count ourselves fortunate that the will of your Lady and my master are as one on this matter," Bayushi Norachai replied. "Let me move right to the point of the matter. As you may know, Ryoko Owari Toshi is the largest and most glorious city in the Empire."

"The City of Lies, you mean," Matsu Seiho replied.

"Ah," Norachai replied, "I see you are also aware of the city's reputation. That will save me a great deal of time. This city has always been occupied by both the Unicorn and Scorpion Clans. Its rulership has shifted between these two factions many times in the past, but the Unicorn have ruled there for many years now. As per the treaty which ended the war in Kaeru Toshi, the city has been restored to Scorpion rule. Do you know what this means?"

"It means that your clan can get back to the business of smuggling and blackmail without the interference of Unicorn magistrates," Moto Shun said with a low laugh.

"Have a care, Shun," Norachai answered with a smile. "You were invited here because I am impressed by your reputation, but surely you know of mine as well. I may serve the Emerald Champion, but I will defend the honor of my clan."

Shun smirked, but the smirk quickly faded as he saw the deadly sincerity in Norachai's eyes. "... I apologize, sama," he said, bowing his head. Sadao was inwardly impressed. Perhaps the Moto wasn't as stupid as she had thought.

"Apology accepted, Shun-san," Norachai said briskly, "but your suspicion proves an important point. There is an incorrect perception among the people of Ryoko Owari that the Clan of the Scorpion is not a clan that embraces order and justice. There are many factions within the city that assume this shift in power means that they have free reign to infuse Ryoko Owari with all varieties of crime, perversion, and corruption. The City of Lies has great need of magistrates, my friends, and this is where you come in."

"Magistrates?" Sadao asked, shocked. "Why me? I have no experience in such matters."

"Perhaps," Norachai answered, "but I have researched each of you well, and all of you have much to offer. Sadao, you are well versed in

matters of commerce and negotiation. Your expertise would be quite useful in fighting the illicit trade that festers in the city, and could aid in bringing peace between the many street gangs in the city. Shun and Seiho are renowned warriors. Their strength of arms will strike fear into the hearts of bandits and ruffians who plague the streets. And as for Ryo and Asami... well, I think you will find that there are often forces at work in the City of Lies that one cannot battle with words and steel."

"I do not know any of these people," Seiho said in an irritated tone. "I do not trust them. With all due respect to your clan, the City of Lies is a dangerous place. A warrior does not enter a battle with untested weapons or untested allies. I do not like this."

"It is not for you to like, Matsu," Norachai answered. "Remember that I am a Scorpion. If I were to select magistrates who already had experience with one another, it might be perceived as some attempt to seed my own allies into positions of power. By selecting those with no connection to me, or to each other, there is the chance that some good might actually be done, some order restored. If you cannot learn to trust one another, if you cannot learn to work with one another, then you will die. I hope that such a thing does not happen; it would take me days to find other magistrates as capable as yourselves and such a thing would be a terrible inconvenience for me." Norachai smiled coldly.

"Then my recommendation," Kitsune Asami said in a soft voice, "is that we do not die."

"Well said," Sadao said with a light laugh. Despite her initial irritation, Sadao found herself excited by the prospect of restoring order to the City of Lies. Already she was analyzing possibilities in her mind, weighing the known strengths and weaknesses of those beside her and judging how to compensate for them. She turned toward Norachai with an eager expression. "When do we start?"



The Game of Twenty Questions

Every journey begins with a single step.

— The Tao of Shintō

You will perform great deeds in the name of your ancestors. You will draw your steel to bring honor and glory to your Clan. You will commune with the spirits of creation in order to gain insight and enlightenment. You will spill the blood of your foolish enemies and destroy any who dare stand between you and your duty.

But first, you're going to need to fill out that character sheet.

Character creation is accomplished in a number of steps that help bring a character to life both in your mind (as well as the minds of those present in your group) and on the character sheet. When you're done, you're going to have that sheet filled with numbers and words that equal the mechanical abilities of your character. These are important parts of your character, but more important is the intangible force that drives him. Is there a reason he has a high Awareness but a low Intelligence? Why does your bushi have so many Social Skills and so few Bugei Skills?

You might have a small idea of what you want your character to be like, you may know to the most minute detail who your character is, or you will more likely fall somewhere in between. In any case, character creation is an important time to take those concepts and either build on them or refine them further through focusing on the mechanical and non-mechanical aspects of your character as you proceed.

Before you sit down to flesh out your character's Skills, Traits, Advantages, and the like, think over your concept. Any number of motivations could call for certain skills or Disadvantages, and vice versa. Maybe you hadn't planned on having some of the skills your character's School begins with, and it may inspire you to add a few more details to his back story.

The Game of 20 Questions

To aid you in fleshing out your character, take a moment to look through the questions presented below. The first ten are meant to be answered with the intention of filling in some details about your character. The second set of ten questions is meant to be answered in order to help establish what his or her thinking patterns might be like. These questions are purely optional and meant only as a guide to help you along the way through character creation and are by no means mandatory.

WHAT CLAN DOES YOUR CHARACTER BELONG TO?

This is one of the most important questions of your character's development. Each of the different Clans have a wide range of philosophies, ideals, and histories that will influence how your character is raised and treated by others. Conversely, it will also tend to color how your character will approach others. To help you get an idea of which Clan you may want to join, take a look at the Clan descriptions on pages 45-79.

HOW WOULD OTHERS DESCRIBE YOUR CHARACTER'S APPEARANCE?

Start with the most obvious here and work your way to the details. Go from defining your character's gender to mentioning any sort of scars or facial ticks they might have. Appearance is an important aspect of Rokugan's social interactions, and most people tend to rely heavily on outward appearances for first impressions. Does your character have a warm, inviting smile, or do his eyes dart around constantly, nervously searching for any sort of threat? Maybe he dresses as plainly as is acceptable and makes himself almost completely bland so as not to be noticed.

IS YOUR CHARACTER A BUSHI, SHUGENJA, MONK, OR COURTIER?

This is an important distinction, as the Empire's rigid social system advocates that everyone knows their role and acts accordingly. This is not entirely a straightjacket, however — many bushi are well known for their scholarly pursuits, and there are tales of courtiers who maintain great courage under fire during physical conflicts.

WHAT FAMILY DOES YOUR CHARACTER BELONG TO?

Much like your character's Clan choice, the family he comes from will have a significant impact on his history and interactions with others. Where each Clan tends to have very general traditions and philosophies, each family has unique ones. For example, the Lion are well known for their martial prowess and general disdain for the Crane and Scorpion Clans. However, the Ikoma family is a family of historians and diplomats in a Clan of warriors, and often works in alliance with the Shosuro family of the Scorpion Clan. In addition, some families have much greater standing within the Clan than others. The Moto family of the Unicorn are the undisputed leaders of the Clan, and warriors of the family take positions of glory and leadership, while the Horiuchi toil in obscurity in their small temples. Some characters are more interesting if they begin from such humble origins as the Horiuchi, while others seem destined for greatness from birth.

WHAT IS YOUR CHARACTER'S MAIN MOTIVATION?

Though all samurai are ideally devoted to their lord and their duty above all else, each individual character may have different reasons for this — or different goals entirely. For some characters, this motivation may be as simple as maintaining the honor of your ancestors by never failing the duty they have performed for the Clan for generations. Others may be more specific, carrying a heart full of vengeance against another samurai from a different (or even the same) Clan. Powerful motivations tend to revolve around revenge, love, honor, pride, or any number of ideals that will keep your character going when all else seems lost.

WHO IS THE PERSON YOUR CHARACTER TRUSTS MOST?

Samurai should be able to trust another honorable samurai without hesitation, but there are usually one or more figures that a character knows he can rely upon. This may be a supportive father, a dedicated sensei, a sibling, or someone completely unrelated to the character. Determining who the character trusts is not as important as determining why. What is it exactly that your character knows about this person that makes them so trustworthy? What impresses your character in such a fashion can go a long way to defining his psyche.

WHAT IS YOUR CHARACTER'S GREATEST STRENGTH? GREATEST WEAKNESS?

Others may have an opinion about what is great or flawed about your character, but what is truly the worst and best qualities he carries? It is important to remember that a character's strengths are the things that he would be looked up to for, while his weaknesses are there to remind himself and possibly others that he is still only mortal. These traits don't necessarily have to be epic to define your character, but they should be aspects that help you understand your character's limitations and purpose.

WHAT DOES YOUR CHARACTER THINK OF BUSHIDO?

The philosophy of bushido is ideally practiced and observed by all warriors, and even non-bushi look to bushido for guiding principles. As with any such code of conduct, there are those who adhere to it as if it were life itself, those who only find some of the tenets important, some who see it more as a set of loose guidelines, and others who believe it is little more than an unrealistic dream. Characters with a high Honor Rank will most likely take bushido seriously, but that doesn't necessarily they believe all parts are of equal importance.

WHAT IS YOUR CHARACTER'S OPINION OF HIS OWN CLAN?

This one is difficult. Much like bushido, samurai are expected to embrace their duty to their Clan without hesitation or question, but that does not always happen. Does your character believe completely in the ideals and goals of his Clan, or does he find fault occasionally with some of their actions? A good example would be a Daidoji bushi — a steadfast and practical warrior in a Clan of peacemakers and artisans. Does that Daidoji see his cousins as self-deluded idealists that need his protection? Perhaps he understands that it is his place to protect the Crane so that the other families can lead more peaceful lives.

IS YOUR CHARACTER MARRIED?

This is an important question for a number of reasons. Will your character have any dependents he will be responsible for? It's also important to remember that marriage is an arranged business in Rokugan, and many marriages are made to cement political ties or treaties and not anything beyond that. Perhaps your character's spouse is a worthless pain in the neck that you have to live with in order to maintain your Clan's alliance with another Clan? Though arranged marriages seldom result in true love, it's also likely that you and your spouse have come to respect and understand one another, creating a harmonious household. In either respect, a marriage can possibly grant you political ties to the more powerful samurai in your own family, other families in your Clan, or other Clans entirely. Naturally, such a tie can easily be a blessing and a curse at once.

DOES YOUR CHARACTER HAVE ANY PREJUDICES?

As mentioned before, your character's family and Clan will probably pass on their broad views of other Clans on to him. Beyond that, has he developed any such viewpoints on his own? Or does he even agree with the ones that are largely accepted by his kin?

TO WHOM DOES YOUR CHARACTER OWE THE MOST LOYALTY?

The easy answer would be "The Emperor," but few samurai have the honor of serving the Son of Heaven directly in their day to day duties. Think of who your character would show the most loyalty in his everyday activities. Is he strictly bound to obey his lord without any other influence? Perhaps he has a wise sensei that he goes out of his way to consult and serve even if the sensei has no direct authority over him. Even trickier would be a samurai with a secret love that he places above anything else. Every samurai must be prepared to give their life without hesitation on the command of their masters, but every samurai would also do so for someone of their choosing. When the time came, who would that person be?

WHAT ARE YOUR CHARACTER'S FAVORITE AND LEAST FAVORITE THINGS?

This is a broad question that is meant to help establish a pattern of behavior. When answering this, start with the rational and move to the irrational. Rational dislikes could be explained for purely logical reasons — such as a fondness for poetry due to his family being famous writers, or a dislike of flower arrangements because you failed your lessons in ikebana and embarrassed your father. Irrational dislikes can be much more entertaining and far less likely to change — a dislike of Noh theatre actors because your father was shamed for an affair with one, or being partial to red because you won your first duel while wearing a red kimono.

DOES YOUR CHARACTER HAVE ANY RECURRING MANNERISMS?

Since everyone tends to act according to the same protocol and etiquette, the minor and inoffensive details of behavior tend to get noticed more. Does your character bite his lip when he's deep in thought? Perhaps he has a particular phrase he greets everyone with. When his hands aren't doing anything, what does he do with them?

WHAT ABOUT YOUR CHARACTER'S EMOTIONS?

Even the most disciplined minds have their weaknesses, not that your character necessarily has an unusually strong control of his emotions. Does he have a hard time controlling his disdain for others he sees as acting improperly? Is there a certain situation or "button" that always arouses your character's sympathy? Perhaps it's nearly impossible to get your character really angry... or sad... or jubilant.

HOW WOULD YOUR CHARACTER HANDLE A SUBORDINATE'S IMPROPER BEHAVIOR?

This applies to both subordinates from the samurai and lower classes, though the answer might be different for each. Some characters might see the fallibility of the peasants as expected, a result of their low station, but misbehaving samurai are unacceptable because they should know their place better. On the reverse, perhaps he thinks peasants must be kept in line with harsh consequences, while samurai can be reprimanded effectively with lesser severity.

HOW WOULD YOUR CHARACTER'S PARENTS DESCRIBE HIM?

A samurai's relationship with his family is important, and his relationship with his parents even moreso. Filial devotion is expected from a true samurai, but that doesn't necessarily mean there is any real respect between a parent and child. It's entirely possible that one parent thinks the world of their child while the other sees him as little more than a failure. A samurai's relationship with his parents not only speaks volumes about his nature but also tends to be used by others as a measure of his worth.

WHAT IS YOUR CHARACTER'S HIGHEST AMBITION?

It's important to note that while desire is a sin, ambition tempered with duty is perfectly acceptable. Many bushi aspire to be great leaders or revered teachers, while shugenja tend to yearn for the life as a respected scholar or advisor. Maybe your character doesn't have any specific goals, and is happy right now with just serving his lord to the best of his ability. Once you've discovered your character's goals, take a moment and decide just how far he's willing to go to achieve them...

HOW RELIGIOUS IS YOUR CHARACTER?

Proof of the supernatural is evident to most samurai, but those who do not directly deal with the mystic arts don't necessarily find themselves overly concerned with them. Some believe that while the Fortunes and kami are all very well and good, in the end one can only rely on his own abilities. Others spend hours a day in prayer, constantly attempting to attune themselves to the rhythm of the universe in search of true enlightenment.

IF YOU COULD, WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE YOUR CHARACTER?

One of the most important aspects of enjoying the role you have chosen for your character is seeing just how distanced you are from it. Does your character closely resemble your own attitudes and mannerisms, leaving little to say? Maybe, upon closer inspection, you think your character should change a thing or two? This question isn't intended to find faults in your character with the intention of fixing them. Instead, recognize the differences, if any, between the character and yourself to help keep you in character once the game starts.



General Game Mechanics

Roll & Keep

In the Legend of the Five Rings Role-Playing Game, players roll 10-sided dice to determine whether their characters succeed or fail at a given task. This is accomplished by rolling a number of dice, usually determined by a character's Skills and Traits, and selecting which dice the player will keep. Once the kept dice have been selected, the total of their individual rolls is added up and compared to the Target Number the Game Master has established for the task. If the total is equal to or greater than the Target Number, then the character has successfully performed the task. If the total is less than the Target Number, then the attempt has failed. Distinguishing between how many dice are rolled and how many are kept is simple: the number of dice rolled is listed first, followed by a lowercase 'k' (for keeping), then a second number denoting how many are kept. The listing 4k2, for example, indicates that a player should roll a total of four dice and keep the two highest.

For any given task that players wish their characters to attempt, the Game Master decrees which Trait and which Skill is appropriate for the task. The player then takes a number of dice equal to their character's rating in the chosen Skill and a number equal to the rating in the chosen Trait. These dice are all rolled together, and are referred to as the rolled dice. After seeing what numbers come up, the player selects a number of rolled dice equal to his character's rating in the chosen Trait. Usually players select the highest-rolling dice, but not always. The results on the kept dice are totaled and compared to the Target Number, as described above.

Example: Matt's character Mirumoto Kyuzo is attempting to hit a target with his bow and arrow. The target is not very far away, and there is no wind, so Ryan, the Game Master, decides the Target Number to hit the target is only 15. Firing a bow and arrow uses the Reflexes Trait and the Kyujutsu Skill. Kyuzo has the Kyujutsu Skill at rank 3, and his Reflexes Trait is also rank 3. Matt takes six 10-sided dice (three for the Skill, three for the Trait) and rolls them. He rolls a 3, 4, 4, 6, 7, and 8. Matt selects the three highest-rolling dice, the 6, 7, and 8, and adds them together to get a total score of 21. He compares this total against the Target Number of 15 and sees that he exceeds it. Kyuzo has successfully hit his target.

TARGET NUMBERS

The Target Number, or TN, is the difficulty that the Game Master sets for a task that a character wants to accomplish. If the task is a simple one, the Game Master sets a low TN. As the task increases in complexity and difficulty, the Game Master increases the TN to make it more difficult for characters to accomplish.

Game Masters are highly encouraged to use a TN scale that is appropriate for their campaign; tasks should be challenging but not impossible in order to avoid frustrating the players. As a general guideline, difficulties are as follows:



RAISES

Occasionally, players want their characters to achieve extraordinary success. Perhaps they do not want to simply hit a target with an arrow, but to hit an arrow that's already sticking in the target. This can be accomplished by voluntarily increasing the TN of the declared task by an increment of 5, which is called a Raise.

Players usually make a Raise when they are confident that their characters can easily exceed a TN the Game Master has declared. Every Raise increases the TN of a task by 5. A character may only Raise a number of times equal to his Void Ring. A bushi with Void 2, for instance, may make one or two Raises, but not three. Raises must be declared before a roll is made. If the roll does not meet the new TN, it is a failure, even if it is higher than the original TN.

Raises can be made on virtually any roll, including combat, spell casting, and social interaction. The results of a Raise are up to the Game Master and player, but generally speaking they result in a greater success.

Combat Example: Kakita Sutebu wants to cut his enemy's moustache without hitting him. The normal TN to hit his enemy is 20. The GM declares that four Raises are necessary for such a precise move. Sutebu has Void 4, so he declares 4 Raises, increasing his TN to 40. (For more information, see the Book of Fire on page 159.)

Spellcasting Example: Tamori Motoshi is casting a spell with a TN 15 that causes a tremor in a 10' radius around the target. This spell allows the caster to increase the radius by 5' for every Raise. Motoshi declares two Raises to make the radius 20', increasing the spell's TN to 25. (For more information on spells, see the Book of Air on page 228.)

Social Example: Doji Tsimiko believes someone is lying to her. She prepares to roll Awareness/Courtier to see if she can tell, and the Game Master sets a TN of 10. Tsimiko can make that easily, so she declares two Raises to get more information, resulting in a TN of 20. If successful, she will learn if the person is lying, and also other things about them at the GM's discretion. (For more information, see the Skill descriptions later in this chapter.)

FREE RAISES

Some school techniques, advantages, spells or other effects can grant a character Free Raises. Free Raises grant the same benefit as a regular Raise, but do not increase the TN of the attempted task. Free Raises are not limited by a character's Void Ring, and may be added to regular Raises for truly spectacular results.

Rings & Traits

The most basic representation of characters' abilities is found in their five Rings, the building blocks of the Rokugani universe after which this game is named. Each Ring is composed of two Traits, one mental and one physical, that represent the character's innate mental and physical abilities. Virtually every roll made during play will involve one Ring or Trait.

Beginning characters start with all Rings and their component Traits at 2. These may be increased through family or school bonuses (see below), or through the expenditure of Character Points (see page 159). Rings have a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being below average and 10 being superhuman. Most samurai have Rings between 2 and 5. Exceptional individuals may possess Rings of 6 or 7, and truly legendary heroes may have one or more Rings of 8 or even 9. No mortal creature has ever achieved a Ring of 10, though divine creatures such as Fortunes or foul demons such as Oni may attain such power.

Although Rings may increase over time as a character gains more Experience, a Ring is never increased directly. Rather, a Ring is equal to the lower of the two Traits beneath it. For example, if Marc's character Tsuruchi Jurichi has a Reflexes of 4 and an Awareness of 2, then his Air Ring (the element made up of Reflexes and Awareness) would be 2. If Jurichi's Awareness increased to 3, his Air Ring would also increase to 3.

AIR

Air is mercurial and enigmatic, the element of intuition and understanding. Air exists everywhere save in the deepest domain of other elements, and is witness to all things that transpire there. Air is the essence of subtlety and innuendo, but also the source of speed and storms. The wrathful aspect of air can tear down buildings, capsize ships, and lend speed to even the swiftest of warriors. Those strong in Air sense things they cannot know, and follow their instincts as often as they use reason. Those weak in the element are sluggish in body and oblivious to even obvious events. Air is represented by the twin Traits of Awareness and Reflexes.

Awareness is a representation of a character's intuition and empathy. Awareness allows a character to sense others' feelings and motivations, even on scant evidence. It also permits characters to alter their demeanor to better reflect the moods of others, allowing them to influence others with charisma, persuasion, and outright manipulation. Awareness is the catch-all Skill for social interaction, and many important Skills employ it.

Reflexes measures how quickly characters can react to events unfolding around them. Characters with a high Reflexes Trait react without thinking, relying on their superior instincts to guide them. Reflexes determine Initiative in combat, a character's Target Number to be hit, and affect archery rolls.

EARTH

Earth is eternal and unchanging. While Water represents active strength, Earth is the quiet resilience that endures centuries. Earth is the mountain, the reservoir of power and endurance that all reach for in times of strife. The power of Earth is not merely physical, but also represents strength of will. The mountain is unchanging, and it is also patient. Those who bear the strength of Earth are tireless in both mind and body, ever ready for whatever trials await them. Those weak in Earth tire quickly and cannot focus on the tasks at hand. Earth is represented by the twin Traits of Stamina and Willpower.

Stamina represents a character's inner reserve of physical energy. A high Stamina would allow a character to run at full speed for long periods of time, or carry a heavy load farther than others could. Stamina also affects the rate at which a character recovers from the effects of wounds, poison, or disease.

Willpower measures a character's ability to focus mental energy. A high Willpower would allow a character to remain attentive to something for a long period of time, perhaps listening to a sensei's instruction or the recitation of one's ancestors. Willpower is also used to resist certain mental effects from spells or natural abilities.

FIRE

Fire is dynamic and energetic, an element of potential and change. Force and motion are the province of Fire, as are inspiration and illumination. Fire drives a warrior to greatness, guiding his hand and steel in a perfect stroke. Fire burns in the mind of the erudite, inspiring them to devour existing scholarship and seek out new lore. Those strong in Fire are skilled combatants with tremendous agility, or brilliant scholars who stun the Empire with their vast storehouse of knowledge. Those weak in Fire are clumsy and awkward, and have difficulty comprehending even simple concepts. The twin Traits of Fire are Agility and Intelligence.

Agility measures a character's hand-eye coordination. Virtually all physical feats that do not depend specifically on speed or strength are based on Agility. The vast majority of weapon Skills are based on Agility, making it one of the most important combat Traits.

Intelligence rates a character's ability to acquire and apply knowledge. A character with a high Intelligence gathers and processes information quickly, and recalls it clearly. Characters with low Intelligence have difficulty remembering even basic details. Like Awareness, Intelligence is the base for a large number of important Skills that govern all manner of non-physical activities. Shugenja, monks, and virtually any character that wishes to pursue non-combat endeavors will be required to roll Intelligence regularly.

WATER

Water is the least static element, ever changing. It is the element of strength. Unlike the mountain, whose strength lies dormant, Water's strength is never still, wearing away at obstacles with tireless intensity. Water also represents clarity, bringing the world into sharper focus. Those strong in Water are powerful physically and possess keen senses. Those weak in Water are physically weak and dull-witted, noticing very little of the world around them. The twin Traits of Water are Perception and Strength.

Perception measures how attentive a character is to events around him. A character with a high Perception notices even small details such as tears in clothing or small changes to common insignia. Characters with low Perception are generally oblivious to things around them.

Strength is the amount of physical power that a character possesses. It measures sheer force, with no consideration of finesse. Strength determines the amount of damage characters inflict with melee weapons or hand-to-hand techniques. It also determines how much they can lift and carry. Characters with a high Strength can be devastating warriors, while those with a low Strength are ineffectual on the battlefield.

VOID

The fifth and final element is Void. Void is poorly understood by mortals, who seek to quantify all things. Void is everything and nothing; it binds the other four Rings together, and at the same time is the nothingness that exists between them. It is the divine spark that all humans possess as a result of their descent from Amaterasu's tears and Onnotangu's blood, representing their unity with the universe.

Unlike the other Rings, Void does not have Traits associated with it. Instead, a character gains a number of Void Points per day equal to his Void Ring. Void Points have many uses (see the Book of Fire for more information), but their most basic use is to enhance the number of dice a character rolls and keeps on any given task. At the beginning of a round, before dice are rolled, a character may declare that he is spending a Void Point. This allows him to roll and keep one additional die for whatever roll he is making. The phenomenon is experienced by the character as a moment of incredible clarity and oneness with the world, a flash of insight, or something similar.

Example: Trevor's character Bayushi Shinal is attempting to use Stealth to sneak past a sentry. With an Agility of 3 and Stealth 2, he will roll 5k3. Concerned that this is not enough, Trevor declares that he is spending a Void Point, increasing Shinal's dice from 5k3 to 6k4.

A high rating in Void indicates a character has a deep spiritual connection to the world around him. Though some may exist in this state in blithe ignorance of their unique natures, more often those with a high Void are shugenja, monks, or particularly devout bushi such as the Shiba. Conversely, a low Void Ring indicates a self-centered individual who has not opened himself up to the things around him. His lack of Void Points will restrict his chances for moments of epiphany.

Skills

While Rings and Traits measure a character's innate physical and mental abilities, Skills represent the abilities they acquire through training and experience. In a very real sense, Traits define what a character is, while Skills define what he knows. The foundation for Skills begins early in a samurai's training, when he enters a dojo for the School he will study throughout his lifetime. A certain number of Skills are taught as standard in each individual School; most offer curricula that allow students to pursue individual courses of study during their training. As a result, while two samurai who study at the same School always have certain Skills in common, they may have wildly different training in other Skill areas.

Like Rings and Traits, Skill ranks range from 1 to 10. A rank of 1 in a particular Skill indicates that the character has been introduced to the basic elements of that particular activity. A rank of 10 in a Skill is exceptionally rare, possessed by only a handful of individuals throughout the Empire. A student of the Ide Emissary School, for example, might have a Courtier Skill of 1 or 2, whereas the fearsome Bayushi Kaukatsu, the Imperial Chancellor and one of the most powerful men in the Empire, might have a 9 or 10.

Most rolls combine a single Skill with a Trait. In this combination, Skills add additional dice rolled for the attempt, dramatically increasing the chances of success with each die rolled. Beyond this, many Skills offer additional benefits at high ranks. For a complete list of Skills and the advantages they convey, see the Skills section later in this chapter.

Clan, Family, & School

Once players understand how Traits and Skills work, the character creation process can begin in earnest. At the end of the Book of Water, there is information on all eight Great Clans as well as some of the prominent Minor Clans. This information includes details on the individual families within each Clan, descriptions of the Clans themselves, detailed descriptions of the samurai schools maintained by each Clan, and the general attitudes each group holds toward the other groups. The first three steps to creating a character are to select his Clan, family, and School.

STEP ONE: CHOOSE A CLAN

The most defining element of a character is the Clan to which he belongs. Great Clans each have a general stereotype that best describes the average member of that Clan. Obviously, there is great variety in each Clan, but for new players these stereotypes can be useful. A player interested in an honorable soldier might find the Lion or Phoenix of interest, while one looking for a care-free archer might choose the Mantis or Unicorn instead.

STEP TWO: CHOOSE A FAMILY

Each Great Clan is made up of several distinct families, each with a proud lineage and history. Each family has its own unique training and tendencies, and therefore confers a +1 bonus to a single Trait. For instance, Crab characters who are members of the Hida family gain a +1 bonus to Strength, meaning that their Strength at the time of character creation will be 3 instead of 2 (or possibly higher if other bonuses are received).

Ronin characters do not normally receive a family bonus, as ronin families are extremely rare.

STEP THREE: CHOOSE A SCHOOL

Each Clan maintains different Schools that train their samurai to serve their family and Clan. This chapter details four Schools for each Clan, including the following archetypes: bushi, or warrior; shugenja, or priest; courtier, or court representative; and one other school that demonstrates a crucial facet of that Clan's theme.

A School confers a second +1 bonus to a specific Trait, much like the one gained from selecting a family. A character's School also determines his beginning Honor Rank, starting equipment (or "Outfit"), and his initial Skill Ranks. Many Schools teach only five or six specific Skills, and allow the character to choose the final Skill. This is typically restricted by Skill type, such as "any 1 High Skill" or "any 2 Bugei Skills." Characters may elect to use this bonus to add a rank to one of the School's specific Skills instead. For example, a character attending a School that taught Courtier, Defense, Etiquette, Kenjutsu, Kyujutsu, and any 2 Bugei Skills could choose to use one of their elective Bugei Skill ranks to add a rank to Defense, Kenjutsu, or Kyujutsu, which are Bugei Skills. These ranks could not be added to Courtier or Etiquette, which are High Skills.

Ronin characters are unique with regard to School selection. A ronin has six Schools to choose from, three bushi schools and three shugenja schools. Ronin characters may choose not to select any of these schools, instead receiving 15 additional Character Points. Ronin who do so may not gain any Techniques until they advance to Insight Rank 2 (see below for more information regarding Insight Rank) and must find a sensei willing to train such a wild student.

Character Points

Once the family bonus and basic School information have been recorded, including Trait bonuses and beginning Skills and Honor, the pre-determined portion of a character's abilities is complete. In order to further develop a samurai's abilities and background, characters receive Character Points to purchase additional benefits beyond those received from family, Clan, and School.

Character Points are spent at character creation to refine out a character concept, developing it in whatever direction the player desires. These points represent the years of individualized training that all samurai receive as well as the results of physical and mental conditioning, social standing, financial standing, and other elements that differentiate one character from another.

Characters begin with 45 Character Points, which may be spent in the following manner:

- **Traits** — Characters may improve their Traits beyond the bonuses received from their family and School. Increasing a Trait requires a number of Character Points equal to the Trait's next rank multiplied by four. For example, increasing a Trait from 2 to 3 would cost 12 Character Points, while increasing a Trait from 3 to 4 would cost 16. A character can increase any given Trait only two Ranks beyond its starting Rank during character creation. School and Family Trait bonuses do not count against this maximum.
- **Void Ring** — Like a Trait, the Void Ring can be increased by spending a number of Character Points equal to the next rank multiplied by four.
- **Skills** — Character Points can increase existing Skills or purchase ranks in new Skills. This costs a number of points equal to the Skill's next rank. For example, increasing a Skill from 2 to 3 would cost 3 Character Points, and purchasing a new Skill at rank 1 would cost 1 point. A character can increase any given Skill only two Ranks beyond its starting Rank during character creation. School and Family Trait bonuses do not count against this maximum.
- **Advantages & Disadvantages** — Advantages, described later in this chapter, have a cost listed in the individual description. Disadvantages can be taken to gain additional Character Points, up to a maximum of 10 extra points (55 points total, or 70 points total for a ronin with no School).
- **Glory, Honor, & Status** — These three qualities, described later in this chapter, have a fixed beginning level. All samurai characters begin with a Glory of 1, a Status of 1, and an Honor determined by their School. Characters may increase their starting Honor by 1 rank by spending 3 Character Points. Characters may also choose to decrease their starting Honor by 1 rank, gaining 3 additional Character Points in the process. This is considered a Disadvantage. Glory and Status may be increased or decreased through Advantages, Disadvantages, or results on the Heritage Table.

Advantages & Disadvantages

Traits and Skills represent the physical and mental abilities, both innate and taught, that a character possesses. Some qualities, however, cannot be represented by Traits or Skills. Advantages and Disadvantages represent these physical, mental, social, and material qualities. Advantages tend to offer a mechanical benefit for characters, so they have a cost in Character Points. Conversely, Disadvantages hinder characters in some way. Selecting a Disadvantage for your character gains him a number of additional Character Points listed for that entry. A character may gain a maximum of 10 additional Character Points in this manner. Disadvantages may be taken in excess of 10 points, but only 10 points are received. For example, if a character takes a 3-point Disadvantage and a 5-point Disadvantage, he receives 8 additional Character Points (for a total of 53). If the same character also took a third Disadvantage worth 5 points, he would receive only 10 points total for his Disadvantages rather than 13. The mechanical penalties for all Disadvantages still apply even if the character does not receive their full Character Point value. Any effects that rely upon the amount of Disadvantage Points a character has, such as Bayushi Courtier techniques, apply as if the Disadvantages were worth their normal value.

Advantages are purchased during character creation, but characters might acquire them following their experiences in an ongoing campaign. For that reason, characters may purchase Advantages during play — if the GM approves it — by spending a number of Character Points equal to twice the listed cost for the Advantage. Advantages with the Inherent or Granted descriptors cannot be purchased after character creation.

An Inherent Advantage is a physical or mental quality that cannot be learned, but is an innate ability. Large, for example, is an Inherent Advantage, as one cannot learn to be large later in life, nor are adult samurai likely to suddenly grow six inches. Granted Advantages represent a quality or possession that cannot simply be acquired because the character wishes it. These Advantages may not be purchased unless the acquisition occurs during the course of play. The Advantage Social Position (Governor), for instance, cannot be taken unless the character has been appointed governor of a village, city, or province.

Disadvantages may be acquired after play begins. Unless the GM so wishes, however, Disadvantages acquired during play do not award additional Character or Experience Points to the character acquiring them.

Honor

All characters possess a quality called Honor. It is an intrinsic measure of a character's moral fiber and devotion to the tenets of bushido, the principles that define the duty of a samurai. It is a measure of a man's nobility and purity, and one that, unlike Glory and Status, is not subject to the perception of others. When determining whether an act is honorable or dishonorable, the only view that matters is the samurai's. A samurai with a high Honor is loyal to a fault and lives or dies by the sanctity of his word. He never sullies his name with questionable practices: the consumption of sake, gambling, or association with those of ill repute. An honorable samurai reveres his ancestors and prays each day. By

Peasants and Non-Samurai

Although the vast majority of characters in *Legend of the Five Rings* are samurai, there may be players who wish to experience another side of life in Rokugan by playing a non-samurai character. The most common type is a monk. Monks, while not of the samurai caste, are nevertheless respected by peasant and samurai alike, and have much more access to society than other non-samurai. Rules for playing monks can be found in the *Book of Air* on page 251.

Playing peasants or other non-samurai characters is another matter altogether. Such individuals, typically from the heimin, hinin, or eta social classes, are not accepted in samurai society, and are generally regarded as lesser beings. Non-samurai are not permitted to wield traditional weapons of war (save for certain designated groups, such as ashigaru or budoka), and do not have access to Schools as samurai do.

Ashigaru are peasants trained in basic elements of combat. Their usual weapon is the spear, but other polearms are not uncommon. Ashigaru legions are still maintained during times of peace, and often supplement samurai guards and sentries in large cities or towns.

Budoka are individual ashigaru of extraordinary ability that have caught the eye of a samurai. A samurai may choose to train a budoka as part of his duties to his lord, ensuring that one more trained warrior stands between his daimyo and any threat that may present itself. Budoka are permitted to use a variety of weapons, but the daisho is strictly forbidden on pain of death, both that of the budoka and of his sensei.

Neither ashigaru nor budoka characters belong to a family or School. They may spend Character Points to purchase additional ranks in Traits, Skills, or Advantages as normal.

contrast, a character with a low Honor is untrustworthy and overly concerned with worldly matters. His ancestors turn their back on the shame he brings to their name. A dishonorable man gives his word freely with no intention of keeping it, shows no compassion for those of lesser station, and serves his lord only in a fashion that benefits himself. While the self-imposed restrictions a samurai with a high Honor endures may seem a burden, those with a low Honor suffer considerable disadvantages. Characters of low Honor are more susceptible to temptation and can be manipulated by their vices. When characters are required to make a Test of Honor (see the *Book of Fire* for more information), disaster can befall those who fail.

It is possible for characters to gain a sense of another person's Honor. Characters with a high Awareness have an advantage when attempting to discern another's Honor. An individual with a low Honor has the feel of a rogue, a scoundrel, and a villain, whereas a character with a high Honor radiates nobility, trustworthiness, and strength of character. As might be imagined, the former tend to have a more difficult time finding allies in court, making profitable trade agreements, and receiving appointments to important positions.

RANKS & POINTS

A character's beginning Honor is determined by his School. Honor is divided into ranks and points, with ten points making up a single rank. Most Schools allow a character to begin with a certain Honor rank and 5 additional points toward the next rank. Most actions that a character takes will be appropriate for their Honor rank (see the rank descriptions below), and cause no change in their Honor. Sometimes, however, a character may perform a task that is appropriate to a higher Honor rank. When this happens, the character is typically awarded some number of Honor points in recognition of this act. When a character reaches 10 Honor points, he advances to the next rank.

Example: Tim's Phoenix samurai has an Honor of 1.8 (he has not been particularly virtuous in recent months). While traveling through Simple Fortunes Village, he sees a burning building and hears cries of help from inside. The samurai rushes in to save the victim, demonstrating the bushido virtue of compassion. The GM awards him 4 points of Honor, bringing the Phoenix samurai's Honor up to 2.2.

Just as Honor can be awarded for valorous acts, it can be taken away for dishonorable acts. Characters who commit acts that are beneath their current rank can be penalized Honor points. If this reduces the number of points they have below zero at their current rank, the rank is dropped and points removed as appropriate. For example, a character with 3.2 Honor who loses 3 Honor points for dishonorable actions ends up with an Honor of 2.9.

More information on awarding or removing Honor, and on utilizing Tests of Honor in a campaign can be found in the *Book of Fire*.

Glory & Status

While Honor measures how a character views himself, how others view him is equally important. Two Traits called Glory and Status represent different aspects of a samurai's reputation and notoriety throughout the Empire.

Glory is a measure of how well known a character's deeds are. Glory comes as a result of performing heroic acts in the public eye, receiving accolades from one's superiors, or fighting well in a battle. A samurai with a high Glory may be the subject of plays or poems, and will likely be chatted about in court. A person with a low Glory is not well known outside of their close family and friends.

Status, on the other hand, is less fame than power. It is a measure of how much political and social clout an individual possesses. The Emperor has a Status of 10, the highest possible rank, whereas a beginning samurai typically possesses only a single rank. Status can be acquired through appointments to positions of responsibility. Governors, ambassadors, daimyo, and officers tend to accumulate Status more quickly than those without responsibility.

Glory and Status interact in different ways. Someone with a high rank in both is both famed and important, such as a successful general who became the head of an Imperial Legion. Conversely, someone with a low rank in both is both unknown and unimportant, such as the average beginning character. A character with a high Glory and low Status is well-known for some relatively unimportant task, perhaps as a yojimbo for someone important. A character with a high Status and a low Glory is important but obscure, perhaps serving as a key functionary in a minor branch of the Otomo or Miya families, or perhaps a quiet, unassuming ambassador between two hostile Clans.

More detailed information on Glory, Status, and the systems for those Traits can be found in the *Book of Fire*.

Heritage

Heritage, history, and lineage are extremely important to a samurai. Every samurai lives under the scrutiny of his ancestors and desires only to live a life worthy of their legacy. A samurai's heritage is represented by the Heritage Table, which can be found on page 153 of this chapter. Rolling on the Heritage Table helps establish background information for players who are not certain how to develop their characters, or for players who prefer an element of chance in their character generation. Various mechanical benefits can be conferred by die rolls on the Heritage Table.

Insight Rank & School Rank

Insight Rank and School Rank are two important qualities that measure a character's overall degree of proficiency. Generally speaking, Insight Rank can be seen as a measure of a character's physical and mental prowess through advancing his Traits and Skills, while School Rank is a reflection of how the character has parlayed these increased abilities into training in his Clan's private Techniques.

INSIGHT

To calculate a character's Insight Rank, take the sum of all five Rings (Air, Earth, Fire, Water, and Void) and multiply it by 10. Add to this the total sum of all the character's Skill ranks. Finally, take note of any special abilities that confer additional Insight bonuses, whether from Advantages, Skill rank bonuses, or any other source. This total is the character's Insight.

For example: Andy is calculating his character's Insight. His Unicorn character's Rings are as follows: Air 2, Earth 2, Fire 3, Water 3, Void 2. From Rings alone, his character's Insight is 120. Andy's character also has 11 ranks in different Skills, bringing his Insight up to 131. Because this is a beginning character, Andy's Unicorn samurai does not have any Skills at a high enough rank to confer an Insight bonus, nor does he have any Advantages or other abilities granting such bonuses. On his character sheet, Andy notes that his character's Insight is 131, and is Insight Rank 1. When the samurai's Insight reaches 150, he will advance to Insight Rank 2.

In addition to determining a character's Rank, Insight determines the potency of many abilities, including Techniques and Advantages. Many such effects specifically reference Insight Rank when determining the size of a bonus, including bonus dice, Free Raises, number of times per use, or other bonuses. These bonuses may be relatively weak at character creation, but grow increasingly more powerful as the character increases in Insight Rank, reflecting the character's continual improvement as he accumulates experience.

INSIGHT RANK

Insight	Rank
0 — 149 points	1
150 — 174 points	2
175 — 199 points	3
200 — 224 points	4
225 — 249 points	5
250 — 274 points	6
275 — 299 points	7
300+ points	8

SCHOOL RANK

Although intrinsically tied to Insight Rank, School Rank is distinctly different from it. School Rank specifically refers to a character's rank in an individual School, regardless of his overall Insight Rank. A character of Insight Rank 6 who has completed his original School's path of study and has moved to a second School, for example, would be considered School Rank 1 in that second school. When the character was prepared to advance to Insight Rank 7, he could learn an additional Technique and simultaneously advance to School Rank 2 in the new School.

School Ranks in Schools that teach Techniques are limited to 5. Bushi, courtiers, and others with such Schools reach the maximum level of proficiency in that School upon reaching Rank 5, and must pursue further teaching elsewhere. Shugenja Schools are different, and allow a shugenja to advance until they reach a maximum of Rank 8 in the School.

Advancing in School Rank is not automatic. A character whose Insight qualifies him to advance in School Rank must return to his home dojo and present himself to his sensei, who must in turn agree to teach the character the next Technique in that School. Realistically, this is a lengthy, drawn-out process that could take weeks or months. Unless this takes place between adventures, however, this can be somewhat prohibitive in terms of time management. For that reason, such training can be assumed to take a number of days of intensive training equal to the new Technique rank being learned. A samurai returning to learn his Rank 3 Technique, for example, would require no less than three days of intensive training alongside his sensei. Sensei under such circumstances often require challenging tests of their students in order to prove their Skill, something that can lead to numerous adventures.

Advanced Characters

Most campaigns begin with inexperienced characters, fresh from their gempukku. Sometimes, though, a GM may plan a more challenging campaign that demands experienced characters. Use the following guidelines for creating characters at advanced Insight Ranks.

1) Create characters as normal using the standard allotment of 45 Character Points. Make certain to do this step first and separately, because some Advantages can only be obtained during initial Character Creation. The GM must review all characters so he can disallow any obvious attempts to exploit this process (such as spending all 45 Points on Inherent Advantages).

2) Each character gains an additional allotment of Experience Points to spend normally, depending on the Intended Insight Rank of the party.


Rank 2: 40 Experience Points

Rank 3: 95 Experience Points

Rank 4: 160 Experience Points

Rank 5: 230 Experience Points

3) Take a look at the party. Keep in mind that the second step is a general guideline. Characters who spend more on a single Trait or purchase lots of Advantages will end up with lower Insight than those who spend their points more evenly. Consider whether this is a problem. If characters end up at a much higher rank than the GM intended, or much lower, he may wish to redistribute points accordingly.



Using Skills

Skills are one of the most defining aspects of your character. His Skill list delineates his talents and knowledge. Two characters with the same School, Family, Clan, and Profession might have wildly different Skills, and thus fill two very different roles in a party. Through Skills, a bushi might be able to function in a social setting nearly as well as a courtier, and a courtier could hold his own in the field of battle.

When the game calls for a Skill Roll, it is described as "Trait/Skill," with any Emphasis in parentheses. For example, if you are called upon to make a roll using the Awareness Trait and the Courtier Skill with the Manipulation Emphasis, the text will read, "Make an Awareness/Courtier (Manipulation) roll."

Skills are divided into several categories. All schools teach a number of Skills (in addition to the Skills a starting character can purchase) and some schools allow a degree of flexibility in selecting these Skills. Generally, these Skills must be selected from one or two categories. In Rokugan, some Skills are only practiced by members of certain social classes. While members of other classes can potentially learn and practice them, to do so is regarded as a curious and sometimes dishonorable act.

Bugei Skills: These Skills are typically the province of the warrior. Though a handful of weapons and fighting techniques (such as Kenjutsu) are the exclusive domain of samurai, fighting Skills are also very common among ashigaru, budoka, and other warriors throughout Rokugan. A bodyguard, magistrate, or military officer will favor these sorts of Skills.

High Skills: Rokugan is a land proud of its traditions. Learning the subtleties of the Empire's culture is no easy task, and is a role generally reserved for the courtier. This is the domain of High Skills, involving art, politics, and lore. Even the fiercest samurai warrior is expected to be somewhat versed in the arts and competent enough in the domains of etiquette to protect himself from embarrassment. A sage, scholar, or intellectual will possess a large number of these Skills.

Low Skills: There are certain Skills that, while arguably necessary, are seen as unclean and dishonorable. These are Low Skills. For a samurai, to use or display knowledge of a Low Skill is usually a shameful act. Though many Low Skills offer exceptions to this rule, every use of a Low Skill causes a samurai character to lose Honor Points equal to his current Honor Rank. Additionally, any time a samurai character learns or increases a Low Skill, he loses Honor Points equal to the new Rank. Even though they are technically samurai, Ronin can both learn and use Low Skills without Honor loss (though many ronin refuse to do so).

MERCHANT SKILLS

Falling somewhere between Low Skills and High Skills, Merchant Skills describe practices that, while not the domain of a samurai, are not inherently shameful. A samurai who practices a Merchant Skill may be regarded with mild disdain, for he is partaking in an activity usually reserved for peasants, but he will not necessarily shame himself. Merchant Skills typically involve crafts, economics, or other tasks more suited to a peasant than a samurai.

Making Skill Rolls

As described on page 158, Skill Rolls combine a Skill and Trait. To perform a Skill Roll, roll a number of dice equal to your Skill + Trait and keep a number of dice equal to your Trait. This Skill Roll is set against a TN determined by the GM.

UNSKILLED ROLLS

A character may attempt to make a Skill Roll without the appropriate Skill, but faces a number of penalties for doing so.

- 1) No dice can explode on an Unskilled Roll.
- 2) No Raises may be declared on an Unskilled Roll, and Free Raises cannot be used.
- 3) Unskilled Rolls may not be used in conjunction with Techniques or Kata. For example, a Kata that can be used with any Weapon Skill cannot be used if you have no ranks in the weapon you're wielding. Though Void can be spent on an Unskilled Roll, Techniques that allow you to spend multiple Void Points on a single roll cannot be used.

FAILED SKILL ROLLS

If you fail at a Skill Roll you can generally make another attempt. However, the price of failure must still be paid. If, for instance, you were crafting an item, the materials are now wasted. If you were attempting to manipulate someone, they now realize your intent and will be resistant to future attempts. If you were attempting to sneak past someone, they now realize you are there and sneaking becomes impossible unless you can escape their attention. Naturally, if your character does not realize that you failed a Skill Roll, you cannot attempt it again.

In general, Intelligence- and Perception-based Skills cannot be attempted again if failed unless new knowledge is gained (such as new evidence coming to light or an increase in your Skill Rank). If you do not possess the knowledge or wisdom to solve a problem the first time, having another go at it will be fruitless.

GROUP SKILL ROLLS

In most cases, a Skill Roll is resolved by a single player. Occasionally, a single Skill Roll represents the efforts of an entire group. Many Skills list what sort of Group Skill Rolls are generally used and how they are used, though at the GM's option almost any Skill might be performed as a Group Skill Roll if it makes sense for the efforts of multiple characters to be represented that way.

There are two basic sorts of Group Skill Rolls, and each is resolved in a different manner.



COOPERATIVE SKILL ROLLS

A Cooperative Skill Roll is used when the efforts of additional party members do not necessarily make the task easier, and when in fact a less-trained party member might interfere with the efforts of more skilled party members. The best example of this would be the Stealth Skill. Another example would be a party using the Climbing Skill to scale a mountain, roping themselves together for safety. Though a more talented member might be able to cover the mistakes of his party members to some degree, a clumsy party member will hamper the party's overall efforts.

When making a Cooperative Skill Roll, use the average Skill and average Trait of the entire party (rounding down) to perform the roll. If half or more of characters involved in the Skill Roll are unskilled, the roll must be made as an Unskilled Skill Roll.

Example: Hiruma Tanako, Kaiu Kenji, and Hida Hideyoshi are all attempting to sneak past a Lost checkpoint. Tanako has Stealth 5 and Agility 4. Kenji has Stealth 2 and Agility 3. Hideyoshi has no Stealth Skill and Agility 2. The average Stealth Skill (counting Hideyoshi's Stealth as zero) is 2 ($5+2+0$, divided by 3 = 2). The average Agility is 3 ($4+3+2$, divided by 3 = 3). Thus the party is rolling $5k3$ on this Skill Roll. The party moves a bit less quietly than Tanako could move alone, but without his friends' help Hideyoshi would be unable to make the attempt at all.

Note that if Kenji also did not possess the Stealth Skill, the party would be unable to make a Cooperative Skill attempt at all. Tanako could always sneak on alone, of course, but he would be unable to compensate for the clumsy actions of both his friends. Of course, Kenji could always spend a Skill Point to be considered Skilled for a single Skill Roll, but doing so might be quite risky if a second Skill Roll were suddenly required and Kenji found himself out of Void.

CUMULATIVE SKILL ROLLS

A Cumulative Skill Roll is used when the efforts of additional party members is beneficial, even if some party members are significantly less skilled. A good example of this would be the Investigation Skill, where multiple investigators search a single area for clues. While the most talented investigator would likely find the most useful information, he might also help his less skilled comrades to discover clues they might otherwise have overlooked. Multiple craftsmen working on a single large project is another example of this sort of Skill Roll.

When making a Cumulative Skill Roll, a single member of the group is designated the leader. This leader declares how many Raises he intends to make, and then the TN is set. Each other member of the group must now roll against this TN, minus five (the

Skill Subtypes

Beside the major Skill types (Bugei, High, Low, and Merchant), there are a number of important subtypes. Many Advantages and Techniques employ Skills that fall into one of the following categories.

ARTISAN SKILLS

Artisan Skills involve creating objects of permanent art. These Skills are often important to courtiers and some shugenja. Artisan Skills differ from Craft Skills in that the items they create often have no obvious practical use, other than sheer beauty. Artisan Skills are generally High Skills.

CRAFT SKILLS

Craft Skills involve creating permanent, useful items. Craft Skills differ from Artisan Skills in that the items they create are intended for a practical purpose. Though these objects can often be beautiful, their utility is usually the primary concern. Any Technique or Advantage that applies to an Artisan Skill can also apply to a Craft Skill so long as it is only used to make the resulting item more beautiful. Craft Skills are generally Merchant Skills.

LORE SKILLS

Lore Skills involve learned knowledge, usually resulting from studying centuries of accumulated research. These Skills are most important to shugenja and courtiers, though bushi also find occasional use for them.

PERFORMANCE SKILLS

Similar to Artisan Skills, the goal of a Performance Skill is to bring beauty to the world. Use of a Performance Skill usually does not leave behind a permanent item. To fully enjoy

the use of a Performance Skill the audience must be present while it is being used. Courtiers frequently find these Skills useful to impress potential allies.

SCHOOL SKILLS

Specific Skills are never designed as School Skills, but some Techniques do offer bonuses to "School Skills." This refers to any of the basic Skills taught by that school. If the school offers a choice of Skills (e.g. "Any one High Skill") the player should note which Skill is his School Skill, in case it is affected by Techniques.

SOCIAL SKILLS

Social Skills are important to a number of courtier techniques and related Advantages. Any Skill that involves non-physical interaction with another person is a Social Skill, and its use is a Social Skill Roll. Any Contested Skill Roll that involves only Awareness, Willpower, Intelligence, or Perception and is of a non-violent nature is also a Social Skill Roll, even if the Skills involved are not normally Social Skills. For example, two samurai making Contested Intelligence/Kenjutsu rolls to discuss the merits of their respective fighting styles are making Social Skill Rolls.

WEAPON SKILLS

Simple enough, any Skill that directly involves the use of a weapon or weapons in combat is a Weapon Skill. These Skills are important to the use of many bushi Techniques and Advantages.

Optional Rule: Insight and Skills

It can be extraordinarily easy for characters to boost their Insight Ranks by taking many Skills at Rank 1. If the GM feels that the players are abusing this possibility he can institute the following rules:

1) Characters only gain Insight for a number of Skills equal to the total of their Rings, though they may choose which Skills grant them Insight.

2) A character may improve any old Skills he possesses normally, but may not learn more than one new Skill a month.

Under normal circumstances, these rules are unnecessary, but it may be in order if a character is taking a dozen Skills at Rank 1 merely to pad out his Insight, or filling out the last few Insight points of every Rank with Skills that aren't really needed or in character.

task is not quite as difficult for them since they are merely assisting). Any Free Raises the leader gains for this roll do not affect the TN for other group members, though they may apply any Free Raises that they are individually entitled to. Each participant who successfully meets this TN grants the leader a Free Raise when he makes his Skill Roll. Each participant who fails this Skill Roll contributes nothing. If the party leader fails the final Skill Roll then the attempt fails even if the rest of the group succeeded.

Example: Doji Tansho, Kakita Ahime, Daidoji Miroku, and Asahina Kotaru are questioning a group of servants to determine if any of them saw anything suspicious the evening before. Tansho has Awareness 5 and Investigation 4, Ahime has Awareness 4 and Investigation 3, Miroku has Awareness 4 and Investigation 2, and Kotaru has Awareness 5 and no Investigation Skill. Tansho is selected as the group leader. The GM decides the TN for learning any useful information is 15, but Tansho feels that this investigation will require a great deal of thoroughness, so she declares three Raises, increasing the TN to 30. Each other member assisting Tansho must now roll against TN 25 as they question the servants. Ahime, Miroku, and Kotaru roll a 29, 18, and 32, respectively. When Tansho makes her own Skill Roll vs. TN 30, she gains two Free Raises, as two of her companions successfully assisted her.

Learning New Skills

Much like learning new Techniques, the amount of time needed to learn a new Skill depends entirely on the GM's tastes. Some campaigns move very quickly and do not offer the downtime to train in new Skills, placing developing characters at a disadvantage. Thus, the rules for learning new Skills are left purposefully vague. However, some guidelines can be helpful.

Learning or improving a Skill requires an amount of time proportionate to the new Rank. For example, learning a new Skill at Rank 1 might take a single day, but improving a Skill from Rank 4 to Rank 5 would take five days.

To learn a new Skill, you must either have an instructor or be reasonably able to teach the Skill to yourself. For example, you might improve your Kenjutsu Skill by fighting with your katana and practicing with it extensively, but a Lore Skill would be difficult to teach

yourself without access to a library or other resource of knowledge. Of course, sufficient Experience Points must also be spent to improve the Skill.

To receive instruction from another character (or NPC), the instructor must have at least 3 Ranks in the Skill in question and their Rank must be higher than your own. If you wish to learn an Emphasis from an instructor, your instructor must have that Emphasis (though their Skill Rank need not be higher than yours).

Emphasis

Some Skills list a number of Emphases in their description. Emphases are extremely specific applications of that Skill. For example, while the Kenjutsu Skill gives mastery of several types of swords, the Katana Emphasis gives greater knowledge of that specific weapon. Likewise, while the Courtier Skill gives one a general knowledge of courtly intrigue and political maneuvering, the Sincerity Emphasis grants a keener ability to convince others that you believe in what you are saying. An Emphasis costs a number of points equal to twice the number of Emphases your character will have in that Skill after that Emphasis is learned. Thus, the first Emphasis costs 2 points, the second costs four, et cetera. You can have only one Emphasis in a Skill you possess at Rank 1.

When using a Skill in an area where its Emphasis applies, you may add your Skill Rank to the total of your roll. If more than one possible Emphasis applies to a single roll, you may only gain the bonuses of one. Some Emphases grant Emphasis Abilities that allow you to use your Skill in unusual ways. Any Skill applications that fall under a Skill's Emphasis Ability cannot be used unless you possess that Emphasis.

Mastery Abilities

Many Skills offer Mastery Abilities. These are bonus abilities you may use if you reach a certain Rank of the Skill. All Mastery Abilities are cumulative unless noted otherwise. In addition to the Mastery Abilities listed under the Skill Description, all Skills offer the following Mastery Abilities.

RANK 1: APPRENTICE

At this Skill Rank you may have a single Emphasis in your chosen Skill. Emphases granted by your school do not count against your maximum.

RANK 3: NOVICE

At this rank you may begin teaching your Skill to others. You may now have three Emphases in this Skill.

RANK 5: JOURNEYMAN

At this rank you gain +2 Insight for your knowledge of this Skill. You gain a Free Raise when using this Skill. You may now have five Emphases in this Skill.

RANK 7: MASTER

You may now have six Emphases in this Skill.

RANK 10: GRAND MASTER

At this rank you gain an additional +5 Insight for your mastery of this Skill. The number of Raises you may make when using this Skill is no longer limited by your Void. There is no limit on the number of Emphases you may have in this Skill.



Skill List

All Skills are described in the following manner:

Skill Name (Trait) — The name of the Skill and the most commonly associated Trait. The name will also denote if this Skill is actually a broad category containing multiple Skills (which must be learned and purchased as separate Skills).

Subtypes — Subtypes applicable to this Skill are listed here in italics. If there are no subtypes, this entry will be absent.

Emphases — Available Emphases.

Description — What the Skill and its Emphases do.

Mastery Abilities — Abilities gained from higher Ranks in this Skill. If there are no special Mastery Abilities aside from those inherent in all Skills, this entry will be absent.

Group Skill Rolls — What sort of Group Skill Rolls normally apply to this Skill. If there are no special Group Skill Rolls, this entry will be absent.

Honor Losses — Any uses of this Skill that cause an Honor Loss. In the case of Low Skills, uses that do not cause an Honor Loss will be described instead. If there are no special Honor Loss rules, this entry will be absent.

High Skills

Acting (Awareness)

PERFORMANCE SKILL

EMPHASES: Disguise, Kabuki, Mimicry, Noh

You have an understanding and appreciation of the theater. There are two kinds of theater in Rokugan: Kabuki and Noh. Kabuki is flamboyant and full of action and color. It is "samurai" theater, telling the great and tragic tales of lords from the past. Noh theater, by contrast, is quiet and subtle, with light music and little movement against a black backdrop. The TN for an average performance is 15, though a tough audience may require Contested Skill Rolls. Critics use Perception/Acting to find holes in your performance.

EMPHASIS ABILITIES

Disguise: The Disguise Emphasis grants you the ability to disguise your appearance. The base TN to disguise yourself as a generic individual of the same profession, Clan, and gender is TN 25. More complex disguises require higher TNs, as well as higher Rank in the Acting Skill. The TN of any Perception/Investigation roll to pierce Disguise or Mimicry is 15. If you Raise to make the illusion more difficult to pierce, the TN of the Perception/Investigation roll increases by the same amount. Anyone who knows you well gains a Free Raise to recognize you.

Note that within the context of the theater, it is not necessary to disguise yourself, only to perform. Most audiences indulge in some suspension of disbelief and assume you are whomever you pretend to be. A successful Skill Roll to disguise yourself, however, convinces your audience that you truly seem to be the person portrayed.

Mimicry: This Emphasis allows you to disguise your voice

MASTERY ABILITIES

Rank 3: You can now disguise yourself as a member of another Clan, profession, or social caste. Any of these options increase the disguise TN by 5. You can also disguise your voice to sound like another gender.

Rank 5: You can now disguise yourself as a person of the other gender. Doing this increases the TN to disguise yourself by 5. You may disguise your voice to sound like a specific person, increasing the TN of your disguise by 5. The base TN to pierce your disguises is now 25.

Rank 7: You can disguise yourself as a specific person. Doing this increases the disguise TN by 5 (if this person is another profession, social caste, Clan, or gender, or if you wish to disguise your voice as well, then these increase the TN accordingly). Anyone who knows this person well gains two Free Raises to pierce your disguise. The base TN to pierce your disguises and mimicry is now 35.

Rank 10: You can convincingly disguise yourself even as a human-sized nonhuman creature. Doing this increases the disguise TN by 5. The TN to pierce your disguises and mimicry is now 50.

GROUP SKILL ROLLS: When several actors are performing at once, all actors playing a significant part in the scene must make a Cooperative Skill Roll.

HONOR LOSSES: This Skill is considered a Low Skill if used to dishonestly portray yourself as someone other than who you are.

Artisan Skills (Awareness)

EMPHASES: Various

This is not a single Skill, but a catch-all category for a variety of artisan Skills that have no pronounced mechanical effect. Origami (paper folding), bonsai (miniature tree tending), gardening, ikebana (flower arranging), painting, sculpting, and tattooing are all good examples. Each Skill must be purchased and increased separately. An Emphasis in this Skill denotes a specific style in the selected art form with which you are particularly proficient (like sumi-e ink brush painting, or sculpting in a specific medium such as stone).

MASTERY ABILITIES

Rank 5: You gain +2 Insight.

Rank 10: You gain +2 Insight.

Calligraphy (Intelligence)

ARTISAN SKILL

EMPHASES: High Rokugani, Specific Clan Cipher

Calligraphy is not mere penmanship; it is an ancient and honored form of art. You are skilled not only at writing, but at writing beautifully and reading complex forms of calligraphy. The High Rokugani Emphasis concentrates on the official style of calligraphy used by the courts of Rokugan in all official texts.

EMPHASIS ABILITIES

Cipher/Specific Clan Cipher: All Clans also have their own specific cipher, used on shugenja scrolls and other private texts. This cipher cannot be written or read without the proper Emphasis.

HONOR LOSSES: This Skill is a Low Skill if you display knowledge of a Clan's cipher other than your own without that Clan's permission. Teaching a Clan cipher to an outsider without the permission of the Emperor or your Clan Champion is an extremely dishonorable act.

Courtier (Awareness)

SOCIAL SKILL

EMPHASES: Gossip, Manipulation, Political Maneuvering

You are skilled in the arts of politics. Along with Etiquette, this is the most important Skill a courtier possesses. A Skill Roll vs. TN 15 allows you to observe a social setting and determine who seems to be in charge and what political gambits are transpiring. Those who are attempting to conceal their influence may make an opposed Awareness/Etiquette roll to avoid your detection. The Political Maneuvering Emphasis applies to such rolls.

This Skill can also be used to manipulate others. A successful Awareness/Courtier roll, contested by your target's Awareness/Etiquette Roll, reveals some hint of your target's needs and desires. Normally these attempts are somewhat obvious: even if you learn the truth your target will know that you are prying. If you have the Manipulation Emphasis, you can make a Raise to learn this information in a subtler manner. With a successful roll, your target will not realize he has revealed anything.

This Skill can also be used to hunt or spread gossip. To hunt rumors, you must spend a day in court discussing a particular person or subject, rolling Awareness/Courtier vs. a TN of 15. If the roll is successful, you learn one juicy rumor about the subject. There is a base 50% chance that the rumor is true, though truthfulness doesn't guarantee usefulness. ("Shinjo Shono dyes his hair!") For every Raise you make, the chance of truthfulness increases by 5% to a maximum of 80%.

To spread rumors about a person or subject, you must spend a day speaking about the target in court, then roll against (Target's Glory) — (Your Glory) × 10. If the TN to spread the rumor would be less than 15, it automatically becomes 15. This Skill only insures the rumor goes into circulation; it doesn't insure that anyone believes it. Keep in mind that gossiping behind someone's back is a good way to get challenged to a duel.

If you have the Gossip Emphasis, you can make a Raise on either of these rolls to conceal the fact that you are hunting or spreading gossip.

HONOR LOSSES: When used to spread untrue rumors or seduce someone into performing a dishonorable act, Courtier is considered a Low Skill.

Divination (Awareness)

LORE SKILL

EMPHASES: Astrology, Kowaru, Omens

You are skilled at using techniques outside the normal domain of shugenja magic to catch a glimpse of the future. Some call these techniques peasant magic, but they have become quite popular and are practiced by some samurai. Even shugenja, who have access to more reliable forms of divination, often use these techniques to supplement their magic, if only for entertainment value.

A Divination attempt may be made once per day, vs. TN 15. If successful, the GM will reveal some hint of what is to come. Divinations of this sort are notoriously vague ("there are difficult times ahead"). You may spend a Void Point to make an additional Divination attempt.

Emphases describe specific forms of divination. *Astrology* uses the movement of heavenly bodies to predict the future and thus can only be performed at night. *Kowaru* uses a series of hexagrams cast using stones, sticks, or coins.

EMPHASIS ABILITIES

Omens: You are not limited in your uses of this Skill per day but may make a Skill Roll every time the GM tells you your character believes he has seen a portentous omen.

Etiquette (Awareness)

SOCIAL SKILL

EMPHASES: Bureaucracy, Conversation, Sincerity

You know what to say and when to say it. You know Rokugani social mores, how to save face, and how to protect yourself from manipulation. Along with Courtier, this is the most important Skill a courtier possesses.

The Conversation Emphasis makes you adept at small talk. A successful Awareness/Etiquette roll vs. TN 15 allows you to find an inoffensive topic of conversation. This can be a pleasant way to pass the time, but it can also be a stalling tactic, keeping a potential enemy busy while your comrades act elsewhere. The GM may require Raises or a contested Awareness/Etiquette roll to escape your conversation if the target is suspicious. A highly suspicious target can, of course, break off the conversation at any time, but not without appearing foolish and arrogant.

Etiquette can also be used to appear that you sincerely believe what you are saying, and the Sincerity Emphasis helps here. While this cannot be used to tell an outright lie, it can be used to avoid the truth or avoid a shameful reply. For example, if an overweight samurai asks, "Do you believe I am as fit as Matsu Nimuro?", you might reply, "I do believe that the Golden Lion would vanish into your mighty shadow, my lord," and be praised for your sincerity. Sincerity can also be used to reveal your belief in something that is legitimate truth. (For outright lying, see the Deceit Skill.)

EMPHASIS ABILITIES

Bureaucracy: If you are seeking information and do not know where to obtain it, a successful Intelligence/Courtier roll vs. TN 15 reveals the most likely candidate (though more obscure information will require Raises to find the source).

MASTERY ABILITIES

Rank 3: The TN of any contested Social Roll made against you is increased by 5.

Rank 7: The TN of any contested Social Roll made against you is increased by 5.

Rank 10: The TN of any contested Social Roll made against you is increased by 10.

GROUP SKILL ROLLS: You can make a cooperative Etiquette Skill Roll with one other person. This is usually done to help a boorish companion avoid embarrassing himself.

Games (Awareness) — Multiple Skills

SOCIAL SKILLS

EMPHASES: Various

This is a catch-all category for a variety of intellectual games that have no pronounced mechanical effect. Some examples are Fortunes and Winds (a popular dice game), Go (Rokugan's premier strategy game), Sadane (a courtly game of exchanging subtle insults) and Shogi (a game similar to chess). Each Skill must be purchased and increased separately. Emphases denote specific styles of play, and can be selected by Clan. (The GM is free to invent styles for his campaign, such as the Rich Frog Gambit style of Go.) Contested rolls must be made with opponents to determine the winner.

MASTERY ABILITIES

Rank 5: You gain +2 Insight.

Rank 10: You gain +2 Insight.

HONOR LOSSES: Making money by playing any of the above games (Gambling) is considered a Low Skill. The Crafty Disadvantage can thus be used to make use of this Skill, but in and of itself may only be used to play Fortunes and Winds.

Instruction (Intelligence)

EMPHASIS: Specific Skill or School

You are skilled at teaching. This Skill is required to teach Skills and Rank Techniques to another character. The TN to successfully teach a Skill is equal to five times the Rank to which the student's Skill will be increased. The TN to successfully teach a Rank Technique is the student's current Insight Rank \times 10. If you fail at your Skill Roll, the student loses no Experience Points for the failed attempt.

EMPHASIS ABILITIES

Specific Skill: You must have Emphasis with a Skill or School to teach that area of knowledge. You must possess a Skill at Rank 5 or higher or have Rank Techniques in a School to learn the appropriate Emphasis.

MASTERY ABILITIES

Rank 5: You gain +2 Insight.

Rank 10: You gain +2 Insight.

HONOR LOSSES: If you use this Skill to teach a Low Skill, Instruction is considered a Low Skill. Teaching Rank Techniques to those outside your Clan without permission from your Clan Champion or the Emperor is highly dishonorable.

Investigation (Various)

EMPHASES: Interrogation, Search, Notice

Investigation is a magistrate's most important Skill, and uses a variety of different Traits. Perception is used to investigate a crime scene, while Intelligence is used to put disparate facts together and Awareness is used to interrogate suspects.

When using this Skill to search an area, such as a crime scene, meeting a TN of 15 will reveal one relevant item or clue after a reasonable amount of search time.

Raises may be used to find more items, or more useful clues. The Search Emphasis applies directly to such rolls.

When interrogating a suspect, you make a contested Awareness/Investigation (Interrogation) Roll. What Skill your targets use depends how they wish to reply to your questioning. If they wish to lie or hide the truth, they use Willpower/Deceit. If they wish to reply with threats or obstinate silence, they use Willpower/Intimidation. If they wish to change the subject or distract you, they use Willpower/Courtier (Conversation) or Willpower/Deceit (Seduction). Other Skills may also be used to resist interrogation if they make sense in the context of the questioning.

Investigation is also used in Contested Rolls against Stealth and Sleight of Hand. The Notice Emphasis applies directly to seeing through such subterfuge. Notice is also used against Forgery but this is not a Contested Roll (see the Forgery Skill).

MASTERY ABILITIES

Rank 5: You may make one additional attempt to search for clues or interrogate a suspect after you have already failed once. (This is an entirely separate Skill Roll and attempt; you approach the problem from a new direction.)

Rank 10: You may make another attempt to search for clues or interrogate a suspect after you have already failed twice.

GROUP SKILL ROLLS: A group using Investigation to Search makes a Cumulative Skill Roll.



Lore Skills (Intelligence) — Multiple Skills

EMPHASES: Various

This is a catch-all for a variety of areas of knowledge. Some examples are Ancestor Lore, Astronomy, Ghosts, Heraldry, History, Kolat, Law, Lying Darkness Lore, Naga Lore, and Superstitions. Any or all of these areas of knowledge can be extremely useful. Shugenja are expected to be knowledgeable in a variety of subjects. Courtiers gain a great deal of respect by showing off obscure knowledge, from expertise on ancient battles to knowledge of tropical fish. Each Skill must be purchased and increased separately. Emphases would denote specific areas of interest, such as a specific Clan, Naga Bloodline, historical period, or the like.

MASTERY ABILITIES

Rank 5: You gain +2 Insight.

Rank 10: You gain +2 Insight.

Medicine (Intelligence)

LORE SKILL

EMPHASES: Antidotes, Disease, Herbalism, Nonhuman Medicine, Wound Treatment

This Skill is used to cure various ailments and injuries. The most common application is to cure Wounds. A Medicine Kit (a pouch containing a variety of herbs, bandages, and remedies) is needed to use the Medicine Skill. The contents of a Medicine Kit allow fifty uses of the Medicine Skill before they must be replaced.

A given person may have his Wounds treated only once per day. To do so, you must spend three rounds tending his Wounds, during which time neither of you may move, and roll a Medicine/Intelligence (Wound Treatment) roll vs. TN 15. If this roll is successful, you heal 1 die of Wounds. You may make Raises on this the Medicine roll to roll additional dice of treated Wounds, but you keep only one die. Each Raise you make uses an additional dose of medicine.

EMPHASIS ABILITIES

Antidotes: Required to cure poisons; see page 161.

Disease: Required to treat disease; see page 161.

Herbalism: The materials in a Medicine Kit can be replaced in a large city (for the price of a new kit) or foraged in any wilderness area. To forage, you must make a Perception/Medicine (Herbalism) roll vs. TN 15. Roll one die to determine the number of doses of medicine found. You may make a Raise to roll an additional die to determine how much medicine you find, though you keep only one die.

Nonhuman Medicine: This is required to use any application of this Skill on a nonhuman creature. When this Emphasis is chosen, you must choose a race (Naga, Nezumi, zokujin, etc). This Emphasis may be chosen multiple times, for different races.

MASTERY ABILITIES

Rank 3: You roll an additional die when determining how many Wounds you treat. You may treat the Wounds of someone who has already been treated once today.

Rank 5: You keep an additional die when determining how many Wounds you treat.

Rank 7: You roll an additional die when determining how many Wounds you treat or how many doses of medicine you forage. You roll an additional die when determining how many Wounds you treat. You may treat the Wounds of anyone who has not been treated more than twice within the last hour.

Rank 10: You keep an additional die when determining how many Wounds you treat. You may treat the Wounds of anyone who has not been treated twice within the last hour, and use only one dose of medicine any time you use this Skill.

Meditation (Void)

EMPHASES: Fasting, Void Recovery, Zanji

By spending an hour in uninterrupted meditation and making a Void/Meditation (Void Recovery) roll vs. TN 20, you regain Void Points.

A Void/Meditation (Fasting) roll may be made to ignore the effects of going without food (allowing you to recover Void while fasting). The TN for this roll is 10, but increases by 5 every day since you last ate or slept.

EMPHASIS ABILITIES

Zanji: This Emphasis grants an almost supernatural awareness of one's surroundings. By meditating for an hour and making a Void/Meditation (Zanji) roll vs. TN 15 you gain a Free Raise on your next Perception-related roll.

MASTERY ABILITIES:

Rank 5: You now recover 4 Void Points (total) from Meditation.

Rank 7: You gain +2 Insight. You gain an additional Free Raise when using Zanji.

Rank 10: You now recover all of your Void Points from Meditation. You gain an additional Free Raise when using Zanji. The TN for fasting increase only by 1, not 5, per day since you last ate.

Performance Skills (Awareness) — Multiple Skills

EMPHASES: Various

This is a catch-all for a variety of performing arts that (like Acting) do not have a direct mechanical application. Examples include dance, music, song, and puppeteering. Each Skill may be purchased and increased separately. Emphases denote expertise with a specific instrument, style, or Clan technique. The TN for an average performance is 15, though a tough audience may require Contested Skill Rolls. Critics use Perception to find holes in your performance.

GROUP SKILL ROLLS: When several performers are performing at once, all contributors playing a significant part must make a Cooperative Skill Roll.

MASTERY ABILITIES

Rank 5: You gain +2 Insight.

Rank 10: You gain +2 Insight.

Spellcraft (Intelligence)

LORE SKILL

EMPHASES: Spell Research, Elemental Knowledge, Maho, School Knowledge

This Skill grants a general knowledge of magic and the rituals that accompany it. Even if you cannot perform magic, you know the names and effects of many different spells. Your knowledge can focus on a specific element, the magic of a certain shugenja school, or even maho.

The TN to identify a specific spell by studying its effects is the same as the base TN to cast that spell. You can specialize in the Spellcraft of a specific Element, Maho, or even a specific shugenja school, though you only gain the benefit of one Emphasis per roll. You can even identify a spell as it is being cast (necessary if you wish to cast an effective counterspell.)

EMPHASIS ABILITIES

Spell Research: This is required to create new spells, and can only be learned by shugenja. The base TN to create a new spell is equal to 10 + the spell's Mastery Level and requires a number of months equal to the Mastery Level. The GM has final approval on the effects of any and all new spells.

HONOR LOSSES: If you use this Skill to display knowledge of Maho inappropriately, or to research Maho spells, it is considered a Low Skill.

Storytelling (Awareness)

PERFORMANCE, SOCIAL

EMPHASES: Bragging, Oratory, Poetry, Rhetoric

You are talented at spinning tales, though entertainment is more of a concern than accuracy.

The Bragging Emphasis is used whenever you wish to use this Skill to impress others with someone's accomplishments (possibly your own). See the Glory rules regarding Public Bragging on page 179.

The Oratory and Rhetoric Emphases apply when telling recorded tales and refer to the spoken and written word respectively. The TN for an average story is 15, though a tough audience may require Contested Skill Rolls. Critics use Perception to find holes in your story. When writing a story, you roll once and the result permanently becomes the TN to critique that story. You may, of course, discard an unworthy version for future revision. In Rokugan, Poetry (especially haiku) is seen as a spontaneous spoken art form just as frequently as a written form of art, and thus may be used as either Poetry or Rhetoric (subject a very short form of it).

MASTERY ABILITIES

Rank 5: You gain +2 Insight.

Rank 10: You gain +2 Insight.

Tea Ceremony (Void)

PERFORMANCE SKILL

The tea ceremony is an ancient and revered tradition, an opportunity for any soul to find harmony in a simple, perfect act. A true Master of the Tea Ceremony is met with deference throughout the Empire.

Use of this Skill requires at least an hour in an undisturbed, quiet location and the use of a tea set. A successful Tea Ceremony requires a Void/Tea Ceremony roll vs. TN 20. All those involved in the ceremony regain one Void Point.

MASTERY ABILITIES

Rank 5: The Tea Ceremony now recovers 2 Void Points. One unskilled participant is considered to have one Rank in this Skill.

Rank 7: The Tea Ceremony now recovers 4 Void Points. Up to three unskilled participants are considered to have one Rank in this Skill.

Rank 10: The Tea Ceremony now recovers all Void Points. All unskilled participants are considered to have one Rank in this Skill.

GROUP SKILL ROLLS: Tea Ceremony is always a Cooperative Skill Roll when more than one person is involved.

Theology (Intelligence)

LORE SKILL

EMPHASES: Ancestor Worship, the Fortunes, Shintao

You are an expert in religious matters, and bear a deep understanding of Rokugan's spiritual side. You know the history of Rokugan's greatest religious figures as well as the wisdom they taught. Each Emphasis describes a specific aspect of Rokugan's religion. True mastery of this Skill is said to be the first step on the path of enlightenment.

MASTERY ABILITIES

Rank 5: You gain +2 Insight.

Rank 7: You gain +2 Insight.

Rank 10: You gain +10 Insight.

Merchant Skills

Animal Handling (Intelligence)

EMPHASES: Dogs, Falcons, Horses, other animal type

You are knowledgeable in the care and breeding of animals. You also know quite a bit about animal behavior. With the proper Emphasis you can use this Skill to teach an animal to perform tasks. At first you can merely teach an already tame animal to follow you or to stay (TN 15).

EMPHASIS ABILITIES

Specific Animal: You must have Emphasis with an animal to train that kind of animal.

MASTERY ABILITIES

Rank 3: You can tame a common domesticated animal if you have the appropriate Emphasis (dogs, falcons, horses) (TN 20).

Rank 5: You can teach an animal to attack or perform a complex trick (TN 25).

Rank 7: You can tame an animal that cannot normally be domesticated (bears, lions, wolves) if you have the appropriate Emphasis (TN 40).

Rank 10: You can command any animal you have trained with only subtle body language (requiring no action or speech on your part to command them).

Commerce (Awareness)

EMPHASES: Appraisal, Mathematics, Merchant

This Skill grants you expertise in trade and economics. It is not considered seemly for a samurai to personally indulge in financial matters, but many samurai adopt this Skill nonetheless so that they can oversee their vassals properly. This Skill can be used in Contested Skill Rolls when haggling over a price (Merchant), to estimate the price of a valuable item (Appraisal) or when simply calculating the taxes one owes the Emperor (Mathematics).

MASTERY ABILITIES

Rank 5: You can make an Awareness/Merchant roll vs. TN 20 to receive 10% more koku than usual when selling an item, assuming the seller can supply the funds. Only one merchant may apply this bonus to any given transaction.

Rank 7: You can make an Awareness/Merchant roll vs. TN 20 to pay 20% less koku than usual when buying an item. Only one merchant may apply this bonus to any given transaction.

Rank 10: As the Rank 5 and 7 abilities, but you receive 20% more and pay 30% less.

HONOR LOSSES: This is considered a Low Skill if a samurai is seen conducting trade in public. Exceptions are made for minor transactions such as buying a meal, purchasing a gift, or arranging lodging. Also, samurai can avoid this honor loss by "coordinating" a transaction, then turning the actual task of trading merchandise over to a peasant servant.

Craft Skills (Intelligence) — Multiple Skills

This is a catch-all category of several Skills that have no pronounced mechanical effect outside of the crafting rules on page 179. These Skills include Armorsmithing, Bowmaking, Carpentry, Cobbling, Cooking, Farming, Fishing, Masonry, Mining, Pottery, Shipbuilding, Tailoring, and Weaponsmithing. All of these Skills must be learned and increased as separate Skills. Emphases can indicate specific styles (either by Clan or new styles of the GM's devising). Armorer and Weaponsmith may be learned and practiced by samurai characters as if they were High Skills.

MASTERY ABILITIES

Rank 5: You gain +2 Insight.

Rank 10: You gain +2 Insight.

Engineering (Intelligence)

CRAFT SKILL

EMPHASES: Architectural Lore, Construction, Siege, Specific Clan Style

Engineering gives you a background in a variety of architectural and construction techniques. You can fashion plans for a structure using the crafting rules on page 179. This Skill can also be used to analyze the strengths of a particular structure with an eye toward destroying it. Spending an hour studying a structure (even from the outside) and making a Perception/Engineering (Siege) roll vs. TN 20 will grant you a Free Raise when using any siege weaponry or explosives on that structure.

MASTERY ABILITIES

Rank 5: You gain an additional Free Raise when using siege weapons or explosives after studying a structure.

Rank 10: You gain a second additional Free Raise when using siege weapons or explosives after studying a structure.

Locksmith (Intelligence)

CRAFT SKILL

EMPHASES: Lock Assembly, Lock Picking

You are skilled at fashioning locks, and can do so using the crafting rules on page 179. When fashioning a lock, you can make the lock sturdier, increasing the TN to pick the lock by 5 for each Raise you make. You can also make the lock trickier; for every three Raises you make in construction, the lockpick must make a Raise to open.

With the proper tools, this Skill can also be used to pick locks. To pick a lock, you must make an Intelligence/Locksmith (Lock Picking) roll vs. TN 15. More complex locks will require a higher TN. Picking a lock requires one minute.

MASTERY ABILITIES

Rank 5: You may now pick a lock in thirty seconds.

Rank 7: You may ignore up to one Raise that a lock requires to be opened.

Rank 10: You may now pick a lock in one round.

Bugei Skills

Athletics (Various)

EMPHASES: Climbing, Kemari, Running, Swimming

The Athletics Skill covers a variety of physical activities, from simple running to kemari, a popular ball game played in the courts. Though many applications of Athletics can be performed with a Raw Trait Roll, having this Skill makes such feats a great deal easier. The Trait used with Athletics varies with the activity. A short climb might use Strength. A sprint might use Agility. A marathon race or extended climb might use Stamina.

GROUP SKILL ROLLS: Climbing is a Cooperative Skill Roll if the climbers are securely linked with sturdy ropes. You may use Swimming as a Cooperative Skill Roll to keep one another afloat. A kemari team makes a Contested Cooperative Skill Roll against the opposing team.

Battle (Perception)

LORE SKILL

EMPHASES: Battle Lore, Skirmish, Mass Combat, Specific Enemy

You have a keen tactical mind, and are adept at devising strategies. This Skill is used to direct armies in mass combat and read terrain for advantages in skirmishes. You may spend three rounds studying an area for advantages. If you do so, you may gain a Free Raise on any skirmish fought in that area within the next day. Additionally, if enemies are waiting in ambush, you may make a contested Perception/Battle roll against their Initiative/Stealth to detect them. You may make a Raise on this roll to learn more information about your enemy, such as how many enemies you face, what weapons they are using, and if they are aware of your presence (one piece of information per Raise).

Emphases can apply to this Skill in skirmishes or mass combat. Additionally, you may take the Specific Enemy Emphasis: select a specific Clan or organization, or the Shadowlands. You gain the benefits of this Emphasis at all times when facing this enemy.

EMPHASIS ABILITIES

Battle Lore: You may use this Skill as a Lore Skill as it applies to Rokugan's history of mass combat, including famous wars, battles, and generals, and their tactics.

MASTERY ABILITIES

Rank 5: Once per combat, you may make a Reflexes/Battle Roll vs. TN 20 after you or a comrade strikes an enemy successfully. If you succeed, roll one die and add it to your initiative.

Rank 7: Reading terrain for Advantages now requires only one round. The Free Raise you gain may be passed to any ally who studied the terrain with you.

Rank 10: You gain three Free Raises when reading terrain for advantages.

Weapon Skills (Varies) — Multiple Skills

This is a general category for a variety of Weapon Skills. Each of these Skills covers a group of weapons, and must be learned as a separate Skill. Each weapon within a group may be selected as an Emphasis. Unusual weapons not found within any of these groups (such as longswords and whips) must be learned as a specific weapon Skill (and may be Emphasized as well). Many of these weapons also possess unique inherent abilities that are built upon by the Skills listed here. See the Equipment section on page 172 for details.

These Skills may also be used with Perception to judge the quality of a weapon.

Some Mastery Abilities modify the natural abilities of a weapon. For example, Heavy Weapons Mastery increases the ability of Heavy Weapons to ignore armor, and Kenjutsu mastery increases your ability to spend Void Points on damage with a sword. Weapons with abilities similar to those in other categories (such as the no-dachi or naginata) do not receive Mastery bonuses from those categories.

Chain Weapons (Agility)

EMPHASES: Kusarigama, Kyoketsu-shogi, Manrikikusari

MASTERY ABILITIES

Rank 5: You gain an additional Free Raise to Disarm or Unleash with a Chain Weapon.

Rank 7: You roll an extra die on Contested Strength Rolls to mangle an enemy with a Chain Weapon.

Heavy Weapons (Agility)

EMPHASES: Dai tsuchi, Masakari, Ono, Tetsubo

MASTERY ABILITIES

Rank 5: Your target's Armor or Carapace is reduced by 1 vs. your Heavy Weapon attacks.

Rank 7: Your target's Armor or Carapace is reduced by 1 vs. your Heavy Weapon attacks.

Kenjutsu (Agility)

EMPHASES: Katana, Ninja-to, No-dachi, Wakizashi

MASTERY ABILITIES

Rank 3: You may now spend an additional Void Point on a single damage roll.

Knives (Agility)

EMPHASES: Aguchi, Jitte, Sai, Tanto

MASTERY ABILITIES

Rank 5: You suffer no penalties for wielding two knives at once (though you gain no additional attacks).

Rank 7: You gain a Free Raise when wielding two knives; this Raise may only be dedicated toward gaining an additional attack.

Kyujutsu (Reflexes)

EMPHASES: Dalkyu, Hankyu, Horse Archery, Yomanri, Yumi

Note: The Horse Archery Emphasis negates penalties for firing a bow from horseback. Yomanri is not a specific weapon, but rather the style of archery practiced by the Unicorn: it allows an archer to use Agility rather than Reflexes when firing any bow.

Ninja Ranged Weapons (Reflexes)

EMPHASES: Blowgun, Metsubishi, Nageteppo, Shuriken, Tsubute

MASTERY ABILITIES

Rank 5: Your 10's now explode on damage rolls with shuriken and tsubute. Your blowgun attacks now inflict 1k1 damage.

Peasant Weapons (Agility)

EMPHASES: Kama, Kumade, Parangu

MASTERY ABILITIES

Rank 5: You inflict 0k1 additional damage with all peasant weapons.

Rank 7: You inflict 1k0 additional damage with all peasant weapons.

Polearms (Agility)

EMPHASES: Lance, Mai Chong, Sang Kauw, Sasumata, Sodegarami

MASTERY ABILITIES

Rank 5: You inflict 1k0 additional damage against mounted or large opponents when using a polearm.

Rank 7: You no longer suffer a damage penalty against non-mounted or large opponents when using a polearm (but you do not gain the Rank 5 bonus against them).

Spears

(Agility, or Reflexes for ranged attacks)

EMPHASES: Bisento, Nagamaki, Nage-yari, Naginata, Yari

MASTERY ABILITIES

Rank 5: You inflict 1k0 additional damage against mounted or large opponents when using a spear.

Rank 7: You no longer suffer a damage penalty against non-mounted or large opponents when using a spear (but you do not gain the Rank 5 bonus against them).

Staves (Agility)

EMPHASES: Bo, Jo, Nunchaku, Pipe, Sang Kauw, Tonfa

MASTERY ABILITIES

Rank 5: You no longer suffer a TN penalty against armored opponents when using a staff.

Rank 7: You gain an additional Free Raise on Knockdown attacks when using a staff.

War Fans (Agility)

EMPHASES: Gunsen, Menhari-Gata, Tessen

MASTERY ABILITIES

Rank 5: You suffer no TN penalties for attacking while holding a war fan in your off-hand.

Rank 7: You may add your War Fan Skill to your TN to Be Hit while wielding a War Fan.

Mastery Abilities (All Weapon Skills)

Rank 5: Your Wound Penalties to your attack rolls are reduced by your Weapon Skill when wielding this weapon.

Rank 10: When using this weapon, 9's explode on damage dice as if they were 10's.

Defense (Agility)

A critical Skill for all those who engage in combat, Defense is your ability to move swiftly out of harm's way. When in the Full Defense Posture, you make an Agility/Defense roll and add this number to your TN to Be Hit. Anyone can use the Defense Skill unskilled without penalty.

MASTERY ABILITIES

Rank 3: Add your Defense to your TN to Be Hit at all times, except when you are incapacitated, in the Full Attack Posture, or unaware of an enemy's attack.

Rank 5: If it is the first round of combat, you may declare the Full Defense Posture when initiative is rolled. This counts as your action for the round.

Rank 7: You now add twice your Defense to your TN to Be Hit at all times, except when you are incapacitated, in the Full Attack Posture, or unaware of an enemy's attack.

Rank 10: You may move or perform a complex action while in the Full Defense Posture.

Horsemanship (Agility)

You are skilled at riding a horse. You are also adept at controlling the animal in tense situations, such as combat.

MASTERY ABILITIES

Rank 1: You can fight while mounted.

Rank 3: You may use the Full Attack and Full Defense Postures while mounted.

Rank 5: Your steed uses your TN to Be Hit, if it is higher.

Rank 7: You gain a Free Raise when mounted on melee attacks against any unmounted opponents.

Rank 10: You may make a move as a simple action while mounted.

Hunting (Perception)

LORE SKILL

EMPHASES: Tracking, Trailblazing, Survival, Wilderness Lore

You are adept at surviving in the wild. You may use this Skill to find tracks in the wilderness or to hide your tracks from others (the latter is a contested Perception/Hunting roll). You also have general knowledge of flora and fauna. You know the behavior of wild creatures, what types of plants are poisonous, and what dangerous weather is approaching (the Wilderness Lore Emphasis applies to such knowledge).

EMPHASIS ABILITIES

Trailblazing: You can find safe passages even through rough and hostile terrain, allowing your group to move unmolested through wild areas. The default TN for this is 15, though it increases in more dangerous areas. (The TN for trailblazing in the Shadowlands is a minimum of 25.)

Survival: You can find sources of fresh water, or fresh food for a number of humans equal to your Hunting Skill, each day (a horse can usually graze for its own food, but in harsher climates needs as much food as three humans).

Iaijutsu (Reflexes)

This is the art of the quick draw, used in Iaijutsu duels. It can also be used in combat to draw a katana without using an action, by making a Reflexes/Iaijutsu roll vs. TN 20.

MASTERY ABILITIES

Rank 3: You may Focus an additional time in an Iaijutsu duel.

Rank 7: You roll an additional die when you Focus in an Iaijutsu duel.

Rank 10: You may Focus another additional time in an Iaijutsu duel.

Jujutsu (Agility)

This is the art of hand-to-hand combat. Anyone can use this Skill unskilled without penalty.

MASTERY ABILITIES

Rank 3: You roll an extra die for damage in unarmed combat.

Rank 7: You roll another extra die for damage in unarmed combat.

Rank 10: You keep an extra die for damage in unarmed combat.

Know the School (Intelligence) — Multiple Skills

LORE SKILL

This category describes a variety of Skills, each applicable to a different school. Pick any school that you have studied in some detail; any school you have attended applies, as does a school you've faced repeatedly in combat or sparred with sufficiently.

If this school is a shugenja school, you add your Rank in this Skill as a bonus to all Counterspell attempts against students of that school, as well as to all spells students of that school cast upon you.

If this school is a courtier school, you add your Rank in this Skill to all Contested Social Skill Rolls against students of that school.

If this school is any other type of school, including bushi schools, you may apply your Rank in this Skill as a bonus to your attack rolls against members of that school, and gain your Rank in this Skill as a bonus to your TN to Be Hit against the attacks of those who have studied at that school.

Low Skills

Anatomy (Intelligence)

LORE SKILL

EMPHASES: Autopsy, Diagnosis, Nonhuman Anatomy, Torture

You have a working knowledge of how bodies are put together. This sort of knowledge is generally reserved for eta, for excessive contact with flesh is necessary to truly master this Skill. This Skill may be used to determine the manner in which a person died. It may also be used to diagnose a living person: roll a Perception/Anatomy (Diagnosis) vs. TN 15 to gain a Free Raise on a subsequent Medicine Skill Roll on that target.

EMPHASIS ABILITIES

Nonhuman Anatomy: Select a specific race (kenku, Naga, scound, oni, etc). You may not use any application of this Skill on a non-human race without this Emphasis. You may select this Emphasis multiple times, selecting a different race each time.

Torture: You can extract information from a subject through application of pain or psychological threats. This is identical to the Investigation Skill's similar use, except that you can make repeated Skill Rolls on the same target until they provide the information you want to hear. (The downside of this, of course, is the potential that they merely told you what you wished to hear.) Torture is a reprehensible act for a samurai, but many magistrates keep at least one eta torturer on their staff to extract admissions from those proven to be guilty by convincing testimony and evidence (in Rokugan a criminal cannot be punished without confession).

HONOR LOSS: This Skill is a Bugel Skill for members of the Kuroi Family. There is no Honor Loss inherent in using this Skill to diagnose a living being (all other applications cause honor loss normally), but most other applications require touching flesh, making it a Low Skill.

Deceit (Awareness)

SOCIAL SKILL

EMPHASES: Intimidation, Lying, Seduction

This Skill is used to compel others to believe that which is untrue. When used to lie, it is usually used in Contested Skill Rolls opposed by the listener's Perception/Investigation. If you are lying about something that the listener has knowledge of (such as a Lore Skill), he may use that Skill to oppose your attempt instead.

This Skill is also used to seduce others. Seduction does not always involve matters of the flesh, but is a matter of offering others what they desire to meet your own ends. This can be to get something more valuable in return, to shame them into dishonorable action, or merely to manipulate them for the joy of doing so. Using Seduction to manipulate a target involves a contested Awareness/Deceit (Seduction) roll vs. the target's Awareness/Etiquette.

Intimidation is the manipulation of others through the use of threats. Keep in mind that the promise of outright violence, such as a Hida Berserker who is covered in blood and wielding a tetsubo, does not require any Skill Roll. Either someone is intimidated by such things or he is not. The Intimidation Emphasis denotes subtle coercion, threatening the target with dangers not obviously apparent. That being said, this Skill could be used by the aforementioned berserker to seem even more fearsome than he truly is. Such a roll is a Contested Willpower/Deceit (Intimidation) roll, opposed by the target's Perception/Investigation (if they do not believe your threats) or Willpower/Deceit (Intimidation) (if they wish to counter them with bravado).

HONOR LOSS: For a less dishonorable way to hide the truth, see the Sincerity Emphasis of Etiquette.

Explosives (Intelligence)

CRAFT SKILL

You are skilled in crafting explosives. Rules for this can be found in the crafting section on page 179. "Gaijin pepper" (gunpowder) has been outlawed in Rokugan since the Battle of White Stag over seven centuries ago, and is considered as dangerous and vile as blood magic. Though not all explosives utilize gunpowder, the difference is immaterial to most.

HONOR LOSS: The Agasha and Tamori families may learn Explosives as a High Skill. They use this Skill to create kagaku (fireworks), and lose no Honor in doing so unless those fireworks are used in combat against an enemy.

Forgery (Intelligence)

CRAFT SKILL

EMPHASES: Specific Artisan or Craft Skill

You may use this Skill to create counterfeit documents, reproduce handwriting, or create other handwritten fakes. If you possess the appropriate Craft or Artisan Skill (such as Painting) you may also use this Skill to create an item that resembles the work of another. You must make a successful Skill Roll to create the item before you make a Forgery Skill Roll to make sure it is an acceptable reproduction (those who wish to forge documents will need Calligraphy).

To create a forged item, you must make a Perception/Intelligence roll vs. $(10 + \text{the TN used to originally create the item})$. You must also either have a copy of what you are forging or be intimately familiar with its design. Most simple letters and handwriting are thus TN 15. Imperial travel papers and other complex documents (which use complex calligraphy to confound forgery) are a minimum of TN 25.

Seeing through your forgery is a Perception/Investigation roll vs. TN 15. An investigator must intentionally be searching for forgery to make this roll. You may make Raises when creating your Forgery to increase the TN to pierce the deception by 5 per Raise.

EMPHASIS ABILITIES

Specific Artisan or Craft Skill: You must possess a Skill allowing you to make a particular item before you can use Forgery to duplicate that item.

MASTERY ABILITIES

Rank 3: The TN to pierce your forgery is increased by 5.

Rank 5: The TN to pierce your forgery is increased by another 5 (total +10).

Rank 7: The TN to pierce your forgery is increased by another 5 (total +15).

Rank 10: The TN to pierce your forgery is increased by another 5 (total +20).

HONOR LOSS: There is no honorable application of the Forgery Skill.

Poison (Intelligence)

CRAFT SKILL

EMPHASES: Specific Poison Type

You may use this Skill to craft poisons (see the crafting rules on page 161). Brewing poison is both highly dishonorable and highly illegal. The Scorpion Clan nonetheless specializes in them, but most poison masters are also skilled in Medicine and can readily list the legitimate benefits of the strange creatures and herbs they keep in their laboratories.

MASTERY ABILITIES

Rank 3: The TN to resist poisons you create is increased by another 5 (total +5). You gain a Free Raise on all Medicine Rolls to create antidotes.

Rank 5: The TN to resist poisons you create is increased by another 5 (total +10).

Rank 7: The TN to resist poisons you create is increased by another 5 (total +15). You gain a Free Raise on all Medicine Rolls to create antidotes.

Rank 10: The TN to resist poisons you create is increased by another 5 (total +20).

HONOR LOSS: Learning this Skill is not inherently dishonorable, as many investigators and herbalists study poisons so that antidotes might more easily be created.



Shadowlands Lore

LORE SKILL

EMPHASES: Goblin Lore, Lost Lore, Ori Lore, Shadowlands Geography, Tsuno Lore

You know the creatures, history, and dangers of the Shadowlands. This is a Low Skill because the Shadowlands are not a topic for polite discussion. Raising such matters in the court is a shameful act if there is no obvious Shadowlands danger.

HONOR LOSS: There is no Honor Loss for learning this Skill. The only Honor Loss inherent in using it is displaying knowledge of the Shadowlands when there is no obvious need to do so. This Skill is considered a Bugei Skill for all members of the Crab Clan. The Crab do not consider it shameful to display knowledge of this Skill — to them, there is always obvious need to remember their enemy.

Sleight of Hand (Agility)

EMPHASES: Conceal, Escape, Pick Pockets, Prestidigitation

You are adept at manipulating objects in misleading ways. This Skill grants you the ability to conceal objects on your person and lift small items off an unsuspecting target. Both of these uses require an Agility/Sleight of Hand Roll opposed by the target's Perception/Investigation. Concealing larger objects or stealing items more likely to be noticed requires Raises (as determined by the GM).

You may use this Skill as a Performance Skill, along with the Prestidigitation Emphasis, to manipulate objects in an entertaining way. You can put on simple magic shows, making coins disappear or moving objects from hand to hand.

EMPHASIS ABILITIES

Escape: You may use this Skill to escape bonds. This is an Agility/Sleight of Hand (Escape) roll vs. TN 15 for simple ropes. Chains or manacles are TN 25. Higher quality bonds may require Raises.

HONOR LOSS: There is no Honor Loss inherent in using this Skill for Prestidigitation.

Stealth (Agility)

EMPHASES: Ambush, Shadowing, Sneaking, Spellcasting

The Stealth Skill grants a mastery of subterfuge and avoidance, offering the following abilities. None of the following Emphases are required to use their associated abilities.

You may use Stealth to find areas where a large number of people can be hidden easily. Upon finding a suitable hiding place, you may make a single Stealth Roll (with an Ambush Emphasis, if you have it) for a number of people equal to your Stealth Rank. If any of your allies move from this area they must use their own Stealth Skill to remain unseen. Finding hidden ambushers is a contested roll of Perception/Investigation (Notice) or Perception/Battle vs. the ambushers' Agility/Stealth (Ambush) roll.

Shadowing is the art of following someone without being noticed but without necessarily hiding yourself. This can only be done in crowded areas, but has the advantage that you need no hiding place. Shadowing requires an Agility/Stealth (Shadowing) roll contested by the target's Perception/Investigation (Notice).

Sneaking is the most common application of the Stealth Skill, and requires some form of cover or shadow to be effective. While

sneaking you may only move a maximum of half your normal speed and remain unnoticed (this is a complex action, so you cannot also attack). You make an Agility/Stealth (Sneaking) roll, opposed by the Perception/Investigation (Notice) rolls of any viewers.

The Spellcasting Emphasis is used specifically by shugenja who wish to cast spells without being noticed. This is described in detail in the Book of Air.

MASTERY ABILITIES

Rank 5: You may now move one-third your normal speed while sneaking as a simple action.

Rank 7: You may now use Ambush to hide a number of Ambushers equal to twice your School Rank.

Rank 10: You may now make a normal move while sneaking.

GROUP SKILL ROLLS: Sneaking or Shadowing with a group is a cooperative Skill Roll.

HONOR LOSS: No Honor is lost for learning the Stealth Skill unless you learn an Emphasis other than Sneaking. Sneaking does not generate Honor losses unless done for dishonorable purpose, such as moving uninvited through another samurai's home or territory or moving into position to attack an unsuspecting enemy. Military scouts and household guards do not lose Honor for using Stealth to perform their duties efficiently.

Traps (Intelligence)

CRAFT SKILL

You are skilled at creating traps. You can also use this Skill to disarm most mechanical traps. You may Raise when making traps to increase the TN to disarm them by 5 for each Raise. An average Quality trap can either inflict 2k2 damage to one enemy or grapple an enemy as if it were an attacker with 3 Strength. You must make an attack roll using Intelligence/Traps vs. whoever sets off the trap.

MASTERY ABILITIES

Rank 5: The TN to disarm traps you create is increased by 5.

Rank 7: The TN to disarm traps you create is increased by another 5 (to +10).

Rank 10: The TN to disarm traps you create is increased by another 5 (to +15).


HONOR LOSS: Members of the Daidoji and Kaiu families consider this a Bugei Skill, though using such traps for anything but to defend their Clan's homeland would lead to normal Honor Losses.

Underworld

LORE SKILL

You know your way around Rokugan's criminal society, including the major bandit gangs, smuggling cartels, and pirate organizations. You may use this Skill to arrange a meeting with criminals, find sources of illicit goods, or identify who seems to be the criminal mastermind in an area. Knowledge gained through this Skill is reliable, but based on rumor and hearsay and thus cannot be used to convict a criminal of a crime in and of itself. Ronin find this Skill extremely useful both for finding employment and identifying the dangerous areas where a lone samurai should not wander.

HONOR LOSS: This is considered a Bugei Skill for all magistrates and Kitsuki. Like Shadowlands Lore, displaying knowledge of the criminal underworld in polite company may be seen as dishonorable.



Advantages

The following Advantages can be purchased to develop and enhance a character at the time of creation. For the most part, Advantages represent abilities or possessions that cannot be reflected with Traits and Skills. Each Advantage lists how many Character Points must be spent to purchase it during character creation. If the GM wishes, Advantages may be purchased during play for a number of Experience Points equal to twice the listed Character Point cost.

Some Advantages have qualifiers. "Inherent" Advantages may not be purchased after character creation. "Granted" Advantages cannot be purchased after character creation unless events in the game have made them available. The Allies Advantage, for example, can only be purchased if a character has regular access to and has gained the trust of new allies.

ABSOLUTE DIRECTION (1 POINT)

You are never lost. You always know what direction is north, regardless of the circumstances. This Advantage does not apply when you are more than two days' travel into the Shadowlands.

ALLIES [GRANTED] (2-8 POINTS)

You are connected. You have an ally or allies who will assist you even under strange circumstances, but the strength of your alliance depends heavily upon the amount of points spent on this Advantage. The points paid into this Advantage determine your ally's devotion and influence. This can generate a wide range of results, from an extremely powerful ally who will provide only minor favors such as information or travel papers, to a minor adjunct in a powerful court who considers you as close as family, and who will risk his life to protect you from danger or dishonor. This Advantage costs 1 fewer point for Crane characters.

INFLUENCE:

- 1 point Minor (without land or political appointment)
- 2 points Moderate (some land or a minor political appointment)
- 4 points Major (vast lands or significant political power)

DEVOTION:

- 1 point Your ally would go out of his way, but not risk his family's honor to help you
- 2 points Your ally would risk his family's honor to help, but would do so secretly
- 4 points Your ally would do anything to aid you, regardless of the cost

AMBIDEXTROUS (4 POINTS)

You are equally skilled with both hands. When fighting with a weapon in your off-hand, you do not receive the normal +5 TN penalty. When fighting with two weapons, the normal penalties are reduced by 5, so that you have only a +5 TN penalty to all attacks. Dragon characters may purchase this Advantage for 3 points.

BALANCE [INHERENT] (5 POINTS)

You are blessed with an inherent sense of calm and composure. Efforts to taunt or antagonize you almost always fail. You gain a +5 modifier to the result of any Test of Honor. Hide, Monk, and Moto characters must pay 6 points to purchase this Advantage.

BENTEN'S BLESSING [GRANTED] (3 POINTS)

You have been noticed by one of the Seven Fortunes. Benten, the Fortune of Romantic Love, has graced you with his blessing. Whenever you are attempting to persuade someone, you add one additional die (two dice if the person is attracted to you). Crane characters may purchase this Advantage for 2 points.

BISHAMON'S BLESSING [GRANTED] (3 POINTS)

You have been noticed by one of the Seven Fortunes. Bishamon, the Fortune of Strength, has graced you with his blessing. For every 2 Raises you successfully make on an attack roll, you gain an additional Free Raise. Crab and Lion characters may purchase this Advantage for 2 points.

BLACKMAIL [GRANTED] (1-5 POINTS)

Information has come into your possession that would embarrass or even ruin another samurai. The cost of this Advantage is equal to the Status of your victim, which also reflects the amount of influence they have. Although overuse of this Advantage may result in your victim deciding your death is a worthwhile risk, if it is used sparingly they will be willing to do terrible things to keep their secret safe. This Advantage may be purchased multiple times, applying to a different individual each time.

A blackmailed samurai whose secret is revealed stands to lose a great deal depending upon the nature of the offense. For minor offenses will result in a significant loss of Status or Gain. More serious crimes can result in the loss of income or removal of Social Position Advantages, and the most heinous may even result in seppuku.

BLAND (3 POINTS)

You are quiet and unassuming, and therefore difficult to remember. As a result, you can move among others, even enemies, rather easily, although it may also be difficult for you to gain recognition for services you have performed for your lord. Others who attempt to remember or recognize you have their DC increased by 10.

BLESSING OF THE ELEMENTS [INHERENT] (4 POINTS)

The kami simply like certain shugenja, and you are one such. Your true nature mirrors that of your chosen element: the strength and stability of earth, the subtle understanding of air, the fluid flexibility of water, the raging fury of fire, or even the enigma of the void. You may purchase one of these Advantages only if you possess an Affinity for the element in question. Each Advantage provides two benefits: a discount on raising Traits or Rings with experience, and the ability to spend a Void Point to acquire a special benefit once per day. The Experience Point discount is such that the listed Traits (or Ring) cost one fewer point to increase than normal. Phoenix characters may purchase this Advantage for 3 points.

Element	Discount	Expend Void Point To...
Air	Awareness/Reflexes	Gain +5 TN to Be Hit for 1 minute
Earth	Stamina/Willpower	Gain one additional +0 Wound level for 3 hours
Fire	Agility/Intelligence	Add Fire to ranged attack results for 1 hour
Water	Perception/Strength	Determine movement using your Water +2 for 1 hour
Void	Void Ring	As an action, regain Wounds equal to 3x your lowest Trait

CHOSEN BY THE ORACLES [GRANTED] (7 POINTS)

You have been selected by one of the Oracles of Light, who watches your endeavors with interest. Although the Oracles have largely withdrawn from this realm, they still observe the mortal world on occasion. Select one Ring when you purchase this Advantage. You gain a bonus equal to your Insight Rank to the result when making a roll using that Ring of one of its associated Traits.

CLEAR THINKER (5 POINTS)

You are difficult to fool even under the worst circumstances. When someone tries to confuse, stall, or lie to you, he adds 10 to his rolls-TN. Opponents attempting to use the Feint maneuver against you in combat must make two Raises rather than the usual one. Dragon characters may purchase this Advantage for 4 points.

COMBAT REFLEXES (6 POINTS)

You have always reacted swiftly and with certainty. After Initiative has been rolled in a skirmish, you may choose to move up or down one space in the established order, essentially trading spaces with the combatant before or after you. For example, if your Initiative score placed you third in the combat round, you could choose to go second or fourth instead. The person originally supposed to go in that place would go third instead.

CRAB HANDS (8 POINTS)

You are particularly gifted with weapons. Your rank in all weapon Skills is considered 1 rank higher than it actually is. This additional rank is not counted when calculating Insight. If you wish to purchase a new weapon Skill, you must purchase it at rank 1 as normal. *Example:* Moto Tsuru has Kenjutsu 4 and no ranks in Kyujutsu. When firing his bow, Tsuru rolls as if he possessed Kyujutsu 1. Later, when he wishes to practice his archery, Tsuru pays 1 point to learn Kyujutsu 1, though he now performs as if he had two ranks in the Skill. Although this Advantage is most common among the Crab, hence its name, it is also possessed by skilled warriors in other clans, most notably the Lion, Mantis, and Unicorn. Crab characters may purchase this Advantage for 6 points.

CRAFTY (6 POINTS)

You have always been particularly clever, and also curious about things inappropriate for one of your station. Your rank in all Low Skills is considered 1 rank higher than it actually is. This additional rank is not counted when calculating Insight. If

you wish to purchase a new Low Skill, you must purchase it at rank 1 as normal. This Advantage does not negate any Honor loss for the use of Low Skills. Mantis and Scorpion characters may purchase this Advantage for 4 points.

DAIKOKU'S BLESSING [GRANTED] (3 POINTS)

You have been noticed by one of the Seven Fortunes. Daikoku, the Fortune of Wealth, has graced you with his blessing. You gain one Rank in the Commerce Skill (applied after you have finished character creation). When making Social Skill Rolls with peasants, you roll 2 additional dice. Unicorn characters may purchase this Advantage for 2 points.

DANGEROUS BEAUTY [INHERENT] (2 POINTS)

Something makes you irresistible to members of the opposite sex. You gain two additional rolled dice on every Deceit roll made against someone of the opposite sex. Scorpion characters may purchase this Advantage for 1 point.

DAREDEVIL (3 POINTS)

You are blessed with a natural athleticism that allows you to accomplish impressive physical feats. You gain a +5 bonus to the result of all Athletics rolls. Once per session, if attempting an action that the GM considers foolhardy or daring, you may roll a single die. If the result is higher than 5, you may add the result to a single Skill or Trait roll involved in that action.

DEATH TRANCE (3 POINTS)

You understand that death is your destiny, and you are not afraid. You roll three additional dice on any roll made to resist the effects of Fear, whether caused by a supernatural ability, a spell, or a Technique. Lion characters may purchase this Advantage for 2 points.

DIFFERENT SCHOOL [INHERENT] (3 POINTS)

You were trained in another clan's school, perhaps as part of a treaty or a friendly exchange between allies. After you select your clan and family, you may select a standard bushi, courtier, or shugenja school from any other clan as your school.

EBISU'S BLESSING [GRANTED] (3 POINTS)

You have been noticed by one of the Seven Fortunes. Ebisu, the Fortune of Honest Work, has graced you with his blessing. When making a Test of Honor, you roll and keep 1 additional die. Mantis characters may purchase this Advantage for 2 points.

FLEET (2-6 POINTS)

You are swift as the wind. You may move an additional 10' per round above the normal Water \times 10' per round for every point you paid for the Advantage. This Advantage costs 1 fewer point for Hiruma and Miya characters (they still gain the full movement benefit).

FORBIDDEN KNOWLEDGE (3, 5, OR 7 POINTS)

You possess knowledge of something that polite society considers taboo or blasphemous. How you came into such knowledge is up to you and the GM, but if others discover what you know, you might be shunned for the darkness they perceive in your soul.

In addition to your normal beginning Skills, you begin with an additional Lore Skill. You gain free Ranks in this skill (not counting against your maximum starting ranks) determined by how much you pay for the Advantage: 1 rank for 3 points, 2 ranks for 5 points, or 3 ranks for 7 points. This Skill must focus upon something that normal Rokugani society finds unclean or unacceptable: maho (blood magic), gaijin lore, Jigoku (the infernal realm), or other taboo topics. You also gain a Free Raise when using this Skill. This Advantage costs 1 fewer point for Phoenix characters.

FRIENDLY KAMI (3 POINTS)

One particular kami has developed an affection for you, and accompanies you wherever you go. You gain 1 additional spell per day with the element of your Affinity, and gain a Free Raise whenever using Sense, Commune, and Summon with your Affinity element. This relationship is mutual, and once per week you must make some sort of tribute or service to your ally to maintain the relationship. This tribute must be affiliated with the particular element. Fire kami, for example, may request the burning of valued documents, while earth kami may demand a heavy stone be moved to another specific location.

FRIEND OF THE ELEMENTS [INHERENT] (10 POINTS)

The secrets of the kami have become more obvious to your increasingly enlightened mind. You must select an element when you purchase this Advantage (Friend of the Air, Friend of the Earth, etc.); you may not choose Void. You may speak with the kami of that element as if you were a shugenja of equal Rank using the Commune spell. You also gain an additional benefit that varies according to the element in question:

Element	Benefit
Air	Gain a Free Raise on all Raw Trait rolls using Awareness
Earth	Gain a Free Raise on all Raw Trait rolls using Willpower
Fire	Gain a Free Raise on all Raw Trait rolls using Agility
Water	Gain a Free Raise on all Raw Trait rolls using Strength

Shugenja characters may purchase this Advantage for 7 points. Monk characters may purchase this Advantage for 5 points.

FUKUROKUJIN'S BLESSING [GRANTED] (3 POINTS)

You have been noticed by one of the Seven Fortunes. Fukurokujin, the Fortune of Wisdom, has graced you with his blessing. You gain 1 Insight for every Lore Skill you have above rank 3. This is in addition to the normal Insight bonuses granted by having these Skills at higher ranks. Dragon and Phoenix characters may purchase this Advantage for 2 points.

GAIJIN GEAR [GRANTED] (6 POINTS)

You possess a weapon or object not of Rokugani design. It may be an heirloom, or perhaps you defeated a gaijin and took his weapon as a trophy. In any event, each gaijin weapon requires its own weapon skill to wield. Examples of gaijin weapons include those from the Yobanjin tribes (ring sword, crossbow); Ivory Kingdoms (chakram, tulwar); Senpet Empire (mace,

khopesh, scimitar); Kingdom of Merenae (maul, cutlass, rapier, or even the distant Yodotal civilization (gladius, spatha, sword). There are items other than weapons available with this Advantage. Among them are such bizarre objects as looking glasses, books, compasses, and other oddities.

This Advantage not only represents possession of such a device, but access to gaijin materials in general. If the gear represented by this Advantage is stolen or destroyed, you may purchase another within a week's time, but are expected to retrieve any stolen item. Multiple such losses will result in the forfeit of the Advantage, as your Clan deems you incapable of guarding its treasures. Mantis and Unicorn characters may purchase this Advantage for 4 points.

GREAT DESTINY [GRANTED] (4 POINTS)

There is a great purpose in store for you. The universe will conspire to keep you alive until such time as you can fulfill this destiny. When you suffer Wounds that would normally kill you, you are instead reduced to a single remaining Wound at the Out level. The universe will protect you once in this manner per game session, but no more frequently than that. Once this destiny has been fulfilled, you gain the points paid for this Advantage as Experience Points. This Advantage may only be purchased after character creation if awarded by the GM.

GREAT POTENTIAL [INHERENT] (8 POINTS)

You possess a remarkable aptitude for a single aspect of your training, one so impressive that even your sensei was given pause. Select one Skill when purchasing this Advantage. When using that Skill, the number of Raises you may make is not limited by your Void Ring. When you reach Rank 10 in this Skill, its dice explode on a roll of 9 as well as 10, and you gain an additional 10 Insight.

HANDS OF STONE (8 POINTS)

Your hand-to-hand techniques are particularly devastating. In unarmed combat, you may keep two dice of damage instead of the normal one. This ability is quite remarkable, and other martial arts practitioners may seek you out to prove themselves. Bushi and monk characters may purchase this Advantage for 6 points.

HEART OF VENGEANCE [GRANTED] (5 POINTS)

For whatever reason, you have a terrible grudge against another clan, chosen when you purchase this Advantage. In any situation involving them, they always draw your wrath. Whenever you are using a Skill in opposition to a member of that clan, you keep an additional die. This applies whether you are engaging in an opposed Poetry competition, a spirited debate using Courtier, or an attack employing Kenjutsu.

HEARTLESS (2 POINTS)

Though others think you cruel and unfeeling, you merely have superior devotion to duty that they cannot understand. Any attempts to sway your opinion by evoking compassion, courtesy, or even love are pointless. Anyone attempting to change your mind through use of any Skill such as Courtier or Deceit receives +10 to his TN.

HIGHER PURPOSE [GRANTED] (2 POINTS)
 There is one overriding goal that defines your existence. Whenever you take a step toward achieving that goal, you gain one additional experience point at the end of that session. The GM is the only arbiter of when this additional experience is awarded. This Advantage may only be purchased after character creation if the purpose in question becomes a driving force in the character's life. Experience gained through this Advantage must be spent on something that furthers the goal. For example, the higher purpose of becoming the Empire's greatest duelist could result in Experience to be spent on Jujutsu, Reflexes, or Void. Experience from the higher purpose of winning one's true love might be spent on Poetry or Awareness.

HOTEI'S BLESSING [GRANTED] (3 POINTS)
 You have been noticed by one of the Seven Fortunes. Hotei, the Fortune of Contentment, has graced you with his blessing. You may never involuntarily lose Void Points, even if targeted by an effect (whether a Technique, spell, or otherwise) that normally causes such a loss.

IMPERIAL SPOUSE [GRANTED] (3 POINTS)
 Through political wrangling, you have been married to a member of the Otomo, Miya, or Seppun families. Although your spouse now bears your name, your connections to his or her previous family afford considerable benefits. When major news from the Imperial Court becomes available, you are among the first to hear. You may receive more koku than normal in your annual stipend. You also receive a Free Raise in social interactions with members of the Imperial families. Also see the effects of marriage on Glory on page 189.

INHERITANCE [GRANTED] (8 POINTS)
 Upon reaching your gempukku, you were honored by your family with an item once possessed by your revered ancestors. This object is sacred to you, and you will die before you allow dishonor to come to it. Whether a weapon or other object, you will die when using the Skill that applies to this item, and you gain a Free Raise when using any object of the same type in a non-combat situation due to your intimate familiarity with such objects. Examples of Inheritances and the benefits they confer include:

Inheritance	Bonus Die	Free Raise
Biwa	Performance (Music)	Any Performance roll made using a biwa
Go Board	Games (Go)	Battle rolls as long as owner is removed from the combat
Katana	Kenjutsu	Demonstrations of skill, performing kata, etc.
Kabuto	Defense	Rolls made to command or intimidate
Tea Set	Tea Ceremony	Social Skill Rolls made with participants for 1 hour afterwards

INNER GIFT [INHERENT] (10 POINTS)
 You possess a mysterious gift that even shugenja cannot truly understand. This may stem from some natural affinity for the kami, an ancestry that includes denizens of other Spirit Realms, a trick of khama, or some other element. Examples of an Inner Gift include:

Gift	Effect
Animal Ken	You may instinctively sense the feelings of animals; animals regard you as friendly
Empathy	You gain a +5 modifier to all Courtier rolls made to determine another's feelings/desires
Foresight	You are difficult to surprise, and gain a +3 modifier on all Initiative rolls
Lesser Prophecy	You sometimes have vague dreams of the future, such as a bloody knife before a murder
Spirit Touch	Awareness roll (TN 15) to see an image of last person to touch an object you are touching

IRREPROACHABLE (VARIES)
 Others find it impossible to tempt you into dishonorable behavior. For every 2 points you spend on this Advantage, attempts to bribe or seduce you are at +5 TN. You may not take the Greed or Lechery Disadvantages. You may not spend more points on this Advantage than you have ranks in Willpower.

ISHIKEN-DO [INHERENT] (10 POINTS, SHUGENJA ONLY)
 You possess a rare and sublime understanding of Void magic. You may learn and cast Void magic normally. Without this Advantage, you cannot learn Void magic. In addition, any time you spend a Void Point to enhance a roll when spellcasting, you gain a Free Raise to cast that spell. Only the Phoenix Clan can teach someone the secrets of Void magic. Thus if you are not a member of the Phoenix Clan, taking this Advantage also gives you a 4-point Obligation to the Isawa family. You gain no Character Points for this Disadvantage. If the GM decides that you have access to a non-Phoenix Ishiken capable of teaching Void magic, he may waive the Obligation; instead, you gain the Dark Secret Disadvantage (and no Character Points for it) as the Phoenix do not appreciate the sacred trust of their Ishiken training being handed out lightly. Phoenix characters may purchase this Advantage for 5 points.

JUROJIN'S BLESSING [GRANTED] (3 POINTS)
 You have been noticed by one of the Seven Fortunes. Jurojin, the Fortune of Longevity, has graced you with his blessing. Whenever you are rolling Stamina to resist the effects of any poison or illness, you roll and keep 2 additional dice. Scorpion characters may purchase this Advantage for 2 points.

KHARMIC TIE (1-5 POINTS)
 Another's destiny is bonded to yours. When you purchase this Advantage, you must select another person to whom your karma is tied, or perhaps to whom you were close in a previous life. The strength of this bond depends upon the number of points spent on the Advantage. For every point spent, once per game session you may roll (but not keep) an additional die when fighting for or protecting the person to whom you are bound. Whenever your Kharmic Tie drops to the Hurt Wound level, you immediately become aware that he is in danger.

LANGUAGES (1 POINT PER LANGUAGE)

You are familiar with a language other than the two primary dialects of Rokugan. When you purchase this Advantage, you may select from the following list a language that you can speak fluently: Naga, Nezumi, Ningyo, Ogre, Ruumal (Ivory Coast), Senpet, Sign Language, Thrane, Yobanjin. This Advantage may be purchased several times, once per language spoken. Since human mouths and throats are built differently, human characters who speak the Naga and Nezumi languages always have a strong accent. Other non-human languages may be understood, but not spoken. For an additional 1 point per language, you may be literate in any galjin language (Ruumal, Senpet, Thrane, Yobanjin) in which you are already fluent.

LARGE [INHERENT] (3 POINTS)

You are significantly larger than normal, ranging from 6'0" to 6'3" in height. The TN for all rolls you make in social situations is increased by 5, because you make others uncomfortable when you loom over them. However, you roll one additional die on all damage rolls made for melee attacks. You may not take the Disadvantage "Small." Crab characters may purchase this Advantage for 2 points.

LEADERSHIP (7 POINTS)

You have a talent for inspiring others. When making a Co-operative Skill Roll with others using a Skill you possess at least 1 rank in, the average Skill and Trait used for the group is increased by 1. Any members of the group who are unskilled are considered to have 1 rank in the Skill in question. Lion characters may purchase this Advantage for 5 points.

LUCK [INHERENT] (3, 6, OR 9 POINTS)

Fortune favors the mortal man, and you in particular. For every 3 points you spend on Luck, you may re-roll one roll per session. You may choose which of the two rolls to keep.

MAGIC RESISTANCE [INHERENT] (2, 4, OR 6 POINTS)

The kami are reluctant to answer prayers invoked against you, making you highly resistant to the magical effects of shugenja. For every 2 points you spend on Magic Resistance, shugenja add +5 to the TN of any spell cast that specifically targets you. If a spell affects an area, it may or may not affect you based on the shugenja's roll and whether or not it is high enough to affect you. For example, if you had 4-point Magic Resistance and a shugenja cast a fire spell that affected a 10' by 10' area and had a TN of 15, you would suffer the effects of the spell if the shugenja rolled a 26 when casting the spell, but not if he rolled a 21. Either way, the spell would normally affect everyone else in the area, because both rolls are above the normal TN.

Effects caused by magic that are not magical in nature are not affected by this Advantage. While a blast of fire from a shugenja's hand will be affected, a collapsing house that was set aflame by a spell will cause normal damage, as would an avalanche caused by an Earth spell. This Advantage costs 1 fewer point for Mantis characters.

MULTIPLE SCHOOLS [GRANTED] (CURRENT INSIGHT RANK × 5 EXPERIENCE POINTS)

For whatever reason, you have been given leave to study at a school other than the one where you began your training. This Advantage may only be purchased after character creation, when you are preparing to advance in Rank. A Crab samurai who is Rank 2 in the Hida Bushi School may, when he reaches the point at which he would advance to Rank 3, purchase Multiple Schools and instead gain the Rank 1 Technique of another school instead. The permission must be secured from one's daimyo, sensei, and the sensei of the school that is to be entered, a difficult task. Most sensei are extremely reluctant to permit students to train in this manner.

Before taking a Technique from another school, you must possess all of that school's School Skills at the same rank they are taught to beginning characters (usually Rank 1, but in some cases Rank 2, such as Stealth at the Hiruma Scout School.)

A Note on Multiple Schools

As the roles of a bushi and shugenja are clearly defined and separate, a character may not take ranks of both a bushi and a shugenja school. However, a shugenja or bushi can take ranks of other schools (including courtier schools). A courtier or other character is likewise welcome to take ranks in a bushi school or a shugenja school, but not both. Attendance at a shugenja school is possible only with the GM's permission, if the character has obviously displayed a deep connection with the elements and some untapped potential for magic is an ongoing part of his background.

SHUGENJA AND MULTIPLE SCHOOLS

The Multiple Schools Advantage is more complex when shugenja are concerned. A shugenja must be at least Insight Rank 3 before he can begin to acquire ranks from other shugenja schools. He does not gain any Techniques from the new School, but he does gain their Affinities and Deficiencies. The effects of these Affinities and Deficiencies stack with his current Affinities and Deficiencies. A shugenja may never enter a school where the element of Affinity is an element in which he currently has a Deficiency.

Example: Isawa Hideyoshi is a shugenja with Water Affinity and Air Deficiency. Upon reaching Rank 3, he decides to call upon some favors and attend the Kiso Shugenja school. He gains the Water Affinity and Fire Deficiency of that school. Thus his School Rank is now effectively two ranks higher when casting Water spells and one rank lower when casting Air or Fire spells.

PERCEIVED HONOR (2, 4, OR 6 POINTS)

Others find it difficult to perceive your true nature, thinking you far more honorable than you actually are. For every 2 points you spend on Perceived Honor, those who attempt to discover your Honor rank through use of Awareness believe your Honor to be one rank higher than in truly is. For example, a samurai with Honor 1 who has 4 points of Perceived Honor would appear to have an Honor of 3. This Advantage does not affect Techniques that determine a target's Honor.

PRECISE MEMORY (3 POINTS)

You have an incredible ability to memorize and recall large amounts of information, including names, dates, facts, and figures. When attempting to remember information you have seen before, you must succeed at an Intelligence roll with a TN of 10. More obscure or specific information may increase the TN considerably at the GM's discretion.

QUICK [INHERENT] (3 POINTS)

Your reaction speed is truly phenomenal. When making an Initiative roll, you always roll one additional die. Scorpion characters may purchase this Advantage for 2 points.

QUICK HEALER [INHERENT] (2 POINTS)

You heal faster than others do. When determining the number of Wounds you recover per day, treat your Stamina as if it were two ranks higher.

READ LIPS (2 POINTS)

You have the ability to read lips at a distance, understanding conversations that you cannot overhear. This requires a Raw Perception Roll against a TN of 20 for every minute of conversation you are attempting to decipher. The TN increases by 1 for every foot farther away than 10 feet your target is. You cannot read the lips of anyone who is more than 25 feet away.

SACRED WEAPON [GRANTED] (VARIES)

The smiths of every clan craft majestic weapons that become the stuff of legends, and you have been chosen to wield such a weapon. These weapons are truly magnificent, and are particular to each clan. The number in parentheses after the weapon's name is the number of Character Points you must spend to purchase this Advantage.

Clan	Weapon	Ability
Crab	Kaiu Blade (5)	3k3, cannot be broken, target's Carapace at -1
Crane	Kakita Blade (5)	4k2, +1k1 to attacks if user has Iaijutsu 2, re-roll damage once per duel
Dragon	Twin Sister Blades (7)	4k2/3k2, adds +1 TN to Be Hit per Insight Rank for Mirumoto
Lion	Akodo Blade (6)	3k2, gain 1 Free Raise per two successful called shot Raises
Mantis	Storm Kama (4)	3k2, gain 1 Free Raise on all disarm attacks
Phoenix	Inquisitor's Strike (5)	3k2 wakizashi, +5 damage to Tainted targets, considered jade
Scorpion	Shosuro Blade (4)	4k2, Free Raise on Poison, poison resists +5 TN
Unicorn	Utaku Saddle Cutter (3)	4k3 no-dachi, +2 to damage on attacks made from horseback



SAGE (4 POINTS)

You are a venerable scholar, widely respected even outside your Clan. You gain a Free Raise on all Lore rolls. Dragon characters may purchase this Advantage for 3 points.

SERVANT (VARIES)

One or more servants from your family's estate have been assigned to accompany you and attend to your needs. They are unassuming, and tend to fade into the background when samurai are interacting. It is rare to have more than one servant, but a samurai can have as many as three servants per full rank of Status. For example, a samurai with Status 2.7 could have up to six servants.

Most servants possess certain useful Skills. These Skills are described in the table below, but all begin at rank 3. It is possible to increase the level of Skill a servant possesses at the time this Advantage is purchased. The cost of a servant doubles for each rank above 3 in a given Skill. For example, a peasant scribe normally costs 4 points and has Lore (History) 3. Raising his Lore (History) rank to 4 would increase his cost to 8 points; a peasant scribe with Lore (History) 5 would cost 16 points. The same scribe would cost 6 points at Lore (History) 4 and 12 points for Lore (History) 5 for a Phoenix samurai.

SOCIAL POSITION [GRANTED] (5 POINTS)

You have achieved a prestigious position in society, perhaps as a magistrate or a military commander, or maybe you are just the child of a powerful individual. You gain one additional rank of Status. This Advantage may be purchased multiple times.

STRENGTH OF THE EARTH [INHERENT] (2, 4, OR 8 POINTS)

You refuse to admit defeat, and continue fighting long after others would have gone to meet their ancestors. The Wound level penalty for damage is decreased by 5 if you have the 2-point version of Strength of the Earth, by 10 if you have the 4-point version, and by 15 if you have the 8-point version.

TACTICIAN (6 POINTS)

You are versed in the ebb and flow of battle, and always find the crucial points on any battlefield. When adding your Water Ring to your Battle Skill in a Mass Combat (see page 204), you may choose to add your Water Ring as normal, half your Water Ring (rounding down), or twice your Water Ring.

VOICE (3 POINTS)

Your voice has a musical quality that enchants listeners. You gain a Free Raise on any roll that depends upon your speaking ability, such as Oratory or Storytelling. Crane characters may purchase this Advantage for 2 points.

WARY (5 POINTS)


You are naturally suspicious of others, and constantly on guard. While this may cause problems in your personal life, it also has its rewards. Attempts to use the Disarm maneuver on you require four Raises rather than the normal three.

WAY OF THE LAND [GRANTED] (2 POINTS)

You have traveled extensively through one particular province and know it as well as the tsuba of your blade. You never get lost when in this province and know the best travel routes. You may take this Advantage multiple times, applying it to a different province each time. At the GM's discretion, this Advantage may apply to land increments as large as an entire family's holdings. Unicorn characters may purchase this Advantage for 1 point.

WEALTHY [GRANTED] (1-10 POINTS)

Your family is particularly wealthy. You gain an additional koku in your starting outfit for every point spent on this Advantage. In addition, you gain that much additional koku in your annual stipend. This Advantage costs 1 fewer point for Crane and Unicorn characters (minimum of 1 point).



Disadvantages

ANTISOCIAL (2 OR 4 POINTS)

Few things bother you as much as the idea of having to deal with others socially. You prefer to keep to yourself in situations and are often just short of rude in your insistence on doing so. The inability to exude confidence around his peers can be a serious issue for a samurai, as you are expected to act with resolve both on and off the battlefield. You keep one fewer die on social Skill Rolls, or two fewer if you take the 4-point version of this Disadvantage.

ASCETIC (3 POINTS)

Power and wealth mean even less to you than to the average samurai. You are unconcerned with prestige, and you own only what is necessary to properly perform your duties to your daimyo. In most cases, this limits you to owning a few weapons, paper and ink, your armor, and similar necessities. Family heirlooms such as a prized tea set or fan are of equal importance as they demonstrate respect for your ancestors. If your duty calls for it, you might perhaps own "acceptable" attire for functions such as court or similar situations. You gain Honor normally, but your Glory and Fame are treated as if you were a Minor. This Disadvantage is worth 4 points for Dragon characters.

SERVANTS

Servant	Notable Skills	Point Cost
Eta Servant	None	1 (Kitsuki may purchase 2 for 1 point)
Stable Hand	Animal Husbandry 3	2
Personal Attendant	Etiquette 3	2 (Crane may purchase up to 3 at 1 point each)
Groom	Animal Husbandry 3	3 (2 for Unicorn)
Peasant Armorsmith	Craft (Armorsmith) 3	3 (2 for Lion)
Peasant Weaponsmith	Craft (Weaponsmithing) 3	3 (2 for Crab)
Peasant Scribe	Lore (History) 3, Poetry 3	4 (3 for Phoenix)
Spy	Forgery 3, Stealth 3	4 (3 for Scorpion)

BAD FORTUNE (1 POINT)

Taking this Disadvantage puts a small part of your fate into the hands of the GM. The Game Master secretly rolls a die and consults the table below. While some Bad Fortunes have obvious effects, others may not arise for some time. You may not take this Disadvantage more than once.

- 1 Someone is secretly in love with you and will go to great lengths to ruin any other romantic or marital interests you may have.
- 2 You have a disfiguring scar or birthmark — the mark of being born under a bad sign. Your mere presence may cause some to blame you for bad luck.
- 3 You lack one item from your starting outfit.
- 4 You have an allergy to something common — sushi, silk, or cotton are good examples.
- 5 You have the "evil eye" (one of your eyes is discolored). People avoid looking you in the eye if they can, and your presence is said to bring bad spirits.
- 6 One of these days, a roll — a very important roll — will fail completely. You won't even be able to roll, and no mechanical effect will be able to avoid it.
- 7 You have some enemy in another Clan, but you will not know about them until it is too late.
- 8 Your family has accrued a gambling debt that you will have to pay off soon.
- 9 You haven't gotten the hang of one of your Skills, which will have all rolls at +5 to the TN until you spend one Experience Point to negate this Disadvantage.
- 0 Your Bad Fortune has yet to manifest itself, a fact your Game Master will surely forget about...

BAD HEALTH (3 POINTS)

You are somewhat more frail than most. You have your Wound ranks figured as if your Stamina was 1 less, to a minimum of 1. (You must have at least 2 Stamina to take this Disadvantage, and cannot lower it below 2 during character creation.)

BAD REPUTATION (2 POINTS)

You have a habit or a history that many find offensive. You could be known as a gambler, a drinker, or someone who needs the concept of honor. It's possible this bad reputation is unwarranted, stemming from a misunderstanding. In any case, your Glory is always treated as if it were 3 less in those aware of this reputation. If this brings your Glory below 1 rank, you instead gain Infamy for each rank below 1 you would place you.

BAD SIGHT (4 POINTS)

Your eyesight is weak, causing many problems in your day-to-day activities. You roll two fewer dice on sight-based Skill checks and any Perception checks.

BENTEN'S CURSE (2 POINTS)

There is something about you others find unsettling or just plain disturbing. You have a difficult time getting others to let their guard down, and often you are the first one suspicion falls on when things go wrong. Any Etiquette Skill Rolls or rolls to be cordial or persuasive have their TNs raised

BITTER BETROTHAL (2 POINTS)

In Rokugan, arranged marriages are the rule, which often leads to situations that require a lot of tact and willpower. As both spouses are samurai, however, they understand the necessity to act correctly and ensure the arrangement does not disgrace their house. In some situations, this unspoken agreement goes ignored. Your character has a spouse that causes problems in myriad ways, determined by the GM. This Disadvantage is worth 3 points for Imperial characters.

BLACK SHEEP (5 POINTS)

For whatever reason, your family has all but cast you out. You are not ronin and you retain your family name, but just barely. You may use the Allies Advantage to purchase friendly ties to your family, but otherwise you're effectively on your own. You cannot advance in your School without great effort to find a willing teacher, and most things Clan samurai take for granted are nigh impossible for you.

BRASH (2 POINTS)

You are exceptionally hot-headed and likely to answer any insult with steel. You must make an Honor roll at TN 20 to keep control of your emotions when insulted. This Disadvantage is worth 3 points for Crab characters.

CAN'T LIE (3 POINTS)

Taking this Disadvantage means you simply cannot tell a convincing lie. Characters who listen to you attempt a lie immediately know it is a falsehood — no roll is needed.

CAST OUT (3, 6, OR 9 POINTS)

Somewhere along the line, you (or your immediate family) were denounced by a group of monks or other holy figures. The size and influence of the holy sect is determined by the point value of this Disadvantage. Three points indicates a minor temple or shrine in your Clan's homeland, six points indicates a medium-sized temple that has several sects throughout Rokugan, and nine points indicates a major following such as the sohei of Osano-Wo or the possibly the entire Brotherhood of Shinsei. These monks treat you as if you had an Infamy of at least 5, until you perform some act (or series of acts) to regain their approval. This Disadvantage is worth an additional point for Dragon characters.

COMPULSION (2-4 POINTS)

There is some object of desire — material or otherwise — that you find nearly impossible to resist. You may have a drinking problem, an opium addiction, a gambling habit, or even a need to visit every significant temple you pass near. In order to avoid the compulsion, you may make a Willpower or Honor roll against a TN of 15 (if this is a 2-point Disadvantage), 20 (if 3 points), or 25 (if 4 points).

CONTRARY (3 POINTS)

You may not remain neutral about anything. You are not compelled to action at every turn, but must have an opinion about everything you encounter. This means that you must take a side in every dispute, seek to solve every problem (even if you can't), and never stand by idly while others take action. In game terms, this means you must make a Willpower roll against a TN determined by the GM for the situation (typically between 5 and 20) to avoid acting in tense situations. Should you fail the roll, you must do something decisive, regardless of the consequences.

COWARD (3 OR 6 POINTS)

In your heart, you do not have the resolve showed by those around you. If you oppose a character with a higher Fame or Glory, if you face a Shadowlands creature, your TNs are increased as fear grips your heart. If you have the 3-point version of this Disadvantage, your TNs are increased by 5; if the 6-point version, your TNs increase by 10.

CRUEL (3 POINTS)

Rokugan's strict caste system sometimes results in samurai who take great satisfaction in making others suffer. You delight in seeing others helplessly squirm in your plots, or others'. Your cruelty need not manifest itself as physical, though it may very well be. Your Awareness is considered to be one less for the purposes of interacting socially and your Honor Rank is considered one full Rank lower for Honor tests. This Disadvantage is worth 4 points for Scorpion characters.

DARK FATE (3 POINTS)

You have an important destiny — one that will change the lives of more people than you may ever know. Your family may be forever remembered because of you, and your Clan may remember your name for generations to come... as a villain. Your doom is as inevitable as it is undesirable. Your GM may determine your Dark Fate, and it is likely you will never know until it is far too late. The forces of fate will conspire to keep you alive until you have fulfilled your destiny, and once per session when you would be considered dead, you are instead left with a single Wound point remaining.

DARK SECRET (5–10 POINTS)

You harbor a secret that could ruin more than just your own name if it were discovered. Depending on the point value of this Disadvantage, the Dark Secret could be something heinous but eventually forgettable (such as your ancestor's reputation as a 'war hero' actually being a fraud) to a crime that you and/or someone else in your family will have to repay with seppuku... or execution. In most cases, if this Dark Secret is discovered by another, you gain an Obligation Disadvantage tied to the person who has learned your secret.

DEATHSEEKER (5 POINTS)

Your family has been dishonored and your name stricken from the histories of your Clan, but you have been given a chance to redeem your own name by giving your life in battle. You cannot merely throw your life away; you must die in a time and place that will benefit your kin. You begin the game with no Glory and may never accumulate any while you still have this Disadvantage. Do not take this Disadvantage without GM approval, as it is hard to develop long-term goals for a character completely devoted to dying gloriously as quickly as possible. The only way to avoid your fate is to clear your family's name (if such a thing is even possible). In the Lion Clan, this Disadvantage means you are a member of the Deathseekers, and you gain 7 points for it.

DEPENDENT (1–3 POINTS)

Someone is almost completely helpless without you: a sick grandparent, a naïve spouse, or a small child. The frequency and severity of the dependent's need for your attention is determined by the point value of this Disadvantage.

DOUBT (4 POINTS)

Choose a Skill from your School's starting Skills. You have a hard time with that particular Skill, due mostly to lack of confidence. Whenever you attempt to use the Skill, you must make two Raises (without any benefit) to make the roll at all. The GM may determine after a suitably impressive or life-altering use of this Skill that you have gained confidence in your ability and this Disadvantage is expunged. The points do not need to be repaid unless the GM so rules.

DRIVEN (3 POINTS)

You have a single goal that you are utterly devoted to achieving. You will turn your back on your friends, family, and even your honor in order to reach your prize. This Disadvantage is worth 4 points for Scorpion characters.

ELEMENTAL IMBALANCE (1, 3, OR 6 POINTS)

This Disadvantage may only be taken by a shugenja. Choose an Element other than the one your School has a Deficiency in. You are strongly attuned to the kami of that element, but in such a way that sometimes their voices and will overpower your own. Whenever you cast spells of that element, you must make a Willpower roll at a TN of 15 (if you have the 1-point Disadvantage), 20 (if 3 points), or 25 (if 6 points). If you fail the roll, you lose control of the spell in a manner determined by the GM. The spell may fail utterly, choose another target, work to a weaker extent, or cause a more powerful effect. Phoenix characters receive 2 additional points from this Disadvantage.

EPILEPSY (4 POINTS)

Some Rokugani noble families tend to suffer from epilepsy, a rare disease that can cause the muscles to go rigid and begin shaking, sometimes even proving fatal. The symptoms are usually induced by either abnormal stress or displays of flashing light (such as a fireworks display). The superstitious consider sufferers to be cursed by the kami, or blessed with insight into the future. In most circles, epileptics tend to be shunned but treated in private as if they are holy. When the epilepsy is triggered, you must make a Willpower roll at a TN of 15. If you fail, you suffer a seizure, which you must make a Willpower roll each minute at TN 20 to end. During the seizure, you fall to the ground and cannot move or speak. This Disadvantage is worth 5 points for Crane characters.

FASCINATION (1 POINT)

You have a fascination with some subject and will go to great lengths to learn new things or experience your fascination. Typical subjects include music, horses, poetry, and the history or lore of a particular topic. This fascination borders on obsession — a character fascinated by spell-craft would be sorely tempted to steal a prayer scroll from a Phoenix shugenja if he believed he could get away with it. The fascination will not spur you into completely insane action: for instance, fascination with Nagai culture will not cause you to kidnap a sleeping Nagai.

FORCED RETIREMENT (2 OR 4 POINTS)

Due to some indiscretion on your part or that of a relative, you have been asked to shave your head and join a monastery in order to avoid staining your family's honor. Members of your Clan and family avoid you, making it likely you will never see

another Rank in your School unless you are a Monk. A 2-point Disadvantage means your former Clan will politely shun you in most instances, but a 4-point Disadvantage means that they might kill you on the spot if given an excuse.

FORSAKEN (1 POINT)

This a particularly bitter Disadvantage in that your ancestors do not speak to you or guide you in any way. No ancestor will ever communicate with you under any circumstances. Most people with this Disadvantage tend to keep it a secret, as other Rokugani naturally assume their karma must be terrible indeed for such a fate to befall them. You may not be subjected to effects that require contact with ancestors, such as the Haunted Disadvantage or certain magical effects.

FRAIL MIND (3 POINTS)

You find it hard to concentrate, especially when others are attempting to confuse you. If you are involved in a Contested roll that involves your Willpower (or other rolls that oppose your Willpower, such as certain spells), your opponent gains two Free Raises.

GAIJIN NAME (1 POINT)

Your name has been handed down to you from somewhere outside of Rokugan. This occurs infrequently among the Unicorn, though it is not unheard of in other Clans. Though not actually shameful, having a gaijin-influenced name is bound to raise the hackles of traditional samurai. This Disadvantage is worth 2 points for Unicorn characters.

GREEDY (4 POINTS)

Unlike most samurai, you see nothing wrong with personally amassing great wealth. Others attempting to bribe you with material goods gain two Free Raises when doing so. This Disadvantage is worth 5 points for Mantis characters.

GULLIBLE (3 POINTS)

You either have an unshakable faith in others, or are just naïve enough to believe almost anything you're told. You often take people at their word no matter how outrageous their stories are. Any attempt to lie to you or convince you of something (often with the Sincerity Skill) has its TN reduced by 15, to a minimum of 3.

HAUNTED (1-3 POINTS)

One of your ancestors has taken a particular interest in you, though you have yet to live up to his or her expectations. Your ancestor chooses the worst times to try and communicate with you, and during those times, your ancestor is insulting, irritating, and distracting. A 1-point Disadvantage means the ancestor appears once per session, 2 points indicate up to three appearances per session, and 3 points indicates the ancestor attempts to bother you at least once a day. Remember — no matter how insulting the spirit is, you must show deference and merely attempt to appease it.

HOSTAGE (2 POINTS)

A common practice to ensure the observance of a disputed issue is for one or both of the samurai involved to exchange hostages. Often, these hostages are second sons or daughters,

and they are raised in their new household as an honored guest of their host Clan. You may take the Different School and Multiple Schools Advantages for one fewer point apiece, so long as you attend a school of your host Clan. Your captors treat you with hospitality and respect and may even allow you to leave their lands, so long as you do not venture too far beyond their grasp and do not return to your homeland without an escort. If war begins between your clan and your captors, your life will be forfeit (thus it is in your best interests to promote peace).

IDEALISTIC (2 POINTS)

You have extreme, romanticized views of bushido and honor. You are quick to pass judgment on those who do not adhere to these concepts as wholly as you do, and go out of your way to help others overcome their own failings in this regard. Whenever you lose any Honor, you lose an additional point of Honor, but any Honor gains of five points or more are increased by one point. This Disadvantage is worth 3 points for Phoenix characters.

INSENSITIVE (2 POINTS)

The three most important things to you are your health, your welfare, and your interests. You don't care overmuch about the plight of others, and you don't go to great lengths to keep this a secret. With the exception of those who contribute directly to your well being (such as your daimyo), you must spend a Void Point to put yourself at risk for another if there is not a direct benefit for you. This Disadvantage is worth 3 points for Mantis characters.

JEALOUSY (2 POINTS)

Choose another character or an NPC in the campaign that you are obsessed with outdoing at every turn. Once you feel as if you have successfully and finally "beaten" the character in question, you move on to the next object of jealousy. This rivalry is almost certainly one-sided, though the object of your obsession might react in a similar manner once your jealousy becomes apparent. With the GM's permission, you may instead focus this Disadvantage on a Skill or ability and constantly vie to show you are the most talented in the chosen subject.

LAME (5 POINTS)

One of your legs is crippled to the point of being almost completely useless. All of your Agility rolls have their TN increased by 10, as do rolls that involve sheer leg strength.

LECHERY (1-4 POINTS)

Physical pleasure is more important to you than befits a samurai. For every point of this Disadvantage, anyone attempting to seduce you gains a Free Raise, and you may not make an Honor test to avoid being seduced.

LOST LOVE (2 POINTS)

You once knew true love, and now it's gone. You tend to have fits of melancholy when you are reminded of your love. Whenever your lost love is mentioned, your TNs are raised by 5 until you spend a Void Point to regain your focus. Spending the Void Point in this manner avoids a relapse for the remainder of the day.

**LOW PAIN THRESHOLD (5 POINTS)**

You have an exceedingly low tolerance for pain, causing the penalties imposed by your Wounds to be increased by 2.

MEDDLER (3 POINTS)

You cannot resist getting into other people's business. You always have an opinion on things, and let everyone know that your opinion is the best solution to their problems. People tend to be very private people, and meddling can easily be construed as an insult, implying that they are incapable of handling their own affairs. All of your Courtesy and Etiquette rolls have their TNs raised by 10. This Disadvantage is worth 4 points for Unicorn characters.

MISSING EYE (3 POINTS)

For a reason left for you to determine, you have only one functioning eye and thus no depth perception. All visual Perception rolls have their TNs raised by 5, and the TN to attack with a melee weapon is likewise increased by 5. Your ranged attacks have their TNs raised by 5 for targets within fifty feet, by 10 for those farther than fifty feet.

MISSING LIMB (3 POINTS)

You are missing a hand, arm, foot, or leg. All physical tests involving the missing limb have their TNs raised by 10.

MOMOKU (10 POINTS)

There come moments in every character's life when he or she must tap into a reserve of "something extra" and overcome obstacles that would otherwise seem impassible. You have such inner strength. For a reason you may or may not know, you cannot spend Void Points, though you may raise your Void Ring normally. Often, this is a curse imposed on a character by the Fortunes or maho, but the result is the same — you are completely cut off from the Void, and you must rely on your own mundane skill and talent to survive.

NEMESIS (2 POINTS)

You must already have the Sworn Enemy Disadvantage to take the Nemesis Disadvantage, and this turns your enemy into a nemesis that constantly plagues your life. Whenever you face your nemesis, you cannot spend your Void Points.

OBLIGATION (2 OR 4 POINTS)

Either you owe someone a favor, or your family owes a favor that you have been charged with repaying. A minor obligation is worth 2 points, while a major debt is a 4 point Disadvantage. When you are called upon to pay your debt, you are bound to do everything in your power to complete the request — even at the cost of your own life for a major debt. Failure to perform your duty (either from refusing or being unable to do so) results in a loss of a full rank of Honor, and you gain the Black Sheep Disadvantage (if a 4 point Obligation), receiving no points for it.

A small Obligation would not threaten your position or your family's standing, but may cause some inconvenience to perform. A major Obligation requires a great deal of effort and time and could take a significant amount of time to repay.

OVERCONFIDENT (2 POINTS)

You almost never retreat or choose to fight another day. When faced with an obviously superior force, you must make a Perception check at TN 30 or you stay and fight. You may not take the Great Destiny Advantage.

PERMANENT WOUND (5 POINTS)

At some point, you took a wound that never healed completely. You begin each day with your first Wound level completely filled. These Wounds cannot be healed by any means.

PHOBIA (1-5 POINTS)

You are terrified of something. Every time you are confronted with the object of your phobia, your TNs are raised by 5 for every point you received from this Disadvantage. Your phobia must be approved by the Game Master.

RUMORMONGER (4 POINTS)

Others often come to you to share thoughts and feelings they wouldn't dream of telling someone else. You are considered a good listener, which means you hear all sorts of interesting stories... and you don't mind repeating them. In order to avoid spreading secrets when given the chance, you must succeed at a Willpower roll with a TN equal to 5 times the Glory of the character with the highest Glory involved. This Disadvantage is worth 5 points for Crane characters.

SHADOWLANDS TAINT (1-5 POINTS)

You begin the game with a number of full Ranks of Shadowlands Taint equal to the number of points you received from this Disadvantage. How you gained the Taint and whether or not the condition is a matter of public knowledge is between you and the Game Master. Keep in mind that while bearing the Taint is not necessarily grounds for execution (though it is usually paid enough for most samurai), harboring the Taint in secret certainly is.

SMALL (2 POINTS)

You are unusually small, causing constant minor hindrances in your day-to-day life. Your movement is calculated as if your Water Ring were one lower, and you roll one fewer die for damage rolls (to a minimum of one).

SOCIAL DISADVANTAGE (3, 6, OR 9 POINTS)

You have slipped from your position within the Celestial Order. For every three points of in this Disadvantage, your Glory Rank is reduced by one (to a minimum of 0). All Ronin are considered to have at least 3 points of Social Disadvantage, from which they receive no points.

SOFT-HEARTED (2 POINTS)

You have a profound respect for human life. Whenever you try to kill another human being, you must make a Willpower roll at a TN of 20 or you can't bring yourself to do it. If you do kill someone, your TNs are increased by 10 due to the guilt wracking your conscience. This penalty lasts until the next day or until you can somehow atone.

SPOILED (3 POINTS)

Like an extreme form of the Compulsion Disadvantage, you are fond of a particular sort of diversion, but you are used to getting it whenever you like. Usually this is a physical object, such as paintings or fine kimonos, which you collect. If you cannot simply command someone to get you the object of your desire, you must make a Willpower roll at a TN of 15 (or higher at the GM's discretion) to avoid stooping to dishonorable acts in order to obtain the thing. Sometimes your desire can be sated with a flawless duplicate, but some items are desirable merely because of their uniqueness, and a copy cannot compare. This Disadvantage is worth 4 points for Imperial characters.

SWORN ENEMY (2-5 POINTS)

You have a foe, and neither of you will be satisfied until the other is dead. An enemy of equal rank is a 2-point Disadvantage, 3- to 5-point Sworn Enemies are of increasingly higher Insight Rank.

TRUE LOVE (3 POINTS)

Finding true love in Rokugan is a painful experience. Those who are truly in love with another often find themselves torn between their love and their duty to their lord. Whenever you find yourself having to choose between your true love and your duty, you must spend a Void Point to choose your duty. If you ever lose the favor of your true love, you cannot spend Void until you return to his or her good graces.

UNLUCKY (3, 6, OR 9 POINTS)

Bad fortune follows you like a dark cloud that cannot be dispelled. For every 3 points of this Disadvantage, the GM may choose to force you to re-roll one roll per session. Game Masters are encouraged to expand the effects of this Disadvantage beyond a purely mechanical sense, causing all sorts of unlucky coincidences to follow you.

WEAKNESS (5 POINTS)

One of your Traits is lowered by one Rank due to some sort of weakness — a lingering sickness, a birth defect, or possibly some sort of permanent damage. You may not reduce the Trait below 1, and this Disadvantage may not be taken more than twice.

WRATH OF THE KAMI (3 POINTS)

The spirits of a particular element have a certain dislike for you. This may be the result of a powerful shugenja's curse, an affront to the Fortunes, or any number of arcane reasons. Whatever the cause, spells of that element causing adverse effects are always more likely to cause more problems for you. Spells of the chosen element that are cast against you gain a Free Raise if they are being cast to harm or hinder you in some fashion. This Disadvantage may be taken multiple times, either to choose multiple elements or cause a single element to gain more than a single Free Raise against you.

Example of Character Creation

Dave is sitting down to create his first Legend of the Five Rings character. The first thing he does is decide upon his character concept. After looking over the various different clans and families, he decides that the samurai of the Crab Clan seem most appealing to him, particularly due to their endless war against the sinister Shadowlands. After thinking about his character for a bit, Dave comes up with a back story. He wishes to play a clever young scout, an explorer who dares enter the Shadowlands with nothing more than his wits and a bit of jade.

Dave begins with 45 character points and Status and Glory Ranks of 1 (the default for Rank 1 characters). His Traits and Void all begin at Rank 2. The first things he must decide upon are his family and school. A quick glance at the Crab families and schools tell him that the Hiruma family and Hiruma Scout School best fit his character's background. His family Trait bonus and his School Bonus each grant him +1 Stamina. Thus his character has Stamina 4 before he even begins to spend Character Points.

Dave's School also gives him a starting Honor Rank of 2.0 as well as Rank 1 in each of the following skills: Athletics, Defense, Hunting, Lore (Shadowlands), and one Weapon Skill. The school also gives him Rank 2 in Stealth, but at the cost of not offering as many Skills as other schools. His School also gives him the Sneaking Emphasis for his Stealth Skill. Dave selects Kenjutsu as his weapon skill so that his scout will be able to fight with a sword.

The next thing Dave must do is decide how to spend his Character Points. This is a delicate process, as Dave only has 45 Character Points which must be distributed among Traits, Skills, Advantages, Kata, Heritage Table Rolls, and possibly even Honor. Before Dave begins to spend these points, he looks at Disadvantages. Disadvantages grant additional Character Points, so Dave reasons that it would be best to select them first so that he has a better idea how much he has to spend.

Dave decides he wishes his character to be an uncouth lout, more comfortable in the corrupted wilderness than in the pampered confines of the court. Thus he selects Antisocial (4 points) and Benten's Curse (2 points). He also sacrifices one Honor Rank, gaining a total of 9 points from Disadvantages. He now has 54 Character Points to spend.

Next, Dave looks to his Traits. He wants to be tough, so he decides to focus on his Earth Ring first. Thanks to his Family and School he already has great Stamina, so he decides to raise his Willpower to Rank 3; since his Stamina is already 4, increasing his Willpower also increases his Earth Ring to 3. He also wishes to be nimble, a good trait for a scout, so he increases Agility to Rank 3 as well. Each of these increases cost 12 Character Points. Dave has 30 points left to spend.

Now Dave looks to his Skills. He is quite happy with his starting Skill selection, but feels Archery would be useful, so he takes it at Rank 1 for the cost of 1 Character Point. He also increases his Kenjutsu to 3 (5 Character points) and his Shadowlands Lore, Archery, Defense, and Hunting to 2 (2 points each). Dave is happy with his other Skills, so he now has 16 Character Points remaining. Looking

at Emphases, he decides to purchase one for Kenjutsu (Katana) and Shadowlands Lore (Shadowlands Geography) so that he will be a better warrior and a better scout. This reduces his total remaining Character Points to 12.

Looking at Advantages, Dave finds he must choose carefully. Some Advantages are Inherent, and thus cannot be selected after character creation. He selects two levels of Strength of the Earth (4 points) to represent his natural Crab toughness. He also selects Daredevil (3 points) to embody his character's daring courage in facing the Shadowlands alone. Finally, he takes Way of the Land (2 points), applying it to the home territories of the Crab Clan. This leaves Dave with 3 Character Points.

Glancing over the Kata, Dave is intrigued with Striking as Fire, but his character does not meet the requirements. Looking at the other kata, he decides that Striking of Earth might be useful, and also is in theme for the Crab, being as strong in the element of Earth as they are. His character fulfills the requirement of 3 Earth, so he spends the 2 Character Points necessary to learn the kata. Dave need not take any kata at all, but he likes the idea of having a special ability to give his scout an edge during tough fights. He now has 1 Character Point remaining, which he saves for an extra roll on the Heritage Tables.

Without further ado, Dave makes his first roll on the Heritage Tables (which costs no Character Points). He rolls a 2. Dishonorable Past. With trepidation, Dave rolls again and gets a 5. His character is now Cursed, and gains the 3-point Unlucky Disadvantage. He notes the normal cost for one Rank of the Disadvantage (3 points) because this is important when he must face certain opponents, such as a Bayushi Courtier. His Honor is also reduced by 5 points, causing him to begin with 0.5 Honor. Dave knew the risks before rolling on the Heritage Table and accepts his fate, but realizes luck is not with him today and reconsiders spending his last Character Point for a second roll. Instead, he spends his final Character Point to gain the Languages Advantage, and learns the Nezumi language. Next, he assembles his starting outfit as determined by his School and decides what equipment he thinks might be useful in his adventures.

With all of the variables that affect Insight now determined, Dave calculates his Insight. He adds his rings and multiplies them by 10, then adds the total ranks of all his Skills. He arrives at a total of 124.

Finally, Dave arrives at one of the most important parts of character creation — deciding on a name. He decides to name his character after his noble ancestor, and Hiruma Hideyoshi is born.

HIRUMA HIDEYOSHI

RANK 1 Hiruma Scout
HONOR: 0.5

STATUS: 1.0

INSIGHT: 124
GLORY: 10

Air: 2

Earth: 3

Fire: 2

Water: 2

Void: 1

Stamina: 4

Agility: 3

ADVANTAGES: Daredevil, Languages: Nezumi, Strength of the Earth (4 points), Way of the Land: Crab Provinces
DISADVANTAGES: Antisocial (4 points), Benten's Curse, Unlucky (3 points)

HERITAGE: Cursed

SKILLS: Archery 2, Athletics 1, Defense 2, Hunting 2,

Kenjutsu (katana) 3, Lore: Shadowlands (Shadowlands Geography) 2, Stealth (Sneaking) 2

KATA: Striking as Earth

Schools of the Crab Clan

Hida Bushi School

The Hida Bushi School teaches one of the oldest and proudest fighting styles in all of Rokugan. Taught at dozens of individual dojo throughout the Crab lands, the Hida fighting style favors raw strength and boundless tenacity over subtlety and grace. The Crab style is immediately recognizable for its reliance on both heavy weapons and heavy armor. A true Hida warrior feels naked if not encased in steel.

Some would call the Hida berserkers, and in fact many (particularly the students of Razor's Edge Dojo) submit to the red haze of madness in battle. For most Crab, however, anger is merely a tool to be used sparingly. A Crab warrior endures the attacks of his enemy with stolid patience, releasing his rage once the enemy has become exhausted by his impressive defenses. While the Hida do not use the misdirection of the Bayushi School, they seize any advantage that an enemy presents. When threatened, a Hida bushi shows no mercy, striking with overwhelming force the instant opportunity presents itself.

The Hida fighting style is particularly well suited for the Crab Clan's primary enemy — the Shadowlands Horde. Often outnumbered by foes with unknown abilities, a Hida's only option is to weather the storm until the time comes to strike. The Hida style is ideally suited to this, allowing a warrior to avoid or absorb attacks that would pulverize a lesser warrior.

Unlike many schools that focus primarily upon the katana, the Hida School encourages the use of heavy weapons such as the *tetsubo* and *ono*. Not only are these trademark Crab weapons quite effective against many Shadowlands creatures, but many Hida bushi prefer not to sully their ancestral swords with the blood of Fu Leng's bestial minions. Naturally the Hida School also insures that all of its students have passing familiarity with the enemy it is their duty to combat, so all Hida students have some knowledge of Shadowlands Lore.

Benefit: +1 Stamina

Honor: 1.5

Skills: Battle (Specific Enemy: Shadowlands), Defense, Heavy Weapons, Jujutsu, Kenjutsu, Kyujutsu, Lore (Shadowlands)

Outfit: Katana, wakizashi, bow and 20 arrows (any type), one two-weapon, heavy armor; one finger of jade, kimono and sandals, traveling pack; 5 koku.

TECHNIQUES

RANK 1: WAY OF THE CRAB

You are adept at tapping into the innate strength of Earth within yourself. You may add your Earth Ring to the total of any attack and damage roll in melee. You may ignore the TN penalties for wearing heavy armor for all skills except Stealth.

RANK 2: THE MOUNTAIN DOES NOT MOVE

You have the extraordinary tenacity for which the Crab are famous. Any time you suffer Wounds, you may spend a Void Point to make a Raw Earth roll vs. a TN equal to the number of Wounds suffered, before the Wounds are inflicted (thus you do not suffer additional TN penalties due to the damage). If you succeed, you suffer no Wounds from the injury. Your Earth is increased by your School Rank when resisting Knockdown.

RANK 3: TWO PINNERS, ONE MIND

You may make an additional attack per round. You gain two additional Void Points beyond your normal maximum that may only be spent to activate The Mountain Does Not Move or The Mountain Does Not Fall. These may be restored in the normal manner for Void Points, and do not allow you to call additional Raises.

RANK 4: FURY OF HIDA

The TN bonus you gain from any armor is doubled. If an opponent attacks you (whether successful or not) you may roll and keep an additional die on any attack and damage rolls against them on your next turn.

RANK 5: THE MOUNTAIN DOES NOT FALL

You may spend a Void Point to ignore all Wound Penalties (including Out) until your next turn. From this point forward, the amount of Wounds in each of your Wound Ranks is doubled. You gain another Void Point that may only be used to activate The Mountain Does Not Move or The Mountain Does Not Fall.



Kuni Shugenja School

One of the strangest and most misunderstood shugenja schools in the Empire, the Kuni are often painted as madmen too deeply obsessed with the mysteries of the Shadowlands for anyone's good. Strangely, many Kuni would admit this is not too far from the truth.

It is the duty of all Crab to stand as the first defense against the Shadowlands. As the spiritual leaders of the Crab Clan, it is thus a Kuni's duty to protect the souls of the Crab from corruption. To properly do so, the Kuni must understand the supernatural forces that fuel the Shadowlands. Every time a Kuni stares too deeply into the darkness he loses a piece of himself, but so long as he returns with the knowledge others need to fight the Shadowlands, this is an acceptable sacrifice.

While the Hida, Hiruma, and Kaiu give their lives on the Wall, the Kuni sacrifice their souls for the knowledge their cousins need to survive. Though the Kuni are less numerous than most shugenja families, more Kuni have fallen to the Shadowlands Taint than all other shugenja families in the Empire combined. None are more disturbed by this fact than the Kuni themselves, who fervently police themselves for signs of corruption.

The Kuni shugenja school focuses on the purity of Earth magic, washing away taint with the pure tenacity of stone. Wards and bindings are common spells, as is any magic that detects or destroys minions of the Shadowlands. Purifying magic that protects their Crab brethren from corruption or deception is also popular. None truly understand the Shadowlands as the Kuni do, for none are bold (or foolish) enough to look so closely.

Most Kuni shugenja are keen and analytical, and strike outsiders as cold. The first lesson a Kuni learns is that kansen, the evil counterparts of the kami, seem drawn to unseemly outbursts of emotion. A wise Kuni guards his feelings, lest he show any weakness that might be used against him. Relaxing is not an option, save in the holiest of temples. Kansen tend to swarm invisibly to Kuni shugenja, always eager to cause the downfall of another who sought Fu Leng's secrets too clumsily.

Benefit: +1 Willpower

Honor: 1.5

Skills: Calligraphy, Defense, Lore (Shadowlands) 2, Meditation, Spellcraft (Maho), any one Weapon Skill

Outfit: Wakizashi, any two weapons; one finger of jade, kimono and sandals, scroll satchel, traveling pack; 3 koku

Affinity/Deficiency: The Crab Clan values determination, strength, and stability, and the Kuni are no different. Thus they possess an Affinity for Earth. They have a Deficiency in Air magic, representing their distaste for deception.

TECHNIQUE: GAZE INTO SHADOW

Any spells that have specific, unique effects on Shadowlands-Tainted targets listed in their description (such as Tomb of Jade) cost one fewer point when learned as Innate Abilities. Any time a Kuni casts a spell on a target known to possess the Shadowlands Taint, he gains a Free Raise. All Kuni Shugenja begin with Jade Strike as an Innate Ability.

Spells: Sense, Commune, Summon, Counterspell, Jade Strike, plus 3 Earth, 2 Fire, 1 Water.

Yasuki Courtier School

Though the Yasuki family is now divided between two Clans, only those Yasuki who consider themselves Crab may attend the Yasuki Courtier School. Crane Yasuki prefer to attend the more prestigious Doji Courtier School in any case.

The Yasuki are master negotiators, though their area of expertise is merchant transactions. Its students are smugglers, consummate hagglers, and wily traders, and the Yasuki Courtier School is sometimes called "the Yasuki Merchant School" by both its students and its detractors. While members of the Yasuki school feel no shame in engaging in commerce (after all, their actions directly benefit the Crab Clan's defense of the Empire), others consider their techniques unbecoming of samurai. This suits the Yasuki well enough. After all, everyone needs something, and sooner or later everyone realizes that the Yasuki have what they need.

Yasuki agents maintain a presence in every large port throughout the Empire and most of the small ones. They keep on good terms with other powerful mercantile families such as the Doji, Yoritomo, and Ikoma by always staying one step ahead of the economy. Before the sake shortage in Ikoma lands begins, the Yasuki already have several barrels loaded on a ship, ready to offer to the Lion at a 'special discount.' Though the Yasuki have earned a reputation as smugglers and dishonest traders, it is rare that anyone comes away from a negotiation with a Yasuki without feeling that he got precisely what he wanted — at least until the Yasuki is safely back on a ship bound for Crab lands.

The only family that truly dislikes the Crab Yasuki is, strangely enough, the Crane Yasuki. The Daidoji family never forgave the Yasuki family for abandoning the Crane Clan. When Daidoji Hachi was proclaimed the new Yasuki daimyo and took the Yasuki name, many Daidoji followed suit, intent on absorbing the renegade Yasuki into their Clan of origin and burying all memory of their defection. When Hachi ended the Yasuki War by swearing fealty to both the Crab and Crane Clans, most former Daidoji kept the Yasuki name but returned to the Crane Clan. Though the Crane Yasuki continue to serve their dual-aligned daimyo, they never pass an opportunity to prove their superiority to the Crab Yasuki. For their part, most Crab Yasuki despise their Crane counterparts, but would never shame their daimyo by acting too openly against their cousins.

Naturally, both Crab and Crane Yasuki are masters of moving subtly against a hated rival.

Benefit: +1 Perception

Honor: 1.5

Skills: Commerce (Merchant), Courtier, Deceit (Lying), Etiquette (Bureaucracy), Stealth, any one Low Skill, any one Bugei Skill

Outfit: Wakizashi, any one other weapon; courtly dress, one finger of jade, kimono and sandals, traveling pack; 10 koku.

TECHNIQUES

RANK 1: WAY OF THE CARP

A Yasuki brings a unique blend of suave charm and brazen intimidation to every social encounter. The consummate gambler, a Yasuki is always prepared when his opponent raises the stakes. Any time you are involved in a Contested Social Skill Roll, you gain a Free Raise for every two Raises your opponent declares. You lose no Honor for conducting trade in public. You may add your Water Ring to the total of any School Skill Rolls.

RANK 2: SHIMMERING SCALES

A Yasuki is rarely caught in a lie or stuck with the short end of a negotiation. If you fail a Contested Deceit or Commerce roll, you may spend a Void Point to make a second roll. If this roll succeeds, the initial attempt is still a failure but has a neutral effect. That wasn't a lie just now, you merely misspoke — and they believe you. A customer who would have walked away in disgust at a high price instead considers purchasing your goods for a lesser fee. Essentially the first roll results in a stalemate, though additional attempts can be made. You also gain a number of Free Raises equal to your School Rank on all uncontested Commerce Skill Rolls.

RANK 3: WILES OF THE CARP

A Yasuki always knows what the customers want, even if they aren't certain themselves. You may spend a Void Point to make a Contested Willpower roll with anyone you are talking to. If this roll succeeds, the target reveals something that he desires. Note that what he desires is not necessarily relevant to you or attainable by you. The target does not realize his admission. If you make a Raise, he reveals something he desires that you can provide (or, if you can truly provide nothing he wants, you learn that instead).

RANK 4: TREASURES OF THE CARP

A Yasuki guards his treasures closely — and his most precious treasure is the truth. Any time someone makes Raises on a Contested Social Skill Roll against you involving Commerce or Deceit, he must make two Raises to gain the effects of one. This includes attempts to see through your lies and flattery as well as attempts to lie to or seduce you in turn. You may add twice your Water Ring to all rolls involving Willpower.

RANK 5: ALL THAT YOU HAVE IS MINE

Yasukis are quite adept at pressing their advantage over a needy customer. If you possess something that someone legitimately desires, and you make it clear that you possess and can supply the object of their desire, then you roll and keep additional dice equal to your School Rank on all Contested Social Skill Rolls against that individual. This benefit is immediately lost if your opponent finds another way to obtain his desire. Thus, rarer commodities ("I hear that you need help arranging a decent marriage for your son") are preferable to common items ("Would you like a glass of water?").

Hiruma Scout School

The Hiruma Scout School has the strangest history of all the Crab dojos. The Hiruma style has endured the destruction of the family's dojos on several occasions, each time adapting with the tenacity that is its students' hallmark. The current incarnation of the Hiruma style scarcely resembles that practiced by scouts even a few generations ago. Though the Hiruma family has found a greater measure of stability in recent generations, some can truly say if the family is safe living so far beyond the protection of the Kaiu Wall. In another decade the techniques may be entirely different — or may not exist at all.

Where a Hida Bushi confronts battle with the stubborn determination of a mountain, a Hiruma Scout is the wind around that mountain. The Hiruma are masters of stealth and misdirection. A skilled scout can vanish into the deepest Shadowlands

for weeks at a time, returning with no trace of Taint. They are strange, solitary figures who venture into the hellish plains because they are their home; they will not surrender it even to a mad god.

A Hiruma Scout begins training in the Shadowlands at an early age. With such an unforgiving classroom, it is not surprising that the Hiruma are among the stealthiest scouts in all of Rokugan. Tempered by the merciless Shadowlands, their services are often sought by generals of other Clans. After all, a warrior who can pass undetected through the lands of an Oni Lord would be of inestimable value in scouting a human enemy's position. The Hiruma rarely entertain such invitations. Their home may not be a welcoming place, but they will be damned before they abandon it.

Benefit: +1 Stamina

Honor: 2.0

Skills: Athletics, Defense, Hunting, Lore (Shadowlands), Stealth (Sneaking) 2, any one Weapon Skill

Outfit: Katana, wakizashi, bow and 20 arrows (any type), ashigaru armor, black body paint, one finger of jade, kimono and sandals, traveling pack, 2 koku

TECHNIQUES

RANK 1: DANCE THE RAZOR'S EDGE

You are lithe and agile. You can move normally while in the Full Defense Posture, and may add your Stealth Skill Rank to your TN to Be Hit. You are skilled at survival, and can make all food, water, and jade rations last twice as long as normal.

RANK 2: STRIKE LIKE THE WIND

Hiruma are patient, evasive fighters. You gain a Free Raise on any attack roll against an enemy who has not yet successfully struck you during a skirmish, either because they missed, were not aware of you, or were attacking your allies instead. Additionally, any time an enemy attacks you and misses, you may add your Fire Ring to your TN to Be Hit against them for the rest of the combat. Your enemy may spend a Void Point to cancel this bonus.

RANK 3: FIRE AND SHADOW

You now add twice your Stealth Skill to your TN to Be Hit (replacing the Stealth bonus from the Rank 1 Technique). If you possess a Skill that pertains directly to a specific enemy (either Lore (Shadowlands) or Know the School), you may add your Skill Rank to all attack and damage rolls against that enemy.

RANK 4: HARNESS THE WIND

You gain a number of Free Raises equal to your School Rank on all Athletics, Hunting, and Lore (Shadowlands) rolls. You may now make an additional attack per round.

RANK 5: VEIL OF SPIRITS

When making Stealth and Hunting Skill Rolls, your 8's and 9's explode as well as 10's. If you are in the Shadowlands or possess Way of the Land for your current location, 6's and 7's explode as well. This effect may be used only once per die per roll. Thus if you roll an 8 then reroll a 9 on the same die, it only explodes once. If you roll an 8 then reroll a 10, the 10 explodes normally.

Schools of the Crane Clan

Kakita Bushi School

At the dawn of the Empire, the First Hantei called a grand tournament to select the samurai who would become his personal champion and chief executor of his law. The tournament was won by the incredible skill of Kakita, the man who would eventually marry Hantei's sister Doji and come to define one of the most important aspects of Rokugan — the way of the sword. Though many families would eventually develop their own techniques with the katana, Kakita established the first true dojo for the weapon, and his methods are widely respected for both their long tradition and effectiveness in combat. Swordsmen

trained by the Kakita are truly feared, and only a great fool entertains the idea of engaging a *kenshi-zen*, an accomplished Kakita student, in a duel. Because of the glorious reputation of the Kakita Bushi School, entry is a matter of prestige for a select few and disappointment for many. Among the Crane Clan, many are taught the basics of Kakita's technique, but only an honored handful are invited to study in the most elite dojo located in Shiro Sano Kakita. Outside the Crane, few students are allowed to train among the Kakita masters — those that do gain entry usually have exceptional talent or political connections, or some mix of both. Though the Crane Clan are not ones to pass up the opportunity to gain a favor from another Clan, admission into the Kakita Bushi School is not a favor that is traded lightly.

Benefit: +1 Reflexes

Honor: 3.5

Skills: Etiquette, Iaijutsu, Kenjutsu (Katana), Kyujutsu, Etiquette, any High Skill, any High or Bugei Skill

Outfit: Katana, wakizashi, bow and 20 arrows (any type), any two weapons, light armor, helm; kimono and sandals, traveling pack; 10 koku

TECHNIQUES

RANK 1: WAY OF THE CRANE

The study of the sword demonstrates the many ways in which the art of Kakita's technique can be applied. You add twice your Iaijutsu rank to all Initia-

tive rolls, and you may use your Iaijutsu Skill in place of your Kenjutsu Skill when using a katana (this does not grant you Kenjutsu Mastery Level abilities). Additionally, you may Focus an additional time in an Iaijutsu duel.

RANK 2: THE SUDDEN STRIKE

Enemies who are slow or weak of spirit are doomed to failure. You have learned how to take advantage of the speed and strength of will taught by the Kakita School. For every 10 points by which your Initiative score exceeds your opponent's, you gain a Free Raise to your attack rolls. In an Iaijutsu duel, you may add the difference between your Honor Rank and that of your opponent's (if yours is higher) to the total number of times you may Focus in an Iaijutsu duel.

RANK 3: STRIKE FROM THE VOID

When engaged in an Iaijutsu duel, you gain an additional number of Void Points equal to your Honor Rank that last only to the remainder of the duel. In a skirmish, when you successfully strike an opponent who has a lower initiative, that opponent suffers a +10 TN penalty to his next attack roll in the same round against you.

RANK 4: ONE STRIKE, TWO CUTS

With one pure strike, the advanced student of Kakita's technique cuts his opponent twice. You may make an additional attack per round, and add twice your Fire Ring to all attack rolls.

RANK 5: STRIKE WITH NO THOUGHT

Your first attack each round rolls and keeps an extra die of damage for every 10 points by which your Initiative score exceeds your opponent's. When engaged in an Iaijutsu duel, you may make a contested Void roll against your opponent. If you succeed, you may limit the number of statistics your opponent learns about you during the duel by one for every 5 points your roll exceeded your opponent's.

Asahina Shugenja School

The Asahina are deeply respected for their devotion to peace. Shugenja trained by the Crane rarely venture outside the temples of the Asahina, for many of their lessons require a great deal of silent meditation, introspection, and scholarship in noble arts. The Asahina spend a great deal of time crafting beautiful fetishes to protect others, and divining the patterns of the future to advise them. Few Crane shugenja travel the countryside except on missions of mercy or diplomacy. The Asahina have a strict pacifist philosophy, often refusing to harm other creatures even when their own lives are threatened. The only sort of enemy this philosophy does not apply to is creatures touched by the Shadowlands — the living embodiment of sin that the Asahina find offensive to the natural order. Those who believe the priests of the Crane Clan to be weak have never witnessed the quiet shugenja angered by the foulness of Jigoku's taint.

Benefit: +1 Awareness

Honor: 3.5

Skills: Calligraphy, Etiquette, Meditation, Theology (Formalism), any three High Skills

Outfit: Tanto; divination tools (choose one type), kimono and sandals, scroll satchel, traveling pack; 10 koku

Affinity/Deficiency: The Asahina favor subtlety and precision, and thus have an Affinity for Air magic. The destructive nature of Fire does not mesh well with their pacifistic nature, so they have a Deficiency for Fire magic.

TECHNIQUE: THE SOUL'S GRACE

You may spend a Void Point to roll additional dice equal to your Honor Rank when casting a spell. If you do so, all effects of the spell that are determined by an Elemental Ring are adjusted as if that Ring were increased by your Honor.

Spells: Sense, Commune, Summon, Counterspell, plus 3 Air, 2 Water, 1 Earth

Doji Courtier School

Though the way of the sword dominated the first true dojo the Crane established, the way of negotiation and peace was certainly the first art they truly embraced. Lady Doji was a caring and peaceful woman, constantly called upon by the other Kami to settle disputes that arose due to the wildly varied natures of the different clans. With few exceptions, Doji ended such disputes with all sides in agreement and as friends once again. The Crane Clan have followed the example of their founder as leaders of peace and sowers of unity between the Clans. Courtiers trained by the Doji family learn from the vast web of influence the Crane Clan has gathered over the generations — countless allies and friendships that span every single household in the Empire. Where the Scorpion might collect such influence through intimidation or blackmail, the Crane are proud of their reputation as friends of all. Few are willing to confront the Crane in the courts (or anywhere else) largely because of their seemingly endless list of allies. A brash samurai attempting to challenge a Crane's power may find himself suddenly aware of just how many friends the Crane has... possibly even the samurai's own lord.

Benefit: +1 Awareness

Honor: 3.5

Skills: Artisan, Calligraphy, Courtier (Manipulation), Etiquette (Conversation), Storytelling (Poetry), Tea Ceremony, any one High Skill

Outfit: Wakizashi; two kimonos and two pairs of sandals, one kimono and pair of sandals (Fine Quality), steed, traveling pack; 15 koku

TECHNIQUES

RANK 1: THE PERFECT GIFT

You may add twice your Honor Rank to all Courtier, Etiquette, Heraldry, Oratory, and Sincerity rolls. Additionally, Doji Courtiers stand at the center of a complex system of favors and trades. A number of times per session equal to your Air Ring + School Rank, you may call upon the Favor Tables to procure a favor for another character — usually as a bargaining chip in exchange for another favor. These services sometimes do not even go through your hands — it is possible for them to be delivered to distant areas through intermediaries, and the table serves as a guideline of what can be acquired with minimal fuss. The Crane do not trade favors lightly, and a courtier using the Clan's vast wealth to equip his friends should not be surprised when the Clan politely but firmly demands to know where and how those tools will be employed.

The Doji Courtier Favor Tables

Favors are categorized by School Rank. A courtier may only obtain favors that correspond to his own School Rank or lower. If you are not in an area where such favors are reasonably available, then the amount of time needed to procure the favor is left to the GM's discretion: you must attempt to contact the Crane Clan's web of influence. You do not need access to the Crane Clan directly; any Clan will do, as the Crane have allies in nearly every part of the Empire. This is not an exhaustive list, but a guideline that can be used to see what Rank a service or favor not listed may be.

An Asahina shugenja can be called upon to cast a spell of a Rank equal to the Rank of the Favor used. He will not enter combat to do so unless it is specifically and clearly in the interest of peace.

Rank One — One item of "fine" equipment, a pony, a minor escort to a major city or palace, a tutor to teach a Lore Skill someone wishes to learn, information on a well-known topic or commonly understood academic subject, or any item roughly 2 koku in value.

Rank Two — One item of "exceptional" equipment, a fine horse, a Kakita bushi of Rank 2 to champion someone in a duel, an invitation to visit the court of a noble family, the chance to serve a powerful daimyo in a single instance, the chance to learn a Skill from a well-known authority on the subject from any Clan, or any item roughly 5 koku in value.

Rank Three — Pardon a minor offense or indiscretion by a member of the samurai caste, gain an audience to speak with a minor daimyo, gain a patron for an artisan or craftsman, a Crab guide into the Shadowlands, a Crane artisan commissioned to create a work of art for someone in particular, a Kitsuki magistrate called upon to investigate something, a Lion gunso to aid in combat, use of a Mantis vessel to move cargo, a Phoenix scholar researches an obscure topic, a Unicorn steed, the Scorpion ship an item somewhere 'no questions asked,' appointment as hatamoto to a minor daimyo in the Clan, appointment as gunso in the Clan's army, a chance to serve the Champion of the Clan personally, or any item roughly 10 koku in value.

Rank Four — The chance for someone other than yourself to marry the second or third child of an influential daimyo, a minor Obligation (per the Disadvantage) from a powerful samurai of the GM's choice from a Clan of the player's choice, becoming the guardian of a powerful nemuranai owned by the Asahina, a personal assistant from the same family or Clan, a position as a magistrate in the same Clan, or any item roughly 20 koku in value.

Rank Five — Minor magic fetish made by the Asahina to specifications, position as Jade or Emerald Magistrate, powerful member of the same Clan (not a family daimyo or Champion) will perform a service, a spell scroll from the Phoenix, a master duelist of the Kakita School to serve as champion in a duel, a wise tattooed monk of the Dragon to serve as an advisor for several weeks, an Akodo general to serve as an aide during a campaign, free passage from anywhere to anywhere on a Mantis boat, a powerful piece of blackmail learned by the Scorpion, a full unit of Utaku Battle Maidens to serve as a guard, or any item roughly 30 koku in value.

RANK 2: A WHISPER FROM THE SOUL

You may observe an opponent for a single round, spend a Void Point, and make a Contested Awareness roll. This opponent must reveal one of his Advantages to you. Any time within the next day that the opponent attempts to use this Advantage in a social situation, you gain a number of Free Raises equal to your School Rank on your Contested Social Skill Rolls against him. If he reveals an Advantage that you already knew he possessed, you gain an additional Free Raise.

RANK 3: TEST OF HONOR

At this Rank you may add twice your Honor Rank to all Awareness rolls (this is cumulative with any applicable bonus from The Perfect Gift). Additionally, when another character takes an action in your presence, you may spend a Void Point to make an Awareness/Etiquette roll at a TN equal to 10 times that character's Insight Rank. If you succeed, the character must make the roll as a Test of Honor (but without any normally associated Honor losses or gains). This Technique has no effect on characters with a 0 Honor Rank or creatures with no understanding of honor (such as undead or Nezumi).

RANK 4: THE GIFT OF THE LADY

You possess Lady Doji's own superb wit, and your allies prosper in your presence. If you possess the Ally Advantage, you may grant your Ally a total number of Free Raises per day equal to your Air Ring on Social Skill Rolls made in your presence. You gain three additional Void Points that may only be used to activate Doji Courtier Techniques. These may be restored in the normal manner for Void Points, and do not allow you to call additional Raises.

RANK 5: LADY DOJI'S SPIRIT

Once per day, you may privately consult any individual with whom you possess the Ally Advantage. You may confer any of the following Advantages on your Ally for the next day: Benten's Blessing, Clear Thinker, Higher Purpose, Ireproachable, Perceived Honor, or Voice.

Daidoji Harrier School (Bushu)

In all things, the Crane Clan strives for grace and excellence — war is no different. Much of the Crane's standing army is trained for a time among the Daidoji family, learning their subtle and complex tactics meant to stymie enemies greater in number and sheer force. Though the Daidoji hold nothing in check when it comes to the defense of their homelands, only the most promising and talented students are given a chance to study with the Harriers. The Daidoji Harriers are an elite division of the Crane army, trained in the arts of scouting, sabotage, and surveillance. Few outside the Daidoji family and leaders of the Crane are aware of the group's training, and those outside the Clan are never trusted with such information. The Crane do not go so far as to lie about their warriors, but as long as the nature of the Harriers remains uncertain to others, they maintain much of their advantage.

The existence of the Harriers as a formal group within the Crane is a matter of debate to outsiders, but none can deny the need to prepare for Crane skirmishers and harassers should the Clan be engaged in war. Daidoji Harriers are expected to turn the tide of conflicts nearly single handedly, as Crane commanders are instructed to count one Harrier able to negate the advantage of fifty or more enemy soldiers. The Harriers are not assassins, and do not poison or murder unwary opponents, but feel that attacking armed and readied enemies is always honorable, no matter if the Daidoji is noticed or not.

Benefit: +1 Agility

Honor: 1.5

Skills: Athletics, Battle, Hunting, Kenjutsu, Kyujutsu, Stealth (Ambush), any one Skill

Outfit: Katana, wakizashi, bow and 20 arrows (any type), iron yari, light armor, kimono and sandals, waterproofed traveling pack, 10 koku.

TECHNIQUES**RANK 1: IRON FEATHER**

A Harrier strikes from the shadows, cutting down his foes before they can respond. When attacking a foe from Higher Ground, while Flanking, or if they are unaware of your presence, you roll additional damage dice equal to your School Rank. The Harriers also teach you to react with your mind and not your instinct; you may add your Fire Ring to your TN to Be Hit.

RANK 2: SILENT TALON

When combat begins, you may designate a single opponent. Your TN to Be Hit against this opponent is increased by five times your School Rank until they hit you successfully. You may not designate an opponent you are unaware of, but you may choose to delay the use of this ability until a new opponent arrives or an existing opponent proves to be a threat. In such a case, you may decline the use of this Technique on your turn. Additionally, you may add your Air Ring to all your attack rolls.

RANK 3: VENGEFUL GHOST

You may add twice your Fire Ring to your TN to Be Hit (replacing the TN bonus gained at the first Rank). After an opponent takes an action against you, you may make a contested Agility roll versus your attacker's Agility or Perception (opponent's choice). If his action was successful, you must spend a Void Point to activate this Technique. If you succeed on the opposed roll, you immediately move up to the next Rank. If sufficient cover is available, you may also make an Agility/Stealth (Sneaking) roll to hide.

RANK 4: TWIN STRIKES IN DARKNESS

Speed, precision, efficiency... these are the marks of the Harrier. At this Rank, you make an additional attack per round. You gain a Free Raise on all attack rolls that may only be used to Feint, Disarm, or Knockdown.

RANK 5: MOVE LIKE SHADOWS

A trained Harrier performs best under pressure. You may now add three times your Fire Ring to your TN to Be Hit (replacing the TN bonus gained at the third Rank), and may add the total of your Stealth and Athletics Skill Ranks to your Initiative rolls. Any bonus you gain for attacking an opponent due to their attack posture, footing, or position now has double the effect. This includes flanking, attacking from higher ground, prone enemies, surprised enemies, uneven terrain, enemies on Full Attack, or any penalty an opponent has applied to his own TN to Be Hit during the combat. When attacking such an enemy, your 8's and 9's explode as well as 10's on your damage rolls. This effect may be used only once per die per roll. Thus, if you roll an 8 then reroll a 9 on the same die, it only explodes once. If you roll an 8 then reroll a 10, the 10 explodes normally.

Schools of the Dragon Clan

Mirumoto Bushi School

Mirumoto's technique is one of the two oldest sword styles in the Empire, rivaling that of the esteemed Kakita. Mirumoto called his way *Niten*, the two-sword technique, and taught his followers how to employ the katana in a single hand and wield the wakizashi in the other. Since its founding, the Mirumoto style has been seen as radical at best, violating the more common tactic of employing the katana with both hands for arguably better control. The Dragon sword style focuses on two blades and multiple, quick attacks, which directly opposes Kakita's philosophy of a single strike with one blade. To this day, the Mirumoto and Kakita schools share a rivalry that is usually courteous but not above turning into violence on rare occasions. Students of Mirumoto's technique are taught their lessons along with meditations upon the Tao, the mystic paths of the shugenja, and a great host of scholarly topics. Because of their training and the composition of the entire Dragon Clan, Mirumoto bushi are often far more religious than other warriors, quoting the words of Shinsei and invoking the wisdom of the Fortunes as if they were monks. Warriors of this school also spend a great deal of time training beside the shugenja of the Tamori family, and students of both schools learn a great deal about each other's path.

This sort of training hinges on a single principle of Mirumoto's philosophy — that, as Shinsei taught, all things are one, and regimented paths of study can often do more harm than good. All that Mirumoto required of his students was a dedication to whatever their art was and the assertion that they will always succeed. Mirumoto was once quoted, when speaking of a more experienced swordsman that he had just beaten, as saying, "He was the better swordsman... but I knew that I would win, and he did not." The patience and meditative mindsets of the school also lend themselves well to the art of the iaijutsu duel, and Dragon warriors are well-respected opponents in such contests. Even when unable to draw their shorter sword, students of *Niten* are feared for their almost supernatural calm and focus that is often more than enough to unnerve a superior opponent.

Benefit: +1 to any Trait

Honor: 2.5

Skills: Defense, Kenjutsu (Katana), Kenjutsu, Lore (Shugenja), Meditation, Theology

Outfit: Katana, wakizashi, bow and 20 arrows (any type), any 1 weapon, light armor, kimono and sandals, traveling pack, 2

TECHNIQUES

RANK 1: THE DAISHO TECHNIQUE

Initiates of the Mirumoto Bushi School must master the basic principles of *Niten*, the two-sword technique. When wielding a katana in your weapon hand and a wakizashi in your off-hand, you suffer no penalties for carrying two weapons and add 5 + your School Rank to your TN to Be Hit. You may substitute your Kenjutsu Skill for your Iaijutsu Skill at any time. Additionally, you add your Fire Ring to all attack rolls.

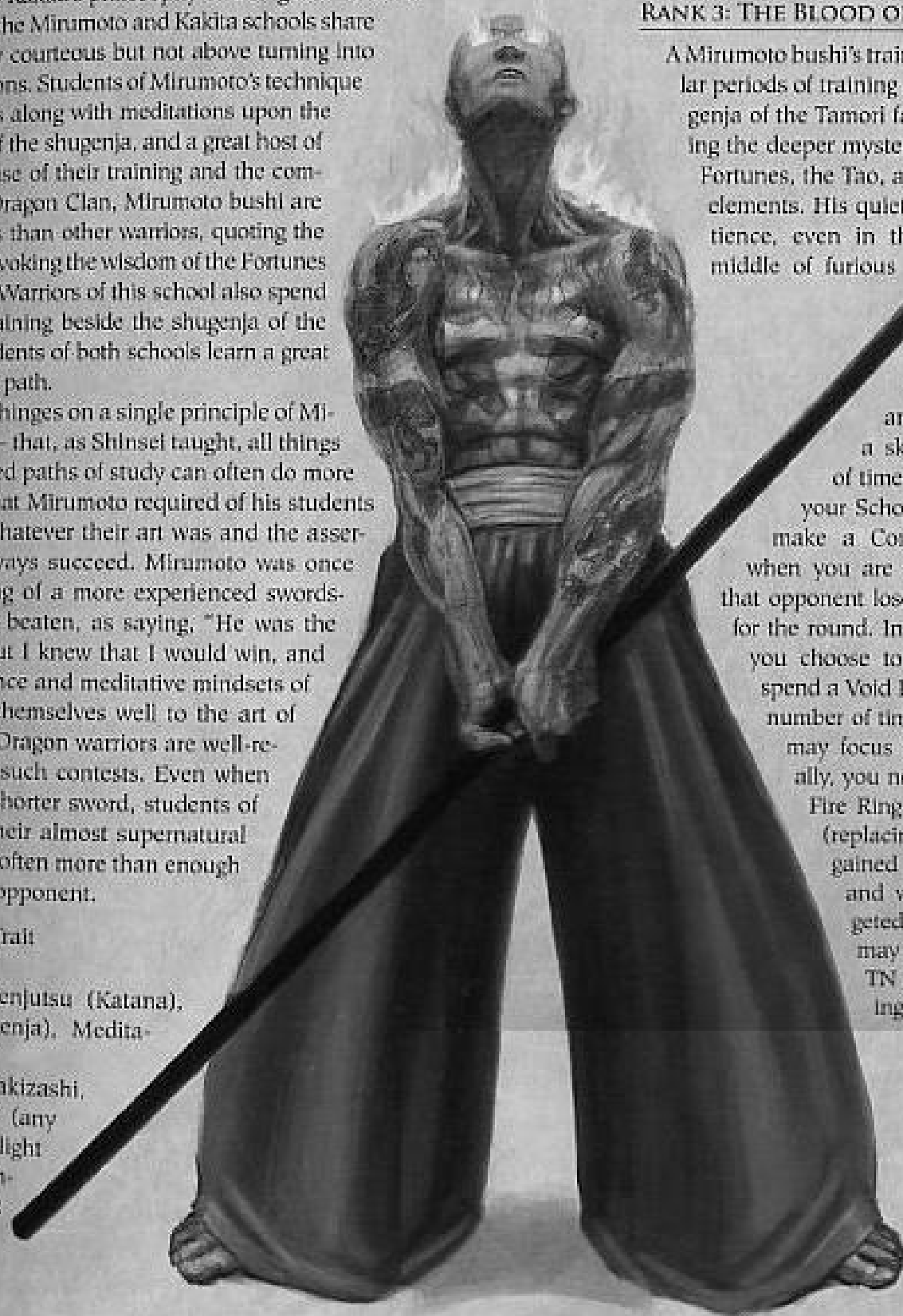
RANK 2: STRONG AND SWIFT

As the exploration of *Niten* continues, the student learns to overwhelm opponents with a flurry of blows while maintaining a superior defense. You may make an additional attack per round, and you add your Earth Ring to your TN to Be Hit.

RANK 3: THE BLOOD OF MY BROTHERS

A Mirumoto bushi's training involves regular periods of training alongside the shugenja of the Tamori family, studying the deeper mysteries of the Fortunes, the Tao, and the elements. His quiet patience, even in the middle of furious

combat or a silent iaijutsu duel, can unnerve any opponent. In a skirmish, a number of times per day equal to your School Rank, you may make a Contested Void Roll when you are attacked to make that opponent lose their next attack for the round. In a duel, whenever you choose to Focus, you may spend a Void Point to reduce the number of times your opponent may focus by one. Additionally, you now add twice your Fire Ring to all attack rolls (replacing the attack bonus gained at the first Rank), and when you are targeted with a spell, you may raise or lower the TN of that spell's casting by 5.



RANK 4: THE UNRIGHTEOUS WILL FALL

At this Rank, a student of Mirumoto's technique begins to understand its core truths. Any time you kill an opponent with a Kenjutsu strike, you immediately gain an additional attack that round. You now add twice your Earth Ring to your TN to Be Hit at all times (replacing the TN bonus gained at the second Rank).

RANK 5: HEART OF THE DRAGON

Masters of the Mirumoto Bushi School seem to strike from everywhere at once, and their movements are completely impossible to predict. You gain an additional attack per round, and add three times your Fire Ring to all attack rolls (replacing the attack bonus gained at the third Rank).

Tamori Shugenja School

The youngest school of the Dragon Clan is founded on the ashes of what the Agasha left behind when they defected to the Phoenix — over a thousand years of learning, technique, and tradition. Though the school does not have the prestige and honor associated with many other shugenja dojo, the Tamori School has the unique advantage of being able to draw the most useful aspects of their fore bearers and discard the rest. The result is a school based on the practical and willful nature of elemental earth and tempered by the divine and enigmatic nature of the Dragon Clan. Shugenja of the Tamori School are taught to embrace the gifts they share with the kami but not to neglect the mundane world around them. Like the Agasha before them, Tamori shugenja spend time training with the bushi of the Mirumoto School, but to a much larger degree. In addition to this, they carefully study the ways of the environment around them, focusing on the arts of herbalism and crafting elixirs from natural reagents. The result of this sort of training causes a Tamori shugenja to have a far more “hands-on” approach to life experiences, relying more on their own physical gifts than the blessings of the kami. Though some shugenja schools find this sort of philosophy an almost blasphemous dismissal of the shugenja's gifts, the Tamori understand the kami respect those who do not rely on their aid.

Like many other schools of the Dragon Clan, the Tamori School leaves its students equal parts mystic, warrior, and philosopher. Tamori shugenja do not hesitate to enter combat when other alternatives are unavailable, and often surprise opponents with their skill in the arts of war. In regards to combat, the shugenja are often taught to use their gifts in ways that augment themselves instead of standing back from a conflict and hurling fire and thunder from a distance. Because of the school's minor stature and the shugenja's untraditional approach to life, the Tamori School tends to be misunderstood and even distrusted more than any other Dragon school until one finally meets a Tamori-trained shugenja. After seeing the result of such discipline, few can help themselves from respecting the small Dragon school.

Benefit: +1 any Trait

Honor: 2.5

Skills: Defense, Divination, Medicine (Wound Treatment), Meditation, Theology, any High or Bugei Skill

Outfit: Katana, wakizashi, kimono and sandals, scroll satchel, traveling pack; 2 koku

Affinity/Deficiency: Tamori shugenja, like their Mirumoto cousins, are adaptable and inquisitive. Dragon shugenja tend to study a great many different applications of their gifts, and two tend to be alike in their talents and spells. The Tamori have taken their Agasha ancestors' arts of herbalism to new heights, amplifying their connection to the kami of the mountains around them. They tend to focus their magic on the arts of fortification and aggression, or the study of the Heavens, learning how to divine the future or see far-away visions of the present. The most art the Tamori leave almost exclusively to mundane means — that of healing — and the Dragon family's vast understanding of plants and medicine often makes up for it. Tamori shugenja gain an Affinity to Earth spells, and a Deficiency to Water spells.

TECHNIQUE: ROOTED IN THE MOUNTAIN

Because the Tamori are unusually proficient in the arts of combat and warfare, they have learned to apply their bond with the elements into a practical application for battle. You always add twice your Earth Ring to your TN to Be Hit. You may spend a Void Point to grant an identical bonus to another character or yourself for a number of rounds equal to your Insight Rank. You may grant this bonus to another member of the Dragon Clan without spending a Void Point, but may only have one such free enhancement active at any time.

Spells: Sense, Commune, Summon, Counterspell, plus 3 Earth, 2 Fire, 1 Air

Kitsuki Courtier School

Founded by Agasha Kitsuki, the student's of Kitsuki's Method learn to hone their senses to an edge sharper than the finest Kaku blade. Agasha Kitsuki was a shugenja of minor ability but well respected for his keen intellect and nearly supernatural powers of perception. He developed a technique of sharpening one's memory so that the details could be recalled with perfect clarity, and his way of seeing through manipulations and falsehoods is legendary to this day. One of Kitsuki's most radical teachings was placing a greater emphasis on the use of evidence in the pursuit of justice. Most Imperial magistrates and officers use the testimony of a samurai as the primary way of solving crimes and rely on evidence only to wipe away any remaining shred of doubt that might linger. Kitsuki reasoned that evidence and testimony could be used in equal measures — one leading to the other in most situations. Smooth-talking liars confronted with a plethora of evidence against them suddenly find themselves with far less room to fabricate the truth, and quite often find themselves stumbling right into the trap of a Kitsuki.

Because of the relatively outgoing nature of Kitsuki's teaching, the Kitsuki family is the primary conduit between the reclusive Dragon Clan and the rest of the empire. Though Kitsuki never imagined his lessons would be used to pick through the deceptions and plots of the courts, his descendents find Kitsuki's Method is a powerful tool to aid them in their duty as the Dragon Clan's emissaries. Kitsuki-trained courtiers are almost impossible to deceive, and tend to have the “annoying” habit of having no entangling political ties to use against them. Though this reputation does Kitsuki and his line honor, it also encourages other courtiers to keep the Kitsuki out of their business as often as possible. Students of the Kitsuki School do not mind this treatment at all — just as the Dragon Clan remain apart from Rokugan, the Kitsuki understand their role is best served by viewing the courts from a detached vantage point.

Benefit: +1 Intelligence
Honor: 3.5

Skills: Courtier (Gossip), Etiquette (Bureaucracy), Investigation (Notice), Meditation, Theology, any Lore Skill, any one Skill

Outfit: Katana, wakizashi; journal, two kimonos and two pairs of sandals, traveling pack; 5 koku

TECHNIQUES

RANK 1: KITSUKI'S METHOD

Students of the Kitsuki Courtier School perceive the world in a logical fashion, relying on facts instead of emotional impressions. You may add twice your Intelligence to all Social Skill Rolls. Any opponent who makes a Contested Social Skill Roll against you must make Raises equal to your School Rank if the Skill Roll involves lying to you in any way.

RANK 2: WISDOM THE WIND BRINGS

Kitsuki courtiers tend to be alternately frustrating and beneficial in court settings due to their refusal to take a hasty view of any matter. You gain Free Raises equal to your School Rank on any Perception- or Willpower-related rolls.

RANK 3: FINDING THE PATH

Members of the Kitsuki family often serve as magistrates for their family, Clan, and even the Emerald Champion due to their dedication to justice and nearly supernatural perceptions. Whenever an Individual of lower Intelligence attempts to consciously lie to you, you can automatically sense that their words are not truthful, though you do not know exactly how. Thus a Kitsuki conducting an interrogation generally aims for 'yes' or 'no' answers to eliminate all possible variables. Keep in mind that this Technique only functions if your target is aware he is telling a lie; if he is unknowingly passing on false information, you learn nothing. In addition to this, you may spend a Void Point when conducting an interrogation to make a Contested Willpower Roll against the target. If you succeed, the target has unknowingly revealed more than he intended. ("He's telling the truth. He's not the killer... but he knows who is.")

RANK 4:

RANK 4: KNOW THE RHYTHM OF THE HEART

Though students of Kitsuki's Technique prefer the cold pursuit of logic, they learn to take advantage of others' emotions. After spending at least five minutes in conversation with another character, you may make a contested Intelligence roll against that character to discern any allies or enemies the target has (such as from mechanical effects such as Minor Ally or Sworn Enemy). The conversation need have nothing to do with the ally or enemy. In addition, any time you spend a Void Point to enhance a Contested Social Skill Roll, you roll and keep two extra dice instead of one.

RANK 5: KITSUKI'S EYES

The most skilled Dragon envoys can detect falsehood, motive, truth, and guilt with a glance and a moment's consideration. Any time an opponent attempts to lie to you and fails, he immediately loses two Void Points and you gain two Void Points. This does not allow you to have more Void Points than your Void Point total. If your opponent does not have two Void Points to lose, he may not lie (and either remains silent or speaks the truth). Allies may not intentionally lie to you to grant you this bonus.

Three Orders Tattooed Man (Monk)

When the Empire was founded, Togashi retreated into the northern mountains with his two vassals — Mirumoto and Agasha. Those who followed the Dragon Kami into the mountains were either sent to Mirumoto or Agasha for training. Those that did not belong with either continued and knelt before Togashi to study at his feet. These men and women were called Ise zumi, the tattooed men, and were the first order of monks not directly devoted to Shinsai or one of the Fortunes. These Ise zumi were Togashi's mortal eyes and ears in the Empire, as well as his firsthand insight into the workings of the mortal soul. The ritual that initiated an Ise zumi involved hours of meditation between the newcomer and Togashi, which culminated with the Dragon Kami tattooing an image on the monk's skin that represented a facet of the initiate's soul. Aided by the magic of the Dragon, these men and women set about seeking enlightenment in various ways and often by journeying across the Empire.

Today, the monks of the Dragon Clan are divided into three Orders — the followers of Togashi, the Eternal Dragon, the followers of Hitomi, the Lady of the Moon, and the followers of Hoshi, the Celestial Wanderer. While all three Orders still grow in numbers as a slow trickle of mortals heed a mysterious desire to journey to the Dragon Mountains, the Hitomi and Hoshi gain members in other ways as well. The Hitomi often acquire their tattoos spontaneously, as the blessing of Lady Moon makes itself known in the form of a mystic tattoo, or children of the Hitomi monks that do not choose a life of celibacy are sometimes born with such gifts. The Order of Hoshi often takes in those who wish to join their quest for justice, as often Hoshi monks are dispatched all around Dragon lands to aid the Mirumoto in dealing with bandits or to enforce the law on their own.

Benefit: +1 Void

Honor: 1.5

Skills: Artisan, Jujutsu, Meditation (Void Recovery), Theology, any three Skills

Outfit: Any two peasant weapons; kimono and sandals, traveling pack; 2 koku

The Three Orders of the Dragon Clan gain mystic tattoos during their studies of the universe's mysteries. These tattoos have inherent power, and also call forth inner reserves of the soul. The tattoos reflect the monk's inner nature, which sometimes comes as a surprise to even the recipient. When choosing tattoos, be ready to explain how they mirror the soul of your character.

Tattooed Men begin the game with two tattoos. These tattoos generally have abilities that must be called upon, though some have effects that are always active unless you choose to cancel them. To temporarily end the effects of a tattoo, you must make a Meditation roll at a TN equal to 15 + 5 for every Insight Rank you have. Once a tattoo's power has been stopped, you must take an action to resume its effects. Each tattoo may only be used a number of times per day equal to your Insight Rank, including resuming the effects of tattoos that would otherwise have constant effects.

Every tattoo has an effect that generally increases as you gain Insight Ranks. When you achieve a new Insight Rank, you may choose another tattoo to add to your character. The Togashi and Hoshi go through a ritual process that involves inking the new tattoo onto the monk's skin and enhancing that aspect of their

soul. The Hitomi merely meditate at one of Lady Moon's shrines, and the image spontaneously forms on their skin. Monks of the Togashi family (called *ise zumi*) tend to receive tattoos that promote healing and harmonious magical effects, the Hitomi (*kikage zumi*) often gain destructive physically-oriented tattoos, and the Hoshi's (*tsurai zumi*) power reflects a balance between the two, usually enhancing their physical and spiritual prowess. Some tattoos can only be taken by members of a certain Order.

If a tattoo's effect would change your Insight Rank (such as raising a Trait so a Ring becomes higher), you do not apply this new Insight Rank to yourself in any way.

TATTOOS

ARROWROOT

By invoking the symbol of this potent healing herb, you may heal yourself or another character by a number of Wounds equal to your Insight Rank \times 10. You may heal the wounds of another character as many times per day as you like, but you may heal yourself only a number of times per day equal to your Void Ring. When you heal the Wounds of another character, half of those Wounds (rounded down) are applied to you, and may only be healed by natural healing and the passage of time.

BAMBOO

This tattoo grants the power of bamboo, the plant that survives even the harshest winters. You raise your TN to Be Hit by your Insight Rank +5. This effect lasts a number of rounds equal to your Insight Rank +1.

BAT

The symbol of the bat grants supernatural reactions, raising your Reflexes by your Insight Rank when called upon. This effect lasts a number of rounds equal to your Insight Rank +1.

BELFLOWER

The bellflower was said to be the last thing Shinsei spoke to before disappearing from the Empire, and it bears five petals — one for each of the Five Rings. The power of the bellflower allows you to substitute your Void Ring for any Trait for a number of rounds equal to your Insight Rank.

BLAZE

Drawing upon the furious aspect of this element, you gain the ability to channel your inner Fire into opponents. When you make an unarmed strike against an opponent and deal damage, you may activate this tattoo to create a burst of flame that deals XkX damage to your opponent, where X is your Fire Ring. This damage is separate from but in addition to normal unarmed damage. You take a number of Wounds equal to your Fire Ring. This tattoo may only be taken by *kikage zumi*.

CAT

Symbolizing wealth, comfort, and good fortune, the cat enhances your ability to appeal to others with your warm personality. You may activate this tattoo to gain a number of Free Raises equal to your Insight Rank on Social Skill Rolls for an hour, once per day. This tattoo may only be taken by *ise zumi*.

CENTIPEDE

This tattoo increases your movement to your Water Ring \times 100 for up to one full day. While moving in such a manner, your TN to Be Hit is increased by your Reflexes + Insight Rank. Once it is deactivated, you are effectively Out (the Pine tattoo cannot negate this), and must rest for the amount of time you ran, multiplied by (6 minus your School Rank).

CLOUD

When summoning the power of the heavenly clouds, you gain an innate connection to the spirits of this world and others. You may cast Sense and Commune as if you were a shugenja of School Rank equal to your Insight Rank, and may use these castings to speak both with the elemental kami and hidden spirits from other Spirit Realms. Invisible spirits are perfectly visible to you.

CRAB

An old story refers to the crab as the armor of the Emperor, and this totem protects you as well. When you activate this tattoo you gain Carapace equal to your Insight Rank +1 for a number of rounds equal to twice your Insight Rank. This tattoo may only be used a number of times per day equal to your Void Ring.

CROW

The crow ventured into the Shadowlands to help Shinsei guide the Thunders to Fu Leng, but its colorful feathers were blackened in the journey. This tattoo gives you complete immunity to the Taint of the Shadowlands, unless you willingly subject yourself to it (such as by practicing maho). The nature of this tattoo draws the attention of Shadowlands beasts (or Lost characters) as if you were made of pure jade — they prefer to attack you when they have a choice, and it is impossible for you to avoid their notice.

DRAGON

Calling upon the symbol of your Clan, you breathe a gout of flame from your mouth. You roll to strike with your Fire Ring/Insight Rank (keeping your Ring), and may strike at a number of targets equal to your Insight Rank, all of which must be within 50'. When rolling for damage, you again roll your Fire Ring/Insight Rank, keeping a number of dice equal to your Ring. You suffer (6 minus your Void Ring) dice of Wounds when you use this tattoo but cannot be reduced below Down by these Wounds.

EAGLE

Though you do not fly like the totem of this tattoo, you come close. You may activate this tattoo to make a great leap. From a running start, you may jump a number of feet equal to your Water \times 15, half that much straight up or from a standing start. When you fall a number of feet equal to or less than this maximum, you take no damage if you make an Agility roll at a TN of 15.

FULL MOON

Also called the Blessing of Lady Moon, this tattoo is common among the members of the *kikage zumi*, but not unheard of among the *tsurai zumi*. The power of the Full Moon can see the chi of others. As your action you may make a Contested Willpower roll with an opponent and draw upon the power of this tattoo. If they fail, they immediately lose one Void Point. If this tattoo is used in sunlight, you must spend a Void Point to activate it.

LION

Like the Clan of the same name, this tattoo symbolizes a warlike nature and intuitive mastery of combat. When you activate this tattoo, you roll a number of extra dice equal to your Insight Rank on all Bugei Skill Rolls for a number of rounds equal to your Insight Rank +1.

OCEAN

Rokugan prizes the ocean for its boundless depths. You can spend a Void Point to negate a single instance of a need for sleep or food and drink. You may also attempt to draw upon the deeper reserves of the Ocean and refresh a number of Void Points equal to your Insight Rank. To do so, you must make a Void/Meditation roll at a TN determined by adding the number of Void Points being regained and the number of times you have used this power today (including the current use), then multiplying the result by 10. For example, if Togashi Teijo used the tattoo for the first time that day to recover all four of his Void Points, he would make a Void/Meditation roll at a TN of 50 (4 + 1, multiplied by 10). If you fail this roll, you are lost in the mysteries of your meditation for a number of hours equal to 6 minus your Insight Rank.

SUN

This tattoo gives you a connection to Lord Sun and all of his glory. While in the full light of the sun, you may invoke the power of this tattoo to gain a number of Free Raises equal to your Insight Rank on a single roll.

OTHER TATTOOS

Players should feel free to design their own tattoos based upon the power levels presented in existing tattoos. Tattoo effects should rarely be able to affect other characters, with the obvious exception of damage-causing or combat-enhancing tattoos. Tattoos should enhance the Dragon's character in some way, possibly with a small cost that balances out the ability. Tattoos can raise Traits at the expense of other Traits, or grant proficiency in a certain area while removing it in another. All player-created tattoos must meet with the GM's approval.

Schools of the Lion Clan

Akodo Bushi School

Warriors of the Lion Clan follow the ideals and teachings set down by Akodo, the First Emperor's own general and the fiercest of the Kami. Akodo wrote the first manuscript on the art of warfare and the soldier's profession, titling it *Leadership*, and strove to see that every man and woman who truly wished to embody the concepts of bushido were given a chance to do so. Akodo warriors are as fierce as any Lion, but they are tempered by the First Lion's teachings of patience in warfare and a strong brotherhood for fellow Lion. Soldiers trained by the Akodo are equally comfortable in command or rank-and-file positions, and work with one another almost as if a silent communication connected them. This is the result of endless training that ensures that all Akodo bushi understand that they are not solitary warriors, but a part of a greater whole that must act and think as a single, titanic entity. Lion armies move like a single powerful force, directed by Akodo generals in the command tents and Akodo soldiers among the ranks.

The distinction of the Akodo Bushi school is such that generals of other Clans, no matter how reckless, hesitate to engage a force led by an Akodo general. An Akodo-trained general has never lost a large scale battle, except to another Akodo-trained general, and the Lion have over a thousand years of history and tradition to prove this is no happy accident. To be admitted into the prestigious Akodo War College, one of the foremost Akodo Bushi dojo, represents the single greatest honor that can be bestowed upon a samurai.

Such recognition is the first step into a glorious career for a commander, and great war leaders in history have almost always been trained in its hallowed halls. The Akodo do not share their secrets with many, but honored allies of the Lion have been known to gain permission to study among the Akodo Bushi, or even the Akodo War College, for a year or two. In every case, the outsider comes away from the experience with a great respect — bordering on outright fear — of Akodo's techniques.

Benefit: +1 Agility

Honor: 3.5

Skills: Battle (Mass Combat), Defense, Kenjutsu, Kyujutsu, Lore (History), Storytelling, any one High or Bugei Skill

Outfit: Katana, wakizashi, bow and 20 arrows (any type), light armor; command tessen, kimono and sandals; 3 koku



TECHNIQUES

RANK 1: THE WAY OF THE LION

Bushi of the Akodo School hone their fury until it is as precise as a blade. Few obstacles stand in the way of a well-trained Akodo strike. You may either ignore Armor or gain a Free Raise when attacking. Also, you may gain a Free Raise on your first melee attack against an opponent in a skirmish, or against any opponent who has declared a Raise on an attack against you since your last turn. Though these two effects are cumulative, you gain only one Free Raise for an enemy who Raised against you, no matter how many times they actually Raised. When rolling for damage or for a contested Battle roll, you may add your Water Ring to the total.

RANK 2: STRENGTH OF PURITY

Akodo-trained warriors are known for their dedication to bushido, and take a fierce satisfaction in defeating dishonorable foes. Before you roll to attack, you may choose either your attack or damage roll and declare that you will add twice your Honor Rank to its total. You may spend a Void Point to make an Honor Roll (see the Book of Fire, page 193) even if you have already made one this session, and only lose half the normal amount of Honor for failed Honor Rolls and tests of Honor.

RANK 3: STRENGTH OF MY ANCESTORS

Like all Lion, students of the Akodo Bushi School are taught an unusually deep reverence for their ancestors. You gain an additional attack per round, one for you and one for the ancestors watching over you, and you now add twice your Water Ring to your damage rolls (replacing the damage bonus gained at the first Rank).

RANK 4: TRIUMPH BEFORE BATTLE

Students of the Akodo School enter conflict fearlessly, knowing in their hearts that only glorious victory or glorious death awaits. You may declare two Raises against an opponent in the Full Defense Posture and, if your attack is successful, cause them to lose the benefits of the Full Defense Posture. You may now use Strength of Purity to add twice your Honor to both attack and damage rolls at all times.

RANK 5: AKODO'S FINAL LESSON

Mastery of the Akodo Bushi School imparts an unshakable faith in victory. Once the bushi has learned to realize every alternative in battle, failure becomes impossible. You now add three times your Water Ring to all damage rolls (replacing the damage bonus gained at the third Rank). When making Raises on any Bugei Skill Roll, if you meet or exceed the original TN (before Raises) but fail to meet the Raised TN, you still succeed but gain no benefits of Raises.

Kitsu Shugenja School

In a Clan dominated by study and emphasis on warfare, the Kitsu Shugenja School stands as a testament that the Lion Clan is more than a coalition of bloodthirsty warriors. Founded by the supernatural Kitsu race, the school teaches reverence for the past and focuses on maintaining the traditions and history of the Lion. Kitsu shugenja are trained to focus their minds in a manner that helps them perceive the other Spirit Realms — the otherworldly lands that reside in other planes of existence

but can connect with the Realm of Mortals. Kitsu shugenja are trained to use their gifts as advisors and guides to those unfamiliar with the ways of the supernatural, especially in regards to the spirits of the ancestors. Those with a closer blood tie to the original Kitsu race can command powerful spirit magic and speak to the Spirit Realms, but even those with no connection to the Kitsu are taught how to perceive the spirits of the dead as if they were elemental kami. Lion Clan employ Kitsu to serve as spiritual guides to other samurai or as mediums of clear communication between the Lion and the realms beyond. Not every spirit is friendly, nor every ancestor helpful, and it is against such forces that the Kitsu's Lion nature comes to the fore.

Of all shugenja schools, the Kitsu School is the least welcoming to outsiders. This has little to do with paranoia and more to do with the simple fact that the Kitsu teach a sort of magic that those outside the Kitsu family only rarely can grasp. While the Kitsu teach traditional elemental magic to their shugenja, they spend a great deal of time focusing on the arts of communing with the Spirit Realms and interacting with spirits that have wandered into the Realm of Mortals. While anyone with a talent to speak with the kami can grasp the former, without Kitsu blood, the chances of a student understanding the latter is almost nil. The talent does manifest in some outside the Kitsu family, and the Kitsu eagerly offer to train such shugenja when they become known to the Lion Clan.

Benefit: +1 Perception

Honor: 3.5

Skills: Calligraphy, Lore: Ancestors (Lion Clan), Lore (History), Meditation, Theology, any two High Skills

Outfit: Wakizashi; kimono and sandals, scroll satchel, traveling pack; 3 koku

Affinity/Deficiency: Kitsu shugenja are trained from an early age to support their cousins in the Akodo, Ikoma, and Mitsu families. The Kitsu are not only the religious guides of the Lion, but also the Clan's link to the Spirit Realms where their ancestors reside. Kitsu shugenja tend to avoid battle, serving only as advisors to Akodo generals or healers, tending the wounded or aiding their kin from afar. The Lion Clan is far too traditional to allow their shugenja to directly participate in war, though occasional mavericks are not completely unheard of. Shugenja trained by the Kitsu gain an Affinity for Water spells and a Deficiency for Fire spells.

TECHNIQUE: ANCESTRAL GUIDANCE

Kitsu shugenja are known for their strong connection to the Spirit Realms. You may cast Sense and Commune with regards to Ancestors to detect and communicate with ancestors. You may also use Sense on other characters to detect any Heritage Table results they accumulated, as well as any Advantages or Disadvantages of a particularly spiritual or karmic nature. These include: Bad Fortune, Benten's Blessing, Benten's Curse, Bishamon's Blessing, Blessing of the Elements, Chosen by the Oracles, Daikoku's Blessing, Dark Fate, Ebisu's Blessing, Elemental Imbalance, Forsaken, Friendly Kami, Fukurokujin's Blessing, Great Destiny, Great Potential, Haunted, Heian Blessing, Ishiken-do, Jurojin's Blessing, Karmic Tie, Momoku Nemesis, and Wrath of the Kami. This Technique specifically does not detect the Shadowlands Taint.

Spells: Sense, Commune, Summon, Counterspell, plus 3 Water, 2 Air, 1 Earth

Ikoma Omoidasu School (Courtier)

Akodo's first, and possibly only, friend was a loud, drunken, brawling, storytelling old man that threatened to bite the Lion Kami's nose off his face the first time they met. Those that did not know Ikoma well wondered how a man with such a reputation could become one of Akodo's most trusted advisors, but those among the Lion understood: Ikoma was brave, unselfish, steadfast, and clever enough to keep the wagging tongues of Scorpions and Cranes from hurting the Lion. The Ikoma School was founded with the intention that the Ikoma would always serve at the left hand of the Akodo. They served as the diplomats and historians of the Lion Clan, recording the history of the Clan's great deeds and making sure that the glory of their armies was heralded from one end of Rokugan to the other. Courtiers of the Ikoma School tend to be unlike most other courtiers, as they are taught the way of combat along with voice coaching, the oral history of the clan, and scholarly pursuits. Where another courtier might hide behind a yojimbo when swords are drawn, the Ikoma are taught to bear their own steel and stand shoulder-to-shoulder with their brothers and sisters. Just as it is in the courts, the words of an Ikoma in such a conflict have often brought victory home to the Lion.

The Ikoma and Akodo families share a strong bond, and as such there are a great many Ikoma who train among the Akodo, and vice versa. Outside of the clan, the Ikoma have a reputation much like that of their founder — boorish, loud samurai who forego peaceful negotiation for browbeating and intimidation. The Ikoma do not mind such a perception, as it tends to give them the advantage to have their enemies underestimate them. At times, courtiers of the Ikoma are suddenly quite welcome, however, as they tend to be the emissaries of an Akodo or Matsu army that is about to utterly destroy an enemy. The Ikoma are taught to turn a victory in war into much more than glory and honor — they are skilled negotiators, and often their counterparts in a negotiation will walk away almost wishing the Lion had merely crushed him and his homeland.

Benefit: +1 Perception

Honor: 3.5

Skills: Courtier (Gossip), Defense, Etiquette, Lore: History (Lion Clan), Storytelling (Bragging), any one High Skill, any one High or Bugei Skill

Outfit: Katana, wakizashi, tanto, ashigaru armor, iron box, two kimonos and two pairs of sandals, traveling pack; 4 koku

TECHNIQUES

RANK 1: PATH OF THE RIVER

When determining if you are recognized, your Glory Rank is effectively increased by your Awareness. You may also confer this benefit on a number of your companions equal to your School Rank. You gain Free Raises equal to your School Rank on all public Bragging rolls (see Glory rules on page 184.)

RANK 2: THE CURRENT'S PULL

During combat you may bolster your allies as a complex action, proclaiming the honor of your actions. A number of allies equal to your Awareness + School Rank may add your Honor to all attack rolls for the duration of the combat. If you are reduced to the Die level or killed, any allies who received the bonus are demoralized, lose the bonus, and suffer an equal penalty for the rest of the combat.

RANK 3: BRILLIANT GLORY

You are trained to pay heed to the shifting tides of glory, taking advantage of the fickle nature of fame both to the benefit of your allies and detriment of your foes. Any time someone loses or gains Glory in your presence, you may make an Awareness/Storytelling (Oratory) roll vs. a TN of the target's Glory \times 10 to publicly expound upon the target's deeds. If this roll is successful, the loss or gain is doubled. Keep in mind that increasing a Glory loss requires gravely insulting the target. Only the largest Glory gain and Glory loss caused by an Omoidasu using this technique within the last month remains in effect for any given individual.

RANK 4: MASTER THE FLOW OF THE HEART

As students of both human nature and the world, the Ikoma Omoidasu are taught to observe the enemy carefully and turn that foe's actions to their advantage. When making a contested roll involving your Perception or Awareness, you may spend a Void Point to lower all of that opponent's dice by your Honor Rank. The Void Point is spent before the roll, but the penalty is applied after dice are rolled. During combat, you may take an action and choose an opponent to make an Oratory roll at a TN of $10 \times$ the target's Insight Rank. If you succeed, that opponent suffers a penalty to all attack and damage rolls equal to twice your Honor Rank, at a minimum of -2. This Technique has no effect on opponents with zero Honor.

RANK 5: THE WILL OF THE WAVES

You may now make Tests of Honor for any failed roll (rather than only those that would cause you Honor loss). You gain no Honor if you succeed, but suffer the normal consequences if you fail. If an ally fails a roll in your presence, you may shout encouragement and spend a Void Point to make a Test of Honor on their behalf. If you succeed, then your encouragement has allowed them to succeed. If you lose this Test of Honor the Honor loss is yours, not your ally's.

Matsu Berserker School (Bushi)

On the battlefield, the Lion Clan's legions of Matsu troops are like an unstoppable tide of death. While the Akodo style favors a controlled and tactical approach to battle, the Matsu School emulates the way of the family's founder — powerful, unstoppable, furious, and honorable. The Matsu are taught to respect the value of patience and planning, but that they are tools for others. In the heat of battle, even the most brilliant strategies have a way of being torn apart by chaos, and it is at that time that the Matsu are taught to focus on the art of killing and nothing else. In practice, a Matsu Berserker is a fearsome sight, throwing herself into combat with little or no heed for her own safety and overcoming more cautious foes in an instant. To the Matsu, the greatest advantage in battle is to seize the initiative and force an enemy to react to the Lion's charge. In such a position, foes have little time to maneuver or employ underhanded tricks to escape the wrath of the Matsu. Matsu Berserkers are not just savage brutes in battle, however, and are quite capable of focusing their rage to maximum advantage for the Lion. Enemies who believe the Matsu's strength lies only in savage and wild offense often find themselves dead an instant after they are defeated by the precision and focus of the school's techniques.

Like the family, the Matsu's schools tend to be dominated by women. This is not because the Matsu spurn the worth of males, but because most positions of influence within the family get passed from daughter to daughter. Most female Matsu students are quite above the concepts of sexism, and only single out male students for pun-

ishment if that student believes it somehow wrong to have a woman for a sensei. The Matsu are fiercely protective of both the honor and prestige of their school, and tend to answer any slight challenge to Matsu's Technique without hesitation. They are also quick to prevent a student's progression (or expel them outright in some cases) if they feel the student has not mastered the lessons completely. The Matsu sensei wish to see their students succeed, but they are notorious for their high standards and nearly nonexistent praise.

Benefit: +1 Strength

Honor: 3.5

Skills: Battle, Jujutsu, Kenjutsu (Katana), Kyujutsu, Lore (History), any two Bugei Skills

Outfit: Katana, wakizashi, tanto, bow and 20 arrows (any type), any two weapons, light armor; kimono and sandals, traveling pack; 3 koku

TECHNIQUES

RANK 1: THE LION'S ROAR

Warriors of the Matsu School respect their Akodo cousins' leadership skills, but they know that a furious attack often simply overwhelms an enemy. You may add your Honor Rank to all damage rolls. You gain a number of Free Raises equal to your School Rank when in the Full Attack Posture. These Raises may only be used for additional damage.

RANK 2: MATSU'S FURY

Though the Matsu Berserkers throw themselves into battle heedless of their own safety, few enemies survive long enough to exploit their recklessness. When you successfully make an attack, you may add your Water Ring to subsequent attack rolls in that combat, once per combat. If you are in the Full Attack Posture, you may instead gain this bonus a number of times equal to your School Rank and may also add this bonus to your damage rolls. This benefit is lost if you do not attack an opponent for a number of rounds equal to your Insight Rank or if you enter the Full Defense Posture.

RANK 3: THE LION'S CHARGE

The Matsu overcome their enemies with their raw fury, the fires of bushido driving their souls. You may now make an additional attack per round. You need to make only three Raises to gain an additional attack when in the Full Attack Posture. You now add twice your Honor Rank to all damage rolls (replacing the damage bonus gained at the first Rank).

RANK 4: MATSU'S COURAGE

All Lion are taught to master their fear. When in the Full Attack Posture, your Wound penalties are reduced by 3x your Honor Rank. Any attempts to control or influence your mind (including spells) also have their TNs increased by this amount. You may gain this resistance outside of combat, but must take an obviously aggressive and hostile stance, drawing a weapon if it is available and taking all penalties of the Full Attack Posture.

RANK 5: THE LION'S VICTORY

The final lesson of the Matsu Berserker School is that once the bushi has stepped into battle, he has already won. At this Rank, when you roll for attack or damage, you may choose to reroll any dice that roll below your Honor Rank +1, but you must keep the new result. You now add 3x your Water Ring to all damage rolls (replacing the damage bonus gained at the third Rank).

Schools of the Mantis Clan

Yoritomo Bushi School

In its current form, the Yoritomo School has existed for less than three generations. While some of the basic techniques of the school began with the Mantis during their days as a Minor Clan, the school took the name of Yoritomo when the Mantis was declared a Great Clan, and has since grown exponentially. Before his death, Yoritomo developed the final secret techniques of the school that bore his name, and masters of these powerful arts are still quite rare. Like the islands the Mantis call home, the way of the Yoritomo Bushi School is unpredictable, furious, and mysterious to those not of Mantis blood. One of the most controversial aspects of the school's training that it focuses on weapons largely considered beneath a samurai's skill level. The Mantis employ a wide variety of peasant weapons, mostly pairs of kama or tana, due to their humble heritage and their seafaring ways. Though the Mantis do not seek to dishonor their katana, their life on the waves often requires they firmly secure their sword to their back or risk losing it at sea. Because of this, Yoritomo Bushi are trained to make use of other weapons that are easily readied and replaced — though some Mantis samurai have taken to passing their favored peasant weapons from generation to generation along with their katana. If a Mantis bushi takes the time to unstrap his katana and ready it against a foe, it is only because the enemy has earned the Yoritomo's full wrath.

A Yoritomo bushi in combat is an interesting sight to say the least. The Mantis do not train their warriors with patterned behavior and fighting drills as other bushi schools tend to. Instead, the Mantis teach students the art of finding an opening in an enemy's defense and exploiting it for every advantage possible. Yoritomo bushi almost never stop moving in a fight, constantly darting towards, away from, and around an opponent in an effort to find some small weakness and turn it into a larger one. Those who attempt to study the Yoritomo Bushi School in action for some way to defeat it find themselves stymied by the School's resistance to patterned techniques and repeated maneuvers.

Benefit: +1 Agility

Honor: 1.5

Skills: Athletics, Battle, Commerce, Craft (Sailing), Defense, Kenjutsu, Peasant Weapons (Kama)

Outfit: Katana, wakizashi, tanto, any two peasant weapons, light armor; kimono and sandals, traveling pack; 3 koku

TECHNIQUES

RANK 1: THE WAY OF THE MANTIS

Mantis bushi learn to use weapons that can be replaced easily and readied at a moment's notice. You suffer no penalties for off-hand fighting or two-weapon fighting when wielding a peasant weapon in your off-hand, nor for uneven terrain penalties less than your School Rank × 5. Opponents gain no advantage when flanking you or attacking you from higher ground. You may add your Water Ring to damage rolls.

RANK 2: VOICE OF THE STORM

When making an attack, you may choose to throw your weapon. Weapons may be thrown 20' per Rank you have in Strength, and gain one kept die for damage but otherwise roll damage normally. In melee, you may drive your weapon into your opponent as hard as you can, sacrificing form for brutal results and sacrificing a rolled die for a kept die. For example, if you would roll 6k2 for damage, you may choose to roll two fewer damage dice and keep two more, rolling 4k4. You must declare how many dice you lose and gain in this manner before rolling damage, and the number of dice transferred from rolled to kept cannot exceed your School Rank.

RANK 3: STRIKE OF THE MANTIS

Students of the Mantis School attack their enemies from all angles — not just front and behind, but above and below as well. You gain an additional attack per round. You gain a Free Raise on all attacks with your off-hand weapon that may only be used to Knockdown. When making a Knockdown attack, you roll additional dice equal to your School Rank.

RANK 4: THE ROLLING WAVE

Any bonus you gain for Flanking, attacking an opponent on lower ground, or attacking a prone opponent is doubled. You gain a Free Raise on all attacks that may only be used to gain an additional attack.

RANK 5: HAND OF OSANO-WO

You may sacrifice your extra attack to instead make a single attack with both weapons in a single, brutal strike. Your Strength is tripled for the purposes of this attack. You may only use this technique while in the Full Attack Posture.

Moshi Shugenja School

Established with the birth of the Centipede Clan, the Moshi school was founded in the light of Lady Sun's influence. Introspective and serene, it straddled the opposing philosophies of peace and the nature of elemental fire. Moshi priestesses were looked upon with respect by their Isawa cousins for their ability to master the awesome power of fire yet remain wise and peaceful. Though the first Sun has perished and the Centipede Clan has long ago vanished into memory, the Moshi school continues to teach its students the tenets that were inherent in its founding — empathy, harmony, and resolve. Though some look upon the shugenja of the Moshi and wonder how they can remain as they are in the midst of the tempestuous Mantis Clan, it is a situation the wisdom of the Centipede Clan learned long ago how to cope with. Students of the school are taught their lessons both in the classroom and then among the swirling storms that surround the Mantis Islands. At all times, the shugenja learn to remain calm and centered during the most chaotic conditions through both mental discipline and communion with the storm. Though their Isawa cousins in the Mantis Clan deal with harsh weather, students of the Moshi school learn to revel in it.

Benefit: +1 Intelligence

Honor: 2.5

Skills: Calligraphy, Divination, Meditation, Spellcraft, Tea Ceremony, Theology (Fortunes), any one High Skill

Outfit: Wakizashi, tanto; kimono and sandals, scroll satchel, traveling pack; 3 koku

Affinity/Deficiency: The Moshi family's historical ties to the Sun and the element of Fire have been tempered, but not extinguished, by their time in the Mantis Clan. Shugenja trained by the Moshi have an intense nature that is expressed even in their calm focus, and are fond of communing with the kami that swirl in the seas and storm. Moshi Shugenja have an Affinity for Fire and a Deficiency for Earth.

TECHNIQUE: EYE OF THE STORM

Students of the Moshi maintain a serenity that is surrounded on all sides by chaos. In both the realm of the mundane and the spiritual, the Moshi are a center of tranquility in the tempestuous Mantis Clan, counterbalancing the spirits of the harsh weather that dominates Rokugan's coastlines. Because the Moshi understand the varied elements of water, air, and fire in such combined phenomena, they are able to commune with each as if they were one and the same. You may spend a Void Point to switch your Affinity and Deficiency to any elements of your choice (except Void) for one day for the purposes of casting (not learning) spells.

Spells: Sense, Commune, Summon, Counterspell, plus 3 Fire, 2 Water, 1 Air



Yoritomo Courtier School

When the Mantis Clan achieved equal status with the Great Clans, it quickly became apparent that the glorious armies of the Mantis would not be enough to earn and maintain influence during the times of peace. Those Mantis who were skilled in the arts of courtly maneuvering were commanded to establish a school so that their arts might be shared with others. After several years and direct funding from the overflowing Mantis coffers, the Yoritomo Courtier School was comparable to the courtier dojos of other Clans. In a purely Mantis approach to the art, the founders of the school made up for their lack of formal training with dedication. What dedication did not unlock for the Mantis was tossed aside and replaced with something more fitting for the Yoritomo family. In the end, the school became something of a hybrid of Doji favor-mongering, Scorpion ruthlessness, and pure Mantis 'charm' — the sort of charm that made other courtiers mildly concerned for their personal safety. Courtiers of the Yoritomo School are trained to apply several tactics, one after the other until the desired result is achieved. At first, the courtier politely but bluntly states what it is he wishes and then opens the floor to negotiation for favors in return. Failing that, the Yoritomo quietly attempts to discern just how much koku would need to be applied to the situation to make things easier. If that response is ineffective (or deemed completely useless beforehand), the courtier then attempts tactics of intimidation — first of an emotional then physical nature. Though the Mantis are often seen as boorish thugs in court, the balance they maintain is a complex one. Most courtiers somehow manage to maintain just the right threat level to scare opponents into action but not draw their wrath upon themselves. Like their bushi cousins, Yoritomo-trained courtiers prefer others being caught off-guard by their true ability.

Benefit: +1 Willpower

Honor: 1.5

Skills: Commerce, Courtier (Political Maneuvering), Deceit (Intimidation), Defense, Etiquette (Sincerity), Underworld, any one Bugei Skill

Outfit: Katana, wakizashi, tanto, any one weapon; two kimonos and two pairs of sandals, traveling pack; 10 koku

TECHNIQUES

RANK 1: DUTY BEFORE HONOR

Like their bushi brethren, the courtiers of the Mantis must often deal with unsavory characters and situations. You gain Free Raises equal to your School Rank to all Social Skill Rolls when dealing with individuals with Infamy. Your Glory, Awareness, and Willpower are all considered two Ranks higher when dealing with individuals with Infamy.

RANK 2: STORM HEART

Mantis diplomats know they can never outtalk the Doji or manipulate the Bayushi, so they learn to take the advantage in court by being plainly intimidating. Any time you spend a Void Point on a roll involving Intimidation, the bonus is doubled. Additionally, any time you are involved in a contested Social Skill Roll involving Willpower, you roll additional dice equal to your School Rank.

RANK 3: COMMAND THE WINDS

Courtiers from the Mantis Clan actively maintain reputations as boors in order to keep an advantage in the courts, but are more observant than others believe. Any time you succeed at a Contested Roll involving Deceit (Intimidation), you may add your Deceit Skill Rank to all Contested Social Skill Rolls against that individual for a number of days equal to your School Rank. You may apply this technique cumulatively to the same individual a number of times equal to your School Rank.

RANK 4: WILL OF THE STORM

When engaging an opponent in conversation, you can attempt to demoralize him in a shattering fashion. You may make a Contested Willpower Roll against an opponent, spending two Void Points and making three Raises to do so. If you succeed at a Contested Roll, then your opponent gains the Nemesis Disadvantage toward a target of your choice (possibly you). This Disadvantage remains until the target defeats his Nemesis either in combat or by proving his superiority in a social situation until you regain the lost Void Points. You may choose not to recover these Void Points for as long as you like.

RANK 5: STRENGTH IN ALL THINGS

When making Deceit Skill Rolls, your 8's and 9's explode as well as 10's. When using the Intimidation Emphasis, 6's and 7's explode as well. This effect may be used only once per die per roll. Thus if you roll an 8 then reroll a 9 on the same die, it explodes only once. If you roll an 8 then reroll a 10, the 10 explodes normally.

Tsuruchi Bounty Hunter School (Bushi)

A unique dojo, the Tsuruchi School teaches the way of the bow to the exclusion of all else — including the sword. When the school was founded on the techniques of Tsuruchi, the Wasp Clan completely eschewed the blade, saying it was a symbol of an impossibly limiting code of conduct. Tsuruchi snapped his own blade in half with his foot, and his followers were bid to do the same. In the years since, the Wasp Clan has been absorbed into the Mantis, and the sensei of the Tsuruchi School has lessened in their enforcement of Tsuruchi's philosophy. While the school still does not teach anything but combat with a bow and close-quarter defense with a short blade, its students are no longer expressly forbidden from carrying katana or wakizashi. Despite the evolution of the school's philosophy, its deadline has remained constant. Students of Tsuruchi's Technique are capable of amazing feats with a bow, the least of which includes firing multiple shots at once or even firing several shots in the space of time it would take a lesser archer to ready a single attack. Tsuruchi archers are trained in the arts of stealth and tracking as well, as they primarily serve the clan as both scouts and hunters. A single unit of Tsuruchi bushi can easily defeat a much larger foe if given the ability to move and harass their target. Because of their skills, the Tsuruchi are also well known for their ability to hunt down fugitives from the Emperor's law. Bounties brought in from such activities make up a significant share of the Mantis' stores of koku.

Schools of the Phoenix Clan

Shiba Bushi School

While many bushi are called upon to guard the non-combatant members of their Clan, the Shiba Bushi are easily the foremost yojimbo in Rokugan. When Shiba knelt before Isawa and promised to guard his descendents, he made an oath that would be upheld so long as the Phoenix Clan existed. While the Shiba bushi are trained in the arts of conventional warfare and single combat tactics, their primary training centers around being able to protect the shugenja of the Clan with their lives. Shiba bushi spend a great deal of time honing their reflexes against attacks from all angles in a variety of situations. The bushi's training focuses both on the mundane and spiritual aspects of combat, and students of the school spend an equal amount of time both physically exercising and meditating to achieve harmony between body and soul. The nearly supernatural reflexes and perceptions of an experienced Shiba bushi is credited to both his intense

physical training and a deep spiritual well-being. Students of the school are trained often alongside shugenja as they study the mysteries of the Void, and many Shiba bushi are able to feel the ebb and flow of the elements much like a shugenja. Even with their exceptional prowess, few Shiba bushi enter into conflict with relish. Though they are warriors, their deep understanding of the ways of the universe tends to instill an appreciation for life that is absent from other bushi.

Benefit:
+1 Reflexes

Honor: 2.5

Skills: Defense, Kenjutsu, Kyujutsu, Meditation (Void Recovery), Spears, Theology, any one High or Bugei Skill

Outfit: Katana, wakizashi, bow and 20 arrows (any type), naginata, light armor, kimono and sandals, traveling pack; 2 koku

Benefit: +1 Reflexes

Honor: 1.5

Skills: Athletics, Defense, Hunting, Kyujutsu (Tsuruchi Longbow) 2, Stealth, any one Bugei or High Skill

Outfit: Wakizashi, tanto, bow and 100 arrows (any combination of types), ashigaru armor, kimono and sandals; 3 koku

TECHNIQUES

RANK 1: NEVER LET THE BLADE REACH YOU

The first lesson of the Tsuruchi School is that a slow archer is a dead archer. At the start of combat you may choose to roll and keep a number of additional dice on Initiative equal to your School Rank. If you do not take the Initiative bonus, you gain a number of Free Raises each round equal to your School Rank. These Free Raises can only be used to make additional attacks with your bow. You may add your Air Ring to your TN to Be Hit, doubling this bonus against ranged attacks.

RANK 2: THE STING OF THE WASP

Tsuruchi's technique teaches its students uncanny accuracy and speed. You may make an additional attack per round when using a bow, and when you Raise to make an additional attack, you may make the extra attack against a different opponent, rolling against the higher TN between the two targets.

RANK 3: THE ARROW KNOWS THE WAY

The superhuman reflexes of the Tsuruchi are aided by teachings that show students how to rely on senses other than vision. You may spend a Void Point to cancel the -20 Initiative penalty for being surprised. You may now Raise one fewer time for any effect that requires Raises when using a bow, to a minimum of one Raise per effect (when Raising for damage, each die of damage is a separate effect). You now add twice your Air Ring to your TN to Be Hit (replacing the bonus gained at the first Rank).

RANK 4: FLIGHT OF NO-MIND

Advanced students of the Tsuruchi School are capable of amazing feats of archery even under the worst circumstances. When firing a bow, you may make one attack per round that ignores all penalties. This includes penalties to your own roll as well as temporary modifiers that would otherwise make an enemy harder to hit, such as a higher TN due to terrain. This does not ignore constant effects such as armor nor Techniques that always generate a bonus.

RANK 5: TSURUCHI'S EYE

Shortly before retiring, Tsuruchi developed a technique that truly embodies mastery of the bow. You may give up one of your attacks per round to make a single attack with ten Free Raises that may not be used for extra attacks. Alternately, you may now make the usual Raises to gain an additional attack on both of your normal attacks per round (rather than just one attack per round).



TECHNIQUES

RANK 1: THE WAY OF THE PHOENIX

Shiba bushi move through battle as the Void moves through all the elements. When you declare your Combat Posture, you also declare if you will add your Void Ring to your TN to Be Hit, your attack rolls, or your damage rolls. This bonus lasts until you choose to change it during your opportunity to change postures. When taking any action, you may spend as many Void Points as you wish.

RANK 2: DANCING WITH THE ELEMENTS

Shiba bushi spend much of their time preparing to protect the shugenja of the Phoenix. You gain a number of Free Raises equal to your School Rank on melee attack rolls, but these Raises may only be used to Guard an ally. If you successfully Guard an ally, any bonuses to your TN to Be Hit are shared with that ally as well, in addition to the usual bonus. Your deepening connection to the Void allows you to raise or lower the TN of any spell cast on you by 5.

RANK 3: ONE WITH THE VOID

You remain calm even in the midst of combat. You may now make an additional attack per round, and you now add twice your Air Ring to your TN to Be Hit.

RANK 4: MOVE WITH THE WORLD

Advanced students of the Shiba School understand that not only are they a part of the universe, but that the universe extends also into them. You double the bonus to your TN to Be Hit, attack rolls, or damage rolls granted by your Rank 1 Technique. Whenever another character spends a Void Point within 50' of you, you may make a Contested Void Roll against that character. If you are successful, you regain one Void Point (but may not exceed your maximum). This ability activates itself even if you are unaware of the source of the Void roll, but you do not learn anything regarding the source or nature of how the Void Point was originally spent.

RANK 5: TOUCH OF THE VOID

Masters of the Shiba School see the universe as a veil draped over the raw elements so that lesser minds can comprehend the world. For every Void Point you spend, you gain the effects of spending two, when applicable. You may also exchange any rolled dice you gain from spending Void Points for dice kept, and vice versa. For example, if you normally roll 8k4 on a Skill Roll, you may spend a Void Point to gain 2k2 to your roll, rather than the usual 1k1. Alternately, you could choose to gain 1k3, 0k4, 3k1, or 4k0.

Isawa Shugenja School

Those outside the Isawa family often compare the Isawa School to the Kakita Dueling Academy — both the premier schools of their art, founded by the man who was considered the greatest practitioner to ever live. Though the Isawa appreciate the comparison, they feel it is somewhat unfair. Though Kakita trained in the way of the sword, he certainly did not invent it. Nor did Kakita discover steel and share it with all of the Empire. Isawa not only helped the clans by sharing his art, but he did so when few others even understood the fundamental differences be-

tween the elements. Even then, Isawa alone truly mastered the way of the Void, and few shugenja outside the Phoenix have ever matched his skill. The Isawa School is not just the pre-eminent academy in the arts of magic, it is the repository of traditions and technique that predate the Empire. The best schools of the Clans may compete amongst themselves to prove their superiority, but none contest the dominance of the Isawa among shugenja. Only rarely are non-Phoenix invited to attend, and even those among the Isawa are not guaranteed a place in their family's dojo. The Isawa do not share their secrets lightly, as few can master both the complex techniques that they teach and the awesome responsibility of carrying such power.

Benefit: +1 Intelligence

Honor: 2.5

Skills: Calligraphy, Meditation, Spellcraft (Elemental Knowledge for character's Affinity), Theology, any one Lore Skill, any two High Skills.

Outfit: Wakizashi, tanto; kimono and sandals, scroll satchel, traveling pack; 4 koku

Affinity/Deficiency: The Isawa family are descended from and named after the first Phoenix Thunder. Isawa's guidance helped the priests of the nascent Clans form schools, and the Phoenix Thunder's power did not seem limited by the idea that prowess in one element came at the cost of another. Shugenja of the Isawa School have no Deficiency. You may choose any Element as your Element of Affinity.

TECHNIQUE: ISAWA'S ART

Universally regarded as the most prominent shugenja in Rokugan and the most knowledgeable about the five elements, students of the Isawa School study each of the four basic elements like their counterparts in other Clans, but do not shun the intimidating mysteries of the Void. While other shugenja families find attempting to touch the element of Void leads to madness, the Isawa's connection to it aids their magic. Whenever you cast a spell, you may spend as many Void Points as you wish, and Void Points spent on your favored element count twice.

Spells: Sense, Commune, Summon, Counterspell, plus 2 Spells from your Affinity and 3 Spells from other elements

Asako Courtier School

While Isawa was powerful and Shiba was wise, no one argued that Lady Asako possessed a talent that both men lacked at times — limitless understanding. Asako's patience seemed infinite, in both dealing with others and researching some problem for her friend Shiba. There were many times that Asako's keen mind and endless perseverance won out after all else had failed the Phoenix Clan, and it did not go unnoticed. When the courts of powerful nobles began to form, it became clear that Asako was the best suited to deal with such situations. Though she could not be everywhere at once, many of her vassals came to understand her ways and were sent to represent the Phoenix in the lands of other families. The tradition of the Asako representing the Phoenix as diplomats and ambassadors eventually grew in to an official arrangement, and the Asako Courtier School was founded. Students of Asako's Technique are taught two primary tenets — dedication succeeds when all else has failed, and the lessons of the past repeat themselves continuously. Courtiers trained by the Asako spend

countless hours in the vast libraries of the Asako, enriching their minds and learning from history in a way no sensei could ever match. Though there are sensei in the school, they are effectively librarians that dictate what lessons the courtier will learn and decide when knows them. While this would cause a severe lack of social grace in many situations, the students of the Asako also serve as the clan's primary researchers and intermediaries between the families of the Phoenix. Given the somewhat strained relationships between the Isawa and Shiba families at times, this leaves the Asako quite adept at dealing with a great many situations.

Benefit: +1 Awareness

Honor: 3.5

Skills: Courtier (Political Maneuvering), Etiquette, Lore: History (any Emphasis), Meditation (Zanji), Tea Ceremony, Theology, any one High Skill

Outfit: Wakizashi, tanto; two kimonos and two pairs of sandals, steed, traveling pack; 4 koku

TECHNIQUES

RANK 1: TEMPLE OF THE SOUL

A true Phoenix knows that the soul is always at peace even in unfamiliar surroundings. Whenever you make a contested Social Skill roll that you did not initiate, you roll an additional die for every Rank you have in this School. The Experience Point cost for increasing any Lore Skill is reduced by your Insight Rank, to a minimum of one point.

RANK 2: FROM THE ASHES

Though many claim the setting of the courts is dynamic and spontaneous, the Asako understand that there are few surprises for those who have studied the ways of the world. You gain a bonus to any Lore Skill Roll equal to the number of Lore Skills you currently possess (at any Rank). Any Raise you make on a Lore Skill Roll counts as two Raises.

RANK 3: VOICE OF THE UNIVERSE

Already a significant resource of knowledge and wisdom, the Asako continues to improve his ability to recall even the most obscure information at a moment's notice. Any time you make a Lore Skill Roll, you may re-roll a number of times equal to your Insight Rank and keep the best result.

RANK 4: ASAKO'S ENLIGHTENMENT

The enlightened mind perceives parallels between the past and the present that escape those less wise. Once per day, you may spend ten minutes in conversation with an ally to give advice on a matter that directly pertains to one of your Lore Skills of your choice. That ally gains two Void Points (which may cause his Void Points to exceed his Void Ring) and a total number of Free Raises equal to his Insight Rank. These Void Points and Free Raises may only be spent on rolls that directly relate to the matter upon which you advised him. Lore (Shadowlands) grants this bonus in combat against any Shadowlands creature. Know the School grants this bonus in combat against students of the school in question. Lore (Specific Clan) applies to members of that clan. Underworld grants this bonus in combat against all bandits and ronin.

RANK 5: ETERNAL WISDOM

A common compliment to a Phoenix is that "the wisdom of the Phoenix is eternal." When you make any Lore Skill Roll, your 8's and 9's explode as well as 10's. This effect may be used only once per die per roll. Thus if you roll an 8 then reroll a 9 on the same die, it explodes only once. If you roll an 8 then reroll a 10, the 10 explodes normally. You may spend a single round in conversation with a person and spend a Void Point to immediately know their Rank in any Lore Skill that you possess.

Asako Henshin School (Monk)

When Shiba died ensuring that Shinsei and Shosuro could return to the Empire with the Black Scrolls that had been Fu Leng's downfall, Shinsei whispered into the dying Kami's ear, telling him a secret that revealed the path of destiny and the soul. What Shiba saw enabled his soul to remain in the mortal world despite the death of his body. Shiba took this secret to the only person he trusted with such knowledge: Lady Asako. He told her of the great destiny of mortal man, and of the human spirit's limitless capacity for growth. Asako in turn instructed her most trustworthy students, and vowed that her family would guide humanity along the Path of Man.

Arrogance overtook the wisdom of Shinsei's words. For a time, the Asako believed that they alone represented the apex of mortal potential, and that those who mastered the Path of Man would become like Fortunes. This folly nearly ruined the noble goals of Lady Asako, but the Henshin righted their course after their folly was revealed to them.

The Asako no longer seek to become the pinnacle of human evolution and achieve apotheosis, but simply to exist in perfect unity with all the elements around them. While many monk orders claim the same goal, the Asako still cherish their belief that mankind can become closer to perfection by becoming like the Fortunes. Students of the Path of Man are taught that they are not masters of human destiny, but guides who must aid every mortal soul in achieving greatness. The monks are taught to guard this secret closely so that it does not lead others to the ruin that nearly corrupted the Asako. Henshin carry with them a terrible secret, one that allows them to draw out the greatness in a human's soul. They can affect how they or others are connected to the entire universe, but must not abuse their awesome power.

School Benefit: +1 any Trait

Honor: 2.5

Starting Skills: Calligraphy, Jujutsu, Lore (Elements), Medicine, Meditation (Zanji), Theology

Outfit: Wakizashi, bo staff, tanto, ashigaru armor, kimono and sandals, traveling pack; 2 koku

TECHNIQUES

Like the tattooed men of the Dragon Clan, Asako Henshin do not gain predetermined Techniques at each Insight Rank. Instead, the monks of the Asako strengthen their connection to the kami in a unique manner that grows more powerful with each Rank. Monks of this school draw upon their magic using Riddles and Mysteries in a manner similar to a shugenja's spellcasting, but with far different results. At the first Rank of this School and every Rank beyond, you choose a Riddle and a Mystery that you learn (they may be of different elements). Whenever you gain a new Rank in this School beyond the first, you gain a Free Raise when using Mysteries and Riddles you have previously learned.

RIDDLES

Where once the Asako sought to trick the kami of the elements with their riddles, they have progressed beyond this arrogant attitude. They now treat the kami as friends to be consulted rather than livestock to be herded. However, the kami have become quite fond of the Henshin's Riddles, and now the Henshin amuse the kami in exchange for favors.

Using a Riddle is a standard action (unless noted otherwise) that requires a Skill Roll using your Lore (Elements) Skill, keeping your Ring in the relevant Element. The starting TN for all Riddles is 15. If you possess a Lore Skill of the element whose Riddle you are using — Lore (Elemental Air), Lore (Elemental Earth), Lore (Elemental Fire), or Lore (Elemental Water) — you add your Rank in that Skill to the total roll and may choose to roll using that Lore Skill instead. For example, if you have Lore (Elements) 5, Lore (Elemental Water) 6, and Lore (Elemental Earth) 4, you may roll 5 dice for your Riddle of Earth and add 4 to the total, and roll 6 dice for your Riddle of Water and add 6.

Each Riddle may be used a number of times per day equal to your Ring in that particular element. You may spend a Void Point to use the Riddle an additional time each day.

The four Riddles are used as follows.

Riddle of Air: Add your Air Ring in rolled (not kept) dice to one Social Skill Roll; you may make a Raise to add an additional die. Instead, you may add your School Rank times your Air Ring to another's Social Skill Roll TN if you can see and hear the target clearly. This Riddle is activated when the Social Skill Roll is made.

Riddle of Earth: Ignore twice your Earth Ring in Wounds as they are applied, or heal someone else of a number of Wounds equal to your Earth Ring times your School Rank. You may make two Raises to ignore or heal 5 extra Wounds.

Riddle of Fire: Add your Fire Ring in dice rolled (not kept) to hand-to-hand attack rolls in the next combat round; you may make a Raise to add an additional die. Instead, you may add your Fire Ring times your School Rank to the total of an Intelligence-based Skill check; you may make a Raise to increase your effective School Rank by one.

Riddle of Water: Add twice your Water Ring to your hand-to-hand damage rolls for a number of consecutive combat rounds equal to your School Rank; you may make a Raise to increase your effective School Rank by one. Instead, you may add your Water Ring in dice rolled (not kept) on a Perception check; you may make a Raise to add an additional die.

MYSTERIES

Mysteries are the result of generations worth of research by the Asako into the mortal body's connection to the universe. Where Riddles are an extension of a Henshin's understanding of the kami, Mysteries use the Henshin's ability to manipulate people's ties to reality. The monks of the Asako learn how to strengthen or weaken their own elements — and the elements of others. Sensei of the Asako Henshin School jeal-

ously guard these Mysteries, knowing that their misuse could cause a dangerous imbalance in the world. Henshin are taught to use their weakening abilities only in self-defense, and those who abuse their gifts are dealt with harshly.

Using a Mystery is a standard action that requires a Skill Roll using your Lore (Elements) Skill, keeping your Ring in the relevant Element. The starting TN for all Mysteries is 15. If you possess a Lore Skill of the element whose Mystery you are using — Lore (Elemental Air), Lore (Elemental Earth), Lore (Elemental Fire), or Lore (Elemental Water) — you add your rank in that Skill to the total roll and may choose to roll using that Lore Skill instead. For example, if you have Lore (Elements) 5, Lore (Elemental Water) 6, and Lore (Elemental Earth) 4, you may roll 5 dice for your Mystery of Earth and add 4 to the total, and roll 6 dice for your Mystery of Water and add 6.

You may use a Mystery to raise or lower your own Ring by your School Rank, but the TN of the roll is increased by 3 for every rank in the Ring you gain or lose past the first. You may make two Raises to move one additional rank beyond your School Rank when affecting your own Ring.

You may use a Mystery to raise or lower another's Ring by one-half of your School Rank, rounded down, but never below 1. The TN of the roll is increased by 10 for every rank in the Ring you affect past the first. You may make two Raises to move one rank beyond your normal limitation when affecting someone else's Ring.

Each Mystery affects the appropriate Ring — the Mystery of Water affects the Water Ring, and so on. Each Mystery may be used a number of times per day equal to your Rank in the appropriate elemental Ring. You may spend a Void Point to use a Mystery an additional time per day beyond this maximum.

When a Ring is raised or lowered, both associated Traits are raised or lowered by an equal amount. This may never lower another character's Trait below one. Altered Rings return to their normal values after a number of rounds equal to your School Rank + 1.

THE MYSTERY AND RIDDLE OF THE VOID

The fifth Rank of this School teaches the final lessons — the harmony with the element of the Void. These do not provide the usual effects of Mysteries and Riddles, but instead mark the Henshin as kin to the supernatural forces that make up all of creation. At this Rank, you are less human and more divine — you require no sleep, and do not age normally. You are effectively immune to natural death, though you may be slain like any mortal. Your connection to the Void means that any time you spend a Void Point, the results are doubled, and you may spend a Void Point to add your Void Ring to any Trait or Ring for a number of minutes equal to your Void Ring. If you use this ability to increase one of your Traits, you also gain the benefits of any Ring increase to which the bonus would entitle you. If you use this ability to increase one of your Rings, you gain no corresponding increase to that Ring's Traits.

Schools of the Scorpion Clan

Bayushi Bushi School

Founded by the Kami whose name they bear, the Bayushi Bushi School embodies the Scorpion Clan's unique blend of subtlety, misdirection, and deadly grace. If the Bayushi are not renowned for their warriors, it is for good reason — the students of this school prefer anonymity. A Scorpion seeks not glory but victory, and when his opponent underestimates his abilities, victory is almost assured.

The Bayushi style is highly unorthodox compared to other schools, relying on feints, disarming techniques, and methods of disconcerting enemies like dueling left-handed. A Bayushi is told to strike quickly and leave his enemy unable to retaliate. "Strike First, Strike Last" is the mantra inscribed on the walls of the dojo in Kyuden Bayushi.

Those who have seen Bayushi swordsmen in combat often claim that their fighting style resembles a complex circular dance. It is a style of beauty as well as precision, but even the aesthetics of their style have their purpose. Like other aspects of the Bayushi style, their graceful movements distract the enemy. An opponent taken aback by the sleek beauty of a Bayushi's movements will die that much more swiftly.

Given their unorthodox approach to engagement, it may be somewhat surprising that the standard training of a Bayushi is otherwise very traditional. Only use of the bow and katana are standard parts of the school curriculum. While other bushi are not discouraged from mastering other weapons, they are expected to be swordsmen first and foremost. A Scorpion knows that no weapon matches a katana; substituting an inferior weapon might blunt the deadly grace of the Scorpion techniques.

The Scorpion graciously welcome students from other Clans who wish to learn the Bayushi techniques. The true lethality of the Bayushi School comes more from its combination with Scorpion philosophies than from its techniques alone. For students of every week, all exchange students train alongside the young Scorpion students. On the seventh day, the sensei meets with the Scorpion only, and discusses what the students have learned from the weaknesses in their visitors' techniques.

Benefit: +1 Intelligence

Honor: 1.5

Skills: Courtier (Political Maneuvering), Deceit, Etiquette, Iaijutsu, Kenjutsu, Kyujutsu, any one High or Low Skill

Outfit: Katana, wakizashi, bow and 20 arrows (any type), any one weapon, light armor, kimono and sandals, traveling pack; 7 koku

TECHNIQUES

RANK 1: THE WAY OF THE SCORPION

Scorpion bushi always seem to get the jump on opponents. You roll additional dice equal to your School Rank on Initiative Rolls. Enemies cannot use the Combat Reflexes Advantage to trade Initiative with you. You gain a +5 bonus to your TN to Be Hit against any opponent with a lower Initiative.

RANK 2: PINCERS AND TAIL

The infamous Scorpion feint has been the demise of many foolhardy samurai. When making the Feint maneuver, you gain two Free Raises from a successful Feint instead of one. Additionally, if an opponent attacks you and misses, you gain a number of Free Raises equal to your Air Ring on any attacks against that opponent that occur before their next turn.

RANK 3: STRIKE AT THE TAIL

Scorpion bushi have an uncanny precision with their attacks. You gain a Free Raise when attempting a Called Shot, Disarm, or Knockdown. During a Disarm attempt, your opponent rolls and keeps one fewer die (to a minimum of one) on Contested Rolls to maintain a grasp on his weapon. You may make two additional Raises on the initial Disarm attack roll to end up holding the Disarmed weapon.

RANK 4: STRIKE FROM ABOVE, STRIKE FROM BELOW

Your quick reflexes and precision combine to afford you extra openings. You may now make an extra attack per round. Your TN to Be Hit bonus against enemies with a lower Initiative increases to +10.

RANK 5: THE PINCERS HOLD, THE TAIL STRIKES

Scorpion masters display the utmost control over their attacks, never exerting the slightest extra effort nor overreaching themselves. You may now declare Raises after you make an attack roll. You may also decide whether your attack is actually a Disarm, Feint, or Knockdown after the attack is rolled. Enemies must make two additional Raises to perform Called Shots, Disarms, Feints, or Knockdowns against you.



Soshi Shugenja School

The Soshi are a family of contradictions. While their major strongholds in the Scorpion lands are in remote areas, the Soshi themselves are charismatic and cosmopolitan. They are an extremely social family, eager to learn new skills and explore new areas of knowledge. While other shugenja families of the Empire have obvious fields of study, the Soshi do not seem to have a clear focus. The Soshi would argue that this diffuse research is their focus, that each Soshi is encouraged to find and explore his own area of expertise with relentless enthusiasm.

As befits the Scorpion's most famous shugenja family, the Soshi are quite skilled with illusion magic. The paths to their mountain homes are circuitous and patrolled by mischievous kami, set by Soshi priests to confound unwelcome visitors. The spirits flawlessly differentiate friend and foe, and never deter those with legitimate business. The art of hiding their castles in such a manner requires endless communion with the spirits. All Soshi students must, at some point, contribute to this monumental task, and all consequently pick up a facility with illusion spells.

Rokugan's religious world is always closely tied to politics, a relationship that the Scorpion could not fail to notice. As a result, all Soshi shugenja train in the arts of etiquette and politics as well as magic and philosophy. A Soshi's duty in the court is to wait and watch. While the Bayushi Courtiers move openly and their bushi counterparts react to threats, a Soshi merely observes and gathers information unseen. While magic is not always necessary to fulfill this role, it is a decided advantage.

Benefit: +1 Awareness

Honor: 1.5

Skills: Calligraphy, Courtier, Etiquette, Meditation, Spellcraft, Stealth (Spellcasting), Theology

Outfit: Wakizashi, tanto; kimono and sandals, scroll satchel, traveling pack; 7 koku

Affinity/Deficiency: The Soshi style of magic bears a striking similarity to their Crane counterparts, the Asahina. However, whereas the Asahina value Air and avoid Fire due to their preference for peace over violence, the Soshi possess an Affinity for Air and Deficiency for Fire that stems from their preference to eliminate obstacles via subtlety rather than direct confrontation.

TECHNIQUE: SOSHI'S WHISPER

Soshi shugenja gain a Free Raise when casting Secrets on the Wind, Reflective Pool, and Essence of Air as well as a Free Raise on their Stealth Roll whenever attempting to cast a spell without being noticed (see Casting With Subtlety on page 227). All Soshi Shugenja begin with Secrets on the Wind as an Innate Ability.

Spells: Sense, Commune, Summon, Counterspell, Secrets on the Wind, plus 3 Air, 2 Water, 1 Earth.

Bayushi Courtier School

The students of the infamous Bayushi Courtier School are the predators of Rokugan's courts. While the Bayushi Bushi prefer to mask the deadliness of their techniques with self-deprecation, the courtiers of the Scorpion Clan do no such thing. They have earned a reputation for pragmatic ruthlessness. If you are not their ally, you are their enemy. None are quite so aware of their fearsome reputation for villainy as the Bayushi courtiers themselves — they have spent eleven centuries carefully cultivating that reputation.

This fearsome reputation masks the true purpose of the Bayushi courtiers in the same way that anonymity protects the Bayushi bushi. A Bayushi courtier may threaten, but he rarely expects more upon those threats. He can always convince an enemy that doing the Scorpion is simpler and far less painful than opposing them.

A Bayushi does not threaten because he is hateful, spiteful, or dishonorable. He threatens because he knows his techniques are more reliable than, say, the Doji's friendlier methods. Some men will act out of friendship or obligation, but many more will act out of fear. Of course, enemies who attempt to call a Bayushi's bluff generally discover that Bayushi rarely bluff. A predator may prefer not to kill, but neither can he allow himself to be proven toothless.

Benefit: +1 Awareness

Honor: 1.5

Skills: Calligraphy, Courtier, Deceit (Seduction), Etiquette (Sincerity), Investigation (Interrogation), any one High Skill, any one Low Skill

Outfit: Wakizashi, tanto; courtly dress, kimono and sandals, traveling pack; 15 koku

TECHNIQUES

RANK 1: WEAKNESS IS MY STRENGTH

A Bayushi Courtier instinctively senses the failures of others and thrives upon them. Whenever you make a Contested Social Skill Roll, you gain a Free Raise for every 2 points of your opponent's Disadvantages that you know about. If your opponent has Disadvantages you are not aware of, you instead gain one Free Raise for every 4 points of his Disadvantages, but you know how many Raises you have and thus immediately sense there is something more to learn about your opponent. Disadvantages that granted their owner no Character Points nevertheless count for their normal value. Any time you succeed in a Contested Social Skill Roll, you gain a Free Raise on your next Contested Social Skill Roll against that opponent.

RANK 2: SHALLOW WATERS

The strongest of structures has a weak point, and the Bayushi Courtier's keen eye is trained to find these weaknesses. You may observe a target for a single round and make a Contested Awareness Roll to learn his lowest Trait (Void counts as a Trait for the purposes of this Technique) and his Rank in that Trait. You may make Raises on this roll to learn additional Traits from the lowest to the highest, learning one additional Trait per Raise. When an opponent attempts to use a Skill or Technique to determine your Traits, you may spend a Void Point to instead feed him false information.

RANK 3: SECRETS ARE BIRTHMARKS

At this level of training, the courtier is quite talented at ferreting out the secrets of others. By making a successful Contested Awareness Roll during a conversation, you can learn useful information about an opponent. The opponent must choose to reveal one of the following to you: two Disadvantages (his choice), all Advantages, his three highest Traits, or the Ranks and Emphases of all of his Skills. If the target chooses anything other than Disadvantages, or reveals information that you already know, that target may not re-roll 10's on Contested Social Skill Rolls against you for one full day. You may not use this Technique against the same opponent more than once per day.

RANK 4: SCRUTINY'S SWEET STING

A Bayushi Courtier weaves a path of rumors to undermine his enemy's reputation; those beholden to the Bayushi are wise not to resist his demands. When using the Gossip Emphasis of the Courtier Skill to spread gossip, your Glory Rank is increased by your School Rank. You do not need to Raise to conceal the fact that you are the origin of any rumors you spread (although if you wish to take credit for the rumor, you may). If you possess the Blackmail Advantage, you may choose which dice the Blackmailed character keeps on any Contested Social Rolls against you. You may add your Air Ring to all Contested Social Skill Rolls against an opponent if you know the Rank of the Trait your opponent is using in the roll.

RANK 5: NO MORE MASKS

At this level of expertise, a Bayushi Courtier's ability to manipulate the truth is such that he can completely twist the way an enemy is perceived in the courts. If you use the Gossip Emphasis of the Courtier Skill to successfully spread gossip and spend a Void Point, you may give a target one of the following Disadvantages: Bad Reputation, Obligation (to individual of your choice) (4 points), or Unlucky (6 points, only applies on Social Skill Rolls — if the target is an NPC you decide when the Unluck occurs). People who hear the gossip know that you imposed the Disadvantage by starting the rumor. The target receives no points for the Disadvantage. If the target confronts you publicly and makes a successful Contested Awareness roll denouncing your slander, the Disadvantage is permanently removed. You must continue to spread gossip and spend a Void Point each day, or people quit talking about the rumor and the Disadvantage evaporates.

Shosuro Shinobi School

The Shinobi are the most secretive school in the most secretive Clan in Rokugan, and for good reason. The Shinobi are spies, saboteurs, and assassins. When diplomacy, strength of arms, and magic fail, it falls to the Shinobi to protect the Scorpion's interests. Though some might call them ninja, it is unwise to let them hear the term; the Shosuro family loathes the demonic Goju assassins who proudly bear the name of "ninja."

Most Shosuro students are drafted from the other Scorpion schools when they begin to show great talent in stealth or the cold instincts that are so useful for an assassin. Most are instructed privately while they continue studies in other schools, adapting guises as samurai or courtiers as they continue their shinobi training. Optimally, a Shosuro Shinobi has a full life and duties aside from those he learns in this school. When his Clan calls upon him, his skills are ready, but until then these deadly samurai hide in plain sight.

A shinobi is trained to move silently, kill efficiently, and blend effortlessly into the shadows. They are also knowledgeable in all aspects of Rokugan's criminal underworld, for their duties often require them to seek aid or information there.

Above all else a shinobi's most prized possession is his identity. A shinobi conceals his true nature from any whom he does not trust implicitly. The Empire hates ninja, and though the shinobi do not consider themselves ninja, they do recognize that their tactics are so similar as to make little difference in the eyes of their enemies. Shinobi who are exposed must claim to be acting without the knowledge of the Scorpion Clan. They reveal nothing about their training or objectives. If there is no possibility of escape, a captured shinobi will take his own life rather than risk revealing the Scorpion's secrets under torture.

Benefit: +1 Reflexes

Honor: 0.5

Skills: Athletics, Deceit, Defense, Kenjutsu, Ninja Ranged Weapons, Stealth (Sneaking), Underworld

Outfit: Wakizashi, ninja-to, ten shuriken, any one weapon, ashigaru armor, dark clothing, kimono and sandals, traveling pack; 10 koku

TECHNIQUES**RANK 1: THE SHADOW HAS NO MASK**

A Shinobi is quick and alert, always prepared for combat. You roll and keep a number of additional dice equal to your School Rank on all Stealth rolls. The Full Defense Posture does not interfere with your movement. You are always considered to be on Full Defense unless you declare otherwise.

RANK 2: THE SHADOW HAS NO MERCY

The Shinobi strikes swiftly from the shadows, holding back nothing. Your Raises on Stealth Skill Rolls and attack rolls against people who do not know you are there are not limited by your Void. If you are using a Skill for which you have the Great Potential Advantage, you gain two Free Raises. You may add twice your Fire Ring to your TN to Be Hit when not wearing armor.

RANK 3: THE SHADOW HAS NO FORM

A Shinobi who has reached this level of skill can move with a flurry of deceptive movements. Enemies have difficulty striking such a foe, never certain exactly where the Shinobi stands. On your action, you may increase your TN to Be Hit by any number up to your Fire \times 5. All of your own TNs except for Stealth, Defense, and Athletics rolls suffer an equal penalty until your next turn. Using the Stealth Skill for Sneaking no longer interferes with your movement.

RANK 4: THE SHADOW HAS NO SUBSTANCE

A Shinobi moves with such speed and precision that he can cause his target to falter, giving him the time he needs to deliver a killing blow. You may now make an additional attack per round. Once per round, you may spend a Void Point and make an Agility/Stealth roll when an opponent attacks you or casts a spell targeting you. If your roll is higher than his, his attack automatically misses or the spell automatically fails. You may not make an additional attack on the round after you use this ability.

RANK 5: THE SHADOW HAS NO SOUL

A master of the Shinobi school is seldom seen in combat, for by the time anyone realizes he is there, the enemy's fate is sealed. Your TN penalty when using The Shadow Has No Form is now half the bonus you apply to your TN to Be Hit. Your 7's, 8's, and 9's explode as well as 10's on any damage roll against an opponent who did not know you were there. This effect may be used only once per die per roll. Thus if you roll an 8, then reroll a 9 on the same die, it explodes only once. If you roll an 8 then reroll a 10, the 10 explodes normally.

Schools of the Unicorn Clan

Moto Bushi School

Although it has been teaching in Rokugan less than a century, the Moto Bushi School is nevertheless a greatly feared institution. Not only does it teach a fierce, unrelenting attack pattern, but few understand the style well enough to defend against it properly.

The fighting style taught by the Moto family originated in the Burning Sands, where the ancient Moto tribesmen stood their ground against all manner of foes, each with a different style. The Moto learned that their best chance for victory was to attack without hesitation or thought of personal safety. They became widely feared as maniacal opponents who knew no fear or remorse, a reputation which they brought with them to Rokugan.

The Moto style is most often used with a katana, as are most styles taught in Rokugan. Unlike most schools, the Moto are not restrictive with their teachings. Students are taught to use a variety of weapons, including many of gaijin origin that migrated to the Empire with the Moto tribesmen. When crafted in the Rokugani folded-steel style, these weapons can be devastating.

The recent war with the Lion and Dragon has exposed more enemies to the Moto fighting style. While most clans remain unfamiliar with Unicorn combat tactics, the two closest potential enemies now have more experience than others.

Benefit: +1 Strength

Skills: Athletics, Defense, Horsemanship, Hunting, Kenjutsu (Scimitar), any one Weapon Skill, any one Skill

Honor: 2.5

Outfit: Katana, wakizashi, bow and 20 arrows (any type), any two weapons, light or heavy armor; gaijin riding horse, kimono and sandals, traveling pack; 10 koku

TECHNIQUES

RANK ONE: WILD STRIKE OF THE MOTO

The Moto combat style is a wild, unfettered fury that intimidates witnesses. You may wield any non-polearm two-handed weapon with one hand, and roll one additional die for damage when doing so. When you are using Full Attack or are mounted, you may roll two additional dice. This is not cumulative if you make a Full Attack while mounted. You add your Earth Ring to the total of all your damage rolls.

RANK TWO: FIST OF THE KHAN

A Moto is determined above all else. You may subtract your Willpower + School Rank from the Wounds caused by any damage roll made against you, to a minimum of one Wound suffered from an attack. Additionally, you add your Water Ring to the total of all attack rolls.

RANK THREE: DESERT WIND STRIKE

Power and precision are equally valuable to the Moto. You gain an additional attack per round. Additionally, you add twice your Earth Ring to the total of all your damage rolls, replacing the benefit from Rank 1.

RANK FOUR: THE UJIK-HAI'S SECRETS

The ancient Moto nomads knew little of philosophy, but they understood that becoming one with the universe was as simple as surrendering to one's most primal instincts. You may spend a Will Point to roll and keep two additional dice on an attack roll. You may also spend a Void Point to roll and keep an additional die on a damage roll. Additionally, you add twice your Water Ring to the total of all attack rolls. This replaces the bonus from Rank 2.

RANK FIVE: MOTO CANNOT YIELD

A Moto never surrenders. When mounted or in the Full Attack posture, you keep an additional number of damage dice equal to half your Strength, rounded up. This is not cumulative if you make a Full Attack while mounted. You always roll a minimum number of dice equal to the dice you keep on any damage roll. Finally, you add three times your Earth Ring to all damage rolls, replacing the benefit from Rank 3.

Iuchi Shugenja School

Shugenja are a traditional lot. Even the most progressive shugenja temples cling to rituals that have existed for over a thousand years. The Iuchi, however, were absent from the Empire when many such traditions were established, and share only the most basic roots with other temples. Instead, those basic elements were subjected to other cultures and magical styles that the Iuchi encountered during the course of their travels, each incident resulting in slight changes to the family's practices.

The Iuchi were separated from the kami, the elemental spirits that underlie Rokugani magic. As they returned, they were forced to incorporate a style of gaijin magic called *meishodo*, or name magic. Similar to traditional shugenja magic in application if not in theory, *meishodo* permitted the Iuchi to continue to serve Lady Shinjo and her descendants. While *meishodo* is no longer widely practiced among the Iuchi since their return to Rokugan, their temples still teach it to students who show promise in its methods.



The Iuchi magical style emphasizes non-combat applications that most shugenja temples consider secondary. Movement is obviously of concern to them, as it allows them to enhance the capabilities of Unicorn cavalry. Interacting with animals is likewise a focus of their training, something that most shugenja consider beneath them. This is perhaps the most telling link between the Unicorn and their long-lost descendants in the Fox Clan, as both share a respect for animals and the spirits of Chikushudo.

Benefit: +1 Perception

Skills: Calligraphy, Horsemanship, Lore (any), Meditation, Spellcraft, Theology (Fortunes), any one Skill

Honor: 2.5

Outfit: Wakizashi, tanto; gaijin riding horse, traditional robes and sandals, scroll satchel, traveling pack; 10 koku

Affinity/Deficiency: Iuchi shugenja have a unique outlook on magic and how it interacts with the universe. Their clan's travels through gaijin lands helped them develop an emphasis on aiding their people's movement through difficult terrain, and on establishing a bond with their precious steeds. Iuchi shugenja have an Affinity for Water spells and a Deficiency for Fire spells. You gain a Free Raise on any spell that grants or enhances movement in any way. You possess the spells Nature's Touch and Heart of Nature as innate abilities.

TECHNIQUE: SPIRIT OF NATURE

Iuchi shugenja have a unique outlook on magic and how it interacts with the universe. You gain a Free Raise on any spell that grants or enhancements movement in any way. You possess the spells Nature's Touch and Heart of Nature as innate abilities.

Spells: Sense, Commune, Summon, any 3 Water spells, any 2 Earth spells, and any 1 Air spell

Ide Emissary School

While the Ide emissaries are not always afforded the same respect as students of more prestigious courtier schools such as the Doji, Bayushi, and Otomo, no one can deny that the Ide have far more practical experience. While Rokugan's other courtier traditions have engaged in a constant state of polite warfare for centuries in an essentially static environment, the Ide spent eight centuries honing their Techniques in dozens of totally unfamiliar gaijin courts all across the world. Adaptability is the true strength of the Ide.

Readjusting to Rokugan was not easy for the Unicorn Clan. Most samurai in service to the descendants of Shinjo were able to retreat to the clan's newly-restored holdings and reflect on their new home, taking time to adjust to what was essentially an alien environment. The Ide did not enjoy this luxury. From the moment of their arrival, the Ide were in a flurry of activity. The Imperial Court was their primary target of course, followed by the courts of each individual Great Clan's Champion. The Emperor's recognition of the Unicorn was enough to open the door to the Ide, and they took on their task with an amazing tenacity. More than two hundred years later, the Unicorn do not draw a second glance in court circles, as their presence is now a foregone conclusion. The Ide are responsible for this acceptance, and the family has vowed not to rest until the Unicorn are looked upon no differently than any other clan.

The arrival of the Moto at the head of Lady Shinjo's armies some decades back was a difficult time for the Ide, as their beloved Kami promptly enthroned a gaijin barbarian as the clan's Champion. A great deal of work the Ide had done to gain equal respect for the Unicorn was undone that day and in the days that followed. Now, the Ide struggle to ensure that the gruff, surly demeanor of their Champion and the fearsome reputation he so enjoys do not damage the Unicorn's acceptance in court. It is not an easy task, but at least the days do not grow dull for the Ide.

Benefit: +1 Perception

Honor: 2.5

Skills: Commerce, Courtier (Manipulation), Etiquette (Conversation), Horsemanship, Investigation (Notice), Storytelling, any one High Skill

Outfit: Wakizashi; gaijin riding horse, kimono and sandals, traveling pack; 10 koku

TECHNIQUES

RANK ONE: THE HEART SPEAKS

The Ide are skilled at adapting to new customs and nuances. You exhibit the serenity of the Ide, leaving you resistant to manipulations. Any time an opponent gains a Free Raise against you in a Contested Social Skill Roll, you gain a Free Raise as well. Additionally, you may add twice your Awareness to all Etiquette Skill Rolls.

RANK TWO: THE HEART LISTENS

The Ide make it a point to keep abreast of major forces in the courts. You may make an Intelligence/Etiquette roll vs. TN 10 to immediately recall what you know about an individual, revealing one of the following pieces of information about them: family, home province, what Schools they are known to have attended, current Glory, current Status, current Honor, any one skill they possess above Rank 5, or some publicly known (if not necessarily widely known) detail about their past that is relevant to their current situation. For each Raise you make on this roll, an additional piece of information is revealed. This roll may not be made against an individual more than once per week, as it takes time to process all the new information you have heard from the courts.

RANK THREE: WHEN THE VEIL MOVES

The Ide have survived by anticipating difficulty and taking steps to avoid it. At any time you may make a Perception/Etiquette roll vs. TN 30 to anticipate the actions of another person. This information is always general: "The Scorpion ambassador is preparing to speak," or "The Doji bushi is about to leave," or "The Hida is about to attack." If you spend a Void Point, you may move, take the Full Defense Posture, or take a Miscellaneous Complex Action before the action occurs.

RANK FOUR: PIERCING THE VEILS

The Ide are masters of looking past the masks of sincerity with which many courtiers veil their true intentions. The Mastery Level TN bonuses that you receive from the Etiquette Skill are doubled.

RANK FIVE: THE IMMOVABLE HAND OF PEACE

Through a unique combination of utter tranquility and implied intimidation, an Ide emissary can turn aside even the angriest opponent. If you spend a Void Point, a target you select cannot instigate any hostile action or Contested Rolls against you so long as you also refrain from these acts. This Technique has no effect against opponents with Honor Rank 0 or no Honor Rank.

Utaku Battle Maiden School

There is absolutely no debate in the Empire about who possesses the finest cavalry. That honor belongs to the Utaku, whose armies are as feared as those of the Moto, Hida, or Matsu despite their much smaller size. The Utaku are perhaps the finest horse breeders in the Unicorn Clan, rivaled only by the Shinjo Horsemasters, and they are responsible for maintaining the unique herds of the Utaku battle horses. These magnificent creatures are considerably larger than even the gaijin riding horses other Unicorn families use, and dwarf the Rokugani ponies ridden by cavalry in other Great Clan armies. These steeds are faster, stronger, and utterly fearless, much like the battle maidens who ride them.

The School of the Utaku Battle Maidens, who are also known as *shiotome*, is one of the Empire's most exclusive Schools.

Benefit: +1 Reflexes

Skills: Battle (Skirmish), Defense, Horsemanship 2, Kenjutsu, Kyujutsu, any one High or Bugei Skill

Honor: 3.5

Outfit: Katana, wakizashi, bow and 20 arrows (any type), any two weapons, light armor, kimono and sandals, traveling pack, Utaku steed; 10 koku

TECHNIQUES**RANK ONE: RIDING IN HARMONY**

The Utaku train with an intensity that few in Rokugan can match. You may select any three of your School Bugei Skills. You roll one additional die when using these Skills. While mounted, you may keep an additional die as well. In addition, you add your Water Ring to your TN to Be Hit at all times.

RANK TWO: THE VOID OF WAR

Swift of foot and of steed, the battle maidens are feared throughout the Empire for the speed of their attacks. At the beginning of a combat round, after Initiative has been declared but before any postures have been declared, you may choose to exchange your Initiative and TN to Be Hit for the duration of the round. In addition, you add your Air Ring to the total of all attack rolls.

RANK THREE: SENSING THE BREEZE

The *shiotome* are swift and deadly. You may make an additional attack per round. When mounted, if one of your attacks kills a target, you gain a third attack that round as well. You may only gain one additional attack per round in this manner. You also add twice your Water Ring to your TN to Be Hit at all time, replacing the benefit from Rank 1.

RANK FOUR: THE WIND NEVER STOPS

To the Utaku, failure means only that their task is not yet finished. During a battle or skirmish, you may reroll any dice that have a result less than the Trait used in that roll, keeping the second roll even if it is lower. This may be used on any Bugei Skill, including attack, damage, and Defense rolls. Additionally, you add twice your Air Ring to the total of all attack rolls, replacing the bonus received from Rank 2.

RANK FIVE: OTAKU'S BLESSING

Otaku, the Silent Thunder, smiles upon her daughters in battle. During a battle or skirmish, you may spend a Void Point at the beginning of a combat round to gain a bonus equal to your Honor Rank on every die used for a single roll that round. This bonus may be applied to an attack, damage, or Defense roll, or to any roll required for the Mass Combat system. The intended roll must be selected at the beginning of the round when the Void Point is spent. You now add three times your Water Ring to your TN to Be Hit at all times, replacing the benefit from Rank 3.

**Imperial Schools****Seppun Guardsman (Bushi)**

The Seppun Guardsmen, known as *miharu*, are the elite guardians of the Emperor. They have served the throne directly since the Empire came into being, when Seppun himself swore fealty to the First Hantei. Since that time, the Seppun family has devoted itself utterly to the Emperor's defense.

Seppun Guardsmen learn from an early age that their existence is unimportant in the grand scheme of things. There is no greater honor than to give one's life in defense of the Emperor. Their training has a divided focus, teaching offense in order to deal with any threats that arise, and defense for obvious reasons. It is neither of these that garners the Seppun such respect, however, but rather their incredible focus. A Seppun can fulfill his duty for days on end without relaxing his guard for a moment.

The Seppun Guardsmen are an extremely exclusive group. None save the most highly decorated members of the Imperial Legions or Emerald Magistrates may serve alongside them, and it is rare that outsiders are allowed to study their Techniques. This secrecy has increased in recent years, particularly since the death of Hantei XXXVII at the beginning of the Clan War, and again when Toturi I was killed by the Onisu Fushin less than a decade ago. Some high-ranking Seppun believe that it was outsiders' "corruption" of their family's duty that led to these failures.

Benefit: +1 Agility

Honor: 3.5

Skills: Battle, Defense, Etiquette, Iaijutsu, Kenjutsu (Kata), Kyujutsu, any one High or Bugei Skill

Outfit: Katana, wakizashi, bow and 20 arrows (any type), yari, any two weapons, heavy armor, helm, emerald badge of office, kimono and sandals, steed; 20 koku

TECHNIQUES

RANK 1: NEVER IN DARKNESS

The Seppun understand better than any other that loyalty to the Emperor is far more important than anything else. You may spend a Void Point to re-roll any failed Test of Honor, and can do so repeatedly on the same roll so long as you have Void Points to spend. You add your Honor Rank to all attack, damage, and Initiative rolls.

RANK 2: THE CLOUDS PART

Catching the vigilant Seppun off-guard is all but impossible. During the first round of any skirmish, you gain a number of bonus dice equal to your Perception. These dice may be spent on any roll made that round, including Initiative, attack, damage, and Defense rolls. Additionally, you add your Earth Ring to the total of any roll made to resist disease, poison, or the harmful effects of spells.

RANK 3: WITH HEAVEN'S SPEED

Certainty brings speed. You gain an additional action per round that may be used in any way you see fit, including making an additional attack or performing a miscellaneous action (simple or complex). You also add twice your Honor Rank to the total of all attack, damage, and Initiative rolls, replacing the benefit from Rank 1.

RANK 4: THE SUN'S LIGHT REVEALS

Lord Sun lends his light to the Seppun, that they might never be deceived. Anyone attempting to mislead you must also succeed at a Contested Awareness roll, above and beyond any other required rolls. This includes use of the Acting skill, Techniques, Advantages, spells, natural abilities, or any other method of deception. You receive a +10 bonus to this Awareness roll. Additionally, you add twice your Earth Ring to the total of any roll made to resist disease, poison, or the harmful effects of spells, replacing the benefit from Rank 2.

RANK 5: HEAVEN NEVER FALLS

No samurai in Rokugan protect their charges as fiercely as the Seppun. At the dawn of each day, you declare one individual that will be your charge until the next dawn. So long as your charge is within 25 feet, you may spend a Void Point to redirect damage inflicted by an attack from him to you. You may immediately make a Fire Earth Test against the damage total. If successful, you negate the damage completely. For the purposes of this Technique, the Emperor is always considered to be your charge while he is within range. You also add three times your Fire Ring to the total of your Initiative rolls, replacing the Initiative bonus from Rank 3.

Seppun Shugenja

Despite their family's small size, the Seppun maintain both bushi and shugenja schools. The Seppun Guardsmen safeguard the Emperor's body, while the Seppun shugenja — typically referred to as the Hidden Guard — defend him from spiritual dangers. The wards that protect the new Imperial Palace in Toshi Ranbo were set in place by the Hidden Guard, with the assistance of Isawa shugenja and specialists from the Yogo family.

Obviously, Seppun shugenja training puts extraordinary emphasis on detection. This limits their ability to apply magic to combat situations, but the Hidden Guard are rarely without support from their Guardsmen allies, who are quite capable of dealing with any threats the Hidden Guard's investigations turn

up. The two groups possess a synergy that rivals that possessed by Dragon and Phoenix bushi-shugenja pairings, and their cooperation has averted many threats to the throne.

The Hidden Guard are even more secretive than the Seppun Guardsmen. They do not permit outsiders to study their Techniques, reasoning that any exposure of their methods reduces their effectiveness. The Hidden Guard are confident that their Techniques have no weaknesses, but see no reason to take risks.

Benefit: +1 Perception

Honor: 3.5

Skills: Calligraphy, Defense, Etiquette, Investigation (Notice), Meditation, Theology, any one High or Bugei Skill

Outfit: Wakizashi, tanto; badge of office, kimono and sandals, medicine kit, scroll satchel, steed, traveling pack; 20 koku

Affinity/Deficiency: Students of the Seppun method are trained to detect anything concealed or obscured, whether through magical or non-magical means. They also learn to enhance their own abilities to improve the chances of success at their sacred duties. Seppun shugenja have an Affinity for both Air and Water spells, and a Deficiency for both Fire and Earth spells.

TECHNIQUE: SEEK THE FORGOTTEN

Seppun shugenja are known as the Hidden Guard, for they protect the Emperor from unseen threats. You receive the following spells as Innate Abilities: *By the Light of Lady Moon*, *Secrets on the Wind*, and *Whispering Wind*.

Spells: Sense, Commune, Summon, any 3 Air spells, any 3 Water spells.

Otomo Courtier

The Otomo occupy a tenuous position in the highest levels of Rokugan's society. They are well regarded by virtually everyone who meets them in court, and yet few trust them implicitly. As unusual as it may seem for such a prestigious family, this distrust is not out of place.

The Otomo have maintained a presence in the Imperial Court since the time of Hantei I, and have served the Emperor directly for over a millennium. It was not until the first Gozoku Alliance had been exposed and defeated that they changed their purpose in court: the Otomo serve the Emperor by keeping the clans in conflict with one another, ensuring that they will not rise up against their rightful ruler. This unpleasant yet necessary task has been accomplished through methods that some find distasteful.

Manipulation is the emphasis of an Otomo's training. They learn to quickly assess not only another person's words, but his body language, mannerisms, attire, and every other conceivable variable that might reveal some hidden secret that can be used as a point of leverage. Even more important than manipulation, however, is discretion. The Otomo cannot accomplish their mission if others uncover their intentions, and thus they always choose their battles carefully. Thus far, they have kept their subtle machinations carefully hidden. In their own way, the Otomo loyally serve their Emperor.

Benefit: +1 Awareness

Honor: 3.5

Skills: Courtier (Manipulation), Deceit (Intimidation), Defense, Etiquette (Bureaucracy), Investigation, Lore (Law), any one High or Bugei Skill

Outfit: Wakizashi; badge of office, kimono and sandals, steed, traveling pack; 25 koku

TECHNIQUES

RANK 1: DESTINY HAS NO SECRETS

Nothing done in the Emperor's name can truly be dishonorable. You do not lose Honor for any use of the Deceit Skill unless you choose to. Any time you successfully use the Deceit Skill against an individual, for the next day you gain a Free Raise on a Contested Social Skill Roll against him. You may reserve these Free Raises to be used all at once or spend them individually. You may not reserve more simultaneous Free Raises against any one person than your Insight Rank, though you can reserve Free Raises against multiple individuals simultaneously.

RANK 2: MY MASTER'S VOICE

The Otomo speak with the Emperor's authority. If your opponent makes a Test of Honor during a Contested Social Skill Roll, you may spend a Void Point to force him to automatically fail the Test. If you speak on behalf of the Emperor, you need not spend a Void Point to produce this effect.

RANK 3: DIVIDING THE STARS

An Otomo finds it useful to keep abreast of all social interaction within the Empire. Upon meeting or hearing of a person, you may make an Awareness Roll vs. a TN equal to the target's Insight Rank $\times 5$. If successful, you are immediately aware of all of the target's Allies and Sworn Enemies. If you make three Raises on a Contested Courtier Skill roll against your target and publicly demand the aid of his allies, he loses the benefits of one Ally Advantage (your choice) and you gain the benefits of that Advantage for one week.

RANK 4: THE EMPEROR'S PROTECTION

Powerful Otomo are quite intimidating, and others are often loath to harm them. You gain a bonus to your TN to Be Hit and to all Contested Social Skill rolls equal to five times the difference between your Status and your opponent's. This applies only if you have higher Status than your opponent. The bonus to your TN to Be Hit applies only if you have not drawn a weapon or attacked an enemy. This Technique has no effect on characters with a 0 Honor Rank or creatures with no understanding of honor (such as undead or Nezumi).

RANK 5: VIRTUES OF COMMAND

When fully brought to bear, the Otomo family's influence is truly impressive. You now reserve two Free Raises instead of one from successful uses of the Deceit Skill when using your Rank 1 Technique. You also roll extra dice equal to your Honor Rank on all Contested Social Skill Rolls with your Allies. Any time someone initiates a Contested Social Skill Roll against you and fails, you gain two free Void Points that may only be spent on Contested Social Skill Rolls against that individual within the next day.

Miya Herald

After the first war with Fu Leng, the Empire was virtually in ruins. The Emperor needed to keep his people apprised of events, but their plight was such that Imperial decrees seemed far less urgent than they should. Nevertheless, the gravely wounded Emperor sent out his herald, a young man named Miya, to tell the people that Fu Leng had been defeated. Miya did as he was bidden, but found that every village had suffered serious damage, and few people paid him any mind. Finally, he settled on a method of gaining their trust and attention. When he arrived in

a village, he said nothing, but began repairing what damage he could, working for days to make a difference in the village. Only when his work was complete would he make his announcement, which was received joyously by a grateful populace.

Miya's travels through the Empire took months, and he gathered followers as he went. The more followers he gained, the more good they were able to accomplish. Word of Miya's deeds reached the Imperial City, and the Emperor was well pleased with his servant's work. When Miya and his retinue finally returned, over a year after he departed, the Miya family was created and the Miya Heralds were born.

Like courtiers, the Miya Heralds serve a diplomatic function on the Emperor's behalf. Unlike courtiers, the Heralds rarely attend court for long, instead moving from place to place issuing decrees and serving as negotiators for the Emperor. Their training involves a great deal of horsemanship — second only to the Unicorn — and diplomatic means of resolving conflict. The Miya are also trained to wield their Imperial status when they must, shaming would-be opponents into backing down rather than inviting the Emperor's wrath by assaulting one of his loyal servants.

Benefit: +1 Reflexes

Honor: 3.5

Skills: Athletics (Running), Defense, Etiquette (Conversation), Horsemanship, Kenjutsu, Lore: Heraldry (Any Emphasis), any one High or Bugei Skill

Outfit: Katana, wakizashi, ashigaru armor; badge of office; obi mono and sandals, steed; 20 koku

TECHNIQUES

RANK 1: VOICE OF THE EMPEROR

Miya Heralds are athletic, but versed in the intricacies of diplomacy. On any Etiquette or Lore (Heraldry) roll, you roll an additional number of dice equal to your School Rank. Your movement per round is your Water Ring $\times 12'$ rather than the usual $\times 10'$. Additionally, you add your Air Ring to your TN to Be Hit at all times.

RANK 2: EYES OF THE EMPEROR

The Emperor's Heralds are at home anywhere in the Empire. You may spend a Void Point to immediately gain the Way of the Land Advantage for any province you are traveling in. You also gain a number of Free Raises per day equal to your School Rank that may be used on any Perception or Hunting roll. Finally, you add your Water Ring to the total of all your Perception rolls.

RANK 3: HAND OF THE EMPEROR

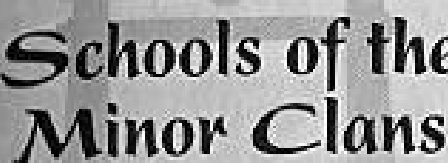
Acting in the Emperor's name lends the Miya a sense of purpose. You gain an additional action per round, which may be used to perform any miscellaneous action (complex or simple). Additionally, you add twice your Air Ring to your TN to Be Hit at all times, replacing the benefit from Rank 1.

RANK 4: GLORY OF THE EMPEROR

The very presence of a Miya Herald encourages others to set aside anger. If you and your allies have taken no offensive action, you may choose to grant a +10 TN to Be Hit bonus to everyone except yourself within 100'. This affects everyone, friends and foes alike, but your own TN to Be Hit is reduced by 20. Further, you are always considered to be in the Full Defense Posture; you can move and act normally while in Full Defense unless you declare another Posture or are incapacitated.

RANK 5: BLESSING OF THE EMPEROR

Like prominent Otomo Courtiers, Miya Heralds possess a powerful information network. You may declare Raises after rolling when using the following Skills: Defense, Etiquette, and Lore (Heraldry). Any assailant who attacks you loses a number of Honor points equal to your Insight Rank. In addition to any amount he would lose otherwise for such an act. Additionally, you add three times your Air Ring to your TN to Be Hit at all times, replacing the benefit from Rank 3.



Schools of the Minor Clans

Usagi Bushi School (Hare Clan)

Much like the Clan that created it, the Hare Clan Bushi School has a proud, if checkered, tradition. The Usagi style has survived intact for centuries despite the various tragedies that have befallen the Clan, including its near destruction in recent decades. Many Hare would claim that it is no coincidence that, with all they have lost, their bushi school has only become stronger, as the Usagi style specializes in escape, defense, and fighting multiple opponents.

Those who see an Usagi Bushi for the first time are frequently amazed, for it is truly a unique fighting style. A Hare samurai makes daring leaps, bounds, and kicks, moving dynamically into combat only to quickly dart back, sometimes transforming a kick into leverage for a leap and bounding off of a stunned enemy only to strike another. A Hare relies on fists and feet as much as his blade, combining steel and martial arts in a dazzling athletic display.

Of course, not all Hare training is physical. This Minor Clan specializes in battling conspiracies such as the Kolat and Bloodspeakers, so some knowledge of their hidden enemies is a must. If their enemies knew how much the Hare had discovered about them, the Hare would lose one of their few remaining weapons. Further, the Hare have learned from experience that few outsiders truly believe how pervasive and powerful the Empire's hidden enemies really are.

During Iuchiban's recent rise, Hare bushi earned a great deal of respect as they left their forest home to fearlessly take the battle to the Bloodspeakers. They returned to obscurity just as quickly once Iuchiban was defeated, but this suited the Hare's purposes just fine. Better for them to remain unseen, where they can fight their hidden foes, than in the open where they cannot see the enemy coming.

Benefit: +1 Agility

Honor: 2.0

Skills: Athletics (Running), Defense, Kenjutsu, Jujutsu, Running, Lore (Kolat), Spellcraft

Note: All Hare Bushi must take the Maho Emphasis of the Spellcraft Skill. Hares lose no Honor for researching Maho, so long as their research is for the purpose of fighting against maho-tsukai rather than any intent to practice blood magic.

Outfit: Katana, wakizashi, bow and 20 arrows (any type), any one weapon, light armor, kimono and sandals, traveling pack, 3 koku

TECHNIQUES

RANK 1: LEAP OF THE HARE

The Hare combat style showcases acrobatic leaps, dodges, and flips. If you move your full movement and attack while on Full Attack, you may perform an acrobatic leap that both grants a Free Raise on your attack roll and allows you to add your Athletics Skill to the total. You may also add your Athletics Skill to your TN to Be Hit when on Full Defense so long as you have room to maneuver.

RANK 2: SPEED OF THE HARE

You may add your School Rank to your Water Ring for the purposes of determining your movement rate. Enemies may not reduce your Initiative with Tides of Battle rolls. Your Reflexes Trait is increased by your School Rank for the purposes of determining your TN to Be Hit.

RANK 3: KICK OF THE HARE

The Kick of the Hare is perhaps one of the strangest combat techniques. The Hare samurai leaps off of an opponent into the air to perform a second strike. You may make an additional attack per round. This must be an unarmed strike (kick). If you perform this attack first and make one Raise, you gain the benefits of Leap of the Hare as if you were on Full Attack (but without gaining the normal Full Attack bonuses) for any remaining attacks. These need not be unarmed strikes.

RANK 4: SWIFT AS LIGHTNING

You may now move normally while in the Full Defense Posture, and may apply your Full Defense Bonus to a number of opponents equal to twice your Insight Rank. You may spend two Void Points to make a Feint while on Full Defense.

RANK 5: REICHIN'S STYLE

With a whirling flurry of leaps, kicks, and feints, you can leave an opponent confused and vulnerable. You may make an unarmed Feint, gaining a bonus to this roll equal to your Athletics Skill. If this Feint is successful, you gain three Free Raises from the Feint (rather than the usual one) and gain a +10 bonus to your TN to Be Hit against any attacks from that enemy until your next turn.

Kitsune Shugenja School (Fox Clan)

Few understand the Kitsune's mystical connection to the Spirit Realm of Chikushudo. Even many members of the Fox Clan cannot truly explain it. But although they do not fully understand the power they wield, that is not to say that they cannot wield it ably. As a Fox would say, "One need not see the air to know how to breathe it."

A Fox shugenja's training involves deep communion with the spirits that dwell in the Shinomen forest. A Kitsune bears a deep connection not only to the kami, but also to the animal spirits of Chikushudo. To these strange entities, a Fox is one of their own. They view the Kitsune as somewhat unfortunate, bound in unchanging mortal forms as they are, but the spirits view this as a temporary eccentricity on the Kitsune's part and aid them until the Fox make the natural transition to a more meaningful state of being.

Legends of Fox shugenja escaping into deep forests without any sign of tracks, or invaders simply vanishing, are no mere fiction. All Fox shugenja bear a deep connection to the Spirit Realm

of Animals, and can enter that Realm in those place where it touches the mortal Realm. Those who would threaten a Fox on his home terrain are foolhardy indeed, for a Kitsune can easily escape into the mists or, even worse, trick an enemy into following him into Chikushudo and then leave him there.

Naturally, the Fox do not use this ability frivolously. The animal spirits do not appreciate invaders, and only tolerate the Kitsune's intrusions due to the mysterious connection to the fox shapeshifters from whom they take their name. A Kitsune who enters Chikushudo without good reason, especially one who brings outsiders, can expect to incur the wrath of powerful shapeshifters. If a good explanation is not forthcoming, the Kitsune will be stripped of the ability to walk between Realms.

Benefit: +1 Perception

Honor: 2.0

Skills: Calligraphy, Defense, Hunting, Medicine (Herbalism), Meditation, Spellcraft, any one Weapon Skill

Outfit: Wakizashi, yari; kimono and sandals, scroll satchel, traveling pack; 3 koku

Affinity/Deficiency: Their close bond with nature grants kitsune shugenja an Affinity for Earth. The aggressive, destructive nature of Fire is of little interest to them, so they possess a Deficiency for Fire.

TECHNIQUE: BLOOD OF CHIKUSHUDO

You can naturally understand and communicate with any animal spirits (such as kitsune, tanuki, koumori, and others). You can sense any passages to Chikushudo, the Spirit Realm of Animals, in your immediate vicinity. If you wish, you may pass into this Realm in such areas, taking along a number of other individuals equal to your School Rank. You may remain as long as you wish, or until a more powerful spirit wills you to return to the mortal Realm. Those whom you bring with you may not return to the mortal Realm without your aid or the aid of another spirit of Chikushudo.

What's in a Traveling Pack?

A samurai's traveling pack, often referred to as a furoshiki, contains a variety of tools and supplies useful in one's daily life. The traveling pack included in your outfit contains up to ten items from the following list:

- Basket
- Blacksmith's hammer
- Blanket
- Bottle of bleach or dye
- Bottle of sake (rice wine)
- Bottle of shochu (very strong liquor)
- Bottle of water
- Bucket
- Candles (six)
- Chopsticks
- Coin purse
- Cooking pot
- Daisho stand
- Divination kit (kawaru coins or yarrow sticks)
- Fan
- Finger of jade (counts as three items)
- Fishing net or pole
- Flint and tinder
- Grapple hook
- Incense brazier
- Jewelry or accessory (netsuke, earring, eyepatch, bracelet)
- Kiseru (smoking pipe)
- Kubi bukuro (small netted bag for carrying bundori — heads and other enemy trophies)
- Lantern
- Lucky cricket (in small cage)
- Makeup kit
- Mask
- Miniature go set or shogi set
- Mortar and pestle
- Musical instrument (drum, shakuhachi, biwa, samisen; counts as two items)
- Parchment and charcoal (10 pieces of each)
- Perfume
- Personal seal or chop
- Pet (dog, cat, songbird, monkey; not suitable for combat; counts as two items)
- Pillow book (small journal, story book, history book, or piece of famous literature)
- Rope (50')
- Sake cup
- Set of dice
- Shovel
- Small back banner
- Small folding stool
- Small hand mirror
- Small knife (not suitable as a weapon)
- Small painting or sculpture
- Small statue of a Fortune or ancestor
- Small tent
- Snowshoes
- Spare kimono and sandals
- Spices
- Straw cloak
- Sumi-e (ink brush) kit
- Sweets (small cakes, candies)
- Tatami mat
- Tattoo needles
- Tea set
- Vial of war paint
- Walking stick
- Week's supply of rations (rice balls or smoked fish)
- Whetstone
- Wicker umbrella
- Wide-brimmed straw hat
- Wig

Kasuga Courtier School (Tortoise Clan)

The Tortoise Clan has the dubious honor of doing the Emperor's "dirty work," especially when it comes to their secret trade with gaijin and guardianship of the ruined former capital, Otosan Uchi. The Kasuga courtiers are the public face of the Clan, a duty that can be quite difficult considering how they are often reviled by their fellow samurai.

The Tortoise endure criticisms and even open hatred with stubborn patience. Just as their ancestor Someisa protected Shinsei's secrets for three centuries without faltering, so do the Kasuga patiently protect their Emperor and Clan. A Tortoise has a unique view of honor, and will unhesitatingly shame himself if it will somehow serve the Emperor.

Although they act with the Emperor's tacit approval, the Tortoise know that trading with gaijin and stalking through the haunted streets of Otosan Uchi fills more honorable samurai with suspicion. Rather than be forced to rely on the Emperor's protection (and perhaps diminish his light through their actions), the Tortoise have learned to hide their activities from outsiders. The less they must hide in the Emperor's shadow, the easier it is to exist without such protection. The Kasuga courtiers are experts at keeping secrets, and have confounded even Kitsuki investigators.

During the Clan War, the Tortoise Clan served as emissaries between the Mantis Clan and the other members of Yoritomo's Alliance. Though the Tortoise did not ultimately join the Mantis as the Wasp and Centipede did, they retained good relations and learned the lessons of diplomacy. In more recent times the Tortoise have followed Yoritomo's example, attempting to cultivate unity of purpose among the Minor Clans. The emissaries of the Kasuga not only keep lines of communication open between all Minor Clans but also represent them in the Imperial Court.

Many find it surprising that the reviled Tortoise would be so easily accepted as the Minor Clan representative, but after all, while other Minor Clans may regard one another with friendship or enmity, the Tortoise are merely mildly despised by all. This equal footing, as well as the Tortoise reputation for discretion and unique relationship to the throne, has led the other Minor Clans to unanimously agree that this often overlooked Clan is the perfect choice to represent them before the Emperor.

Benefit: +1 Awareness

Honor: 1.0

Skills: Calligraphy, Courtier, Deceit (Lying), Etiquette (Sincerity), Investigation, Stealth (Shadowing), Underworld

Outfit: Wakizashi, tanto; sturdy box with lock, courtly dress, kumogori and sandals, traveling pack; 8 koku

TECHNIQUES

RANK 1: WAY OF THE TORTOISE

You are knowledgeable in the shadier aspects of the Tortoise Clan's duties. You roll an extra die when using all Low Skills, and are never considered unskilled with Low Skills. This benefit is cumulative with the Crafty Advantage, but provides no additional Insight.

RANK 2: THE TORTOISE SHELL

You are quite adept at keeping secrets. Any time someone makes a Contested Courtier or Investigation Skill Roll against you (either for the purposes of interrogation or merely to learn your desires), you roll additional dice equal to your School Rank. If your opponent fails, he does not know that he has failed; you may either give him false information or simply patiently resist his manipulation.

RANK 3: HAND IN HAND

The Tortoise hold a special place in the social landscape of the Empire. All know that their duties are unseemly, but few would dare openly challenge them. Any time someone initiates a Contested Social Skill Roll that would cause you to lose Honor, he loses an equal amount of Honor. You may use your School Rank in place of your Honor when making Tests of Honor.

RANK 4: THE TORTOISE SMILES

You are capably underhanded when it becomes necessary. Select a number of Low Skills equal to your Awareness (you need not have any Ranks in these Skills). Your maximum Raises when using these Skills is no longer limited by your Void. If your Awareness ever increases, you may choose additional Skills accordingly. If you possess the Great Potential Advantage for any of these Skills, you now gain two Free Raises when using them.

RANK 5: SOMEISA'S RIDDLE

You possess the same tenacious will that allowed Someisa to conceal Shinsei's secret for three centuries. Any time someone initiates a Contested Skill Roll against you, he must Raise three times to get the benefits of one Raise, and must spend two Void Points to get the benefit of one.

Toku Bushi School

Once known as the Monkey Bushi School, the Toku Bushi School was recently renamed in honor of the Monkey Clan's heroic founder. One of the youngest bushi schools in the Empire, the Toku Bushi school was cobbled together from the unique fighting styles practiced by Toku and the various ronin who joined him in founding the Monkey Clan.

Like the Tortoise, the Monkey enjoy the favor of the Emperor himself. Unlike the Tortoise, who serve the Emperor by performing duties that are beneath other samurai, the Monkey are guardians of justice. Though the school is small and only in its second generation, already many great magistrates and Legionnaires have risen from its ranks.

The fact that the Monkey School boasts such powerful Techniques despite its relative youth is almost unprecedented, but it is no accident. As one of the greatest heroes of the Clan War, the War Against the Darkness, and the War of Spirits, Toku attracted many of the finest unaligned warriors in the Empire to the Monkey Clan banner. These heroes shared the Techniques their own families had practiced in secret for generations. Other allies of the Monkey, such as the legendary ronin Ginawa and the mysterious warrior Daini, also frequently visited the dojo during its early years and added their own counsel.

The primary virtue of a Monkey bushi is his indomitable will. A Monkey does not falter or retreat even in the face of overwhelming odds, unless to do so would bring harm or dishonor to others. They display extraordinary skill and tenacity even against more powerful opponents, and much like their Hare cousins seem to flourish when outnumbered. In the tradition of their founder, a Monkey will not allow himself the luxury of fatigue or death until his goals have been accomplished. Bandits who have crossed paths with Monkey magistrates and survived report that it is best to deal with these indefatigable warriors from a distance — or better yet, simply to flee when they arrive.

Benefit: +1 Willpower

Honor: 2.5

Skills: Athletics, Defense, Hunting, Investigation (Search), Kenjutsu, Kyujutsu, Lore (History)

Outfit: Katana, wakizashi, bow and 20 arrows (any type), light armor, Imperial seal, kimono and sandals, traveling pack, 5 koku

TECHNIQUES

RANK 1: TOKU'S LESSON

Students of the Monkey Technique have a way of prevailing against impossible odds. You may add twice your Willpower to any Skill Roll with a TN of 15 or higher (including attack rolls). You also gain this bonus on any Contested Rolls against an opponent who is using a higher Trait or Skill in the Contested Roll than you are. Your TN to Be Hit is increased by your Willpower.

RANK 2: A WILL OF STEEL

A Toku warrior possesses boundless tenacity. You may reduce any Wound penalties you are suffering by an amount equal to your School Rank \times 4, for one round. The following round your Wound penalties are doubled. You may use this ability every other round, but cannot negate the Out Wound level.

RANK 3: THE STRENGTH OF ONE MAN

A Toku bushi does not shy away from any challenge. When facing multiple opponents or any enemy with a higher Insight Rank, you may add your Honor Rank to all attack, damage, and Contested Skill Rolls. You gain additional Wounds equal to your Willpower on each Wound level.

RANK 4: FORGE YOUR OWN FATE

The Toku bushi's skill and tenacity are unmatched, allowing him to avoid defeat even when it seems inevitable. You may make an extra attack per round. You may spend a Void Point when suffering Wounds to force your opponent to reroll the damage roll. All bonuses to the original roll are retained, and you must accept the second roll.

RANK 5: FORTUNE FAVORS THE MORTAL MAN

A Toku bushi does not allow failure. You may spend a Void Point to reroll any roll. This may be done multiple times on a single roll, so long as you have Void Points to spend. You may keep the new roll or any of the earlier rolls, your choice.

Ronin Schools

Ronin are unlike clan-aligned samurai in many ways, not the least of which is their lack of a dojo or formal fighting style. A ronin's techniques are not particularly advanced, but are honed to a razor's edge by a lifetime of never-ending hardship. A Kakita duelist practices his technique in a pristine, silent dojo with nothing to disturb him; a ronin duelist practices in the rain on an open field, learning to focus his mind despite the distractions that surround him.

The following ronin schools contain broad, basic Techniques that are not a result of formal training, but personal experience. These schools may be taken by any samurai, even those affiliated with a clan, without use of the Different School Advantage. In such cases, the schools simply represent a more intuitive path that a samurai has chosen to follow rather than an established style. Ronin characters may move freely between these different schools, taking Techniques from whichever suits them. A character may never take a Technique without having the previous Techniques in that school. For instance, a ronin who is a Rank 2 Duelist may, upon reaching Rank 3, take Rank 1 in Yojimbo or Bushi, or Rank 3 in Duels.

Ronin Bushi Schools

The following schools have these traits in common:

Honor: 1.5

Outfit: Katana, wakizashi, any one weapon, ashigaru armor, well-worn traveling clothes and sandals, travel pack, 5 zeni

Ronin Warrior

Benefit: +1 Strength

Skills: Defense, Hunting, Kenjutsu (Katana), Kyujutsu, and 3 Skills

TECHNIQUES

RANK 1: THE WOLF'S TECHNIQUE

The wolf is merciless when attacked. If you are declared the target of an attack, you gain one additional rolled and kept die to your attack or damage roll versus that opponent each round. You must declare which roll is receiving this bonus die at the beginning of each combat round. This Technique may apply to only one opponent per round, but may be switched from one to another each round as long as each opponent has declared you the target of an attack.

RANK 2: PUNISH THE ARROGANT

A ronin survives only if he is quick to react to what happens around him. If wounded by an opponent, you receive a bonus to your Initiative equal to the number of Wounds you suffered. This bonus applies only to the round immediately following the round in which you were wounded. If, during that round, you attack the opponent who wounded you, you roll two additional attack dice against him.

RANK 3: DESPERATE SPEED

A ronin's desperate struggle for survival gives him strength and speed in times of stress. You gain an additional attack per round.

RANK 4: THE KILLING STRIKE

The ronin's fighting style is fluid, and he can adapt his stance depending upon the style of those he faces. A number of times per day equal to your Insight Rank, you may spend a Void Point to gain a bonus on each damage die equal to your School Rank.

RANK 5: NONE SHALL OVERCOME

Every second of combat threatens a ronin's life, and so he strives to kill his enemies the moment he draws his blade. When making any attack roll, you may voluntarily sacrifice rolled dice for kept dice. For example, if you would roll 6k2 for your attack, you may choose to roll two fewer attack dice and keep two more, rolling 4k4. You must declare how many dice you lose and gain in this manner before rolling your attack.

Ronin Duelist

Benefit: +1 Agility

Skills: Defense, Hunting, Iaijutsu, Kenjutsu (Katana), Kyujutsu, any 2 Skills

TECHNIQUES**RANK 1: THE WIND TECHNIQUE**

Speed is necessary for a ronin duelist to survive. You add twice your Agility to the total of all Initiative rolls.

RANK 2: TAKING THE MEASURE

An opponent who is understood is an opponent who is already defeated. When facing an opponent in a duel or skirmish, you may choose to take no action and study your opponent. For every round you study an opponent, you gain an additional rolled die on all attacks made against that opponent for the remainder of the day. This Technique may be used while on Full Defense. Every round spent focusing in a duel is considered a round of study.

RANK 3: STRIKE LIKE WIND

The incredible speed a ronin develops in training for a duel becomes evident in his every move. You gain an additional attack per round.

RANK 4: TESTING THE MEASURE

As a ronin learns to understand his foes, he gains a greater appreciation of how to exploit their weaknesses. For every round you study an opponent, you gain an additional rolled and kept die on all attacks made against that opponent for the remainder of the day. This Technique may be used while on Full Defense. Every round spent focusing in a duel is considered a round of study. This replaces the benefit of Rank 2.

RANK 5: THE FINAL MEASURE

The trained eye can find any weakness. When facing an opponent in a duel or skirmish, you may study them for a number of rounds equal to their Insight Rank. The round after this has been completed, you may make a single attack. If the attack is successful, you and your opponent make a contested Void Roll, and if he loses, your opponent is immediately reduced to the Down wound condition. This Technique may only be used against opponents of equal or lesser Insight Rank. This Technique may be used against enemies without an Insight Rank if the sum of the target's Rings is equal to or less than yours; you must study such opponents for a number of rounds equal to their lowest Ring.

Ronin Yojimbo

Benefit: +1 Reflexes

Skills: Defense, Hunting, Kenjutsu (Katana), Kyujutsu, any 3 Skills

TECHNIQUES**RANK 1: THE WAY OF SACRIFICE**

Even a wandering ronin can value life and seek to protect it. When on Full Defense, you may choose to share the bonus to TN to Be Hit from your Agility/Defense roll with someone you are protecting. This must be declared at the beginning of the round, and the protected individual must be within 10'. Any or all of the bonus may be conferred to another in this manner. You select the opponents against whom this bonus applies as per normal Full Defense rules. The Guard combat action does not require a Raise for you, and confers an additional +1 TN to Be Hit per Raise made.

RANK 2: WILL NOT FLESH

Focus permits a ronin to set aside pain and push beyond physical limitations. When acting to protect another individual or when acting in self-defense (i.e., you do not provoke or initiate combat), you reduce the wound penalty on any action by a number equal to three times your Insight Rank.

RANK 3: HASTEN THE BLADE

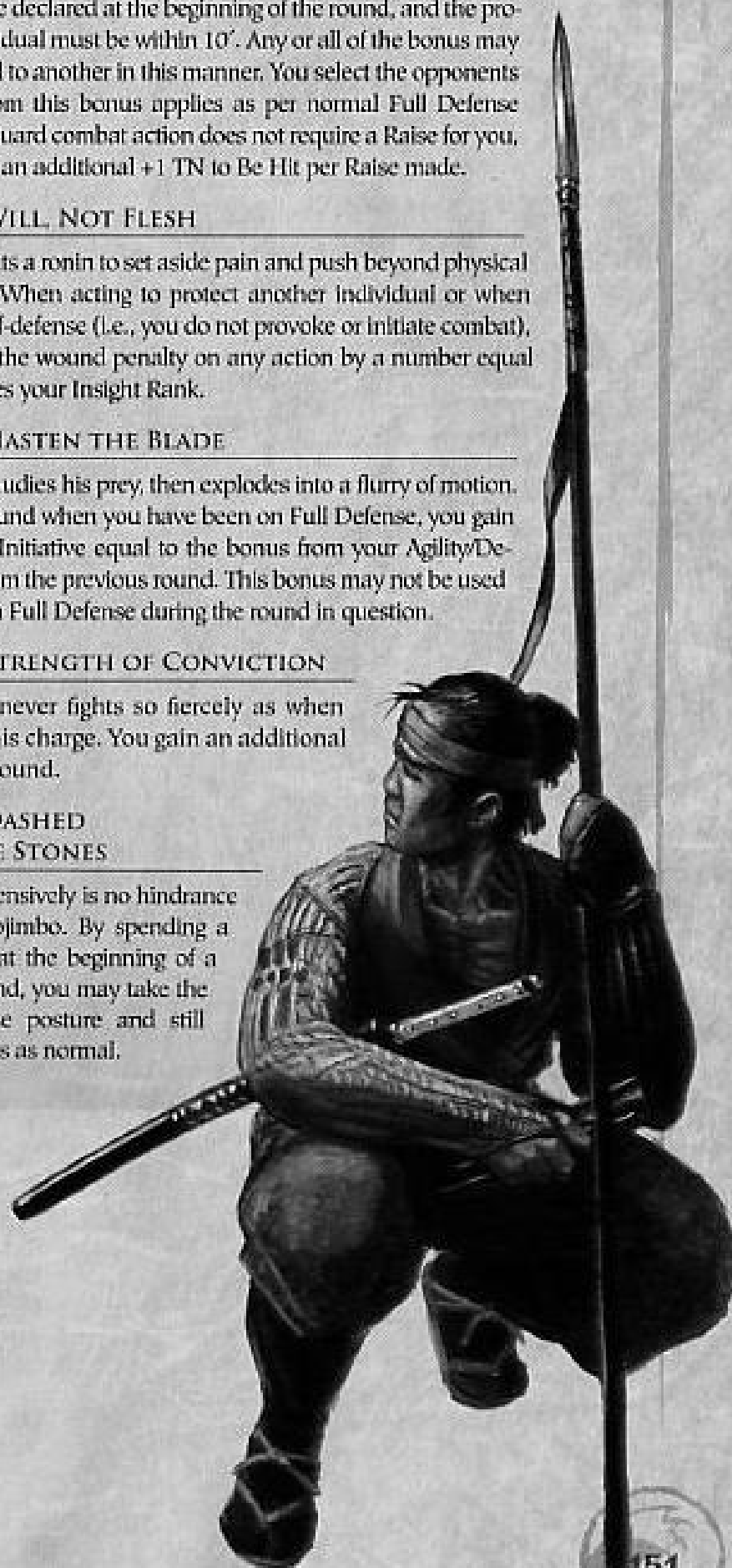
A yojimbo studies his prey, then explodes into a flurry of motion. After any round when you have been on Full Defense, you gain a bonus to Initiative equal to the bonus from your Agility/Defense roll from the previous round. This bonus may not be used if you are on Full Defense during the round in question.

RANK 4: STRENGTH OF CONVICTION

A yojimbo never fights so fiercely as when defending his charge. You gain an additional attack per round.

RANK 5: DASHED UPON THE STONES

Fighting defensively is no hindrance to a true yojimbo. By spending a Void Point at the beginning of a combat round, you may take the Full Defense posture and still make attacks as normal.



Ronin Shugenja

Ronin shugenja are a unique lot. They lack the wealth of knowledge afforded to clan-affiliated shugenja whose schools record centuries of research into the ways of the kami, but they make up for this shortcoming with an innate gift for the kami that many shugenja secretly envy. Ronin shugenja are rare, so it is extremely unusual for them to develop fixed schools of thought regarding the study of magic. Most instead rely upon their natural gifts, and do not pass on their secrets. Still, there have been a handful of individuals throughout history, such as the legendary ronin Kanosei, who have established schools that have survived the centuries; these schools are available to any ronin with a talent for the kami who wishes to learn.

Ronin shugenja do not have the ability to change between schools in the same way ronin bushi do. If a shugenja wishes to change schools, he must purchase the Multiple Schools Advantage.

Traditional Priest

Benefit: +1 Willpower

Honor: 2.5

Skills: Calligraphy, Meditation, Spellcraft, Theology (Fortunes), any 3 Skills

Outfit: Wakizashi, ashigaru armor; calligraphy set, kimono and sandals, scroll satchel, travel pack; 5 zeni.

Affinity/Deficiency: Traditional priests do not limit themselves by focusing on one facet of magic, but embrace it in all its myriad forms. Still, a talent for one form of magic is often mirrored by a difficulty in grasping its opposite. Traditional priests may select any element for which they have an Affinity. They are automatically Deficient in the opposing element.

Technique: None.

Spells: Sense, Commune, Summon, 3 spells of the primary element, 2 spells of any other element, 1 spell of a third element

Militant Shugenja

Benefit: +1 Strength

Honor: 1.5

Skills: Calligraphy, Jujutsu, Lore (any), Meditation (Void Recovery), Theology, any 2 Skills

Outfit: Wakizashi, ashigaru armor; calligraphy set, kimono and sandals, scroll satchel, travel pack; 5 zeni.

Affinity/Deficiency: Ronin of this mindset empathize with the strength and fortitude of Earth, seeking to emulate its power and achieve its strength. Militant shugenja have an Affinity for Earth spells and a Deficiency for Air spells.

TECHNIQUE: THE KAMI'S GIFT

Militant shugenja embrace personal power as the key to spiritual power. Any elemental spell you cast that has **Area of Effect: Self** receives two Free Raises.

Spells: Sense, Commune, Summon, any 3 Earth spells, any 2 Fire spells, any 1 Water spell

Kanosei Furudera Order

Benefit: +1 Intelligence

Honor: 1.5

Skills: Calligraphy, Etiquette, Meditation, Theology (Fortunes), any 3 Skills

Outfit: Wakizashi, ashigaru armor; calligraphy set, kimono and sandals, scroll satchel, travel pack; 5 zeni.

Affinity/Deficiency: This particular sect of ronin teaches that communication with the kami is the greatest accomplishment in magic, and that emphasis on communication colors all its other teachings. Students of the Kanosei Furudera order have an Affinity for Air spells and a Deficiency for Earth spells.

TECHNIQUE: WHISPER OF THE ELEMENTS

You gain a number of Free Raises per day equal to your Ingot Rank that may be used only on Sense, Commune, and Summon spells.

Spells: Sense, Commune, Summon, Counterspell, 3 Air spells, and 2 Water spells.

Rokugani Names

The following list gives many examples that can be used to name your character. Note that one's family name always comes first, so Akio of the Hida family will be named Hida Akio.

Male Names

Akahito, Aki, Akihito, Akinari, Akinori, Akio, Akira, Anzai, Arimo, Ashihei, Atasuke, Atsumori, Atsutane, Bairei, Bakin, Basho, Benjiro, Benkei, Bokkai, Chikafusa, Chikao, Chomei, Chuichi, Daisetsu, Danjuro, Dayu, Denbe, Doi, Eien, Eiichi, Eiji, Eijiro, Elshi, Elzo, Ekiken, Etsuya, Fujio, Fumiaki, Fumihiko, Fumihoo, Fumimaro, Fumio, Gempachi, Gengyo, Genichi, Genjo, Genna, Gesshin, Gidayu, Gihei, Goemon, Goro, Gyukudo, Hachemon, Hachiro, Hajime, Hakuseki, Hanshiro, Haranobu, Haru, Haruhiko, Haruki, Harunobu, Hayato, Heiji, Heikichi, Heizo, Hideaki, Hidekazu, Hideki, Hideo, Hideyori, Hideyoshi, Hikaru, Hiro Hiroaki, Hirobumi, Hirofumi, Hiroharu, Hirohisa, Hiroji, Hirokichi, Hirokumi, Hiroshi, Hirotada, Hirotaka, Hiroya, Hiroyasu, Hisahsi, Hisaki, Hisanobu, Hisashi, Hisato, Hisayuki, Hiromaro, Hitoshi, Hogai, Hoitsu, Hokichi, Hokusai, Honzo, Hoshi, Hoshiko, Hyobe, Hyosuke, Hyotaru, Ichibei, Ichizo, Iemitsu, Iemochi, Ienobu, Iesada, Ieshige, Ietsuna, Ieyasu, Ieyoshi, Ikemoto, Iku, Inejiro, Ipppei, Isamu, Isao, Isei, Isoruko, Isoshi, Iwane, Iwao, Izu, Izumo, Jakuchu, Jin, Jinzaburo, Iiro, Jo, Joji, Josuke, Jotaro, Joui, Juichi, Jun, Junichi, Junichiro, Junji, Junnosuke, Junzo, Jurubei, Juzaburo, Juzo, Kafu, Kagehisa, Kagetoki, Kail, Kakuei, Kakuzo, Kamatari, Kan, Kanbe, Kanjiro, Kanko, Kansuke, Kaoru, Katsumi, Katsumoto, Katsunan, Kazu, Kazuki, Kazuma, Kazunari, Kazuo, Kazushi, Kazutoshi, Kei, Keiji, Keisuke, Keita, Keitaro, Kenichi, Kenji, Kenjiro, Kenko, Kenzaburo, Kenzan, Kenzo, Kijuro, Kikaku, Kikugoro, Kikunojo, Kimi, Kinji, Kinmochi, Kinonosuke, Kinzo, Kisho, Kiyohira, Kiyomitsu, Kiyomori, Kiyonobu, Kiyonori, Kiyoshi, Koan, Kobo, Koetsu, Kohei, Koichi, Koin, Kei

Kokin, Kokei, Koki, Kokushi, Konoye, Konyo, Korechika, Kore-
 oya, Korenaga, Korin, Kosaku, Kosami, Koshiro, Koshu, Kotaro,
 Koto, Kozue, Kuemon, Kunto, Kunisada, Kunitaro, Kuniyoshi,
 Kyozen, Kyotchi, Kyofu, Kyoshi, Kyuso, Kyuwa, Mabuchi, Ma-
 jibel, Makoto, Mamoru, Manabu, Manobu, Marihito, Masaaki,
 Masami, Masanobu, Masanori, Masao, Masaru, Masashi, Ma-
 sawashi, Masayuki, Masazumi, Masu, Masuhiro, Masutaro, Ma-
 tabel, Matsu, Matsudaira, Matsuo, Matsusuke, Meiji, Michinori,
 Michio, Minaru, Misao, Mito, Mitsuharu, Mitsuhide, Mitsukuni,
 Mitsunari, Mitsuzuka, Miyazaki, Miyoko, Mokuami, Momoru,
 Morimasa, Motoichi, Motoki, Munemori, Muneyaki, Munoto,
 Mutai, Mutsuhito, Naganori, Naizen, Nakamuro, Nakazo, Nam-
 boku, Naoki, Naomi, Naoya, Nariaki, Natsu, Natsuo, Niehren,
 Nisei, Noboru, Nobuatsu, Nobuhiko, Nobuhisa, Nobuhito,
 Nobukazu, Nobuo, Noburo, Nobusuke, Nobuyoki, Nobuyori,
 Nobuyoshi, Nori, Noriaki, Norihide, Norihisa, Norinaga, Norio,
 Norishige, Noritada, Noritoshi, Noriyori, Noriyuki, Norogumi,
 Oda, Ogas, Okakura, Okitsugu, Oniji, Orinosuke, Osamu, Oto-
 jiro, Reijiro, Rikya, Rikyu, Rosanjin, Ryo, Ryobe, Ryoichi, Ryo-
 ko, Ryoma, Ryosei, Ryozo, Saburo, Sachi, Sadaharu, Sadanobu,
 Sadao, Saemon, Saitaku, Saneatsu, Sanetomo, Sanjuro, Sanju-
 ro, Sanraku, Sanzo, Satoru, Satoshi, Sawao, Seibel, Seisensui,
 Seibo, Seichi, Seiji, Seiki, Selnosuke, Seiryu, Seishiro, Seishi-
 sai, Seisi, Seison, Seitaro, Sen, Senichi, Senzo, Sharaku, Shiba,
 Shigaki, Shigemasa, Shigematsu, Shigemori, Shigetoki, Shiko,
 Shimpel, Shingen, Shinji, Shinobu, Shinsaku, Shintaro, Shizue,
 Shu, Shogo, Shohel, Shoichi, Shoin, Shoji, Shojiro, Shoko, Shor-
 aku, Shosuke, Shotaro, Shuichi, Shuji, Shukishi, Shuko, Shumel,
 Shun, Shunichi, Shunji, Shunko, Shunsen, Shunsho, Shunso,
 Shunsi, Shuzo, Soetsu, Soh, Sojuro, Sorai, Sosa, Soseki, Soshu,
 Sosuke, Sotan, Sotaro, Sotatsu, Sozen, Sozul, Sugimoto, Sugita,
 Sulejaro, Sukekubo, Sukune, Sumio, Sumiteru, Sumitomo, Su-
 sumu, Tabito, Tadahisa, Tadanobu, Tadao, Tadashi, Tadasu,
 Tadayuki, Tabei, Takan, Taisuke, Takahashi, Takahiro,
 Takakazu, Takamasa, Takao, Takashi, Takechi, Takehide, Takeji,
 Takeo, Takeru, Takeshi, Takesi, Taki, Takuro, Takuya, Tamotsu,
 Tanyu, Tanzan, Taro, Taroemon, Tashiaki, Tashiro, Tasuku, Tat-
 sui, Tatsukichi, Tatsuya, Tatsuzo, Taysuke, Teika, Teinosuke,
 Tekkan, Teruhin, Terao, Teruichi, Terumoto, Teruo, Tessai, Tet-
 su, Tetsuhiko, Tetsui, Tetsunori, Tetsuo, Tetsuya, Tobei, Togai,
 Tokaku, Toichi, Toin, Toju, Tokaji, Toki, Tokichiro, Tokugawa,
 Tomiji, Tomoaki, Tomomi, Tomoyuki, Ton, Torajiro, Torazo,
 Toru, Toshiaki, Toshiki, Toshio, Toshiro, Toshiyugu, Toshiyuki,
 Tosen, Totoya, Toyoaki, Toyotomi, Toyozo, Tsugahara, Tsukasa,
 Tsunenasa, Tsunayoshi, Tsuneharu, Tsuneko, Tsunoki, Tsunomu,
 Tsuyoshi, Ukyo, Unkel, Utaemon, Utamara, Waotaka, Washi,
 Wanchi, Yachi, Yaichiro, Yakumo, Yamato, Yasotaro, Yasuhiko,
 Yasunori, Yasuo, Yasutake, Yo, Yodo, Yohachi, Yoichi, Yojiro,
 Yone, Yoritane, Yoringa, Yoritoki, Yosai, Yoshi, Yoshiaki, Yo-
 shida, Yoshifusa, Yoshihide, Yoshiki, Yoshimasa, Yoshimatsu,
 Yoshimi, Yosen, Yosuke, Yugoro, Yuichi, Yuji, Yujiro, Yuki, Yukio,
 Yuzen, Yuzuki, Yuzuro, Yusuke, Yutaka, Zenko, Zeshin

Female Names

Ai, Aiko, Akane, Akemi, Aki, Akiko, Akuro, Ami, Arisa, Asa-
 hi, Asami, Atsuko, Aya, Ayako, Ayame, Ayano, Chiaki, Chie,
 Chiezo, Chika, Chikako, Chikuma, Chinatsu, Chisato, Echiko,
 Eiko, Ema, Emi, Emiko, Eri, Eriko, Etsuko, Eulko, Fujiko,
 Fumi, Fumie, Fumiki, Fumiko, Fumiyo, Fusae, Fuyuko, Gem-
 mei, Ginko, Hama, Hana, Hanae, Hanako, Haruko, Harumi,

Hatsue, Hatsuyo, Hideko, Hikaru, Hiroe, Hiroko, Hiromi,
 Hiroshi, Hisa, Hisae, Hisako, Hitomi, Hitomo, Hitoshi, Hon-
 ami, Hoshi, Hoshie, Hoshiko, Hoshiyo, Ichi, Inoue, Isako,
 Ise, Itsuko, Izumi, Joruri, Jun, Junko, Juri, Kadiri, Kaede, Ka-
 hori, Kameko, Kaneko, Kaori, Kaoru, Kasuga, Katsue, Katsu-
 ko, Katsumi, Kayoko, Kazue, Kazuko, Kazumi, Keiko, Kichi,
 Kiko, Kimie, Kimiko, Kin, Kinuko, Kinuye, Kinuyo, Kioko, Ki-
 shi, Kit, Kita, Kiyo, Kiyoko, Kiyomi, Kochiyo, Koi, Koiso, Ko-
 ken, Komachi, Kumi, Kumiko, Kunle, Kuniko, Kyoko, Machi,
 Machiko, Madoka, Mae, Maeko, Maemi, Mai, Maiko, Maki,
 Makiko, Mako, Mami, Manami, Mari, Mariko, Maru, Masae,
 Masako, Masami, Matsu, Maya, Mayako, Mayo, Mayoko,
 Mayu, Mayumi, Megu, Megumi, Michi, Michiko, Midori,
 Mieko, Miho, Mihoko, Miki, Mina, Minako, Mineko, Mino,
 Mio, Misa, Misako, Misato, Mitsu, Mitsuko, Miya, Miyako,
 Miyo, Miyoko, Miyoshi, Mizuki, Momoko, Mutsumi, Naho,
 Nahoko, Nami, Namie, Namika, Namiko, Namiyo, Nana,
 Nanako, Nanami, Nao, Naoko, Naomi, Naora, Nari, Nariko,
 Narumi, Natsuko, Natsumi, Nayoko, Nene, Nomi, Nori,
 Noriko, Nozomi, Nyoko, Ochiyo, Oharu, Oki, Okichi, Okiku,
 Omitsu, Otsu, Otsune, Raicho, Raku, Rei, Reiko, Remi, Rie,
 Rieko, Rika, Rikako, Rina, Rinako, Risa, Risako, Ritsuko,
 Romi, Rui, Rumiko, Ruri, Ryo, Ryoko, Sachi, Sachiko, Sada-
 ko, Sae, Saito, Saki, Sakiko, Sakue, Sakuko, Sakura, Sakuro,
 Sama, Sanako, Saori, Sata, Satoko, Satomi, Sawako, Saya,
 Sayo, Sayoko, Sayuri, Sei, Seka, Seki, Sen, Setsuko, Shige,
 Shinobu, Shiori, Shizu, Shizue, Shizuka, Shoken, Shoko, Sui,
 Suko, Sumi, Sumie, Suzue, Suzuko, Tadako, Tae, Tai, Takako,
 Tama, Tamafune, Tamaki, Tamami, Tamiko, Tamiyo, Taniko,
 Tansho, Tara, Teruyo, Tokie, Tokiko, Tokiyo, Tomi, Tomiko,
 Tomoe, Tomoko, Tomomi, Toshie, Toshiko, Toyoko, Tsuki,
 Tsukiyama, Tsuya, Ume, Umeka, Umeko, Urako, Utako,
 Wazuka, Yae, Yaeko, Yasu, Yasuko, Yodo, Yoko, Yori, Yoriko,
 Yoshi, Yoshie, Yoshiko, Yu, Yui, Yuka, Yukako, Yukari, Yuki,
 Yukiko, Yuko, Yuma, Yumako, Yumi, Yumiko, Yuri, Yuriko,
 Yusuke, Yutsuko, Yuya

Heritage Tables

After choosing your character's Family, if you wish you may roll on the Heritage tables to see what sort of family line the character was born into. You may roll on the Heritage tables up to three times as desired; the first roll on the Heritage Table is free, but each roll after that costs one Character Point (CP). Some results award Skill Ranks; these Ranks are gained after you are done purchasing Skills with your CP.

Begin with Heritage Table 1 and follow the instructions. Be warned: not every samurai's past is glorious.

HERITAGE TABLE 1

Roll	Result
1-4	Dishonorable Past. Roll on Heritage Table 2.
5-7	Distinguished Past. Roll on Heritage Table 3.
8-0	Mixed Blessings. Roll on Heritage Table 4.

HERITAGE TABLE 2: DISHONORABLE PAST

Roll	Result
1-2	Coward: Your ancestor could not face the strain of battle. As the enemy army approached, he dropped his weapons and abandoned his post. He was later recaptured and punished for his dereliction of duty. Samurai look at you and wonder if the same craven blood flows in your veins. Lose 5 points of Glory, 5 points of Status, and gain the Driven (prove yourself worthy) Disadvantage (but not the CP for it).
3-4	Inept: Your ancestor was a bumbling idiot, and his mistakes almost led to his lord's destruction. For his failures he was forced to shave his head and retire as a monk. As a further punishment, your lord ordered your family to forever pay for the upkeep of the monastery your ancestor joined. You must make sure that the monastery runs smoothly, visiting it at least once a month.
5	Cursed: Your ancestor inadvertently angered a powerful spirit while he was acting dishonorably. The spirit cursed his line, causing all those who share his blood to share his faults. Gain the 3-point Unlucky Disadvantage (but not the CP for it), and lose 5 points of Honor.
6	Lost Fortune: Your grandfather and his family were lost along with the estate's koku in a vicious storm off the coast. Every since then, your family has drilled into your head the importance of staying away from the water. When you go near water, you see the death of your grandfather in your mind's eye. Gain the 2-point Phobia (Ocean) Disadvantage (but not the CP for it). You start with no money.
7	Debt: Your ancestor was careless with his money and squandered the resources he needed to maintain his estates. A neighboring daimyo supported the land and made sure no dishonor came to your ancestor. Though decades have passed and the original debt repaid, your family still feels constrained to aid their benefactors. Gain the 4-point Obligation Disadvantage toward the family of the neighboring daimyo (but not the CP for it).
8	Corrupted: Your ancestor fought against the Shadowlands and succumbed to its siren call. Now he fights for the Dark Lord as one of his powerful lieutenants. Gain the Driven (kill your ancestor) Disadvantage (but not the CP for it).
9	Betrayal: A family member sold the Clan's secrets to anyone who showered him with enough koku. Though your Clan attempted to bring him to justice, he disappeared with his newfound wealth. Your name has been exonerated, but the shame of his dishonor still burns in you. Gain the Driven (find the traitor) Disadvantage (but not the CP for it).
0	Maho-Tsukai: Your grandfather quickly rose to power within his Clan. However, the family found out afterwards his rise to glory was aided by an unhealthy use of maho. Gain an 8-point Dark Secret Disadvantage (but not the CP for it) that you share with your entire family. No one must discover the roots of your power and wealth...

HERITAGE TABLE 3: DISTINGUISHED ANCESTORS

Roll	Result
1	Enlightened: Your ancestor wrote an influential book about your Clan's philosophy on life, war, and peace. Gain a copy of the book, 3 points of Honor, and a Free Raise on all Social Skill Rolls with your Clan.
2-5	Battle Veteran: Your ancestor earned respect by fighting in a tremendous battle. Go to Table 3A: Great Battles.
6-7	A Hero's End: Your ancestor died upholding his beliefs and protecting those who needed to be protected. Go to Table 3B: Glorious Death.
8-9	For the Empire: Your ancestor spent his life in service to Clan or empire. Go to Table 3C: Prestigious Duty.
0	Successful Marriage: One of your ancestors had a successful arranged marriage with another Clan of the GM's choice. Gain a 3-point Minor Ally in the appropriate Clan.

HERITAGE TABLE 3A: GREAT BATTLES

Roll	Result
1	Guardian: Though your ancestor was never involved in the great battles that define the history of Rokugan, he steadfastly defended an important rice village from bandit attacks. He spent his entire life in the region, content to stay home and guard an asset of the Clan. Gain the Way of the Land Advantage that applies to the province he guarded. Your Glory is considered to be 2 Ranks higher while in that province.
2-3	Battle of White Stag: Centuries ago, barbarians from the east sailed into the Emperor's harbor and initiated diplomatic negotiations. Two years later, a fleet of barbarian ships assaulted Otosan Uchi with superior weapons and attempted to kill the Emperor. The army of Rokugan defeated the barbarian fleet in the first major naval battle in Rokugan's history. Gain two Ranks of the Athletics Skill.
4-5	Battle of the Cresting Wave: The Maw's great assault into Rokugan was stopped because of the heroism of samurai Kuni Osaku sacrificed her life to buy time for samurai of all Clans to complete the Kaiu Wall. With teamwork and hard work, the samurai were ready for the Shadowlands army and decimated it. Gain two Ranks in Skills that are taught by the Crab schools.
6-7	Battle of the Sleeping River: At this famous battle, the Great Clans united to defeat Iuchiban and his Bloodspeakers. Gain one Rank of the Lore (Shadowlands) Skill.
8-9	Battle of Beiden Pass: In the year 1127, the Battle of Beiden Pass began several years of war, turmoil and chaos before the fateful Second Day of Thunder. Toturi the Black successfully outmaneuvered the huge and Tainted Crab army with an army of Dragon, ronin, and Unicorn troops. Gain two Ranks of the Battle Skill and 3 points of Honor.
0	Second Day of Thunder: In the year 1128 on the ninth day of the Month of the Ox, the combined forces of Rokugan and the Naga army gathered around Otosan Uchi and declared war on the Ninth Kami, Fu Leng. While the Thunder defeated the dark god inside the Imperial Palace, the armies of Rokugan engaged in combat with the fiercest oni ever seen beyond the Kaiu Wall. Gain two Ranks of the Lore (Shadowlands) Skill and 1 full rank of Glory.

HERITAGE TABLE 3B: GLORIOUS DEATH

Roll	Result
1-2	Duel: Your ancestor was killed in a duel and you wish to prove his technique correct. Gain one rank in both the Kenjutsu and Iaijutsu Skills, or two Ranks in either.
3-4	Combating the Shadowlands: Your ancestor was renowned for his fearlessness. Gain one Rank of any Bugei Skill. You gain +10 on all rolls to resist Fear effects from Shadowlands creatures.
5-7	Killed in Battle: Roll once on Table 3A, gain the benefit, and then roll again here:
1	Saved the day. Gain a 6-point Major Ally from any Clan or family on your ancestor's side.
2	Killed while charging enemy lines. Gain a 3-point Minor Ally from your Clan.
3	Died protecting the general. Gain 5 points of Honor.
4-5	Killed an important foe, such as a Clan hero or a mighty samurai. Gain a 2-point Sworn Enemy from a Clan or family who fought against the ancestor.
6	Saved a wounded samurai. His family has remained connected to yours. Gain a 5-point Minor Ally.
7-9	Fought bravely. Roll one die and gain that many points of Glory.
10	Carried the Clan standard into battle. Roll one die and gain that many points of Glory.
8	Yojimbo: Your ancestor died protecting his lord from an assassination attempt. Gain 3 points of Honor and two Ranks of the Defense Skill.
9	Seppuku: Your ancestor committed suicide to protect the honor of his family, leaving you a treasured keepsake. Upgrade one of your starting outfit items to Fine Quality.
10	Dutiful Vengeance: Your ancestor failed to protect his lord, but after years of dedication to his goal he brought the murderers to justice. When the last criminal was executed, your ancestor committed seppuku to cleanse the shame of his failure. Others look to him as a paragon of Chugo, the tenet of Duty. Gain 1 full rank of Glory that you do not lose through the passage of time, and one Free Raise on Social Skill Rolls with members of your own Clan.

HERITAGE TABLE 3C: PRESTIGIOUS DUTY

Your ancestor was a/an...

Roll	Result
1-3	Family Magistrate: Gain +1 Honor Point and +1 Glory Rank inside the family province.
4-5	Clan Magistrate: Gain +2 Honor Points and +1 Glory Rank inside the Clan provinces.
6	Imperial Magistrate: Gain +3 Honor Points and +5 Glory Ranks.
7	Army Commander: Gain +2 Honor Points and two Ranks of the Battle Skill.
8	Famous Sensei: Gain +3 Glory Ranks with members of the sensei's Clan.
9	Diplomat to a Great Clan: Gain a 2-point Ally from the appropriate Clan.
10	Diplomat to the Imperial Court: Gain +3 Honor Points, +5 Glory Ranks, and the Voice Advantage.

HERITAGE TABLE 4: MIXED BLESSINGS

Roll	Result
1-2	Artist's Touch: Your ancestor was a famous writer who captivated his audience with innovative imagery and wordplay. Because of portentous signs at your birth, you are expected to follow in his footsteps — whether or not you have the same abilities. Gain one rank in both the Acting and Storytelling Skills, or two Ranks in either. Whether you can actually write or not, Rokugan eagerly awaits your masterpiece.
3-5	Unremarkable: One of your ancestors went his entire life without being noticed, and people have told you that you look and act just like him. Gain the Bland Advantage. Additionally, your Glory may not be higher than your Status. However, it is possible to remove this penalty through perseverance and excellence. The penalty (though not the Advantage) is removed if you spend 10 XP or have 6 Ranks in any High or Bugei Skill.
6-7	The Duel: Your ancestor was a famed duelist who struck down his rival in front of the Imperial Court, gaining much fame for his family while shaming his opponent's. Gain 5 points of Status, a 2-point Sworn Enemy (but not the CP for him), and two Ranks of the Know the School (Enemy Clan) Skill.
8-9	Family Heirloom: Your ancestor acquired a <i>nemuranai</i> , an item whose soul is awake, and passed it down to his son. The item passed from father to son for several generations before it arrived in your hands. You have no idea as to the item's potential, but you are expected to carry it with you at all times.
10	The Truth in Legends: Many stories were written about your ancestor, a paragon of bushido. But a book recently surfaced, written in your ancestor's style, telling of his many misdeeds. He wrote of stealing from his lords, of killing innocent peasants and travelers, and of inciting war between his neighbors. This behavior is so jarringly different from the legends that many samurai choose to ignore this book as mere libel, a forgery perpetrated by your family's enemies. Some, however, whisper that the new source's voice sounds authentic, so the information it contains must be true. You gain a Free Raise on all Social Skill Rolls with samurai who believe the legends. You have a -5 penalty to all Social Skill Rolls with those who believe the newly discovered knowledge about your ancestor.



著書

BOOK OF FIRE



Hida Kait moved cautiously through the ruined city. He clutched his heavy *tetsubo* in both hands, holding the weapon high over one shoulder, ready to strike at anything that moved in the darkness. He barely breathed, moving as quietly as he was able in his heavy steel armor. The few clanks and creaks he made were drowned out by the hideous shrieking. He could hear them. They were nearby. They were everywhere. *Bakemono*, hideous little beasts in service to the Dark Lord.

The scouts that discovered this place did not know where the city came from; it was simply there one day. Such was the way of the Shadowlands. It was like a living being, and seemed to grow and shift by the day at its own sinister whim. Concerned that a new stronghold of the Horde had formed close to the Wall, Kait and the others were sent to investigate. The city appeared empty at first, but they proceeded cautiously.

Once they were well within the walls, the shrieking had begun. The little goblins boiled up out of every hole in the broken streets, every window of the abandoned buildings that lined the streets. The withdrawal followed standard Crab training when faced with an impossible foe: one man stepped forward to hold off the advance while the others withdrew to return with reinforcements. The one to step forward had been Kait. He had thrown himself into a wall of shrieking green flesh, hewing about with his *tetsubo*. Their claws had torn at his face and arms, but his armor had held. Before they could finish him, the streets crumbled and they fell into the tunnels below. Many of the goblins perished when the heavy Crab landed on top of them. The rest did not survive for long.

Kait had thanked the Fortunes for his escape, but he was uncertain now whether that escape was truly a blessing. He was alone now, lost in the tunnels beneath this forsaken city. Most disturbing of all, he no longer felt the cold reassurance of the jade finger against his chest. The necklace had been lost at some time during the battle. Now even if the goblins did not find him, the Taint inevitably would. He had to find his way out of this place, before the Shadowlands claimed him as its own. He moved by feel alone, carefully stalking through the blackened tunnels. Finally, light shone ahead but he was not relieved at the sight. In this place, such light was more likely to be foe than friend.

A ring of torches stood in the cavern ahead. On the floor between them a circle of arcane symbols was painted in dark red pigment. A thin man in flowing red robes stood at the heart, running a long knife over a shimmering stone. His head was shaven like a monk's, and his gaunt face

was lined with strange scars. He looked directly at where Kait waited in the darkness, a slow grin spreading across his ghastly features.

"And there is our wandering Hida," he said, gesturing at Kait with his blade. "Please, step forward. It will save me the trouble of dragging your heavy corpse to the circle when we are done."

"Are you responsible for the ruins, for the goblins?" Kait demanded, edging toward the man. He was clearly a *maho-tsukai* of some sort, a master of black magic. If Kait could keep him speaking long enough to get him in range of his club, he may yet have a chance. "Who are you?"

"How foolish would I be to reveal the secrets of this place to a Crab?" the man replied. "Yet by the smell of you, I sense you will not be a Crab much longer. Where is your jade, son of Hida?" With a mocking laugh the man drew the knife across his own palm and shouted something in a twisted, broken tongue. Flaming missiles of blood streaked toward Kait. He turned his shoulder toward the *tsukai*, letting the dark magic strike his armor. He could feel a terrible heat building through the steel. He pushed himself forward with a defiant cry before the magic could run its course.

The *tsukai's* eyes widened as he realized his spell had not been sufficient to the task. He began to weave another spell, but Kait collided solidly with the man's midsection. He tumbled back onto the floor and opened his mouth to cast a second spell, or perhaps simply beg for mercy. Kait's *tetsubo* fell with a heavy crunch.

Though the sorcerer was dead, the fires continued to burn Kait's body. He grunted and fell to one knee, the *tetsubo* bouncing out of his hands and rolling into the darkness. Around him, the shrieking of the *bakemono* drew nearer. Kait pushed the pain aside. He needed a weapon, any weapon, before they found him. He picked up the dead sorcerer's knife, and to his surprise the pain faded away. He looked down at the weapon and noted the strange watery patterns of red within the white steel, the black stones embedded along its hilt.

The Crab looked about him in surprise. At the edge of the torchlight he saw dozens of hideous faces, the *bakemono* that he had faced in the city above. They looked up at him, at the knife in his hand, their gleaming red eyes burning with hatred.

As one, the creatures bowed.

A malevolent laugh filled the tunnels, and it was a moment or two before Kait realized it had been his own. Tucking the cursed dagger into his obi, Hida Kait found he was no longer so eager to leave this place.

The Legend of the Five Rings game system is designed to be flexible, simple, and efficient. Resolving disputes is meant to be dynamic and exciting, whether the dispute is a social encounter with one's lord or a fierce combat encounter. Situations are intended to reflect the dynamic, heroic style of samurai epics such as *Lone Wolf and Cub* or Akira Kurosawa's *Seven Samurai*. Because of this, there is a great deal of emphasis on intrigue and combats tend to be both swift and deadly.



Basic Die Rolls

If you wish to perform a task, that task is resolved by rolling dice. Naturally, common sense is required here. If you simply wish to walk across the street or sharpen your katana, no roll is required. If the failure or success of a task would have a bearing upon the adventure, then a dice roll should be made to determine success or failure. The GM should avoid bogging down the game with unnecessary rolls or require rolls for trivial tasks.

The Legend of the Five Rings system uses ten-sided dice exclusively. When called upon to make a roll, you must roll a certain amount of dice and compare them to a Target Number. Any given roll will allow you to roll a certain amount of dice, keep a certain amount from this pool, add them together, and compare this to the Target Number. You need not keep the highest results, though this is generally desirable. If the total of the dice equals or exceeds the TN, then the task is successful.

Die rolls are usually noted as "XkY," meaning that you roll a number of dice equal to X and keep a number equal to Y. Rolling five dice and keeping three, for example, would be described as "5k3."

"Exploding" Dice

Any die that naturally rolls a 10 is referred to as an "exploding" die. An exploding die is re-rolled and the result is added to the original roll. If the die rolls a 10 again, it explodes again and is rolled again, adding to the result each time. Whatever the final result is, the total is considered to have been rolled on that single die. Other effects such as Techniques, Skills, and Advantages may cause dice to explode on results other than 10. In other cases (such as Unskilled Skill Rolls) dice may not explode at all.


Ten Dice

A maximum of ten dice may be rolled on any given dice roll. If you are entitled to roll more than ten dice, every two dice you would have rolled beyond ten (rounding down) are converted into a single kept die. Each die you would have kept beyond ten is converted to a Free Raise. All extra rolled dice are converted into kept dice before extra kept dice are converted to Raises. Extra dice gained from spending Void Points are added to the dice pool before any dice are converted.

Example: Bayushi Kaukatsu is attempting to make an Awareness/Courtier Skill Roll. Kaukatsu is an extremely skilled courtier, with an Awareness of 8 and a Courtier Skill

of 9. Thus he is entitled to a roll of 17k8. The extra seven rolled dice become three extra kept dice. Therefore, Kaukatsu is now entitled to roll 10k11. This extra kept die is converted into a Free Raise, so Kaukatsu actually rolls 10k10 and gains an additional Free Raise.

If Kaukatsu had spent a Void Point on this roll, he would have been entitled to roll 18k9. This would have converted to 10k13, and then to 10k10 with three Free Raises.



Types of Rolls

Skill Rolls

This is the most common sort of roll. To use a Skill, you roll a number of dice equal to your relevant Trait + Skill, keeping a number of dice equal to the Trait, as described in the Skills section of the Book of Water (page 87). When a Skill Roll is called for, it is described as Trait/Skill with any necessary Specialization in parentheses. For example, if you are called upon to make a Skill Roll using Awareness and Courtier and the Manipulation Specialization, the game text says, "You must make an Awareness/Courtier (Manipulation) roll."

While this may seem to place undue emphasis on Traits, especially given their greater Insight value, keep in mind that many useful abilities can be gained by accumulating Skill Ranks. Attempting to perform a task without the appropriate level of Skill also imposes significant penalties. The default Target Number of a Skill Roll is 15. More difficult tasks may impose a higher Target Number, and may treat a character with only a couple of Skill Ranks as Unskilled (see "Unskilled Rolls" in the Book of Water, page 92.)

Raw Trait Rolls

Though less common than Skill rolls, Raw Trait Rolls also occur. In this situation a player rolls and keeps a number of dice equal to his character's relevant Trait. Any task that does not apply directly to a given Skill might require a Trait roll. For example, lifting a heavy boulder may require a Raw Strength Roll. Leaping across a wide chasm might demand a Raw Agility Roll. Noticing an important detail would demand a Raw Perception Roll. In some cases, a Raw Trait Roll may apply to the same situation as a Skill Roll. For example, a samurai might notice the signs of an impending ambush with a Perception + Battle Skill Roll, but a Raw Perception Roll would also be acceptable (and is not considered an unskilled roll). The default Target Number of a Raw Trait roll is 5, though a Raw Trait TN is always 10 higher than the TN of any Skill Roll that could be made to perform the same task (a penalty for not having the appropriate Skill). Additionally, the added benefits inherent in having ranks in a Skill, such as making Raises to determine the number of enemies in an ambush using Battle, cannot be gained from a Raw Trait roll.

Raw Ring Rolls

These are even rarer than Raw Trait Rolls, and for the most part apply only when some sort of supernatural effect is involved. A character might have to make a Raw Earth Roll to resist a powerful spell effect, for example. In these situations, the player rolls and keeps a number of dice equal to his character's relevant Ring. There is no default Target Number for this sort of situation, as these sorts of rolls are rare enough that they always define their Target Number.

Spell Casting

To successfully cast a spell, a character must roll his relevant Ring + Shugenja School Rank, keeping a number of dice equal to his Ring. More information on spellcasting is given in the Book of Air.

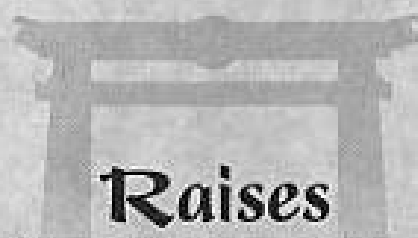
Contested Rolls

A Contested Roll is essentially any of the previous types of rolls made in direct competition with another character (either a PC or an NPC). For example, two characters engaged in a poetry contest would engage in a Contested Skill Roll. A footrace might result in a Contested Raw Agility Roll. These are resolved just like any roll, except that the Target Number is equal to the competitor's result. The highest result wins. Depending on the nature of the task at hand, more than two competitors might be involved in a single Contested Roll. In the race example, each competitor's results would determine how well he did, while in contested tasks like a poetry contest only the winner might be relevant. It is also possible that all participants in a contested roll may be competing to reach a TN set by the GM. For example, three courtiers might compete in the poetry contest to win the heart of Doji Domotai, but in the end all of them fail to impress her (as they did not meet the GM's TN).

If a Contested Roll results in a tie and the situation being contested would not sensibly result in a tie, any tied participants must reroll to determine the winner among themselves. For example, if five samurai are running a foot race and the resulting rolls are 24, 5, 18, 17, 18, then the two 18's must reroll. This is essentially a Contested Roll between those two participants to determine second and third place. Even if one of the runners were to roll a 12 when breaking the tie, he would not be surpassed by the runner in fourth place on the original roll.

Combat

Like magic, combat is a special task that is detailed further in its own section. Generally, combat is resolved as a Skill Roll, though the Target Number varies depending on one's opponent.



Raises

All rolls are compared to a Target Number, and meeting or exceeding this Target Number provides some amount of success. On any given roll, the success achieved by meeting the Target Number is minimal. In combat, you strike your enemy and do normal damage. On an Investigation roll, you learn a minimal amount of information. On a Weaponsmithing roll, you create an item of Average Quality. To achieve more impressive results, you must make Raises.

What is a Raise?

Essentially, all rolls work on a bidding mechanic. The GM determines the Target Number, and the players must either meet that Target Number or up the ante. Before making a roll, a player may declare that he intends to make a Raise. Making a Raise increases the Target Number by 5, but provides some additional effect of the player's choice if the roll is successful. A Raise on an attack roll might inflict more damage. A Raise on an Investigation roll will provide more useful information. A Raise on a Courtier roll might make a better impression on one's host. The number of Raises and their effects must be determined before a roll is made.

You may declare Raises even if you do not know the Target Number, though naturally it is safer to do so when the difficulty is known.

The effects of Raises are quite varied. The Combat section on page 168 lists a number of effects that can be achieved through Raises. Additionally, the Skills section on page 91 lists the effects of Raises within the description of specific Skills.

FAILING WHEN RAISING

Raises are a gamble, and like any gamble they offer an element of risk. If you make a Raise and fail to meet the new Target Number, the roll fails even if the result meets or exceeds the original Target Number. Such is the price when your reach exceeds your grasp.

FREE RAISES

Some Techniques, Spells, Advantages, and other effects provide Free Raises. These Raises can have any of the normal effects of a Raise, though some Free Raises define very specifically how they must be spent. Unless the effect that grants a Free Raise says otherwise, any Free Raise may be used to add 5 to the result of your roll, rather than using it for a more complete success.

MAXIMUM RAISES

You may declare multiple Raises on a single roll, but may not declare more Raises on a single roll than your Void or your Skill Rank (if it is a Skill Roll), whichever is higher. Free Raises do not count against this maximum.

RAISES IN A CONTESTED ROLL

Raises may be made normally in a Contested Roll. The results vary depending on the nature of the roll, but can generally achieve any of the normal effects of a Raise (such as creating a work of lasting beauty in a poetry contest). During a Contested Roll, any Raise you make subtracts 5 from your final roll (to simplify matters in the case of more than two contestants). Free Raises in a Contested Roll may be used to boost your roll normally.



TN Modifiers

A number of factors (most notably getting wounded) interfere with your character's ability to function efficiently. These factors impose TN penalties upon your actions.

For example, you are targeted by a spell that says, "The target suffers a +10 TN penalty to all actions." The TN of any Skill Roll you make while this spell is in effect is increased by 10. Though these penalties are similar in some ways to Raises, successfully overcoming a TN penalty does not provide any added effect (other than the Herculean effort of succeeding despite adversity). Likewise, a TN penalty does not hamper your ability to declare Raises in any way, though it certainly decreases the likelihood of pulling them off.

Likewise, some factors might offer you a decided advantage — not as flexible and useful as a Free Raise, but still useful nonetheless. Such a bonus might be described as a "-5 TN bonus to your action." This means that any TN that is affected by the bonus is reduced by 5 for you, making the task of meeting or exceeding that TN a great deal easier.

Blinded

If you are blinded for any reason, you suffer a +20 penalty to melee attacks and ranged attacks become effectively impossible. Your TN to Be Hit is reduced by 15. This is in addition to the obvious effects of blindness (i.e. you cannot react to visual stimuli).

Darkness

Fighting an enemy in dim light (such as candlelight) or fog imposes a +5 TN penalty to melee attacks and a +10 TN penalty to ranged attacks. Fighting in total darkness makes you effectively blind.

Deafened

If you are deafened, your TN to Be Hit is reduced by 5 against any melee attacks from enemies flanking or standing behind you. This is in addition to the obvious effects of deafness (i.e. you cannot react to aural stimuli).

Going Without Sleep

Although samurai can push their bodies to their natural limits, such effort has its price. Each day you go without sleep, you suffer a cumulative +2 penalty to all TNs. After going three days without sleep, your dice no longer explode.

Going Without Air

In certain circumstances — while underwater, for instance, or to avoid a cloud of noxious gases — it is necessary to hold one's breath. You can go without air for a number of minutes equal to your Stamina. After this time, you lose one Rank of Stamina per round. When you reach zero stamina due to suffocation, you die. If you breathe again before this time, lost Stamina is regained at a rate of one Rank per minute.



Poison and Disease

The use of poison as a weapon is an extremely dishonorable practice generally associated with ninja. However, poison can be quite an effective tool. All too often the results of poison resemble a natural death, so investigators cannot spot foul play. When properly applied, a poison can remove enemies without suspicion. It is not even necessary to kill one's enemies — a general can be made too sick to lead effectively, a duelist overcome by nausea, or a courtier consumed by a wracking cough that leaves him speechless during the final day of Winter Court. Those of the Scorpion's Shosuro family are the undisputed masters of poison lore, and in their gardens bloom a variety of beautiful and deadly herbs. Naturally their interest in the matter is purely academic, at least as far as the rest of Rokugan is concerned.

Diseases can be similarly deadly, but are too dangerous to be inflicted intentionally in most cases. Some generals catapult rotting corpses over the wall of a castle under siege, or taint a water supply with infected meat as a way of spreading disease among the enemy, but such actions are the very height of dishonor.

Each of the following entries describes how a poison or disease is inflicted, its effects, any applicable rolls to mitigate or ignore the effects, and the manner in which it might be healed. A Medicine Skill roll TN is provided to determine the exact nature of the affliction and cut the recovery time in half, so long as the subject does nothing but rest under the attending physician's care during the recovery time. A character must have the proper emphasis in his Medicine Skill in order to make this roll — Disease for diseases, Antidote for poisons.

The Craft entry supplies the TN for crafting the poison with the Craft (Poison) skill, as well as any effects of Raises. The GM may rule that a particular poison cannot be brewed if certain ingredients are unavailable.

Diseases have mechanically similar penalties to poisons but are administered in different ways, may persist much longer, and cannot be crafted. The disease's name is listed next to the name of the poison that it resembles, and additional considerations of the disease are described in the Disease entry. Such afflictions may take several days to incubate before beginning to affect a victim.

Diseases that are not treated worsen over time but usually run their course. If a character afflicted by disease does not attempt to see or treat the disease, it persists for one day plus an additional number of days equal to one-fifth the Heal TN (unless otherwise noted in the Disease entry). Some diseases, if left unchecked, can become a serious threat. If a disease reduces a character's Earth Ring to 0, he immediately dies. A poison that reduces the victim's Earth Ring to 0 merely leaves him in a greatly weakened state, and taking even one Wound will kill him.

These are mechanical effects for afflictions that are carefully coded in order to produce subtle but efficient results. Characters can just as easily be poisoned with common substances (e.g. a serving of shochu spiked with bleach), but those substances are usually easy to smell or taste, or obvious signs of poisoning.

GENERIC POISONS/DISEASE: Between the varied wildlife of Rokugan and the sheer ingenuity of the underhanded, there are a great many diseases and poisons in the Empire. Specific types are listed below, but for ease of reference, an entry is provided for "generic" diseases and poisons, their effects, and the methods of recovery. These should be used when there is no need to introduce a specific sort of sickness or poison. GMs should feel free to alter these mechanics to suit their campaigns.

Generic Poison/Disease must be administered internally, and lowers one of the victim's Traits by 1 until they rest for a normal sleep period. A victim of Generic Poison may make a Raw Stamina Roll after sixty minutes at a TN equal to the poison's Craft TN to shake off its effects. If the Stamina roll exceeds the TN by 10 or more, the poison's effects end immediately.

Heal: TN 10, ends the effects an hour after the Medicine roll is successful.

Craft: TN 10, crafter may make three Raises to increase the Trait loss to 2 or lower an additional Trait by 1. Void is not a Trait, and thus cannot be reduced by Generic Poison.

Disease: Causes the same Trait to be lowered by 1 on the second day.

Specific Poisons/Disease

DRIPPING POISON/BISHAMON'S ANGER: A staple of an assassin's arsenal, dripping poison must be swallowed (not merely introduced into the blood stream). It is usually administered by hanging a thread over a sleeping victim's mouth and dripping the poison down the thread from a hidden place in the ceiling. Dripping poison is especially deadly because it is administered at night, and usually allowed to go untreated for hours while the victim sleeps. Dripping poison lowers the victim's Strength by 2 when initially applied. A victim of dripping poison may make a Raw Stamina Roll against a TN of 15 when initially affected to negate his Strength being lowered for another hour. This roll must be made every hour until the poison is treated. Each time the roll is attempted beyond the initial onset, the TN increases by 5 permanently.

Heal: TN 15

Craft: TN 20

Disease: Contracted through ingestion only; incubates for a day and manifests overnight, so effects begin after a night's rest instead of during it. Symptoms include a lack of energy and motivation. Commonly spread through undercooked meats, it is also referred to as Kojin's Anger, after the Fortune of the Kitchen.

FAUNTEI SHI: The deadliest poison in the arsenal of the Scorpion, a trace of Fauntei Shi can kill even the most robust victim. The poison is a secret held dearly by the Scorpion, and few know the methods by which it is crafted. Fauntei Shi is employed only when the Scorpion need to be absolutely certain their target will die. The poison's rarity stems from the difficulty in manufacturing it, but the Scorpion understand it is another aspect of the poison that makes it so deadly. Since the toxin is used so infrequently, even skilled healers are baffled when confronted by a victim of Fauntei Shi. The only known antidote has been developed by the Kitsuki, and even then not every Kitsuki carries vials of Rukun's Juice, the cure. Victims of Fauntei Shi must make a Raw Stamina Roll every ten minutes against a TN of 35 or die.

Heal: TN 50 to identify the poison only.

Craft: TN 55.

Disease: No natural disease kills as effectively and as quickly as Fauntei Shi, though extremely powerful maho curses or similar sources may mimic its effects.

Poisoned Plots

Although several of these poisons have quick, murderous effects, GMs should be careful to introduce these elements only when it is beneficial to the story. A dying NPC that has information to give before he dies may be suffering from fugu poisoning, and beyond the help of PC shugenja who could simply cast Path to Inner Peace if the NPC were simply bleeding to death. If characters are poisoned and have no way to avoid or mitigate the poison's effects, it robs the campaign of drama — and the same applies to players who are allowed to poison every human obstacle without repercussions.

FIRE BITER/WATER IMBALANCE: Often painted onto edged weapons by unscrupulous bushi, Fire Biter wracks the victim's joints with painful spasms, causing physical damage as well as hampering the victim's ability to defend himself. Fire Biter must be introduced into the bloodstream, and causes a loss of 2 Agility and 2k2 Wounds within ten seconds of application. A Raw Stamina Roll against a TN of 30 reduces these penalties by half. The Wounds may be treated normally but the Agility penalty persists for a full day.

Heal: TN 25

Craft: TN 25, two Raises increases the damage by 1k1 or the Agility penalty by 1.

Disease: Water Imbalance can be contracted through contact or ingestion, and causes its effects after incubating overnight. The Wounds and Agility penalty are applied every morning, but the Agility penalty is reduced to 1. In addition to muscle spasms, the victim's skin becomes cool and slightly puffy, as if he were filled with water.

HOT MADNESS/BOILED MIND: A poison that attacks the victim's mental faculties, Hot Madness heats the victim's scalp and makes it nearly impossible for him to concentrate. Hot Madness must be swallowed, and lowers the victim's Intelligence and Willpower by 2 for its duration. This poison cannot kill a victim through lowering his Traits, and the victim may make a Stamina roll at a TN of 30 to reduce the Trait penalties to 1. The poison runs its course after a night's rest.

Heal: TN 20

Craft: TN 30, two Raises extends the duration an additional day

Disease: Causes the penalties again every day until treated. Victims who are reduced to 0 Intelligence or Willpower lapse into a fevered sleep or comatose state, and if the disease is left untreated, the victim dies after three days.

FUGU (PUFFERFISH): The pufferfish is a delicacy in Rokugan, for it is both delicious and exceptionally hard to prepare. If poison from certain glands contaminates the harmless pufferfish flesh, the eater dies. Rokugani science has not progressed to the point that the fugu poison can be effectively extracted and used on its own (much to the continued frustration of the Shosuro family). Fortunately, fugu does not kill instantly, and can be diagnosed by sharp stomach pains shortly after the meal, a few hours before the victim dies. There is no roll to avoid the effects of consumed pufferfish poison.

Heal: TN 40

Craft: None, but it is not impossible to trick someone into eating fugu poison.

Disease: No diseases are comparable to fugu.

KIREI-KO: Discovered by accident, Kirei-ko is a concentrated version of a compound that was once used in noblewomen's makeup. After years of exposure, these women developed lesions, sores, and disabling sicknesses that were eventually traced back to the cosmetic. Of course, the makeup was destroyed, but the Scorpion saw an amazing resource to exploit. Distilled Kirei-ko is a versatile poison that can either be administered in large doses quickly to kill a victim or over a short time to disable them before they waste away. Kirei-ko can be applied over a long period as a contact poison or more quickly through ingestion, causing either a loss of one Stamina point every two weeks (through contact) or two points every week of continuous ingestion through food and drink. There is no way to avoid the effects of Kirei-ko, but if exposure is ended, the effects continue for an additional week and then begin to fade at the rate of one Stamina point regained for every two weeks of treatment and rest.

Heal: TN 40, with the TN being reduced by 5 for every point of Stamina lost to the affliction.

Craft: 35

Disease: Several varieties of naturally occurring diseases cause mechanical effects similar to Kirei-ko, but do not rely on constant exposure once the affliction is contracted.

NIGHT MILK/NIGHT ROT: One of the first poisons developed by the Scorpion Clan, Night Milk foregoes devious and disabling effects for sheer brutality. Night Milk must be introduced into the bloodstream and takes effect immediately, forcing the victim to make a Raw Stamina Roll at TN 25 every minute or suffer 2k1 Wounds. A victim that loses two Wound Ranks after being affected by the poison (the Wounds need not all come from the poison) is treated as if he were at the Down Wound level. The poison's effects last for five consecutive Stamina rolls, but Wounds accumulated (or being reduced to the Down Wound level) cannot be healed normally until the poison is treated or the victim has a full day's rest.

Heal: TN 20

Craft: TN 25, two Raises extends the damaging effects of the poison by an additional Round.

Disease: Effects of the Rotting Disease are measured in days instead of minutes. Symptoms include loss of appetite, mild to disabling stomach cramps, and dizziness.

SNAKE VENOM/PLAINS FEVER: Snake venom may be inflicted by a serpent's bite, gathered and administered internally, or synthesized by crafting a poison with similar effects (but the likelihood of being identified as snake poison). The venom attacks the victim's motor skills, lowering his Agility and Reflexes by 1 for every hour it goes untreated. Certain types of snake bites may also cause blindness or other effects. A victim of snake venom may make a Raw Stamina Roll against a TN of 10 when initially affected, and if successful does not suffer Trait loss for that hour. This roll must be made every hour until the poison is treated or until the victim is allowed 8 hours of uninterrupted rest (while still making the rolls). Each time the roll is attempted beyond the initial onset, the TN increases by 5 permanently.

Heal: TN 15

Craft: TN 10, or TN 30 without actual snake venom. Crafter may Raise twice to add blindness that will affect the victim after he falls two Stamina rolls.

Disease: Rolls and duration are measured in days instead of hours, contracted internally or through contact. Symptoms include joint aches and spasms.



Metsubishi

SPIDER VENOM/RED LUNG: Not as deadly as snake's toxin, a spider's bite can nonetheless create significant problems if left untreated. Most spiders are so small that their bites are harmless, but some larger or deadlier varieties are able to kill children and even grown men. Spider venom must be applied internally and lowers the victim's Stamina by 1 every hour. A victim of spider venom may make a Raw Stamina Roll against a TN of 10 when initially affected, and if successful does not suffer Trait loss for that hour. This roll must be made every hour until the poison is treated or until the victim is allowed 6 hours of uninterrupted rest (while still making the rolls). Each time the roll is attempted beyond the initial onset, the TN increases by 5 permanently. If the initial roll exceeds the TN by 10 or more, the poison is ignored completely and does not affect the character further.

Heal: TN 10

Craft: TN 15

Disease: Rolls and duration are measured in days instead of hours, contracted internally or through contact. Symptoms include shortness of breath and even coughing up traces of blood.

STOLEN BREATH/ISORA'S ANGER: A somewhat obscure poison. Stolen Breath enjoys near anonymity outside circles that make use of the toxin. Stolen Breath must be ingested (injecting into the bloodstream is ineffective), usually by mixing in a victim's food or drink. The victim of the poison feels a slight tingle in his throat after an hour, and his voice becomes raspy. A full day after ingestion, or after a night's rest, the victim's throat is too dry to talk. The best the victim can muster is a low, painful whisper. After the voicelessness has lasted six hours, the victim is allowed a Stamina roll at TN 30 to shake off its effects and regain his voice within two hours (depending on the amount of time the effect remained). If failed, this roll is allowed every two hours (including during sleep). The victim's voice returns after a full night's rest. Because the poison so closely resembles a disease and is treated in a similar matter, most victims of Stolen Breath never realize they were poisoned.

Heal: TN 15 to treat the effects, requires no Emphasis. TN 30 to diagnose that the victim has been poisoned (requires *Analyze* Emphasis).

Craft: TN 30

Disease: Isora's Anger has mechanically identical effects.

WISH YOU DEAD/AIR IMBALANCE: One of the poisons devised by the Shosuro family of the Scorpion Clan, Wish You Dead has spread to other hands over the centuries. The poison must be introduced into the bloodstream, and causes nausea in addition to a loss of one Stamina point for its duration. The victim may make a Stamina roll against a TN of 20 to ignore the effects of the nausea, but if he fails, he is too queasy to focus on tasks, and he rolls one fewer die on all Skill rolls. The effects of the poison persist for up to 8 hours if left untreated, or 4 hours if the initial Stamina roll succeeds.

Heal: TN 20

Craft: TN 25; one Raise extends the duration by 8 hours.

Disease: Causes an additional loss of Stamina each day unless treated or the victim stays in bed for the duration. In addition to nausea, symptoms include becoming easily fatigued.

Similar to poisons, metsubishi are powders, dusts, and related compounds used to distract or blind. Most commonly, these are the infamous eggshell bombs employed by ninja, but can include anything as simple as blowing smoke into someone's eyes. Use of metsubishi is shady, though the situation and tools used naturally dictate just how dishonorable it is. An ambushed Yoritomo bushi hurling sand in an opponent's eyes to gain a moment to plan will likely only draw mild disdain, but using a compound specifically made to blind an opponent is extremely dishonorable.

Metsubishi come in three general categories, detailed below. Metsubishi are typically delivered via an attack roll using Reflexes/Ninja Ranged Weapons (metsubishi). They can also be fired from a blowgun or nageteppo using the appropriate Skills. Nageteppo are eggshell grenades that release their contents in a 5' radius around the point of impact. Creating a nageteppo requires two Raises on the initial metsubishi crafting Skill roll.

Characters wearing a mask or mempo gain a +10 TN to Be Hit bonus against metsubishi attacks.

Poison Metsubishi

Far and away the most dishonorable sort, these metsubishi are made from poisonous compounds that irritate the skin, eyes, and breathing passages. These metsubishi are almost exclusively the tools of ninja, and are illegal throughout Rokugan.

Crafting: Requires an Intelligence/Poison Skill roll vs. TN 25 to create a single dose, plus two Raises for each additional effect the metsubishi carries. An additional Raise in crafting insures that the metsubishi is only toxic if applied to the eyes, allowing the poisoner to spit it from his mouth without harming himself. If the crafter must purchase ingredients, they cost 1 bu per dose. These poisons are made from mundane substances, so purchasing these materials does not draw suspicion unless someone is specifically investigating such things.

Use: Because these metsubishi are specifically made easy to use, there is no unskilled penalty when making an unskilled attack roll. This manner of metsubishi may be delivered with a blowgun or nageteppo without penalty.

Effect: The effects of poison metsubishi persist for a number of rounds equal to 10 minus the victim's Stamina (minimum one round). Each round spent flushing the poison out with water reduces the remaining duration by three rounds. Poison metsubishi can have any one of the following effects:

- **Blindness:** See Blindness rules on page 160.
- **Choking:** Victim must make a Stamina roll at a TN of 15 every time he wishes to perform an action or he loses that action due to choking.
- **Itching:** -10 Initiative.
- **Nausea:** Roll one fewer die on all Stamina and Agility rolls.



Crafted Metsubishi

More common than their chemical counterparts, crafted metsubishi rely on simple components to blind an opponent, but are much easier to pass off as a random assortment of debris.

Crafting: Requires a Craft (metsubishi) Skill roll vs. TN of 10 to create a single dose, plus two Raises for an additional effect. These metsubishi can be made from dirt and refuse, and thus cost nothing to make.

Use: This manner of metsubishi may be delivered with a blowgun or nageteppo, but the user suffers a +5 TN penalty to his attack roll due to the crude nature of the materials.

Effect: Effects persist for as long as the material remains in the eyes, to a maximum of 10 minus the victim's Stamina in rounds (minimum of 1 round). Unlike chemical powders, this sort of metsubishi relies on coarse and relatively large particles of matter rather than a chemical reaction. A victim regains his sight if he spends two rounds cleaning his eyes, one round if he washes his eyes with water. Crafted metsubishi cause one of the two following effects.

- *Blindness:* See Blindness rules on page 160.
- *Itching:* -10 Initiative.

Improvised Metsubishi

Improvising metsubishi is as simple as throwing dirt in an enemy's eyes. While many would debate the honor of such a tactic, one cannot argue its effectiveness.

Crafting: No Skill required to craft, but requires a Raise on the attack roll to stoop and pick up an acceptable substance if one is not in hand.

Use: Exclusively thrown. Even the small amount of finesse required to pack dirt and stones into a blowgun or nageteppo causes such materials to be considered crafted metsubishi.

Effect: Roll one die. On a result of 1-5 the target suffers a -10 Initiative penalty due to itching. On a result of 6-10 the target is blinded for two rounds (only one if he spends his next action wiping his eyes).

Void Points

The element of Void represents your inherent understanding of the dance of the elements, as well as your ability to draw upon the harmony between all elements to achieve greatness. From your character's point of view, this is rarely seen for what it is: You realize that your character is drawing upon the Void, but your character may simply see it as a moment of concentration, a burst of heroic effort, or simple dumb luck.

You may spend a single Void Point to enhance the result of any given roll. Spending a Void Point can have a variety of effects, but the most common is to roll and keep an extra die. Spending a Void Point can have other effects instead, listed on the table below. Only one enhancement may be gained per roll.

Spending Void to enhance a roll must be declared before the roll is made. Only a single enhancement may be used on any given roll. Certain effects may increase the number of Void Points that may be spent on a single roll.

To recover Void, you must get a full night's sleep. If you go without food, water, or restful sleep for more than one day, you cannot recover Void Points. You may recover one Void Point if more than two dice explode on a single roll (meaningless rolls made in an attempt to exploit this bonus do not count). GM's discretion is final on this matter. You may recover Void from such a roll a number of times per day equal to your character's Void Ring. The Meditation and Tea Ceremony Skills also allow you to recover Void Points.

VOID DIE ROLL ENHANCEMENTS

Enhancement (only one per roll)	Void Cost
Extra die, rolled and kept	One Void Point
Free Raise (this Raise may not be used to lower TN)	One Void Point
Gain one Rank in a Skill for one roll	One Void Point

Other Uses For Void Points

Void Points have uses outside of enhancements on rolls. A number of Advantages, Techniques, Kata, and Kiho require Void Point expenditure. In addition, there are other ways that all characters can spend Void Points.

ENCOURAGEMENT

As a comrade performs an action, you may encourage him in some manner so long as he can see or hear you. You spend two Void Points, and your comrade immediately gains a Void Point that he must spend to enhance his next roll. Your comrade may still spend his own Void to enhance the same Skill Roll normally. A single individual may not receive more Void Points to spend in this manner at one time than his own Void Ring.

FINAL STRIKE

If you are reduced to the Down or Out Wound levels, you may spend three Void Points on your next turn to perform a single action before you fall. You suffer an additional +30 TN penalty for this action. If you are actually killed, you must spend five Void Points to perform a Final Strike.

GAIN AN ACTION

You may spend two Void Points to gain an additional action on your turn. This may not be an attack, but may be used to perform any other action you could normally perform in one round.

PERSISTENCE

You may spend a Void Point before making any Skill Roll (including an attack roll) to negate all Wound Penalties for that Skill Roll. This does not negate the Wound Penalties incurred by the use of Final Strike. You may spend more Void to enhance this roll normally. Penalties imposed by effects other than Wounds (such as a spell poison, or heavy armor) are not negated by persistence.

SPEED

You may spend two Void Points before rolling Initiative to roll and keep an extra die on your Initiative roll.

SWITCH INITIATIVE

Immediately after Initiative is rolled, you may spend a Void Point to exchange your Initiative result with any other willing comrade who also spends a Void Point to do so.

TN INCREASE

On your turn, you may spend a Void Point to increase your TN to Be Wounded +10 until your next action. This in no way interferes with your ability to act this round, and may be combined with Full Defense.

WOUND REDUCTION

You may spend a Void Point to reduce the number of Wounds you take from a single attack by 10. This negates the Wounds taken—they affect you, so it may potentially save you from a spell damage. This may be done once per round.



Combat Resolution

In an Empire ruled by powerful samurai, combat is an inevitable part of life. A samurai literally lives his life four feet from death — the length of his katana. Though you may not face combat in every game session, the threat of violence and death is always present. The combat rules in L5R are swift and deadly, but players can take some solace in the fact that this rule works both ways — even the most fearsome enemy might be overcome by a warrior who plans his attack carefully.

Skirmishes

When a single player or group of players faces a similar number of opponents, this conflict is referred to as a Skirmish. Confrontations between larger groups of enemies, such as those that might occur in open warfare between two clans, are resolved using the Mass Battle rules on page 204. Even during Mass Battle, Skirmishes are used to resolve smaller conflicts against the backdrop of the larger conflict.

The Combat Round

Skirmishes are divided into rounds of combat, each lasting about six seconds of game time. During each round, each participant takes a turn to act. When all surviving participants have acted, the battle either ends or continues into another round.

STEP ONE: ROLL INITIATIVE

When it becomes clear that events in the game cannot be resolved without combat, the GM or any player may demand an Initiative Roll. Each player present at the Skirmish rolls Reflexes/Insight Rank to determine their Initiative. The GM rolls Initiative for all enemies present in the same manner. Only one Initiative roll is made for the duration of the combat, though each individual's Initiative can fluctuate (see "The Tides of Battle"). The GM ranks all Initiative rolls from highest to lowest. Any Wound penalties a combatant suffers are subtracted from his current Initiative.

STEP TWO: DECLARE POSTURE AND RESOLVE ACTIONS

Beginning with the combatant with the highest Initiative, each participant acts in the combat. First, each participant declares his Posture for that round. There are three basic combat postures: Attack, Full Attack, and Full Defense. Only certain actions may be taken while in each of these Postures. In addition, each of these postures provides certain benefits and imposes certain penalties. After his Posture has been declared, the character takes his turn, resolving his action, and the combat moves on to the participant with the next-highest Initiative.

Any player may choose not to act when his turn comes, delaying his action as long as he likes. This in no way alters his Initiative in future rounds.

STEP THREE: RESOLVE COMBAT OR CONTINUE

When all participants have acted, the combat round ends. If no combatants remain who wish to continue combat, then the combat ends as well. Otherwise, combat continues.

Attack and Defense

Attacking another opponent requires a special sort of Skill Roll. As the attacker, you make a Skill Roll determined by the sort of attack you are using. For example, attacking with a katana requires an Agility/Kenjutsu roll. (All Weapon Skills tell you which Trait to use under their individual descriptions.) This Skill roll has a base TN equal to the target's Reflexes \times 5. Other modifiers may increase this TN, the most common of which is armor. If you equal or exceed your opponent's TN to Be Hit, then your attack is successful.

DAMAGE

When you successfully strike an opponent, the damage dealt is determined by the weapon you are wielding and your own Strength. Each weapon has a Damage Rating (DR), which partially defines the amount of damage it does. A weapon's damage is described in a manner similar to the following:

KATANA: DR: 3k2

To determine the number of Wounds inflicted on the enemy, add your Strength to the number of dice rolled by your weapon, then roll normally. For example, a character with 3 Strength wielding a DR 3k2 katana inflicts 6k2 damage. 10's explode normally on damage rolls.

Damage rolls have the normal maximum of ten dice, rolled and kept. If you are entitled to roll more than ten dice, every two dice you would have rolled beyond ten (rounding down) are converted into a single kept die. In the rare event that more than ten dice are kept, you may add +5 to your total damage. As die pools tend to be smaller for damage rolls than other rolls, this rule should not come up often.

Example: Hida Osano-Wo, Fortune of Fire and Thunder, strikes an unfortunate opponent with his tetsubo. Osano-Wo's mortal form has a Strength of 8 and his tetsubo inflicts 8k8 damage. He is entitled to roll 16k8 damage. The extra six dice rolled become three extra dice kept, and now his pool is 10k11. Again, this is too much, so the extra die kept becomes a bonus +5 damage. Hida Osano-Wo ends up inflicting 10k10 + 5 Wounds upon the poor fool who chose to stand in his way.

Void Points may not be spent on damage rolls. However, strategic expenditure of Void can make it much easier for you to successfully make Raises for additional damage.

Wounds

All damage is subtracted from the target's Wounds. Wounds are divided into seven levels, each of which contains a number of Wounds equal to the character's Earth \times 2. Any time you take more Wounds than you have on a given level, you drop down to the next level and suffer the appropriate penalties to movement and TNs. Note that your movement can be reduced to zero through these penalties, in which case you are so overcome by your wounds that you can no longer walk (though you might still be able to fight).

HEALTHY (+0)

At this level you are basically unharmed, and suffer no penalties.

NICKED (+3)

You are mildly injured, and suffer a +3 TN penalty to all actions.

The Tides of Battle

Generally speaking, a character who begins a battle swiftly and decisively will maintain his advantage, and a character who opens a fight clumsily must struggle to regain ground. For this reason, Initiative order remains the same throughout a combat.

Of course, there is always the possibility that a skilled opponent can gain the advantage. At the end of each round of combat, any participant who has suffered no Wounds since his last turn may make a Tides of Battle roll. Roll one die and either add it to your Initiative or subtract it from the Initiative of any enemy against whom you made a successful attack roll, or upon whom you inflicted Wounds, since your last turn. This die does not explode.

The Tides of Battle roll reflects the ability of a skilled opponent to gain ground on an enemy, of a patient warrior to seize exactly the right opportunity to strike, or of a mob of opponents to overwhelm a single powerful foe.

Any Techniques or abilities that require a character to inflict Wounds upon himself (such as maho) do not count against that character's ability to make a Tides of Battle Roll.

GRAZED (+5)

You have taken some damage, but are still functioning reasonably well. You suffer a +5 TN penalty to all actions.

HURT (+10)

At this level, the pain begins to interfere with your ability to move. You suffer a +10 TN penalty to all actions and your Water Ring is reduced by one for the purposes of movement.

INJURED (+15)

Your injuries are such that you have a great deal of trouble focusing, and even Skills you ordinarily perform with ease take great effort. You suffer a +15 TN penalty to all actions.

CRIPPLED (+20)

You are barely able to stand upright. You suffer a +20 TN penalty to all actions and your Water Ring is reduced by three for the purposes of movement.

DOWN (+40)

You are effectively incapacitated. You cannot move, and can speak only in a whisper. You must spend a Void Point to take any action whatsoever, and even then you suffer a +40 TN penalty to all your actions and move as if your Water Ring was reduced by five.

OUT (N/A)

You are completely unconscious, barely alive and unable to take any actions at all. On the plus side, this Wound Level contains a number of Wounds equal to your Earth \times 5 rather than your Earth \times 2, allowing some possibility that your comrades might yet heal you or rescue you from the field of battle. Once you have depleted all Wounds on this level, you are dead, and no amount of healing can help you. At the GM's option, being driven to the Out level may offer more permanent effects. You might bear some scars or permanent wound to remind you of your brush with death.

Healing

Every morning, you naturally recover a number of Wounds equal to your Stamina + Insight Rank. If you spend a day completely at rest, doing nothing but tending to your wounds in a safe environment, then you recover twice this amount. Use of magic and the Medicine Skill can increase your recovery dramatically.

This rate of recovery is intentionally accelerated. This is a game of heroes and adventure, and it is not fun to sit around a castle waiting to recover from injuries. If this rate of recovery is not to the GM's tastes and he wishes to have a more realistic rate of healing, he may feel free to reduce it to a rate he considers fair.

Combat Postures

All actions you take in a round of combat fall under one of these three general postures.

ATTACK

This is the default combat Posture. You may move normally and attack as much as you are able. Anyone who has not yet declared her Posture is assumed to be in this Posture, though certain Rank Techniques, Skills, and other abilities might negate this.

FULL ATTACK

You charge your enemy with wild abandon, sparing little concern for your own safety. You gain two Free Raises on each of your melee attacks until your turn in the next round. These Raises may only be spent to lower an enemy's TN to Be Hit or inflict additional damage. Of course, attacking in such a brazen manner leaves you virtually defenseless. Any enemy who attacks you before your turn in the next round gains three Free Raises, which they may use in any manner they like.

FULL DEFENSE

We have turned every effort toward self-preservation, moving slowly and watching all enemies for any sign of attack. You make an Agility/Defense Skill roll and add the result to your TN to Be Hit until your turn in the following round. This bonus only apply only to a number of opponents equal to your Insight Rank. This bonus can only be applied to enemies you are aware of and cannot be used against an unseen enemy.

Though you cannot declare Full Defense (and thus gain the benefits of Full Defense) until your action, it is possible to be in Full Defense before combat begins. If you feel that combat is inevitable, you may declare to your GM that you wish to go on Full Defense at any time (though when combat actually begins you are late to do so). If you perform any actions illegal during Full Defense or move at more than half speed, you lose the benefits of Full Defense.

What Can I Do In a Round?

60 seconds is not a long time. The following section describes what general actions can be performed within a single round, and the accompanying table describes which of these actions can be performed in each of the three Combat Postures. Note that many Advantages, Techniques, Spells, and other abilities break these rules; these are merely the default rules most characters (especially beginning characters) live by.

FOCUS

You may spend a round focusing on a specific opponent, gathering energy and preparing for a perfect strike in a later round. Your opponent must be in range of your attack when you begin to Focus. If either you or your opponent moves before you make your attack, all benefits of Focusing are lost. For every round you spend Focusing, you gain a Free Raise that may be used only to increase damage. You may Focus for a maximum number of rounds equal to your Void Ring. You may Focus on either melee or ranged attacks.

MELEE ATTACK

You may attack once per round. If you are in the Attack Posture, you may move your full movement and attack, but must make one Raise to strike your target successfully. If you are in the Full Attack Posture you may move your full movement and still attack with no penalty.

MISCELLANEOUS COMPLEX ACTION

A complex action is any action that requires a Skill Roll to perform or that takes some amount of care and precision. For example, using a war fan to send a signal to a comrade across a battlefield is a complex action, as it requires use of the Battle Skill. Picking up a fragile glass statue and putting it in your pack is likewise a complex action, though no Skill Roll is required. You can perform one complex action per round. If you are forced to make an Unskilled Skill Roll during the round, this is considered a complex action and your action for the round is wasted. You may make a half move and perform a complex action, but you must make one Raise on any Skill Roll involved to perform the action successfully. Naturally this may not be done unskilled, as Raises may not be declared if you are unskilled.

MISCELLANEOUS SIMPLE ACTION

Simple actions are just that: simple. Anything that can be performed with no risk and no Skill Roll is a simple action. The most basic simple actions include drawing or putting a weapon away, falling to the ground, loading a ranged weapon, moving half your movement, taking out or putting away a spell scroll, tossing an item to a nearby comrade, or opening a door. A character may perform one simple action per round and still perform any other actions he wishes. Performing more than one simple action in a round counts as a complex action. Only one simple action may be used for movement in a round. The maximum number of simple actions that can be performed in a single round depends on the actions in question — anything that could reasonably be done in a total of six seconds is permissible.

MOVE

A character can move his Water $\times 10'$ in a single round. If you are in the Full Defense Posture, you cannot make such rapid movement, though you can move half this distance as a simple action.

RANGED ATTACK

You may attack once per round with a ranged weapon. Due to the precision inherent in ranged attacks, such attacks may not be made in the Full Attack Posture.

RIDE A HORSE

As many samurai spend a great deal of time on horseback, this deserves special consideration. Riding a horse falls under the same rules as movement, though you use your horse's movement speed rather than your own. It is worth noting that without Techniques or a certain level of the Horsemanship Skill you cannot use Full Attack or Full Defense while mounted. A rider without any ranks of Horsemanship cannot even fight on horseback (as making the unskilled rolls to remain in the saddle would be a complex action).

RUN

You can also use your action to run, moving up to three times your normal movement in a straight line. You may perform no other actions, not even simple actions, while running.

SPEAK

You can always speak during any action without any penalty, assuming that you can be heard and that speaking does not interfere with whatever you are doing (such as sneaking up on an opponent or casting a spell).

STAND UP

If you are knocked to the ground, rising to your feet again takes your action for the round. If you are in the Full Attack Posture you may make two Raises to rise and attack in a single round.

USE SPECIAL ABILITIES

Many Kiho, Kata, Techniques, Advantages, and other special abilities confer their abilities at all times or activate as part of an attack or other action. Some, however, require you to activate them specifically. Doing so counts as your action for the round, and can only be done in the Attack Posture. Casting a spell also falls into this category. Naturally some spells and other abilities allow themselves to be used in other Postures, but these are exceptions, not the rule.

COMBAT ACTIONS

Action	Attack	Full Attack	Full Defense
Melee Attack	Yes	Yes	No
Misc. Action (Complex)	Yes	No	No
Misc. Action (Simple)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Move	Yes	Yes	No
Ranged Attack	Yes	No	No
Ride a Horse	Yes	No	No
Run	Yes	No	No
Speak	Yes	Yes	Yes
Stand Up	Yes	Yes	Yes
Use Special Ability	Yes	No	No

Raises

As with any Skill Roll, Raises may be declared in combat for additional effect. The risk of using Raises during combat can be much greater than normal, as a great deal of the time you will have no idea what TN you are rolling against. Raises can be used in combat for any of the following effects.

DISARM (3 RAISES)

To disarm an opponent, you must make a Contested attack roll against your opponent. The target may choose to use Strength/

Weapon Skill, rather than the weapon's usual Trait, to maintain his grasp on the weapon. If you are successful, you may normally make a disarm attempt with a ranged weapon.

CALLED SHOT (1, 2, OR 3 RAISES)

Called shots inflict no additional damage (Increased Damage Raises are, in effect, called shots aimed at such a result). You might have additional effects depending on the situation. A warrior enemy might become enraged by a called shot to his face, an opponent standing on one leg might fall if an attack is directed to that leg. The full effects of called shots are left to the GM, but require Raises as follows: torso — 1 Raise, arm or leg — 2 Raises, Head — 3 Raises.

EXTRA ATTACK (4 RAISES)

You can gain an extra attack against a single opponent by making 4 Raises and two successful attack rolls against that opponent. If either of these attack rolls fails, both fail. You may only attempt to gain an additional attack in this manner once per round, no matter how many attacks you have in a round. Keep in mind that your original attack and the additional attack must be directed against the same opponent.

FEINT (1 RAISE)

You can make a quick, non-damaging attack to throw an enemy off guard. If your attack roll is successful, you do no damage but gain a Free Raise on any single attack you make against that opponent in this or the following Round. Clever warriors use this option to set up an opponent up for a more complex maneuver, such as a called shot to the head.

GUARD (1 OR MORE RAISES)

If you are standing next to an ally, you may declare that ally to be under your guard against a specific enemy. If you make a Raise and make a successful attack roll against that enemy, the ally you are guarding gains a +5 bonus to his TN to Be Hit against that enemy for the following round. You may make any number of Raises (up to your maximum) in this manner, increasing your ally's TN to Be Hit respectively. If you have multiple attacks, only the attack with the greatest number of Raises remains in effect for any single enemy (though you may target multiple enemies, guarding your ally from each of them). You need not actually attack your enemy, but simply make an attack roll (though this counts as an action as if you had attacked). At your option, your character can merely take a defensive stance and make it clear that your ally is under your protection.

INCREASED DAMAGE (1 OR MORE RAISES)

You may declare a Raise on an attack roll to increase your damage on that attack. A single Raise increases your damage by 1k0. Two Raises increases your damage by 1k1. You may make any number of such Raises on a single attack roll, up to your normal maximum.

KNOCKDOWN (3 RAISES)

If your attack roll (including the Raises) is successful and exceeds your opponent's (Earth + Insight Rank) × 5, your opponent is knocked prone.

TN Modifiers

In addition to Raises and Wound penalties, a number of other modifiers can affect combat. All penalties and bonuses are cumulative unless stated otherwise.

DARKNESS

Fighting an enemy in dim light (such as candlelight) or fog imposes a +5 TN penalty to melee attacks and a +10 TN penalty to ranged attacks. Fighting in total darkness imposes a +20 penalty to melee attacks (you are considered blinded) and makes ranged attacks effectively impossible.

FLANKING

If you and a comrade each attack an enemy from opposite sides, both of you gain a -2 TN bonus on melee attacks against that enemy.

HIGHER GROUND

If you attack an enemy from higher ground, you gain a -2 TN bonus on ranged or melee attacks.

LOWER GROUND

If you attack an enemy on higher ground, you suffer a +2 TN penalty on ranged or melee attacks.

OFF-HAND FIGHTING

If you do not have the Ambidextrous Advantage and fight using a weapon in your off-hand, you suffer a -5 TN penalty to all attack rolls.

PRONE

If you are prone, enemies receive a +10 TN bonus to hit you with melee attacks and a +10 TN penalty to strike you with ranged attacks.

SURPRISED

If you are not aware that combat has begun (if, for example, your enemy attacked you from hiding) you suffer a -20 penalty to your Initiative.

TWO-WEAPON FIGHTING

If you hold a weapon in your off-hand (even if you do not attack with it) you suffer a +5 TN penalty to all attack rolls.

UNEVEN TERRAIN

Fighting an enemy on uneven or unfamiliar terrain (a bog, a jagged cliff, a ship on a rough sea) imposes a +5 to +15 TN penalty on all actions, depending on the severity of the situation.

Special Combat Situations

Grappling

To grapple an opponent, you must be unarmed or holding only a small weapon (no larger than a tanto) and must first make contact with an Agility/Wrestling Skill Roll. Armor provides no TN bonus against this attack. Raises may be declared on this attack roll to provide a stronger grapple (explained below).

If the initial attack roll is successful, you make a Contested Raw Strength Roll with your opponent to gain control of the grapple. You gain a Free Raise for every Raise made to strengthen your grapple on your initial attack roll. The combatant who wins the Contested Strength Roll gains control of the grapple.

On his turn, the combatant who controls the grapple can choose to either release the grapple or inflict damage on the opponent and hold him motionless for one round. The damage inflicted is either unarmed damage or the damage of any small weapon the grappler holds. If the grapple is not released, the combatants make a new

Contested Strength Roll to see who gains control of the grapple for the next round; the combatant who controlled the grapple in the previous round gains a Free Raise on this roll.



Iaijutsu Duels

Many samurai (particularly those of the Crane Clan) would claim that the Iaijutsu duel is the truest test of a swordsman. While the cultural implications and requirements of a formal challenge are detailed elsewhere (see page 37), this section covers the mechanical aspects of an Iaijutsu duel.

For the duel to begin, both samurai must take up a stance a few steps away from each other, facing each other. Each duelist makes a TN 5 Awareness/Iaijutsu Skill Roll. For each increment of 5 points by which he exceeds the TN, a duelist may choose to learn one of the following pieces of information about his opponent:

- The opponent's Agility.
- The opponent's Awareness.
- The opponent's current Wound penalty.
- The opponent's Iaijutsu Skill Rank.
- The opponent's Insight Rank.
- The opponent's Reflexes.
- The opponent's remaining Void Points.
- The opponent's Void.

After these Awareness rolls have been made, but before any other action takes place, either opponent may declare the other to be the victor. In most cases this is not perceived as a cowardly act; to recognize one's betters without shame is a sign of true honor. Curiously, to refuse to submit even in the face of a superior opponent is also seen as a sign of courage. Of course, in the case of duels to the death, a combatant who submits is expected to take his own life. In any case, if a combatant should submit at this point the duel is effectively over.

If neither opponent chooses to disengage, the duel continues. Each combatant chooses his opponent's Agility, Void, or Reflexes. In the coming duel, each opponent will Focus using the Trait or Ring that the other duelist chose for him. These rules refer to the chosen Trait or Ring as "Choice."

When the duel begins, the TN to Be Hit of both opponents is reduced to 5, plus armor (most Iaijutsu duelists remove their armor). The duelist who had the higher total on the Awareness/Iaijutsu roll has the option to Focus or Strike first. If you had a higher total and pass this option to your opponent, you gain one point of Honor.

If you choose "Focus" you must make a Choice/Iaijutsu roll vs. your opponent's current TN to Be Hit. If this roll is successful, both opponents' TN to Be Hit increases by 5, and the option to Focus or Strike passes to the other duelist. If this roll fails, the TN to Be Hit does not increase, and you must declare "Strike" — see below. You may only choose "Focus" a number of times equal to the Trait or Ring chosen by your opponent at the beginning of the duel. If you cannot Focus any more, you may spend a Void Point to Focus again, and may continue to do so as long as you have Void Points remaining.

If you choose "Strike," then your opponent immediately makes an attack roll (Reflexes/Iaijutsu) against you, gaining a Free Raise for every time he declared "Focus." "Strike" is not an option you choose for yourself; it is a command to your opponent, and only the duelist told to "Strike" may make this attack roll.

In most cases, this initial strike is deadly. Even if both combatants survive, most duels are merely to first blood, so the duel may well be concluded with this first attack. If the duel is to the death and both duelists survive the first blow, both duelists may choose to immediately spend any Void Points they have remaining. For every Void Point a duelist spends, he does one die of Wounds to his opponent. In this manner, a duelist who drew first might nevertheless be overcome by his target, or a 'karmic strike' could occur where both duelists perish simultaneously. If both duelists survive

The Tides of Battle

The mechanic presented here for Iaijutsu dueling can be easily adapted for other forms of challenges, even non-lethal contests such as Go, kemari, or poetry contests. Simply replace Iaijutsu with the appropriate Skill, and replace Reflexes with the Trait usually used with the Skill. If the Skill does not use a physical Trait, replace Agility with Willpower. The TN in such a contest is naturally not a TN to Be Hit, but remains the TN that must be overcome to defeat the opponent. If both opponents fail their initial TNs, the duel is a draw, but the contestants may begin again if that is not satisfactory.

Magical duels are also possible, as each competitor draws upon abstract magical forces to prove himself the superior shugenja. (These duels are always nonlethal — shugenja that wish to engage in lethal duels use Iaijutsu or simply hurt spells at one another in normal combat.) The only changes from the above mechanics are that each opponent determines his own Choice, with that Choice being a particular Ring, and all Skill Rolls in the duel are Choice/School Rank. Each time a duelist focuses, he must expend a spell slot from that Element. If a duelist has no spell slots remaining, he must call "Strike." As in other non-lethal duels, if both opponents fail, the duel is a draw.

the initial strike and the expenditure of Void Points, the duel becomes a normal skirmish, with both duelists rolling Initiative.

If the duel is to first blood, but the duelist who was commanded to "Strike" failed to hit his opponent with his attack roll, the other duelist may make the same attack roll in turn. If he successfully strikes his opponent, he wins the duel. If he also fails to connect, the duel is over, with both duelists having failed. A samurai in a duel to first blood may spend Void Points to inflict extra Wounds, as described in the previous paragraph, but the GM may well rule that an Honor loss is thereby incurred.

Ranged Attacks

The following attack modifiers apply to all ranged attacks:

Range	TN Penalty
50' or less	None.
50' to 100'	+10
100' to 150'	+15
150' to 200'	+25
200' to 250'	+30
250'+	+10 to TN for each additional 50'
Firing from horseback	+10

Note that many ranged weapons, abilities, and Skills can offset these penalties.

Unarmed Combat

When engaging in unarmed melee combat, you inflict (Strength) damage. There are no additional penalties for using unarmed combat against armed opponents, as many weapons already offer powerful advantages (not to mention superior damage) against an unarmed combatant. With that said, Rokugan has a proud tradition of skilled unarmed martial artists defeating armed opponents, and this book offers a number of Advantages (such as Hands of Stone) and Traits that help an unarmed combatant gain an edge against armed foes.

Armor

Not only are there functional differences between armors assigned to different troops, but Clans also differ on design. Suits of armor from different clans, with equivalent purpose, often look entirely distinct. A beautiful suit of samurai armor is intended as much to impress as it is to protect.

LIGHT ARMOR: Those with mobile fighting styles favor light armor. Scouts, and bushi from schools that emphasize speed and agility, such as the Daidoji Harriers, do not wish to be burdened. Those few shugenja or courtiers who wear armor tend to prefer light armor, both because they lack the training for heavier suits and because bushi sometimes take offence at non-warriors who wear armor.

Light armor usually consists of protection for the torso and head, leaving the limbs bare or minimally covered.

TN to Be Hit bonus: +5

Special Rules: You suffer a +5 TN penalty to all Athletics and Stealth Skill Rolls.

Price: 30 koku

HEAVY ARMOR: While light armor is worn by scouts, heavy armor is reserved for troops expecting to engage enemies in open combat, particularly those in the front lines. Crab berserkers, Matsu bushi, and Utaku infantry all prefer heavy armor, trusting to the thickness of the plates to help deflect blows. Heavy armor consists of large, heavy torso pieces and an elaborate helmet, and integrates armored sleeves and leggings. Although the wearer's mobility is impaired, many bushi find that a worthwhile tradeoff.

TN to Be Hit bonus: +10

Special Rules: You suffer a +5 TN penalty to all Skill Rolls involving Agility or Reflexes.

Price: 50 koku

ASHIGARU ARMOR: Heavy and light armor are designed for samurai, so a great deal of effort goes into their construction. Ashigaru armor's primary virtue is that it is cheap. This is not to say that it is of poor quality, but it offers neither the protection nor the aesthetic beauty of a suit of samurai armor. Ashigaru armor consists of light plates for the torso, head, and upper legs. Some scouts of the Great Clans wear ashigaru armor due to its light weight and flexibility, and shugenja value it because it slips easily over their traditional robes. Ronin also frequently wear this armor, because it is procure. Higher ranking samurai prefer cheap and easy to not to be seen in peasant uniform.

TN to Be Hit bonus: +3

Price: 10 koku

RIDING ARMOR: Riding armor is modified light armor, favored by members of cavalry regiments. The armor plates are angled to deflect blows from an enemy on foot. The customization makes the armor more effective on horseback, but less effective if the wearer is not mounted.

TN to Be Hit bonus: +8

Special Rules: Riding armor is considered Heavy Armor for the purposes of Techniques and other abilities. You suffer a +5 TN penalty to all Skill Rolls involving Agility or Reflexes unless you are on horseback. The TN bonus this armor provides increases to +14 on horseback.

Price: 60 koku



Weapons

There is a great variety of Rokugani weapons, and a wise warrior becomes familiar with as many as possible.

ARROWS

WILLOW LEAF: The willow leaf arrow is a standard broad arrowhead, used for both hunting and warfare.

DR: 2k2

Price: 1 bu each



ARMOR PIERCER: Rather than the broad head of a willow leaf, this arrow ends in a small spike designed to punch through armor. This makes it more likely to penetrate, but reduces the amount of damage it causes.

DR: 1k2

Special Rules: Ignores TN bonus of target's armor.

Price: 2 bu each



FLESH CUTTER: A flesh cutter arrow has an especially broad, sometimes barbed head, to tear at unarmored flesh. It inflicts terrible wounds on lightly armored foes, but is ineffective against armored targets.

DR: 2k3

Special Rules: Armor provides double the normal TN to Be Hit bonus. Range when using this arrow is decreased by one-half.

Price: 3 bu each

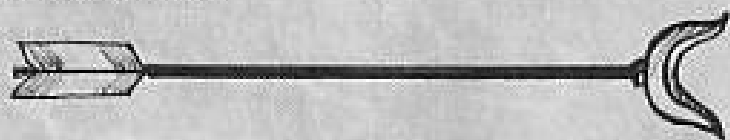


ROPE CUTTER: A rope cutter is tipped with a wide, crescent-shaped head, and is ideal for cutting ropes, banner strings, and so forth.

DR: 1k1

Special Rules: Grants two Free Raises on any called shots against inanimate objects. Range when using this arrow is decreased by one-half.

Price: 5 bu each

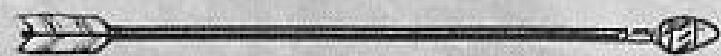


HUMMING BULB: This unique arrowhead is hollow-tipped, and produces a whistling noise as it travels through the air.

DR: 0k1

Special Rules: Produces a loud whistling noise, good for signaling and distractions.

Price: 5 bu each



Bows

DAIKYU: The daikyu, the largest type of bow commonly seen, is made by gluing wood, horn, and sinew together. This large bow, wielded from horseback, can fire an arrow with extraordinary accuracy, great power, and superior range. These are treasured weapons, and things of extraordinary beauty.

Ideally, each daikyu is custom-designed for its archer, but the bow is typically slightly longer than its wielder is tall. As a result, daikyu, which are balanced slightly off-center for ease of firing while astride, are cumbersome when on foot.

Strength: 4

Minimum Strength: 3

Range: 600'

Special Rules: +2k0 DR, +10 TN if fired while on foot. Total range penalties are reduced by +10 (see Special Combat Situations in the Book of Fire for range penalties).

Price: 20 koku



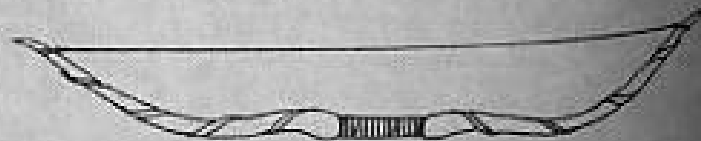
HANKYU: The hankyu is smaller than the yumi, but is easy to carry and convenient to use. Unlike the composite design of the daikyu, the hankyu usually consists of a single piece of wood or horn. Its size and weight make it ideal for situations where it may need to be readied quickly — or if stealth is important. For people such as Harriers or ninja, this often compensates for its short draw.

Strength: 1

Range: 100'

Special Rules: Drawing this weapon does not count as an action, once per round. +10 to all TNs when fired from horseback.

Price: 6 koku



Archery

When inflicting damage with a bow, both the bow and arrow have an effect on damage. The arrow determines the weapon damage of the attack, while the bow affects how much Strength can be put behind the attack. Every bow has an associated Strength rating. Unlike other weapons, the damage one inflicts with a bow is limited by the bow's Strength. When rolling damage with an archery attack, use either the bow's Strength or the archer's Strength, whichever is lower. Some extremely powerful bows have a minimum Strength rating. Those without adequate Strength cannot even draw such mighty weapons, let alone fire them.

SHINJO HORSEBOW: The small Shinjo horsebow is designed for ease of use both on foot and on horseback. These are generally sleek, simple weapons without the ostentation that is so common on *daijyu*. The Shinjo make no efforts to hoard these weapons or keep them secret, but few others use them due to the unseemly reputation of the Shinjo family.

Strength: 2

Range: 300'

Special Rules: Total range penalties reduced by +5 (see Special Combat Situations in the Book of Fire for range penalties).

Price: 9 koku

TSURUCHI LONGBOW: Though the Tsuruchi family of the Mantis Clan does not call a great deal of emphasis to it, the style of their bows has been greatly influenced by their clan's experiences in the Ivory Kingdoms. Tsuruchi archers develop powerful chest muscles until they can fire these custom bows with speed and power. Only those who have trained with the Tsuruchi family wield such weapons.

Strength: 5

Minimum Strength: 3

Range: 400'

Special Rules: +1k1 DR, +10 to all TNs when fired from horseback. Total range penalties reduced by +10 (see Special Combat Situations in the Book of Fire for range penalties).

Price: 30 koku

YUMI: The *yumi* is the most common samurai bow. It is a large weapon, although not quite as bulky as the *daijyu*, and is typically issued to archer units. The large size and curvature of the bow lend it a great deal of power, although its design makes it unwieldy for use on horseback.

Strength: 3

Range: 300'

Special Rules: +10 to all TNs when fired from horseback.

Price: 20 koku

Chain Weapons

Special Rules: You gain two Free Raises to Disarm or Knockdown with any Chain Weapon. An opponent Disarmed or Knocked Down must succeed at a Contested Strength Roll with you or be entangled in the chain. You are then considered to be grappling the opponent.

KUSARIGAMA: The *kusarigama* is functionally two weapons attached together. The base of the weapon is essentially a *kama* (see "Peasant Weapons," below). Attached to the back of the *kama*, directly opposite the blade, is a four- to six-foot chain, usually weighted at the end. This provides considerable flexibility; the chain can be used to lash out and entangle opponents, while the *kama* provides a close-range weapon. This makes the *kusarigama* useful both as a weapon and as a tool, though it has prominent associations as a favorite ninja weapon.

DR: 0k2 (*kama*), 0k1 (chain)

Special Rules: The *kama* may be used to inflict damage on a target grappled by the chain, and gains an additional +1k1 DR on all attacks against such a target.

Price: 5 koku

KYOKETSU-SHOGEI: While the *kusarigama* is a weapon with some functions outside of combat, the *kyoketsu-shogi* is a tool that has some merit in combat. Another weapon popular with ninja, the *kyoketsu-shogi* is a sharpened grappling hook on a silk rope.

Way of the Sword, Way of the Bow

Though the people of Rokugan have invented a vast arsenal of weapons and adapted others from their *gaijin* neighbors, samurai carry a certain prejudice against weapons other than the *katana*, *tanto*, *wakizashi*, *no-dachi*, *daijyu*, and *yumi*. These six weapons are seen as the 'purest' of all weapons, the only weapons suitable for a samurai.

There are always exceptions. Warriors are often pragmatic people, and many samurai learn to set aside their prejudices for whatever works best.

The Lion prefer traditional weapons, but also frequently utilize *tessen* both for battlefield signals and defense. The Matsu also favor the *magari-yari*, a three-bladed spear.

The Crane and Phoenix are the least likely to be seen using non-traditional weapons, though both clans do employ the *yari*.

Among the Dragon, the Mirumoto and Kitsuki are extremely traditional, and use only the sword and bow whenever possible. The other families tend to use staves or hand-to-hand combat.

The Crab favor heavy weapons suited to slay the demons they face. This also allows them to keep their ancestral swords clean of their foes' tainted blood. A Crab will not hesitate to use his *katana* against a Shadowlands creature, but would prefer not to do so.

The Unicorn wield a number of *gaijin* weapons they acquired in their explorations. Some Unicorn have taken this tradition to heart so thoroughly that they carry a scimitar instead of a *katana*, placing the same value on it that a samurai would his *daisho* (a practice that infuriates the Crane and Lion).

The Mantis, especially the Yoritomo, favor a variety of peasant weapons. As a naval clan, losing a weapon to the depths of the sea is all too common, so the Mantis like weapons that are easily replaced.

The Scorpion embrace the sword and bow with the same fervent tradition as their Crane cousins. However, it is not unusual for a Scorpion samurai to learn at least one rare and exotic weapon, if only to keep the enemy guessing. Ninja weapons are a particular favorite, especially among the Shosuro.

Monks deploy a vast assortment of weapons, especially staves of all varieties. The *sohei* of Osano-Wo invented the *ono* and favor it above all other weapons.

Ronin use whatever they can find or afford.

Every clan uses the sword and bow. Rokugani swords and bows are superior weapons, and their quality often makes use of other weapons a quixotic choice.

The other end of the rope has a light weight, to keep the rope taut while its user is climbing. In combat, the *kyoketsu-shogi* is spun in a similar manner to a *manrikusari*, both on the sharp end and on the weighted end, to hold off opponents with twirling slashes and bludgeoning blows.

DR: 0k1

Special Rules: TN bonuses for armor are doubled against a *kyoketsu-shogi*. The *kyoketsu-shogi* may be used as a climbing tool.

Price: 9 bu

MANRIKIKUSARI: The manrikikusari is simply a short length of chain, weighted at both ends. It is favored by those who value stealth such as ninja, Hiruma Scouts, and Daidoji Harriers. In combat, the chain is whirled at high speed, and can deliver crushing blows. A manrikusari does more damage than the chain of a kusarigama — being free to spin the chain at both ends allows the user to strike with greater power.

DR: 2k1

Price: 6 koku

Heavy Weapons and Axes

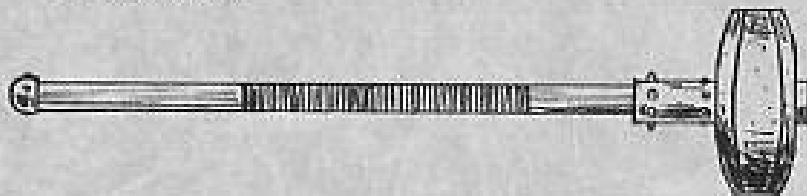
Axes and heavy weapons are powerfully effective in the hands of those who can swing them properly. For the purposes of damage, a character wielding a heavy weapon calculates his Strength as if it were 50% higher, rounding down. Thus a character with 3 Strength effectively has 4 when wielding a heavy weapon; a character with 6 Strength wields it as if he had 9 Strength.

DAI TSUCHI: The dai tsuchi is a two-handed warhammer often used by the Crab Clan, and is best known as the favorite weapon of both Hida Kuon, the current Crab Champion, and Hida O-Ushi, his late mother. The dai tsuchi focuses its impact on a small area, shattering Rokugani armor plates and Shadowlands carapaces alike. The combination of high penetrating power and damage makes this a popular weapon for those who expect to fight heavily-armored opponents.

DR: 1k3

Special Rules: Requires 3 Strength to wield; reduces TN bonus to armor and Carapace by 5.

Price: 15 koku



MASAKARI: The masakari is a one-handed axe, similar to a farmer's hatchet. Many peasant militia and ronin have adopted the masakari as a favored weapon, as it is cheap and plentiful, and most people can already use an axe. As a result, Clan samurai scorn to use it; even though there is no explicit stigma, the masakari is unavoidably associated with lower classes. It is commonly seen among ashigaru and mercenary units.

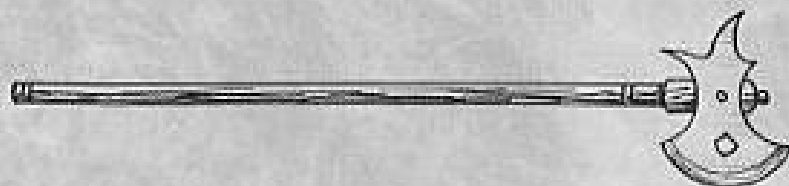
DR: 0k3

Price: 10 koku

ONO: The ono, like the dai tsuchi and tetsubo, is one of the Crab Clan's preferred weapons. Unlike the masakari, the ono is used two-handed, and inflicts terrible wounds.

DR: 0k4

Price: 20 koku

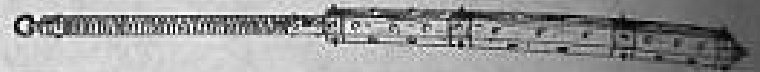


TÊTSUBO: The tetsubo was the signature weapon of Crab Champion Hida Yakamo, who has now become Lord Sun. The tetsubo is essentially a club, with steel, iron, or even jade ends inserted into it. This simple design is unmatched at shattering or bypassing armor, making it uniquely suited for fighting heavily-armored opponents.

DR: 0k3

Special Rules: Requires 3 Strength to wield, reduces armor and Carapace by 10.

Price: 20 koku



Knives

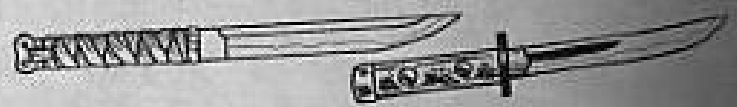
Once per round you may draw a knife without it counting as an action. Knives can be thrown accurately up to thirty feet as a ranged attack.

AIGUCHI AND TANTO: The aiguchi and tanto are both basic knives; the aiguchi possesses a hilt guard while the tanto does not. Many samurai carry a tanto for use in grooming.

DR: 1k1

Special Rules: You gain a Free Raise when using Sleight of Hand to conceal an aiguchi or tanto.

Price: 1 koku

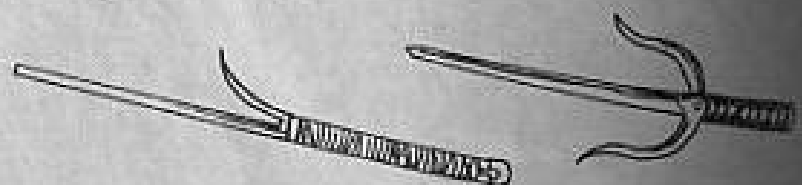


JITTE AND SAI: The jitte and sai are both adapted from farm implements, and are similar in appearance. On both weapons a steel cylinder, about a foot long, just from a short handle and tapers to a blunt tip. On the side of the cylinder are prongs: the jitte has one prong, while the sai has two prongs, symmetrical and oppositely placed from one another. The design of the sai and jitte make them ideal for disarming opponents. Both carry some of the stigma of being "peasant weapons", although the jitte is also associated with magistrates, who occasionally need to capture rather than kill criminals.

DR: 1k1

Special Rules: The jitte and sai grant a Free Raise when used to disarm an opponent, two if the opponent is using a sword other than a no-dachi.

Price: 5 bu



Ninja Ranged Weapons

BLOWGUN: The blowgun shares many ninja weapon hallmarks: it is cheap to make, easy to use, and is useful outside of combat — most often for breathing while submerged. A blowgun is a hollow tube, most frequently a bamboo reed. The ninja blows hard into the tube, projecting darts at high speed. Blowgun darts rarely inflict much damage, but are frequently coated with poison.

The target takes only a single Wound of damage (but also suffers the effects of any poison the needle carries).

DR: 1 Wound

Range: 30'

Special Rules: Blowgun darts are frequently coated with poison. It is possible to pack powder into a blowgun, allowing the ninja to create a cloud of poison or smoke (to provide a distraction) in a 5' area before him. Armor provides double its normal TN to Be Hit bonus against blowgun needles. See the Poisons section for examples of metsubishi and injected poisons.

Price: 8 bu

SHURIKEN: The shuriken, along with the ninja-to, is a definitive ninja weapon. A small, sharpened metal disk, the shuriken is more a tool of harassment than a weapon. Shuriken vary greatly; some are hollow in the middle and produce a whistling noise like a humming-bulb arrow, while others look like items of clothing. Generally, shuriken are cheaply made, disposable, and easy to produce in mass quantities. Shuriken are often coated with poison.

Damage: 1k1. Shuriken do not add the thrower's Strength to the damage roll.

Price: 2 bu each

TSUBUTE: The tsubute is another small hurled weapon. Where the shuriken is usually made of metal and sharp, tsubute are usually blunt stones ground down for throwing. The chief advantage of the tsubute is that it is more easily improvised — in an emergency, a round stone will suffice. Conversely, while the shuriken can be customized for various uses, tsubute are typically only useful for harassment and distractions. Tsubute cannot be poisoned.

Damage: 1k1. Tsubute do not add the thrower's Strength to the damage roll.

Special Rules: 10's do not explode on tsubute damage rolls.

Price: 1 bu each

Peasant Weapons

Peasant weapons are generally farming tools. Even professional peasant warriors such as ashigaru spurn such improvised weapons, and tend to look upon those who use them with some disdain. As always, there are exceptions; peasant weapons are common among monks, and samurai of the Yoritomo family traditionally use kama.

KAMA: The kama is an adaptation of the farming sickle. It consists of a wooden shaft, approximately a foot in length, topped by a downward-curving metal blade. The kama is wielded with one hand with a chopping motion, like an axe. This weapon is favored by the Mantis Clan for its association with their legendary hero, Yoritomo.

DR: 1k2

Special Rules: You do not suffer the standard +5 TN penalty to all attacks when holding a kama in your off-hand. However, you do still suffer the normal +5 TN penalty when attacking with the weapon itself you do not have Ambidexterity or School Techniques that negate this drawback, and do not gain any additional attacks per round for wielding two weapons at once. If you use paired kama, each kama inflicts an additional +1k1 damage.

Price: 3 bu

KUMADE: The kumade is a modified peasant rake: a wooden shaft, topped with a metal spike and several hooks, wielded two-handed. The hooks make it easy to pull out stumps or weeds while the spike spears obstructions out of the way. Most warriors scorn the kumade's poor-quality construction.

DR: 1k2

Special Rules: If it can be hooked over a projection, the kumade gives its user a Free Raise when climbing.

Price: 1 koku

PARANGU: The parangu is essentially a machete, wielded with heavy chopping motions to clean out underbrush, debris, or in the case of Mantis sailors, ropes. The parangu is highly curved, and is far more fragile than a samurai's sword. Forged from scrap metal, parangu are functional, if not particularly durable.

DR: 2k2

Price: 10 bu

Polearms and Spears

This category encompasses a variety of long weapons. You gain a Free Raise when wielding any polearm or spear in melee against a mounted opponent or any creature larger than human size. Conversely, polearms and spears are less effective against smaller, more agile foes and roll one fewer die for damage against all other targets. Because their damage is generally considerable, this does not often discourage warriors from employing them even against infantry.

BISENTO: The bisento is essentially a wooden shaft with a heavy-bladed sword at its tip. Although it looks awkward and top-heavy, the leverage provided by the shaft allows it to be wielded effectively. The bisento is an unusual weapon, and is most commonly seen among militant orders of monks.

DR: 1k4

Price: 12 koku

LANCE: The lance is rarely seen on Rokugani battlefields, but when it appears, it is used to deadly effect. Used almost exclusively by the Unicorn and Ox Clans, proper use of a lance requires a horse — the larger the better — with a stirrup saddle. The lance is essentially a very low spear used in cavalry charges. The user tucks the lance under a shoulder, stands up in the saddle, and relies on the velocity imparted by his charging steed to drive the point deep into his opponent. Many lances shatter upon impact, and are poorly designed for close-in fighting, so cavalry units typically drop them and draw another weapon after the initial charge.

DR: 1k2

Special Rules: If you move in a straight line and attack with a lance in the same round while mounted, the DR is 3k4 instead of 1k2. You suffer a +5 TN penalty if using the lance in a close-in melee while mounted, or +10 TN if using one on foot. A lance shatters if it inflicts more than 30 Wounds in one attack.

Price: 20 koku

MAI CHONG: The mai chong is a highly unusual weapon, used almost exclusively by the nearly extinct Boar Clan. It consists of an eight-foot wooden shaft, topped with a foot-long metal head. The tip has three points, one projecting straight forward, the other two angling off to the side. Additionally, along the side of the tip are two more outward-facing points. The extra tips allow the wielder of the mai chong to slash as well as thrust.

DR: 3k2

Price: 20 koku

NAGAMAKI: The nagamaki is essentially a sword blade mounted upon a short wooden pole. Designed to be wielded one-handed, the nagamaki combines many virtues of the sword with the leverage of a hafted weapon. Both it and its larger cousin, the naginata, are often seen in Phoenix armies.

DR: 2k3

Special Rules: You may spend one and only one Void Point when rolling damage with a nagamaki to roll and keep an additional die.

Price: 8 koku

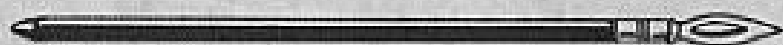


NAGE-YARI: The nage-yari is essentially a javelin. About 3 to 4 feet in length and tipped with metal, the nage-yari is useful both as a melee and ranged weapon. Nage-yari are unusual, save for certain orders of Togashi monks and Unicorn light cavalry units.

DR: 1k2

Special Rules: The nage-yari may be thrown accurately at a range of up to 50'.

Price: 3 koku

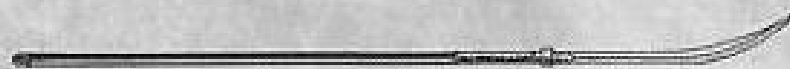


NAGINATA: The naginata is probably the most respected Roku-gani spear weapon. The process of forging a naginata blade and crafting its haft approaches that of a katana. Like the bisento, the naginata is a sword blade mounted atop a long haft, although the naginata's blade is typically lighter and thinner. The naginata is commonly used in castle sieges, and is also used by certain elite groups in the Empire, most notably the Phoenix Order of Heaven's Wing and the Utaku Battle Maidens. The naginata is a two-handed, flexible weapon; the blade is suitable for both slashing and stabbing, while the durable haft is suitable for deflecting blows.

DR: 1k3

Special Rules: On each attack, you may choose to roll or keep an additional die of damage with a naginata. You may instead spend one and only one Void Point when rolling damage with a naginata to roll and keep an additional die.

Price: 10 koku

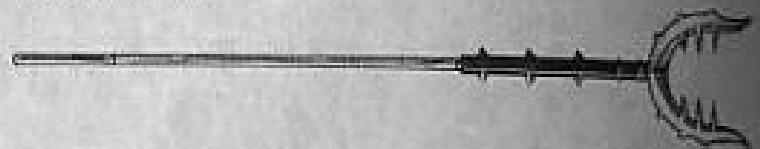


SASUMATA: The sasumata is also known as the "man-catcher": its four-foot wooden shaft sports a pair of two-foot, inward-facing crescent blades. A gap between the two blades allows a skilled sasumata user to trap an opponent's limbs or body — useful for pinning an opponent against a wall or the ground. The sasumata is difficult to use, since only the insides of the crescents are sharp, but the tactical advantage of trapping opponents makes sasumata very popular among magistrates and those who expect to battle cavalry units.

DR: 1k1

Special Rules: The sasumata may be used to grapple as if it were a chain weapon. The sasumata may be used to inflict damage in a grapple that it created.

Price: 8 koku

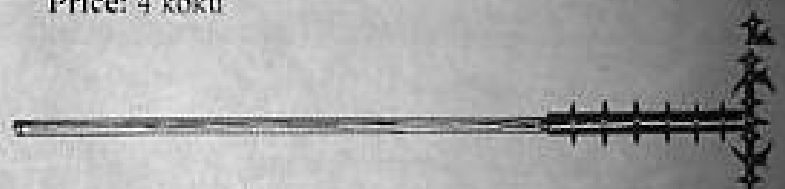


SODEGARAMI: Where the sasumata is meant to capture people, the sodegarami is meant to entangle sleeves. The sodegarami's four-foot wooden shaft has a T-shaped metal head rather than the sasumata's double-crescent. The T's crossbar is barbed so that it hooks opponents' clothing. The sodegarami is frequently wielded by city militia and guards, who use the weapon to disarm and incapacitate samurai.

DR: 1k1

Special Rules: The sodegarami may be used to grapple as if it were a chain weapon. You gain a Free Raise on Contested Strength Rolls during the grapple if the target is wearing loose clothing (or is a beast with particularly shaggy fur). The sodegarami may be used to inflict damage in a grapple that it created.

Price: 4 koku



YARI: The yari is a spear, six to eight feet long, used two-handed when on foot and one-handed when mounted. A basic, utilitarian weapon, it is commonly given to ashigaru soldiers, although several samurai units also use it, including most cavalry units and the Crane's Daidoji heavy infantry. Like its smaller cousin, the nage-yari, the yari is suitable for throwing.

DR: 2k2; if thrown, 1k2, maximum range of 30'

Special Rules: The yari inflicts 1k1 additional damage when the wielder is mounted.

Price: 5 koku



Staves

Simple to make and easy to wield, the staff is a common weapon of the peasant classes. Unlike other peasant weapons, even samurai are not ashamed to wield staves, due mostly to the weapon's association with the Brotherhood of Shinsei. Monks frequently carry a staff, as even a peaceful seeker of enlightenment sometimes finds it handy to have a six-foot stick.

Staves are too light to be effective against armored targets. The TN bonus of armor is either doubled or increased by five (whichever is less) against staff attacks. Staves lend themselves to sweeping attacks, and thus grant a Free Raise on all Knock-down attempts.

BO: The bo is the simplest and most common weapon in Rokugan. It is a simple wooden staff, usually 5 to 6 feet in length, commonly carried by travelers and monks. The bo has virtually no armor penetrating power, but tales of monks who have mastered the martial arts mean bo users are generally treated with respect.

DR: 0k2

Special Rules: If you have the Staves (Bo) Emphasis, you receive a +5 to your TN to Be Hit.

Price: 2 bu

JO: The jo is a short staff, approximately 3 feet in length. Used in pairs, the jo is used to deliver rapid concussive strikes, but like the bo, the jo is ineffective against armor.

DR: 0k2

Special Rules: If you have the Staves (Jo) Emphasis, you suffer no penalties for wielding two jo simultaneously. However, both jo are always used to make a single attack against a single target. This attack inflicts 1k3 damage.

Price: 1 bu

NUNCHAKU: Adapted from a farmer's threshing tool, the nunchaku is simple to build and surprisingly effective. Consisting of two foot-long wooden handles connected by a foot-long chain, the nunchaku is beautiful to watch in the hands of a skilled user. The flexibility provided by the arrangement allows users to punch, bludgeon, and choke, leading to a myriad of attacks and kata.

DR: 0k2

Special Rules: The nunchaku may be used to start grapples as if it were a chain weapon.

Price: 3 bu



PIPE (MACHI-KANSHISHA): The machi-kanshisha steel smoking pipe is a weapon unique to the Kaeru vassal family of the Lion. Their warriors use this weapon to police the streets of Kaeru Toshi as well as to relax after a long day. Consisting of a long, hollow metal tube, the pipe is useful in much the same manner as a jo staff. Additionally, due to its construction, the pipe is suitable for smoking herbs, or to blow metsubishi powder into an opponent's face (though the wielder should carefully clean the pipe before smoking again).

DR: 1k1

Special Rules: The pipe may be used to blow metsubishi powder into an opponent's face. This attack has a maximum range of 5 feet, and is rolled as a normal attack using the Staves (Pipe) Skill. See the Poisons section for examples of metsubishi poisons.

Price: 10 koku

SANG KAUW: The sang kauw is a highly unusual weapon, typically seen only in the hands of skilled sohei. The weapon has two common variants, but both versions have a 3 or 4 foot wooden shaft with metal spikes on both ends. One variant has a metal shield in the middle of the shaft to deflect attacks, while the other has a crescent-shaped blade to fend off attackers. Both versions are considered fairly exotic within the Empire, and skilled sang kauw users are often subject to requests for demonstrations of kata... or challenges.

CRESCENT BLADE SANG KAUW:

DR: 1k2

Special Rules: If you possess the Staves (Sang Kauw) Emphasis, you gain a +2 bonus to attack rolls against any attacker who attacked you and missed since your last turn. You suffer a +5 penalty to all attack rolls if you do not possess the Staves (Sang Kauw) Emphasis.

Price: 10 koku

SHIELD SANG KAUW:

DR: 2k1

Special Rules: You gain +5 TN to Be Hit (this counts as Armor). You suffer a +5 penalty to all attack rolls if you do not possess the Staves (Sang Kauw) Emphasis.

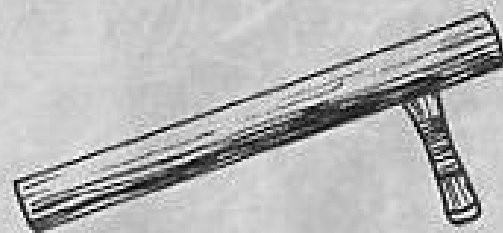
Price: 10 koku

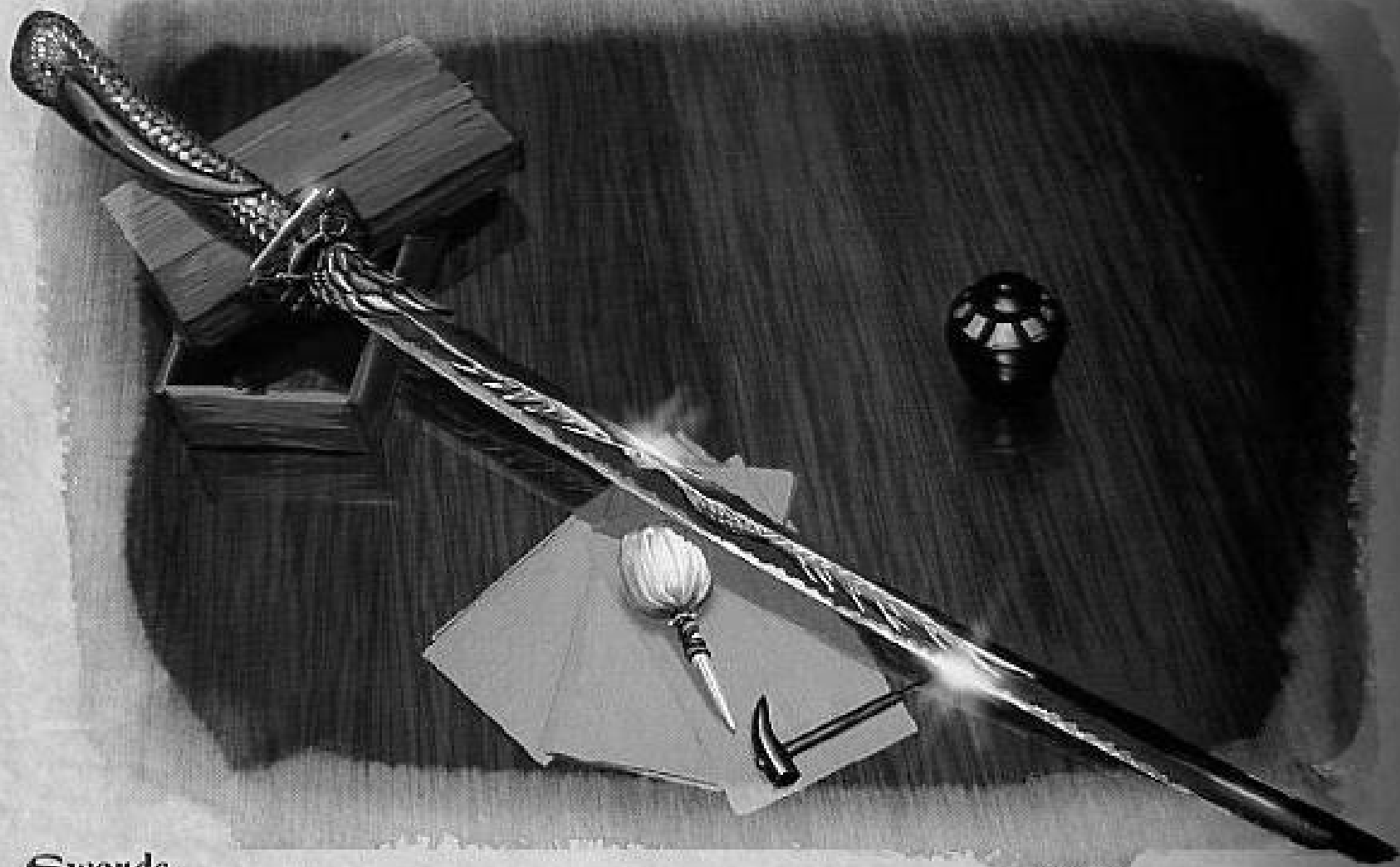
TONFA: The tonfa is another adaptation from a peasant implement; in this case, the handle of a millstone. It consists of a wooden staff about the length of a man's forearm, with a handle on the side. Held by the handle, with the wooden shaft against the forearm, the tonfa is an effective defensive tool, allowing the forearm to block incoming attacks. Although the tonfa is not particularly dangerous, the ability to ward off attacks makes it popular among monks.

DR: 0k1

Special Rules: If you possess the Staves (Tonfa) Emphasis, you gain +3 TN to Be Hit (this counts as Armor) while wielding one (even in your off-hand). Wielding a second tonfa grants an additional +2 TN to Be Hit bonus, but imposes the usual penalties.

Price: 5 bu





Swords

The sword is the soul of the samurai. No other weapon harmonizes with the samurai style so perfectly. When wielding any sword, you may spend one and only one Void Point to roll and keep an extra die on damage. This may be done once per damage roll.

KATANA: There is no weapon so revered as the katana. Three to four feet in length and slightly curved, the katana is a triumph of design, the midpoint between artistry and craftsmanship. Specially forged so that the blade is hard and the inside is soft, the katana combines a devastating cutting edge with enough flexibility so as to not shatter when cutting into armor or bone. While the wakizashi may only be worn by those of the samurai caste, only warriors carry the katana. Families pass the swords down through generations; carrying a famous katana is an honor and privilege. A katana is not only a weapon of war, it is an expression of the soul of its bearer.

To carry a katana is to imply one knows how to use it. Such an individual is expected to personally respond to any iaijutsu challenges issued to him, and cannot appoint a champion to take his place without a loss of Honor and/or Glory. A samurai who does not carry his katana typically displays it in a place of honor.

DR: 3k2

Special Rules: When wielding a katana, you may spend a Void Point to roll and keep an extra die on damage as normal, or you may spend two Void Points to roll and keep two extra dice on damage.

Price: 20 koku

NINJA-TO: While the katana is held in high esteem, the ninja-to is reviled. As the name implies, the ninja-to is favored by ninjas. Unlike the katana and wakizashi, it is generally crudely made, with little regard for aesthetics. A ninja risks capture or the loss of his weapon with every mission, so ninja-to are easily replaceable. Some ninja-to incorporate secret compartments, blowguns, or other tools in the handle or the saya (scabbard) — but the general disposability of the ninja-to makes extensive modifications not worthwhile.

DR: 2k2

Special Rules: The ninja-to and its scabbard are fairly frequently modified with additional tools or special compartments. Despite its size, a ninja-to is easily hidden within clothing; you gain a Free Raise when attempting to conceal a ninja-to on your person with the Sleight of Hand Skill.

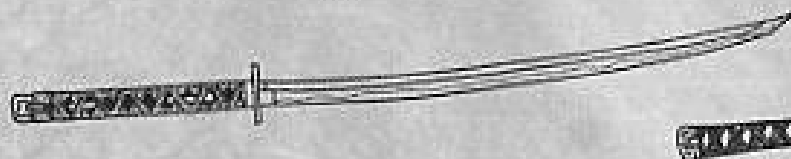
Price: 5 koku

NO-DACHI: The no-dachi is a huge weapon, typically 5 to 7 feet long, slightly curved like an enormous katana. Forged in the same manner as its smaller cousin, the no-dachi is capable of inflicting grievous wounds. It is intended as an anti-cavalry weapon. The greatest no-dachi masters can cut through a horse and rider in a single stroke.

DR: 3k2

Special Rules: The no-dachi gains the same Strength bonus to damage as an axe or heavy weapon, and keeps an extra die of damage against any opponents larger than human sized.

Price: 30 koku



SCIMITAR: A heavy, curved blade of Senpet design, a scimitar trades a katana's elegance for deadly power. The most common sort of gajin sword in Rokugan, the scimitar is favored by the Moto family and other Unicorn warriors. It is not commonly used or well regarded outside the Unicorn Clan. The heavy Moto-style scimitar must be wielded with two hands, though the Moto Bushi School teaches Rank Techniques that allow it to be used effectively in one hand.

DR: 4k2

Price: 20 koku

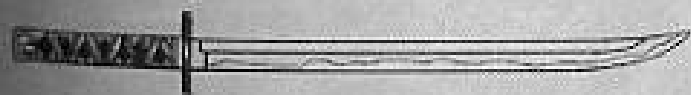
WAKIZASHI: Even though the katana is the mark of a samurai warrior, the wakizashi represents the samurai as a social class. Every member of the samurai station is entitled to carry a wakizashi, and nearly all do. Shorter than a katana, wakizashi range from 2 to 3 feet in length, are forged like the larger blade, and are comparably lethal in combat.

The wakizashi carries an additional role that the katana does not in Rokugani society — it symbolically preserves the honor of its bearer. A samurai's last refuge for protest is seppuku, performed with the wakizashi. Although the katana is held in greater regard by the noble classes, the wakizashi is a constant reminder of a samurai's duties.

DR: 2k2

Special Rules: You do not suffer the standard +5 TN penalty until attacks when holding a wakizashi in your off-hand. However, you do still suffer the normal +5 TN penalty when attacking with the weapon itself if you do not have Ambidexterity or School Techniques that negate this drawback, and do not gain any additional attacks per round for wielding two weapons at once.

Price: 15 koku



War Fans

Fans are ubiquitous. Courtiers use them to hide their faces, generals use them to signal troops, and nearly the entire populace uses them to keep cool during hot summers. Inevitably, they become weapons as well. Most war fans, or tessen, do not fold; exceptions are known as menhari-gata. Most tessen are entirely wood, but menhari-gata have tines of metal or especially hard woods, to deflect weapon blows.

In battle, the tessen is primarily defensive. However, all-wooden tessen can be used to inflict bludgeoning blows and to add weight to punches, while the tines of menhari-gata are often sharp, for slashing. Some tessen, known as gansen, are decorated with military symbols to signal troops in battle. Unlike most weapons, a war fan can be carried into even formal court chambers or negotiations, making it a valuable tool if violence erupts.

DR: 0k1

Special Rules: If you possess an Emphasis in the type of war fan you are currently wielding, you gain a +2 bonus to your TN to use it while wielding it in your off-hand. This counts as Armor. This bonus increases to +4 if your War Fan Skill is 6 or higher.

Price: 5 koku

Crafting Items

Creating, particularly weapons and armor is one of the most honorable crafts a samurai can engage in. Great heroes of the past such as Kakita have shown their expertise at not only welding, but creating weapons for their own and their kinsmen's use.

Forging a weapon or armor can be a long, arduous process, or a quick, routine one, depending on the skill of the smith and the level of quality desired. The base TN to create a weapon or suit of armor is 10. This takes a number of hours equal to the item's cost in koku, and produces a single, Poor Quality weapon or suit of armor. This is a number of working hours — the character must still eat and sleep.

The character may also declare Raises prior to making his Skill Roll, with the following effects:

To improve Quality:

- 1 Raise: Produce a Low Quality item
- 2 Raises: Produce an Average Quality item
- 4 Raises: Produce a Fine Quality item
- 6 Raises: Produce an Excellent Quality item

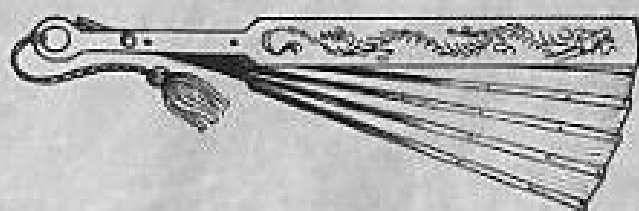
To make more items:


- 1 Raise: Produce two identical items
- 2 Raises: Produce four identical items
- 3 Raises: Produce eight identical items

The character needs materials worth 1/10 of the total cost of the items he has produced (after factoring in Quality and the number he produces), and must have access to a forge or shop of at least an equivalent Quality level as the weapon or armor being created.

To produce a Legendary Quality item, the character must roll against a TN of 60, and may not Raise to produce more than one. This attempt takes the koku cost of the item in days, and requires at least an Excellent quality forge or shop. He may Raise further, in which case the item is of even greater quality; matching the quality of Ketsuen, the Ancestral Armor of the Crab, would require 4 Raises, while something approaching the sword Chukandomo, given by Doji Kurohito to the Lion Clan, would require 2. In both cases, this would not replicate the magical qualities of the item — just the raw perfection of the forging process.

A very few Legendary Quality facilities exist; if the character has access to one of these, the TN is reduced to 50, in addition to any other bonuses the forge or shop might provide.





Miscellaneous Items

A samurai's life is not consumed with mere combat, and his needs extend far beyond just weapons or armor.

BACKPACK: Rokugani traveling backpacks are built upon wicker frames, making them fairly rigid.

Price: 3 zeni

BALL, KEMARI: A leather ball used to play kemari.

Price: 5 zeni

BASKETS: The most common container found in Rokugani, crafted of wicker. Sometimes baskets are upturned and worn as hats to hide the identity of wandering monks known as komuso.

Price: 1 zeni for small basket, 5 zeni for large basket

BLACKSMITH'S HAMMER: Necessary for an armorer or weaponsmith to ply his trade.

Price: 3 bu

BLANKET: A coarse blanket, appropriate for travel. A single blanket won't keep you warm at night; you need more than one, or a Fine Quality blanket.

Price: 1 bu

BOTTLE OF BLEACH OR DYE: Used primarily for clothes-making, also useful for disguise or for hair coloration.

Price: 1 bu

BOTTLE OF SAKE: Rice wine, a popular beverage, not particularly strong in comparison to other drinks.

Price: 1 bu

BOTTLE OF SHOCHU: A very strong, distilled alcoholic beverage.

Price: 2 bu

BOTTLE, EMPTY: Used to carry liquids; made of glass or pottery.

Price: 1 zeni

BOOKS AND SCROLLS: These elaborate affairs are highly valued, usually containing some important work such as ancestral records, Akodo's Leadership, or the Tao.

Price: 1 to 10 bu on average, depending on how large the book or scroll is

BOWYER'S KIT: Used for maintenance of bow and arrows.

Price: 2 bu

BRAZIER: A vessel designed to hold burning substances, used for burning incense, heating liquids, or providing warmth to a small area.

Price: 1 bu

BUCKET: A simple metal vessel with a handle, generally used for toting water.

Price: 1 zeni

CANDLE: A simple, hand-dipped candle.

Price: 1 bu

CHEST: Elaborate chests with locks are generally possessed only by merchants and samurai.

Price: 2 bu for a wooden one, 8 bu for a metal one

CHOPSTICKS: Rokugani eating utensils; a pair of sticks fashioned of wood, ivory, or metal.

Price: 1 zeni

CLOTH, SILK BOLT: Useful for mending clothes, wrapping metal objects to keep them from rattling, sewing into clothes, and as a trade good.

Price: 2 koku

COIN PURSE: A small purse, easily concealed within the folds of a garment.

Price: 3 zeni

DAISHO STAND: Easily dissembled and carried on one's person, this stand is used to display one's katana, wakizashi, and tanto prominently.

Price: 1 koku

DICE AND DICE CUP: Useful for gambling, quite popular among Mantle crews and bushi on watch duty.

Price: 25 zeni

DIVINATION KIT (KAWARU COINS OR YARROW STICKS): Popular among superstitious peasants, also used by shugenja.

Price: 1 bu

FINGER OF JADE (COUNTS AS THREE ITEMS): Used to ward off the Shadowlands Taint.

Price: 1 koku

FISHING KIT: Includes a fishing hook, small net, and cleaning knife.

Price: 10 zeni

FLINT AND STEEL: Useful for creating sparks and lighting fires.

Price: 1 zeni

FUROSHIKI SACK: The most popular way for samurai to carry things, the silken furoshiki sack has a drawstring to seal it closed.

Price: 1 zeni

GAMES, TRAVELING: Designed to be portable. Go, Shogi, and other such games are popular among both bushi and courtesans.

Price: 1 bu and up

GRAPPLE HOOK: A simple iron hook to be attached to a rope for use in climbing.

Price: 1 bu

KISERU: A simple smoking pipe.

Price: 3 zeni

KUBI BUKURO: Among the Lion Clan, the bundori — the head of an enemy — is a trophy of good omen. This netted bag helps the bearer stow away the bundori without touching dead flesh unnecessarily. The Crab also use these bags to retrieve samples of Shadowlands creatures for study.

Price: 2 zeni

LANTERNS: Used for decoration and illumination.

Price: 1 bu for paper lanterns, 4 bu for metal ones

LANTERN OIL: A typical flask will last for 2 hours.

Price: 3 zeni per flask

LUCKY CRICKET: Quite popular among the Mantis, a small cricket in a cage is quite lucky indeed.
Price: 4 bu

MEDICINE KIT: Basics such as needle and thread, cloth bandages, and herbal disinfectant. The contents of a Medicine kit allow fifty uses of the Medicine Skill before they must be replaced (see the Medicine Skill for details regarding the use of this item).
Price: 1 bu and up

MIRRORS: A simple glass or metal surface, polished to a high sheen.
Price: 3 bu for a small handheld mirror, 2 koku for a large display mirror

MORTAR AND PESTLE: Used to grind and mix ingredients. Necessary when using the Herbalism Emphasis to produce medicines.
Price: 2 bu

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS: Common examples include the shamisen, biwa, flute, and drum; many courtiers carry an instrument with them, to demonstrate their skills at the arts. Shakuhachi flutes are often carried by monks, and drums are commonly used to signal soldiers in battle.
Price: 1 to 5 bu, depending on the instrument

PALANQUIN: An elaborate personal carriage, carried by peasant servants. Palanquins have silken curtains covering the entry, affording privacy to the samurai riding inside. Can carry up to two people.
Price: 10 koku; does not include peasant servants

PAPER WRITING: Paper is fairly expensive and time-consuming to produce, making writing the domain of samurai.
Price: 1 bu per 5 sheets

PARCHMENT AND CHARCOAL (10 PIECES OF EACH): Far more cheaply made than paper and ink.
Price: 3 zeni

PERSONAL SEAL OR CHOP: Used to sign documents and to verify identities. Each samurai's personal chop is a unique design, registered with the Miya family. To copy another samurai's chop is a crime as well as an insult.
Price: 4 bu

PET: Samurai pets include dogs, cats, songbirds, monkeys, or other small creatures. The price here assumes that the creature is not capable of combat, but merely provides companionship and entertainment. Some pets are easily agitated by strangers, and can serve as effective alarm systems.
Price: 1 koku

PILLOW BOOK: A small, loosely bound book usually pertaining to some light subject, such as a romance tale, adventure story, or book of poetry. Usually works of important literature are crafted with more care and attention; portable versions of such volumes as Akodo's Leadership, Tansen's Lies, and the Tao of Shinsei are available.
Price: 1 zeni to 1 koku, depending on the subject matter

POT, IRON: While many bushi use their helmets as cooking pots, some prefer to have a separate pot to prepare their meals.
Price: 15 zeni

The Koku

The Koku is Rokugan's unit of currency, a small gold coin intended to represent the amount of rice needed to feed a single person for one year. A single koku can be divided into five coins called "ichibukin" — "bushels" — or most commonly "bu." Each bu can be further broken down into ten copper pennies called "zeni."

QUIVER: A cloth satchel used to sling arrows at one's hip or shoulder. Holds up to sixty arrows.
Price: 20 zeni

ROPE: Lower quality ropes are made of hemp, average quality ones of braided hair, and high quality ropes are crafted of silk.
Price: 5 zeni per foot for average quality rope

SAKE CUP: In many areas, it is traditional for guests to bring their own sake cup to functions.
Price: 1 bu

SHOVEL: A simple digging tool.
Price: 5 zeni

SMALL BACK BANNER: Particularly popular among bushi, these banners identify the wearer's rank, name, family, and clan.
Price: 1 koku

SMALL FOLDING STOOL: Often brought to battle so that soldiers garbed in heavy armor can conserve their strength for fighting during planning sessions.
Price: 3 bu

SMALL KNIFE: Useful for carving or personal grooming.
Price: 5 zeni

SMALL PAINTING OR SCULPTURE: It is not uncommon for samurai to carry some small work of art on their person, either for sentiment or as an emergency gift.
Price: 3 bu

SMALL STATUE OF A FORTUNE OR ANCESTOR: Such representations of revered figures are thought to invoke the favor of those they depict.
Price: 1 koku

SPICES: Popular for adding flavor to food, exotic spices are also common trade goods.
Price: 1 to 5 bu for a small bottle, depending on how rare the spice is.

SUMI-E (WRITING) BOX: Contains brushes, several ink stones, a water bowl, and sand to speed the drying process. Consists of ink and 3 brushes.
Price: 1 bu

SWEETS (SMALL CAKES, CANDIES): Popular snacks, particularly during festival seasons, usually made of bean curd or honeyed rice.
Price: 1 bu for 4 servings

TATAMI MAT: Used to keep clothes clean when sitting on the ground.
Price: 2 zeni

TATTOO NEEDLES: Particularly popular among the Dragon Clan, these needles are made of steel or bamboo.

Price: 1 bu per set

TEA SET: This portable set allows a samurai to enjoy the harmony of the tea ceremony even far from home.

Price: 1 koku

TENT, CHOMCHOG: An extremely large and elaborate portable home utilized by the Unicorn Clan. It is extremely well insulated from the elements, and can potentially house up to a dozen people (though it is generally used to house smaller noble families in extreme luxury). Takes some time to disassemble and requires several oxen and a wagon to carry.

Price: 20 koku

TENT, SMALL: Suitable for two people to rest comfortably in the wilderness.

Price: 1 koku

TENT, YURT: A much larger tent favored by the Unicorn Clan. This is a large, elaborate affair crafted of thick leather or canvas with felt floor. Suitable for use as long-term housing for four, but extremely heavy and unwieldy, usually requiring a horse or ox dedicated specifically to carrying it. Takes several minutes to assemble or break down.

Price: 10 koku

TRAVELING RATIONS: Consists of preserved food, such as dried rice and fish, wrapped in paper.

Price: 5 zeni per meal

UMBRELLA: A simple contraption of wicker and silk used to ward off the elements.

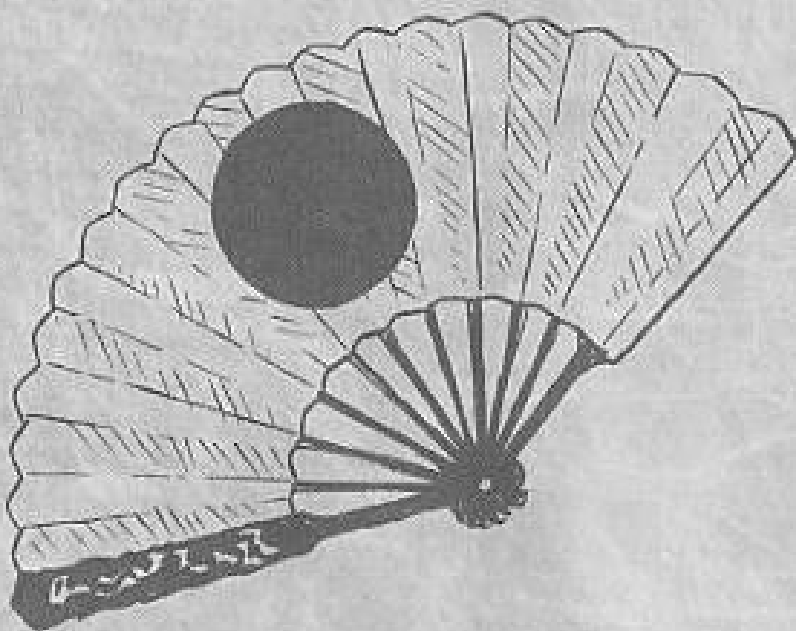
Price: 2 bu

WALKING STICK: A simple cane, not sturdy enough to be utilized as a weapon.

Price: 1 zeni

WHETSTONE: Used to sharpen weapons. Katana and wakizashi are usually sharpened professionally by master weaponsmiths.

Price: 1 zeni



Clothing and Accessories

CAP, COURTIER'S: A peaked black cap popular among politicians and bureaucrats.

Price: 2 bu

FAN, COURTIER'S: This style of fan is not suitable for use as a weapon.

Price: 40 zeni and up

HAKAMA: These trousers, just short of knee-length, are popular among most males as well as samurai-ko.

Price: 75 zeni

HAORI: Haori are jacket-like garments, designed to accentuate the wearer's shoulders. They are often worn by nobles and courtiers, very rarely by peasants.

Price: 25 zeni

JEWELRY OR ACCESSORY (NETSUKE, EARRING, EYEPATCH, BRACELET): Small, fashionable accessory of moderate value.

Price: 1 bu

KIMONO: Kimono form the most basic outfit of the samurai caste, but even members of the lower classes possess a kimono or two for special occasions. Includes an obi — a ceremonial belt used to tie the kimono.

Price: 1 bu

MAKEUP KIT: Consists of a variety of face powders, wigs, and other small, easily portable tools to improve one's physical appearance.

Price: 1 koku

MASK: Extremely popular among the Scorpion Clan, also comes into fashion every few years in Courts across the Empire. These vary in style from a simple silken mask to a bushi's lion mempo (war mask). Masks are also commonly worn by ninja.

Price: 3 bu

OBI POUCH: A small pouch that attaches to a fastened obi.

Price: 25 zeni

PERFUME: Popular among the Crane and Scorpion; perfumes are made from a variety of common herbs and substances.

Price: 2 bu per small bottle

SANDALS: The simplest form of shoe, common among samurai and peasant alike.

Price: 50 zeni

SNOW SHOES: Wide-framed shoes to prevent the wearer from sinking into snow, these are particularly useful in the northern provinces of the Empire, such as the Phoenix lands.

Price: 2 bu

TRAVELING CLOAK: Typically made of low-quality silk; higher quality indicates better materials, lower quality rougher ones.

Price: 75 zeni

WIDE-BRIMMED STRAW HAT: Useful for protecting one's face from the sun.

Price: 1 zeni

WAR PAINT, VIAL: Particularly popular among Hiruma scouts, Nezumi warriors, the Moto White Guard, Deathseekers, and the Kuni family.

Price: 3 bu

WIG: Often used for disguise, or simply to make an impression.

Price: 1 bu each



Item Quality

Not all equipment is created equal. Items can be purchased, created, or acquired at differing levels of quality. Higher quality equipment performs better, lasts longer, and looks more impressive, while lower quality equipment looks obviously worn and is likely to break.

As a general rule, a character must make a TN 10 Skill Roll with an appropriate Skill (such as Armorer or Defense for Armor, Weaponsmith or the appropriate Weapon Skill for weapons, or Calligraphy to check the quality of a set of brushes) to determine the quality of equipment he is inspecting. This takes approximately a minute of gentle hands-on inspection. If the character is trying to do so quickly (in a matter of seconds), or without actually handling the item in question, he must Raise once (twice if he is in a hurry and cannot handle the item).

There are six levels of quality for items: Poor, Low, Average, Fine, Excellent, and Legendary.

POOR QUALITY

Poor equipment is clearly in bad condition, as even a cursory glance reveals. The character's ability to perform is severely hampered. Poor equipment is very cheap—it costs only 1/10th the normal price.

Poor Quality Weapons: The character must Raise twice each time he wishes to receive the benefit of a single Raise. If the character is dueling with a Poor-quality weapon, each time he focuses increases his opponent's TN to Be Hit by an additional 5.

Poor Armor: Due to poor fit and restricted mobility, the character receives an extra +2 TN penalty to all Skill Rolls involving Agility or Reflexes, in addition to any imposed by the Armor type. Additionally, reduce the TN To Be Hit Bonus of the armor by 2.

Poor Other Items: The character must Raise twice each time he wishes to receive the benefit of a single Raise. For example, if a character wearing a Poor Quality kimono in court wishes to make a good impression upon a visiting daimyo, he must Raise four times on his Courtier check to receive the benefit of Raising twice.

Poor Quality items are likely to break or wear out if used extensively.

LOW QUALITY

Low quality equipment is not good, but it is serviceable. It still hampers the character's efforts, but it is far better than Poor equipment. Low quality equipment costs 1/2 the normal price.

Low Quality Weapons: Every time the character declares a Raise, he receives an additional +2 TN penalty to his Skill Roll.

Low Quality Armor: Due to the poor construction of the armor, reduce the TN To Be Hit Bonus of the armor by 2.

Low Quality Other Items: Every time the character declares a Raise while using the item, he receives an additional +2 TN penalty to his Skill Roll.

A Note on Economy

The prices listed in this section are a rough guideline. The Rokugani economy is based upon the koku, the amount of rice needed to feed a single person for one year, and thus its value can vary drastically depending on the quality of last year's harvest. If the harvest was poor, everything becomes much more expensive. If the harvest was abundant, all items become cheaper. These default prices give the GM some sort of starting point.

A samurai is generally provided everything he needs by his lord — this is represented by a character's starting Outfit. Outside of this, a character can be assumed to have a home (usually starting characters live in a family household), enough food to survive, and reasonable personal possessions. If a samurai loses an item from his starting outfit, he can have it replaced simply by reporting to his lord once more. Samurai who abuse this privilege or annoy their lord frequently to replace minor objects can expect appropriate reprisals.

If a samurai wishes something more than his lord has given him, or seeks to obtain equipment or gifts in lands beyond his daimyo's rule, then money becomes an issue. After all, even a peasant's first responsibility is to the daimyo — if he is distracted from his work, then there must be compensation so that the daimyo is not cheated of the value of the peasant's labor. All samurai receive a small discretionary income generally equal to their Status \times 10 koku per year to deal with such purchases; a starting character does not receive this amount in addition to his starting wealth. Samurai who have performed admirably may be rewarded accordingly.

In general, money is not a huge issue for samurai. They are well paid, respected, and given everything they truly need. For some samurai, the race for wealth becomes something of a game, a way of keeping score of one's accomplishments, but such pursuits are hardly considered an honorable way to spend one's time.

Naturally, ronin find money to be a much higher priority. A ronin is not entitled to anything beyond that which he already possesses, and even that only if he can keep anyone from taking it from him. A ronin must pay for all of his food and equipment personally, so a reliable source of income is often foremost in a wave-man's mind.

AVERAGE QUALITY

Average quality equipment is the standard the other levels are compared to. Average equipment uses the listed prices. It has no special game effects and imposes no penalties.

FINE QUALITY

Fine quality equipment is the best normally available to beginning characters. It is forged with greater care, crafted with greater skill, and composed of better materials. Fine equipment costs 10 times the normal price.

Fine Quality Weapons: The weapon is expertly designed, and the character receives a Free Raise for a specific attack or action. Examples would include "while Striking in an Iaijutsu duel," "for a Called Shot to hit specific region locations on an op-

ponent," or "to disarm." Instead, the weapon could have a useful non-combat use that is appropriate to the weapon (many War Fans are designed to signal troops in combat, for example).

Fine Quality Armor: The armor is particularly comfortable, reducing the TN penalty for Agility and Reflex Skill Rolls (or Athletics and Stealth Skill Rolls for Light Armor) by 2. Fine Quality Ashigaru Armor might have a TN To Be Hit Bonus of +4 instead of +3.

Fine Quality Other Items: While performing tasks the item is specifically designed for (writing with brushes and inks, attending court for kimono, and so forth), the TN increase for the first Raise the character declares is +3 instead of the usual +5.

EXCELLENT QUALITY

Excellent quality equipment is treasured, and is typically found only among decorated samurai or the highest-Status members of a family. Excellent quality equipment costs 100 times the normal price.

Excellent Quality Weapons: The weapon has perfect balance. The character receives a Free Raise on any Skill Roll to wield the weapon.

Excellent Quality Armor: The armor is a perfect fit and masterfully forged. The TN penalties to Athletics and Stealth for Light Armor is eliminated, whereas the TN penalties for Heavy and Riding Armors are replaced with a +3 to all Athletics and Stealth Skill Rolls. For Ashigaru Armor, not only is the TN To Be Hit Bonus +4, the armor is particularly inconspicuous, granting a Free Raise to any attempts to conceal or hide the armor's presence or nature.

Excellent Quality Other Items: While performing tasks the item is specifically designed for (writing with brushes and inks, attending court for kimonos, and so forth), the character receives one Free Raise.

LEGENDARY QUALITY

Items of legendary quality are famous, and often bring both their creators and their users much Glory. Famous swords such as the Rakita Blades or Iuchiban's Bloodswords are of legendary quality. Legendary quality items are not available for purchase, and must be acquired through adventuring or created by the characters who want them. A character might go his whole life without encountering an item this fine.

Legendary Quality Weapons: The character receives a Free Raise towards any Skill Roll to wield the weapon, and additionally gains an additional +0k1 to all Skill Rolls to wield it.

Legendary Quality Armor: The armor imposes no TN penalties on Agility, Reflexes, Athletics or Stealth Skill Rolls. Additionally, the Armor provides an improved TN To Be Hit Bonus:

- Heavy Armor: +12
- Light Armor: +8
- Ashigaru Armor: +7
- Riding Armor: +10 while on foot, +16 while mounted.

Legendary Quality Other Items: The character receives two or more Free Raises whenever he uses the item for its purpose.

The GM is encouraged to create other bonuses or powers for items of Legendary quality. The kami residing in Legendary items are frequently more powerful than the norm, and many Legendary Quality items awaken into fully fledged nemuranai.

Glory and Status

Rokugan is a rigidly structured society. Every individual has a place within the Celestial Order, and must recognize that place. While one's birth has a substantial effect on one's place in the world, one's actions are also significant. A minor bushi who performs a heroic deed might find himself granted a position as a magistrate or provincial governor. The recognition and influence a particular individual can claim over the rest of society are thus a matter of both social rank and personal fame. Any player or non-player character can describe his place in Rokugani society using two attributes: Glory and Status.

Both Status and Glory are measured on a scale of Ranks from 1 to 10. Each Rank is divided into 10 points, and when 10 points are gained a character's Status or Glory increases by one Rank. For example, Shiba Tsai's Glory is at 4.8. He performs some extraordinary act and gains three points of Glory. His Glory is now 5.1.

Status

Status measures an individual's niche in Rokugan's society, his political rank relative to everyone else. Status is a rigid measurement of an individual's importance reflecting the duties he performs. An Emerald Magistrate has a great deal more Status than a ji-samurai guarding a small barley farm.

One must obey the commands of an individual with higher Status, assuming that individual also has authority. Higher Status implies greater importance, but does not always imply authority — a high-ranking Crane samurai cannot command a low-ranking Lion (that Lion's duties to his Champion outweigh the Crane's wishes), though that Lion must still show respect to his superior. If an individual is commanded by two individuals who both have authority over him, he must obey the person with higher Status.

A samurai must obey those who outrank him within his family as well as the Champion of his clan. Usually, samurai also obey those who have superior Status from other families within the same clan out of courtesy, but this is not always the case (among such internally divisive clans as the Phoenix, for example, this is somewhat rare). Soldiers and magistrates must obey their superior officers, regardless of what family (or clan, in the case of the Imperial Legions) they hail from. The Imperial Families have authority over everyone whom they outrank in Status (and in the Emperor's case, that's everyone). Extremely high-ranking individuals such as the Emerald Champion and the Shogun have authority over anyone of lower Status, and the Emperor naturally has the highest Status in the Empire.

Guests in a household are a special case, as the lord of the house does hold some limited authority over them. This has less to do with Status than manners. While in another samurai's home, it is best not to wear out one's welcome by violating his commands, as a disrespectful guest can always find hospitality revoked. Likewise, samurai of higher Status avoid undermining their host's command of the household while visiting, effectively voluntarily lowering their own Status beneath that of their host.

Within and beyond the samurai caste, Status also reflects the greater social structure. Peasants and eta have extremely low Status, below the standard scale (as most player characters are samurai). Minor Clan samurai have lower Status on the whole than Great Clan samurai. Imperial Family members have higher Status on the average than Great Clan samurai. No one has equal Status to the Emperor. When facing a member of a group with significantly higher Status it is wise to be obedient and helpful, even when that individual has no direct authority. In truth this is more a matter of common sense and discretion than a necessary aspect of Status. A Crab peasant, for example, might be terrified by a Unicorn bushi's demands to surrender his rice harvest, but will do his best to refuse to do so as such an act would be disloyal to his Crab lords.

EFFECTS OF STATUS

Disobeying your superior leads to an immediate loss of Honor (between one point and one Rank depending on the severity of the disobedience). Whether the superior's commands are dishonorable is not a factor; disobedience is disobedience. Further, at the whim of a character's lord, disobedience may lead to an immediate demotion in Status. In the case of peasants and eta, disobedience is frequently rewarded with brutal punishments or even death. If the commands of two superiors are in dispute, then the superior with higher Status has precedence. If the superiors have equal Status, you do not lose Honor so long as you obey one of them as best you can. (Naturally, the superior who has been disobeyed may still take offense.)

STATUS RANKS

Status is measured on a scale from 10 to -10. The following table lists the minimum Status for each individual rank. A character that has a position listed on this table could potentially have higher Status if he has received other promotions or special recognition. A character who serves in multiple roles has the Status granted by the highest-ranking role, or perhaps a point or two more to denote his expansive authority.

Note that a samurai's Status does not always carry an associated title. A samurai with Status 5 might be a city governor, or he may merely be a respected authority with no official title or duties. Samurai with Status of 7 or higher, however, must have one or more titles listed below or a new title created by the Emperor.

GAINING STATUS

Status may only be awarded by a samurai with higher Status, and is always indicative of a promotion of some sort. Status may only be awarded by an individual with some sort of authority over the recipient. For example, a Hohei in the Lion armies could not be promoted by a Crane family daimyo. If that same lion were to become an Emerald Magistrate, however, then the Emerald Champion (a Crane) could grant him any Status increase he deemed appropriate (though not equaling or exceeding his own Status). Certain individuals such as high-ranking members of the Imperial Families, the Imperial Chancellor, the Shogun, the Voice of the Emperor, and the Emperor himself can award Status to anyone if they wish to do so. This happens quite rarely, as Clan Champions often resent having their subordinates promoted without their permission (except in the case of the Emperor, of course, whose will is never disputed).

SAMURAI STATUS RANKS

The Emperor	10
The Empress	9.9
Shogun	9.9
Voice of the Emperor	9.5
The Emperor's Children	9.4
Seppun/Otomo/Miya Daimyo	9.3
Emerald Champion	9
Jade Champion	9
Imperial Chancellor	9
Imperial Advisor	9
Great Clan Daimyo	8
Minor Clan Daimyo	7.5
The Imperial Herald	7
Family Daimyo	7
Rikugunshokan (military rank — General)	7
Hatamoto (daimyo's honored retainer)	6
Provincial Governor	6
Shireikan (military rank — Commander)	6
City Governor	5
Taisa (military rank — Captain)	5.5
Chui (military rank — Lieutenant)	5
Vassal Family Daimyo	5
Karo (advisor to a lord)	4.7
Emerald or Jade Magistrate	4.5+
Clan Magistrate	4+
Gunso (military rank — sergeant)	3
Average Imperial Family Member	3
Diplomat	2
Gokenin (small estate manager)	2
Shisha (Imperial messenger)	2
Nikutai (military rank — corporal)	1.5
Average Great Clan/Minor Clan Samurai	1
Hohei (military rank — Private)	1
Ji-Samurai (Vassal Families)	0.5
Ronin (see sidebar)	N/A
Exile	N/A
Ninja (see sidebar)	-10

HEIMIN (PEASANT) STATUS RANKS

Monk (see sidebar)	0
Ashigaru (professional peasant soldier)	0.4
Doshin (peasant village officers)	0.3
Budoka (peasant warrior)	0.2
Farmer, woodsman, fisherman	0.2
Craftsman	0.1
Akindo (merchant or peddler)	0.1
Peasant levy	0.0
Exile	N/A

HININ (ETA) STATUS RANKS

Entertainer, Geisha	-1
Leatherworker, Butcher	-4
Torturer	-5
Gravedigger	-8
Exile	N/A

Increase of Status is never random, nor is it a guaranteed reward for services to the clan. In some cases, an increase in Status can even be a punishment, granting a lazy courtier a stressful position as chief magistrate of a small lawless city or forcing a brash bushi to spend a winter protecting the Emperor's favorite peacocks. For the most part, an increase in Status is a desirable thing, as a samurai with high Status gains more opportunities to serve his clan. For some, this is reward enough. Others seek high Status as a doorway to Glory (as fame is easier to obtain for those in important positions). Some dishonorable individuals see high Status as nothing more than a pathway to personal gain.

LOSING STATUS

Loss of Status indicates a loss of social position. Status may be revoked by an individual of higher Status who has authority over the subject. While there is no limit to how much Status can be removed at one time, a samurai cannot be reduced below Status 0.5 and peasants may not be reduced below Status 0.

An individual who believes he has been unjustly stripped of Status may plead his case to someone with higher Status than the one who demoted him. If the demotion was in fact unjust, such an act causes a loss of Honor (1 point for every 5 points of demotion in Status) for the individual who performed the demotion. There may be side effects. A samurai who goes about unjustly demoting his inferiors may find himself demoted in turn, or even the target of an angry challenge from those he has wronged.

Of course this works both ways. A person who is complains to a higher authority, but is deemed to have been demoted fairly, loses 1 point of Honor for every 5 points of Status loss and is publicly shamed. The superior who originally demoted him may also seek satisfaction for the insult in the form of a duel.

Loss of Status can be voluntary. Anyone who wishes to do so may report to his superior and formally renounce his Status. In most cases, openly denying one's duty is considered a cowardly, dishonorable act, and carries an equal loss of Glory and Honor. There are always exceptions, of course, the most notable being retirement. To forsake Status is not automatic; one's superior must approve it. If the act is not approved, Glory and Honor are still lost. If the character wishes to renounce his Status for an honorable reason (such as a skilled officer who wants to remain with his troops rather than serve in the court, a war hero who recognizes he would make a poor governor, or an elderly samurai who wishes to retire) and his request is denied, then the individual renouncing his Status loses nothing. In fact, at the GM's option this might lead his superior to look foolish (causing a possible loss of Glory and/or Honor for the superior).

THE EMPEROR AND STATUS

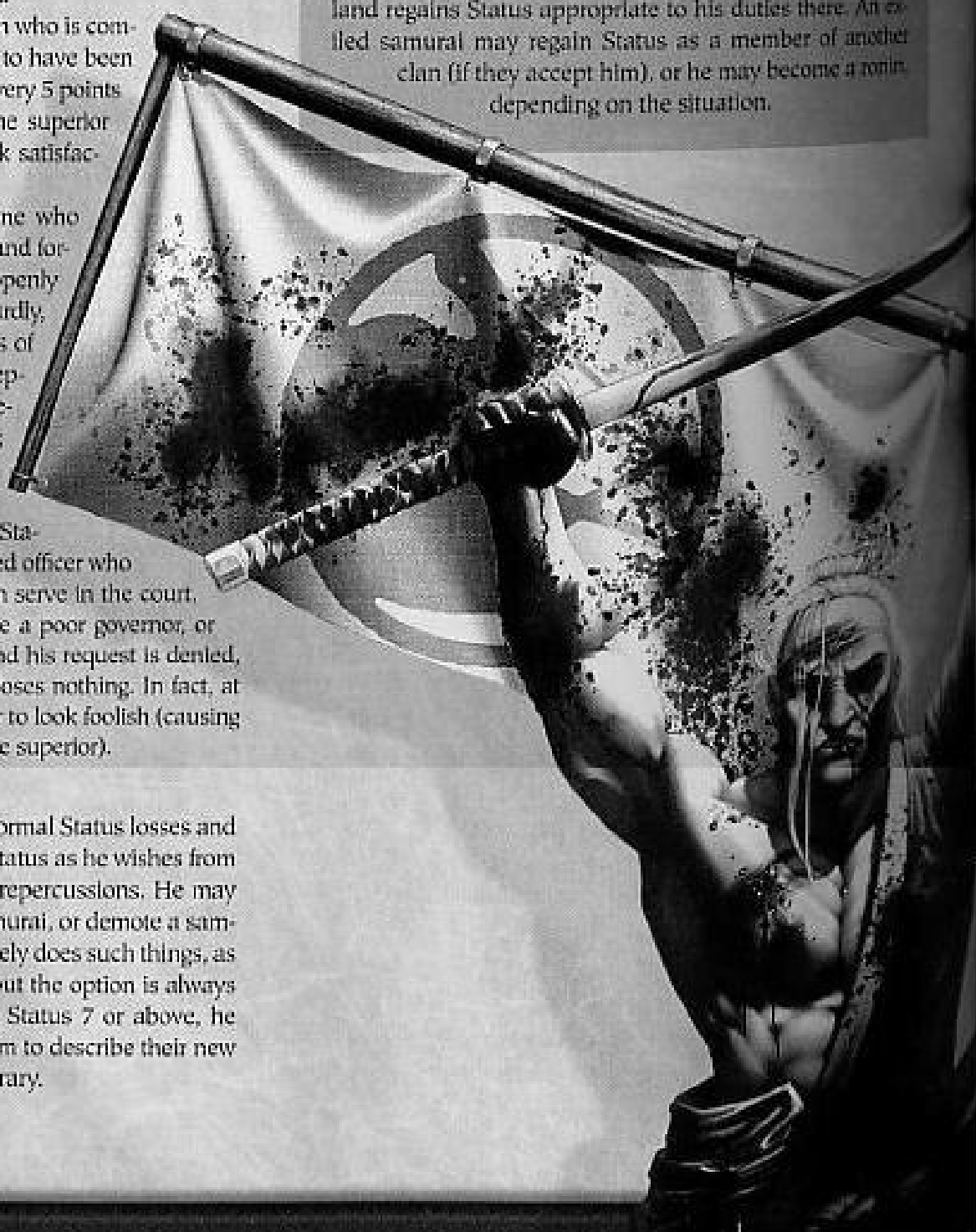
The Emperor stands outside the rules for normal Status losses and gains. He may award or remove as much Status as he wishes from whomever he wishes at any time with no repercussions. He may promote a peasant or eta to the level of samurai, or demote a samurai below samurai status. The Emperor rarely does such things, as such acts cause a great social disruption, but the option is always his. If the Emperor promotes someone to Status 7 or above, he also traditionally invents a new title for them to describe their new duties, even if these titles are entirely honorary.

Ronin, Exiles, and Status

Ronin are outcasts, abandoned by Rokugani society. As their place in the Empire's social structure is a gray area, they effectively have no Status Rank (not even a 0). They owe no man fealty, and in turn hold no authority over anyone. They are technically samurai, however, and can command all peasants and eta as if they had a Status of 1. This is not to say that ronin lack any sense of organization or duty — many ronin form brotherhoods with a distinct chain of command. However, this authority is not officially recognized, and thus they have no Status.

A ronin who is granted fealty or any sort of official duties under the command of a non-ronin immediately gains Status appropriate to his new duties. In addition, the Emperor can waive a ronin's loss of Status even if he serves no lord directly, and has done so for at least one ronin family (the Yotsu, who gain Status normally).

Exiles have been ordered to leave their clan's territory upon pain of death. These individuals are usually not welcome in other provinces either, and are forced to take their chances on Exile's Road (see page 300) or run from vengeful magistrates forever. As such, exiles also have no Status. An exiled peasant or eta who is welcome in another clan's land regains Status appropriate to his duties there. An exiled samurai may regain Status as a member of another clan (if they accept him), or he may become a ronin, depending on the situation.



Glory

Glory is a measure of an individual's personal fame, resulting from personal accomplishment. Where Status is an objective, rigid trait, Glory is subjective and often fluctuates wildly depending on a character's location and deeds. A renowned duelist, for instance, would have a greater amount of Glory than a minor clerk in the Imperial Libraries. The Emperor has a surprisingly low Glory, as the chances of him being recognized outside the Imperial Capital and without his retinue are low. Of course the number listed on the following table is the default Glory of an Emperor. Emperors renowned for visible, heroic activities (such as Toturi and his children) are far more easily recognized and thus have higher Glory.

High Glory does not impose obedience from those with lower Glory, but it does command respect. A heroic bushi recognized across the Empire might find that even samurai from rival clans are willing to aid him. This can be a burden, as a hero's Glory often causes him to be recognized even when he does not wish it, and others may seek fame by challenging a hero's prowess or expect a recognized hero to help solve their problems.

While Glory is a trait independent of Status, gaining Glory often leads to gaining Status. Rokugan dearly loves its heroes, and those who accrue high Glory are often promoted to positions of influence. Likewise, those who publicly perform villainous acts and accumulate negative Glory can look forward to a reduction in Status.

EFFECTS OF GLORY

A character's Glory affects both how likely he is to be recognized and how influential he is with others.

Any time a character meets people he has never met before, the GM makes a Raw Awareness Roll vs. TN 60 for him to see if he is recognized (the character may choose to spend a Void Point to roll and keep an additional die). This TN is reduced by the character's current Glory Rank \times 5. If this roll is successful, then those present recognize the character and are more or less aware of his past exploits. If the roll fails, they do not necessarily disbelieve the character is who he seems to be, but they are not particularly impressed. A character may reduce the recognition TN by 10 simply by introducing himself. If the character is introduced by a mutual acquaintance or presents legitimate proof of his identity, the roll is automatically successful (at most major courts, official heralds make certain everyone is recognized). A character may add his Glory Rank to the total of any social Skill roll once he is recognized.

Once someone has recognized you, they do not "forget" you, even if your Glory should later decrease. They may, however, wonder why you have failed to live up to your past reputation.

Ninja and Status

Ninja are the foulest sort of criminal in existence, a living violation of Imperial Decree. The Status rank listed here is that of a ninja whose existence as such is known to the Empire at large. Naturally, most ninja are wise enough not to advertise their existence in such a manner, and their Status reflects some other position they hold.

INFAMY

If a character is known for behaving in a dishonorable or criminal manner, then the GM may rule that his Glory immediately becomes an equal negative amount, known as Infamy. Infamy works exactly as Glory does for the purposes of being recognized (though people tend to be terrified rather than honored to meet an Infamous character). A character may add his Infamy Rank as a bonus to any attempt to intimidate or coerce someone's aid, or to any social rolls against other characters who also have Infamy. Characters with Glory may not apply their Glory as a bonus to social Skills against a target with Infamy, but may apply it as a bonus to intimidation attempt against them.

Acts that would normally cause a character to gain Glory only cause a character's Infamy to increase, and acts that would decrease Glory also decrease Infamy. Winning battles and defeating opponents only serves to make a villain more terrifying. Only if the character publicly redeems himself does his Infamy become Glory again. Actual remorse is not a factor — many a despicable villain has become a hero simply by being publicly forgiven by the Emperor, and has simply continued his villainous activity in the guise of a hero.

Being infamous is not a crime. Many well-known samurai are infamous, but those who recognize a character's Infamy keep an eye on him and are quick to react if they think that he is up to something.

GLORY RANKS

Like Status, Glory ranges on a scale from 10 to -10. The following table is a guide to determining a character's Glory, although it can fluctuate wildly. Glory Ranks listed on the following table are minimums. This means that a character who has fulfilled this requirement has his Glory increased to this amount, if it is below this amount. After this time, Glory increases and decreases normally.

For the most part, Glory is independent of Status. It is entirely possible (albeit unlikely) that even a peasant could become a great hero and gain great Glory. It is equally possible that a legendary samurai might have greater Glory than the Emperor, or that even the Emperor could descend into the depths of infamy.

A quick look at the table will also reveal that the easiest way to obtain Glory in Rokugan is through a successful military career. Rokugan is, after all, a land of warriors.

GAINING GLORY

While Status is always adjusted in a rigid, prescribed manner, the fame that Glory brings can fluctuate wildly. The only requirement for an increase in Glory is that a character's actions be publicized. A samurai who saves a peasant family from bandits and leaves without giving his name gains no Glory. This is not meant to imply that a samurai must brag about his actions. If the peasants were to learn their savior's name, they would spread word of his deeds for him. Likewise, accomplishments on the field of battle or in the eye of the courts are automatically publicized.

Many of the Glory gains depend upon the Glory or Status of another individual. In such a case, use whichever is higher.

GLORY RANKS

Legendary Hero (Seven Thunders, Shinsei)	10
Emerald Champion	8
Great Clan Daimyo	8
Jade Champion	7
Renowned War Hero (Clan War, War of Spirits)	7
Famous Playwright, Poet, Artisan	6
Family Daimyo	6
Famous Craftsman	6
Imperial Chancellor	6
The Imperial Herald	6
Shogun	6
Voice of the Emperor	6
Rikugunshokan (military rank — General)	6
Shireikan (military rank — Commander)	5
War Hero (winning army)	5
The Emperor	4
The Empress	4
Imperial Advisor	4
Minor Clan Daimyo	4
Seppun/Otomo/Miya Daimyo	4
Taisa (military rank — Captain)	4
War Hero (losing side, but conducted self honorably)	4
Chui (military rank — Lieutenant)	3
Emerald Magistrate	3
The Emperor's Children	3
Geisha	3
Gunso (military rank — sergeant)	3
Hatamoto (daimyo's honored retainer)	3
Imperial Legionnaire	3
Provincial Governor	3
City Governor	2
Clan Magistrate	2
Karo (advisor to a lord)	2
Monk (see sidebar)	2
Nikutai (military rank — corporal)	2
Shisha (Imperial messenger)	2
Vassal Family Daimyo	2
Craftsman	1
Diplomat	1
Gokenin (small estate manager)	1
Hohei (military rank — Private)	1
Merchants	1
Ashigaru (professional peasant soldier)	0.5
Budoka (peasant warrior)	0.5
Doshin (peasant village officers)	0.5
Ji-Samurai (Vassal Families)	0.5

Characters guilty of the following gain Infamy equal to at least the following. Infamy is not a measure of criminal behavior, but how much one's startling public actions lead to recognition. A character who is secretly a maho-tsukai or ninja gains no Infamy.

INFAMY RANKS

Bandit	-1
Killer (known for unnecessarily ending disputes in blood)	-2
Exile	-4
Conqueror (war hero known for ruthlessness)	-4
Gaijin (diplomat)	-5
Gaijin (any)	-6
Maho-Tsukai	-8
Ninja	-8
Dark Lord of the Shadowlands	-10

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

If a character's actions are publicly acknowledged as heroic, honorable, or extraordinary by another character with Status 7 or higher, he immediately gains a Rank of Glory. If the character's actions are publicly acknowledged by the Emperor, he gains two Ranks of Glory. Only the largest Glory gain in this manner within the last year counts.

AVENGING A BLOOD FEUD

If the character fairly and publicly defeats an individual who has wronged his family, he gains Glory Points equal to his enemy's Status or Glory (his choice).

COMPLETING A QUEST

If the character is assigned an important quest and returns successfully, he gains Glory Points equal to 1/2 the Glory or Status of the person who gave him the quest (round up) as a bonus to any other gains he may have accumulated for his actions along the way. A character gains no Glory for completing a quest for his own lord or for completing a quest that would have fallen within his normal duties. A Crab samurai spending a year upon the Kalu Wall or an Emerald Magistrate rescuing a kidnapped maiden from bandits, for example, is only doing what is expected no matter how heroic those deeds might be.

CRAFTSMANSHIP

A character who creates a work of lasting beauty (a poem, a sword, a well-made tool) gains a Glory Point for each Raise he made while creating the item. Certain crafts are seen as particularly honorable and grant twice this amount. These include armorsmithing, weaponsmithing, calligraphy, poetry, tattooing (Dragon only), animal husbandry (Unicorn only), and shipbuilding (Mantis only). Once a character has gained Glory in this manner, he may not gain Glory for the same Craft Skill again for one month per Raise, unless he makes a greater number of Raises than the previous instance (in which case he only gains Glory for the additional Raises). At the GM's discretion, a character who regularly creates items of lasting beauty might gain notoriety as a Great Craftsman (see Glory table).

DUELS

Upon winning a fair duel with an opponent, a character gains Glory Points equal to 1/3 of his enemy's Status or Glory Rank (winner's choice, round up) if the enemy was of lower Insight Rank, or equal to his enemy's Status or Glory Rank if the enemy was of equal or higher Insight Rank. A character gains an additional three points of Glory for killing an opponent in a fair duel. Only the largest Glory award gained within the last month counts.

GIFTS

A character who gives or receives a gift gains Glory Points equal to the other character's Glory or Status Rank if either is higher than his own Glory. If both are lower than his own Glory, he gains one Glory Point. Only the largest Glory award gained within the last week counts. Thus high-ranking samurai are often overwhelmed by a subordinate's attempts to shower them with gifts, and samurai lords who reward their servants are rewarded in return with steadfast loyalty from those who share in their master's Glory.

IMMORTALITY

If the character is known to be the inspiration for a work of poetry, sculpture, or literature he immediately gains Glory Points equal to the highest Glory or Status Rank of those who have enjoyed the work. This Glory reward continues to bestow itself every year that the work is still enjoyed. Only the largest Glory reward gained in this manner within the last year counts. A character can indeed be the inspiration for his own work, assuming he can convince others to appreciate his self-aggrandizing creation.

LEARNING

It is glorious to be honored by one's sensei. Each time a character gains a new Insight Rank, he also gains a rank of Glory.

MARRIAGE

Upon marriage, the spouse with the lower Glory becomes one rank lower than the partner's Glory (if that is an increase). In addition, both bride and groom gain Glory Points equal to the Status Rank of their spouse's father (or mother, in the case of matriarchal families such as the Matsu, Moshl, and Utaku).

PUBLIC BRAGGING

Samurai are well known for bragging about their exploits. Any time you gain Glory, you can gain one more point of Glory by bragging about your actions publicly at some point within the next year. You may make one attempt to do so, making an Awareness/Bard (Bragging) roll vs. TN 20. You can also brag on behalf of someone else you know, gaining a Glory Point for that person. This act is not generally seen as arrogant or dishonorable if it is done in good taste and not exaggerated excessively (some embellishment is expected). It is a samurai's duty to let others know the glorious deeds he has performed in the Emperor's name, so that they will be inspired by his example. At the GM's option bragging about sensitive topics (like describing one's defeat of a Crane duelist while visiting the court of Kyuden Kakita) will just rouse anger rather than granting Glory.

ROMANCE

Love is a rare thing in Rokugan, and those who walk its treacherous path might find that others honor them as heroes. A samurai who publicly proclaims his love for another gains a point of Glory. Note that Glory is only gained so long as a samurai proclaims his love in an honorable and discreet manner. Many do so by concealing the identity of their love within a poem. Glory may be gained in this manner once a week.

SKIRMISHES

A character gains one point of Glory (total) for defeating bandits, ronin, Shadowlands beasts, or other enemies outside of open warfare. Glory may be gained in this manner once a week. Particularly dangerous encounters award three Glory Points.

STATUS

Any time a character's Status increases, he gains a number of Glory Points equal to the number of Status Ranks gained (round up). Multiple Status promotions gained within one month count as a single promotion.

STEALING CREDIT

Perception is everything where Glory is concerned. Thus it is entirely conceivable for someone to gain Glory for an action he did not perform. If a character claims credit for some heroic act and others believe him, then he gains Glory as if he actually performed that act (though he loses Honor for the lie).

WARFARE

A character gains three points of Glory for each battle he survives and six points if his army won. If he played an unexpected instrumental part in winning the battle, he gains an additional five points of Glory.

LOSING GLORY

Glory is frequently lost as easily as it is gained. Fame is fickle, and public opinion can swiftly turn against a former hero if he does not meet the expectations of others. Extraordinarily vile or dishonorable acts such as use of maho, assassination, and other criminal behavior do not cause a loss of Glory — loss of Glory implies a lessening of recognition. Rather, such acts cause one's Glory to become Infamy. Dishonor does little to lessen one's reputation — it simply gives you a bad reputation.

To lose Glory or gain Infamy, the cause of the loss must be known. A ninja who murders his enemies but covers his tracks well gains no Infamy. A samurai who is defeated in a duel with no witnesses likewise loses no Glory unless his opponent tells others of what occurred and he admits to his defeat.

As in Glory gains, many losses refer to the Glory or Status of another individual. In such a case, use whatever statistic is higher.

CAUGHT IN A LIE

If a character is proven not to have been responsible for an act that granted him Glory, he immediately loses double the amount of Glory he originally gained for that act. A character who can later prove that he actually performed the deed regains the lost Glory, and his accuser loses Glory as if he had been caught in a lie for this same action.

DEFEAT

A character leading an army that loses a battle or who is defeated in a duel loses one full rank of Glory. This Glory is lost only if you survive the incident, leading many samurai to hurl themselves into a desperate, glorious death when all seems lost.

FAMILY DISHONOR

If a character is related to another person who has committed a deeply shameful, criminal, or dishonorable act (including being cast out as a ronin) the character loses a full rank of Glory. If the shamed character redeems himself in some manner (including honorable seppuku) the lost Glory is immediately regained.

IDLENESS

The easiest way to lose Glory is by simply doing nothing. Each week that passes, a character loses one point of Glory. If he has done nothing to gain Glory within that week he loses three points of Glory instead. If the character's Glory is less than or equal to his Insight Rank he ceases to lose Glory in this manner until it is higher again.

INDIFFERENCE

If a character has showed poor manners, lost face in public, or is a guest in the home of his enemies, he might find that other samurai may choose to punish him by ignoring his behavior (good or ill). A samurai who is being ignored in such a manner has all Glory gains reduced by one point, and all Glory losses increased by two points. If his hosts choose to cease ignoring him this effect ends.

DEATH AND GLORY

If a character dies, his Glory immediately ceases to change, except as follows. If a character dies heroically, he immediately gains one Rank of Glory. If a shrine is built to the character's memory, he gains a further Rank of Glory while the shrine still stands.

SITUATIONAL GLORY MODIFIERS

As a measure of fame, Glory can alter dramatically depending on the situation. The following are temporary modifiers that can affect Glory so long as they are in effect.

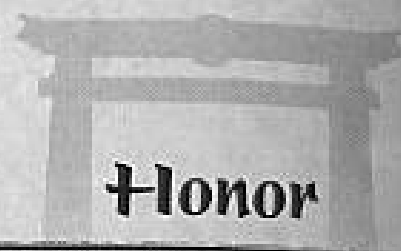
Situation	Glory Modifier
Wearing an official personal mon	+0.5 Glory Ranks
Has lived in the area for more than one year	+0.5 Glory Ranks
Accompanied by retinue of servants/sycophants	+2 Glory Ranks
Was born, raised, or trained in the area	+1 Glory Ranks
Has performed heroic acts in the area	+1 Glory Rank
Ruler of local castle, city, or province	+2 Glory Ranks

Monks

Monks are a special case as far as Status and Glory are concerned. For all intents and purposes their Status is permanently Rank 0, equal to that of peasants. However, they are not regarded or treated in the same way as other peasants. Monks are looked upon with reverence and respect, and widely-known monks are revered for their wisdom.

Effectively, a monk uses his Glory Rank as if it were Status, but has no authority over anyone who is not a monk. Samurai usually choose to show deference to a monk with high Glory, just as they would to a samurai with higher Status but no authority over them. Monks do not gain Glory for warfare, duels, skirmishes, marriage or romance.

Within the Brotherhood, monks have their own systems of rank that they obey rigidly (some sects more rigidly than others). Monks from different sects have no authority over one another, though most sects in the Brotherhood are courteous toward one another even if their philosophies differ.



Honor is the beating heart of Rokugan, and a character's Honor Rank is a reflection of this concept. While Status reflects one's importance in society and Glory reflects one's overall fame, Honor is the ultimate measure of one's integrity.

Your Honor Rank is not a straitjacket. Honor does not determine your character's behavior — quite the opposite. How you choose to behave, how you choose to embrace bushido and prove your worth to others, determines your Honor. Having high Honor Rank, in turn, provides certain advantages. Certain Advantages, spells, Techniques, and other character options are more potent when wielded by a character with high Honor.

Honor is both an internal and external concept. While to a large degree Honor reflects how a character feels he adheres to the concepts of bushido, it also reflects how others perceive him. If it were purely a matter of how one perceives oneself, the entire concept would be irrelevant, as many of the Empire's greatest villains have considered themselves misunderstood but honorable souls. In reality, even the most loyal Scorpion assassin can only lie to himself so much before he realizes how others perceive his dishonorable actions. Though many clans place different stigma on different sorts of activities, there is a general agreement that a number of actions are ultimately honorable or dishonorable.

Much like Glory and Status, Honor is measured in Ranks, with each rank divided into ten points. When you perform honorable actions, you gain Honor. When you perform dishonorable actions, you lose Honor. A character's beginning Honor is determined by his Clan and School. Honor is measured in six ranks, from zero to five. These ranks are loosely defined as follows.

HONOR RANK 0: "HONORLESS DOG"

You do not adhere to the principles of bushido. You mock those who do, viewing bushido as a code followed by easily manipulated idealists. You cannot be trusted, though you might go to great lengths to conceal it. You would betray anyone to gain an advantage. Most criminals fall under this category.

HONOR RANK 1: "UNTRUSTWORTHY"

While you are hardly honorable, you are at least somewhat reliable. Perhaps your upbringing has left you some veneer of virtue, a loose morality that even you will not violate (such as not betraying your duty, not bringing harm to children, etc.). Perhaps you are merely a coward and can be relied upon to behave honorably so long as the threat of punishment is real. While you recognize the importance of bushido, you consider it imperfect or inconvenient. You easily ignore your conscience when it is safe or profitable to do so. Most peasants fall in this category, as do many ronin and Lost.

HONOR RANK 2: "WHAT IS EXPECTED"

This is the default level of Honor for those of the samurai class. You follow the tenets of bushido to the letter. You still feel qualms whenever you must let your own interests be supplanted by the

interests of your Clan, and you generally do what honor requires. You believe in bushido, but sometimes find it difficult to understand, and you shy away from selfless acts of virtue. Though you may not have the potential to be a true paragon of honor, those who embrace bushido are true heroes in your eyes.

HONOR RANK 3: "EXCEPTIONAL"

You have seen the strength of bushido. While you feel the temptations of "low" character, you ignore them with effort. Occasionally you allow yourself to ignore virtue in the name of practicality, and these choices always haunt you for a long time afterward.

HONOR RANK 4: "A SOUL ABOVE QUESTION"

You are a rarity, one of the few samurai who cannot be swayed from their duty to kin and clan. Because of your devotion to bushido, others frequently admire you but also view you as rigid or impractical. For your part, you see virtue as more important than pragmatism — honor is its own reward, and wipes away all failure.

HONOR RANK 5: "STRENGTH OF A THOUSAND ANCESTORS"

Those who have reached Honor 5 are the stuff of legends. You are so far above reproach that those who dare to doubt your honor only serve to call their own into question. You are selfless, completely devoted to Empire, family and clan. Ironically at this level, some amount of flexibility is regained as you define virtue through your every action.

Honor Losses and Gains

Honor is not a static trait. The more Honor one gains, the more difficult it becomes to accumulate. Likewise, the more Honor one gains, the easier it is to lose Honor. The following table gives a general idea of how much Honor is gained and lost during a variety of situations at each given Rank of Honor. The situations given on this table each reflect how one would uphold various virtues of bushido. Honorable actions may not always be the most practical actions — but no one ever said the honorable man's road was an easy one.

Some actions, such as blindly following orders, can cause either honor gains or honor losses depending on Honor Rank. This is intentional. An individual with low Honor will presumably seek to defy his lord's orders because they interfere with his own dishonorable ends, so obeying their lord's legitimate commands causes an Honor gain. Samurai with extremely high Honor (4 or higher) would only even consider defying their lord's orders if those orders were extremely dishonorable. Thus, to ignore one's misgivings and proceed to act dishonorably as ordered causes an Honor loss. Likewise, some actions cease to grant Honor altogether at the higher ranks. An extremely honorable samurai is not expected to be discourteous to his rivals, but treating them with respect gains him no additional honor. Such behavior is merely expected.

No matter how reprehensible or virtuous a person might be, Honor can never drop below 0.0 or increase above 5.9.

Gains/Losses By Honor Rank

Action	0	1	2	3	4	5
Accepting a bribe.	0	0	-2	-2	-4	-4
Accepting responsibility for a superior's shameful actions.	5	4	3	2	2	2
Acknowledging a superior opponent.	2	2	2	1	1	0
Aiding a wounded enemy.	5	4	3	3	3	2
Being an accomplice to a heinous crime (kidnapping, murder)	0	-2	-4	-6	-8	-10
Being an accomplice to a minor crime (theft, espionage)	0	0	-2	-2	-4	-4
Being disloyal to your lord, spouse, or superior.	0	-1	-3	-5	-7	-9
Being duped into performing a criminal act.	0	-2	-4	-6	-8	-10
Being duped into performing a disloyal act.	0	-1	-3	-3	-5	-7
Being duped into performing a foolish act.	0	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5
Blasphemously breaching etiquette (insulting the Emperor).	-3	-3	-5	-5	-8	-10
Committing a major breach of etiquette (public drunkenness, insulting one's host).	0	-1	-1	-1	-3	-3
Committing a minor breach of etiquette (incorrect greeting, spilling tea).	0	0	-1	-1	-1	-1
Deliberately deceiving another.	0	-1	-1	-3	-3	-5
Disobeying your lord's commands.	0	-1	-1	-3	-3	-5
Enduring an insult to your ancestors.	0	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5
Enduring an insult to yourself.	2	1	1	0	0	1
Enduring an insult to your family or clan.	0	0	-1	-1	-2	-2
Facing a clearly superior foe in the name of your family/clan.	4	3	3	2	2	1
Fleeing from battle.	0	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5
Following orders despite personal misgivings.	2	2	0	0	-1	-1
Fulfilling a promise despite great personal cost.	4	4	3	2	1	0
Giving a truthful report that will harm your own standing.	4	3	2	1	0	0
Instigating unwarranted violence.	0	0	-2	-2	-4	-5
Using to bolster your own reputation.	0	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5
Manipulating another person to perform a dishonorable act.*	0	-1	-2	-3	-4	-5
Politely ignoring another person's dishonorable behavior.	1	1	0	0	-1	-1
Pretending to show courtesy to gain advantage on an enemy.	0	0	-1	-3	-5	-5
Protecting your clan/family/lord's interests despite great personal risk.	5	4	3	3	2	1
Showing kindness to one beneath your station.	3	3	2	2	1	1
Showing sincere courtesy to your rivals.	5	5	3	1	0	0

*In addition, you also lose Honor equal to the amount lost by the person performing the act.

Other Aspects of Honor

HONOR AND AWARENESS

A high Awareness grants exceptional talent in judging character. Upon first meeting a person, you can make a Raw Awareness Roll to determine how honorable they are. If you already know of this person by reputation, you gain a Free Raise on this roll. The TN for this roll is equal to 30 minus their Glory + Insight Rank. If this roll is successful, the GM gives you a general idea (not the exact Rank) how honorable they are. A character with Honor 0 might read as "somewhat untrustworthy" while a character with Honor 5 is perceived as "quite impressive and sincere." Advantages such as Perceived Honor Interfere with the results of this roll normally.

HONOR ROLLS AND TESTS OF HONOR

Though many Techniques, spells, and Advantages are affected by Honor, one advantage of high Honor that all characters can enjoy is that of the Test of Honor. Once per game session, when you fail at any roll, you may make an Honor Roll. This allows you to reroll the failed roll, using your Honor in place of a Skill, Trait, or Ring of your choice (you must replace some aspect of the roll with your Honor). If the Honor Roll succeeds, then the roll succeeds normally. If this roll fails, you lose ten points of Honor!

Tests of Honor are a special sort of Honor Roll that may also be made at any time when your failure would result directly in a loss of Honor. A geisha who attempts a Contested Awareness/Seduction roll you to lure you away from your guard post is a legitimate target for a Test of Honor. Attacking an enemy and missing generally results in no Honor

loss (though it may result in death) so it could not be rerolled as a Test of Honor.

The penalties for failing a Test of Honor are the same as failing an Honor Roll, but should you succeed you gain two points of Honor.

Kata

Kata are special practice maneuvers learned by all bushi. Similar to a dance, a kata has a set pattern of movements that honor a warrior's familiarity with certain attacks. They are typically used as training exercises or as a focus for meditation, though some have practical applications in combat. Though many of these kata limit one's ability to react spontaneously, they can be very useful in the proper situation. Like Techniques, major bushi schools all claim unique kata. Many tests of a bushi's skill involve performing one or more kata for show.

Learning a new kata requires as much time and energy as learning a new Technique. The GM is encouraged to use his own judgment in determining how long it will take a character to master a new kata.

While a kata is active, the character may choose to stop using the kata in order to lose both its benefits and its penalties. This is announced on the character's action, and only goes into effect at that point. If the kata is still available (the duration has not run out), he may later resume using that kata by making an announcement on his action in the same manner.

As kata require precise, choreographed movements, a character may be affected by only one kata at a time, unless noted otherwise in the description of a particular kata. There is no limit to the number of kata a character may know. Kata may be affected by the use of Void Points. A bushi who invests more of his focus into a kata is likely to reap stronger benefits. Each kata details how Void Points may be spent to affect the mechanics of the kata, if at all. These effects are not cumulative — if a kata says a character may spend a Void Point to roll an additional damage die while using the kata, he may not spend two Void Points to roll two additional dice.



Kata are almost exclusively practiced either empty-handed or with a melee weapon. Very few kata are applied to the art of archery or ranged combat. Unless noted otherwise, kata may not be used with bows or thrown weapons.

Like School Techniques, each School has a set of kata that are taught only to its students. These kata require a minimum understanding of a particular School, as the kata builds upon existing teachings from that School or presents some variant on it. There are kata that are common to all dojo, and these may be taken by any bushi with the minimum Insight Rank described by the kata. These "common" kata come primarily in two classes. The first comprises those such as the Striking As the Elements kata, basic exercises that can be applied to most forms of combat. These kata are practiced in all dojo and are often the first kata any bushi learns. The second class is far less common — kata that were created by a bushi, then shared freely with the rest of the Empire. To date, the only major set of kata of this type is called The Thousand Years of Steel. These kata were devised by Mirumoto Uso and Kakita Kaiten, arguably two of the greatest swordsmen of their generation. These kata were developed in 1132 during the fight against the Lying Darkness as an attempt to show unity in a time of strife. The Thousand Years of Steel focuses on the similarities between Kakita's The Sword and Mirumoto's Niten, demonstrating that even two such dissimilar styles can exist in harmony. Though not as common as the Striking As the Elements kata, the Thousand Years of Steel is taught to anyone who wishes to learn.

Kata Format

Name

PREPARATION TIME: How long the bushi must spend focusing on the kata's maneuvers and strikes before he can use the kata. If this preparation time is interrupted for longer than a minute, the preparation is ruined and must begin again. If the bushi spends twice the listed preparation time practicing a kata during morning exercises, he can call upon the kata at any time that day, disregarding the "Duration" listed below.

DURATION: Kata that are prepared normally have a limited duration. The kata's bonuses and penalties are always in effect during the duration unless the kata says that it must be "activated." If an activated kata is not used at some point during the duration period, its effects are lost. Kata may be extended for another full duration by spending three Void Points when the kata's effects are about to end. Kata that end instantly after an attack roll or other predetermined single situation (such as taking a set amount of damage) cannot be extended in this way.

Between the "Duration" and "Rank" entries is a brief description of the kata's effects.

RANK: The minimum requirement to learn the kata. Typically, this is a minimum rank in a particular school that teaches the kata, though some kata are common throughout the Empire and have only a minimum Insight Rank requirement. This Insight Rank requirement may be met by bushi School Ranks unless otherwise noted.

COST: The cost to learn the kata, in Experience Points.

SPECIAL: If a special requirement must be met to learn or use this kata, it will be listed here.

EFFECT: The game effects that the kata produces.

VOID: If the kata can produce extra effects with the expenditure of Void Points, it will be described here.

Common Kata

Striking As Earth

PREPARATION TIME: 10 minutes

DURATION: 120 minutes

This kata draws on the inner reserves of Earth within the body. Just as Earth can shield from harm, so does it often fail to perceive the world around it.

RANK: Insight Rank 1

COST: 2

SPECIAL: Must have an Earth Ring of 3 or higher.

EFFECT: Your TN to Be Hit is increased by 5, but your Awareness- and Perception-based rolls roll one fewer die.

VOID: None.

Striking As Fire

PREPARATION TIME: 10 minutes

DURATION: 120 minutes

Schools that focus on speed over power teach this kata right away, improving the accuracy and repetition of a student's strike.

RANK: Insight Rank 1

COST: 2

SPECIAL: Must have a Fire Ring of 3 or higher.

EFFECT: Your Initiative rolls are increased by 2 and you roll one extra die on melee attacks. You roll one fewer die on all melee damage rolls.

VOID: None.

Striking As Water

PREPARATION TIME: 10 minutes

DURATION: 120 minutes

Focusing on pure strength, this kata brings the destructive power of Water to bear, sacrificing precision for powerful and sometimes wild swings.

RANK: Insight Rank 1

COST: 2

SPECIAL: Must have a Water Ring of 3 or higher.

EFFECT: You roll two additional dice on all melee damage rolls with a blunt weapon. Your Initiative is reduced by 5 and you roll one fewer die on all attack rolls.

VOID: None.

Striking As Wind

PREPARATION TIME: 10 minutes

DURATION: 120 minutes

This kata teaches maneuverability at the cost of all else. Striking as Wind allows phenomenally quick movements at the price of both power and accuracy.

RANK: Insight Rank 1

COST: 2

SPECIAL: Must have an Air Ring of 3 or higher.

EFFECT: You roll two additional dice on all Initiative rolls. You roll one fewer die on all attack and damage rolls.

VOID: None.



Striking As Void

PREPARATION TIME: 10 minutes

DURATION: One day

This kata is pure meditation, having no practical combat application. Striking As Void allows a bushi to prepare multiple kata at once.

RANK: Insight Rank 2

COST: 5

SPECIAL: You must know Striking As Earth, Striking As Fire, Striking As Water, and Striking As Wind to learn this kata.

EFFECT: You are able to prepare two additional kata for the day simultaneously. These two kata (neither of which may be Striking As Void) must be chosen when this kata is learned, and cannot be changed. This kata must be prepared normally.

VOID: None.

The Empire Rests On Its Edge

"To tread on the sword and not be cut — this is the true mindset of a samurai."

— Kakita

"Only a fool draws a blade rashly, unknowing that the whole world rests on its edge."

— Mirumoto

PREPARATION TIME: 15 minutes

DURATION: 120 minutes

The first truth that Uiso and Kaiten discovered about their ancestors' styles is that both men believed the way of the sword to be reflected in every aspect of life. Those who master this kata come to understand that for a true warrior, all things can be balanced on the edge of the sword.

RANK: Insight Rank 1

COST: 2

SPECIAL: Must be used with a katana or daisho.

EFFECT: When you learn this kata, you must choose a single High Skill. When using this kata, that High Skill is considered to be halved (rounded up) and your attack rolls gain a bonus equal to your full (unmodified) Rank in that Skill.

VOID: None.

Victory of the Wind

"Unseen. Unpredictable. Unassailable. Only a fool believes he can fight the wind."

— Kakita

"Like the very air, you must surround your foe from all sides at once."

— Mirumoto

PREPARATION TIME: 20 minutes

DURATION: 120 minutes

In both a duel of iaijutsu and a more common skirmish, the master of the sword understands it is not always he who strikes first who is victorious — it is he who strikes first with perfect form. This kata teaches movements and strikes meant to disable a hindered foe.

RANK: Insight Rank 2

COST: 3

SPECIAL: Must be used with a katana or daisho.

EFFECT: You gain a Free Raise to attack an opponent for every full Wound Rank they have, but may not gain more Free Raises in this manner than you have Insight Ranks. Your Damage rolls roll and keep one fewer die.

VOID: None.

The World is Empty

"Strike free of worldly concerns."

— Kakita

"Obstacles are illusions. Technique is illusion. The world is empty."

— Mirumoto

PREPARATION TIME: 25 minutes

DURATION: 60 minutes

From early in their lives, both Kakita and Mirumoto understood that there was a hidden connection between all things in the universe, a connection that could lead to flashes of greatness. This was what is now known as the Void, and both swordsmen spent their lives learning to live in harmony with it. This kata expands on their mutual quest, and focuses the bushi's mind on a single moment of purity.

RANK: Insight Rank 3

COST: 5

SPECIAL: Must be used with a katana or daisho.

EFFECT: When you activate this kata, you roll an extra number of dice to all attack and damage rolls equal to the number of Void Points you have. These bonuses last for the remainder of this round and the next, at which time you lose all Void Points, roll and keep one fewer die on all rolls, and cannot recover Void without an hour's rest.

VOID: None.

Victory of the River

"In the unending and unyielding movement of water, there is wisdom."

— Kakita

"Strike like the flowing river, without beginning or end."

— Mirumoto

PREPARATION TIME: 30 minutes

DURATION: 180 minutes

Central to a true mastery of the sword is the understanding that between the time the sword is drawn and the time it is sheathed, there is only one strike. The strike may move and weave and flow like the movements of a river, but a true master makes ten attacks in one movement. This kata favors strikes that blend together in such a manner, causing one effective attack to create another, then another, and then another.

RANK: Insight Rank 4

COST: 6

SPECIAL: Must be used with a katana or daisho.

EFFECT: When you successfully strike an opponent, his TN to Be Hit is reduced by 10 for your attacks until the end of the next round. Multiple strikes are cumulative. Your TN to Be Hit is 10 lower while this kata is active, and you cannot declare a Full Defense.

VOID: None.

Standing On the Heavens

"Protect my daughter, Mirumoto."
"Protect my Empire, Kakita."

— Kakita

— Mirumoto

PREPARATION TIME: 35 minutes
DURATION: 180 minutes

The houses of Mirumoto and Kakita have been rivals for centuries, but they are tied by one common thread: the souls of Trancers. Mirumoto was called upon to venture into the Shadowlands with Kakita's daughter to defeat Fu Leng, and neither returned. In this way, both houses share a connection to each other and the immortal Heavens. Seven mortals faced a god and mortal will triumphed — that is the lesson of this kata. This kata primes the spirit to supernatural reflexes, causing the warrior's soul to become an indomitable force that is assured of victory.

RANK: Insight Rank 5

COST: 7

SPECIAL: Must be used with a katana or daisho.

EFFECT: Whenever you would be struck in combat, you may spend a Void Point to force the attack roll to be re-rolled. If you ever have zero Void Points while this kata is active, your TN to Be Hit is reduced by 10, and your dice do not explode for the rest of the day.

VOID: None.

Crab Kata

Crab dojo are as secretive as any, though they have been known to teach their most treasured kata to any Crab bushi who can shoulder the burden of an unending war against the Shadowlands.

Hida's Avalanche

PREPARATION TIME: 30 minutes

DURATION: 180 minutes

This kata was developed by Hida's son Atarasi as a way of teaching the nascent Crab Clan's armies how to advance on a more powerful foe. Hida's Avalanche is often cited as the first appearance of a technique that would eventually become the Berserker School of the Crab, but the kata is a treasured secret taught only to students of the Hida Bushi School. Taking a cue from his stone father and the unstoppable torrents of stone rolling down a mountain, Atarasi developed this kata to teach strikes that gather speed and fury as more strikes are made. Eventually, the bushi practicing this ancient kata becomes a savage whirlwind without regard for his own safety, tearing down enemies as if they were paper.

RANK: Hida Bushi 5

COST: 9

SPECIAL: Must be used with a two-handed weapon.

EFFECT: Whenever you strike an enemy, you may lower your TN to Be Hit by 5 (once per strike) to roll and keep an additional die of damage while attacking that enemy. These bonuses and penalties are cumulative, and the penalty to your TN to Be Hit does not apply for the remainder of the combat. If your current target is

defeated (reduced to the Down Wound Level or lower), you lose two of the extra damage dice gained by this kata, but may keep the remainder to attack your next foe, whom you must attack until he is defeated in order to retain these bonus dice, and so on. You lose these bonus dice at any time you stop attacking your current foe, if he is still standing.

VOID: You may spend two Void Points to lose only one damage die instead of two when moving to a different opponent.

Shards of Earth

PREPARATION TIME: 20 minutes

DURATION: 120 minutes

The Hida teach their bushi to focus their chi like the earth, becoming impenetrable. They show their students how to draw out their elemental earth and augment their already impressive fortitude. This kata takes a different approach to the Hida family's affinity for the element, striking at the earth within their opponent.

RANK: Hida Bushi 3 or Hiruma Scout 4

COST: 4

SPECIAL: The effects of this kata end once a successful attack is made.

EFFECT: You may completely ignore armor and Carapace when you make an attack using this kata. If you strike a target that was unprepared (i.e. unaware of the attack), the opponent must succeed on a Contested Earth Roll against you or be thrown off his feet and lose his next action.

VOID: You may spend 2 Void once while preparing this kata to extend it for an additional successful attack.

Shell of Stone

PREPARATION TIME: 10 minutes

DURATION: 60 minutes

The most basic kata of the Hida Bushi School, this exercise reinforces the primary techniques of a Crab warrior's defense and is often learned by the Hida's cousins in the Hiruma family. The kata is performed in full armor and uses positioning and movement to make the bushi nearly impossible to hit effectively. Mastery of this kata is demonstrated by a novice bushi performing it while being struck multiple times by senior students wielding all manner of heavy weapons. Though not all first-year students survive the process without broken bones or similar injuries, the kata prevents what would otherwise be a painful death from severe internal bleeding.

RANK: Hida Bushi 1, Hiruma Scout 2

COST: 2

SPECIAL: Must be used with heavy armor.

EFFECT: When you use this kata, you may either double your effective Defense Skill or double the bonus gained from wearing heavy armor. You may not declare a Full Attack, and you roll one fewer die for Initiative and attack rolls.

VOID: None.



Stance of the Wall

PREPARATION TIME: 15 minutes

DURATION: 60 minutes

This unusual kata shows little in the way of foot movement, instead focusing the bushi's training on striking and defending from as many angles as possible from a single position. The bushi steps from side to side during the kata, reflecting the movements of a crab or the defensive ability of a wall. Several Crab bushi employing this kata in tandem create a high-impossible barrier.

RANK: Hida Bushi 2, Hiruma Scout 3

COST: 3

SPECIAL: None.

EFFECT: This kata prevents forward movement, and your total movement is halved while it is active. You gain a +5 bonus to your TN to Be Hit, and you may not be flanked. You gain a Free Raise against any opponent who has moved during the round or who is attempting to move past you.

VOID: You may spend a Void Point to increase the TN bonus of this kata by an additional +5. You may spend a Void Point to gain an additional Free Raise against opponents who move.

Unyielding Fury

PREPARATION TIME: 30 minutes

DURATION: 120 minutes

This kata focuses a bushi's mind for what the Crab call the "truest test of courage" — the last. Tapping into the undying rage and unflagging resolve of the Crab, the bushi gives up any sense of self-preservation in order to destroy all foes.

RANK: Hida Bushi 4

COST: 7

SPECIAL: None.

EFFECT: Whenever you are successfully struck in combat, you may spend a Void Point to immediately gain a free attack against the opponent that attacked you. You cannot use this ability if you take no damage from the attack. If you use this ability against an attack that would bring you to the Down Wound Level or lower, it does not cost a Void Point and the number of dice you roll and keep for damage on the subsequent attack is doubled. You may not gain more than one extra attack per round from this kata.

VOID: None.

Crane Kata

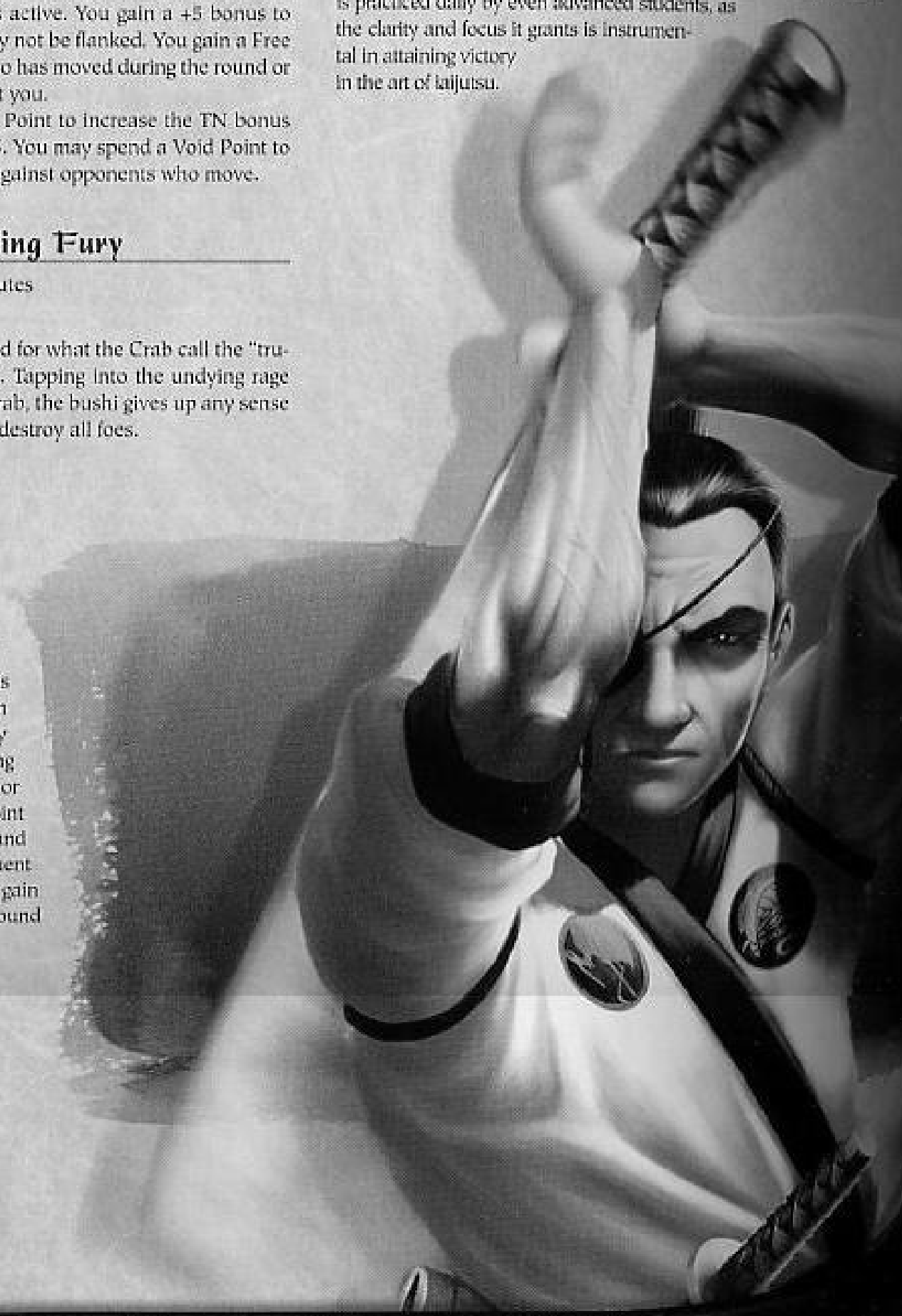
The Crane are perhaps the most traditional swordsmen in the Empire. Their dedication to excellence is reflected in the quality of their kata. Learning a Crane kata is an honor shared with only a select few outside the Clan.

Kakita's First Stance

PREPARATION TIME: 10 minutes

DURATION: 60 minutes

One of the first exercises that a student of Kakita's style learns is this stance. This kata has very few movements, instead teaching the bushi to focus the purity of his spirit into a single, perfect cut. This basic kata is practiced daily by even advanced students, as the clarity and focus it grants is instrumental in attaining victory in the art of iaijutsu.



RANK: Kakita Bushi 1

COST: 2

SPECIAL: Must be used with a katana.

EFFECT: When you enter an Iaijutsu duel, you may substitute your Honor Rank for any of your Traits. Your Void Ring is considered one lower for the purpose of duels.

VOID: You may spend two Void Points to negate the penalty to your effective Void Ring during a duel.

One Leg Stance

PREPARATION TIME: 20 minutes

DURATION: 40 minutes

This kata involves a flurry of motion with the arms and virtually no movement of the legs. Like the crane, the bushi tucks one leg beneath his body, then practices a series of rapid strikes in all directions.

RANK: Kakita Bushi 3, Daidoji Bushi 4

COST: 6

SPECIAL: This kata may only be learned with a katana or yari, and must be learned separately for each.

EFFECT: Your TN to Be Hit is calculated with your Reflexes \times 2 (instead of the normal \times 5). You roll and keep an additional die for Initiative during this kata's duration, and you gain two Free Raises to attack any opponent with a lower Initiative. You may not move at all, except to change the direction you are facing, while using this kata.

VOID: You may spend two Void Points to raise your TN to Be Hit during this kata to your Reflexes \times 3.

One Strike Blade

PREPARATION TIME: 40 minutes

DURATION: 90 minutes

Kata believed that any enemy could be defeated with a single strike — if that strike was of perfect form. This kata consists of a lengthy series of blade strikes, focusing on a single object. Initially, the number of strikes decreases while the bushi's speed increases. At the end of the kata, the bushi's strikes lash out with incredible speed and accuracy.

RANK: Kakita Bushi 4 or Daidoji 5

COST: 8

SPECIAL: None.

EFFECT: You may sacrifice one of your attacks during a round to gain a +15 bonus to your Initiative for the rest of the combat or three Free Raises to your next attack that round.

VOID: You may spend a Void Point to increase the Initiative bonus by 5, or to gain an additional Free Raise (for a total of four) from this kata.

One Truth

PREPARATION TIME: 25 minutes

DURATION: 120 minutes

The founding principle of Kakita's technique is that a true master of the blade needs only one strike to end any conflict — sometimes less than that. Though not as esoteric as the bushi of the Shiba or Mirumoto, this style focuses students' chi in a way that can only be described as supernatural, forcing opponents into ineffective action or complete inaction. The One Truth kata is a graceful exercise that focuses the bushi's mind and spirit in such a way that others are awed by his presence.

RANK: Kakita Bushi 5

COST: 8

SPECIAL: None.

EFFECT: You may strike only once per round, and you roll two fewer damage dice. Opponents whose combined Honor plus Insight Rank does not equal or exceed your own Honor may not attack you unless you have already attacked them during this combat (enemies with 0 Honor or opponents in an Iaijutsu duel ignore this effect). If you strike an opponent with a lower Initiative, you may make a contested Reflexes roll against him. If you win this roll, the opponent loses one of his attacks for the round if he attempts to strike you during the same round (this effect applies during Iaijutsu duels).

VOID: You may spend two Void Points to raise your effective Honor for this kata by one.

Watchful Falcon

PREPARATION TIME: 20 minutes

DURATION: 60 minutes

While technically a kata, this is actually more a ritual that Doji courtiers and magistrates use to sharpen their senses. It involves a slow alternation of slashing and sweeping wakizashi strikes that focuses the samurai's perception.

RANK: Doji Courtier 2 or Kakita Bushi 2

COST: 4

SPECIAL: None.

EFFECT: For the duration of this kata's effects, you gain a Free Raise on all Perception rolls. Unfortunately, your attention to the world around you lessens your ability to deal with other people socially, penalizing your social interaction rolls with a +5 to their TN.

VOID: You may spend two Void Points when preparing this kata to gain an additional Free Raise on your Perception rolls.

Dragon Kata

Though the Dragon can be distant and enigmatic, the Mirumoto family's expertise in the art of swordplay is beyond question. The Dragon gladly teach their kata to any who embrace their ways, though not all can easily understand.

Breaking Waves

PREPARATION TIME: 35 minutes

DURATION: 140 minutes

The Breaking Waves kata teaches one of Mirumoto's greatest lessons — any tide can be stemmed, any force turned against itself. Emphasizing reactive movements and quick counterattacks, the bushi overcomes any opponent who tries to bring him down with sheer force or speed. The chi of the opponent is channeled away from the Mirumoto and turned against his enemies.

RANK: Mirumoto Bushi 4

COST: 7

SPECIAL: Must be used with a daisho, katana, or unarmed.

EFFECT: Any time an opponent makes one or more Raises when attacking you, you may make a Kenjutsu Skill roll (using Agility) against their total roll. If you succeed, your opponent loses all benefits of the Raises but must still meet their new TN, and you gain an equal number of Free Raises on your next attack roll. Because of the defensive nature of this kata, you may not make more than one Raise on your attack rolls while using it.

VOID: None.

Endless Strike

PREPARATION TIME: 30 minutes

DURATION: 120 minutes

A master of *niten*, the two-sword style, is a fearsome hurricane of attacks that never seem to end. The Endless Strike kata is the epitome of Mirumoto's style, favoring lightning-fast strikes that overwhelm an opponent and render him incapable of counterattacking. Quick footwork moves the bushi in complex patterns through the kata, his twin blades never ceasing to cut the air in a manner that could bring down dozens of foes. Each strike propels the kata into quicker movements, until the Dragon bushi appears to be the calm eye in a hurricane of steel.

RANK: Mirumoto Bushi 5

COST: 8

SPECIAL: Must be used with a daisho.

EFFECT: You roll one fewer die for damage. When you successfully attack an opponent, you may choose to roll and keep one fewer die for damage. If you do so, you may either raise your TN to Be Hit by 5 for the remainder of the skirmish or make an additional attack immediately. This extra attack may not trigger a further use of this kata's abilities and you roll one fewer die for damage from that attack.

VOID: None.

My Brother's Soul

PREPARATION TIME: 25 minutes

DURATION: 120 minutes

The Mirumoto spend a significant amount of time training beside the shugenja of the Tamori family. This teaches the Mi-

rumoto a great deal about the ways of the kami and spells — which is quite useful when a Dragon bushi finds himself faced with a enemy shugenja. This kata focuses the Mirumoto's kinds of magic.

RANK: Mirumoto Bushi 2

COST: 3

SPECIAL: Must be used with a daisho.

EFFECT: You may either ignore one magic defense when attacking an opponent (such as Aura of Flame or Armor of the Emperor) or roll an additional die when attacking or damaging a shugenja or an opponent capable of casting spells. The supreme focus this kata requires causes you to lower all of your Initiative rolls by 5.

VOID: None.

Spirit and Steel

PREPARATION TIME: 10 minutes

DURATION: 120 minutes

One of the most basic kata of the Mirumoto Bushi School, this exercise is performed in tandem with a shugenja from the Tamori family. The kata is a slow, simple ritual that aligns the spirits of the two Dragons, allowing them to share their strength in battle.

RANK: Mirumoto Bushi 1, Tamori Shugenja 2

COST: 2

SPECIAL: Must be used with a katana or daisho; must be performed by two characters — at least one shugenja.

EFFECT: While engaged in combat with the same enemy (or same group of enemies) both practitioners of this kata may add their Earth Ring to their TN to Be Hit, and their Fire Ring to all attack and damage rolls (shugenja may, when preparing this kata, choose to add their Fire Ring to their rolls to cast spells instead of attack rolls). When rolling Initiative, both characters roll and keep one fewer die and use the lower roll between the two of them.

VOID: You may spend two Void Points to double the bonuses granted to you by this kata.

Time Between Breaths

PREPARATION TIME: 20 minutes

DURATION: 120 minutes

One of the signature strikes of the Mirumoto School is the half-beat strike, which forms the foundation of this kata. This kata involves a series of staggered movements and feints intended to throw off the opponent's rhythm just enough to give the Dragon an advantage.

RANK: Mirumoto Bushi 3

COST: 5

SPECIAL: Must be used with a daisho.

EFFECT: Whenever you are attacked while on Full Defense, you may spend a Void Point to make an attack either just before or just after your opponent's attack. If you attack before your opponent, you roll one fewer die for damage on that attack. If you attack after your opponent, you roll and keep one more die for damage on that attack. Attacking in this manner removes you from the Full Defense Combat Posture and puts you into the Attack Combat Posture.

VOID: None.

Lion Kata

The Lion Clan is a proud Clan with a tradition of mastery of the art of warfare. Their sensei are brutal and unforgiving, but only because they are expected to live up to the high standards of their ancestors. Any student who can approach such standards might be granted a chance to learn these kata.

Fury Without End

PREPARATION TIME: 30 minutes
DURATION: 120 minutes

Lion bushi focus on precision and honor, ignoring pain and difficulty until their goal is achieved. This kata combines a series of fluid, sweeping movements that focus a warrior's mind and clears it of all distraction. Once the kata is complete, there are only two things in the bushi's universe — himself and his duty. Nothing exists between.

RANK: Akodo Bushi 3, Matsu Bushi 3
COST: 3
SPECIAL: None.

EFFECT: For the duration of the kata, you suffer no penalties from Wound ranks, fatigue, or other such distractions. When the kata ends, you must rest for half a day to recover Wounds and Void Points normally, and are considered to be at least at the Down Wound rank until rested.

VOID: None.

Gentle Blade of Winter

PREPARATION TIME: 20 minutes
DURATION: 120 minutes

Actually a series of shorter kata, this powerful exercise requires considerable time to prepare but has deadly effect. An Akodo bushi's precision can literally disrupt the chi of an opponent with each strike, damaging an enemy's focus as well as his body.

RANK: Akodo Bushi 4

COST: 7

SPECIAL: Must be used with a katana.

EFFECT: For every 5 points of damage you deal to an opponent, all of his attack roll TNs increase by 1. This effect is cumulative, and the increase lasts for a number of rounds equal to twice your Insight Rank.

VOID: You may spend two Void Points to increase the TN penalty of this kata to 2.

Matsu's Vengeance

PREPARATION TIME: 20 minutes
DURATION: 120 minutes

Though the Akodo and Matsu schools vary in many ways, they hold one fundamental principle in common — for the honorable warrior, there is no defeat. This kata focuses the purity of a bushi's spirit into the blade of his ancestors, striking down unseen foes that represent uncertainty, injustice, fear, and other affronts to the ideals of bushido. When the kata is complete, the bushi's focus becomes singular.

RANK: Akodo Bushi 5, Matsu Bushi 5

COST: 8

SPECIAL: None.

EFFECT: You add twice your Honor Rank to all your Initiative, damage, and attack rolls. Your TN to Be Hit is lowered by 20. Your attack and damage dice explode on a roll of a 9 or 10, and you may re-roll any attack or damage dice that roll below your Honor Rank plus one (you keep the second result even if it is worse).

VOID: You may spend a Void Point to raise your effective Honor Rank for this kata by one.

The Soul's Roar

PREPARATION TIME: 25 minutes
DURATION: 120 minutes

This is one of the most basic kata the Matsu teach their students. It involves a short series of crisp, sweeping strikes and ends with the weapon held aloft in a single hand as the bushi roars in primal fury. The Matsu battle maidens sometimes perform this kata on the battlefield — thousands of Lion warriors demonstrating their prowess and giving voice to their fury is enough to daunt the hardest opponent.

RANK: Matsu Bushi 2

COST: 3

SPECIAL: None.

EFFECT: You add your Insight Rank to all attack and damage rolls. Your TN to Be Hit is lowered by 5.

VOID: You may spend a Void Point to add twice your Honor Rank to your attack and damage rolls, but your TN to Be Hit is then lowered by 10, not 5.

Tsuko's Storm

PREPARATION TIME: 30 minutes
DURATION: 120 minutes

This kata is a flurry of rapid strikes, with the bushi striking, then spinning in a different direction to lash out, only to change direction again. Upon completion of this kata, the bushi finds himself able to react to attackers from all sides with a savage fury that is the hallmark of the Matsu elite.

RANK: Matsu Bushi 3, Akodo Bushi 4

COST: 5

SPECIAL: None.

EFFECT: For the duration of the kata, opponents gain no advantage from attacking you from the side or behind. You must declare a Full Attack every round while this kata is active.

VOID: None.



Mantis Kata

Though others call the Mantis style unorthodox, the Yoritomo are quite proud of their kata. The Tsuruchi family has come to adopt these secret kata since being assimilated into the Mantis, as have the few Moshi who take up the life of a bushi.

Boundless Fury

PREPARATION TIME: 20 minutes

DURATION: 180 minutes

Much like their Crab cousins, the Mantis believe that strength is necessary for victory. Though cunning certainly informs a Yoritomo bushi's training, they learn that strength, not mere guile, crushes lesser foes. Masters of the Yoritomo School focus their strength to destroy wounded or weak enemies with powerful, sweeping attacks.

RANK: Yoritomo Bushi 5, Tsuruchi Archer 5

COST: 9

SPECIAL: Must be used with either two weapons or a two-handed weapon if not used with a ranged weapon.

EFFECT: When attacking a wounded opponent or an opponent with a lower Strength, you roll one extra die for every Wound level or point of Strength by which you exceed your opponent. You may choose to sacrifice any of these dice to roll for damage

against your enemy instead. Because of the powerful, deliberate timing of this kata, you roll and keep two fewer dice for Initiative. This kata may be used with ranged weapons, in which case you compare your Reflexes to your opponent's Reflexes.

VOID: You may spend a Void Point to make your effective Strength one higher for this kata.

Howl of the Son of Storms

PREPARATION TIME: 20 minutes

DURATION: 180 minutes

Devised by Yoritomo as one of the fundamental kata of his style, this exercise embodies the bold, powerful techniques the Mantis are known for. Only the most skilled within the Yoritomo school can master it.

RANK: Yoritomo Bushi 4, Tsuruchi Archer 4

COST: 6

SPECIAL: None.

EFFECT: Any time you roll two or more natural 10's on a damage roll (a damage die that explodes twice does qualify), you may roll and keep an additional damage die. This kata may be used with ranged weapons.

VOID: None.

Prayer's End

PREPARATION TIME: 10 minutes

DURATION: 120 minutes

Like the insect after which his Clan is named, the Mantis bushi rests with his weapons raised, gathering his chi and waiting for the perfect moment to strike. This kata reinforces basic aspects of the Yoritomo school, including clever footwork and opportunistic strikes.

RANK: Yoritomo Bushi 3

COST: 4

SPECIAL: Must be used with paired kama.

EFFECT: When making two attacks per round, you may make one attack roll for both strikes. If you do, you roll an additional number of attack dice equal to your Peasant Weapons Skill. If the attack is successful, you deal damage with both weapons normally. Because of the patient nature of this kata, you roll and keep one fewer die on Initiative.

VOID: None.

Strength of Waves

PREPARATION TIME: 15 minutes

DURATION: 120 minutes

The techniques of the Mantis Clan are described as "unorthodox", but when students of the Yoritomo school aren't listening, others call them "dirty tricks." Mantis bushi are not above using underhanded tactics to win a fight and don't particularly care who knows. Only in the Mantis Clan would a kata that emphasizes attacking opponents to frustrate and stifle them be proudly displayed as a part of a bushi school's history.

RANK: Yoritomo Bushi 2

COST: 4

SPECIAL: None.

EFFECT: Your TN to Be Hit is lowered by 5. Whenever you successfully strike an opponent, you can make a contested Strength roll against him to lower his TN to Be Hit by 5 for the remainder of the combat. This effect cannot reduce an opponent's TN to Be Hit below the TN bonus granted by his armor.

VOID: None.

Strike of the Cliff's Edge

PREPARATION TIME: 10 minutes

DURATION: 120 minutes

This kata exaggerates the weaving, rolling movement of the Yoritomo Bushi School to strike an opponent from any angle.

RANK: Yoritomo Bushi 1, Tsuruchi Archer 2

COST: 2

SPECIAL: None.

EFFECT: When you attack, your opponent's TN to Be Hit is calculated as if their Reflexes were one lower. This bonus is lost for a round against an opponent who successfully strikes you, and your own TN to Be Hit is calculated as if your Reflexes were also one lower. This kata may be used with ranged weapons.

VOID: You may spend two Void Points to lower your opponent's effective Reflexes by 2 instead of 1.

Phoenix Kata

While few Phoenix bushi can muster the brute power of the southern schools, they are masters of several more subtle martial techniques. Like their allies in the Crane Clan, the Shiba are so graceful that their enemies have been known to simply stare at them in wonder.

Deeper Reflection

PREPARATION TIME: 60 minutes

DURATION: 120 minutes

Like many of the Shiba's martial arts, this kata is as much a meditation as it is a warrior's exercise. This excruciatingly long kata allows the bushi to tap into the Void that connects them to the universe in order to move in more perfect harmony with the world.

RANK: Shiba Bushi 4

COST: 8

SPECIAL: You must make a Meditation roll with two Raises to complete this kata.

EFFECT: At the completion of this kata, you gain two Void Points for the remainder of the day. Multiple applications of this kata do not grant further Void Points, and these Void Points are always the first to be spent.

VOID: None.

Eyes of the Phoenix

PREPARATION TIME: 15 minutes

DURATION: 120 minutes

This kata is one of many exercises the Shiba bushi learn in order to serve as yojimbo to the Isawa family. The kata is a graceful series of steps and slow motions as the bushi moves in a circle around a meditating shugenja, aligning their chi. When the kata is complete, the shugenja and bushi share a brief supernatural connection that makes the Shiba a formidable guardian.

RANK: Shiba Bushi 2

COST: 3

SPECIAL: Must be performed with one bushi and one shugenja. When the kata is complete, the shugenja involved must make a Meditation roll at a TN of 15.

EFFECT: Your Initiative score is always one higher than the shugenja that you targeted with this kata (if he is involved in the combat). That shugenja may spend a Void Point when you are attacked to raise your TN to Be Hit by 15 for that attack. Any spell that shugenja casts to aid you directly may be considered automatically successful if he does not wish to Raise on the casting. You add that shugenja's Void to your attack and damage rolls so long as you are fighting to keep him from harm.

VOID: None.

Heaven's Wing

PREPARATION TIME: 30 minutes

DURATION: 60 minutes

The signature kata of the Shiba Bushi School, this form is often displayed for others as a gift from the Shiba family. Powerful Crane daimyo and even Imperial lords have been known to call in long-standing favors or grant great boons in exchange for a master of the Shiba School's demonstrating this exercise. Few can learn its artful steps, and there is an elite cadre of Phoenix

warriors who pride themselves on mastering the Heaven's Wing kata. The ritual steps of this kata require a naginata, which is handled with speed, grace, and lethal skill. Finally, the slow rhythm of the kata is upset by a flurry of motion and strikes that can only be described as superhuman.

RANK: Shiba Bushi 5

COST: 8

SPECIAL: Must have at least 7 ranks of Spears to take this kata; must be used with a naginata.

EFFECT: You may make a Full Attack to activate this kata, giving you one extra attack that round for every Void Point you have remaining. This action spends your entire pool of Void Points, and after the attacks are used you must remain on Full Defense for a number of rounds equal to the number of attacks gained.

VOID: You may spend a Void Point to gain a Free Raise on all attacks granted by this kata. This reduces by one the number of attacks granted by the kata.

Tail of the Sun

PREPARATION TIME: 10 minutes

DURATION: 60 minutes

The Shiba are great advocates of the naginata. Other clans believe it suitable only for noblewomen, but the Phoenix warriors prize its elegance and control. This kata emphasizes the Shiba's love of the long weapon, and like all Phoenix kata, is beautiful to behold.

RANK: Any Phoenix Bushi School 1

COST: 3

SPECIAL: Must be used with a naginata.

EFFECT: The bonus Initiative you gain by using a naginata does not end after three turns. Opponents with a higher Initiative score than you gain a Free Raise to attack you.

VOID: None.

Touching the Infinite

PREPARATION TIME: 20 minutes

DURATION: 120 minutes

Shiba bushi have a strong connection to the element of the Void, and this kata deepens that affinity and prepares the warrior for the mysteries of Shiba's technique. The kata is performed blindfolded. The bushi must extend his senses into the Void as he performs the exercise's steps, movements so complex that they would cause most sighted warriors to trip over their own feet. When the kata is complete, the Shiba bushi is so strongly attuned to his own Void that he becomes like the very element — shifting as nothing and everything at once.

RANK: Shiba Bushi 3

COST: 5

SPECIAL: Must make a Meditation roll at TN 20 to complete this kata, must have maximum number of Void Points for the day to complete this kata.

EFFECT: You cannot spend Void Points while using this kata. You cannot regain Void Points by any means while you have this kata prepared. At the beginning of each round, you gain a number of dice equal to your current Void Points to use for attack or damage rolls. You may divide these bonus dice in any way of your choosing, between any number of attack and/or damage rolls. You may also choose to forfeit all of these dice to instead gain +5 to your TN to Be Hit for each die forfeited in this manner.

VOID: None.

Scorpion Kata

The Scorpion guard their kata as jealously as they guard their other secrets. Few outsiders that are accepted into their bushi schools learn these ancient rituals. Those who do gain the opportunity to learn a Scorpion kata are warned that they have been given a great gift — one that must someday be repaid.

Blackened Sight

PREPARATION TIME: 35 minutes

DURATION: 120 minutes

The Blackened Sight kata is a high art among Scorpion bushi. Few master its movements, much less the focused state of mind it requires to produce the effect Bayushi Nikute developed hundreds of years ago. The motions of the kata force the bushi's mind and body to operate on completely different levels of awareness, causing his body to indicate one pattern of attack or defense, while his actual movements prove to be something else entirely.

RANK: Bayushi Bushi 5, Shosuro Ninja 4

COST: 7

SPECIAL: None.

EFFECT: Opponents' dice do not explode on attack rolls against you. Opponents attacking you drop all attack dice that roll lower than your Air Ring minus one. You may not declare a Full Attack while using this kata, and you must be able to move at least 10' every round or the benefits of this kata are lost.

VOID: None.

Choking Air

PREPARATION TIME: 25 minutes

DURATION: 120 minutes

This kata reinforces the lightning-fast footwork that is the signature of the Bayushi technique. The student takes long steps as he moves all about in an area, making quick strikes against his invisible opponents before practically leaping away as part of the kata. This frustrating style of attack allows a single Scorpion bushi to harass five or six opponents at once.

RANK: Bayushi Bushi 4

COST: 7

SPECIAL: Must wear light armor or no armor.

EFFECT: You gain a +10 bonus to your TN to Be Hit against opponents who act after you in a round. You gain an additional +5 bonus to your TN to Be Hit against opponents who are currently suffering a TN penalty from Wounds. You roll two fewer damage dice.

VOID: None.

Cut Under the Mountain

PREPARATION TIME: 20 minutes

DURATION: 120 minutes

Like the bushi of the Kakita School, the Scorpion prefer to remain unfettered in combat in order to take advantage of opponents encumbered by heavy armor or weapons. Unlike the Crane, students of the Bayushi Bushi School learn to make the fullest use of any opening such a technique presents. When practicing this kata, the bushi wears little to no armor, and generally employs a small weapon that can be used up close against slower opponents.

RANK: Bayushi Bushi 3, Shosuro Ninja 3

COST: 6

SPECIAL: Must be used with a katana, ninja-to, unarmed, or one-handed weapon while wearing light armor or no armor.

EFFECT: You gain a +10 bonus to your TN to Be Hit against opponents wearing heavy armor or using a two-handed weapon (other than a katana). You gain a +20 bonus against opponents using both a heavy weapon and heavy armor. If you attack an enemy against whom you receive this bonus, your Initiative score is improved by 5, and you gain a Free Raise to attack.

VOID: None.

Sundering Grace

PREPARATION TIME: 15 minutes

DURATION: 120 minutes

This kata is an extension of another of the Bayushi technique's blending principles — it is easier to disable a stronger opponent than outright kill him. Where the Crab and Lion might just crush an enemy with their superior strength, the Scorpion prefer strikes that make it difficult for an opponent to retaliate. The kata focuses on quick footwork and shallow strikes in order to wear down even a tenacious foe. The bushi weaves and steps around a center point, striking out as he moves in ever-closing circles around an imaginary foe.

RANK: Bayushi Bushi 2

COST: 4

SPECIAL: None.

EFFECT: Each time you successfully strike an opponent, he must win a Contested Reflexes Roll against you or suffer a +5 penalty to all of his attack TNs. This effect is cumulative with multiple strikes, and lasts for a number of rounds equal to your Insight Rank plus one. You roll and keep one fewer die for damage.

VOID: None.

The Tail's Reach

PREPARATION TIME: 10 minutes

DURATION: 120 minutes

The basic principle of the Bayushi Bushi School is surprise. Most commonly opponents are surprised by striking before they are ready, and this kata reinforces this fundamental concept. The kata emphasizes quick, flashy attacks that both take advantage of a surprise attack and keep the opponent on the defensive.

RANK: Bayushi Bushi 1, Shosuro Ninja 2

COST: 2

SPECIAL: None.

EFFECT: If you attack an opponent with a lower Initiative score, you may roll two additional dice for damage. Your TN to Be Hit is lowered by 5.

VOID: None.

Unicorn Kata

Unicorn dojo teach unpredictable techniques mastered during long journeys beyond Rokugan. As a result, their kata are quite different from those of the other Clans.

Howl of the Moto

PREPARATION TIME: 20 minutes

DURATION: 120 minutes

Few things are as terrifying as a Moto warrior in full fury, and this kata is ample proof. The war cry of the Moto, a family that stared down its own undead reflection for generations, strikes terror into even the heart of those who believe themselves above it. As the Moto and the Crab grow closer, the lords of the Hida have even seen this fearsome kata used with great effect against the hordes of the Shadowlands.

RANK: Moto Bushi 2

COST: 5

SPECIAL: When this kata is completed, you must spend two Void Points.

EFFECT: Your battle cry produces a Fear effect of a strength equal to your Insight Rank. If you do more than 20 Wounds in a single melee attack against an opponent, he must roll to resist the Fear even if he would be otherwise immune. This fear radiates around you, and allies must also resist the Fear effect or be forced to stay at least 20' away from you.

VOID: None.

Moto's Burning Strike

PREPARATION TIME: 30 minutes

DURATION: 120 minutes

The Moto family keeps closer ties to the Burning Sands than any Unicorn family. They tend to favor bizarre heavy weapons imported from the Sands, or variants that are more acceptable in Rokugani society. This kata helps the bushi take full advantage of a large weapon, favoring strong, sweeping attacks that can cleave through other weapons and nearly any armor. Moto that are sent to serve the Clan's alliance with the Crab by guarding the Katu Wall often learn this kata in order to more effectively pierce the hides of Shadowlands beasts.

RANK: Moto Bushi 4, Utaku Battle Maiden 5

COST: 8

SPECIAL: Must be used with a heavy, two-handed weapon or katana.

EFFECT: When you make a Full Attack, your TN to Be Hit is raised by your Skill Rank in the weapon you are attacking with. You ignore the effects of light armor, and reduce the effectiveness of other armors by 5 points. You may choose to forego both of these effects when you declare a Full Attack to instead roll and keep two additional damage dice. Your Initiative is lowered by 10.

VOID: None.

Otaku's Void

PREPARATION TIME: 25 minutes

DURATION: 120 minutes

Unicorn bushi learn that battle is unpredictable, and it is the unchanging warrior who is destined to fall. Among the Battle Maidens, the philosophy of change in battle is called "Otaku's Void of War," and applied to many aspects of their lives. This kata reinforces that principle, alternating between bold, furious strikes, then defensive stances and counterattacks, and finally slow, powerful attacks.

RANK: Utaku Battle Maiden 4, Moto Bushi 5

COST: 7

SPECIAL: None.

EFFECT: On your action every round, before you act, you may declare you are sacrificing your damage dice, your attack dice, or your TN to Be Hit. Any number of damage or attack dice may be sacrificed and applied to the other roll or used to raise your TN to Be Hit by 5. You may similarly drop your TN to Be Hit by increments of 5 to roll an additional die on your attack or damage rolls. These changes remain in effect while this kata is active, and may only be readjusted during your action before you declare any other action. You roll two fewer dice for Initiative.

VOID: None.

Shinjo's Breath

PREPARATION TIME: 10 minutes

DURATION: 180 minutes

Unicorn bushi quickly learn that while they have a decided advantage in combat while on horseback, it is not always possible to engage enemies from the saddle. The warriors of the plains have developed impressive acrobatic feats performed on foot, and can leap into or out of the saddle at a moment's notice.

RANK: Any Unicorn Bushi 1

COST: 2

SPECIAL: None.

EFFECT: You may make an Agility check at a TN of 20 to perform a quick leap or movement that positions you better for combat. This action may be used before your attack once per round, and may be used to mount or dismount a horse. Penalties applied to this roll due to armor are doubled, and if it is used to move into combat with an opponent, the opponent may make a contested Agility check against you to stay outside of combat range. If you fail either roll, you fall prone and take one die of Wounds.

VOID: You may spend a Void Point to lower the TN of the Agility check by 5.

Thundering the Sky

PREPARATION TIME: 10 minutes

DURATION: 180 minutes

This kata, developed over centuries, was finally perfected shortly after the Unicorn's return to Rokugan. Thundering the Sky is awesome to behold, as the bushi performs spectacular leaps and spins in midair, not taking a moment's pause until every sweeping and dizzying movement of the kata is executed.

RANK: Any Unicorn Bushi 3

COST: 5

SPECIAL: None.

EFFECT: Your TN to Be Hit is raised by 10, and you gain an additional attack each round. You cannot run while using this kata, and you roll two fewer dice on both attack and damage rolls.

VOID: None.

Mass Battle

Though most combat can be resolved using the skirmish rules from earlier in this chapter, occasionally something greater is required. Battles of epic scope cannot easily be depicted with combat rules designed for small groups. In many cases, the GM might simply use the combat rules to describe the part of the battle the players are participating in directly and use the greater battle as a backdrop. However, what happens when the players themselves are the officers commanding the battle or wish to have a pronounced influence on the conflict's outcome? The system below details how to determine the course of battles, and can be used to resolve large scale conflicts. The GM is always the final arbiter in when these rules are used instead of the standard combat rules.

Battles are resolved in Battle Turns. Each Battle Turn covers approximately thirty minutes. During each Battle Turn, each player decides where his PC fights during the battle and whether to undergo Battle Opportunities. Depending on how Battle Opportunities resolve, the players' actions can turn the tides of battle (for better or for worse).

A small battle of around 500-800 troops in each army can take 2-3 Battle Turns. A medium-sized battle of 800-1500 troops in each army can take 4-5 Battle Turns, and large-scale battles of 1500+ troops each can take 6-8 Battle Turns.

Resolving Battles

Step One: Declaration

Every Battle Turn, each player indicates how his character will be fighting this Battle Turn. The players must choose among four levels of activity: Reserves (farthest from the actual fighting, where little action occurs), Disengaged, Engaged, and Heavily Engaged (in the thickest part of the fighting, where the PCs may most influence the outcome of the battle).

If the PCs are simply soldiers whose words have no weight, their commanders will order them where to go in the battle. In that case, the GM can tell the players where they have been commanded to go during each Battle Turn.

Otherwise, during the first Battle Turn, players may choose any of the four levels of battle activity. After the first Battle Turn, the players may only choose a level of activity one degree away from their level at the end of the previous Turn. For example, a player who was in the Engaged level of fighting during the last Turn may only choose to fight in the Disengaged, Engaged, or Heavily Engaged levels this Turn. A player who was in the Heavily Engaged level of fighting during the last Turn may only choose to fight in the Engaged or Heavily Engaged levels this Turn.



Step Two: Tides of Battle

After engagements have been declared, the GM announces how the battle is going this Battle Turn. The current advantage can be even or can favor one side of the battle. If the battle is going against a PC's army, it is more personally dangerous, but there are also more chances for a heroic swing in the battle. The generals for each army roll against each other to determine the Tides of Battle, but the GM can also simply choose the Tides of Battle to fit a predetermined story.

The generals of the opposing armies must make a Contested Perception/Battle (Mass Combat) Roll to determine who is winning in each Battle Turn. The winner has the advantage in that Battle Turn. If the difference between the two rolls is 5 or less, the battle is considered to be even for that Battle Turn.

A number of factors can modify this roll. These modifiers track. Using this table as a guideline, the GM may create additional modifiers for special circumstances.

TIDES OF BATTLE MODIFIERS

Name	Roll Modifier
Advantage in numbers	See below
Army's equipment is significantly better (katana versus pitchforks)	+5
More magical power than the opposing army (shugenja, maho)	+5
Morale	See below
Advantageous ground	+5
Chokepoint	See below
Defensive positions	+3
Raining on the field (Attacker)	-2
Raining on the field (cavalry units)	-3
General has Way of the Land	
Advantage for battlefield	+(Insight Rank × 2)
General has Battle (Mass Combat) Skill	Emphasis bonus added twice

ADDITIONAL RULES FOR STEP TWO

ADVANTAGE IN NUMBERS

These bonuses to the Tides of Battle roll are not cumulative. Round down when determining the numerical advantage.

2 to 1 Advantage	+5
3 to 1 Advantage	+10
4 to 1 Advantage	+15
5 to 1 Advantage	+20
6+ to 1 Advantage	+25

CHOKEPOINTS

There are ways to make sure that one's opponent cannot bring his army's full strength against one's army. A clever general uses terrain, traps, and other methods to keep a part of the opposing army useless during portions of the attack. An enemy can only send so many troops through a castle gate at one time, for example. A chokepoint that negates or limits the opponent's ability to use his entire force either negates or reduces the opponent's advantage in numbers.

MORALE

If an army wins two consecutive opposed rolls, or wins one roll with more than twice the total of the opposing general's roll, that army begins to gain momentum and the opposing forces begin to become demoralized. On the next battle roll, the winning general gains a bonus equal to one-fifth the difference of the previous roll's results (rounded down).

TACTICS

At the beginning of each Battle Turn, each general should decide what tactics he will employ. If a general's tactics are ruled effective against the opponent, the GM can assign an appropriate bonus. This is an intentionally vague statement of the bonus situation, as there is no end to the possible strategies a general may attempt. A few examples: setting pikemen against a cavalry charge, sending saboteurs to destroy enemy siege weapons, or using an advantageous wind to start a fire that threatens the opposing army. The GM should assign a bonus according to creativity and effectiveness.

Example: Akodo Jin leads his force of 1000 heavy Lion infantry against a small outpost garrisoned by 300 Scorpion soldiers and led by Bayushi Toshimo. Akodo Jin's troops are soldiers tempered in the Lion's many battles; Toshimo relies on the Shosuro ninja among his forces to undermine the opponent's strength. Though Akodo Jin has a significant advantage in numbers, Bayushi Toshimo's troops have been waiting for the attack for several months and have set up defensive fortifications that will prove tough to destroy. Should the Lion army attack, the Shosuro ninjas are ready to set off traps that will collapse a part of the hill, making the Lion army unable to bring the full brunt of its strength against the outpost. It has been raining for the past three days, though it seems like the downpour may end by nightfall.

Akodo Jin has a total bonus of +10 to his Perception/Battle (Mass Combat) Roll; +15 for outnumbering his foe 3 to 1, +2 for the general's Skill of 3 in Battle, a penalty of -2 for the rain, and (though he does not know it) a penalty of -5 for the partial chokepoint the Shosuro ninja will create with their traps. Bayushi Toshimo has a total bonus of +10 to his Perception/Battle (Mass Combat) Roll; +5 for the outpost's advantageous ground, +3 for the defensive fortifications, and +2 for the general's Way of the Land Advantage applicable to this area.

Having weighed the pros and cons of launching his attack, Akodo Jin decides to hold off for one more day.

Step Three: Determination

Each player makes a Perception/Battle (Mass Combat) Roll to see how well his character is faring in the battle. If he succeeds on this roll, he has a better chance of receiving a Battle Opportunity that will greatly affect the battle. If he fails this roll, he has a higher chance of receiving very dangerous Battle Opportunities. The TN for the Battle (Mass Combat) Roll is determined by one's level of engagement in the battle.

TN FOR DETERMINATION

Level of Activity

Reserves	TN
Disengaged	25
Engaged	20
Heavily Engaged	15
Your army has the advantage this Battle Turn	10
Opposing army has the advantage this Battle Turn	+5
Already refused one Battle Opportunity	-5
Already refused two Battle Opportunities	-1

Each player rolls one die and adds to it his Water Ring and his Battle Skill. This roll is modified by the following items.

MASS BATTLE TABLE MODIFIERS

Level of Activity

Level of Activity	Roll modifier
Missed Determination roll's TN by less than 5	-2
Missed Determination roll's TN by more than 5	-4
Raise successfully called on Determination roll	+1
Heavily Engaged	10

The player then looks up the appropriate Mass Battle Table for his situation, locates his result on it, and finds out what his PC is doing that Battle Turn.

A Battle Opportunity is a small skirmish or scene that the player can roleplay. Some Battle Opportunities are meant to be completed alone, some with the help of the party or other NPC samurai on the player's side. The player may not refuse a Battle Opportunity if he has already refused two this battle.

If the Battle Opportunity does not fit the battle as the GM wishes it to go, the GM may make the PC reroll his roll on the Mass Battle Table.

Step Four: Resolution

If the PC has fulfilled a Battle Opportunity, he gains all Glory bonuses he earned in this Turn.

It is possible to fail a Battle Opportunity. Perhaps the PC loses his nerve and runs from the legion of Hida berserkers making its way towards him. Perhaps he fails to rally his troops to go back into the breach once more. The penalties for failure are up to the GM. Perhaps the PC will die. Perhaps he will lose Glory, Honor, and Status. Perhaps nothing will happen, and only the PC will know about his failure. The harshest penalty for failure could be seppuku, and the character must accept his fate and die with honor. These are only suggestions and the GM is free to do whatever he wishes to failing PCs.

Battle Opportunities can grant great rewards, but at great risk. However, to deny the call of battle is also not without risk. To fail to seize such an opportunity can have grave repercussions. At the very least, your general suffers a -1 Morale penalty to fu-

sure Tides of Battle Rolls. At worst, the GM may determine that the course of the battle has changed drastically because you failed to deal with a specific enemy threat. (Failing to charge an exposed line of shugenja, for example, may result in those shugenja enacting a ritual that inflicts severe losses upon your troops or even alters the battle terrain.)

Special Rules: Naval Battles

The rules for naval battles follow the rules above, with the following exceptions. The GM may use the Mass Battle tables for naval battles instead of the normal charts, mix some of the naval Battle Opportunities into the normal tables, or ignore them altogether.

Naval battles have no Reserves level of engagement. When two ships are engaged, no one may be held in reserve; ships are small.

Cavalry units have little use on the naval battlefield and gain no bonuses for being cavalry. No one may fight on horseback during naval combat.

The movement of the waves can unsettle the strongest samurai. All PCs must make an Agility/Athletics check at a TN of 15 at the beginning of each Battle Turn to be able to fight effectively. PCs who fail receive +5 to all TNs for that Battle Turn.

All Fire spells cast in a naval battle have their TNs raised by 5. All Water spells have their TNs reduced by 5.

Special Rules: Fighting the Shadowlands

The rules for fighting against Shadowlands opponents follow the rules above, with the following exceptions. The GM may use the Mass Battle charts for fighting the Shadowlands instead of the normal charts, mix some of the Battle Opportunities into the normal charts, or ignore them altogether.

A Shadowlands army is unaffected by morale and cannot gain any bonuses or penalties from having an advantage or disadvantage in the battle, unless the army contains both human and Shadowlands soldiers. If so, the GM may decide that the Shadowlands army will be affected by morale after all.

A Shadowlands army is a fearsome sight unless the troops are accustomed to fighting demons. All Battle (Mass Combat) rolls have their TNs increased by 5 unless the player has the Love (Shadowlands) Skill.

An army facing a Shadowlands force receives a -2 morale penalty to its Tides of Battle roll and to PCs' Determination rolls.

After the Battle

Any Status gains that occur as a result of battle must be affirmed by a samurai of higher Status than the PC. Any extraordinary behavior should result in an additional Glory or Status gain; these additional gains are completely to the GM's discretion.

MASS BATTLE TABLE 1A: RESERVES

≤0:	Skirmish (1-4 ashigaru)
1-3:	Skirmish (1-2 samurai, one Rank lower than PC)
4-6:	Skirmish (1-3 samurai, one Rank lower than PC)
7-9:	No Battle Opportunity
10-11:	No Battle Opportunity
12-14:	No Battle Opportunity
15-16:	Shugenja's Gift
17:	Rally the Archers
18+:	Join the Battle

MASS BATTLE TABLE 1B: DISENGAGED

≤0:	Skirmish (1-3 samurai of equal Rank to PC and 0-1 shugenja of equal Rank)
1-3:	Skirmish (1-3 samurai of equal Rank to PC)
4-6:	Skirmish (1-4 ashigaru)
7-9:	Save a Wounded Opponent
10-11:	Protect the General
12-14:	Be Prepared to Dig Two Graves
15-16:	Skirmish (2-4 samurai, one Rank lower than PC)
17:	Show Me Your Stance
18+:	Save a Wounded Comrade

MASS BATTLE TABLE 1C: ENGAGED

≤0:	Skirmish (1-2 samurai of equal Rank to PC)
1-3:	"Hold This Ground!"
4-6:	Protect the General
7-9:	Be Prepared to Dig Two Graves
10-11:	Overwhelm
12-14:	Save a Wounded Opponent
15-16:	Attack the Archers
17:	Pick Up the Banner
18+:	Break the Line

MASS BATTLE TABLE 1D: HEAVILY ENGAGED

≤0:	Skirmish (1-3 samurai of equal Rank to PC and 1 shugenja of equal Rank)
1-3:	Skirmish (1-3 samurai of equal Rank to PC)
4-6:	Skirmish (2-4 samurai, one Rank lower than PC)
7-9:	Show Me Your Stance
10-11:	Attack the Shugenja
12-14:	Few Against Many
15-16:	A Clear Shot
17:	"Hold This Ground!"
18+:	Take the Enemy Banner

MASS BATTLE TABLE 2A: NAVAL — DISENGAGED

≤0:	Skirmish (1-3 samurai of equal Rank to PC and 0-1 shugenja of equal Rank)
1-3:	Skirmish (1-3 samurai of equal Rank to PC)
4-6:	Skirmish (1-4 ashigaru)
7-9:	Show Me Your Stance
10-11:	Protect the General
12-14:	Be Prepared to Dig Two Graves
15-16:	Skirmish (2-4 samurai, one Rank lower than PC)
17:	Show Me Your Stance
18+:	Save a Wounded Comrade

MASS BATTLE TABLE 2B: NAVAL — ENGAGED

≤0:	Skirmish (1-2 samurai of equal Rank to PC)
1-3:	Skirmish (1-5 ashigaru)
4-6:	Protect the General
7-9:	Be Prepared to Dig Two Graves
10-11:	Overwhelm
12-14:	Save a Wounded Opponent
15-16:	Attack the Archers
17:	Fire the Sails
18+:	Ramming Speed

MASS BATTLE TABLE 2C: NAVAL — HEAVILY ENGAGED

≤0:	Skirmish (1–3 samurai of equal Rank to PC and 1 shugenja of equal Rank)
1–3:	Skirmish (1–3 samurai of equal Rank to PC)
4–6:	Skirmish (2–4 samurai, one Rank lower than PC)
7–9:	Show Me Your Stance
10–11:	Save Our Ship
12–14:	Few Against Many
15–16:	A Clear Shot
17:	Flame the Sails
18+:	Save Our Ship

MASS BATTLE TABLE 3A: SHADOWLANDS — RESERVES

≤0:	Skirmish (1–5 goblins)
1–3:	Skirmish (1–2 Tainted samurai one Rank lower than PC, or 1 ogre)
4–6:	Skirmish (1–3 samurai, one Rank lower than PC)
7–9:	No Battle Opportunity
10–11:	No Battle Opportunity
12–14:	No Battle Opportunity
15–16:	Shugenja's Gift
17:	Rally the Archers
18+:	Join the Battle

MASS BATTLE TABLE 3B: SHADOWLANDS — DISENGAGED

≤0:	Skirmish (1–3 samurai of equal Rank to PC and 0–1 shugenja of equal Rank)
1–3:	Skirmish (1–3 samurai of equal Rank to PC)
4–6:	Save a Wounded Opponent
7–9:	For the Empire
10–11:	Protect the General
12–14:	Be Prepared to Dig Two Graves
15–16:	Save a Wounded Comrade
17:	Stand Against the Darkness
18+:	Skirmish (1–2 ogres)

MASS BATTLE TABLE 3C: SHADOWLANDS — ENGAGED

≤ -1:	Skirmish (3–8 goblins and 1 goblin warmonger)
0:	Skirmish (1–2 Tainted samurai, one Rank lower than PC)
1–3:	"Hold This Ground!"
4–6:	Protect the General
7–9:	For the Empire
10–11:	Overwhelm
12–14:	Save a Wounded Opponent
15–16:	Attack the Archers
17:	Shadowlands Madness
18+:	Skirmish (1–2 ogres)

MASS BATTLE TABLE 3D: SHADOWLANDS — HEAVILY ENGAGED

≤0:	Skirmish (1–3 Tainted samurai of equal Rank to PC and 1 maho-tsukai of equal Rank)
1–3:	Skirmish (1–3 Tainted samurai of equal Rank to PC)
4–6:	For the Empire
7–9:	Skirmish (1–2 ogres)
10–11:	Shadowlands Madness
12–14:	Few Against Many
15–16:	Stand Against the Darkness
17:	"Hold this Ground!"
18+:	Skirmish (1 Minor Oni or 2 Lesser Oni)

Battle Opportunities

A CLEAR SHOT

The front lines break and you have a clear shot at the leader of the opposing army with a ranged attack!

The TN of the shot depends on the commander (typically TN 30+). A successful hit is worth 3 Glory, but will likely only wound the commander. If this Battle Opportunity is successful, the opposing general has –5 to his Tides of Battle rolls for the rest of the battle.

ATTACK THE ARCHERS

Suddenly, your character sees a path that leads directly to the reserves of the opposing army. You have an opportunity to attack the archers, thus making an opportunity for the reinforcements to charge.

If this Battle Opportunity is successful, the opposing general has –3 to his Tides of Battle roll next Battle Turn. The PC gains 2 Glory.

ATTACK THE SHUGENJA

A break opens in the battle and your character has the opportunity to attack the reserves. The shugenja suddenly stop their battle rituals as you charge into their ranks!

A successful attack on the opposing shugenja, while dangerous (they direct attacks against anyone who assaults them), can be key to victory. If the Battle Opportunity is successful, the opposing general has –5 to his Tides of Battle roll for the next two Battle Turns. The PC gains 3 Glory.

BE PREPARED TO DIG TWO GRAVES

You see a samurai from the enemy's army cut down one of your kinsmen. You may spend the rest of this battle looking for that samurai.

If the PC chooses to pursue his enemy, the PC must enter the enemy's level of engagement and succeed at a Contested Perception/Battle Roll. If the PC fails, his enemy eludes him. If he succeeds, he immediately initiates **Show Me Your Stance** with his foe. If the foe wishes to confront the PC, he may waive the Contested Perception/Battle Roll and face the PC directly.

BREAK THE LINE

You get the command to charge the front line!

The PC must fight 2–4 Rank 2 samurai to successfully attack the front line. The PC is immediately moved to the Heavily Engaged level of activity. Next Battle Turn, subtract 2 from the PC's roll, but add 3 to his general's Tides of Battle roll. The PC gains 3 Glory.

FEW AGAINST MANY

You watch as an ally charges into the midst of battle. If he remains unaided, he will soon be overrun by enemy soldiers, who move to surround him. You must come to your ally's aid or he will surely perish!

Treat this Battle Opportunity as a Skirmish against 3–6 samurai of one lower Rank than the PC. To successfully finish this Battle Opportunity, the ally the PC is aiding must survive. If this Battle Opportunity is successful, the PC gains 3 Glory and the gratitude of his comrade.

FIRE THE SAILS

One sure way to attack an enemy ship is to burn his sails and render him immobile. You are able to shoot his sails with flaming arrows!

The TN of the shot depends on how far the target ship is away from the PC's ship (typically TN 25+). A successful shot will severely damage a ship and give a -3 penalty to the opposing admiral's Tides of Battle roll for the rest of the battle.

FOR THE EMPIRE

These creatures seem unfazed by the deaths of their comrade. They press their attack, ignoring the deaths your army inflicts. Suddenly you notice a Shadowlands warrior shouting out commands toward the massive horde. Perhaps the death of one of their leaders will give your army an advantage.

The PC may fight a Tainted samurai (Rank 3-4), a Minor Oni (statistics can be found in the Shadowlands Taint section in the Book of Air, page 261), or whatever the GM deems appropriate. If the PC succeeds, he gains 3 Glory. The opposing army is affected by any applicable Morale penalties next Battle Turn, and the opposing general suffers an additional -3 penalty to his Tides of Battle roll for the next Battle Turn.

"HOLD THIS GROUND!"

Your leader tells you to hold the line! You must remain at your current engagement level, but if your troops successfully hold their position, you will gain great Glory.

The group must hold the line against these enemies.

Engaged: Samurai (of equal Rank) equal to the group's number of PCs; +2 Glory

Heavily Engaged: Samurai (of equal Rank) equal to the group's number of PCs plus 4; +4 Glory

JOIN THE BATTLE

In your position at the army's reserves, you see a hole in the enemy general's strategy. Perhaps now is the time to bring your strength into the battle!

The PC can choose to move his position into the Disengaged level of activity. If he chooses to do so, he immediately rolls again on the Disengaged Mass Battle Table with no modifiers to the roll.

OVERWHELM

You and the troops in your unit see an enemy commander in the midst of battle with no guardians, separated in the chaos of battle. Though it may not be the most honorable thing to do, overwhelming him might give your army a deciding advantage.

If the PC ignores this Battle Opportunity, he receives no penalties. The PC (plus whoever is in his unit) may decide to attack a single samurai of Rank 3-4. If this Battle Opportunity is successful, the opposing general suffers a -5 penalty to his Tides of Battle roll on the next Battle Turn.

PICK UP THE BANNER

You see the banner carrier fall to arrows. You have the opportunity to carry the army's banner, boosting your army's morale. However, the banner carrier is a choice target for enemy soldiers.

The PC who accepts the burden of the army's banner will be attacked by many samurai and archers every Battle Turn until he abandons the banner. During every Battle Turn the PC holds the banner, his general gains a +3 bonus to his Tides of Battle roll.

PROTECT THE GENERAL

You suddenly come across the army's general, who has lost his personal guard. The general commands you to stand at his side and protect him from attack. You must follow him wherever he goes (some generals are more courageous than others).

Direct this PC's level of activity for the rest of the battle. The PC gains one extra point of Glory every Battle Turn.

RALLY THE ARCHERS

A brave enemy soldier has laid waste to the ranks of archers and your army's archers are in disarray. You must regroup your ranged troops and ready them to fight once more.

The PC must use inspirational words and a roll of Awareness/Storytelling (Oratory) at a TN of 15 to succeed. If successful, his general gains +1 to his next Tides of Battle roll, and the PC gains 1 point of Glory. If this Battle Opportunity fails or is refused, his general loses -1 to his next Tides of Battle roll.

RAMMING SPEED

The captain of your boat calls out, "ramming speed!" You must brace yourself to board an enemy ship as your boat enters the thick of battle.

If the PC accepts this Battle Opportunity, he must place himself in the Heavily Engaged level of activity. He must fight 1-4 samurai of one lower Rank than the PC. The PC gains 1 point of Glory.

SAVE A WOUNDED COMRADE

In the midst of battle, you notice a kinsman has fallen! You have the opportunity to save him.

While he is saving your comrade, the PC cannot undergo any other Battle Opportunities. Each Battle Turn, the PC faces two or three Rank 1 or 2 opponents. If the PC successfully defends the fallen comrade, he gains an additional point of Glory for each Battle Turn (and the ally may wish to bestow gifts in return for his life).

Fighting as a Party

Battle is a chaotic and dangerous affair, and unprepared heroes will undoubtedly fall if they charge into battle with no support. If more than one PC is in the same level of engagement at the beginning of the Determination step, they have the option of fighting together in all Battle Opportunities that Battle Turn.

If the players decide to fight together, all Glory and Status gains are divided among the PCs, rounded up. In Battle Opportunities with a lasting bonus (such as **Save a Wounded Comrade**, **Save a Wounded Opponent**, or **Shugenja's Gift**), the GM may choose the PC that performed the best to receive the benefits, or to simply spread out the benefits to the entire group. Perhaps the allied soldier the PCs save feels indebted to the whole group, or the shugenja decides to apply his spell to the group's best fighter.

To determine which Battle Opportunity the group receives, all players make their Mass Battle Table rolls. They then add their totals and divide by the number of PCs in the party, rounded down. The result on the Mass Battle Table is the only Battle Opportunity the group receives, regardless of how many people are in the group.

The GM may decide to add more opponents to Battle Opportunities when the players fight in a group, but it is not necessary — battle is already a deadly affair.

SAVE A WOUNDED OPPONENT

Between breaths you notice a wounded enemy. He calls out for you to help him. You may ignore him without penalty (he is acting cowardly, after all), but if you aid him, he will be morally obliged to you. The opponent could also become a valuable hostage to be used in negotiations with the enemy...

The PC must move to the Reserves level of activity as soon as he can. The PC gains no bonuses for completing this Battle Opportunity.

SAVE OUR SHIP

Your ship has been the target of heavy fire throughout the entire battle, and you find out that it has suffered structural damage. In a few moments it will sink, and without warning your crewmates will all die. You must warn the others and help them off the ship.

If the PC successfully saves the lives of his crewmates, he gains 3 Glory.

SHADOWLANDS MADNESS

The curse of the Shadowlands Taint falls upon those fighting by your side and they fall to the ground, screaming. A few moments later they rise again — with an unholy gleam in their eyes.

The PC must fight against 1–4 Tainted samurai either equal to the PC's Rank (in Heavily Engaged) or one lower (in Engaged). The PC gains 1 Glory for succeeding. If the PC fails this Battle Opportunity, his general has a –3 penalty to his Tides of Battle roll on the next Battle Turn.

SHOW ME YOUR STANCE

An enemy commander notices you and loudly challenges you to a duel.

If the PC accepts, initiate a duel against a samurai Rank 2 or 3. If the PC wins, he gains one point of Glory for each Glory Rank of his opponent; additionally, his general gains a +2 bonus to the Tides of Battle roll on the next Battle Turn.

SHUGENJA'S GIFT

One of the shugenja of your army has targeted you with a spell. The GM may decide what spell it is; alternatively, just consider one of the PC's Traits or Skills to be one Rank higher until the end of the battle.

SKIRMISH

This Battle Opportunity gives the PC a choice of fighting a number of enemies as sketched out in the Mass Battle Table. A PC needs only to force his enemies out of the fight to succeed at this Battle Opportunity; he does not need to kill them. If the PC is successful in this Battle Opportunity, add +1 to his general's Tides of Battle roll on the next Battle Turn.

STAND AGAINST THE DARKNESS

The ashigaru troops and some craven samurai in your army are unused to fighting undead abominations and the stuff of nightmares. They break and run at the sight of a huge Oni slowly marching on their position. If you can defeat the beast, perhaps your example will raise the morale of your army.

The PC may fight a Minor Oni (statistics can be found in the Shadowlands Taint section in the Book of Air, page 261). If he succeeds, the PC gains 4 Glory and his general gains +3 to the Tides of Battle roll on the next Battle Turn. If he fails, or if this Battle Opportunity is refused, the general suffers –5 to his Tides of Battle roll on the next Battle Turn and loses any Morale bonuses on the roll.

TAKE THE ENEMY BANNER

Between the blood and carnage you spot the standard bearer of the opposing army. You have the opportunity to take the enemy's banner! You must kill the bearer in combat to take it. If you take it, you must try to get it back to your reserves.

Without the help of the PC's army, this Battle Opportunity is nigh impossible to complete. While the PC holds the enemy banner, he cannot undergo any other Battle Opportunity. Each Battle Turn, the PC is assaulted by one die of enemy samurai equal to his Rank.

On each Battle Turn the enemy banner is in the PC's possession, give a –5 penalty to the enemy army's roll to determine advantage. When this Battle Opportunity is completed, the PC gains a Rank of Glory.



Experience and Character Progression

Experience Points

As characters adventure in Rokugan, they improve their abilities through practice and experience. To represent this in the game, characters are awarded Experience Points at the conclusion of every session. These points may be spent to increase Skills or Traits, purchase new Advantages, buy off existing Disadvantages, or purchase special abilities such as Kata (described in this chapter) and Kiho (described in the Book of Air). The cost for increasing a Skill or Trait is as follows:

- Increasing a Skill costs a number of Experience Points equal to the new rank. Examples: Purchasing a new Skill at Rank 1 costs 1 point; increasing a Skill from Rank 3 to Rank 4 costs 4 points.
- Increasing a Trait costs a number of Experience Points equal to the new Rank \times 4. Examples: Increasing Stamina from Rank 2 to Rank 3 costs 12 points; increasing Awareness from Rank 4 to Rank 5 costs 20 points.
- Increasing the Void Ring, which does not have individual Traits, costs a number of Experience Points equal to the new Rank \times 4. Example: Increasing Void from Rank 2 to Rank 3 costs 12 Experience Points.
- Purchasing Advantages, Kata, or Kiho costs an amount of Experience Points equal to that described in the Individual description. Buying off a Disadvantage costs a number of Experience Points equal to twice the number of Character Points received when the Disadvantage was taken, and requires appropriate character development as determined by the GM (a Sworn Enemy, for example, cannot be bought off until you have made peace with your enemy — or slain him). Advantages with the Inherent descriptor cannot be purchased with Experience Points. Advantages with the Granted descriptor cannot be purchased until you have not only paid sufficient Experience Points, but also fulfilled the GM's requirements. To purchase Benten's Blessing, for example, you need the Fortune Benten's favor. The GM may award Granted Advantages for free (such as Allies) if he feels a character has earned them, and can similarly remove without cost any Disadvantages he feels a character has overcome.

Character Progression

Experience points are meant to reflect the ongoing perfection of a character's Skills and abilities. While in reality the process of self-improvement is a lengthy one that requires years or decades, a role-playing game tends to present such matters in a more cinematic light.

Using experience to advance a character's Traits is the most basic level of self-improvement. As a character hones his physical abilities, he becomes stronger, faster, and possessed of greater stamina. A lifetime of study can lead a scholar to constantly improve his intelligence and body of knowledge, whereas more time spent in the company of others hones a courtier's ability to recognize and interpret what others are doing. All these can be

represented through the expenditure of Experience Points on Traits, both physical and mental.

Skills are far more specific than Traits, and should theoretically only be improved through direct practice. A bushi serving on the front lines of battle for weeks at a time has little opportunity to improve his Skill at arranging flowers, and a scholar in the library has few chances to exercise his favored martial arts. To truly capture the essence of Rokugan, players should choose to advance Skills based on the nature of the adventures they have experienced.

Void is unique among a character's Traits in that it has no specific in-character explanation. It is a measure of an individual's innate connection to the universe, a representation of oneness with all things and with nothing. Increasing a character's Void should represent a new level of understanding in the character's sense of self, or perhaps an enlightening encounter with something beyond the ken of mortals.

Purchasing Advantages should be done with the approval of the Game Master. Ideally, these benefits should be achieved through role-playing, but if a player is interested in their mechanical benefits, then purchasing Advantages can be appropriate. Similarly, paying off Disadvantages can remove significant penalties from characters, always an appealing prospect. Again, this is a matter best left to the discretion of the Game Master, and should be accomplished only through circumstances represented in the game.

Awarding Experience Points

The number of Experience Points awarded by the GM at the end of each session ultimately depends on the scope of the campaign. If the GM intends to have an extremely long campaign, it may be appropriate for the characters to advance slowly. If the campaign is intended to be relatively short, the GM may award a greater amount of Experience per session so that the players can see their characters advance. A gentle experience curve would award roughly 1–3 Experience Points to each player per session, while an extremely generous curve could offer up to 8–10 Experience Points per session.

The GM is encouraged to award extra Experience Points for clever role-playing. Extraordinary heroics, humor, or cleverness can all result in such rewards, but it is ultimately the GM's option whether such behavior is rewarded. A GM can use Experience rewards to encourage all manner of activity, such as remaining in character, advancing the story, or adhering to the ideals of bushido. It is also sometimes fun to involve the players. Try conducting a vote at the end of every session, letting each player select the person (other than himself) who did the best job of playing his or her character. Then grant the players with the most votes a few bonus Experience Points.

Remember that Insight Rank is not the final arbiter of a character's quality. Characters of equal power levels might have vastly different Insight Ranks because some character options, such as Advantages and Kata, increase a character's overall power level and versatility but offer no Insight. This is intentional, forcing players to choose between these options and new Rank Techniques. Also, Traits and Skills become more expensive as a character increases them. This results in characters that spend their Experience Points in an even fashion, increasing all their Traits and Skills, gaining new Techniques more quickly than a character that focuses entirely on a very narrow area of Traits and Skills. This feeds directly into the Rokugani concept of enlightenment as well as the ideal of a samurai — that a truly accomplished individual can ignore neither the physical nor the mental aspects of existence.



著書

BOOK OF AIR



In the foothills of the Great Climb there stands a small temple dedicated to Benten, Fortune of Romantic Love. Miya Sukejuro had traveled long to find this place. As the young herald made his way up the rugged mountain path, he found his weary footsteps filled with a new energy. It was good to be so close to his goal. The wooden stairs creaked gently as he climbed. He smelled the rich fragrance of incense wafting from within, and heard a low, melodious voice singing softly. Gently, he pushed aside the wooden doors and stepped inside.

A statue of the goddess dominated the small room within. She seemed to look down upon Sukejuro with a curious, knowing smile. A single priest knelt on the floor before the statue, his back to the door. He was a small, withered man almost lost within his voluminous robes. Sukejuro was surprised to realize it was the old man singing; he would not have expected such a pure sound to come from one so weathered by time. The song drifted away on the winds. The little old man rose and turned to face Sukejuro, his wrinkled face fixed in an expectant grin. Sukejuro bowed to the man, and the gesture was returned, albeit somewhat more stiffly.

"You are finally here," he said with a chuckle.

"Finally?" Sukejuro asked, confused. "How did you know I would come? I only came to this place by chance. It just happened to be on my way back to Shiro Tamori."

"Chance?" the old man asked, raising one bushy eyebrow. "What is chance? There are a dozen roads more traveled among these mountains, all more hospitable than this, most that offer quicker travel. Why take this one?"

"Because I was in no hurry," Sukejuro answered uncomfortably. "I had never seen this part of the mountains before, and had hoped that exploration might bring me peace of mind."

"The mountains beckoned you," the old man said, nodding. "We have often heard their call as well. I sensed your approach, and asked them to beckon you here."

"If you say so, sama," Sukejuro said with a wry smile.

"I confess I am surprised to see the nature of my visitor," he said. "What business brings an Imperial Herald to these mountains, yet offers him the luxury of taking the long road?"

"I am not here on Imperial business," Sukejuro replied. "I am told that I have potential to become a shugenja, and have come to learn from the Tamori."

"A shugenja?" the man asked, intrigued. "Why would the Imperial Families send you to so remote a place? The Seppun have many fine shugenja schools."

"Because my mother was a Dragon," Sukejuro replied, "and my father says that the Tamori can teach me mysteries that the Seppun would never understand."

"This is true," Sukejuro said. "Though the Seppun could claim the same as well. The universe is a vast place, Sukejuro-san, and none of us have eyes large enough to see all of it."

"Perhaps," Sukejuro answered, "but I fear that I do not see much at all. My mother believes that I possess great magical power, but I have seen what shugenja can do. I cannot summon flame or walk upon the air. I cannot speak to the mountains. I fear that I will arrive at Shiro Tamori only to learn that she was wrong, that I have no magic. I fear that I have come here only to fail my family."

The old man smiled. "Then do not fail. Look upon this and tell me what you see." He closed his eyes and suddenly the air stirred within the temple. The wind rose swiftly, swirling about Sukejuro and the priest, stirring the spirit catchers that hung from the ceiling. The candles that burned at the base of the Fortune's statue flickered and threatened to go out, but then their flame rose higher with a defiant rush, burning green in the small storm. Sukejuro felt the earth beneath his feet tremble, the entire shrine shaking with the power of magic. Sukejuro stumbled and fell to his knees. Filled with fear, he wondered if the temple might collapse and prayed that the tempest would end. The wind faded. The earth grew still. The fires dwindled back to pinpoints of light.

"I saw power," Sukejuro whispered. "Power greater than any I could ever possess, power greater than I could hope to master."

"Then you saw the truth," the old priest said. "A shugenja does not possess such power. He does not master such power. Such forces belong only to the kami. Yet if we show them the respect they are due, offer them the tribute they deserve, the spirits will return that devotion. It is the kami, not me, who have done the things you see here. I have merely directed their actions. A shugenja must always remember that the spirits are not his slaves. You believe that you cannot command the kami because you respect their power so greatly, and for that I believe you will make a fine shugenja."

"But I cannot hear the spirits as you do," Sukejuro said. "I cannot speak to them."

The old man laughed again. "The spell I just cast was simple enough; I set the spirits in motion and left them to their own devices. It was you who silenced them once more, Sukejuro."

"Me?" he asked, surprised. "I did nothing but pray that the earthquake would cease."

"And it did," the old priest said. "It is said among my clan that a man who lives forever in the mountains cannot see their beauty. It is the same with you. You do not believe you can hear the kami speak because you have always heard their whispers. Tell me, Sukejuro. Do you feel a sense of endless peace here? A sense of patience and eternity? That is the mountain. Do you feel a restless energy? A sense that there is something beyond the next horizon that must immediately be discovered? That is the wind. You hear these things, Sukejuro. It is so natural that you do not even recognize it."

"I think I understand," Sukejuro said, his voice filled with awe. "Is this why you brought me here? Did you sense that I was in need?"

"To tell the truth, no," the old man said with a mischievous grin. "I was just hoping to find someone to help me sweep the temple."



The Way of the Kami

Tales of powerful shugenja commanding the forces of the elements in spectacular ways — summoning raging storms on a clear day, incinerating enemies by the dozen, commanding the earth to rise up and protect a village from pillaging bandits, or bringing floodwaters to lands far removed from the coast pepper Rokugani history. These stories hardly reveal the true nature of a shugenja's power, namely that he has none at all except the ability to speak with the elemental spirits around him. In Rokugan, the Five Elements coexist to create reality, and those who can communicate with the kami have the ability to speak to the very forces that govern the universe. As a result, every manifestation of a shugenja's power, from a minor breeze to a raging tornado, is nothing more than the elements responding to the spellcaster's request. The power of maho, corrupt magic, comes from a different place but the same principle applies. Corrupt spirits known as kansens serve a maho-tsukai's whim... for a price, for pain and suffering as a reward, and a blood-sacrifice to complete the bargain.

The kami are sentient entities with animal realm awareness. Like worker ants, typical kami understand their role — a water spirit that lives as part of stream or a rock spirit that inhabits a small stone — and maintain their position to the best of their ability. Like other animals, however, they respond to those who can speak unaware of the consequences of their actions. Kami do not have inherent qualities but merely reflect aspects of nature like the rain and wind. Fire kami can just as easily be asked to warm a pot of tea for guests as attack a shugenja's enemies. Of significance is the shugenja's connection to the elemental spirits and how he maintains it. Though not critical of their tasks, kami are still the children of the Celestial Heavens and can be offended by certain abuses of the natural order of things. Further, the kami must be treated as honored allies by those who wish to use their power and not as lap dogs of the shugenja. Commonly this is achieved through the use of ofuda, prayer scrolls, that have been ritually blessed after being inscribed with a chant of some nature. The ofuda serves as the conduit and key to power for many shugenja, though eventually a shugenja may learn how to entreat the kami without such tools.

Much like the caste structure of Rokugan, both greater and lesser kami inhabit the world. Powerful spells and prayers call upon more powerful spirits, and some kami are not satisfied with a typical prayer or scroll. In some cases, the spirits demand an offering of some kind in order to show the shugenja carries the proper dedication and reverence. Just as lesser samurai show obedience to their lords through service, these greater kami will either extract their price when a spell is cast or demand it afterwards. Kami powerful enough to manifest themselves and make such demands are obviously not entities wise shugenja make enemies with, and whatever the kami requires must be paid in full to both satisfy the kami and the shugenja's honor.

Exceptionally powerful or talented shugenja know how to cast a number of spells without such material aids as scrolls or ritual sacrifices due to an extraordinarily close bond between the shugenja and the kami resulting in "innate abilities." Such spells can be cast with a few words and a gesture by the shugenja, or in certain cases, a thought. Figures such as the Isawa Sezaru (the Emperor's brother) and Naka Tokoi (the Grand Master of the Elements) share such a strong connection with the elemental spirits that kami always surround them. Shugenja with this level of a connection to the elements sometimes need not even think of the magic they wish to call upon — the kami can predict and protect their beloved friend after such a bond has been achieved.

For all the religious nature of the kami, there are those who see magic as more scientific than supernatural. They show the correct reverence to the kami in order to achieve their results, but approach the study of magic with a much more calculating mind than those spellcasters who see the kami as friends. Though there is nothing inherently blasphemous about such an attitude, many shugenja have made the mistake of perceiving the kami as little more than tools that dance to their whim. More often than not, when the kami refuse to aid the offensive shugenja or even become much more willing to strike him down at the command of another such absurd notions vanish quickly.

Cosmology, Spirit Realms, and the Afterlife

The Kami, the Sun, and the Moon

The universe began with Nothing, and through fear, desire, and regret Nothing created the world. With the creation of the world came the birth of the Three Gods Whose Names Cannot Be Spoken, who recognized the need to bring order to the world and created Onnotangu (Lord Moon) and Amaterasu (Lady Sun) to do so.

The children of Lady Sun and Lord Moon were the Kami — Hida, Doji, Togashi, Akodo, Shiba, Bayushi, Shinjo, Fu Leng, Hantei, and Ryoshun. Onnotangu feared that his children may grow too powerful and destroy him, so he chose to devour his children. Horrified, Amaterasu tricked Lord Moon into eating a stone rather than the young Hantei, and put the mighty god to sleep with drugged tea. Lord Moon slept for a long time, and when he awoke he found Hantei, now full grown and prepared for battle, ready to face him. Hantei cut open his father's stomach, spilling his brothers and sisters to the earth below.



Only Ryoshun, who died within his father's stomach, did not fall to the mortal realm. Lord Moon reached out for young Fu Leng, but Hantei severed his father's hand. As Fu Leng fell, he grabbed Hantei as well, causing all of the surviving children of the Sun and Moon to fall to the world below.

When they touched the earth, each of the Kami lost much of their divinity. They were unable to return to the Heavens. Instead, the Kami chose to remain in Ningen-do and lead the scattered human tribes they found there. A great contest between the Kami resulted in Hantei's victory, and his coronation as the first Emperor.

Fu Leng was not present at the contest, having fallen further than the other Kami, piercing the veils between the Spirit Realms and landing in Jigoku itself. It was there that the foul powers of Jigoku twisted Fu Leng into the terrifying mad god that he is today. It is unknown whether Jigoku truly intended Fu Leng to become its ruler all along, or if the Spirit Realm underestimated the young Kami's power and was enslaved by it in turn.

As might be expected, all clans pay homage to the Kami that founded their clan. Even the strange inhabitants of the Shadowlands worship Fu Leng with the same eerie reverence. This ties in considerably with the practice of ancestor worship, described below, as family shrines are typically not only devoted to the founding Kami, but also to many legendary members of the family as well. A family shrine in the Akodo lands, for example, might revere not only the great Akodo himself, but also the fallen champion Akodo Arasou and many other heroes of the family's past. This is not seen as a sign of disrespect, nor as a lessening of the shrine's devotion to the Kami. Instead, it is a way to revere the Kami and those who have lived up to their legacy. By praying to the spirit of Akodo Arasou, a Lion samurai also honors Akodo. By bearing the Akodo family name with honor, all such samurai honor Akodo.

Beyond the borders of a clan's holdings, the Kami associated with that clan is not often worshipped except by traveling samurai or by monks. Hida, for example, is not worshipped in the lands of the Scorpion or the Crane, although those clans will be very careful never to disrespect the Kami's memory. To do so, even during wartime, invites the wrath of the Heavens — generally considered a foolish and arrogant course of action. Wise samurai are even cautious when speaking ill of Fu Leng. Though indisputably evil, he is still a god and not to be trifled with. Most avoid even speaking Fu Leng's name, wary of the attention such action might bring. Hantei, on the other hand, is revered throughout the Empire. Even those who find fault with the Son of Heaven's descendants cannot deny that Rokugan might never have survived or even come into existence at all without his wisdom and guidance. At the very minimum there will be one shrine to the Hantei line in the palace of each clan's ruling family.

In addition to being invoked by their descendants and kinsmen, the Kami are also often invoked by those who wish to succeed in an area where a particular Kami excelled. Artisans, for example, often invoke the name of the lady Doji or, less frequently, Shiba, both of whom were well known for their appreciation of and skill with the arts. Likewise, Hida might be called on for strength or endurance, Bayushi for guile, etc. Again, this is most common among members of a given Kami's clan, but not exclusively so. Even a Mantis might call upon Akodo for courage, though obviously a Unicorn who is fighting Lion samurai is far less likely to do so.

Worship of Ryoshun is quite different than that of the other Kami. Until a few short decades ago, during the Battle at Oblivion's Gate, the Rokugani were unaware that Ryoshun existed. For centuries he had protected the Rift — the boundary between Yomi, the realm of honored ancestors, and Jigoku, the hellish realm of corruption. After the gates to Yomi were opened during the struggle between the clans and the Lying Darkness, Ryoshun's spirit moved to Meido, the realm of the dead. Ryoshun now guards the afterlife, and many pray to him after the death of a relative that he might take them and guide them to their place in the next world.

Fu Leng

Of all the Kami, Fu Leng was arguably the most powerful. The dark intelligence of Jigoku twisted and corrupted him, but bestowed dark magic upon him the likes of which the other Kami could not comprehend. Twice in Rokugan's history, the forces of Fu Leng have come precariously close to overwhelming and destroying the Empire, remaking it into a foul and twisted mockery of its former self. Both times, mortal men defeated the dark god, but only by the narrowest margin. Countless lesser tragedies have also arisen due to the machinations of Fu Leng's followers, and the sinister empire of the Lost that now stands in the Shadowlands is a living reminder of Fu Leng's madness and power.

It goes without saying that outside of the Shadowlands Fu Leng no one openly worships him. His power is certainly recognized, and his influence is all too evident in the danger of the Shadowlands to the south of Rokugan. The bold curse him, but most prefer not to speak his name or think of him. The name "Fu Leng," in fact, is not Fu Leng's original true name but one that was invented to protect the foolish from speaking the Dark God's name. Realizing the power of names, even Fu Leng has participated in his duplicity, referring to himself as Fu Leng and keeping his original name a closely guarded secret. Most Rokugani references will avoid even referring to the Dark God in this indirect manner, simply referring to him as "The Ninth Kami."

The Seven Fortunes

The worship of the Great Fortunes represents the oldest facet of religion in Rokugan, a practice that existed prior to the fall of the Kami to the world. This style of worship is said to have originated in the lost city of Gisei Toshi, built and maintained by the sorcerer Isawa and his tribe in what would one day become the holdings of the Phoenix Clan. The exact form of worship was actually known as the "way of the gods," and referred to the Thousand Fortunes, a name that included the Lady Sun and Lord Moon, the Seven Fortunes, and the myriad of other fortunes that inhabited every rock, river and grove in the Empire.

The Seven Fortunes are the most powerful of the Thousand Fortunes other than the Lady Sun and Lord Moon, universally recognized and accepted as the most powerful entities in the Rokugani belief system still active in the affairs of the mortal world. However, their activity is somewhat relative. The Fortunes intervene in mortal affairs rarely and even then usually act with extreme subtlety. Worshipping the Seven Fortunes is done out of reverence, not out of fear or a belief they will immediately bestow their power upon

The Seven Fortunes

- Benten is the Fortune of Romantic Love.
- Bishamon is the Fortune of Strength.
- Daikoku is the Fortune of Wealth.
- Ebisu is the Fortune of Honest Work.
- Fukurokujin is the Fortune of Wisdom.
- Hotel is the Fortune of Contentment.
- Jurojin is the Fortune of Longevity.

The Lesser Fortunes

- Ekibyogami is the Fortune of plague and pestilence.
- Emma-O is the Fortune of death and the judge of the underworld.
- Izo is the Fortune of mercy.
- Jotei is the Fortune of morning dew.
- Musubi-no-Kami is the Fortune of marriage.
- Toyouke-Omikami is the Fortune of grain.
- Inari is the Fortune of rice.
- Isora is the Fortune of the seashore.
- Kenro-ji-jin is the Fortune of the soil.
- Kisada is the Fortune of persistence.
- Kojin is the Fortune of the kitchen.
- Koshin is the Fortune of roads.
- Kuroshin is the Fortune of agriculture.
- Osano-Wo is the Fortune of fire and thunder.
- Suitengu is the Fortune of the sea.
- Tengen is the Fortune of writing and literature.
- Tsukune is the Fortune of rebirth.
- Uzume is the Fortune of dancing.

their worshippers. Though shugenja name many of their spells after the Fortunes, even a shugenja realizes a Fortune rarely takes an obvious hand in a mortal's existence.

Because of their importance in the Celestial Order, the Seven Fortunes are worshipped throughout Rokugan. Cities of any significant size contain temples to the Seven Fortunes, most of which have monks that maintain and care for the shrine, necessary because of the constant stream of worshippers, both peasant and samurai, who pay their daily respects to the Fortunes. Those villages not fortunate enough to possess an order of monks to maintain the temple must do so themselves. Perhaps surprisingly, there is never a shortage of workers to care for the temple, as it is considered a great show of respect and results in good luck for the individual in question.

Images of the Seven Fortunes are always drawn in two very different styles. When all is well, the Rokugani pay homage to images of the Fortunes in their benevolent aspect, usually depicted reclining upon a pillow or perhaps streaking across the sky in a golden chariot. If there is strife, suffering, or discord then the Fortunes are worshipped in their wrathful aspect. Wrathful Fortunes are typically depicted with black skin and blazing red eyes. They are also often shown wielding gigantic, deadly weapons. Even at these times they are not worshipped out of fear. Fortunes rarely strike out at their worshippers, more commonly it is believed that the Fortune takes its wrathful aspect out of anger for the ill fate that has befallen its worshippers.

The Lesser Fortunes

While the Seven Fortunes are considered powerful celestial beings very much removed from the world, the Lesser Fortunes known as mikokami fall close to a more common realm. Each object or thing in Rokugan, be it a rock, stream, sword, tree, or hill, has a spirit within it deserving of respect. A farmer who cuts down a tree for firewood gives a prayer of thanks to the spirit of the tree that will provide his family with warmth and protection from the winter cold.

The mikokami play a considerable role in the daily lives of the citizens of Rokugan. They are considered much more accessible than the Seven Fortunes, and it is not uncommon for the helmin to make offerings to them in hopes of receiving their favor. In coastal villages, for example, fishermen leave offerings to Saitengu, the Fortune of the sea, in hopes of a plentiful haul of fish in return. Villages within the Unicorn Clan holdings, on the other hand, might instead pray to Koshin, the Fortune of roads, for a swift and safe journey. If the event in question is of considerable significance, such as the beginning of the fishing season on a coastal village, then an entire festival might be scheduled. Ironically the more human nature of these Lesser Fortunes also makes them somewhat more terrifying than their more powerful brethren. Suitengu's anger is a thing to behold, and few would tempt the wrath of Osano-Wo. Like the Seven Fortunes, mikokami have both benevolent and wrathful aspects, though a handful are exclusively portrayed in either one or the other.

There is something of rank and file between the more powerful mikokami that are truly considered Lesser Fortunes and the nature spirits that inhabit everyday objects. In essence, the Lesser Fortunes wield more power, influential mikokami that have gained influence over a particular domain. A mikokami might hold domain over an entire rice field in a particular village, but Inari, the Fortune of rice, inhabits in all such fields throughout the Empire. While a farmer planting his individual field would pray to whatever mikokami inhabits it, a festival for the harvest of all a village's fields would be directed to Inari since there are many fields involved.

Ancestors

Of all the spiritual and heavenly entities found in the Rokugani belief system, ancestor spirits are by far the least powerful and however, the most active. The Realm of Ancestors lies very close to the mortal world, and it is easy for them to influence the mortal realms so long as they have an anchor: their descendants. Using their descendants as links to the physical world allows ancestor spirits to vicariously experience a hint of the sensations they once knew in life.

Ancestor worship is not an organized religion by any stretch of the imagination. While all Rokugani recognize and appreciate the importance and influence of their ancestors, buildings shined to them and paying them homage as appropriate, there are no centralized temples, no doctrine, not even monks who subscribe to the practice. Instead it is a unique and individual practice, with each family honoring their ancestors in their own unique way. Some choose to honor their ancestors by carrying items sacred to them, such as a lock of hair or the dagger that they carried with them at all times. Others attempt to emulate their ancestors, completing unfinished business of theirs in the mortal world.

All families in Rokugan, regardless of their caste, maintain a shrine to their ancestors. This is true for the Emperor just as it is for the poorest farmer. Each branch of a large family, such as the Akodo, maintains a separate shrine to their own specific ancestors as well as to the Kami Akodo himself. The Tsume vassal family of the Crane might have a shrine devoted to Tsume Retsu, the family's founder, as well as many prominent heroes of the Doji, from whom the Tsume are an offshoot.

In addition to worshipping their ancestors as a means of finding guidance in their own lives, the citizens of Rokugan also do so in an attempt to facilitate their ancestors' journeys through the afterlife. The Rokugani believe that the souls of the dead must first be purified of their sins before moving on to either reincarnation or eternal rest in Yomi, the realm of the ancestors. By praying for them, Rokugani can alleviate their ancestors' suffering and hasten their trip through the underworld. These prayers are often directed at Emma-O, the judge of the underworld and Izo, the Fortune of mercy. The Unicorn also direct these prayers to the Shi-Tien Yen-Wang, the mysterious Lords of Death.

Sins

When the universe was new, there was Nothing. Nothing came before even Lady Sun and Lord Moon, and Nothing was all that there was. It is said that from Nothing came the first Three Sins, now considered the most basic sins of Rokugan. Nothing was afraid, for it was the only thing in the universe, and it despaired. Fear is a sin for it drives men to do shameful things.

Soon, Nothing longed for a companion. From Nothing's emptiness came the sin of Desire. Desire created half of the universe, made heavy by the pain felt by Nothing, and the form of the world appeared. Desire is a sin because it inspires samurai to disobey their one duty in life — to serve their lord. A guard who desires more than his simple station will grow lax in his duties as he focuses on things other than what he is expected to do. A samurai who desires love will defy honor and daimyo to satisfy himself.

After Nothing saw what its desire wrought, it had regret. The weight of Nothing's regret formed the rest of the universe, and set into motion the events that would create both Sun and Moon. Seeing that it was losing itself to its own creation, Nothing retreated into the blackest recesses of the universe. Regret is a sin because it both leads to the other two sins, and it signifies a weak mind. Regret can cause a man to question his lord, to fear for what he had done, or to desire another path. It also leads to doubt, a feeling that has no place in the heart of a samurai.

Folk Magic

There are hundreds of Fortunes, and for each Fortune, many ways to draw their disfavor. Peasants harbor countless superstitions on how to avoid the wrath of each of the Fortunes, or how to regain their favor once you have angered them. The Fortunes are fickle beings, who become angered on occasion, and their disfavor can be seen in something as small as a pot sliding from someone's hands to a sudden plague bestowed upon an entire family. While the Fortunes hardly interact with humanity in such a direct manner, most superstitious peasants would argue that it is better not to take the risk of such.

Atoning for a transgression against the Fortunes is simple enough, given the proper ritual. The main complication of such a task is that for each Fortune, there are handfuls of ways to commune with them. Praying to Suitengu for a safe voyage across the sea, for example, might entail an entirely different ritual than a prayer of thanks for discovering a pearl while swimming. Naturally many of the Fortunes do not really care, and will accept any form of sincere reverence, but in matters of ritual and superstition some will take no chances.

Peasants have invented countless such forms of attracting or averting the attention of Fortunes. Though their rituals do not have the reliable, immediate results of a shugenja's spell, it cannot be denied that their practices do occasionally bear fruit. Shugenja have thus come to refer to these practices as folk magic.

Kharma

Sooner or later characters die. It's unavoidable, especially in a game as violent as Legend of the Five Rings. Though Rokugan canon certainly boasts tales of heroes like Hida Kisada who have returned from the dead, they are by far the exception rather than the rule. A character who dies will most likely remain dead.

But if a player's beloved character dies, how will he continue to participate in the campaign? Must he create a character from scratch and begin again? This can ruin the fun of the game for everyone, as one player is forced to play a much weaker character and the others must watch out for their new friend.

Invoking the Kharma rule is an alternative option. When a character dies, simply add up the following:

- 1) Amount of Experience Points spent to increase Traits (not counting School and Family Trait bonuses).
- 2) Amount of Experience Points spent to increase Skills (not counting the first rank of School Skills).
- 3) Experience Point value of all Advantages (whether they were gained by paying Experience Points or as the result of roleplaying).
- 4) Negative point value of all Disadvantages (whether they were purchased intentionally or otherwise accrued; maximum ten points).

The player now creates a new character. The total points calculated above becomes the Experience Points he receives to build his new character, but with the following rule: any points gained for Advantages that the original character gained through role-playing must be spent on Advantages the new character could have obtained in a similar manner (such as Allies). Naturally the resulting character should meet with the GM's approval and somehow be appropriate to the campaign and party, optimally bearing some sort of connection to the player's former character. This rule allows the player to create a character whose Skills, abilities, and contacts are on par with the rest of the party despite the occasional unfortunate death.

Dragons

Seven Dragons make up the Celestial Heavens, all of which represent an aspect of the universe's foundation. The five Elemental Dragons are the most well known, and joined by the Celestial Dragon and the Thunder Dragon to hold the world together. They represent that which is both pure and holy of their element, and are said to be more powerful than the Fortunes themselves. Though recent whispers among the Oracles suggest that the birth of an Eighth Dragon may be impending, thus far they are proven only to be rumors.

Each of the Elemental Dragons is tied closer to Rokugan than the others. They were created with the universe, as the primal stuff of creation, slowly formed into the five basic elements. These Dragons moved among mortals when the Celestial Heavens was much closer to the earth, and took great interest in them. The Dragon of Fire was taken with how the humans could perform great feats of inner strength and inspiration. Earth and Water talked to one another, speaking of how the mortals were strong in body and spirit, able to tame the land Sun and Moon had given them. Air saw how the kami that surrounded the Empire loved these humans, and did the same. The Dragon of Void stood apart, conferring with his cousin Togashi (the founder of the Dragon clan) about what mysteries these mortals would unlock with their canny minds and unconquerable souls.

Sun and Moon soon worried that the interference of the Dragons (along with other Celestial figures) would be too much for the Empire. They decreed that the Heavens would be lifted far away from the earth, and the Celestial Dragon was created to both hold the Heavens aloft, and serve as a messenger between the two realms.

Finally, when Shinsai called forth the mortal champions of the Empire to do battle with Fu Leng, the Dragon of Thunder was first seen in the heavens, and the cry of her birth shook all of the land below. The Thunder Dragon represents the strength of a mortal's soul combined with the voice of the Heavens. Those favored by the Thunder Dragon are said to be completely fearless and unstoppable in combat.

The Dragons reside in the Celestial Heavens. On rare occasions throughout history, the Dragons have guided mortals to their home in the Heavens. Because of this, many refer to this place as the Dragonlands. Only the Thunder and Celestial Dragons interfere in the affairs of mortals directly, though the Dragon of the Void has an insatiable curiosity regarding human affairs. 'Often' to a Dragon figures effectively as once or twice every hundred years, appearing to worthy mortals asking for their guidance, or to charge them with a duty from the Celestial Heavens. The Elemental Dragons choose to affect the mortal realm through their Oracles and by sending mortals dreams or visions.

The Dragons reign as the lords of the Celestial Heavens, serving the Sun and Moon just as the Clan Champions serve the Emperor. They usually act and think independently though they consider one another family. Each Dragon embodies their Element, though they can take any form they choose.



The Spirit Realms

The physical world of Rokugan does not consist of the entire universe. The mortal realm is simply one layer of a complex system, referred to by scholars and shugenja as the Spirit Realms. All of the many Spirit Realms exist simultaneously in time and space. Whether one can move through, perceive, or interact with realms beyond the mortal one philosophical concept. Many supernatural coexist in many of these realms simultaneously. Likewise, many physical places are passages into other realms, existing in more than one at a time. A mortal being might travel through these places or interact with these individuals and never realize he has touched upon something beyond the ordinary world.

Though many of these Spirit Realms have no bearing on an ordinary samurai's life, there is one way in which Spirit Realms are important to all mortals. When a mortal soul dies, the kharma cycle carries his spirit into another of these realms. Depending on the nature of his life and how well he served the purpose of his existence, he might find himself living a new life in one of these other realms. In some cases, this might only be temporary while a soul works off the kharma they accrued in the previous lifetime and proves itself worthy to become mortal once more. In other cases, this is a permanent arrangement, such as the many heroes who dwell forever in Yomi or remorseless souls tormented forever in Jigoku.

Some Spirit Realms closely resemble Rokugan in appearance and function, while others are so alien they hardly resemble anything in the normal world. Each of the Spirit Realms is home to its own population of unique beings, spirits that vary as widely as the realms they inhabit. Many times these creatures are so far removed from our reality that they cannot be affected by mortal weapons. Some spirits (such as ghosts) can pass through physical objects effortlessly. Such creatures can be terribly dangerous given the proper motivation, and an awareness of the variations of spirits can come in handy. A spirit can usually be harmed by a weapon forged in the realm that spawned it, or by

any material that exists in multiple spirit realms simultaneously. Jade and crystal are the only known substances that exist simultaneously in nearly every spirit realm. Magic also transcends the boundaries of reality, and can usually be relied upon to affect a visitor from another realm normally.

Certain spirit realms are said to be "close" to others which does not imply an actual physical distance but rather a similarity in form or philosophy. Realms that are said to be "distant" from one another are unlike one another in some dramatic fashion. For those rare spirits able to pass from one reality to another, doing so between congruent realms is far easier than attempting to leap from one incongruous realm to another. In fact, to attempt to do so invites self-destruction, and only the most foolhardy spirits attempt to travel in such a matter. Some realms, such as Jigoku and Tengoku, are entirely closed to one another, forbidding travel between them by any means without first entering a closer Realm.

The Toritaka phantom hunters are the foremost experts on the Spirit Realms, and have documented over eight million different types of spirits. They have also documented the eleven most significant Spirit Realms, though it should be noted that each of these realms actually encompasses countless smaller shades of reality, similar enough in nature that they may be grouped together.

TRAVEL THROUGH THE SPIRIT REALMS

Traveling through the spirit realms is difficult, usually requiring powerful magic. For those without such a resource, there are a handful of legendary places where the Realms brush against one another more closely than normal. Those who know what they are seeking can take advantage of these passages, stepping from one Realm into the other and leaving the mortal world behind entirely. Of course, the dangers one may find by wandering the Spirit Realms may make one wish he had remained at home.

JEALOUS REALMS

Each of the Spirit Realms has a life and mentality of its own, and some are said to be "jealous." These realms tend to be very protective of their inhabitants, and will often try to bring outsiders into the fold. Visitors in a jealous realm must be cautious, lest they find themselves unable to return whence they came.

NINGEN-DO — THE REALM OF MORTALS

This is the realm we perceive, the humans realm. To the spirits, this world is alternately as real or ephemeral as any other. Ningen-do is among the most jealous of all realms, and has a particular hunger for the denizens of Tengoku. The original Kami found themselves trapped here when they fell to earth centuries ago, and many animal spirits have become bound here as well. Even oni who enter the mortal realm find that they are no longer quite as welcome in the Realm of Evil as they once were. Certain clever spirits such as dragons and tricksters can enter and leave Ningen-do without difficulty.

Zokujin, ningyo, kenku, lesser kami, ogres, trolls, and bakemono all seem to have originated here. It is an often overlooked fact that Naga and humans are in actuality not natives of Ningen-do. Humans are offspring of Lady Sun and Lord Moon, they are technically denizens of the Celestial Heavens, now trapped in the mortal world. The origin of the Naga also seems to link their race to the Sun and Moon. Neither race gain any special abilities due to their divine origins outside of the fact that the inhabitants of Tengoku view them as distant cousins.

Close Realms: Chikushudo, Gaki-do, Maigo no Musha, Meido, Sakkaku, Yomi, Yume-do

Distant Realms: Tengoku, Toshigoku, Meido

CHIKUSHUDO — THE REALM OF ANIMALS

This world is remarkably similar to Ningen-do. All ordinary animals exist in Chikushudo and Ningen-do simultaneously. When a soul is reincarnated as an animal, it begins its path in Chikushudo. Chikushudo is the domain of the greater animal spirits as well as the curious and sometimes destructive hengyokai. This is also the chosen home of Inari, Fortune of Rice.

Close Realms: Ningen-do, Sakkaku

Distant Realms: Jigoku, Meido

Known Passages: From Ningen-do: Kitsune Mori, but one must have the blessing of the fox-spirits to find the way.

GAKI-DO — THE REALM OF THE HUNGRY DEAD

This is a realm of punishment for those who lived lives consumed with selfishness or dishonor. These spirits are called gaki, and they live to feed, to consume until their hunger is satisfied and they can be promoted to a less painful existence. They are often quite harmless, but a few varieties of gaki exist that can be quite malicious. Gaki should be treated with utmost caution.

Close Realms: Jigoku, Toshigoku, Ningen-do

Distant Realms: Tengoku, Meido

Known Passages: Amaterasu's Furnace, deep in the Shadowlands, leads to Gaki-do. However, the path is long and only a truly virtuous heart can survive the flames and enter the land of the Hungry Dead.

JIGOKU — THE REALM OF EVIL

Common parlance has caused the name "Jigoku" to sometimes be used as a general reference to all Spirit Realms, especially during the War Against the Darkness. Shugenja will quickly point out that this is incorrect, and pray a swift prayer to the ancestors so that they do not take offense. Jigoku is a realm of utter corruption. All that exists there is raw, soulless evil. Only souls beyond redemption are cast into Jigoku upon their death. Jigoku is home to oni, kansen, and countless dark things that often escape into Ningen-do through the Shadowlands, where the borders between our realms are far too thin. Jigoku is the most jealous of all the Spirit Realms, and hates the purity of Ningen-do with a passion. The Realm of Evil will not rest until the Realm of Mortals is destroyed.

Jigoku is home only to oni. All other creatures of the Shadowlands are mere corruptions. Only oni are true natives of Jigoku.

Close Realms: Ningen-do, Gakido

Distant Realms: Toshigoku, Chikushudo

Closed Against: Tengoku, Meido

Known Passages: The Festering Pit of Fu Leng leads directly to the heart of Jigoku, though only the truly mad would wish to go there.

MAIGO NO MUSA — THE REALM OF LOST HEROES

The youngest of all Spirit Realms, Maigo no Musha (also called the Realm of Thwarted Destiny) is the final resting place of dead souls who have been denied their true destiny. The War of Spirits caused enormous imbalance in the Spirit Realms as returned spirits with no right to remain in the mortal realm caused many souls to perish before their time, with destinies unfulfilled. These lost souls wandered without purpose, unable to enter any of the spirit realms, until Maigo no Musha formed like a scab over the Celestial Order's wound. A great conflict followed between legions of dead souls to determine the future of this realm. In the end a band of heroes known as the Legion of the Dead insured that it would always be a place of hope and potential, where lost souls might find a second chance to reenter the mortal world to find their destinies.

There are no native beings to this realm, only unfortunates drawn here by circumstance. The only two beings who choose to dwell here are the ghost of the ronin, Sanzo, and his loyal steed, Musha. Together they seek out the lost souls of Maigo no Musha and help them find redemption. Spirits of slaughter sometimes wander into this realm, seeking to twist the lost heroes of Maigo no Musha into bitter, murderous creatures like themselves.

Close Realms: Ningen-do, Meido, Toshigoku, Yume-do

Distant Realms: Sakkaku

Known Passages: The Daldoji know of a passage to this realm within their lands, but guard the secret closely for reasons of their own.

MEIDO — THE REALM OF THE DEAD

This is the realm where spirits go to await reincarnation if they were neither evil enough for Jigoku's torment nor honorable enough for Yomi's rewards. It is a domain of waiting — a sad, lonely, grey place. Occasionally, confused spirits slip through the gates to Ningen-do in an attempt to resume their former

lives. Though these poor ghosts mean no harm, they can cause much pain and confusion (especially to themselves) if left to wander. This Realm is home to many enigmatic celestial beings including Emma-O (Fortune of Death) the mysterious Shi-Tien Yen-Wang (or Lords of Death) and Ryoshun, the Tenth Kami. While Emma-O viciously protects his realm from intruders and captures those who attempt to escape, the Lords of Death pass their time determining brutal but just punishments to purify those souls who are sent here. In contrast, Ryoshun is a figure of mercy, bringing relief to the tormented prisoners of Meido and eventually sending their spirits on to be reincarnated when they are ready.

Meido is a very jealous realm. Those who set foot in the Realm of the Dead have renounced life and may not leave until the beings who rule here deem them worthy.

Close Realms: Maigo no Musha, Ningen-do, Yume-do, Toshigoku, Yomi

Distant Realms: Chikushudo, Gaki-do, Sakkaku, Tengoku

Closed Against: Jigoku

Known Passages: There are no known ways to reach Meido quickly, other than death.

SAKKAKU — THE REALM OF MISCHIEF

This spiritual realm is the home of mujina, orochi, and kappa (though kappa often deny it and orochi prefer not to think about it). Its inhabitants are not as numerous as those of other realms but they possess an astounding solidarity of purpose. To put it simply, mischievous spirits enjoy causing trouble. A trickster who confuses an arrogant mortal is a well-employed trickster. The landscape of Sakkaku resembles Rokugan vaguely, but is chaotic with natural laws asserting themselves only occasionally to keep visitors on their toes.

It should be stressed that spirits of Sakkaku are not evil, merely mischievous. These spirits are indeed unpredictable, but occasionally wise. Those who meet their tricks with equal cunning may be offered friendship. Some Shintao monks revere trickster spirits, revering them as great teachers.

Sakkaku is the least jealous of all the realms. Though the tricksters do their best to annoy whoever enters their home, those who escape its grasp will quickly be forgotten as more amusing activities present themselves. Likewise, most other realms have little use for tricksters, and are all too willing to allow the fickle spirits to escape.

Close Realms: Ningen-do, Yume-do, Jigoku, Chikushudo

Distant Realms: Maigo no Musha, Tengoku

Known Passages: The sheer number of mujina in Crab lands suggests there is a passage somewhere, but the mujina refuse to reveal where.

TENGOKU — THE CELESTIAL HEAVENS

This realm is the home of many Fortunes, the Elemental Dragons, the Sun, the Moon, and other divine entities. Tengoku is a realm of exquisite majesty. Mortals are rarely allowed to perceive Tengoku, though it is said the True Emperor can see this realm at will. Like the greater Kami, inhabitants of Tengoku sparkle with the majesty of the heavens, and are thus attractive additions for any realm. Visitors of Tengoku are particularly vulnerable to being claimed by jealous realms should they stray from home for long.

Close Realms: Yume-do

Distant Realms: Ningen-do, Gaki-do, Sakkaku

Closed Against: Jigoku

Known Passages: Any of the true Oracles bears a connection to an Elemental Dragon, and thus can open a passage to Tengoku whenever they wish. If the Oracle's Dragon is not willing to allow the passage, such a thing will not be. Needless to say, the Oracles do not bestow this honor on the undeserving.

TOSHIGOKU — THE REALM OF SLAUGHTER

When a warrior dies in senseless battle, or perishes consumed by thoughts of revenge, his soul is cast into Toshigoku. Toshigoku is a world of endless battle, where spirits kill other spirits only to rise up and kill again. Fortunately, Toshigoku does not border closely with Ningen-do, for its inhabitants are a cruel and savage lot. Instances of spectral armies destroying entire towns are, in fact, examples of visitors from Toshigoku.

Close Realms: Gaki-do, Maigo no Musha, Meido

Distant Realms: Ningen-do, Jigoku

Known Passages: Any sight where senseless carnage occurred on an epic scale is a possible passage to Toshigoku. Such places should be avoided, lest the spirit armies appear and destroy all foolish enough to stand in their path.

YOMI — THE REALM OF THE BLESSED ANCESTORS

Those who have fulfilled their destinies and karma are allowed to enter into this realm upon their death. Yomi borders closely upon our own world; the blessed ancestors walk alongside their descendants and guide their every action as shiryo — guardian spirits. The greatest heroes of Yomi form the legendary Legion of the Dead, an army of heroes that stands ready to answer to any threat to the Spirit Realms.

Shiryo are easily identifiable by the healthy golden glow that suffuses them. The armies of spirits that emerged from Oblivion's Gate preceding the recent War of the Spirits were, in fact, shiryo.

Close Realms: Ningen-do, Jigoku, Meido

Distant Realms: Sakkaku, Chikushudo

Known Passages: The Kitsu Hall of Ancestors is more closely linked to Yomi than any other site in Rokugan.

YUME-DO — THE REALM OF DREAMS

This is the only realm that ordinary mortals regularly perceive. While sleeping, human minds wander this world. The shiyokai, predatory harbingers of nightmares, and the baku, mysterious but often helpful eaters of dreams, both originate in this realm. The Naga Akasha is believed to exist somewhere in the Realm of Dreams. I'chih, the Nezumi World of Dreams, is also believed to be related to Yume-do. The Nezumi believe that all that has ever existed fades into dream, and thus their once mighty empire must still exist somewhere in the endless fields of dream. Many Nezumi shamans spend their entire lives tirelessly searching for these lost dreamscapes.

Close Realms: Maigo no Musha, Ningen-do, Tengoku, Meido, Sakkaku

Distant Realms: Toshigoku

Known Passages: Everywhere. All one must do to enter Yume-do is dream. The villainous Tsuno were once notorious for using these ample passages as a weapon, inciting nightmares in their enemies' consciousness and then using them as a passage to transport their armies into the mortal realm.





Nemuranai

All things in the world are inhabited by spirits of some kind. Just as dynamic and beautiful waterfalls are home to powerful Water kami, even a lifeless stick houses some minor spirit. In most cases, the natural elemental kami are active only in places where the elements have a strong presence or are active — an ancient and huge mountain, a quiet stream, a tree, a raging storm. In other places, the spirits of the world have become dormant due to inactivity, loneliness, or merely because the kami are otherwise asleep. This is most common in man-made items such as tools and clothing that have removed some material from its natural state. Generally the spirits do not find this activity offensive, but choose to sleep until the silence of their kin ends.

Nemuranai are created when the spirits within an object end their slumber prematurely, granting the item they dwell in supernatural properties. Because the power of the object comes from the spirits awake within them, nemuranai are also referred to as "awakened" objects. Awakened items almost always fall into one of two types — minor charms that the bearer considers lucky, or revered artifacts known for their power and history. There is almost no middle ground between the two types of nemuranai.

Items most commonly awaken due to proximity to powerful souls (self-awakened) or to being made in a special manner (crafted). Self-awakened nemuranai are inhabited by spirits that feel a loyalty to a particular person or family line, usually the

children of their original bearers. Weapons and armor are the most common type of self-awakened nemuranai, with the spirits aiding their master and protecting him from harm. Items carried by legendary men and women are either already awakened or will likely become so if their bearer becomes a legend after death. Many times, the spirits of an item awaken in response to some great danger to their bearer, saving him from certain doom. Such a case might be an honorable Emerald Magistrate ambushed by a powerful bandit lord he had been hunting for months. Other times, the spirits slowly awaken as the item is passed from generation to generation.

As the legend of an item grows and the deeds of its bearer (or bearers) accumulate, so too does the power of the item. The most famous of these were the Ancestral Swords of the Clans, passed down from Champion to Champion of each of the first Seven Great Clans for a thousand years until they were cast into the Celestial Heavens by Amaterasu, the Sun Goddess. Self-awakened items that linger in obscurity, such as "lucky" obis or sandals, do not lose their magic but tend to remain minor in power. These items are often sent to relatives or given as gifts, and so long as they are given freely maintain their supernatural properties. Crafted nemuranai rarely become more powerful with time, though they are just as likely to become particular about their bearers. A war helm made to protect a particular daimyo often functions only for the intended wearer or his children.

In either situation, it is possible to offend the spirits within the item through dishonorable actions, misuse of the object, or blasphemy — the awakened kami are tied to the Celestial Heavens, after all.

Nemuranai Rules

Nemuranai, as explained above, come into existence in two ways. In the case of awakened nemuranai, the details and subsequent mechanics of the item's awakening are left in the hands of the GM. A PC that performs some great feat of service for his lord and is granted his own fiefdom may find the spirit of his blade awakening. Otherwise, a minor bonus or function may manifest intermittently at first and then slowly become a more constant effect as the item awakens over time.

Crafted nemuranai require a far more active role on the player's part, but can still be subject to the will of the GM. Because the items are powered by the whimsical kami, there is no foolproof "formula" for crafting nemuranai. Though the Ashina, Hecluchi, and Tamori families have developed reliable methods, they still fail often enough due to the nature of the elemental spirits. Suggestions on item creation are listed below, but GMs should feel free to add or remove requirements based on the circumstance of the campaign or the unique nature of the item. A lamp that lights itself may only require a concentrated effort and communion with the kami, but a sword that bursts into flame is unique and epic enough that it may require something like lava rocks from Amaterasu's Furnace — the untainted volcano that burns deep in the Shadowlands.

GMs are encouraged to keep three things in mind when introducing awakened items into their campaigns — rarity, drama, and balance. Primarily, GMs should remember that even minor nemuranai are rare. They tend to be precious heirlooms passed down among samurai families, meaning they are owned by a small percentage of a tiny minority of Rokugan's full population. Nemuranai should be kept rare also in the interest of maintain-



ing their air of wonder. No one is impressed when the party is awarded its umpteenth magical netsuke, even if it grants a Free Raise on something or other. Nemuranai should always have an interesting history, which should be stressed as much as the mechanical applications of the item. Inheriting Uncle's Satsuke's well-playing biwa may not sound impressive to a warrior, but he will be expected to care for the item as the revered artifact that it is. Finally, nemuranai represent unique mechanical resources for PCs and NPCs alike that cannot be gained by merely spending Experience or gaining Insight Ranks.

Items that contain magic may be identified in a number of ways. Commonly, a shugenja may use Commune to speak with the spirit of a nemuranai, but must make a Raise for every question he will ask (beyond the first) regarding the item's magic. Awakened artifacts that have a historical significance may be identified with an appropriate Lore skill. For example, the wakizashi of Hantei Genji, son of the First Emperor, could easily be identified by anyone with Lore (Hantei Dynasty) or even Lore (History). Finally, Commune or the Spellcraft Skill could be employed to determine if an object is awakened at all, though objects that give off obvious clues (such as an obi that ties itself) require no check of any kind.

NEMURANAI EFFECTS

Like all magic in Rokugan, the mystical nature of awakened items can be assigned to the Five Elements. Mechanically, this dictates the sort of effects associated with the item. Effects are divided further into major or minor categories, signifying both the power level of the mechanical effect and the amount of effort that would be required for such an item to become awakened (through use or creation). In most cases, an awakened item only ever has one mechanical effect. Nemuranai can have multiple effects, though they tend to be from the same element and tend to be either a handful of minor effects or two or three major ones. These restrictions are by no means meant to limit players and GMs, but are intended to serve as a reference when attempting to create effects not listed. Effects of similar power should have similar costs and requirements.

As stated above, suggestions are given for effects and ways for GMs to implement them when their players attempt to craft magical items, but this is not an exhaustive or binding list. What is common to all effects is the experience cost and the required magical expertise involved in the item's creation. Minor effects require the shugenja to spend 2 Experience Points when crafting the item, require the ability to cast at least Rank 3 spells of that element, and add +15 TN to any Skill roll required when making the item. Major effects require the shugenja to spend 5 Experience Points when crafting the item, require the ability to cast at least Rank 5 spells of that element, and add +25 TN to any Skill roll required when making the item. If the shugenja awakening the item is not the person crafting the item, the TN penalties are raised by 5, and the shugenja must be present for the entire process of the item's creation.

AIR
Requires silent meditation upon the object; being crafted at the highest point the crafter can find; sacrifice of feathers gathered without violence.

Minor: The item can cast an Air spell of Rank 2 or lower once a week; the item can raise the bearer's Awareness or Reflexes by 1 for an hour once a week; the item animates in some way that re-

lates only to itself (such as a box that closes itself); a message no longer than a minute can be spoken to the object and "replayed" upon command; the item is completely weightless; the item can be used to gain a Free Raise on a Social Skill roll once per day; the item's bearer rolls an additional die for Initiative.

Major: The item can cast an Air spell of Rank 2 or lower once a day; the item can cast an Air spell of Rank 4 or lower once a week; the item can raise the bearer's Awareness or Reflexes by 2 for an hour once a week; the item can raise the bearer's Awareness or Reflexes by 1 for an hour once a day; the item animates in a way related to its function on its own and can affect other things (such as a rope that binds a victim on command); the item becomes invisible on command; the item grants its bearer a Free Raise on all Social Skill rolls; the item's bearer rolls and keeps two additional dice for Initiative.

EARTH

Requires being crafted on a special anvil, table, or other blessed surface of wood, stone or earthen material; must be made from earthen or specially grown wooden materials; requires sacrifice of precious minerals or important ceramic items.

Minor: The item can cast an Earth spell of Rank 2 or lower once a week; the item can raise the bearer's Stamina or Willpower by 1 for an hour once a week; the item transforms from its normal state into solid stone (and vice versa) on command; the item grants two Free Raises to resist poison or disease effects; the item can sustain the growth of a small plant with a quarter of the usual sustenance; the item's bearer ignores his Earth in Wounds (from a single damage instance) once a day.

Major: The item can cast an Earth spell of Rank 2 or lower once a day; the item can cast an Earth spell of Rank 4 or lower once a week; the item can raise the bearer's Stamina or Willpower by 2 for an hour once a week; the item can raise the bearer's Stamina or Willpower by 1 for an hour once a day; the item prevents the bearer from being moved against his will; the item's bearer is immune to mundane poisons or diseases; all physical damage against the bearer is reduced by his Earth; the item is permanently considered a jade weapon for purposes of harming Tainted subjects.

FIRE

Requires being crafted while specially made incenses burn; must be forged on the lip of a volcano; requires sacrifice of any manner of acceptable items in a fire.

Minor: The item can cast a Fire spell of Rank 2 or lower once a week; the item can raise the bearer's Agility or Intelligence by 1 for an hour once a week; the item can be used to gain a Free Raise on a Lore Skill roll once per day; the item ignites and extinguishes on command; the item's damage is increased by +1k0; the item can be used once a day to extinguish mundane fires less than ten cubic feet in size.

Major: The item can cast a Fire spell of Rank 2 or lower once a day; the item can cast a Fire spell of Rank 4 or lower once a week; the item can raise the bearer's Agility or Intelligence by 2 for an hour once a week; the item can raise the bearer's Agility or Intelligence by 1 for an hour once a day; the item produces a fire that cannot be extinguished by any means; the item grants a Free Raise on all Lore Skill rolls; the item's damage is increased by +2k1 and it shimmers with fire.

WATER

Requires being dipped or soaked in special water; must be crafted with coral from a particular location or a particular kind of fish bone.

Minor: The item can cast a Water spell of Rank 2 or lower once a week; the item can raise the bearer's Perception or Strength by 1 for an hour once a week; produces pure water once per day; the item can be used to gain a Free Raise on a Bugei Skill once per day; doubles the bearer's natural Wound recovery rate while carried or kept near his resting place; can increase the bearer's Water by 1 for determining his movement rate once per day for an hour; the item's damage rating is increased by +0k1.

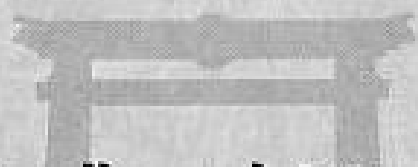
Major: The item can cast a Water spell of Rank 2 or lower once a day; the item can cast a Water spell of Rank 4 or lower once a week; the item can raise the bearer's Perception or Strength by 2 for an hour once a week; the item can raise the bearer's Perception or Strength by 1 for an hour once a day; produces pure water on command that evaporates after an hour if unused; can be used once a week to fully heal the bearer; the item grants a Free Raise on several related Bugei Skills; doubles the bearer's movement rate for an hour once per day; the item's damage rating is increased by +1k2.

VOID

Purely dependent on the item, but usually some manner of ritual that includes a balance of all four other elements.

Minor: The item can cast a Void spell of Rank 2 or lower once a week; the item can be used to spend a Void Point as if the bearer had done so, once a week; general catchall effects that don't fall into the other elements.

Major: The item can cast a Void spell of Rank 2 or lower once a day; the item can cast a Void spell of Rank 4 or lower once a week; the item may be used to spend a Void Point as if the bearer had done so, once a day; general catchall effects that don't fall into the other elements.



Spells and Magic

Learning a Spell

If a shugenja wishes to cast a spell, he must first learn the spell's intricacies. All spells are unique, each requiring a specific mindset. Merely reading a scroll out loud is insufficient, or everyone would be able to practice magic. Upon first encountering a new spell, a shugenja must first determine if he is capable of casting it. A shugenja may only cast spells with a Mastery Level equal to or less than his Shugenja School Rank. If he can potentially learn the spell, he must spend a number of hours equal to the spell's Mastery Level studying the spell scroll. At the end of this time he must make a roll as if he were casting the spell. If this roll is successful, he learns the spell. If it fails, he must begin the learning process anew.

All shugenja characters begin with a certain number of spell scrolls, granted by their school. You already know how to cast any spell scroll your character begins with. When your shugenja increases in Insight Rank, you may select any two spells that you could now potentially cast. You automatically learn how to cast these spells as a result of your spiritual development, a new insight into your magic. Copies of the appropriate spell scrolls can be obtained at your school.

New spells may be offered by one's school as a reward for personal achievement, or merely discovered in the course of your adventures. Keep in mind that most spell scrolls are coded in a clan cipher, making them useless to members of other clans.

Innate Abilities

While learning a spell allows a shugenja to potentially cast it, there is a difference between familiarity and true mastery. By memorizing all the particular nuances of a spell, you make it into an Innate Ability. To do so, you must spend one day per Mastery Level of the spell studying the scroll. This study can be done in your spare time, so long as the scroll is accessible. At the end of this time, you spend a number of Experience Points equal to the spell's Mastery Level. This spell is thereafter considered an Innate Ability and you can cast it without having the scroll on hand. The original scroll can still be a useful reference, however, and can greatly help your focus when calling upon its magic. Any time you use an Innate Ability and have the appropriate scroll in hand, you gain a Free Raise for the casting of that spell.

An additional bonus of learning a spell as an Innate Ability is that you can reproduce scrolls of that spell if they are lost. To create a scroll you must make an Intelligence/Calligraphy (Clan Cipher) roll vs. a TN equal to the Spell's Mastery Level $\times 10$. This requires a number of hours equal to the spell's Mastery Level. Most clan schools strictly control how their spells are distributed, and do not look kindly on a shugenja copying out scrolls unless they are for his personal use.

Some very common spells are easy to master. Sense, Commune, Summon, and Counterspell are Innate Abilities for all shugenja. Certain shugenja schools may offer other free Innate Abilities.

Casting a Spell

To cast a spell you must first have learned the spell and must have the spell scroll in hand or possess the spell as an Innate Ability. All spells are associated with a specific element. You must roll a number of dice equal to your corresponding Ring + School Rank and keep a number of dice equal to your Ring. Your casting TN is 10 plus the spell's Mastery Level $\times 5$. Casting a spell requires a number of rounds equal to the spell's Mastery Level unless stated otherwise in the spell's description. Raises can be used to reduce this casting time, at a rate of one round per Raise made for this purpose. A spell always takes effect immediately during the last round of its casting time; a spell that requires only one round to cast triggers immediately upon your action. If you are injured at any time during the casting of a spell, you must immediately roll your Ring + School Rank, keeping your Ring, vs. a TN equal to the damage dealt, or the spell is lost.

For example: Kuni Hideyoshi, a Rank 3 Kuni Shugenja wishes to cast Fires From Within, a Mastery Level 2 Fire spell. Hideyoshi's Fire Ring is 3, so he rolls 6k3 dice (Fire 3 + School Rank 3, keep Fire 3). His TN is 20 and it will take him two rounds to cast the spell. If he wishes, he can make one Raise to reduce the casting time to one round, increasing the TN to 25.

Each day, a shugenja can cast a number of spells equal to his corresponding Ring. These potential spells are referred to as spell slots. A shugenja with Fire 4, for example, has four spell slots per day that can be used for Fire spells. You may temporarily gain an additional spell slot by spending a Void Point. Additionally, any shugenja can use Void spell slots to cast spells of any element. If you attempt to cast a spell and fail, you still expend a spell slot.

All spell slots are regained after a night of sleep. One spell slot of each Ring is regained from an hour of uninterrupted meditation and a Void/Meditation roll vs. TN 15.

Range and Area of Effect

A spell's Range defines how far away you can localize the center of its effect, while its Area of Effect defines the distance the spell effect spreads from the center. If a spell's Range is "Self," you are always the center of the effect. You can cast spells with a Range of "Touch" on another character whom you touch at the end of casting, or upon yourself.

Ritual Magic

All shugenja spells are technically rituals, but the term "ritual magic" refers to a spell cast by several shugenja in unison. Casting a spell ritually requires ten minutes per Mastery Level of the spell (unless another ritual casting time is given) and requires at least two participants who both know the spell and either have the scrolls on hand or possess the spell as an Innate Ability. The caster with the highest Shugenja School Rank is considered the lead caster (in the case of equals, they may choose a lead caster). Only the lead caster need roll to cast the spell, and he rolls and keeps an additional die for every participant aiding him. The maximum number of Raises that may be made when casting the spell is increased by one for each additional participant. The maximum number of participants in a ritual is equal to the lead caster's Shugenja School Rank plus one. Some spells may have additional effects when cast in ritual form.

Destroying Scrolls

Some spells (such as Heart of the Inferno) require that the spell scroll be destroyed during the casting. While destroying spell scrolls is normally sacrilege, in this case it is a necessary offering to the kami, a part of the magic that must be completed for the spell to function. If you possess such a spell and do not have the scroll to give as an offering, you must instead offer the Kami a part of yourself. Any time you cast such a spell and do not have the appropriate scroll on hand, you must expend one Experience Point. If you have no Experience Points to spend, the spell fails.

Affinity/Deficiency

Most schools focus their studies on a particular element and as a result cannot explore the mysteries of another quite so deeply. The element your school focuses on is called your Affinity. The element your school does not possess a strong understanding of is called your Deficiency. Your Mastery Level is considered one higher when casting or learning spells that pertain to your Affinity, and one lower when casting or learning spells that pertain to your Deficiency. Thus a startling character with Affinity to Fire and Deficiency to Water can begin with Mastery Level 2 Fire spells and cannot learn Water spells until his School Rank increases.

Concentration Levels and Duration

Some spells last only while you are concentrating on them. Others last for a set period of time after you stop concentrating. Some do not require any concentration after you finish casting them, but last for a fixed period of time. Except for spells that are Instantaneous or Permanent, you may dismiss any spell that you have cast if you wish to halt its effects before the duration expires.

Total Concentration: You may not move or act while maintaining the spell's effects. If you are disturbed in any way, including suffering any Wounds or being moved, your concentration is broken.

Full Concentration: Maintaining the spell's effects requires one complex action per round. Thus you may not attack, cast another spell, take the Full Defense Posture, or run, or the spell's effects immediately end. If you suffer any Wounds, you must make a Willpower roll vs. the spell's Mastery Level \times 5 or your concentration is broken.

Casual Concentration: You must keep some minimum level of focus to maintain the spell's effects. If you attempt to cast another spell, spend a Void Point, or make a Raise for any reason, your concentration is broken. If you suffer any Wounds, you must make a Willpower roll vs. the spell's Mastery Level \times 5 or your concentration is broken.

Raises

As with any task, Raises can be made to enhance the results of spell casting. Many spells list specific effects that can be achieved through Raises, but the following effects can be achieved for any spell. You may Raise more than once for an effect, even one listed under Special Raises; for instance, if a spell says that you can extend its effects over one extra person with a Raise, then you may make two Raises to extend it over two extra people. Certain spells may cap the number of Raises that can be allocated to a specific effect; if so, that cap will be listed under "Special Raises."

Casting Time: Any spell that does not have a specific Casting Time listed has a Casting Time equal to its Mastery Level in rounds. Such spells may have their Casting Time decreased by one round for each Raise made.

Duration: Any spell with a duration other than Concentration, Instantaneous, or Permanent can have its duration increased. Each Raise increases its duration by one increment, so a spell with a duration of three rounds would last for four rounds, a spell with a duration of three hours would become four hours, etc.

Fortitude: You can fortify a spell to make it more difficult to Counterspell. For each Raise you make fortifying a spell, your opponent must make an equal number of Raises to Counterspell.

Mastery: If you dedicate three Raises toward mastering a spell, then you may cast it without expending a spell slot. You may not attempt to cast a spell in this manner if you have no spell slots remaining.

CASTING WITH SUBTLETY

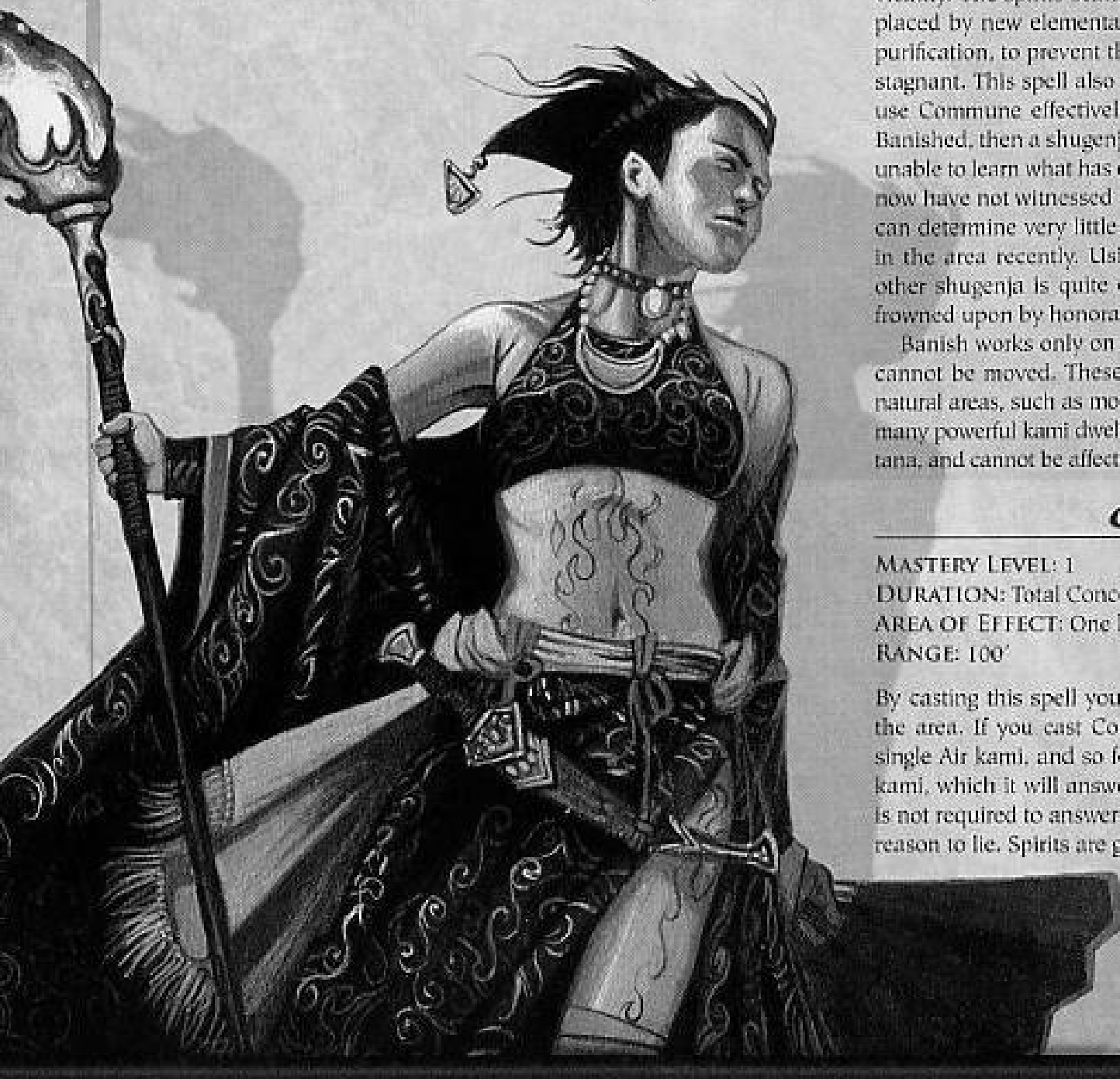
If a shugenja wishes to conceal the fact that he is casting a spell, use the following guidelines. Hiding a spell from view is an Awareness/Stealth roll with a TN of 15. This Target Number assumes that no one is paying particular attention to the shugenja. If someone is watching the shugenja, the watcher may make a Contested Perception/Investigation (Notice) Roll against the shugenja's Awareness/Stealth (Spellcasting) Roll.

Many factors can affect the concealment of a spell. Some spells are designed for stealth, and may grant bonuses to this roll in their description. Air spirits are generally inconspicuous, while Fire spirits tend to draw attention to themselves. Void magic is the most subtle, as few individuals have perceptions sharp enough to note the ebb and flow of Void.

Spells obviously generated by the caster such as The Fires From Within may be cast discreetly, but discretion is rendered moot once the spell comes blazing from the shugenja's hands.

The shugenja has bonuses and penalties to his Stealth roll as follows:

- The spell is a Fire spell: -5 to total
- The spell is an Air or Water spell: +5 to total
- The spell is a Void spell: +10 to total
(but +20 to the Investigation rolls of any observer with 4 or more Void)
- Shugenja has Affinity with this spell: +5 to total
- Shugenja has Deficiency for this spell: -5 to total
- Shugenja has learned the spell as an Innate Ability and is not using the scroll: +10 to total
- Spell has dramatic, obvious effects such as bright lights, noises: -5 to total
- Each Raise caster makes to shorten casting time: -5 to total



Universal Spells

The following spells do not apply specifically to any single element. They are universal spells, known to shugenja of all schools, and their elemental focus changes depending on the situation. Each of these spells can be cast as a Fire, Earth, Water, Air, or even Void spell (assuming the caster has access to Void magic). After their element is determined the spell is otherwise cast normally.

Commune, Counterspell, Sense, and Summon are such a basic part of a shugenja's curriculum that all shugenja begin with these spells as Innate Abilities. Banish and Importune are by no means as common, and shugenja must learn them on their own.

Banish

MASTERY LEVEL: 3
DURATION: Instantaneous
AREA OF EFFECT: 10' radius
RANGE: Self

By casting this spell, you banish all kami from the immediate vicinity. The spirits scatter into the ether to be immediately replaced by new elemental spirits. It is often used as a ritual of purification, to prevent the spirits in holy temples from growing stagnant. This spell also makes it difficult for other shugenja to use Commune effectively. If the spirits in an area have been Banished, then a shugenja who later investigates a scene will be unable to learn what has occurred there, because the spirits there now have not witnessed anything. After using Banish, shugenja can determine very little other than that someone used Banish in the area recently. Using Banish to cover one's tracks from other shugenja is quite effective, but such use of this spell is frowned upon by honorable shugenja.

Banish works only on lesser kami, and more powerful spirits cannot be moved. These kami are most prevalent in powerful natural areas, such as mountains, rivers, and forests. Additionally, many powerful kami dwell within ancient artifacts, particularly ta-tana, and cannot be affected by Banish.

Commune

MASTERY LEVEL: 1
DURATION: Total Concentration
AREA OF EFFECT: One kami
RANGE: 100'

By casting this spell you may commune with a single kami in the area. If you cast Commune as an Air spell you contact a single Air kami, and so forth. You may ask one question of the kami, which it will answer to the best of their ability. The kami is not required to answer truthfully, though most have very little reason to lie. Spirits are generally uninformed and unconcerned with the world of mortals and are cryptic by nature, but a shugenja experienced in dealing with them

Counterspell

MASTERY LEVEL: 1 (Special)

DURATION: Instantaneous

AREA OF EFFECT: One shugenja

RANGE: 100'

This spell immediately ends the effects of one other spell. Its use is somewhat complex.

To cast Counterspell, you must be aware that an enemy is about to cast or is maintaining a magical effect. Thus you must either have higher Initiative than your opponent or he must be concentrating on a spell. In non-combat situations you can declare that you are prepared to Counterspell a single target, and may remain prepared so long as you do not cast or concentrate upon any spells of your own.

Next, you must determine what element the opponent is drawing upon to cast his spell. This can be done either by making a Spellcraft roll to identify the spell or by merely guessing what element the opponent intends to use. If a Spellcraft roll is made on the fly, the TN to cast Counterspell is increased by 10. If you guess the element your opponent is casting and choose incorrectly, your Counterspell has no effect. Counterspell always draws upon the element that opposes the spell you are countering. Thus Fire and Water counter one another, Earth and Air counter one another, and Void counters itself.

Though Counterspell is learned as a Mastery Level 1 spell, it is always cast as a spell of the same Mastery Level as your opponent's spell. You do not necessarily know this Mastery Level in advance, meaning that if you attempt to counter a spell beyond your means you may automatically fail (and expend a spell slot). Casting Counterspell works much like a Contested Roll, with your TN being equal to your opponent's result. If your Counterspell is successful, the spell is immediately cancelled. If cast during an opponent's spellcasting, his casting fails. If cast upon a target who was concentrating on a spell to maintain its effects, those effects immediately end.

Any time a shugenja's magic is countered, successfully or not, he immediately feels a sudden surge in the elements, a 'tug' toward the individual who countered his magic. In a crowded room it may be difficult to determine who is responsible, but a shugenja with a clear view of his opponent always knows who countered him.

For example: Isawa Rinjin sees that Kuni Saburo is about to cast a spell and is prepared to Counterspell him. Saburo is casting Fires From Within, a Mastery Level 2 Fire spell, and rolls a 28, but the results of the spell are delayed until the effect of Rinjin's Counterspell is determined. Unwilling to risk guessing what spell Saburo intends to cast, Rinjin makes a Spellcraft roll. The result of his Skill Roll is 37, more than sufficient to determine the spell Saburo is casting. Rinjin then proceeds to cast his Counterspell. In this instance, Counterspell counts as a Mastery Level 2 Water spell, well within Rinjin's capabilities. The TN to cancel Saburo's spell is now 38 (counting the +10 for identifying it on the fly).

Special Raises: You may Raise once to increase the spell's range by 100'. You may Raise twice to suppress the surge that alerts the target to your location following a Counterspell; if you make these Raises and fail in your casting, the spell is not countered, but the opponent feels the surge anyway. You may Raise once to fortify a spell against Counterspell. For each Raise made to fortify a spell, you must make a Raise to empower your Counterspell to overcome its effects. There is no way of knowing in advance how much an enemy has fortified his magic. Also, another shugenja can Counterspell your Counterspell, and Raises made to Empower your own Counterspell do not also fortify it.

idiosyncrasies can learn much by communing with them. Often times performing some small favor for a spirit results in more helpful information (in the form of Free Raises). For an Earth spirit, this could be as simple as moving a stone to the other side of the road or promising to build a shrine to the spirit of a great mountain. For a Fire spirit, some valuable item must be burned to earn good will.

Earth spirits are very blunt and to the point. They can often be too concerned with details and stubbornly obsessed with subjects irrelevant to the matter at hand.

Air spirits are flighty and emotional. They prefer to communicate with flashes of emotion rather than words. When they do speak, they whisper in cryptic riddles, generally answering questions with more questions. They are often more intent on playing games with the caster than actually answering relevant questions.

Fire spirits are temperamental and impatient. They do not appreciate being disturbed, especially by this spell, and often respond with shrieking threats unless mollified by some burnt offering. Fire spirits are at least the most predictable in that the information they provide is rarely clouded or confused. However, many times a fire spirit cannot provide useful information merely because it was not paying attention, more intent on devouring everything in sight than matters transpiring around it.

Water spirits do not speak. They show only visual reflections of the past, without sound. Water spirits are not concerned with opinion, only fact, and often the information they provide is so general as to be entirely useless.

Void spirits are playful and curious. They have keen minds and often deep insight to everything they have perceived, but are always seeking to learn something new. Thus they rarely divulge any secrets unless they can learn something equally interesting in return. If told a secret, a Void spirit always upholds its part of the bargain and reveal something it knows.

Other spirits, such as ghosts, Oni, and even Fortunes, can be contacted with this spell if they are in the immediate area. You must know the spirit's name and cast the spell to communicate with that spirit specifically. A kansen can also be contacted with any casting of this spell, and will happily provide you with a single Mastery Level 1 mahō spell of its choice should you wish it.

This spell can also be used to determine the general attitude of spirits in the vicinity. In areas that are Tainted or home to ghosts or other malevolent entities, elemental spirits are often depressed and unsettled. Though this spell does not immediately reveal the nature of the disturbance, it does reveal that something is not right. This application can be used to determine if shugenja have already called upon spirits in the area to work magic in the recent past. A single casting of this spell for this purpose reveals all Mastery Level 1 spells cast in the area within the last hour, unless the spirits were more recently Banished (see that spell's description for more details).

Special Raises: You may make one Raise to ask an additional question. You may make one Raise to get a more specific answer. You may Raise once to either increase the Mastery level of spells detected by one, or sense an additional hour into the past; for example, for three Raises you could either detect all Mastery Level 4 spells cast in the last hour, all Mastery Level 3 spells cast within the last two hours, all Mastery Level 2 spells cast within the last three hours, or all Mastery Level 1 spells cast within the last four hours.

Importune

MASTERY LEVEL: 2
DURATION: Special
AREA OF EFFECT: One kami
RANGE: 10'

This spell calls upon an elemental spirit dwelling to cast a spell for you. Though learned as a Mastery Level 2 spell, its Mastery Level can vary depending on the circumstance.

Before casting *Importune*, you must name the spell you wish to have cast, which need not be a spell that you know. The Mastery Level of *Importune* for the purposes of casting then becomes the Element and Mastery Level of the spell you wish to cast, plus one (thus many spells you would normally be able to cast would be beyond your ability to replicate). The spirit within the item will then demand a favor, which you must provide before the spell can be completed. You must begin to fulfill your promise within the next day, otherwise the kami become displeased and you lose all ability to cast spells pertaining to that element for one week.

The nature of the favor is up to the GM, but also depends on the Mastery Level of the spell you intended to cast. You must perform the favor personally, or the spirits are not satisfied.

Mastery Level 1 — A simple favor requiring only a few moments of your time, such as piling stones in an improvised shrine or spending time in silent prayer.

Mastery Level 2 — A favor that requires several minutes of time and some amount of strenuous work, such as dragging a dead tree out of a river or building a bonfire in tribute to the spirits.

Mastery Level 3 — A favor that requires several hours of time or some amount of risk, such as cleaning out a dilapidated temple or climbing to the peak of a mountain.

Mastery Level 4 — A favor that requires several days of work or significant risk, such as building, painting, and consecrating a torii arch, or hunting the vicious wolves that have overpopulated a serene forest.

Mastery Level 5 — A favor that requires several weeks of work or monumental personal risk, such as building a temple to the kami or personally defeating a pack of Oni that have been tormenting the local spirits.

Mastery Level 6 — These spells cannot be cast with *Importune*.

Once the favor is performed, you gain the ability to cast the spell in question, once, at any time within the next day. You cast the spell as you normally would, but the casting is automatically successful and cannot be affected by *Counterspell*.

Special Raises: Any Raises that may be made on the spell you wish to cast may be made on *Importune* to gain those effects once the favor is paid.

Sense

MASTERY LEVEL: 1
DURATION: Total Concentration
AREA OF EFFECT: 10' radius
RANGE: Self

You gain a supernatural awareness of the elements around you. If cast as an Earth spell, for example, this spell reveals the location and types of all earth and stone within the radius. The knowledge received, of course, is limited by your own. If you *Sense Water* and a bottle containing a liquid poison you have never encountered before is in the area, you do not suddenly gain knowledge of the poison and its effects. Instead, you become aware that an unidentified liquid is present.

One particularly useful application of this spell is using it to find any living beings hiding within its small area. Living beings are composed of a mixture of all elements, so this spell reveals their presence and their general condition (alert, sleeping, sick, wounded, dead).

This spell also senses the presence of spirits. Kami can be detected by casting a *Sense* spell that pertains to their element. Denizens of other Spirit Realms, like living things, are a mixture of all elements and thus may be sensed by any version of this spell. A spirit disguised as a human is sensed as if it were human, and some spirits may possess natural abilities that conceal them from detection.

Special Raises: You may Raise once to increase the area of effect's radius to 15'. You may Raise four times to increase the area of effect's radius to 20'. You may Raise nine times to increase the area of effect's radius to 25'.

Summon

MASTERY LEVEL: 1
DURATION: Special
AREA OF EFFECT: One cubic foot
RANGE: 10'

With this spell you can summon one cubic foot of elemental matter. The element appears in the shape of a ball in an area of your choosing within range, and hovers for as long as you maintain Total Concentration, afterward behaving normally. The element is of a type of your choosing, but must be something that occurs naturally. Thus iron, smoke, or water could be summoned but steel, wine, and liquid nitrogen could not. When you stop concentrating, the summoned elements remain in existence.

The item summoned possesses no inherent magical properties. Summoned crystal and jade offer no protection against the Shadowlands Taint nor any defense against supernatural creatures. In fact, the elements seem to subtly rebel against the creation of such substances. Any Summoned jade or crystal slowly transforms into mundane stone over the course of a few days.



Air Spells

Mastery Level 1

By the Light of Lady Moon

DURATION: 5 rounds
AREA OF EFFECT: 10' radius
RANGE: Self

The Air kami reveal to you the location of any hidden objects or individuals, including concealed traps, false bottoms, assassins hidden in the bushes, etc. The kami's whispers do not reveal what is hidden, only where it is hidden.

This spell does not automatically reveal things that have been concealed by magic or other supernatural forces. If a magically concealed object or individual is within the area of effect, you must roll your Air/School Rank against a TN equal to your opponent's Ring + School Rank (using the appropriate Ring for the spell). The GM may wish to make this roll secretly to avoid arousing suspicion.

Cloak of Night

DURATION: Until dawn or until dispelled (see below)
AREA OF EFFECT: 1 object of up to 100 lbs.
RANGE: Touch

You can summon Air kami to encircle an object, concealing it from sight. The object is rendered invisible for the spell's duration unless something draws attention to it in some way. The spell's effect is dispelled if the object is touched by anyone other than you, if it somehow makes a sound, is used as a weapon, or any other way interacts with another individual.

Special Raises: You may Raise once to conceal an additional 25 lbs.

Nature's Touch

DURATION: Full Concentration
AREA OF EFFECT: Target creature
RANGE: 10'

Enlist the Air kami's aid in conveying thoughts and intentions between the minds of humans and animals, allowing you to make yourself understood to one creature. Intelligent creatures are not affected by this spell, as their minds are too complex for such a simple effect. This spell does not compel the targeted creature to interact with you, nor does it allow the creature to speak in an intelligent fashion; it merely allows the creature to communicate emotions and intentions.

Quiescence of Air

DURATION: 1 minute
AREA OF EFFECT: 5' radius around one targeted object
RANGE: 10'

You invoke the kami to erect an invisible, intangible barrier that allows no sound to pass through. The kami do not permit any sound within the area to escape, and allow no sound from outside to enter the area. If the kami are centered upon a portable object, the bubble of silence travels with the object. Anyone moving within the bubble gains a number of Free Raises equal to your Insight Rank on all Stealth rolls.

Special Raises: You may Raise once to increase the area of effect's radius to 10'. You may Raise four times to increase the area of effect's radius to 15'. You may Raise nine times to increase the area of effect's radius to 20'.

Tempest of Air

DURATION: Full Concentration plus 1 minute
AREA OF EFFECT: 20' cone, 10' wide at the end
RANGE: Self

You invoke the kami's wrath, directing vengeful air spirits against a target of your choosing. The kami create a cone of wind of the dimensions specified above, with a force of your choosing, ranging from a gentle breeze to gale-force winds of 50 miles per hour. Characters caught in heavy winds roll 2 fewer dice on all rolls. If any character in the cone has an Earth Ring lower than your Air Ring, he takes 1k1 Wounds per die of difference every round until he leaves the area of effect.

Way of Deception

DURATION: Casual Concentration plus 1 minute
AREA OF EFFECT: 50' radius
RANGE: Self

The Air kami can reproduce any image, and you can request that they make an exact duplicate of you. This spell creates a perfect illusionary duplicate of you anywhere within the area of effect. The Air kami delight in this game, perfectly duplicating every action you take for the spell's duration. Any attack targeting you has a 50% chance of failure (1-5 on a d10 roll) due to the confusion the spell creates. Any time you take an action targeting an enemy, like attacking or casting a spell, the miss chance decreases by 30%.

Special Raises: You may Raise twice to produce another duplicate, increasing the chance of an attack's failure by an additional 10% per duplicate. The chance of failure cannot rise above 80%.

Wind-Borne Slumbers

DURATION: 1 minute
AREA OF EFFECT: Target person/creature
RANGE: 50'

Air kami can whisper soothing messages that the conscious mind cannot perceive. So long as the target is not engaging in any taxing physical activity, this spell puts the target to sleep. Even targets that are engaging in physical activity roll 2 fewer dice for all actions for the spell's duration due to exhaustion. Any noticeable noise or a touch instantly awakens the target.

Special Raises: You may Raise once to affect an additional target.

Yari of Air

DURATION: 1 minute
AREA OF EFFECT: Self
RANGE: Self

The kami of air cannot be touched, but will coalesce into a physical form if properly petitioned. This spell requests that they take the form of a deadly yari, far more dangerous than a wooden weapon. This weapon is wielded exactly like a traditional yari, using the Spears Skill. The Yari of Air has DR 3k3. If you become unconscious or die, the Yari vanishes.

Special Raises: You may Raise once and once only to increase the Yari's damage rating by +1k0.

Mastery Level 2

Benten's Touch

DURATION: 1 hour
AREA OF EFFECT: Target person
RANGE: Touch

Many Air kami serve Benten, the Fortune of Romantic Love. By asking the kami to impart their master's blessing, you can increase a target's social acumen. The target of this spell may roll and keep one additional die on all social skill rolls for the spell's duration, and is generally regarded as more attractive and witty than usual.

Call upon the Wind

DURATION: 1 minute
AREA OF EFFECT: Target person
RANGE: Touch

You can summon capricious air spirits to lift a target into the air, giving the target a limited form of flight for the spell's duration. The target can move up to 10' per round in any direction. Winds of more than 10 miles per hour cut this movement in half, and winds above 20 miles per hour make movement impossible. When the spell's duration ends, the air spirits leave immediately, and make no attempt to safely return the target to the ground.

Special Raises: You may Raise once to increase the rate of movement by 5' per round.

Echoes of a Breeze

DURATION: Full Concentration
AREA OF EFFECT: Target person
RANGE: Unlimited

All speech is carried by the Air kami, and they can carry it anywhere they wish if properly entreated. This spell compels the Air kami to carry a whispered message to the intended target regardless of their location. The target must be familiar to you, and you must have spent a significant amount of time in the target's presence for this spell to take effect. If the target also casts the spell, the Air kami permit simultaneous two-way communication until one of you breaks concentration.

Hidden Visage

DURATION: Casual Concentration plus 15 minutes
AREA OF EFFECT: Self
RANGE: Self

Air kami are fond of jokes, and can easily be convinced to participate in what they perceive as one. This spell calls upon the Air kami to alter your image slightly, changing your facial features so that you no longer resemble yourself. This spell cannot alter your face to resemble someone else specifically, but rather changes it randomly so that you cannot be recognized.

Mists of Illusion

DURATION: 1 minute
AREA OF EFFECT: 10' radius
RANGE: 10'

By vividly remembering an image, object, or person that you have seen before or by imagining a detailed image, you may invoke the Air kami and create a perfect illusion of that memory or vision. This illusion must fit completely within the spell's area of effect, and it is neither mobile nor in any way affected by the environment. Physical objects pass straight through the illusion, immediately revealing its origin.

Anyone who suspects the illusion is not real (but who cannot attempt to touch it for some reason) may make a Raw Perception Roll with a TN equal to your Air Ring \times School Rank. Success immediately reveals the illusion's nature.

Secrets on the Wind

DURATION: Full Concentration plus 5 minutes
AREA OF EFFECT: 50' radius
RANGE: 1 mile

You summon the Air kami to carry voices to you from long distances. You must have spent at least 10 minutes communing with the Air kami in the targeted area within the past 48 hours in order to be familiar with the spirits there. This spell allows you to hear any conversations taking place in the targeted area.

Special Raises: You may Raise once to increase the range by 1 mile.

Whispering Wind

DURATION: Instantaneous
AREA OF EFFECT: Target person
RANGE: 10'

The thoughts of humans are simple for Air kami to perceive, and the spirits view everything in basic terms. A quick prayer from a shugenja can discover if the last thing the target said was true or false. The kami cannot fathom personal opinion, so sometimes carefully worded statements can confuse them. Repeated use of this spell annoys the kami, and many believe that using it too often will result in your being unable to tell a lie under any circumstances.

Mastery Level 3

Essence of Air

DURATION: 5 rounds
AREA OF EFFECT: Self
RANGE: Self

This spell invites the Air kami to merge with your essence, suffusing your soul with the very substance of Air. You become insubstantial, and can pass through solid matter at a rate of 1' per round. Normal movement is halved while this spell is in effect, and you cannot use any other spells for the duration.

Forgotten Murmurs

DURATION: Instantaneous
AREA OF EFFECT: Target person
RANGE: 10'

Just as Air kami can perceive a person's thoughts, so too can they affect them. This spell invokes the kami to reach into a person's mind and touch their memories, disorienting them to the point that they forget the most recent five minutes of their life. Other than a moment of disorientation, to the target it is as if the last five minutes did not happen. Unscrupulous attendants at court sometimes use this spell to eliminate a social gaffe they have committed without loss of honor. Ironically, someone discovering that you have used this spell in such a manner would be far more dishonorable than any social faux pas ever could be.

The Eye Shall Not See

DURATION: Casual Concentration plus 1 minute
AREA OF EFFECT: Target person/creature
RANGE: Touch

When this spell is cast, you convince the Air kami to dance around you, drawing the attention of others with subtle sounds and movement. This diverts all attention away from you, effectively rendering you invisible. So long as you do not draw attention to yourself by making noise, moving objects, attacking, or any other similar activity, you cannot be noticed by the normal senses. Spells or other supernatural means may still detect you, requiring a Contested roll using your Air Ring/School Rank versus an opponent's relevant Ring/School Rank.

Mask of Wind

DURATION: Casual Concentration plus 1 hour
AREA OF EFFECT: Self
RANGE: Self

Anyone familiar with this spell can petition the Air kami to cast an elaborate illusion all around them, completely altering their appearance. This powerful spell allows you to resemble any humanoid creature of approximately the same size. The illusion can make you appear to be up to 1' taller or shorter, radically alter facial features to the point of exactly duplicating someone with whom you are familiar, or even make you appear to be someone of the opposite sex.

Special Raises: You may make three Raises to cause this spell's Range to become "Touch" and its Duration to become "1 hour." You may target only one person with this spell at a time.

Summon Fog

DURATION: 1 minute
AREA OF EFFECT: 20' radius
RANGE: 100'

When petitioned by this spell, the Air kami thicken the air in the affected area into a dense cloud of fog, reducing visibility to 5' and dampening everything within it. Small sources of flame like candles are extinguished, and even lantern-sized fires are diminished to the point of providing scant illumination. When the duration of this spell ends, the fog disperses normally over the course of 10 minutes, or more quickly if it's windy.

Wisdom of the Kami

DURATION: 1 hour
AREA OF EFFECT: Self
RANGE: Self

Although there is always an element of risk involved, you can invite the kami into your mind, imparting a fraction of their knowledge. While the kami are assisting you, you add your School Rank to your rank in one Skill that you declare at the time of casting. This spell may target Skills in which you have no ranks. The affected Skill may not be changed without a second casting of the spell. At the duration's end, the kami withdraw all traces of their wisdom, removing all bonus ranks in the target Skill.

Mastery Level 4

Know the Mind

DURATION: Full Concentration plus 1 minute
AREA OF EFFECT: Target person
RANGE: 20'

By inviting the Air kami into a bond between your mind and the mind of another, you can sense the surface thoughts and emotions of another person. A successful casting of this spell allows you to sense the emotions of a target as well as their surface thoughts, such as their immediate reaction to something said to them. If a target were asked "How fares your lovely wife?" for example, you would instantly sense his response, including how he feels about his wife and what he truly thinks of her.

False Realm

DURATION: Full Concentration plus 15 minutes
AREA OF EFFECT: 50' radius around target object or location
RANGE: 100'

One of the most complex illusion spells in existence, this spell involves you inviting and instructing dozens of Air kami to craft a massive illusion that affects all the senses. Anything you can imagine will appear within the area of effect, from a simple stone wall to a small village complete with villagers. The illusion includes sound and smell, but not touch; anyone attempting to physically interact with any component of the illusion passes through it, revealing the illusion's true nature.

Lady Moon's Legion

DURATION: Full Concentration plus 20 minutes

AREA OF EFFECT: Self, targeted people

RANGE: 20'

By convincing the Air kami to block the vision of others, you can render invisible yourself and a number of people within range equal to your Air Ring. Non-magical means of perception simply do not register the affected individuals' presence. Any affected individual who speaks aloud to others, attacks, or otherwise draws attention to himself immediately forsakes the kami's protection and becomes visible.

Symbol of Air

DURATION: Permanent

AREA OF EFFECT: 10' radius around a target object

RANGE: 25'

A shugenja casting this spell can inscribe a symbol of pure Air upon an object, most often a door, threshold, or similar passage. The powerful Air kami who inhabit this symbol react to the presence of any mortal except you. Anyone else who approaches feels a powerful sleep comes over him.

Affected targets must make a Contested roll using their Earth versus your Air. If the target fails, he instantly falls asleep until awakened by an unaffected person or until removed from the area. Even targets that succeed at the Contested roll are affected, and roll 3 fewer dice on all actions due to overwhelming exhaustion.

A Symbol of Air is permanent unless removed. It can be removed by a second casting of the spell, either by you or by another shugenja. If the object on which the symbol is inscribed is moved or destroyed, the spell is removed.

The casting time to inscribe the Symbol is 1 minute.

Wall of Air

DURATION: 1 hour

AREA OF EFFECT: Special

RANGE: 100'

This spell summons the local Air kami and incites them to fury, creating a swirling, semi-solid wall of air 10' tall, 1' thick, and 25' wide. The wall appears as a swirling mass that can be seen through, but that obscures detail. Anyone attempting to pass through the wall must roll his Earth against a TN equal to your Air \times School Rank. Failure indicates that the target has been thrown back a distance equal to 5' \times your Air. The target suffers damage with a DR equal to your Air. Ranged weapons cannot be fired through the wall, as the projectiles become lost in the tempest.

Mastery Level 5

Command the Clouds

DURATION: 1 day

AREA OF EFFECT: 1 mile radius

RANGE: Self

A true master of Air magic can alter the very forces of nature, including wind, temperature, and precipitation. The chart below lists standard weather conditions, and a successful casting of this spell allows you to alter one element of the weather by one level in either direction.

Special Raises: You may Raise once to change conditions by an additional level. You may Raise once to change an additional condition by one level.

Temperature	Winds	Precipitation
Sweltering	Calm	Clear
Hot	Breezy	Partly Cloudy
Warm	Moderate	Overcast
Cool	High	Rain Shower/Snow Flurry
Cold	Storm	Raining/Snowing
Freezing	Gale	Thunderstorm/Blizzard

Poison of the Windspider

DURATION: 10 minutes

AREA OF EFFECT: 25' radius

RANGE: 100'

This spell summons the most wrathful of all Air spirits, transforming all air within the area of effect into a noxious gas that chokes everything that breathes it. This cloud boils up from the ground in an instant, filling the area of effect immediately and allowing no opportunity for escape.

This noxious gas has several effects, the most serious of which is a terrible burning of the eyes and sinuses. It is caustic, and can cause severe damage to exposed flesh. It also causes overwhelming nausea, further hindering attempts at escape. Any living creature trapped within the cloud must make an Immediate Stamina roll, TN equal to your Air \times School Rank, or fall to the ground, blinded and choking. Attempting to leave the cloud requires a successful Raw Stamina Roll every round, with a minimum of two successful rolls necessary to escape the area of effect. Everyone within the cloud suffers 3k3 Wounds per round.

Slayer's Knives

DURATION: Full Concentration

AREA OF EFFECT: Special

RANGE: Self

Powerful shugenja are capable of drawing Air kami to them and then directing them outward at incredible speeds. You channel the kami into a corridor of wind 10' wide and 25' long. The winds within the corridor are incredibly powerful, and hurl anyone caught within it outside the area of effect, inflicting damage with a DR equal to your Air Ring. Paper and cloth items caught in the area of effect are shredded almost instantly, and smaller objects are picked up and thrown as well.

Whirlwind

DURATION: 10 minutes

AREA OF EFFECT: 20' radius

RANGE: Line of sight

The Air kami create a massive, swirling whirlwind centered around a location you choose and wreaking devastation throughout its area of effect. This vortex can be moved up to 10' per round in any direction at your discretion. Those caught within the whirlwind suffer damage with a DR equal to your Air Ring every round, and have their movement reduced to 25% of their normal rate. The kami who create this effect are well-disposed toward you, and you may move throughout the area of effect without harm.



Mastery Level 6

Blessings of Jizo

DURATION: Casual Concentration plus 10 minutes
AREA OF EFFECT: Self
RANGE: Self

Air kami are capricious, and are capable of evading and redirecting kami of other elements, even those of Earth. A shugenja who entreats them for protection can be safe from magical effects of all sorts for the spell's duration. Any spell directed against you for the spell's duration is reflected back against the opposing caster just as if they had been the original target. Area effect spells that do not specifically target you are not reflected, but neither do they affect you in any way. An area-effect fire spell, for instance, would immolate everything within its area of effect normally, but you would stand unharmed amid the flames.

Rise, Air

DURATION: Full Concentration
AREA OF EFFECT: Special
RANGE: 25'

The Summon: this prayer calls upon the Air kami to perform a service for you. The summoned kami is massive, equivalent in size to 25 cubic feet of air. This air takes a vaguely humanoid shape with a murky, indistinct outline.

The air around the kami's manifested form suffers from high winds, blowing away small objects and impeding movement in a 25' radius around the kami. Arrows and other ranged weapons cannot penetrate this area, and anyone within it must succeed at a Raw Reflexes Roll against your Air \times School Rank or be hurled to the ground by the wind.

The manifested kami may attack at your command, rolling and keeping your Air Ring to attack and inflicting 8k4 Wounds. Any opponent struck by such an attack is knocked to the ground and must spend two actions struggling against the winds to rise.

The Wrath of Kaze-no-Kami

DURATION: Total Concentration
AREA OF EFFECT: 1 mile radius
RANGE: Self

The Fortune of Wind, Kaze-no-Kami, was lost in Fu Leng's attack on Tengoku, but his servants still answer your prayers. This most powerful invocation of the Air kami creates a massive hurricane centered around you. You stand in the hurricane's eye, a perfect circle 20' across where there is no wind at all despite the raging storm.

This supernatural hurricane generates winds of several hundred miles per hour, lifting anything less than 500 lbs. and hurling it about. Visibility is less than 1' in this area, and any physical actions attempted in the wind suffer a +25 TN penalty. Most normal buildings are completely destroyed by the gale-force winds, although stone buildings and particularly sturdy wooden ones may just be severely damaged.

Anyone caught within the area of effect is thrown about by the winds. Such targets must make a successful Raw Strength Roll to hold on to something immovable (such as a large rock, an ancient tree, or something similar). This roll has a TN equal to 20 + your Air Ring + School Rank (and does not suffer the normal TN penalty imposed by the storm). Anyone who fails this roll is Knocked Down. All individuals caught up in the storm suffer 2k2 Wounds per round from a combination of being battered into other objects and torn by the force of the winds.

This spell may not be cast in any given area more than once a month, as it exhausts the air kami.



Earth Spells

Mastery Level 1

Earth's Stagnation

DURATION: 5 rounds
AREA OF EFFECT: 1 target
RANGE: 100'

This spell summons Earth kami to weigh down the target, suffusing him with the stillness of rock. The target's Agility and Reflexes are lowered by 1 for the duration of the spell. This does not lower the target's Rings.

Special Raises: You may Raise twice to target an additional person.

Earth's Touch

DURATION: 5 rounds
AREA OF EFFECT: 1 target
RANGE: 100'

You strengthen the elemental Earth of the target, increasing his Willpower or Stamina by 1. A character can only have each Trait affected by one Earth's Touch, and this will not affect his Rings.

Special Raises: You may Raise once to target an additional person. You may Raise twice to increase the bonus granted by this spell by 1.

Elemental Ward

DURATION: 1 minute
AREA OF EFFECT: Self
RANGE: Self

The spirits of the Earth rise up to protect you. Choose an element when you cast this spell. For the duration of Elemental Ward, spells of that element targeting you (and that you attempt to resist) have their TNs raised by 5.

Special Raises: You may Raise twice to affect an additional element.

Fires from the Forge

DURATION: Permanent
AREA OF EFFECT: 10 cubic feet
RANGE: Touch

A popular spell among the Kuni and Tamori, this spell calls upon the Earth spirits to repair nonliving material. Any single object of 10 cubic feet or less is instantly restored to perfect condition. Fires from the Forge does not restore any magical power that may have been lost when the item was ruined.

Special Raises: You may Raise once to increase the area of effect by an additional 10 cubic feet. The GM may impose mandatory Raises to repair complex items or items with several different materials, such as a full suit of armor.

Force of Will

DURATION: 3 rounds
AREA OF EFFECT: 1 target
RANGE: 10'

This spell strengthens the target's Earth, allowing him to function when he would otherwise falter. The target may function as if his Wounds were one Wound Rank less, including allowing a character that would otherwise be Down to function at his lowest Wound Rank above Down.

Special Raises: You may Raise four times to allow the target to function at an additional Wound Rank higher than he actually is.

Jade Strike

DURATION: Instantaneous
AREA OF EFFECT: 1 target
RANGE: 100'

By focusing on the purity of Earth, you to summon a bolt of energy that destroys the corruption of the Shadowlands. Because the spell summons a green light and burns Tainted individuals, it is called Jade Strike, though it is not solid like the mineral. For obvious reasons, this spell is known by nearly every Kuni and Jade Magistrate. Untainted targets attacked by this spell feel nothing at all, and may well take offense at having been suspected of harboring the Shadowlands Taint. Tainted targets of this spell take 3k3 Wounds.

Special Raises: You may Raise once to increase the damage of this spell by +1k0. You may Raise twice to declare an additional target.

Speed Growth

DURATION: 1 minute
AREA OF EFFECT: 10' radius
RANGE: 10'

Calling upon the fertility of the earth and the rapid growth of the spring season, you urge the spirits of the ground into a frenzy. All plants in the area of effect undergo one month's worth of growth. Any plant subjected to more than two castings of this spell will die. More than three castings of this spell on the same area within a month cause the spirits of the Earth to become exhausted, ruining crop growth in the area for a year.

Tetsubo of Earth

DURATION: 1 minute
AREA OF EFFECT: Self
RANGE: Self

You shape the spirits of the earth into the form of a tetsubo made from stone. This weapon is wielded like a normal tetsubo, but you may use your School Rank plus one in place of the Heavy Weapons Skill. The Tetsubo of Earth has DR 3k3. If you become unconscious or die, the tetsubo vanishes.

Special Raises: You may Raise once and once only to increase the Tetsubo's damage rating by +1k0.

Mastery Level 2

Armor of Earth

DURATION: 1 minute
AREA OF EFFECT: Self
RANGE: Self

The Earth kami come to your defense, protecting you from physical blows. Your skin becomes firmer and takes on a gray pallor. This armor reduces the damage of all attacks by your School Rank \times 2; dice that explode have their final totals reduced. This may reduce an attack's damage to zero.

Courage of the Seven Thunders

DURATION: 1 minute
AREA OF EFFECT: 1 target
RANGE: Touch

This impressive spell gives its target the resolve of the mountains. The target of this spell is immune to Fear for the duration of the spell. The spell's duration doubles for targets with an Honor of 3 or higher.

Special Raises: You may Raise once to choose an additional target. You may Raise once to increase the duration for one target by one minute; this duration increase happens before the Honor-rated doubling.

Grasp of Earth

DURATION: Full Concentration plus 5 rounds
AREA OF EFFECT: 1 target
RANGE: 50'

The target of this spell must be in contact with the ground, but not necessarily natural earth. You command the Earth kami to invisibly grasp the target's feet, making movement nearly impossible. The target's movement is calculated as if his Water Ring were lowered by one Earth Ring, and his TN to Be Hit is lowered by 10. The victim of this spell may, on his action, make a Strength Roll at a TN equal to 10 plus five times your Earth Ring to escape this effect.

Hands of Clay

DURATION: 1 minute
AREA OF EFFECT: Self
RANGE: Self

By communing with the Earth spirits, you can walk along any surface of earth or stone using your hands or feet. There is no chance you will slip or fall, even if you are completely upside down and walking along the stone ceiling. If you move faster than a normal walking pace, this spell is interrupted until you slow down.

The Mountain's Feet

DURATION: Full Concentration
AREA OF EFFECT: 1 target
RANGE: 25'

The target of this spell has the unshakable footing of the very mountains. Any attempt to move the character against his will, such as a trip, knocking him back, or throwing him, is completely negated. If he is standing with both feet on the ground. If you cast this spell on yourself, its Duration becomes "5 minutes".

Tremor

DURATION: 5 rounds
AREA OF EFFECT: 100' radius
RANGE: Touch

You must touch exposed natural ground while casting this spell. A small earthquake causes minor structural damage; poorly constructed buildings may collapse. Particularly sturdy buildings (mostly stone) are immune to damage, though shaking may cause things to fall and break. Everyone except you within the area of effect is affected by Fear 1. The vibrations in the earth can be felt from as far away as two miles, though anything outside the spell's area of effect suffers no damage.

Special Raises: You may Raise twice to increase the area of effect's radius to 200'. You may Raise eight times to increase the area of effect's radius to 300'.

Walk Without Passing

DURATION: 1 hour
AREA OF EFFECT: Self
RANGE: Self

By asking the spirits of the earth to aid your passage, you make yourself able to pass over the ground without trace. Blades of grass you step on bend back to their previous state, you leave no footprints in mud and sand, etc. You leave no sign you have moved through the area unless you do something besides move normally — if you set fire to a tree that was in your way, others will notice the missing tree and large pile of ash in its place. Shugenja of the Iuchi and Horiuchi families often employ this spell when patrolling the Shinomen Forest.

Mastery Level 3

Benevolent Protection of Shinsei

DURATION: 1 hour
AREA OF EFFECT: 15' radius
RANGE: Touch

This spell can only be cast upon an object made of jade or properly sanctified token of protection. The effects of this spell are centered on the object, which must remain stationary after the casting or the spell's power is broken. Everyone within the spell's area of effect feels calm and at peace. If someone inside the radius of this spell wishes to cause harm to anything (living or not), he must first overcome the spell by rolling his Willpower against a TN equal to your Earth Ring times your School Rank. Once the spell's effects are resisted once, the subject does not need to roll again. If the object in question is inside a Temple of Shinsei or similar holy structure (such as the Shrine of the Seven Thunders), the radius of the spell is multiplied by ten and the spell's effects last until the next dawn.

Special Raises: You may Raise once to increase your effective Earth Ring or School Rank by 1 for the purposes of this spell's effects. You may Raise twice to increase the duration of the spell by 1 hour. You may Raise once to increase the area of effect's radius to 20'. You may Raise four times to increase the area of effect's radius to 25'. You may Raise nine times to increase the area of effect's radius to 30'. The GM may grant Free Raises or impose TN penalties, depending on the particular location or relic involved in the spell.

Curse of Stone

DURATION: 5 rounds
AREA OF EFFECT: 1 target
RANGE: 15'

Like Earth's Stagnation, this spell causes the Earth kami to drag at the target, but Curse of Stone even imparts a gray tone to the target's skin. The target's Initiative score is lowered by 10, and he rolls one fewer die on all attack and damage rolls as his strikes are slowed.

Special Raises: You may Raise twice to declare an additional target.

Earth's Protection

DURATION: 1 hour
AREA OF EFFECT: One target
RANGE: Touch

Like the pine tree in winter, the subject of this spell suffers no ill effects from harsh weather such as high heat, forceful winds, and snow. This spell does not completely prevent physical damage from such effects if it is applicable (such as being struck by hail or touching fire), but reduces each damage die rolled for such effects by your School Rank. This protection extends to magical effects, such as spells that deal damage from fire or reduce a target's movement due to high winds.

Immortal Steel

DURATION: Permanent
AREA OF EFFECT: 1 weapon
RANGE: Touch

This spell shares part of your own elemental Earth with a single weapon. The target weapon gains +1k1 to damage rolls, but only if it deals damage with a steel component (such as a blade). This spell does not affect weapons that deal damage due to equal parts steel and something else. You may affect only one weapon at a time. If you attempt to cast this spell on another weapon while the first is still whole and affected by the casting, the second attempt fails and the previous weapon also loses its enchantment. This spell requires one hour to cast, requires Full Concentration during the casting, and you must have the weapon in your presence the whole time.

Slash of the Lion

DURATION: 1 minute
AREA OF EFFECT: 1 target
RANGE: Touch

When you call upon the spirit of the lion, the target gains the predator's strength and ferocity. The target gains +2k0 to all unarmed attack rolls and +2k1 to all unarmed damage rolls.

Strength of the Crow

DURATION: 1 day
AREA OF EFFECT: 1 target
RANGE: Touch

This spell strengthens the target's elemental Earth and his ties to the Realm of Mortals. This spell may not be cast on targets not native to Ningen-do, the Realm of Mortals, or characters affected

by the Shadowlands Taint. The target is completely immune to non-physical methods of gaining the Shadowlands Taint (such as walking in the Shadowlands or other corrupted areas), and rolls and keeps two extra dice when attempting to otherwise resist gaining the Taint. This spell has no effect if the target willingly embraces the touch of the Shadowlands through the use of maho, or by simply willing this spell's protection to end.

Mastery Level 4

Armor of the Emperor

DURATION: 1 minute
AREA OF EFFECT: 1 target
RANGE: Touch

Ancient and honorable Earth spirits encase the target in a dark gray mantle that resembles a fine suit of armor. This covering appears insubstantial, but is as solid as stone without impeding the target's movement. All dice rolled against the recipient for damage are reduced by your School Rank; dice that explode have their final totals reduced.

Special Raises: You may Raise twice to increase your effective School Rank for this spell's effect by 1.

Death of Stone

DURATION: 1 minute
AREA OF EFFECT: 1 target
RANGE: 100'

This spell suppresses the target's elemental Earth, lowering both his Stamina and Willpower by an amount equal to your Earth Ring, to a minimum of one. Each round, the target may make a Contested Raw Earth Roll against you (using his unmodified Earth Ring) to escape this effect. Targets affected by this spell may not have their Stamina or Willpower involuntarily reduced by any other means. You may negate the victim's ability to escape these effects if you maintain Full Concentration for the spell's duration.

Shatter

DURATION: Instantaneous
AREA OF EFFECT: 1 item
RANGE: 100'

You rouse to movement the kami of Earth in a single nonliving object. The result is the destruction of the item, which cannot be more than ten cubic feet in total volume nor carried on a person's body. Anyone within a 10' radius of the detonated item takes 3k2 Wounds, or more (4k3 or 5k4) for larger or more destructive items (a large steel helm exploding might cause more damage than a paper lantern's explosion). Magical or awakened objects are immune to this spell, including nearly all daisho.

Symbol of Earth

DURATION: Permanent
AREA OF EFFECT: 10' radius
RANGE: 25'

This spell is cast as you etch the symbol of Earth upon an immovable surface such as a door threshold, a floor, or a stone pillar. Any beings other than yourself and those named when the spell is cast

must make a Contested Roll of their Air Ring against your Earth Ring (at the time of casting) when they come in the spell's area of effect. Failure indicates the victim is stunned, deafened, and Knocked Down by the Symbol of Earth. For the first round of the stunning, the victim cannot act or move. Each round thereafter, the victim gains back his hearing, then movement (at a crawl only), but remains at the Down Wound Rank until he leaves the area of effect. After that, his ability to move returns at a rate of 10' per round. This spell may be dispelled by another casting of Symbol of Earth from any shugenja or by destroying the surface.

The casting time to inscribe the Symbol is 1 minute.

Tomb of Jade

DURATION: Total Concentration
AREA OF EFFECT: 1 target
RANGE: 100'

This spell can only be cast on characters or creatures with the Shadowlands Taint. The target is encased in a skintight layer of jade, causing 3k3 Wounds on the initial round and 2k2 Wounds every round thereafter. The target of this spell may make a Raw Earth Roll against a TN of 5 × (your Earth Ring + School Rank) each round in order to break free. The target still takes 2k2 Wounds on the round he successfully breaks free. Dead targets become statues of jade that fade to dust in the next hour.

Special Raises: You may Raise once to increase the TN the target must meet to break free by 5.

Wall of Earth

DURATION: Permanent
AREA OF EFFECT: Special
RANGE: 100'

You petition powerful Earth kami to shoot upward, creating a massive barrier of earth. The wall is a 10' tall, 1' wide, 25' long wall of stone that is treated as if it were a castle's wall. This wall may be shorter or longer as desired, within the total specifications, but all mass must be used somehow. The spell may be used to create a simple wall, seal passages, repair breached parapets, or close off caverns.

Special Raises: You may Raise once to increase one of the specifications (height, width, or length) by its base increment (10', 1', or 25' respectively).

Mastery Level 5

Divide Into Ash

DURATION: Permanent
AREA OF EFFECT: 100 cubic feet
RANGE: 10'

This spell causes all Earth kami in the targeted area to abandon their places. As they leave, the area begins to crumble, torn apart by both the sudden weakening of solid matter and the effects of the kami's flight. This spell disintegrates all nonliving matter in the area of effect that is a natural part of the earth (such as stone, rock, crystal, mud, etc). Worked stone, such as a wall, is immune to this effect, although worked stone set on a natural rock foundation could be undermined. The Earth kami avoid you for the next day, meaning you must make a Raise to cast any Earth spell, until you spend an hour in meditation beseeching them to return to you.

Earthquake

DURATION: 5 rounds
AREA OF EFFECT: 200' radius
RANGE: Touch

Similar to Tremor, this spell is cast as you touch the natural earth and stir the spirits of the ground into a frenzy. This spell creates a full-fledged earthquake. Only the strongest buildings in the area of effect remain standing, and everyone in the area of effect is affected by Fear 3 (except you) and must make an Agility roll at a TN of 15 every round to remain standing (even you). The effects of this spell can be felt for miles in every direction, but only buildings and characters in the spell's area of effect are subjected to the mechanical effects of this spell. Earthquakes are terrifying natural disasters, and this spell can be construed as a declaration of war against those caught in it.

Special Raises: You may Raise once to increase the area of effect's radius to 400'. You may Raise four times to increase the area of effect's radius to 600'. You may Raise nine times to increase the area of effect's radius to 800'.

Prison of Earth

DURATION: Permanent
AREA OF EFFECT: 1 target
RANGE: 100'

The nature of Earth can imprison even the strongest energies. This spell calls upon this aspect of Earth to trap the essence of an unnatural spirit, including (but not limited to) Oni, Shadowlands creatures, summoned spirits, and any creature not native to the Realm of Mortals. You must have a diamond in which to imprison the target's spirit. You make a Contested Raw Earth Roll against any Ring of the target's choosing and if you are successful, the target is trapped in the diamond until such time you release it, you are slain, or the diamond is shattered. If you fail the roll, the target is immediately aware of your attempt and is likely to attack.

Spikes of Earth

DURATION: 1 hour
AREA OF EFFECT: 100' radius
RANGE: Line of sight

You command the kami of stone to jut from the ground, creating jagged spikes 8-12 inches long within the area of effect. These spikes tend to be composed of material relevant to the surroundings, but are always solid enough to have the same effect. Anyone within the area of effect must make an immediate Raw Reflexes Roll at a TN of 40 or trip over the spikes, suffering Wounds equal to your Earth × 2. Anything moving through the area must move at half its normal movement rate and make a Raw Agility Roll each round at a TN of 20 to avoid falling and taking Xk3 damage, where × is your Earth Ring. Moving through the area at a rate of 1 foot per round negates any chance of falling.



Mastery Level 6

Fraying of Ningen-do

DURATION: 1 minute
AREA OF EFFECT: 15' radius
RANGE: 100'

This spell causes a 1-foot gash to open in the earth and spew noxious fumes. Those within the spell's area of effect immediately take 5k5 Wounds and must make an Earth roll at a TN of 30 or fall to the ground, choking on the gas for the remainder of the round. Each round spent in the area of effect causes another 5k5 Wounds and another Earth roll. This spell is a great favor to ask of the Earth spirits, as it creates a deep chasm. You must either break apart a significant Inorganic item (such as a favored statue or intricate fan) in sacrifice to the kami when casting this spell, or suffer a +5 TN penalty to all Earth spells for an hour after casting this spell.

Special Raises: You may Raise twice to increase the damage of the spell by +1k1. You may Raise once to increase the area of effect's radius to 30'. You may Raise four times to increase the area of effect's radius to 45'. You may Raise nine times to increase the area of effect's radius to 60'. You may not Raise to increase this spell's duration.

Kami's Strength

DURATION: 1 minute
AREA OF EFFECT: 1 target
RANGE: Touch

Only the most experienced shugenja can call upon the spirits in this manner, causing the most ancient and powerful spirits to rise up and protect the target. The target ignores all damage from non-magical sources, and damage from magical sources is halved (rounded down). The spirits of the Earth can be called upon only once per day in this manner. If you do not cast this spell on yourself, its duration is Full Concentration, but you cannot extend the duration beyond a minute even if you maintain concentration.

Rise, Earth

DURATION: Full Concentration
AREA OF EFFECT: Special
RANGE: 25'

This spell requires perfect communion with the Earth kami, a feat that only the greatest shugenja are capable of. You gain complete control over 25 cubic feet of earth, which you may either shape into a humanoid form to obey your command, or otherwise bend to your will. In humanoid form, the commanded Earth kami can perform any task you set before it and is a fierce combatant. In melee, the summoned creature strikes twice per round, and rolls and keeps your Earth Ring in dice when rolling to attack. Anything it successfully hits takes 8k5 Wounds. The earth creature takes damage normally, but is not affected by Wounds so long as there is more earth available to replace the damaged portion.

Otherwise, this spell may be used to move the affected earth in any way imaginable, creating small shelters, rock slides, walls, and the like. If used to attack a target (or group in the area of effect) by crushing or overwhelming it, the earth deals 8k8 damage to everything it crushes. Victims of this attack can make a Raw Reflexes Roll at a TN of 30 to avoid the attack. One such roll can be made per round.

Fire Spells

Mastery Level 1

Biting Steel

DURATION: 1 minute
AREA OF EFFECT: 1 weapon
RANGE: Touch

This spell enhances the damage of steel weapons, or weapons with steel blades and handles of any substance (such as yari, kama, etc.). Biting Steel cannot enhance magical weapons, weapons already enhanced by magic of any kind, or weapons made from mixed components (such as tetsubo). For the duration of the spell, the weapon has its DR raised by +1k1.

Burst

DURATION: Instantaneous
AREA OF EFFECT: 20' radius
RANGE: 100'

You cause the Fire kami to become violent for the briefest moment, setting off a flash of light and a small wave of heat from a tiny burst of flame. Everyone in the area of effect is partially blinded unless their eyes were covered or protected. Any roll that involves sight has a +5 TN penalty. The blinding effect lasts for two rounds.

Extinguish

DURATION: Instantaneous
AREA OF EFFECT: 100' radius
RANGE: Self

You dismiss the most active Fire kami in the area. All non-magical fire in the area is immediately snuffed out, and any damage dealt by fire (magical or not) rolls and keeps one fewer die for damage until the next round. The nature of this spell makes it difficult for you to cast Fire spells in the area of effect for an hour, forcing you to make a Raise if you wish to do so. Because Rokugani homes and cities are vulnerable to fire, many shugenja (even those with a Fire Deficiency) learn this spell.

The Fires that Cleanse

DURATION: Instantaneous
AREA OF EFFECT: 30' radius
RANGE: Self

Unlike other spells that entreat the kami to act in a controlled manner, this prayer urges the Fire kami into a chaotic frenzy. The result is a burst of fire in the area of effect that appears from nowhere and expands out from you. Everyone in the area takes $\times k \times$ Wounds, where \times is your Fire Ring. This result is rolled once and applied to everything in the area of effect. Because the Fire kami recognize the one calling them to action, they try to avoid injuring you; you take only half the Wounds from this spell.

Special Raises: You may Raise once to increase the area of effect's radius to 40'. You may Raise four times to increase the area of effect's radius to 50'. You may Raise nine times to increase the area of effect's radius to 60'.

Fires of Purity

DURATION: 1 minute
AREA OF EFFECT: 1 target
RANGE: 25'

The fire kami surround this spell's target in a burning sheath. Neither the target nor anything he is carrying or holding takes damage from the spell, but anything that comes into contact with him takes 1k1 Wounds (including enemies the target strikes in melee if he uses his hands or a weapon he carried when the spell was cast). Anything the target puts down cannot be picked back up without subjecting it to the damage from the spell.

Special Raises: You may Raise twice to increase the damage of this spell by +1k0.

The Fury of Osano-Wo

DURATION: Instantaneous
AREA OF EFFECT: 1 target
RANGE: 100'

By calling to the Fortune of Fire and Thunder, you invoke the fire spirits to act on his behalf. A bolt of lightning strikes the target from the sky, dealing 3k2 Wounds and forcing him and everyone within 10' to make a Stamina roll at TN 10 or be deafened for two rounds. If this spell is cast during a storm, the damage is increased to 3k3 for a moderate storm and to 4k3 for a particularly strong storm or hurricane.

Special Raises: You may Raise twice to increase the damage of this spell by +1k0.

Ignite

DURATION: Instantaneous
AREA OF EFFECT: 1 target
RANGE: 50'

You ask several minor fire spirits to converge, igniting a small fire on objects that are easily flammable, such as most clothes, scrolls, or thin wood. The fire is unremarkable, and easily extinguished unless allowed to grow normally. You may cast this spell on yourself, allowing the Fire kami to ignite a small, torch-sized flame on you (for example, on your hand) without causing any damage. When ignited in this manner, the fire does not grow and lasts for 5 rounds.

Katana of Fire

DURATION: 1 minute
AREA OF EFFECT: Self
RANGE: Self

You shape the spirits of Fire into a katana of flickering flames. This weapon is wielded like a normal katana, but you may use your School Rank plus one in place of the Kenjutsu Skill. The Katana of Fire has DR 3k3. If you become unconscious or die, the Katana vanishes.

Special Raises: You may Raise once and once only to increase the Katana's damage rating by +1k0.

Mastery Level 2

Aura of Flame

DURATION: 1 minute
AREA OF EFFECT: Self
RANGE: Self

You summon Fire spirits to punish any enemy who strikes you in melee. The fire does not damage you or your equipment, but anything that comes into contact with you takes 2k2 Wounds. Flammable nonmagical projectiles cannot pierce the flames, being burned instantly when they touch the fire.



The Fires from Within

DURATION: Instantaneous
AREA OF EFFECT: 1 target
RANGE: 100'

This spell forms a small orb of fire that hovers in your palm for a moment before streaking towards its target. The sphere gains momentum and size until it hits its target, causing XkX Wounds, where x is your Fire Ring. The fire completely consumes flammable nonliving objects such as rice-paper walls and scrolls, and is potent enough to ignite flame-resistant material such as treated wood.

Special Raises: You may Raise twice to declare an additional target for this spell, which must be in sight at the same time as every other target.

Hurried Steps

DURATION: Instantaneous
AREA OF EFFECT: Self
RANGE: Self

You draw upon the speed of the Fire kami. Upon completion of this spell, you may immediately begin casting another spell, which has its casting time reduced by 3 rounds. If the next spell you cast is a Fire spell, the casting time is instead reduced by 4 rounds. This cannot reduce a spell's casting time below 1 action, and does not affect spells that have their casting times measured in increments other than rounds (such as minutes or hours). If you do not begin casting the new spell immediately, the benefit of Hurried Steps elapses.

Inferno's Tooth

DURATION: 1 minute
AREA OF EFFECT: 1 object
RANGE: 25'

This prayer causes a targeted object to heat up to its ignition point. Oil are set ablaze, yumi ruined, and metal jewelry begins to melt on the wearer's flesh. Anyone touching the object takes $2k2$ Wounds each round they remain in contact with it, though flammable objects (such as paper) are consumed in a single round. This spell cannot affect magical or nonflammable items, or objects larger than two cubic feet.

Speed of Flame

DURATION: 5 rounds
AREA OF EFFECT: 1 target
RANGE: 100'

This spell grants its target the urgency of a great fire. The target gains +10 to his Initiative score if he is already in combat, or otherwise gains + $2k1$ to Initiative rolls.

Special Raises: You may Raise twice to declare an additional target.

Tail of the Fire Dragon

DURATION: 6 rounds
AREA OF EFFECT: Self
RANGE: Self

When this spell is completed, a tendril of flame extends from your hand and moves at your command. You may use this tendril to strike enemies as far as 50' away. You attack with the

tendril by rolling Agility + twice your School Rank, keeping your Agility. The tendril rolls dice equal to your Fire Ring for damage, keeping dice equal to your School Rank.

Special Raises: You may Raise once to increase the reach of the tendril by 10'.

Touch of the Fire Kami

DURATION: 5 rounds
AREA OF EFFECT: Self
RANGE: Self

You gather powerful Fire spirits around your hands and forearms. In combat, the fire deals $2k1$ Wounds (in addition to normal damage) to anything you hit with an unarmed strike. Your hands count as magical weapons for the purpose of damaging your targets. You take no damage from this spell.

Mastery Level 3

Breath of the Fire Dragon

DURATION: 4 rounds
AREA OF EFFECT: Self
RANGE: 30'

This impressive spell bestows a bit of the Dragon of Fire's power, allowing you to breathe a bolt of flames from your open mouth once per round. The bolt deals XkX damage, where x is your Fire Ring. You cannot speak or cast spells while under the effects of this spell.

Burn the Mind

DURATION: Full Concentration
AREA OF EFFECT: 1 target
RANGE: 25'

You distort the balance of the target's elements, causing his focus to slip. The target rolls two fewer dice on all rolls while under the effects of this spell, and must make a Willpower roll at a TN of 15 to make any Intelligence or Awareness roll. If the target fails the roll, he loses his action while trying to remember what he was trying to do. As the target is likely to become a stammering idiot, it is clear to anyone present that something unnatural is occurring, and anyone can make a Perception/Spellcraft roll at a TN of 20 to recognize the spell.

The Fist of Osano-Wo

DURATION: 1 minute
AREA OF EFFECT: 50' radius
RANGE: 100'

The area caught in this spell is subjected to repeated lightning strikes and vaguely fist-shaped bolts of flame that streak from the skies. Weak structures and those easily set on fire (such as most homes) are destroyed by the spell's fury, or catch fire and are consumed. Anyone caught in the area of effect suffers a 50% chance each round of taking XkX Wounds, where x is your Fire Ring. This spell will surely be met with Imperial retribution if used in a populated area, as fires are terribly dangerous in Rokugani cities.

Special Raises: You may Raise once to increase the range of the spell by 100'.

Heart of the Inferno

DURATION: Instantaneous
AREA OF EFFECT: 25' radius
RANGE: 300'

Similar in appearance to The Fires from Within, this spell causes a small orb of fire to hover in your palm and then streak toward its target. When the orb strikes its target, it explodes; roll a number of damage dice equal to twice your Fire Ring, keeping a number equal to your Fire Ring. You must destroy the scroll during the casting, or you suffer half of this damage as well. This spell is identical to Fires from Within in regards to setting objects on fire.

Special Raises: You may Raise once to increase the area of effect's radius to 30'. You may Raise four times to increase the area of effect's radius to 35'. You may Raise nine times to increase the area of effect's radius to 40'.

Hungry Blade

DURATION: 5 rounds
AREA OF EFFECT: Target weapon
RANGE: 50'

You strengthen the Fire spirits in a weapon, causing a faint sheath of fire to envelop it. The weapon's wielder rolls +1k0 to his attack roll, and all of his damage dice explode on a result of 8 or better. Each die can explode on an 8 or 9 only once per roll.

Waiting Flame

DURATION: 1 hour
AREA OF EFFECT: 10' radius
RANGE: Touch

Pacifying the fire spirits is never an easy task, but this spell calms the kami of fire in a single area and binds them to an object or location — your choice — until a particular trigger occurs, and they burst forth. This trigger can be anything, but should be as specific as possible so the fire spirits do not erupt prematurely or too late. Triggers could be "When Lord Bayushi Hirito speaks my name" or "When three men wearing yari walk within ten feet." The explosion causes 6k6 Wounds to everything within the area of effect. This spell takes ten minutes to cast.

Mastery Level 4

Death of Flame

DURATION: 1 minute
AREA OF EFFECT: 1 target
RANGE: 100'

This spell suppresses the target's elemental Fire, lowering his Agility and Intelligence by an amount equal to your Fire Ring, to a minimum of one. Each round, the target may make a contested Fire roll against you (using his unmodified Fire Ring) to escape this effect. You may negate the victim's ability to escape these effects if you maintain Full Concentration for the spell's duration.

Fire Walking

DURATION: 1 minute
AREA OF EFFECT: 1 target
RANGE: Touch

You beseech the Fire kami to acknowledge the target as a welcomed friend, preventing fire from harming him in any way. The target of this spell (and his carried equipment) ignores all effects of fire and heat. He takes no damage from such sources. If the target is subjected to damage from a magical fire effect, the damage is completely negated, but the effects of Fire Walking end. A target may be under the effects of only one Fire Walking spell at a time.

Special Raises: You may Raise twice to declare an additional target.

Light of Yakamo

DURATION: 10 minutes
AREA OF EFFECT: 50' radius
RANGE: 100'

This prayer invokes the power of Lord Sun, calling down a concentrated beam of his holy light to punish the unworthy. Everyone caught in the area of effect takes 2k2 Wounds from the intense heat. Characters take an additional 2k2 Wounds for every Honor Rank they are below 2, and an additional 2k1 Wounds if they possess the Shadowlands Taint. Victims who have an Honor Rank of 0 are blinded for a number of rounds equal to your Fire Ring.

Symbol of Fire

DURATION: Permanent
AREA OF EFFECT: 10' radius
RANGE: 25'

This spell is cast as you etch the symbol of Fire upon an immovable surface such as a door threshold, a floor, or a stone pillar. Any beings other than yourself and those named when the spell is cast must make a Contested Roll of their Water Ring against your Fire Ring (at the time of casting) when they come into the spell's area of effect. Those who fail are blinded and damaged by the Symbol of Fire. Victims take 2k2 Wounds, and are blinded for a number of hours equal to your Fire Ring. This spell may be dispelled by another casting of Symbol of Fire from any shugenja or by destroying the surface.

The casting time to inscribe the Symbol is 1 minute.

Wall of Fire

DURATION: 1 hour
AREA OF EFFECT: Special
RANGE: 100'

By invoking powerful fire spirits, you cause a wall of blazing fire to spring up. The wall is a 10' tall, 1' wide, 25' long wall of fire that causes 6k6 Wounds to anyone that touches it. This wall may be shorter or thinner as desired, within the total specifications, but all mass must be used somehow. The wall may be created in an area where people or creatures are standing, forcing them to make a Raw Reflexes Roll against a TN of 20 to avoid taking Wounds from the fire.

Special Raises: You may Raise once to increase one of the specifications (height, width, or length) by its base increment (10', 1', or 25' respectively).

Mastery Level 5

Burn the Soul

DURATION: Full Concentration
AREA OF EFFECT: 1 target
RANGE: 25'

To many shugenja, this spell is an unspeakable horror that must be used only to punish the wickedest foes. The victim of this spell begins to burn, but no fire surrounds him — the spell looses his own elemental Fire, destroying him from within. This spell's effects intensify from round to round, as described below. If the victim manages to move outside the range of the spell or your concentration is broken, the spell ends immediately.

- **Round One:** The target takes 1k1 Wounds, suffers a +5 TN penalty to all rolls, and cannot maintain focus enough to perform tasks such as casting a spell.
- **Round Two:** The target's blackened skin begins to peel, causing 3k3 Wounds and a +15 TN penalty to all rolls. The target must make a Willpower roll at a TN of 30 to take any action, including movement.
- **Round Three:** The target's skin has burned away almost completely. The target must make a Raw Willpower Roll at a TN of 30 and spend a Void Point in order to do anything except fall helplessly on the ground. The target takes 6k6 Wounds.
- **Round Four:** The target's muscles and tendons begin to burn, and he must make a Raw Willpower Roll at a TN of 45 to maintain consciousness. Any action other than attempting to crawl away at half speed is impossible, and the victim must pass his Willpower roll to remain conscious and spend a Void Point to do even that. If the victim survives this stage, he gains the Phobia: Fire Disadvantage for a month.
- **Rounds Five and Later:** If the victim is still alive, he takes 9k9 Wounds and bursts into flame. As in round four, only half speed movement is possible, with the same restrictions. The spell may be maintained for as long as you concentrate.

Recovery from stages three or later requires a week worth of bed rest for every round the victim endured in addition to normal means of healing. Someone who takes damage on round three or later, but recovers, acquires the Permanent Wound Disadvantage.

Everburning Rage

DURATION: 1 round
AREA OF EFFECT: 1 target
RANGE: 25'

You call upon the Fire spirits to wrack the target's body with pain. For the duration of the spell, the victim is considered to be at the Down Wound Level and suffers all associated penalties and conditions, although he takes no actual Wounds from the spell. When the spell expires, the target may stand up as if nothing had happened.

Special Raises: You may Raise once to declare an additional target.

Follow the Flame

DURATION: 5 rounds
AREA OF EFFECT: Self
RANGE: Self

This spell grants you exceptional control of the nearby Fire kami. On the round this spell is cast and every round thereafter, you gain an additional action to declare a line of sight target within 300' and send a stream of fire toward it that snakes along the ground. The stream of fire moves at a rate of 75' each round and moves around impassable (or inflammable) barriers in order to reach its target. Once the fire reaches its destination, the target bursts into flames, causing XkX Wounds, where x is your Fire Ring. The subject catches fire and takes half that many Wounds (round down) every round until the fire is doused normally or the spell's duration expires. Spending two rounds doing nothing but rolling on the ground douses the fire at the end of the second round.

Strike of Osano-Wo

DURATION: Full Concentration
AREA OF EFFECT: 10' radius
RANGE: Line of sight

This prayer calls upon the Fire kami that attend the Fortune of Fire and Thunder, commanding them to descend from the Heavens in a whirling cyclone of flame. Anything caught in the area of effect takes 8k6 Wounds and must make a Raw Agility Roll at a TN of 30 or be Knocked Down. You may direct the column of fire, once created, to move 30' per round, burning everything in its path. When this spell is cast, you must sacrifice the spell scroll, an item of importance to you, or a bit of your own elemental Fire (causing you 3k3 Wounds).

Mastery Level 6

Hochiu's Call of Heaven

DURATION: 1 minute
AREA OF EFFECT: 10' radius
RANGE: Self

A furious burst of fire surrounds you and burns for the duration of the effect. This fire extends in a 10' radius around you, burning everything it touches for 8k8 Wounds per round. You and your equipment are not affected by this damage, but you cannot otherwise direct the damage from this spell. You are effectively immune to arrows and similar projectiles, and even medium-sized metal objects will melt in the heat before reaching you. Any wood or metal weapon swung through the fire will burn or melt before touching you. Only magical items and items specifically protected against fire can withstand the heat, and even they will probably be ruined.

Rise, Flame

DURATION: Full Concentration
AREA OF EFFECT: 25 cubic feet of fire
RANGE: 25'

This difficult spell requires perfect communion with the Fire kami. You gain complete control over 25 cubic feet of flame and its fuel (such as the wood it is burning), which you may either shape into a humanoid form to obey your command, or other



Void Spells

...wise move to your will. In humanoid form, the commanded Fire kami can perform any task you set before it and is a fierce combatant. In melee, the summoned creature strikes twice per round and rolls and keeps your Fire Ring in dice when rolling to attack. These attacks may be melee attacks or ranged strikes with a range of 50'. Anything hit takes 5k4 Wounds. The fire creature does not take damage normally, and is harmed only by effects that would douse or smother flame. Each effect that would extinguish a normal fire of its size instead drops it down a Wound Level, though you may heal a Wound Level on the creature by having it consume at least a 5 cubic foot flame source.

Otherwise, this spell may be used to manipulate the affected fire in any way imaginable, creating images, expanding (up to double its current size) or diminishing (by 25 cubic feet) an existing fire, or causing it to strike against something in the area for 5k4 Wounds, acting as if it were the fire creature previously described.

Tempest of Fire

DURATION: Full Concentration plus 10 minutes

AREA OF EFFECT: 60' radius

RANGE: 200'

The most destructive fire spell known, this prayer requires a shugenja powerful enough to entreat the elemental nature of the world to spiral violently out of balance. You incite the Fire kami to overwhelm the other kami, forcing out all other elements. The elemental balance of the area is destroyed, causing 10kX Wounds to everything each round, where X is your Fire Ring. Air, water, and even stone burst into fire, and when the spell is finally complete, little is left but a crater and ash. This spell is a dangerous one, as the elemental imbalance it causes causes the other elemental spirits to avoid you for days. All other Fire spells you cast have a TN penalty of +5 for a number of days equal to the number of minutes you maintain this spell. Each day you may spend an hour in prayer and make a Void/Meditation roll at a TN of 40 to reduce the number of days they shun you by 1.

Void magic is the subtlest and most enigmatic kind of magic. Void kami are even more alien than most elemental spirits, and do not often choose to communicate with mortals. While those who can communicate with kami are extremely rare, those who can call upon Void magic are rarer still. These shugenja are known as Ishiken.

Only among the Phoenix Clan does talent with Void magic appear with any regularity. While the other clans are aware of the existence of Void magic, they do not possess the Phoenix Clan's skill in training it. Thus, sadly, many of those who might become powerful Ishiken never realize their full potential. When the Phoenix Clan becomes aware of such individuals they are invariably offered training with the Isawa. Though the Isawa guard their mystical secrets closely, they recognize that Void magic is far too precious to squander due to petty clan politics. Despite the rare Ishiken outside the clan, the full secrets of Void magic belong to the Phoenix alone. Not only does the general Rokugani tradition of loyalty to one's dojo prevent even non-Phoenix from teaching the Phoenix's secrets to others, but the chances of finding another student to pass along the teachings are miniscule.

Void magic is cast in the same manner as all other magic, with slightly altered rules. You use your current remaining Void Points, not your Void Ring, as your Ring when casting Void spells. If you spend a Void Point to enhance your roll when casting a Void spell, you roll and keep two extra dice instead of one. For example, if a Rank 1 shugenja with 3 Void Points remaining spends a Void Point when casting a spell, he rolls six dice and keeps five. This is cumulative with the Free Raise that the Ishiken-do Advantage grants whenever spending Void to enhance a roll when spellcasting.

Mastery Level 1

Sense Void

DURATION: Total Concentration
AREA OF EFFECT: Self
RANGE: 1 mile

You fall into a deep trance, surrendering your senses to the Void. Your soul roams free of your body, flying at a speed equal to your normal walking speed. You are invisible except to other Ishiken and certain spirits (including Oni), to whom you appear as a hovering nimbus of light.

While so roaming you perceive the normal world, though your perceptions are greatly altered. You can see inanimate objects normally, though everything seems to be coated in a purple sheen. You perceive thoughts rather than seeing living beings. Though you cannot read minds, you can sense general emotions such as happiness or anger. Thus the presence of 'boredom' in an empty hallway suggests that a guard is present on duty. You can also sense the presence of spirits such as ghosts, Oni, and shapeshifters (essentially anything not of the mortal realm) in your location, though you cannot see them.

If your body suffers any Wounds during your trance, you return and awaken immediately.

Special Raises: You may Raise three times to extend the range by one mile.

Drawing the Void

DURATION: Instantaneous
AREA OF EFFECT: Self
RANGE: Self

When you cast this spell, you immediately gain an extra Void Point. This spell can be cast only once per day. Void Points beyond your maximum are lost if not spent within an hour.

Special Raises: You may Raise four times to gain two Void Points.

Mastery Level 2

Altering the Course

DURATION: One day
AREA OF EFFECT: Self
RANGE: Self

When you cast this spell, you call upon the Void spirits to hold a vital store of your chi essence in reserve for when you need it most. At any time within the next day you may call upon this magic and spend all of your Void Points on a single roll. You must spend all Void Points that you have remaining when this magic is finally invoked.

Essence of Void

DURATION: Total Concentration
AREA OF EFFECT: One target
RANGE: 50'

You concentrate upon a single target, seeking to overwhelm their connection to the Void with your own. For as long as you concentrate, they must succeed at a Contested Void Roll with you to spend Void Points for any reason. You gain a +10 bonus to your roll.

Special Raises: You may Raise twice to gain an additional +5 bonus on your Contested roll.

Mastery Level 3

Kharmic Intent

DURATION: One hour
AREA OF EFFECT: One target
RANGE: Touch

By casting this spell, you form a kharmic link between your Void and that of any willing person you touch. For the duration of the spell, your current Void Points are added together into a single communal pool, and both of you may spend Void Points from this pool normally. At the end of the spell's duration, any remaining Void Points are divided equally between yourself and the target, with you gaining the extra point if there is one. If either you or your target has more Void Points than your Void Rings, the excess points are lost.

Moment of Clarity

DURATION: One hour
AREA OF EFFECT: Self
RANGE: Self

You can enhance your natural talent in any single Skill you possess at Rank 1 or higher. You spend any number of Void Points when this spell is cast, and select one Skill. For the duration of this spell, your rank in this Skill is increased by the number of Void Points spent.

Mastery Level 4

Void Release

DURATION: Your Void Ring in rounds
AREA OF EFFECT: One target
RANGE: 50'

When this spell is cast, you suffuse a target with the power of your own Void. Select any one Trait. For the duration of this spell, the target uses your Void Ring in place of this Trait. If a target's Stamina or Willpower is enhanced by this spell and his Earth Ring increases, his Wound Ranks increase accordingly. However, any damage inflicted to the target remains when the spell wears off, meaning that a heavily injured target may suddenly die when his enhanced Earth returns to normal.

Special Raises: You may Raise twice to affect another of your target's Traits.

Void Strike

DURATION: Instantaneous
AREA OF EFFECT: One target
RANGE: 50'

You select one target within range and immediately make a Contested Void Roll. If this roll is successful, the target loses one Void Point and you gain one. If the target has no Void Points remaining, you gain nothing. The TN to cast this spell increases by 10 each additional time it is cast within a single day.

Special Raises: You may Raise twice to steal an additional Void Point from your target.

Mastery Level 5

Void Suppression

DURATION: Your Void Ring in rounds
AREA OF EFFECT: One target
RANGE: 50'

You select one target in range and make an immediate Contested Void Roll. Should you win, you then select one of the target's Traits. That Trait is switched with the target's lowest Trait for the duration of the spell. The target may negate this effect for one round by spending two Void Points.

Mastery Level 6

Divine the Future

DURATION: Instantaneous
AREA OF EFFECT: Self
RANGE: Self

This spell represents the most profound connection possible with the Void. You extend your awareness into all things and experience a single moment of ultimate truth. You may ask the GM one question regarding the campaign, of no more than fifteen words. The GM may be vague in his reply, but he must be truthful. You must spend all your remaining Void Points to cast this spell, and cannot regain Void Points for the rest of the day, nor the next day.

Rise From the Ashes

DURATION: Permanent
AREA OF EFFECT: One target
RANGE: 50'

This extremely powerful spell can turn back the karmic wheel itself. When cast upon a single creature or item, all effects that have occurred within the last six hours are immediately revoked. Wounds, poisons, the Shadowlands Taint, and any other physical changes accrued during that time can be revoked by this ritual. When the spell is complete, the subject and all shugenja involved in the casting of this spell expend all Void Points and cannot recover Void Points for one week. For each additional caster that participates in this spell, another hour of the past is negated. This spell cannot negate death, for death carries a soul beyond even the reach of Void spirits. It will, however, restore any damage done to a body.

This spell can only be cast as a Ritual.



Water Spells

Mastery Level 1

Bo of Water

DURATION: 1 minute
AREA OF EFFECT: Self
RANGE: Self

You can request that the kami lend you Water's inexorable strength, in the form of a bo staff. This weapon is wielded like a normal bo staff, but you may use your School Rank plus one in place of the Staves Skill. The Bo of Water has DR 3k3. If you become unconscious or die, the Bo vanishes.

Special Raises: You may Raise once and once only to increase the Bo's damage rating by +1k0.

Castle of Water

DURATION: Casual Concentration plus 5 minutes
AREA OF EFFECT: 5' radius
RANGE: Self

The Water kami defend those they favor. You create a small wall of water 3' high and 1' thick. This wall encircles you and impedes any attempt at passage. Those attempting to pass the wall must succeed at an Earth roll versus your Water Ring \times School Rank. Those who fail are thrown out of the radius and suffer 1k1 Wounds.

Special Raises: You may Raise once to add an additional 1' to the wall's height. You may Raise once to increase the area of effect's radius to 10'. You may Raise four times to increase the area of effect's radius to 15'. You may Raise nine times to increase the area of effect's radius to 20'.

Heart of Nature

DURATION: Permanent
AREA OF EFFECT: Target animal
RANGE: 5'

Aligning the Water between two creatures is a simple matter of speaking to the kami. This spell creates a bond between you and one non-magical creature. Thereafter, the creature instinctively understands and follows your mental commands so long as you are within one mile of each other, though the creature will not risk its life to do so. If you cast Heart of Nature upon a creature governed by a Skill (such as Horsemanship for a steed or Hunting for a falcon), you gain a Free Raise when using that Skill.

You may affect only one animal at a time. Casting Heart of Nature on a second animal dispels the bond created by the first.

Path to Inner Peace

DURATION: Instantaneous
AREA OF EFFECT: Target person/creature
RANGE: Touch

The harmonious Water kami can dramatically increase the rate at which the body heals. When cast upon a wounded person or creature, Path to Inner Peace instantly heals one die of Wounds, but never fewer than your Water Ring.

Special Raises: You may Raise once to heal an additional die of Wounds.

Purify Water

DURATION: Instantaneous
AREA OF EFFECT: 25' radius
RANGE: 10'

This simple prayer beseeches the kami to remove any impurities from their mortal manifestations. All water within the area of effect is changed into pure, pollutant-free, Taint-free water. This is a popular ritual among Crab traveling in the Shadowlands, although any water that remains in contact with contaminated water quickly becomes re-infested. This spell cannot affect water that has already been consumed.

Reflections of Pan Ku

DURATION: Instantaneous
AREA OF EFFECT: Target object
RANGE: 5'

Air is the element of secrets, but water is the element of divination. By properly entreating the kami within a still pool, you may divine the nature and powers (if any) of a single object or item. This information is revealed by way of brief glimpses of the object's past use. Other details of the vision are hazy and indistinct, including information such as who wielded or created the item. These visions are vague, and it is up to you to interpret them properly. You can usually tell whether an item is a nemuranai using this spell, though it does not necessarily reveal the item's abilities or purpose.

Reversal of Fortunes

DURATION: 1 minute
AREA OF EFFECT: Target person
RANGE: 10'

Water is the most benevolent element, with kami that are almost eager to bestow their blessings upon mortals. The target may choose to re-roll any one die each time he makes a roll during the spell's duration. The new roll must be kept.

Sympathetic Energies

DURATION: Varies (see below)
AREA OF EFFECT: Target person
RANGE: 10'

Water is the element of change, and even magic is not immutable. You petition the kami to transfer an existing spell effect from you to another individual within range, or from another individual to you. To transfer a spell to yourself, you must have seen the spell being cast and have a sufficient School Rank to potentially cast the spell. Otherwise, this spell automatically fails. For the remainder of the spell's duration, it is as if the target had cast the spell in question. This spell cannot be applied to spells with **DURATION:** Instantaneous or that require any level of Concentration.

Mastery Level 2

Heart of Mortality

DURATION: Permanent
AREA OF EFFECT: Self & target person
RANGE: 10'

You can align your elemental Water with that of another intelligent being, establishing a bond between you. So long as the target is within 1 mile, you can always sense what direction he is in and can target him with spells as if he were within the spell's normal range. The target of this spell must be willing to enter into the bond, and if he becomes unwilling at any point the spell automatically ends. If the target is more than 1 mile from you, all benefits disappear until he returns within the 1 mile range. Only one person may be affected by this spell at a time. If you attempt to cast Heart of Mortality on a second person, it dispels the first bond.

Reflective Pool

DURATION: 5 minutes
AREA OF EFFECT: 50'
RANGE: 1 mile

The inscrutable knowledge of Water can be a great boon. You may use a simple pool of reflective water to gaze upon any familiar location. You can view that location as if you were standing in the center of the area of effect.

In order to become familiar enough with an area to use this spell, you must spend 10 minutes studying the area and its contents without interruption. You may view any familiar location when you cast Reflective Pool.

Rejuvenating Vapors

DURATION: Instantaneous
AREA OF EFFECT: Target person
RANGE: Touch

You may summon vapors that cleanse the mind of fatigue. The target of this spell is refreshed as if he had just had a full night of sleep, eliminating any fatigue penalties. This rest reinvigorates the mind as well, allowing shugenja to recover all their spells from the previous day. No person may benefit from this spell two days in a row.

The Ties That Bind

DURATION: Full Concentration plus 1 minute
AREA OF EFFECT: Self
RANGE: 1 mile

This spell is similar to other divination spells in that it allows you to seek out the Water within a specific object. It provides the direction and distance to one familiar object (one you have carried with you, or studied for at least an hour). If the object is outside the spell's range, the spell provides no information.

Special Raises: You may Raise once to seek for an additional mile.

Wave-Borne Speed

DURATION: 5 minutes
AREA OF EFFECT: Target person/creature
RANGE: Touch

Kami of Water can lend the ocean's speed to individuals. The target moves at double the normal rate (Water \times 20 feet per round instead of \times 10) and does not tire during the spell's duration.

Water kami are notoriously capricious, however. If the target ceases moving or takes any action other than simple things that can be done while moving, the kami grow bored and leave, canceling the spell.

Wisdom and Clarity

DURATION: 1 hour
AREA OF EFFECT: Self
RANGE: Self

By asking the Water kami to impart a fraction of their insight, you may double your reading speed and remember clearly everything you read during the spell. This spell does not enhance comprehension, only speed and recall. Ciphers, codes, and unfamiliar languages are still indecipherable.

Mastery Level 3

Bane of the Scorpion

DURATION: Instantaneous
AREA OF EFFECT: Target person/creature
RANGE: Touch

The Water within living creatures is difficult to manipulate with magic, but it can be encouraged to accelerate natural processes. The spell immediately purges all poisons from the target's system, eliminating them and their symptoms completely. Damage suffered from the poison is not healed.

Near to Ice

DURATION: Casual Concentration plus 1 minute
AREA OF EFFECT: Target person
RANGE: Touch

Gentle, tranquil waters can be hardened to ice, increasing their strength a hundredfold. You can temporarily borrow this strength from the Water kami. This spell's target suffers no TN penalties from Wounds for the spell's duration. Near to Ice does not heal Wounds, nor does it negate the effects of being Down.

Regrow the Wound

DURATION: Total Concentration
AREA OF EFFECT: Target person/creature
RANGE: Touch

Water kami heal by absorbing pain into themselves. This spell allows you to directly channel a target's pain into the great ocean of Water kami. As long as this spell is maintained, the target heals a number of Wounds equal to your Water every round until no damage remains.

Silent Waters

DURATION: Varies
AREA OF EFFECT: Self
RANGE: Self

The ocean's memory is eternal. A single Water kami merges with your body and waits for the time when it will be released to perform its duty.

This spell is cast in conjunction with one other spell of any element of Mastery Level 3 or less, which must be cast within one minute of completing this spell. At the time you cast Silent Waters, you must select a specific trigger that will activate the second spell. This trigger may be when you say a specific phrase or when a certain physical action takes place (when you fall, when you draw a blade, etc.). When this trigger occurs, the second spell immediately takes place as if it had just been cast. You must have a spell slot of the appropriate element available for it to take effect. This spell cannot benefit from any Raises.

You may store spells to be cast upon yourself even if you are unconscious, but if the stored spell targets another person, you must be conscious for it to take effect.

Way of Still Waters

DURATION: 10 minutes
AREA OF EFFECT: Target person or creature
RANGE: Touch

Those who are embraced by the Water kami have no fear of their physical manifestations. You can grant the ability to breathe, see, and move at normal speeds underwater. This does not remove the target's ability to breathe air in any way. If this spell is cast upon water-breathing creatures, it allows them to breathe and move about in air freely.

Walking upon the Waves

DURATION: 10 minutes
AREA OF EFFECT: Target person/creature
RANGE: Touch

The Water kami can buoy up those who tread upon their manifestations, making it impossible to sink into the water. The target of this spell can move freely across the surface of water as if it were solid, walking, running, sitting, or performing any other actions as normal. If the water's surface is disturbed, as by a storm, then a Raw Agility Roll may be necessary to maintain one's balance, otherwise falling prone onto the water. Falling a long distance onto water while under the effects of this spell will result in damage as if one had fallen onto the ground.

Mastery Level 4

Hand of Jurojin

DURATION: Instantaneous
AREA OF EFFECT: Target person/creature
RANGE: Touch

Many Water kami serve Jurojin, the Fortune of Longevity, by cleansing illness, injury, and poison from mortals. By invoking the Fortune's blessing and channeling his power through the kami, you can cure one target of any disease. The disease is instantly eliminated along with its symptoms, including fever, lesions, or boils. Supernatural diseases may be cured in this manner, as long as they do not originate from a spell of higher Mastery Level than this one.

Sacred Ground

DURATION: Instantaneous
AREA OF EFFECT: Self
RANGE: Self

You can offer the proper prayers to temporarily consecrate an area. Consecrating an area takes an hour, while you scribe certain sacred runes all around it. You may later cast Sacred Ground and implore the kami to return you to the consecrated area. If successful, you immediately disappear from your current location and reappear in the consecrated spot. Distance has no effect on this spell. If the consecrated area is disturbed in any way, the area must be reconsecrated. Only one area can be consecrated in this fashion at a time.

Symbol of Water

DURATION: Permanent
AREA OF EFFECT: 10' radius
RANGE: 25'

You engrave the symbol of Water upon an object, usually a door, gate, or passage. Any beings other than you who come within the area of effect feel a great fear. Those who see or feel the symbol must make a Contested Roll using their Fire versus your Water at the time of casting. Those who fail must immediately flee at maximum speed.

A second casting of Symbol of Water within the area of effect will dispel the effect instantly. If the object the on which the symbol is inscribed is moved or destroyed, the spell is instantly cancelled.

The casting time to inscribe the Symbol is 1 minute.

Wall of Water

DURATION: Casual Concentration plus 1 hour
AREA OF EFFECT: Special
RANGE: 100'

This spell calls upon the Water kami within the area to create a wall of water 10' high, 1' wide, and 25' long. The wall is virtually impassable and may not be created if living beings are within the area of effect. Anyone attempting to pass through the wall must succeed at a Fire roll with a TN equal to your Water \times School Rank. If they fail, they become stuck within the wall and suffer 1k1 drowning damage for every round they are trapped (1k1 the first round, 2k2 the second, 3k3 the third, etc.). Individuals trapped within the wall may make a Fire roll each round to try and escape.

Within the Waves

DURATION: 1 hour
AREA OF EFFECT: 25' radius
RANGE: Self

The kami can envelop those that they consider friends. This spell creates a bubble around you. You and those within the bubble may move on or through water with no movement penalties. The air within the bubble is not consumed regardless of how many people are inside. If the bubble is beneath a water surface at the duration's end, it immediately rises to the surface, then bursts.

Mastery Level 5

Part Water

DURATION: Total Concentration
AREA OF EFFECT: 100' depth, 1000' length
RANGE: Line of Sight

This powerful spell compels the kami to move aside. You can part any body of water up to the maximum area of effect. So long as you maintain your concentration, the water will remain parted. If you stop concentrating for any reason, the water rushes back together instantly. For smaller bodies of water, this might merely be an inconvenience. For larger bodies such as rivers, lakes, or even seas, this sudden closure could kill anyone within the affected area.

Power of the Ocean

MASTERY LEVEL: 5 (Casting time: 1 hour)
DURATION: Your School Rank, in weeks
AREA OF EFFECT: Target person
RANGE: Touch

Water is the element of life and vitality. Those shugenja who are beloved by the Water kami can bestow a tiny fraction of their incredible energy upon mortals. The target of this spell requires no food, drink, or rest for a number of weeks equal to your School Rank. The target may refresh his Void Points completely a number of times per day equal to your School Rank. Finally, the target heals a number of Wounds per hour equal to three times his Stamina.

When the duration of this spell expires, the target requires one full day of rest for every two days this spell was in effect. During this time, he is incapable of any strenuous action, and may only move about sluggishly. He cannot travel even by horse or palanquin. Any activity more strenuous than a short, slow walk reduces his Stamina to 1 for the next week. The target suffers one Wound Rank of damage per day every day that he does not rest.

Waves Are Ever Changing

DURATION: 1 hour
AREA OF EFFECT: Self
RANGE: Self

Water is ever-changing, and so can be those who exist in harmony with it. This spell permits you to change your physical body into a new shape. You may use this spell to take the form of any natural living creature you have personally seen. Unnatural or supernatural creatures may not be imitated with this spell, nor may intelligent beings such as Naga or humans.

This spell physically transforms you, changing your physical attributes to those of the creature you imitate while keeping all your mental attributes and abilities. You can only cast spells in the new form if it has hands to gesture and vocal cords to offer prayers.

Whirlpool

DURATION: Full Concentration plus 1 hour
AREA OF EFFECT: 50' radius
RANGE: Line of Sight

You create a powerful whirlpool in the midst of a body of water at least 300' across. The whirlpool has a 50' radius and sucks in anything within 200' of its center. Any creatures within the radius



Monks

During the early days of Rokugan, the prophet Shinsei changed the course of history in a single night, when he spent the long evening hours telling the first Emperor Hantei of his plan to defeat Fu Leng and his Shadowlands armies. Shinsei revealed many secrets to Hantei, secrets regarding the Celestial Order and the role of man in the universe. When the dawn came, the Emperor pledged Shinsei whatever he required to defeat Fu Leng. Fortunately for the Empire, the wisdom revealed in this conversation was not lost, but was dutifully recorded by Hantei's brother, the Kami Shiba.

The Tao of Shinsei grew out of Shiba's notes. He brought the scrolls back to his fledgling Phoenix Clan and surrendered them to the Tribe of Isawa. Isawa's followers studied the Tao carefully, and even the most arrogant among them could not deny its wisdom. Its secrets revolutionized the way shugenja interacted with the kami, causing the Isawa to abandon the primitive blood magic they had always used. The Tao was too important to be kept secret, and Shiba saw to it that copies went to each Great Clan.

At the time the Tao of Shinsei was written, the people of Rokugan already had a religion that predated the Kami's fall from heaven. They revered the powerful primordial beings known as Fortunes, including both the Seven Fortunes and less-powerful deities called mikokami, such as the Fortune of Wind called Kaze-no-Kami. A schism developed between these two faiths, widening quietly until the two were officially merged by Imperial edict several years later.

Individuals blessed with the ability to speak to the kami directly are relatively rare, but there is no shortage of pious men and women who desire a spiritual life. Devotees of the Fortunes and students of the Tao alike established monasteries where they could adopt an ascetic lifestyle while seeking enlightenment. These individuals are Rokugan's monks, and their massive network of temples, shrines, and monasteries that spans the Empire is governed by a body known as the Brotherhood of Shinsei. Some oversight is necessary given the sheer number of facilities controlled by the various monastic sects in Rokugan, and while the Brotherhood has no formal leader, the most respected monks around Rokugan are generally given authority by their fellow monks, whether they want it or not.

Monks occupy a tenuous position in Rokugan's social order. As a rule, they are not forthcoming about their past, and it is considered almost blasphemous to inquire. A monk has left his old life behind. The fact that some were peasants and others samurai makes interacting with them difficult, as one never knows what station should be afforded a monk. Given the uncertainty and their position as religious figures, the honorable thing to do when interacting with a monk is to treat him with respect and admiration. This mindset is common to all but the most dishonorable samurai.

While samurai feel some uncertainty when interacting with monks, the peasants simply revere them. Monks are teachers as much as anything else, and they treat all people equally. Also,

must make a Contested Water roll against you or be drawn in. Creatures within the whirlpool take 2k2 cumulative drowning damage per round (2k2 the first round, 4k4 the second, 6k6 the third, etc.). Trapped creatures may make another Contested Water roll each round to try and escape.

Mastery Level 6

Peace of the Kami

DURATION: Instantaneous
AREA OF EFFECT: Target person/creature
RANGE: Touch

The ultimate healing power of water can only be invoked by the most powerful and pious of shugenja. This spell cures all Wounds from any source and rids the target's body of all diseases and poisons. This spell may eliminate the Permanent Wound Disadvantage, although the target must expend a number of Experience Points equal to twice the Disadvantage's cost. This spell eliminates one full rank of Shadowlands Taint from the target, but it can never reduce a target's Taint below 1.0. This spell can be cast only once per day.

Rise, Water

DURATION: Full Concentration
AREA OF EFFECT: Special
RANGE: 25'

Like Summon, this prayer calls upon the Water kami to perform a service for you. The summoned kami is massive, equivalent in size to 25 cubic feet of water. This manifestation constantly rolls and surges, but keeps a vaguely humanoid shape.

The kami's manifestation may envelop targets. Such targets must succeed at a Contested Water roll against you or remain trapped and take 2k2 cumulative drowning damage per round (2k2 the first round, 4k4 the second, 6k6 the third, etc.). Trapped targets may roll each round to attempt to escape.

The manifested kami may attack at your command, rolling and keeping your Water to attack and 8k6 damage. Any opponent struck by such an attack is knocked to the ground and must spend two actions to struggle against the current to rise.

Words of the Kami

DURATION: Instantaneous
AREA OF EFFECT: 50' radius
RANGE: Self

A thousand years of exposure to a gentle current can tear down mountains, but a shugenja can channel Water's fury in a single moment. This spell is the most wrathful of all water manifestations, and brings the purifying power of Water to bear on the physical manifestation of corruption. This spell completely destroys any corrupt or trapped creatures or persons within the area of effect. Intelligent beings targeted by this spell may roll their highest Ring in a Contested Water roll against your Water + School Rank, keeping Water. If successful, the being is reduced to the Out wound level instead.

The words of the kami are not meant to be spoken lightly. So great is their power that all within 50' of you who hear them are struck deaf for 1 hour, and roll one fewer die on all actions until they have recovered from the spell's stunning effect.

many monasteries send their adherents into villages and towns to aid heimin and hinin with menial tasks.

Monks represent the entirety of Rokugan's religion, which is a surprisingly diverse, eclectic, and elaborate institution with three distinct facets. While an Imperial decree technically links two of these facets together, and the third is so widely accepted that none dispute it, the truth is that the three do not fit together particularly well. Generally speaking, the average individual, including monks, selects an aspect he finds most desirable and uses that as the basis of his devotion.

Common Qualities

Certain traditions are nearly universal among the Empire's monks. The first is the initiation process. Every applicant at a monastery is subjected to the most grueling physical labors imaginable, often for no apparent reason. This prepares the mind for a journey undertaken by the spirit.

Asceticism is extremely common. Trappings of the mortal world are a burden that weigh down the soul; they must be set aside by those who seek enlightenment. Even the most ostentatious monk in service to Daikoku, Fortune of Wealth, sets aside personal wealth in pursuit of his doctrine.

Purity of the physical self is a fundamental belief. Contaminating the body with worldly materials creates a barrier to the achievement of spiritual purity. Fasting, rigorous exercise, and consumption of only the bare essentials — usually rice and water — are typical monastic vows.

Fortunist Monks

Monks devoted to the many Fortunes are practicing the oldest aspect of Rokugani religion, one that predates the Kami's fall to earth and that has continued virtually unchanged since that time. Such monks' mannerisms and traditions diverge wildly depending upon the Fortune to whom they are devoted. Monks of Daikoku, Fortune of Wealth, encourage others to give donations to his temple, while monks of Osano-Wo, Fortune of Fire and Thunder, instead develop their martial prowess.

Fortune worship is the most popular form of religion among the peasant classes. In their mindset, their ancestors are not gazing down upon them, but instead have been reincarnated as a reward or punishment for the lives they led. The Tao is far too complex for most peasants' liking. One has little time to contemplate the great truths of the universe when one must feed a huge family while still harvesting enough to pay taxes. To farmers, the notion of a primordial being with divine power that can be entreated to intervene in mortal affairs is most appealing, as they can hope to gain the Fortunes' favor through devotion. For this reason, the lesser Fortune Inari, Fortune of Rice, is exceptionally popular.

Students of the Tao

By far the most common monastic tradition, studying the Tao is the image that first comes to mind when most consider the lifestyle of a monk. This image is not far from the truth. As the name Brotherhood of Shinsei implies, most monastic sects in Rokugan emphasize study of the Tao. Even the most adamant devotees of militant Fortunes are forced to admit, however grudgingly, that Shinsei was truly a prophet.

This is not to say that the Tao receives universal reverence.

While few dare malign it, and even its most ardent opponents grudgingly concede that it is indeed a useful signpost on the path to enlightenment, there are those who simply do not consider it to be their primary pursuit. This is most notably true among monks who were once samurai in service to the Lion Clan. The Lion emphasis on ancestor worship, together with the Kami Akodo's notorious disagreements with Shinsei, continues to influence many former Lion.

Ancestor Worship

All but the most loathsome samurai pray to their ancestors daily, and many among the lesser classes hold their revered elder family members in similar high regard. It is a rare home that does not contain at least one shrine to the owners' ancestors. Truly memorable ancestors, such as mortal founders of formally family lines like Mirumoto, Isawa, and Hiruma, are revered with such intensity and by so many adherents that they rival the Fortunes in the glory of their offerings.

Ancestor worship is the aspect of Rokugan's religion that monks have the least involvement with. A samurai who enters a monastery leaves his former life behind, including his ancestors. While some monks continue to revere ancestors after entering the monastery, most do not. Still, monks are keenly aware that ancestor spirits reach through the veil that separates the Realm of Blessed Ancestors from the mortal realm, and they respect them. For this reason, the Brotherhood maintains the majority of ancestral shrines that exist scattered around the Empire.

Playing a Monk

Monk characters do not gain Techniques as they advance in rank, nor do they gain spells. Monks cannot speak to the kami as shugenja do, but their fundamental understanding of the elemental nature of the universe allows them to accomplish incredible mystical feats. These enlightened feats are called kiho, and are the defining quality of a monk.

Monk characters use the following information during character creation:

- All Rings and Traits begin at 2.
- Instead of a Family and School Trait bonus, all monks receive +1 Void.
- Monks select a School and gain the Skills, Honor, and base ability of that school.
- Monks begin play with three Kiho. To know a Kiho, the monk's Insight Rank + Ring must be at least equal to the Mastery Level of that Kiho. Monks use the Ring associated with the Kiho for this determination (i.e., the Fire Ring for Fire Kiho, Air Ring for Air Kiho, etc.).
- All monks have Glory 2 and Status 1. A monk's Glory never changes, although they may gain Status normally.
- Additional Kiho may be purchased at character creation for a number of Character Points equal to twice the Kiho's Mastery Level.
- Upon advancing to a new Insight Rank, a monk character immediately gains 2 additional Kiho. They must meet all prerequisites to learn these Kiho.
- All monks receive the following Outfit at character creation: Bō or walking stick; coarse hakama and robe, scroll satchel with passages from the Tao; 2 zeni.



Monk Schools

As mentioned above, monk schools are very different from traditional samurai schools. They offer no Trait bonus or Rank Techniques. Rank advancement within these schools is marked solely by the acquisition of Kiho.

Each monk school represents a network of temples or, in some cases, a specific temple where the monk received his induction into monastic life. Most are affiliated with the Brotherhood of Shinsei. The following entries describe the temple or temples in question, as well as the temple's primary monastic affiliation and its mechanical information.

The Four Temples

Once, the Four Temples were among the most magnificent in all the Empire, popular attractions for travelers from nearby Otosan Uchi. When the Dark Lord Daigotsu attacked the capital city in 1159, the assault nearly ruined the Four Temples and nearby Kyuden Seppun. Kyuden Seppun has since been rebuilt, but the Brotherhood decided to relocate the Four Temples. Now, there is a temple in Dragon, Unicorn, and Crane lands, as well as one within the new capital of Toshi Ranbo. Traditionally, the senior monk of the Four Temples espouses the belief that the world can only be improved by experiencing it rather than remaining secluded from it. Four Temples monks often serve as advisors to daimyo, governors, and military leaders.

The Four Temples archetype specifically refers to four extremely large temples, but can also be applied to any temple that embraces a philosophy of interaction. Such temples are most common among the Brotherhood, but are not unheard of among the Fortune orders.

Primary Devotion: The Tao of Shinsei

Honor: 3.5

Skills: Courtier, Etiquette, Jujutsu, Meditation, Theology, any two Skills.

Technique: You roll and keep one additional die on all rolls that involve a High Skill.

The Shrine of the Seven Thunders

One of the most sacred temples in Rokugan, the Shrine of the Seven Thunders is revered by all clans. The Shrine honors not only the original Seven Thunders, but also their reincarnations from the Clan War era, including the Emperor Toturi.

The monks who attend the Shrine of the Seven Thunders are reclusive. They believe that enlightenment can only be reached through meditation, contemplation, and quiet study. They do not forsake martial training, remembering the example set by the Thunders they revere. When they reach a certain point in their training, both mental and physical, they are presented with the option to travel beyond the monastery and experience the variety of life. Those who take this opportunity frequently find it difficult, as they are grossly unequipped to handle others who are not of a monastic background.

This temple archetype can be used to represent any monastery or temple with a generally reclusive philosophy that emphasizes solitary meditation.

Primary Devotion: The Tao of Shinsei

Honor: 2.5

Skills: Athletics, Jujutsu, Lore (any), Meditation, Theology, any two Skills.

Technique: Your training focuses on a single element, and you select all your beginning Kiho from that element. You are considered one Insight Rank higher for the purposes of determining what Kiho of that element you may learn.

The Temple of Kaimetsu-uo

The monks who follow the path of Kaimetsu-uo, the Mantis Clan founder, have a very different view of their progenitor than the Mantis. The order believes that Kaimetsu-uo chose to leave the Crab despite his superior claim to the Championship out of respect for his father's wishes and a desire to avoid conflict. He embraced a life of hardship in the Islands of Silk & Spice in search of his own destiny. And he accepted wisdom from a source that most in the Empire would have distrusted: the koumori, an ancient race of wise bat-spirits from Chikushudo, the Realm of Animals.

The monks of Kaimetsu-uo do not eschew violence, but they do not initiate it. They study the path of purification, seeking to eliminate the corruptive influences the mortal realm has upon their spirits. They are prohibited from bragging or intimidation (which only further separates them from the Mantis). They are not prohibited from using weapons, but many choose instead to focus on unarmed combat, which they consider a "pure" form of combat.

There are three temples that are technically considered Temples of Kaimetsu-uo, one each in the lands of the Mantis, Crab, and Lion. Many smaller temples subscribe to the same philosophies, however, and could confer the following benefits.

Primary Devotion: The Fortunes

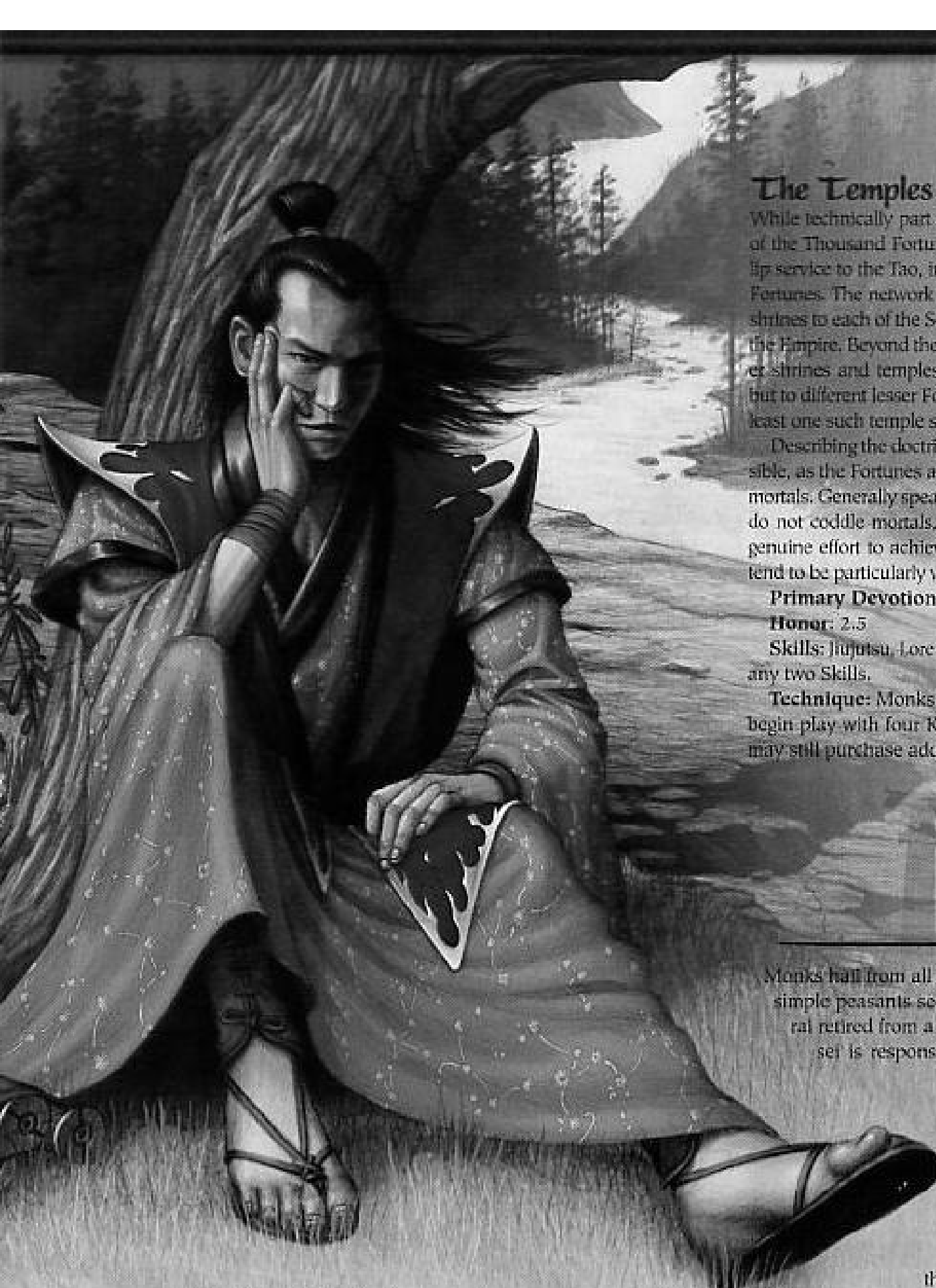
Honor: 2.5

Skills: Defense, Jujutsu, Meditation, Theology, any three Skills.

Technique: You receive the following Advantages at no cost: Balance, Bland, and Clear Thinker. These Advantages may be purchased a second time with Character Points, in which case the benefit is doubled (you receive +10 to your Test of Honor results; the TN to remember you increases by 20; the TN to lie to you increases by 20 and feinting opponents must make four Raises).

The Temple of Osano-Wo

The most martial of the monastic orders, the Order of Thunder reveres both the mortal life and the divine power of Hida Osano-Wo, the son of Hida who became Crab Champion and, upon his death, the Fortune of Fire and Thunder. The first Temple of Osano-Wo is the birthplace of the sohei, those monks who train as warriors and react to violence with violence in equal measure. While many other orders look upon this philosophy with suspicion, none can deny that Osano-Wo was indeed blessed by the heavens, and that the Thunderer smiles upon his adherents.



The Order of Thunder operates many temples, but the largest is the Temple of Osano-Wo, the first such temple created in the Empire, in the Plains of Thunder near the Shinomen Forest. It was founded by retired Crab, and while other clans are represented among the membership, the Crab continue to supply most of the temple's monks. The monks there are, perhaps predictably, somewhat worldly individuals with a keen interest in the outside world and the events that shape the course of history.

Primary Devotion: The Fortunes

Honor: 2.5

Skills: Battle, Iujutsu 2, Meditation, Theology, any two Bugei Skills.

Technique: You keep an additional die of damage when fighting unarmed. This benefit is cumulative with other increases, such as the one gained from the Stone Hands Advantage.

The Temples of the Thousand Fortunes

While technically part of the Brotherhood of Shinsei, the Temples of the Thousand Fortunes are a large network of shrines that pay lip service to the Tao, instead embracing the doctrine of individual Fortunes. The network is dominated by the seven largest temples, shrines to each of the Seven Fortunes that are scattered throughout the Empire. Beyond them, the network includes hundreds of smaller shrines and temples devoted not only to the Seven Fortunes, but to different lesser Fortunes, or mikokami. Every province has at least one such temple somewhere within its borders.

Describing the doctrine of this group of temples would be impossible, as the Fortunes are as different from one another as any two mortals. Generally speaking, these monks believe that the Fortunes do not coddle mortals, but rather support those who put forth a genuine effort to achieve enlightenment. As a result, such monks tend to be particularly well educated in the areas they pursue.

Primary Devotion: The Fortunes

Honor: 2.5

Skills: Iujutsu, Lore (History), Lore (any), Meditation, Theology, any two Skills.

Technique: Monks from the Temple of a Thousand Fortunes begin play with four Kiho rather than the standard three. They may still purchase additional Kiho with Character Points.

Kiho

Monks hail from all different levels of Rokugani society, from simple peasants seeking something more from life to samurai retired from a life of warfare. The Brotherhood of Shinsei is responsible for aiding these myriad individuals

in their personal quests. In order to prepare new initiates for the difficulty of their task, they first condition their bodies through rigorous mental tasks that turn away the unworthy.

Monks who survive the rigorous Brotherhood initiation process find themselves on one of many paths to enlightenment. For them, the initiation process was a success, preparing the body to sustain a split seeking the universe's greater truths. Those who are successful in their quest achieve a sliver of enlightenment in the form of mystical abilities known as Kiho.

The abilities demonstrated by more learned Brotherhood members can be indistinguishable from a shugenja's magic. Kiho can take the form of advanced martial arts techniques, feats of near-superhuman athleticism, or even manifestations of elemental spirits. Kiho are similar to spells in some ways, as they are each aligned with a particular element. The human body contains all five elements, and by aligning one's chi with a given element, a monk can accomplish inexplicable feats.

Kiho are by their nature difficult to quantify, but it is possible to break them down into four broad categories: martial, internal, karmic, and mystical.

Martial Kiho

The first step toward purifying the spirit lies in purifying the body, a practice embraced by virtually every monastic order. Purification of the body involves long hours of taxing physical tasks that purge impurities and hone the body into a disciplined instrument guided by the will. Unless specified otherwise in the individual entry, martial Kiho are delivered via an unarmed attack. Only one martial Kiho may be used per unarmed attack.

Many martial Kiho take the form of precise strikes against a target's nerve centers. These strikes are called atemi, which is also an emphasis of the Hand-to-hand Skill. Atemi often inflict little or no direct damage, as they are inflicted with the precise strike of a single fingertip on a nerve center. The touch that delivers an atemi strike is so light that cautious monks can even deliver them without initiating combat, or in some cases without the target even realizing he has been struck. Unfortunately for practitioners of atemi, standard Rokugani armor covers many of the major centers targeted by the art. An opponent wearing armor gains double the armor's normal bonus to his TN to Be Hit when targeted with an atemi strike.

Internal Kiho

Internal Kiho are defensive in nature. They draw upon the monk's life force to enhance his physical or mental capabilities, using elemental balance and deep meditation to achieve remarkable results. The monk bonds his chi to a particular element and channels its energy. These Kiho often grant considerable defensive abilities, but their cost is great, often having significant drawbacks. Most monks familiar with Internal Kiho use them only in the direst circumstances.

A monk may have only one Internal Kiho active at any one time. Activating an Internal Kiho or switching from one to another requires either a fifteen-minute period of meditation or the use of a single action (as measured in combat rounds) and the expenditure of a Void Point.

Kharmic Kiho

In terms of Shintao philosophy, Kharmic Kiho are perhaps the most powerful. Shintao postulates the existence of a great kharmic wheel, a universal balance that distributes to every mortal soul the reward or punishment it is due when its time in the mortal realm is finished. For those who achieve their destiny, the Realm of Blessed Ancestors awaits. Others find time to meditate on their failures in the Realm of Waiting. This primal force, often called karma, is unknowable to most humans. Those familiar with Kharmic Kiho can tap into this vast reservoir of energy and use it to achieve minor effects in the mortal world. Each has a specific trigger that must be fulfilled before the Kiho's effects take place. If this trigger does not occur, the Kiho eventually expires.

A monk may have only a single Kharmic Kiho active at any one time. Activating a Kharmic Kiho or switching from one to another requires either a fifteen-minute period of meditation or the use of a single action (as measured in combat rounds) and the expenditure of a Void Point.

Mystical Kiho

The final category of Kiho is the least understood. Mystical Kiho have few explanations, verging from the merely incredible into the realm of the supernatural, comparable only to magic in terms of

their effects and appearance. Only a soul on the path to enlightenment can truly master mystical Kiho, and even then the monk rarely has a true understanding of the Kiho's mechanism.

There are no restrictions on how many mystical Kiho can be active at one time, although few monks have sufficient Void Points to keep more than one or two active at the same time.

Non-Monks and Kiho

Kiho represent an individual's ability to properly understand his place in the universe. The Brotherhood of Shinsei are the unparalleled masters of this art, but they are not the only ones who can access this hidden power. Some people can perform Kiho instinctively, a fact that never fails to impress Brotherhood members who encounter these prodigies. Invariably, these individuals achieve high positions within the Brotherhood following their retirement.

Shugenja are the most likely non-monks to possess knowledge of Kiho. Their training as priests of the kami gives them the necessary familiarity with both the elements and the basic tenets of Shintao. Rarely, others who are neither monk nor shugenja learn Kiho. These individuals are invariably attendees of Schools that have a spiritual bent, denoted by the "Monk" descriptor following the name of their school.

To know a Kiho, these characters must have a Ring at least equal to the Mastery Level of that Kiho. Use the Ring associated with the Kiho for this determination (i.e., the Fire Ring for Fire Kiho, Air Ring for Air Kiho, etc.). Each kiho so learned costs twice the kiho's Mastery Level in Experience Points. Such a character may only learn a number of total Kiho equal to his School Ranks in schools with the Monk descriptor.



Air Kiho

Air Fist

TYPE: Martial

MASTERY: 3

Among the most basic elemental Kiho, Air Fist focuses your strikes so that they possess the wind's speed. True masters of this Kiho sometimes find smoky vapors encircling their fists. At the beginning of a combat round, you may spend a Void Point to gain a bonus to your Initiative and unarmed attack rolls for the round equal to your Air Ring. The damage on all your unarmed attacks is reduced by your Air Ring.

Flee the Darkness

TYPE: Kharmic

MASTERY: 6

It is not the place of mortals to interfere in the destiny of another. When this Kiho is activated, it steels your mind against manipulation, whether from the mystical energies of a spell or the manipulative secrets taught by courtier Techniques. When such manipulation takes place, the Kiho activates.

When the Kiho is triggered, you instantly become aware that another is attempting to manipulate your destiny in some way. If you choose, you may spend a Void Point to either double the TN for this effect (again, either a spell or a Technique), or to double the number of dice you roll to resist such an effect (assuming such a roll is called for), up to the normal maximum of ten dice. Even if you choose not to spend the Void Point, you still gain the awareness that another is attempting to alter your path.

Fortune's Breath

TYPE: Internal
MASTERY: 3

All things are pure to those who understand purity. By aligning your spirit with the spirits of Air, you can draw a deep breath of the purest, most lasting air that a mortal can withstand. This pure breath sustains you, eliminating the need to breathe for a number of minutes equal to $5 \times$ your Air Ring. At the Kiho's end, you draw another breath and are instantly restored to your normal rhythm.

Your alignment with the element of Air leaves you more susceptible to attack through magic. Any damage-dealing spell cast upon you during this Kiho's duration rolls an additional die of damage.

The Great Silence

TYPE: Mystical
MASTERY: 4

One of the strangest Kiho known by the Brotherhood of Shinsei, the Great Silence allows you to intermingle your chi with another, disrupting their ability to focus their thoughts. This Kiho is the subject of much debate, with some considering it a weapon being used against those who cannot comprehend it, and others defining it as a non-violent means of ending conflict. By making eye contact with another person within the normal movement range, you can spend a Void Point and make a Contested Air Roll against the target. If successful, you interject your chi into the target's spirit temporarily, striking him mute. This lasts for a number of minutes equal to your Air Ring, or until you spend another Void Point.

Shugenja can still cast spells they possess as Innate Abilities even when struck mute by this Kiho.

Harmony of the Mind

TYPE: Mystical
MASTERY: 6

Monks from the Brotherhood of Shinsei are known for their keen intellect and ability to instantly size up strangers, partially as a result of this analytical Kiho. Once per day, you may spend a Void Point and make an Raw Awareness Roll against another individual, with a TN equal to $10 +$ the target's Insight Rank $\times 5$. If successful, you may choose to learn the individual's lowest and highest Traits, or any martial arts styles he possesses and his level in those styles, or his School Ranks and Insight Rank.

Soul of the Four Winds

TYPE: Internal
MASTERY: 4

Developed within the past two hundred years by retired Iuchi shugenja, this Kiho brings great clarity for defensive purposes. By increasing the dominance of Air within your soul, you gain

almost preternatural reaction times, granting you a bonus to your TN to Be Hit equal to your Air Ring + Insight Rank + Defense Skill. This Kiho remains active for a maximum period of 10 minutes or until you choose to end it. During its duration, you may not take the Full Attack posture.

Stain upon the Soul

TYPE: Martial (Atemi)
MASTERY: 4

This Kiho is named for the stigma many monastic sects assign it, although some consider using it upon oneself an appropriate way to develop discipline. The Kiho causes a resonance between the Air within you and that within your opponent. After a successful atemi fingertip strike, you activate this Kiho by spending a Void Point and making a contested Air roll against your opponent. If successful, the strike agitates the Air within your opponent's body, causing excruciating pain at the nerve cluster where the strike landed. The afflicted opponent rolls \times fewer dice on all actions, where \times is half your Air Ring, rounded up. This effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to your Air Ring. This strike causes no Wounds, and may be used multiple times against a single target to impose cumulative dice penalties.

Steal the Air Dragon

TYPE: Internal
MASTERY: 5

This bizarre Kiho is a perfect example of how monks can use their inner energy to accomplish incredible feats. When activating Steal the Air Dragon, you spend a Void Point and focus the Air within you, radiating an aura of serenity. This lulls the minds of others into complacency. While this Kiho is active, so long as you do not speak, carry no weapon, and make no threatening moves, other intelligent beings simply do not notice you. You could walk through a heavily guarded room without being noticed. You are not invisible, and animals do not have the enlightened spirit necessary to be affected by this Kiho, but humans, Nezumi, Naga, or members of any other intelligent race simply do not perceive you. This Kiho lasts until you speak, take up a weapon, attack, or will the effect to end.

Techniques, spells, or Kiho that specifically allow the user to detect hidden things may be effective against this Kiho. Any individual benefiting from such an effect must make a Contested Air Roll against you. If he is successful, he notices you, and the Kiho is dispelled.

Even if you are not detected while this Kiho is active, you will be remembered if you leave any trace of your passing. Any objects you touch or move from their original location will inevitably be noticed, and the parties present at the time will suddenly remember your presence, although they will not understand why they did not notice you the first time.

So long as this Kiho is active, all your Bugei Skills and Martial Kiho function as if all your Rings, Traits, and Skills were at rank 1.

Way of the Willow

TYPE: Kharmic
MASTERY: 3

This Kiho is more a mindset than a true elemental effect. You draw upon the wind's energy to enhance your perception and reaction speed, allowing you to intercept attacks before they take place. To

secret from Way of the Willow, you must declare the Full Defense posture during combat. Any opponent who declares a Full Attack posture and who is within your normal movement range may be targeted with this Kiho. You may interrupt your opponent's Initiative acting immediately before the opponent makes his attack. You must make a Contested Air/Jujutsu roll against the opponent's Agility/Weapon Skill. If successful, you throw the opponent a number of feet equal to three times your Air Ring, inflicting normal unarmed damage in the process and canceling the opponent's attack for that round. If the opponent wins the Contested Roll, then you are considered to be in a Grapple with him and must continue it next round. You may keep Way of the Willow active until the current combat ends or until you adopt any posture other than Full Defense.

Wind's Truth

TYPE: Internal
MASTERY: 4

There are no secrets from the wind, and when a monk aligns his chi with the energies of Air, few possess the discipline needed to lie to him convincingly. While this Kiho is active, all attempts to deceive or manipulate you, whether through use of Skills, Techniques, spells, or any other effect, have their TNs increased by an amount equal to twice your Air Ring. Any time someone is speaking to you while this Kiho is active, you may spend a Void Point and make a Contested Air roll. If successful, you immediately know if the speaker is lying. You must spend a Void Point to activate this Kiho. It remains active for a number of minutes equal to five times your Air Ring.

By focusing so intently on the words of others, you forsake your physical self for a short time. Any physical actions you attempt while this Kiho is active, including all physical Skill and Trait Rolls, roll three fewer dice than normal.



Earth Kiho

Cleansing Spirit

TYPE: Internal
MASTERY: 4

The earth is vast and unspoiled. By aligning your chi, you may access a fraction of Earth's elemental purity, purging impurities. By spending a Void Point, you may attempt to purge yourself of all poisons or corruptive influences (such as alcohol or other drugs) by rolling your Earth against a TN of 25. Success immediately purges all such substances from his system, halting any effects or penalties instantly. This Kiho remains active for a number of hours equal to your Earth Ring, and during that time, any roll made to resist such effects (e.g. poison, alcohol), you add your Earth Ring to each die rolled.

There is a drawback to devoting one's spirit to protecting the body. While this Kiho is active, your mind is less shielded than usual. Attempts to influence or manipulate you, whether through spells or through use of Skills or Techniques, receive a Free Raise.

Earth Fist

TYPE: Internal
MASTERY: 3

Despite its name, this is not an aggressive Kiho, but rather a reactive one. By focusing the earth chi within your body into your hands, you can harden your skin. This Kiho is activated with a Void Point and lasts for a number of minutes equal to your Earth Ring. While this Kiho is active, you may immediately make a free Disarm attack against any opponent who attacks you and misses by 5 or more. This attack is in addition to any other attacks you would normally make during the round, and receives a Free Raise.

The drawback of this Kiho is a loss of dexterity. For anything other than an unarmed attack, your Agility is considered 1 rank lower than normal.

Embrace the Stone

TYPE: Internal
MASTERY: 5

An advanced application of one's Earth chi, this Kiho hardens your flesh with the same elemental energies that maintain the stability of mountains. By spending a Void Point, you gain a Carapace rating equal to your Earth Ring. This Kiho lasts for a number of minutes equal to your Earth Ring, or until you choose to end the effect.

While this Kiho is active, your aspect is as stark as the mountain itself. You roll three fewer dice on all non-combat rolls, including all social interactions and the use of any mental or social Traits.

Grasp the Earth Dragon

TYPE: Internal
MASTERY: 4

By drawing upon the earth's essence to enhance the body's chi, you increase your resistance to mental and physical attacks. By spending a Void Point, you cannot lose consciousness for any reason other than death. Any penalties to your TNs imposed by spells, Techniques, or Wounds suffered are reduced by an amount equal to your Insight Rank. A Rank 3 monk reduced to the Hurt Wound level, for example, would suffer +7 to all TNs rather than +10.

When drawing upon the Earth, you are encased within its stoic nature. You may not speak while the Kiho remains active. The Kiho is ended when you choose to end it, or when you lose contact with the ground for more than one combat round. Once this Kiho has been deactivated, it may not be reactivated for at least 15 minutes or unless you spend an additional Void Point to activate it (it would require two Void Points).

Harmony of the Body

TYPE: Kharmic
MASTERY: 5

Based on the simplest teachings of Shinsel, this Kiho is an outgrowth of the philosophy that the body is comprised of all five elements in balance, and illness and weakness are the result of imbalances. You may spend a Void Point to activate this Kiho. While it is active, you gain a bonus equal to your Earth Ring to all dice rolled for any Willpower or Stamina rolls. This Kiho remains active until you choose to end the effect or until you spend a Void Point for any other reason.

Heart of Stone

TYPE: Kharmic
MASTERY: 3

Many mortal souls tragically fail to meet their destinies, their kharmic cycles disrupted by the influence of the Realm of Thwarted Destiny or the machinations of mortal foes. This Kiho permits you to draw upon the certainty of destiny to shield you from harm. When activated, this Kiho takes effect any time you receive Wounds. During any round you suffer Wounds while this Kiho is active, you may choose to spend a Void Point after receiving the Wounds to immediately reduce the number of Wounds taken from any one attack by 10. You may spend multiple Void Points this way per round, to a maximum of one per attack suffered per round.

Rest, My Brother

TYPE: Martial
MASTERY: 5

Developed over decades of rigorous study by retired Kuni shugenja and tsukai-sagasu, this powerful Kiho is one of a handful of methods to purge the Shadowlands Taint. The secret is to strike the body's nerve centers in such a way that the natural purity inherent in all human beings drives out the influence of the Shadowlands Taint. This causes terrible pain to any Tainted opponent struck by the blow, and can result in a lessening of the Taint within their system.

This Kiho may be activated by spending a Void Point after any successful unarmed attack. A strike against a Tainted target rolls an additional number of damage dice equal to the target's Taint Rank. If the Kiho is activated following a strike against a target with no Taint or a creature native to the Shadowlands, there is no effect, as there is no imbalance to exacerbate. Tainted targets struck by this Kiho lose one point of Shadowlands Taint after the combat is over, assuming they survive. A target may only lose one point of Taint in this manner per week.

Root the Mountain

TYPE: Mystical
MASTERY: 6

Mysterious and misunderstood as so many Mystical Kiho are, Root the Mountain permits a monk to draw the essence of Earth into his *iten*, an energy center located just below the navel. With this elemental focus in place, the monk becomes virtually impossible to move. Root the Mountain requires a Raw Earth Roll to activate, with a TN of 20. While it is active, any attempt to move, throw, or lift you requires the attacker to succeed at a Raw Strength Roll against a TN equal to your Earth Ring \times 15. While this Kiho is active, you may make a number of unarmed attacks equal to half your Earth Ring, rounded down.

You may not move from the spot where you are rooted. You may not use the Full Defense or Full Attack postures. The Kiho's effects last for a number of rounds equal to your Earth Ring, or until you choose to dissipate the energy you have harnessed, ending the Kiho with a single action.

Walk through the Mountain

TYPE: Mystical
MASTERY: 7

Few students of Earth Kiho learn this enigmatic method of merging one's spirit with that of the earth, and even they do not claim to understand it. A monk using this Kiho may simply pass through earth and stone as if it were not there, although neither the monk nor the material become immaterial. Monks using this Kiho may walk through stone walls, stride across quagmires of viscous mud without sinking, and disappear into the hearts of mountains.

Activating this Kiho requires the expenditure of a Void Point. Once active, the Kiho remains in place for a number of minutes equal to your Earth Ring. Metals that have been processed and shaped by man, such as steel used to create weapons, are not affected by this Kiho. Using this Kiho to move through large expanses of stone or earth can be dangerous, as the interior is completely dark and you may lose your way. If lost in this manner, you may choose to keep the Kiho active by continuing to spend Void, but if the Kiho expires while you are within the stone or earth, you will suffocate almost immediately.

Way of the Earth

TYPE: Martial
MASTERY: 4

Many Kiho focus on the earth's quiet strength and serenity, but Way of the Earth is not among them. This is an expression of the earth's primal fury, the relentless force that unleashes earthquakes and avalanches.

Way of the Earth may only be used once you have entered into a grapple with an opponent, and requires a Void Point to activate. Every round that you maintain the grapple, you inflict terrible damage on your opponent. For the duration of the grapple, you roll your Earth Ring + Insight Rank for unarmed damage, keeping a number of dice equal to your Earth.



Fire Kiho

Breaking Blow

TYPE: Martial
MASTERY: 4

The perfect alignment of body and spirit can achieve wondrous things. Focusing that energy toward destruction is no less impressive, although many monastic sects consider it a blasphemous use. Monks familiar with such techniques can crack stone, shatter wood, and split the lacquered plates of a samurai's armor. You may spend a Void Point when declaring an attack roll to activate this Kiho. If the attack is successful, you roll and keep a number of extra damage dice equal to your Fire Ring. Specifically targeting an opponent's armor requires three Raises and deals only normal damage to the opponent, but destroys the armor if successful. This Kiho may not be used with a Full Attack.

If the attack is successful against an inanimate object, you then roll your Fire Ring against a TN determined by the object's material. The thickness of the material that may be broken can be doubled for every successful Raise.

Material	TN	Maximum Thickness Affected
Ceramics/Glass	5	1' thickness
Wood	10	4' thickness
Brick	15	3' thickness
Stone	20	2' thickness
Metal	25	1' thickness

Channel the Fire Dragon

TYPE: Internal
MASTERY: 3

This simple Kiho aligns a monk's chi with the element of Fire, granting him enormous protection from both heat and cold. Any damage that comes as a result of any source of fire or heat, or from cold of any sort while this Kiho is active is automatically reduced by a number of dice equal to your Insight Rank. This Kiho lasts for one hour, or until you choose to end the effect.

This Kiho demands incredible focus. You may speak only in one-word sentences while the Kiho is active, and are easily surprised (+10 TN to all Perception-based rolls).

Dance of the Flames

TYPE: Martial
MASTERY: 5

Fire spreads with incredible speed, and a monk who has mastered the Dance of the Flames moves with similar speed. By spending a Void Point, you may make two unarmed attacks per round. This effect lasts for a single round; you must spend another Void Point each round you wish to make a second attack. This is cumulative with making an additional attack using the Extra Attack combat option, although doing so still requires four Raises as normal.

Falling Star Strike

TYPE: Martial (Atemi)
MASTERY: 4

This simple yet crippling Kiho is a perfect example of the dangerous applications of atemi. You must make a successful attack against an opponent, using only the barest tip of your finger. If successful, you must spend a Void Point and make a Contested Roll using your Fire Ring against your opponent's Water Ring. If you win the Contested Roll, the target is struck blind for a number of rounds equal to your Fire Ring, as you have disrupted the energy traveling to their eyes.

As with certain other atemi strikes, the Falling Star Strike can be made outside of combat, and targets may never realize that you have struck them if you are cautious in its application.

Flame Fist

TYPE: Martial
MASTERY: 3

This basic Kiho teaches adherents that Fire has more than mere destructive potential. This Kiho uses Fire's ability to transfer energy between two beings. If you make a successful unarmed attack against an opponent, you may spend a Void Point and deal no damage. Instead, you reduce your Wound penalties by twice your Fire Ring for a number of rounds equal to your Void. The target suffers no actual Wounds, but has TN penalties equal to twice your Fire Ring for an equal duration.

Kharmic Strike

TYPE: Kharmic
MASTERY: 3

The Kharmic Strike is the most basic Kharmic Kiho, and possibly the most powerful. For a single moment, this Kiho intertwines your destiny with that of your opponent. The trigger for this Kiho is the moment that an opponent successfully strikes you. You must declare at the beginning of a round that you are attempting a Kharmic Strike, and spend a Void Point. This reduces your TN to Be Hit to 5. In the instant that an opponent strikes you, before Wounds are applied, you may immediately counterattack, striking your opponent automatically. You may make no Raises on this attack, but automatically gain one Free Raise for each full increment of 5 by which the opponent exceeded your TN to Be Hit.

You may make multiple Kharmic Strikes per round, up to a maximum equal to half your Fire Ring (rounded down). Only one Kharmic Strike may be made against an opponent per round, and the strikes may only be made against opponents who successfully strike you during the round. A Kharmic Strike does not negate any damage. Your strike and your opponent's deal damage at the same time.

Fire's Fleeting Speed

TYPE: Kharmic
MASTERY: 7

This powerful Kiho draws upon the latent energy of karma to such an extent that you move like a tongue of flame, darting from one place to another in the beat of a hummingbird's wing. By spending a Void Point, you may double your normal movement speed and add twice your Fire Ring to your TN to Be Hit for the Kiho's duration. You may add twice your Fire Ring to the total of any Athletics Roll made during the Kiho's duration. This Kiho lasts a number of rounds equal to your Fire Ring, although you may choose to end it prematurely.

Purity of Shinsei

TYPE: Mystical
MASTERY: 5

A monk who has mastered the Purity of Shinsei has gained absolute control over his inner Fire, and can summon it forth. By spending a Void Point, you can cause your skin to glow with the light of a large bonfire. The effective radius of this light is equal to 10' x your Fire Ring, and is bright enough to read or travel by even in absolute darkness. This light lasts for a number of hours equal to your Fire Ring, or until you will it to end.

Creatures with the Shadowlands Taint, possessed by the Lying Darkness, or native to the spirit realms of Gaki-do or Jigoku suffer an irrational fear when confronted with this inner radiance. While you are manifesting the Purity of Shinsei, such creatures react to you as if you possessed a Fear rating equal to your Fire Ring.

Unbalance the Mind

TYPE: Mystical
MASTERY: 4

This strange technique, also known as kuzushi, combines a physical attack with an invasion of the target's chi to result in mental and physical disorientation. This Kiho requires a suc-

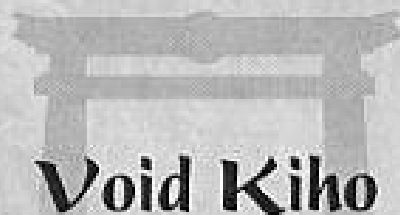
cessful unarmed attack, on which you choose to deal no damage. You generate a Free Raise as a result of this attack, and an additional Free Raise for every 5 points by which your attack surpassed the target's TN to Be Hit. Anyone who attacks the target during the next round may use these Free Raises. (If the Free Raises are used by attackers early in the round, they are not available for lower-Initiative attackers.)

Way of Flame

TYPE: Internal
MASTERY: 6

This Kiho inflates the Fire within you, causing you to radiate unnatural heat. While this Kiho is activated, you roll a number of additional dice on all unarmed attack and damage rolls equal to your Fire Ring. Flammable objects (papers, oil, tinder, etc.) that you touch while this Kiho is active may burst into flame.

At the end of every round that this Kiho is active, you suffer a number of Wounds equal to your Fire. These Wounds may not be negated in any way, and may not be healed until the Kiho has ended. The Kiho ends instantly if you are rendered unconscious, or at your command.



Void Kiho

Ancestral Guidance

TYPE: Mystical
MASTERY: 4

The Brotherhood of Shinsai does not teach its members to speak to the kami as shugenja do, and indeed could not do so even if that was their desire. Ancestors nevertheless occasionally choose to speak to monks in hopes of influencing the mortal realm.

By spending a Void Point, you may enter a deep meditative trance. While in this trance, you may speak with any spirits that are active in the area. This normally affects ancestors who are present in the area because of the presence of their descendants, but it can also establish a link between you and any restless spirits, such as beings from Toshigoku, Meldo, or Gaki-do. Once this link is established, you may ask the spirit a number of questions up to your Void Ring, although spirits are notorious for their cryptic responses.

Death Touch

TYPE: Martial (Atemi)
MASTERY: 6

The most feared of all atemi strikes, this Kiho is also known as the Dim Mak Technique. It is considered a myth by most, although a handful know its secrets. This attack is delivered with a gentle fingertip strike, one so precise that it requires three Raises to be successful. This may not be done with a Full Attack, and may not be delivered if you have any Internal or Khar-

mic Kiho active at the time. If the strike is successful, you must spend a number of Void Points equal to your opponent's Insight Rank and succeed at a Contested Void Roll. If successful, your target's fate has been sealed.

The effects of the Death Touch are devastating. The target heals Wounds as if his Stamina were one rank lower, and all healing spells and Kiho require two extra Raises in order to have any effect on him. The victim suffers Wounds equal to your Insight Rank at every sunrise and sunset, and these Wounds may not be healed by any means until the Death Touch has been removed.

There are two known means of removing the Death Touch. The first is for you to deliver the Death Touch a second time, requiring a second fingertip strike and a Raw Void Roll (TN 15). The only other known cure is use of the Chi Protection Kiho; consult it (page 259) for details.

Eight Directions Awareness

TYPE: Mystical
MASTERY: 8

This legendary Kiho can only be learned from one who has mastered it. It is unknown how this knowledge first came to the Brotherhood, but only a handful of monks in a generation master its intricacies. To activate this Kiho, you must spend a Void Point and make a Raw Void Roll. You immediately become aware of everything within 10' of you, plus an additional 10' for every 10 you rolled. This awareness is absolute, revealing to you every detail, every hidden door, every concealed object, and every living thing within the area of effect. You see, hear, smell, taste, and feel everything within the area. Darkness and physical obstructions present no barrier, although objects or persons concealed by magic require a Contested Void Roll between you and the shugenja who concealed the object.

One with All

TYPE: Karmic
MASTERY: 4

Touching the Void can be dangerous, but it can also be an act of great spiritual purity and serenity. To activate this Kiho, you must spend a Void Point. Any time that you are required to make a Skill Roll while this Kiho remains active, you may choose to take a full five rounds performing the task at hand in order to automatically succeed without rolling. This Kiho does not function on any attack rolls.

Overwhelm the Spirit

TYPE: Martial
MASTERY: 5

This Kiho represents a strength of spirit so pure that it can overwhelm others. To use this Kiho, you must make a successful unarmed attack against an opponent and release a kiai shout. After dealing normal damage, you may choose to spend any remaining Void Points you have, forcing the target to spend an equal number of Void Points. If you force the target to spend more Void Points than are currently available, the target may not recover Void Points for a number of days equal to the difference. This Kiho is only effective against targets that possess and can spend Void Points.

Self, No Self

TYPE: Internal
MASTERY: 3

Beyond mere meditation, there is a state of mind wherein all sense of self is discarded. The body, mind, and spirit become both everything and nothing as the soul touches the infinite expanse that is Void. When focused in this state, you can meditate for five minutes (Void/Meditation, TN 20) and replenish all Void Points. The detachment you feel limits you; you may not make any Raises for one hour after using this Kiho.

Touch the Void Dragon

TYPE: Internal
MASTERY: 4

This Kiho allows a monk to align his chi with that of the land around him. For the duration of this Kiho, you function as if one of your Rings and its Traits were one rank higher. Which Ring is affected depends upon the location: caves are strong in Earth, the seashore is strong in Water, the plains are strong in Air, and areas of high heat are strong in Fire. A Raw Trait Roll using Perception (TN 10) can accurately predict what Ring will be affected in a given area, but Earth and Air are by far the most common.

Merging with the elements in this manner has certain drawbacks. All kami in the area immediately become aware of you and your abilities, including any Kiho you know. While this is not particularly damaging, the kami will share this information with any shugenja in the area using the Commune spell.

If this Kiho is used in an area corrupted by the Shadowlands Taint, you are essentially inviting the Taint into your soul. You gain one point of Taint for every round you keep the Kiho active. This Kiho remains active for one hour, or until you choose to end it.

Unattunement

TYPE: Kharmic
MASTERY: 5

A powerful Kiho that many shugenja consider an abomination, Unattunement allows a monk to sever another's connection to the elements. If you are the target of a spell or Kiho while Unattunement is active, you may immediately spend a Void Point and make a Contested Roll using your Void + Insight Rank against your opponent's Ring + Insight Rank (using the Ring associated with the spell or Kiho in question). If you are successful, the target cannot use any spells or Kiho associate with that element for one full day. The severed Ring and its Traits are also reduced by 1 for the same period, to a minimum of 1. Even rest and meditation cannot restore this connection before the time elapses.

Void Fist

TYPE: Mystical
MASTERY: 3

This basic Kiho teaches monks the essential ebb and flow of Void. In declaring an unarmed attack against an opponent and making two successful Raises, you can forego dealing damage and instead gain one Void Point as a result of the strike, causing the target to lose one Void Point as well. This Kiho can only be used against targets that possess Void Points. This Kiho can only be used once per day per opponent.

Way of Void (Kukan-do)

TYPE: Mystical
MASTERY: 7

Considered by many to be a dangerous practice, Kukan-do allows a monk to fill his chi with the vast expanse of Void, then project it into an opponent, locking their spirits in a deadly embrace. To initiate the Kiho, you must make eye contact with your target and spend a Void Point, then make a Contested Void/Insight Rank Roll. If you succeed, then neither you nor your target may use any magic, Kiho, Techniques, tattoos, or other Rank-derived benefits of any sort until the Kiho's effect ceases. Skills, Advantages, Disadvantages, and Void Points continue to function as normal. This Kiho lasts until you end the effect, lose consciousness, or when the target moves out of visual range.



Water Kiho

Boundless Depths of Water

TYPE: Kharmic
MASTERY: 6

Just as there is no end to the ocean, so there is no end to the reserves of energy within the human body. Once this Kiho has been activated, it takes effect when you are reduced to the Down or Out Wound Level. You automatically spend 2 Void Points and regain a number of Wound Levels equal to your Water + Insight Rank. If you do not have 2 Void Points available, this Kiho does nothing. This Kiho will not revive you if you have taken sufficient damage to kill you.

Boundless Depths of Water is extremely taxing. If you have made use of its effects, you may take no combat actions save Full Defense for a period equal to 10 rounds minus your Water + Insight Rank. This Kiho will not activate during this refractory period.

Chi Protection

TYPE: Martial (Atemi)
MASTERY: 4

The same nerve clusters that can be used to disable opponents can be used to heal them. You may spend 10 minutes applying a series of lightning fast fingertip strikes against the target, altering the flow of Water within their system. At the end of 10 minutes, you and the target combine your Water Rings and make a Raw Ring Roll against a TN of 30, taking into account any Wound Penalties either of you possess. If successful, the target heals a number of Wound Levels equal to your Water Ring, plus one level for each successful Raise made on the mutual Water roll. (If you use this Kiho on yourself, roll twice your Water Ring against the TN of 30.)

Chi Protection may also be used to end the effects of any other atemi strike. You simply make an atemi strike against the target, spend a Void Point, and make a Contested Water Roll against whoever delivered the original atemi strike. If successful, the lingering effects end and the target is returned to normal.

If you use Chi Protection to counter the effects of a Death Touch Kiho, you must spend a preliminary week meditating and performing acupuncture treatment on the victim. You must then make a Contested Void/Insight Rank Roll against the one who used the Death Touch. If successful, the victim ceases to suffer additional damage, but continues to heal at the reduced rate (Stamina -1) until all damage from the Death Touch has been healed.

Ebb and Flow

TYPE: Kharmic
MASTERY: 3

If a body of water is reduced in one place, it rises in another. Such is the power of Ebb and Flow. If you wish to use this Kiho, you must first declare Full Defense. If an attacker fails to hit you, you may strike back during the following round, rolling an extra die on your attack roll, plus an additional extra die for every factor of 5 by which your opponent missed you. This attack can only be directed against the opponent who failed to strike you.

Freezing the Lifeblood

TYPE: Martial (Atemi)
MASTERY: 3

Among the most basic atemi Kiho, Freezing the Lifeblood teaches the means by which one can interrupt another's flow of Water. By making a fingertip strike and spending a Void Point, you can make a Contested Water Roll against your opponent. If you are successful, the target is paralyzed for the remainder of the round and for a number of subsequent rounds equal to your Insight Rank. Paralyzed opponents may make a Contested Water Roll each round to attempt to end the effect, but each such attempt requires them to expend a Void Point.

Parting the Waves

TYPE: Internal
MASTERY: 4

Striking water is futile, for it simply reforms around the strike. By spending a Void Point, you enhance your body's ability to redistribute incoming attacks, reducing the Wounds you suffer from any attack by your Water Ring. This ability applies universally, and all attacks you make during this time suffer the same penalty to damage.

Ride the Water Dragon

TYPE: Internal
MASTERY: 5

This powerful healing effect fills the user with the spirit of Water, dramatically increasing the rate at which he recovers from injuries. By spending a Void Point, you activate the Kiho and begin regaining wounds equal to your Water every minute the Kiho remains active. Unfortunately, the dominance of Water within your limbs makes you sluggish. While the Kiho is active, your movement rate is halved and all your attack rolls automatically keep the lowest dice.

Slap the Wave

TYPE: Martial
MASTERY: 3

This dramatic Kiho channels a monk's inner chi into an outward display of force, like the waves that crash upon the shore. To activate this Kiho, you spend a Void Point and shout, clapping your hands together before you. This gesture sends a shock-wave through the Water spirits in the area and disorients all who hears it, within a range equal to your Water $\times 10'$.

Anyone who hears the slap must make a Raw Water Roll against a TN equal to your Water $\times 5$. Targets who fail this roll become disoriented, subtracting a number of dice equal to half your Water (rounding down) from all actions. This effect lasts a number of rounds equal to your Water Ring. Everyone within the Kiho's range must make this roll except for you; the Kiho does not discriminate between friend and foe.

Speak to the Soul

TYPE: Mystical
MASTERY: 4

This enigmatic Kiho permits a monk to align his spirit with the elements within other objects or people. By touching a person or object and spending a Void Point, you immediately learn the target's elemental composition. You immediately know which element (Ring) is strongest, and whether the spirit of an inanimate object has been awakened (nemuranai). This also allows you to determine whether or not the object or person possesses the Shadowlands Taint or the influence of the Lying Darkness, although you must understand the distinction between those two conditions in order to make sense of what you are feeling.

Spirit of Water

TYPE: Mystical
MASTERY: 7

A definitive example of the supernatural nature of Mystical Kiho, Spirit of Water permits a monk to merge with the spirits of Water that surround all things, stepping from one place in the mortal realm and appearing elsewhere in an instant. You simply step out of view of onlookers, spend a Void Point, and instantly reappear anywhere within your previous range of vision. Neither monks nor shugenja have any notion as to where the monks that possess this Kiho disappear to, nor what happens to them in the heartbeat before they reappear. For whatever reason, this Kiho requires you to be out of view of intelligent beings, or it will not function.

Water Fist

TYPE: Martial
MASTERY: 3

Drawing upon the tide's strength, a monk can focus all his power into a single unarmed strike. You must spend a Void Point before an unarmed attack roll, hit your target successfully, and choose to deal no damage. Instead, the target is thrown back a number of feet equal to twice your Water Ring and Knocked Down.

The Shadowlands Taint

The Emerald Empire has had a formidable enemy from its inception. The Shadowlands, once a realm populated by the vast Nezumi Empire, lies to the southwest of Rokugan. Fu Leng's fall from the heavens destroyed the ratlings' cities and allowed Jigoku to extend its reach to Ningen-do. The Shadowlands now is a physical manifestation of the evil realm. It is the single greatest threat to the safety of Rokugan. The Shadowlands affects everything, and contaminates all pure objects within its reach. When a samurai walks into the Shadowlands, he threatens his very soul. Those exposed to the Shadowlands without the proper protection can contract the Shadowlands Taint, a physical manifestation of Jigoku's hold on the mortal realm.

All characters begin with a Taint Rank of 0, but this Rank increases as the character gains Shadowlands Points. Each Taint Rank is made of 10 Shadowlands Points, just like Honor, Glory, and Status. Prolonged exposure to the Shadowlands Taint causes a character to gain Shadowlands Points.

Protection

The best way to be safe from the Shadowlands Taint is to never contract it in the first place. Jade's blessed nature keeps corruption away from its bearer, absorbing the Shadowlands Taint until they turn black and soft. A single piece of jade about the size of a man's finger is enough to protect a samurai from all corruptive effects for about a week. After the week has passed, the Earth rolls start up (see "Dangers of the Shadowlands Taint," below).

The availability of jade varies drastically from era to era. Jade is readily available from the beginning of the empire, when the Great Clans began to mine it. However, following a great assault onto the Shadowlands around the year 1133, there has been an empire-wide jade shortage. For campaigns set in or after the Hidden Emperor period, daimyo can give jade only to high-ranking samurai. Others who wish to venture into the Shadowlands during this period must figure out on their own how they will protect themselves.

Dangers of the Shadowlands Taint

There are numerous ways in which a character can gain the Taint. For every day spent in the presence of the Shadowlands — be it a powerful Tainted artifact carried by the character or the Shadowlands itself — a character must make a Raw Earth roll. The TN for the roll is 5. If the character succeeds, he successfully resists the corruptive effects of the Shadowlands Taint. If he fails, he gains one die of Shadowlands Points. For every additional day spent near the corrupting presence, the TN to resist becoming Tainted increases by 5. If the character has any open, unbound wounds, the TN to resist the Taint is increased by 15 instead of 5 every day. This process continues until the character leaves the Shadowlands or no longer carries the artifact.



A character may contract the Taint by eating or drinking Tainted food; though this occurs most often in the Shadowlands itself, tricky *maho-tsukai* have been known to Taint rivers and fields of rice to sow havoc among the Rokugani. Characters who are wounded by a Tainted blade must make a Raw Earth Roll with a TN of 20; those who fail gain a die of Shadowlands Points. Those who call upon the kami inside the Shadowlands often instead summon *kansen*, the evil counterparts of the kami, which love to Taint *shugenja*.

Samurai who die in the Shadowlands often rise as zombies, attacking indiscriminately. This can be prevented if the body is burned or decapitated. The corpses of highly Tainted characters can become zombies even in normal areas.

Taint Symptoms

As a character develops the Taint, he begins to show mental and physical signs of corruption. When a person is infected with the Shadowlands Taint, his appearance and behavior subtly change. His skin turns pale, his hair becomes greasy, and he looks ill. He becomes short-tempered, quick to respond to perceived threats with violence. If unchecked, the symptoms grow worse over time and he loses more control over his actions. Finally, his Taint completely overwhelms him, turning him into a monster under *Iigoku's* control. The symptoms that curse a Tainted character are individualized, but each follows a similar course of damnation.

Magic in the Shadowlands

Using magic inside the Shadowlands is unreliable, dangerous — and often necessary. The elements themselves are warped inside the corrupted lands, and *shugenja* must be careful not to draw the corrupted spirits with their prayers.

Shugenja must make two additional Raises to successfully cast any Elemental spell in a highly Tainted area, reflecting the corrupted spirituality of Fu Leng's realm. These Raises must be made specifically to bypass the dangers of the Shadowlands, and must be added on to any other Raises the character wishes to make for benefits. *Maho* spells cast in the Shadowlands do not incur this penalty. If a *shugenja* fails to cast an elemental spell inside the Shadowlands, he gains one Shadowlands Point for every 5 full points by which his roll fell short of the TN. The *shugenja* may purposefully decide not to Raise when casting his Elemental spell; this choice automatically gives the *shugenja* 2 Shadowlands Points but gives him a better chance of successfully casting his spell. A *shugenja* who fails due to this increase may (at the GM's option) hear a *kansen* offering to complete the spell normally. If the *shugenja* agrees to the *kansen's* request, the spell succeeds, but with potential additional effects due to the *kansen's* mischief. At the very least, the *shugenja* accrues twice the normal Taint if he deals with the *kansen*.

Example: A *shugenja* in the Shadowlands is casting a spell that is ordinarily TN 20. He attempts two Raises to cast it cleanly, so the TN becomes 30, but he rolls a 21 and fails. Additionally, he gains 1 Shadowlands Point because his roll was 9 under his Target Number.

All Tainted people are kept under close watch by Imperial authorities, but are generally allowed to live until their Taint makes them too dangerous to others. The Kuni Witch Hunters and other organizations that deal with the Taint have created a system that denotes how dangerous each Tainted person is. The Kuni Witch Hunters keep an eye on all Tainted samurai, and are not hesitant to act when faced with the appropriate category. The categories are as follows. All penalties listed below are cumulative.

FIRST DEGREE — PASSIVE INFECTION

The subject has a mild level of Taint, showing no mental symptoms. There is little danger of spreading the Taint to others. The Kuni Witch Hunters do not punish these samurai, though they check on them monthly to see if they have succumbed to higher degrees of the Taint. The subject is not allowed to marry without informing the prospective spouse and family of his Shadowlands Taint. Any violation of these protocols is immediately considered a "dangerous mental symptom" — grounds for execution.

This degree generally encompasses any character who has a Taint Rank higher than his lowest Ring. (A character with a Taint Rank lower than all his Rings often experiences only mild effects, or is totally asymptomatic. He himself may not realize that he has been Tainted.) The Shadowlands Taint begins to manifest itself in nightmares. Next comes a general malaise; the character is prone to nausea, vomiting, and uncontrollable trembling. He might begin to mumble to himself without realizing it, even in inappropriate situations. These symptoms unbalance the character, keeping him from his rest and making it more likely that he will fail his Earth roll to keep the Taint in check.

The Taint begins to claim its host's body, but has not significantly changed him. Any character at this level immediately gains the Brash Disadvantage (if he did not already have it). The character also receives a +5 penalty to the TNs of all Honor Tests.

SECOND DEGREE — ACTIVE INFECTION

The subject has a moderate level of Taint, may show some mental symptoms, and could possibly spread the Taint to others. When the Kuni Witch Hunters find the subject, he is given the choice of *seppuku* or relocation to a barracks for the Damned, a unit of Tainted samurai who are thrown into combat against the Shadowlands at every opportunity. For the rest of the subject's life, he will be under the constant supervision of Kuni Witch Hunters.

This degree generally encompasses all characters who have a Taint Rank higher than two or three of their Rings. The Shadowlands Taint has begun to color everything the character feels, urging him to lash out at those closest to him. The character becomes paranoid, and is irritated by those around him. He feels he cannot trust anyone and thinks everyone else around him is secretly Tainted. He starts to see hallucinations and hears the voices of the *kansen*.

A character at this level must increase the TNs of all Willpower tests to resist dishonorable behavior by +10. The character receives another +5 penalty to all Honor Tests.

THIRD DEGREE — DEADLY INFECTION

The subject has an extreme level of Taint, shows dangerous mental symptoms, and is in immediate danger of spreading the Taint to others. The Kuni Witch Hunters immediately execute

any subjects that fall into this category. Seppuku is not an option, as these subjects are too dangerous to be given a choice. Inquisitors consider any intentional concealment of Shadowlands Taint from other individuals a "dangerous mental symptom."

This degree generally encompasses all characters who have a Taint Rank higher than four of their Rings. The Shadowlands Taint begins to show itself in extreme ways, all unique to each person. Some might choose to discard hygiene and never bathe. Some characters might exhibit extreme homicidal behavior. Some cough blood, some become extremely gaunt, and some develop long black fingernails. Tainted characters in this degree are most unpredictable and extremely dangerous.

The host must make a Willpower test against a TN of 25 to resist becoming violent in stressful situations. The host finds it difficult to behave like himself, being constantly buffeted by strong bestial instincts. The character receives another +5 penalty to all Honor Tests.

FOURTH DEGREE — EMBRACE OF THE DARK

This category includes any subjects who are possessed by demons, those who use the Taint for supernatural powers, those who practice *mafiu*, and those who worship the Dark God (even if the subject is not Tainted). The protocol is immediate death via decapitation.

This degree encompasses all those whose Taint Rank exceeds all of their Rings. For the most part, Shadowlands symptoms continue to have the same effect as before. There are generally two types of hosts in this stage of corruption: madmen and the lost. The madmen have completely lost their minds to the Taint and have become bestial; they can no longer think on their own. The Lost, on the other hand, retain their intelligence and human-like behavior; however, they have become completely devoured by the Taint and are slaves to *Jigoku*. There is no redemption for characters in this stage of corruption.

There are no modifiers for characters in this degree; for the most part these characters have become Lost to the Shadowlands. At any time the character may be subject to a Willpower test versus a TN 40 to maintain control of himself. If he fails, he loses control until the dark powers decide to give control back to the character.

Living With Taint

When a person contracts the Shadowlands Taint, he is thereafter doomed to a life of struggle and hardship. The Taint within the samurai influences his decisions, urging him to actions unbecoming of a samurai, and eventually attempts to devour his soul. The Taint twists the body, mind, and soul of the infected, and there is no cure.

Simply bearing the Shadowlands Taint changes one's behavior for the worse, introducing ties and causing a character to act in a manner unbecoming of a samurai. A Tainted character rolls one fewer die for every Rank of Taint when he makes rolls that involve interacting with others.

A Tainted character finds it increasingly difficult to control his behavior as the Taint works on his psyche. A player can control his Tainted character until his character loses his mind to *Jigoku* completely, fighting all the way.

Even if precautions are taken and the character does his best to keep the corruption bottled inside of him, the Shadowlands Taint increases its hold over time. Once a person has become Tainted, the infection surely worsens until it overwhelms its host.

The following table indicates the interval at which one's Taint increases.

INCREASING TAIN

Earth Ring	Check Interval
1	14 days/Rank
2	30 days/Rank
3	90 days/Rank
4	180 days/Rank
5	360 days/Rank
6	Earth in years/Rank

At the end of each interval, the character must make a Raw Earth Roll versus a TN of 5. If successful, the TN increases by 5 with each additional interval until the roll is failed. The TN is then reset at 5. Each time the roll is failed, the host gains an additional Shadowlands Point. If the host possesses any Shadowlands Powers, his corruption grows even more swiftly. Minor Shadowlands Powers bestow one extra point of Taint, each, per Interval. Major Shadowlands Powers bestow two extra points of Taint, each, per Interval. Greater Shadowlands Powers bestow three extra points of Taint, each, per Interval. If the host attempts to live a life devoted to calming the corruption in his soul — undergoing acupuncture, meditation, and leading a monastic lifestyle — he may roll an extra die per check, and reduce the additional Shadowlands Points given by Shadowlands Powers by one per power. If the host deviates from this lifestyle in any way, or uses his Shadowlands Powers, he immediately loses these benefits.

Days in which the corrupted character drinks Tea of Jade Petals do not count as days for each interval. It is thus possible to freeze one's Taint Rank if one is diligent in taking the tea.

Removing the Taint

Other than some special cases, there are no cures for the Shadowlands Taint. Those who become Tainted must simply cease drawing upon the strength the Taint gives them and hope that *Jigoku's* hold on them grows no stronger. Drinking Tea of Jade Petals is the most popular method of keeping the Taint at bay. The tea is harvested from specially grown lotus blossoms sprinkled with mystic jade powder in a ritual known only to the monks of the Jade Lotus. Secretly, the monks of the Jade Lotus give the names of those who purchase the tea to the Kuni Witch Hunters, who keep a careful eye on the customers.

While a character is under the effects of the tea, his Taint symptoms go into remission. The Taint cannot be detected and spells which harm the Tainted have no special effect. Shadowlands Powers may not be used while under the effects of the tea.


There are few reliable ways to remove the Shadowlands Taint. One of those ways is the application of one of Doji's Tears, *nemuranai* carried by the wife of the Doji *daimyo*. Use of Doji's Tears permanently removes the Shadowlands Taint from a samurai at the cost of his life. The ronin band called the Unbroken relies on a Technique that gradually removes the Taint from themselves by killing Shadowlands creatures. The technique drastically shortens their lifespan and those who join the Unbroken may never leave.

Reveling in the Taint: Benefits of the Shadowlands

Not all those who have contracted the Taint are willing to drink the Tea of Jade Petals, and not all those who have contracted the Taint are willing to let go of the benefits the Dark God gives them. The power of Jigoku is strong indeed, and the Shadowlands Taint has compensatory advantages that are hard to resist. Any Tainted character may roll (but not keep) a number of extra dice equal to his Taint Rank on any Strength, Agility, Stamina, or Reflexes roll at the cost of adding another Shadowlands Point to his total. The character may use this additional boost consciously or subconsciously.

For Tainted characters who wish to mingle in Rokugani society with protection, a jade sliver corrupted by the Shadowlands Taint can protect its bearer against detection and pure magic. For every such item that is carried, the TN to detect the bearer's Taint is raised by 10. Effects that would normally detect the wearer's Taint automatically require the user to make a Raw Perception Roll at TN of 15, plus 5 for every additional piece of corrupted jade carried.

After five days the corrupted jade crumbles to dust. Only one piece crumbles at a time when carried within 10' of another. A jade sliver essentially protects the character with its Taint, and thus brings more corruption upon the bearer. Any time a bearer of corrupted jade accumulates additional Taint, he gains one more point than normal. If he is carrying more than three slivers, he gains two extra points each time.



Shadowlands Powers

Those who attempt to draw upon the powers of darkness (consciously or subconsciously) are capable of great feats. Usually these feats come with an immediate price, causing strange deformities or twisting the character's psyche. These abilities are classified as Shadowlands Powers, and are divided into three groups.

Minor Shadowlands Powers

These are relatively minor abilities or simple mutations that give the character powers above the norm. A character must have at least one full Rank of Taint and spend one Experience Point or Character Point before he can acquire a Minor Shadowlands Power. The process of learning a Minor Shadowlands Power causes the character to accumulate one more point of Taint.

Major Shadowlands Powers

These abilities are more impressive than Minor Shadowlands Powers. A character must spend five Experience Points before he can acquire one of these powers. The process of learning one of these powers causes the character to accumulate two points of Taint. A character must possess at least one Minor Shadowlands Power for each Major Shadowlands Power he acquires.

Greater Shadowlands Powers

These rare and terrible powers grant the character extreme capabilities, but also carry heavy prices. A character must spend ten Experi-

ence Points before he can acquire a Greater Shadowlands Power. The process of learning one of these powers causes the character to accumulate five points of Taint. A character must possess one Major Shadowlands Power for every Greater Shadowlands Power he acquires.

A character may possess a maximum number of Shadowlands Powers up to his Insight Rank. A character who gains a new Rank of Insight may choose to learn a Shadowlands Power instead of a Rank Technique. This new power is learned with no expenditure of Experience and no increase in Taint, and does not count toward the character's maximum number of Powers.

Natural Shadowlands Creatures

Roughly one in twenty denizens of the Shadowlands possesses Shadowlands powers. These powers work as they do for Tainted characters, except that powers that cause an increase in Shadowlands Points may instead be used a number of times per day equal to the creatures' Earth, unless noted otherwise.

POWERS OF SHADOWLANDS CREATURES

Creature	Maximum Number of Powers
Minor creatures (goblins, lesser Oni)	1 Minor
Moderately powerful creatures (pennagolan, gaki)	1 Major, 1 Minor
Very powerful creatures (ogres, trolls, bog hags)	1 Greater, 1 Major, 1 Minor
Extremely powerful creatures (Oni)	GM's discretion

Deformities

Some Shadowlands Powers impose Deformities. These are special Disadvantages that cause the character to appear inhuman. Anyone who studies the character may notice Deformities by making a Perception/Investigation roll. The TN of this roll is listed with each Deformity. (For example, Deformity/15 means a Deformity with a TN 15 to detect.) If you have multiple Deformities, an observer may roll separately to notice each one.

Characters may attempt to disguise a deformity with the Acting or Disguise Skills (base TN 15). Disguising a Deformity increases the TN to notice it by 5, plus 5 for each Raise made on the Acting or Disguise check.

Scarification

Those who practice maho and those who use Shadowlands Powers that require scarification may find it difficult to hide the many cuts they must inflict upon themselves. A character receives a Deformity/25 for scarring himself in such a manner. Each time he cuts himself a number of times equal to his Earth within the span of one week, the Deformity's TN is lowered by 5. Healing the scars (with Unearthly Regeneration or Path to Inner Peace) negates this Deformity.

Tea of Jade Petals and Shadowlands Powers

All Shadowlands Powers become inactive 1-10 minutes after drinking Tea of Jade Petals and Deformities recede. The tea is frequently used by Kuni Witch Hunters to drug a dangerous Tainted individual, negating his powers and simplifying his arrest and execution.

Minor Shadowlands Powers

BLACKENED CLAWS

You may instantly extend claws of pure obsidian from the tips of your fingers. You gain one point of Taint every time you extend the claws, but there is no limit to the length of time they may remain extended. The claws have DR 3k3 and you gain a +5 Initiative bonus on the round they are extended. The Blackened Claws can harm creatures normally vulnerable only to crystal, obsidian, or jade. The Claws may be wielded using either the Tanto or the Jujutsu skill.

Drawback: After taking this power, you grow to prefer using the claws above all other weapons, and must take a Willpower roll versus a TN of 5 each round to avoid using the claws in a combat situation. Deformity/0 if the claws are extended.

BLESSING OF THE DARK ONE

You have gained an uncanny resistance to pain and damage. Your maximum Wounds on each level are increased by 1.

Drawback: Your skin is slightly rubbery and inhuman. Deformity/10 for those who touch your skin.

CHILD OF DARKNESS

You find yourself at home in the Shadowlands. Somehow, you feel an odd kinship for creatures of darkness and they return the sentiment. Natural Shadowlands creatures will not attack you unless you threaten them first. If you can communicate with them, they might obey your commands.

It may not be immediately obvious what some Shadowlands creatures consider a threat. An Oni, for example, may consider your presence in its territory a threat. This power should be used with care, and how each individual creature reacts is up to the GM.

Drawback: None. This power is unpredictable as it is.

JADE SENSE

You have a natural sense for jade, crystal, and obsidian. You instantly detect all jade and crystal within ten feet per rank of Taint you have accumulated, regardless of obstructions. This ability functions exactly as the Sense spell, with regards to jade and crystal only. This spell can sense Tea of Jade Petals, and immediately identifies it for what it is. A Cloak of Night spell or other appropriate magic blocks this power.

Drawback: None.

MASTER OF BLOOD

You are a friend of the kansen, a master of dark magic. You may reduce the number of Wounds required to cast a maho spell by your Taint Rank. Only shugenja can gain this power.

Drawback: The kansen are jealous masters. The TN of any non-maho spell you cast is raised by 10.

MASTER OF SHADOWS

You are at home in darkness, and the shadows wrap themselves around you. You may roll and keep extra dice equal to your Taint Rank on all Stealth rolls, and may attempt to vanish into the shadows even if someone is watching you. (Make a Contested Agility/Stealth Roll versus the watcher's Perception/Investigation.)

Drawback: You naturally attract deep shadows, even when there are none about. This counts as a Deformity/10 if you are in bright light, and cannot be disguised except by staying out of such light.

UNCANNY SPEED

You can move as quickly as shadows before light. You may move your (Water + Taint Rank) × 5 feet in a round, or double that if you take no other action that round. You face no penalty the round after running full speed (a normal character does; see Movement in the Book of Fire). By gaining a point of Taint, you may roll and keep a number of extra dice equal to twice your Taint Rank on your Initiative for one round.

Drawback: You are naturally fidgety and nervous. This counts as a Deformity/20, though an observer is more likely to think that you are hyperactive or addicted to drugs than Tainted. This Deformity cannot be disguised.

UNHOLY BEAUTY

Darkness can be subtle. All symptoms of your Taint are either easily concealable or mental. You receive none of the normal social penalties for being Tainted. Deformities from other Shadowlands Powers are not affected by this Power.

Drawback: None.

UNHOLY STAMINA

Your Taint keeps you eternally full of energy. You may go without rest or sleep for as long as you wish.

Drawback: Every three days you use this power causes you to develop another point of Taint, whether or not those three days are consecutive.

UNHOLY VISION

Those who possess this power find that their vision is never clouded. You can always see clearly in darkness, smoke, or when magically blinded. This power activates automatically, though you can choose not to use it.

Drawback: When relying on Unholy Vision, your eyes glow with a sinister green light. Anyone who can see you notices easily. Luckily, this power usually only functions when visibility is in question, so it tends to do a good job of hiding itself.

Major Shadowlands Powers

ABOVE THE ELEMENTS

You are eternally surrounded with dark magic, making you especially resistant to the pure magic of the kami. All non-maho spells cast by or targeting you have their TNs raised by 20. All maho cast by or targeting you receives two Free Raises. You can cancel the Free Raises against hostile maho, but cannot cancel the effect on pure magic even if you wish to be targeted.

Drawback: The spirits shy away from you. Any shugenja who casts Sense detects a great void in the kami, and can guess that something is wrong.

BESIDE THE DARKNESS

By meditating for two hours, you can force your body to temporarily metabolize your Taint. All physical symptoms of the Taint vanish while this power is in effect, though gross changes like missing limbs are not repaired. Your Taint is totally undetectable in this state, and effects that specifically harm Shadowlands creatures have no effect on you. The effects of this power wear off abruptly at sunrise.

Natural Shadowlands creatures cannot purchase this ability, with the exception of bog hags and pennagolan. Bog hags who put aside their Taint may neither use their disease-inducing ability

nor take a new skin while using this power. Pennaggolan who put aside their Taint must remain in human form, and lose their Fear and Invulnerability.

Drawback: While under the effect of this power, you cannot use any of your Shadowlands Powers, cannot use your Taint to increase your physical Traits, and cannot cast *maho* spells. Each time this power is used, you gain a point of Taint. This power cannot be canceled prematurely.

BLOOD DOMINATION

Your blood carries a powerful magic, housing many of the will-sapping attributes of the Taint. Any creature that has drunk as little as a thimbleful of your blood becomes subject to your demands. You may make a Contested Willpower roll to cause any such target to obey your every wish for a number of hours equal to your Taint Rank. If you do not command your target, the blood lingers in their system for a number of months equal to your Taint Rank until you invoke this ability. Once you begin commanding the target, you cannot end the magic prematurely to save the effect for later.

Drawing enough blood from yourself to use this power causes one Wound.

Drawback: None, though it is difficult to convince people to drink your blood. Mixing it with something else is usually a good idea. See also the above section on Scarification.

BLOOD KNOWS BLOOD

You are able to sense parts of your own body, no matter where they may be. Those who bear this power usually use blood (at least one Wound) as a tracking device, smearing a bit on their quarry and then unerringly following. There is no need to roll; the power simply works. The blood normally lingers about a week unless it is intentionally washed away. Those with more ghoulish tastes may leave longer-lasting bits of themselves (e.g. fingers).

Hair and fingernails cannot be tracked. Pain seems to be the price for this blessing. If you possess both this power and Blood Domination, you may track those who have drunk your blood.

Drawback: See the above section on Scarification.

CHOSEN OF FU LENG

Though the vast majority of undead are brainless and powerless, you have become infused with powers to aid your fight for the Dark Lord. All attempts to persuade you, change your mind, or manipulate you magically fail.

Drawback: This Power may be used only by extraordinary undead creatures. It has no other penalty.

FATHER OF LIES

When Jigoku is subtle, it is at its most dangerous. You may use your Taint to increase rolls involving mental Traits (Willpower, Perception, Awareness, and Intelligence) as well as physical Traits.

Drawback: You accumulate a point of Taint when you use this power, just as when the Taint is used to increase physical Traits. Natural Shadowlands creatures gain no Taint when using this power.

GREATER BLESSING OF THE DARK ONE

As in Blessing of the Dark One, but your maximum Wounds on each level are increased by 2. This power is cumulative with Blessing of the Dark One, so you gain 3 extra Wounds per level.

Drawback: Your skin is slightly rubbery and paler than normal. Deformity/5 for those who touch your skin or examine you closely.

TERRIBLE ARMOR

The dark power of the Taint has covered your body with a stiff, scabrous armor. You may add your Taint Rank \times 5 to your TN to Be Hit.

Drawback: The armor is fairly obvious. Deformity/0 unless it's covered up somehow, and any bit of exposed skin gives it away. This Deformity is difficult to disguise.

UNEARTHLY REGENERATION

You heal with incredible speed. Every minute you recover a number of Wounds equal to your Taint Rank. Your injuries leave no scars, a convenient ability for those who practice *maho* or scarification. You do not regenerate lost limbs or body parts, though a severed part will reattach itself if held in place for several minutes.

Drawback: Every 20 Wounds healed by this ability cause you to gain another point of Shadowlands Taint.

UNHOLY STRENGTH

You add your Taint Rank in dice to all Strength rolls, including damage rolls. You may still gain an extra point of Taint to add your Taint to your Strength, gaining an additional bonus.

Drawback: Your body has become grotesquely over-muscled from the power of dark magic. Deformity/10 to tell that something is very wrong. Even if you manage to disguise your Deformity, you still look as if you have been doing an awful lot of exercise.

Greater Shadowlands Powers

BEAST OF FU LENG

The Taint has transformed you completely into a bestial, inhuman creature. The exact details of the transformation vary.

Extra limbs: Discolored or skeletal arms sprout from your ribcage, allowing an additional Jujutsu attack per round.

Flight: Great skeletal wings with torn, leathery skin sprout from your shoulder blades. You may fly at your normal rate of movement.

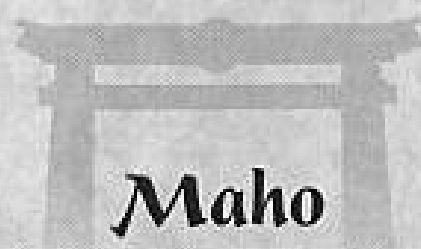
Quadruped: You are a four-legged beast from the waist down. Your Water Ring is doubled for the purposes of determining movement. This is cumulative with Uncanny Speed.

Tentacles: A mass of squirming, intestine-like tentacles erupt from your body in various places. The distraction they provide grants +5 to your TN to Be Hit. If you forego all other actions you may attack with the tentacles. This does no damage, but forces your opponent to make a Contested Strength Roll each round or be held helpless so long as you use your actions to maintain your grip.

Drawback: This power imposes a Deformity that can never be hidden or concealed. Using *Beside the Darkness* will not return you to your human form. It will be difficult to find armor that fits you unless you have it customized.

DRAWING OUT THE DARKNESS

The Shadowlands is everywhere, in everything. Some people just haven't realized it yet. Using this power requires ten minutes of concentration and constant physical contact with another living being. At the end of this time, you must make a Contested Willpower Roll against the target. If you succeed, the target permanently gains a number of Shadowlands Points equal to your Taint Rank. You may not use this ability on the same person more than once a month.



Maho

Maho is a dangerous source of power available to those willing to call upon the kansen, evil spirits of corruption. Strictly forbidden in Rokugan, maho practitioners (or "maho-tsukai") use blood — their own and that of others — to power their magic. In exchange for their power, maho-tsukai give more and more of their souls to Jigoku, perhaps even binding their names to Oni to achieve their goals. The greedy and the selfish learn maho as an easy route to power. Maho-tsukai can raise the dead, inflict curses on their opponents, and even summon powerful Oni.

Maho spells call to Jigoku, the Spirit Realm of Evil, and the omnipresent kansen are eager to serve those who wish the power of darkness. Maho requires an invocation of Jigoku's power, whether or not the caster is aware of where his energy is being sent. Each prayer, each hour spent in meditation serves only to further the dark realm's power.

Nearly anyone can learn and cast a maho spell, though training is required for all but the simplest spells. The shugenja's natural gift to speak to the kami is irrelevant; the kansen speak to anyone who is willing. Rare individuals cannot cast maho, but less than one in ten thousand is affected this way.

Drawback: Those versed in the ways of the Shadowlands — Kuni Witch Hunters, Jade Magistrates, and the like — know of this ability and swiftly enact justice upon those who use it. Only fools use this power carelessly.

FEEDING ON FLESH

When your own strength is gone, there are always others who can lend you theirs. If you kill a creature with your bare hands or natural weapons (such as Blackened Claws) you immediately heal a number of Wound Ranks equal to twice your victim's lowest Ring. Samurai killed in this manner never return as ancestors. No one is really certain where these poor souls end up, but it isn't Yomi.

Drawback: This power is not subtle. A terrible red light rises from your victim into your mouth when this power is used, and the howl of tormented souls can be heard for several yards.

OUTSIDE THE ELEMENTS

This power functions exactly as Above the Elements, except that the TNs of spells targeting you are raised by 25, and maho gains three Free Raises. Again, you can choose to disallow the Free Raises, but have no control over your resistance to normal magic. This power is cumulative with Above the Elements.

Drawback: The terrified spirits flee before you. Any shugenja who casts Sense in your presence detects a great negative vortex in the kami, and knows immediately that something is horribly wrong.

PROTECTION OF THE DARK

By drawing on this dark power, you gain one point of Taint and invulnerability for a number of hours equal to your Taint Rank.

Drawback: While you are using this power, your skin glows with a throbbing black energy. This is impossible to hide, and obviously sinister to anyone with any amount of common sense.

THY MASTER'S WILL

The power of Fu Leng's vengeance fires your every action, and even death is not a barrier to your power. Any time you are killed, you return from the dead some time later with an additional Rank of Taint. The first time this power activates, you become Undead, and are affected by everything that affects Undead. The GM determines exactly how long it takes you to recover from your death, but you always return at full strength. You retain all your abilities, Rank Techniques, Void, and control of your character (unless the increase in Taint causes you to become Lost). Technically, you are a revenant, a living soul trapped in an undead body.

Drawback: Many negative spells affect undead, and soon after your first death your

body begins to rot. The stench of death follows you ever afterward. This bestows a Deformity that is impossible to conceal.



MECHANICS

The hardest part of learning maho is gaining access to the maho scrolls. Shugenja find it easier to learn maho than other people, simply because a shugenja needs no tutor but can use the Summon spell to call the spirits of the Shadowlands. Downtrodden peasants who are discouraged by their life of servitude can learn maho by joining the Bloodspeakers, followers of the sorcerer Iuchiban.

A character must spend at least a week to learn his first maho spell, but needs only a few hours for later spells. When learning a new maho spell, the character rolls his Spellcraft (Maho) plus the relevant Ring, keeping his Ring. The TN is ten times the spell's Mastery Level.

Once the character learns his first maho spell, he may decide to gain ranks in the Maho-Tsukai Shugenja School. This School reflects the general practices and rituals of those who dabble in the dark arts and is not an actual School. A character may gain ranks in this school without the Multiple Schools advantage. A character who already has School Ranks in another School, but who then takes ranks in the Maho-Tsukai Shugenja School, acquires the Maho-Tsukai's Affinity and Deficiency, replacing any previous Affinity and Deficiency. He gains the Maho-Tsukai's Technique while retaining any previous Techniques.

To cast a maho spell, the caster must roll a number of dice equal to his corresponding Ring + Maho-Tsukai School Rank and keep a number of dice equal to the relevant Ring. The casting TN is 10 + the spell's Mastery Level × 5. The caster must also shed the blood of an intelligent being; a number of Wounds at least twice the Mastery Level of the spell must be inflicted. For spells that are simply "ELEMENT: Maho," the caster rolls Spellcraft (Maho) + Maho-Tsukai School Rank, keeping his School Rank.

Whether or not the casting was successful, a maho-tsukai gains Shadowlands Points equal to the difference between the TN of the spell (Raises Included) and the total of the roll. Remember that the caster can always choose not to keep the highest dice rolled, and increasing his Spellcraft (Maho) Skill can be an effective defense in and of itself.

A maho-tsukai does not cross off any spell slots when he casts a maho spell. The energy required to cast the spell prob-

ably did not come from the caster; whether or not it did, the lost energy is represented in the form of Wounds, either to a victim or to the caster himself.

The ever-present threat of the Shadowlands Taint is the biggest problem for a maho-tsukai. Jigoku inevitably destroys its servants, and careless maho-tsukai have lost their minds or permanently warped their bodies by gaining too much Taint. Despite this fear, many maho-tsukai tend to cast their spells in the Shadowlands or near highly Tainted areas. A highly Tainted area grants two Free Raises on a maho casting. Conversely, a maho-tsukai must make two additional Raises to successfully cast maho in an area sanctified or purified by the presence of the blessed realms of Yomi or Tengoku. These areas include famous temples to the Seven Fortunes and highly spiritual areas such as the Lion Hall of Ancestors.



Maho Spells

Mastery Level 1**Reduce**

ELEMENT: Maho, Air
DURATION: Instantaneous
AREA OF EFFECT: 1 Target
RANGE: Touch

This spell is used to remove the Shadowlands Taint from important individuals to make sure that they do not lose their minds to the powers of Jigoku. The caster must concentrate for an hour in the target's presence, identifying the corruptive elements in the target's body. The caster must then offer as sacrifice a living, sentient being. The spell lowers the Taint of the target by one point. This spell will not remove the target's last Shadowlands Point, and will not lower the target's Taint Rank.

The caster must inflict four Wounds instead of two to convince the kansen to power this spell. The sacrifice must be made before the casting roll.

Unlike other maho spells, this spell does not give the caster any Shadowlands points. This spell may be cast only once per week. Even with the offerings given to them, the kansen do not like loosening their claim on a soul, and will not do so often.

Special Raises: The caster may Raise twice and offer four more sacrifices to remove another Shadowlands Point.

Bleeding

ELEMENT: Maho, Air
DURATION: Permanent
AREA OF EFFECT: 1 Target
RANGE: 25'

The target begins to bleed at a rate of one Wound per round until he takes an action to bind his wound.

Special Raises: The caster may Raise once to choose an additional target.

The Maho-Tsukai "Shugenja School"

Benefit: +1 Intelligence

Skills: Calligraphy, Defense, Meditation, Spellcraft (Maho) 2, Stealth (Spellcasting), any one Low Skill.

Affinity/Deficiency: The maho-tsukai is considered to have an Affinity for Maho spells and a Deficiency in all non-Maho spells.

Beginning Honor: 0.5

Outfit: Tanto; kimono and sandals, scroll satchel, traveling pack; 1 koku

Technique: Maho-tsukai become adept at casting the foul spells charged with the power of Jigoku. While casting maho, the caster may gain a bonus to the roll of any amount that does not exceed his rank in Spellcraft (Maho). Instead, if he wishes to, he may subtract a similar amount from a successful maho spellcasting roll.

Blood Rite

ELEMENT: Maho, Water
DURATION: Permanent (healing)/1 hour (augmentation)
AREA OF EFFECT: One target
RANGE: Touch

Blood is the element that fuels the power of maho. With this simplest of rituals, the caster can convert large amounts of blood into dark energy, which can then be used to heal the caster or others, or to temporarily increase his physical abilities. For every 10 Wounds sacrificed, the caster may either heal himself or a companion by 5 Wounds, or increase a physical Trait (Agility, Reflexes, Stamina, or Strength) by one point for the duration of the spell.

Curse of Weakness

ELEMENT: Maho, Air
DURATION: Permanent
AREA OF EFFECT: One target
RANGE: Touch

This spell inflicts a general weakness on the target. Maho saps the victim's body, mind, and spirit. All TNs for that target are increased by +2. Only one Curse of Weakness can affect a character at once.

Special Raises: The caster may Raise once to increase the TN penalty by +1.

Drain Soul

ELEMENT: Maho, Earth
DURATION: 5 minutes
AREA OF EFFECT: One target
RANGE: 10'

The target's Stamina is reduced by one for the duration of the spell. Multiple applications of this spell are cumulative. This spell will not lower a target's Stamina below one.

Special Raises: The caster may Raise once to choose an additional target.

Summon Undead Champion

ELEMENT: Maho, Earth
DURATION: Permanent
AREA OF EFFECT: Dead Body
RANGE: Touch

This spell creates a zombie (if used on a newly dead creature) or a skeleton. The creature follows the caster's mental commands as long as the caster remains within 25' of it. If the caster allows the undead creature to leave his radius of control, it begins to kill everything in sight. The caster can use other spells to control the creature once it has left his radius, but it is otherwise not obligated to obey the caster even if it reenters the 25' radius. No one may control more Undead Champions with this spell than his Insight Rank.

Special Raises: The caster may Raise once to affect an additional target. Statistics for undead can be found in the Book of the Void (page 283).

Mastery Level 2

Caress of Fu Leng

ELEMENT: Maho, Earth
DURATION: Instantaneous
AREA OF EFFECT: One target
RANGE: 35'

The ultimate corruption of the elements, this loathsome spell summons a tiny fraction of Jigoku's power to corrupt that which is beyond the Shadowlands Taint: jade. This powerful summoning is the only known way to corrupt jade other than by long periods of exposure to the Shadowlands. The jade itself undergoes a rapid deterioration, becoming soft and black until it resembles obsidian. Malicious maho-tsukai often cast this spell upon scouting parties deep within the Shadowlands. This spell corrupts all normal jade held by an individual targeted by the spell. Special jade — jade from the realm of Tengoku, or powerful jade nemuranai — is immune to the effects of this spell.

Choking Death

ELEMENT: Maho, Water
DURATION: Two weeks
AREA OF EFFECT: One target
RANGE: 10'

The target contracts pneumonia. If the target is kept warm and comfortable for the next two weeks, he has only a 20% chance of dying from the illness; otherwise he has a 50% chance of dying in that time. If someone with the Medicine Skill takes care of him, the caretaker may make a Intelligence/Medicine Roll (TN 15) to reduce the chance of death by 10%. Each Raise made by the caretaker on his Medicine roll reduces the chance of death by an additional 5%. Unlike natural pneumonia, this spell is not contagious, but otherwise is exactly the same.

Special Raises: The caster may Raise three times to increase the chance of death by 10%.

Control Undead

ELEMENT: Maho, Earth
DURATION: 1 hour
AREA OF EFFECT: One undead target
RANGE: 100'

The caster seizes control of one undead target. It obeys his mental commands without question or regard for its own safety. If the undead creature is already being controlled, the caster must make a Contested Willpower Roll against the current controller; the winner of the Contested Roll gains control of the undead creature.

Special Raises: The caster may Raise once to take control of an additional target.

Darkness Rising

ELEMENT: Maho, Earth
DURATION: Permanent
AREA OF EFFECT: One target
RANGE: 15'

The caster can summon a kansens and bind it to another character. The kansens effect on a person is subtle yet profound; at nearly every choice, the kansens advises impulsive and dangerous acts. A courtier afflicted with a kansens may find that he speaks his mind even in inappropriate circumstances, or a bushi may become more likely to perceive everything as a challenge to his honor.

Once per day, the GM may have the kansens attempt to compel a specific reaction. If the target fails a Raw Willpower Roll against a TN of 25, the kansens takes control of the character's action. Any shugenja that casts Sense (Earth) in the area may be able to notice the kansens's presence. The target is unaware of the kansens influencing his decisions and thinks nothing is amiss. However, the first time the target successfully resists the effects of the kansens, he becomes aware of the curse placed upon him and recalls all the dishonorable deeds he has conducted under the kansens's influence.

Special Raises: The caster may Raise three times to increase the Willpower TN by 5.

Dark Wings

ELEMENT: Maho, Air
DURATION: 5 minutes
AREA OF EFFECT: Self
RANGE: Self

A useful means of escape or rapid travel, this spell causes leathery black wings to erupt from the caster's back. These sturdy wings resemble those of the monsters found in the depths of the Shadowlands. They can be used to strike opponents with two Raises on a Jujutsu roll, inflicting normal unarmed damage. The caster can fly at a speed equal to twice his normal movement rate for the duration of the spell.

Fear

ELEMENT: Maho, Air
DURATION: One month
AREA OF EFFECT: One target
RANGE: 10'

The target becomes absolutely terrified of something of the caster's choosing. The item of the target's phobia is considered to have a Fear rating of 4 only to the target. The caster may not choose something that is vital for life — such as air — but such things as rice, dogs, or houses are fair game.

The Unblinking Eye

ELEMENT: Maho, Earth
DURATION: Permanent
AREA OF EFFECT: 1 Target
RANGE: 10'

The target of this spell is completely unable to sleep. Until the spell is dispelled or its effects negated, the target suffers the penalties of going without sleep found on page 160.

Mastery Level 3

Corruption of the Elements

ELEMENT: Maho, See below
DURATION: Permanent
AREA OF EFFECT: 100'
RANGE: Touch

One of the four elements is hideously corrupted within the radius of the spell. Anyone attempting to cast a spell of the corrupted element within the radius has the spell's TN increased by 25. This effect can be undone with cleansing rituals.

This spell is cast as a spell of whichever Element is affected. It is learned as a spell of the caster's highest Ring.

Essence of Undeath

ELEMENT: Maho, Earth
DURATION: Permanent
AREA OF EFFECT: One target
RANGE: Touch

This ritual requires 10 hours to cast. This spell must be cast on a living willing target that must be present for the entire ritual. Once successfully cast, this spell turns the target into a rotting undead creature. He remains self-aware and is able to freely use any of his Skills or spells (although any spell he casts is considered mahos and must follow the rules for casting mahos). The creatures created by this spell are considered to be controlled by themselves for the purposes of resisting the control of other mahos-tsukai.

The undead target is immune to the effects of the Shadowlands Taint, but cannot spend Void Points. Additionally, undead do not generally have blood to power mahos spells.

Obsidian Armor

ELEMENT: Maho, Earth
DURATION: 10 rounds
AREA OF EFFECT: 1 target
RANGE: Touch

This spell summons a powerful aura of corruption that surrounds one person. This aura disrupts Taint-targeting spells or special abilities that are directed at the target. For example, a Jade Strike that targeted someone encased in Obsidian Armor would first encounter the Armor and destroy it without reaching the target. This spell effectively counters the first Taint-seeking spell or special ability directed at the Armor wearer. Later such attacks affect the target normally.

Stealing Breath

ELEMENT: Maho, Air
DURATION: Total Concentration
AREA OF EFFECT: 1 Target
RANGE: 25'

One of the target's lungs collapses. The target cannot breathe and must follow the rules for going without air on page 160.

Mastery Level 4

Curse

ELEMENT: Maho, Fire
 DURATION: Permanent
 AREA OF EFFECT: See below
 RANGE: Line of Sight

Curses require a sympathetic component: a lock of hair, an ounce of blood, etc. It is not enough to gain a piece of the subject of the curse; the caster must gain something that contains spiritual energy of the target.

If the curse is successful, the caster must keep physical contact with the item at all times. If the caster ever loses the item, the curse is broken. This is the only way to break a curse.

Possible curses:

- The Scorpion samurai finds that everyone trusts every word he says
- The Dragon who cannot speak anything but incomprehensible babble
- The Crab who cannot tell the truth
- The Unicorn who cannot sleep under the same roof twice
- The Lion who cannot whisper
- The Phoenix who finds casting spells irresistible, and must do so at every occasion
- The Crane who cannot be quiet
- The samurai who brings death and bad fortune to all those who rely on him

Gift of the Maker

ELEMENT: Maho, Void
 DURATION: 1 day
 AREA OF EFFECT: Personal
 RANGE: Personal

Often cast as an act of desperation or madness, Gift of the Maker calls out to the Dark Lord for his blessing and power. The caster does indeed receive Fu Leng's power, but at a terrible cost. This spell takes one hour to cast, but then allows the caster to manifest one Major Shadowlands Power for a day. The power fades after a day, but its listed Deformities remain permanently.

Summon Greater Kansen

ELEMENT: Maho, Air
 DURATION: 1 hour
 AREA OF EFFECT: 1 kansen
 RANGE: 10'

Over the round a misty specter-like creature appears before the caster. For the duration of this spell it follows his mental commands without question or regard for its own safety. Statistics for Greater Kansen can be found in the Book of the Void.

Summon Oni

ELEMENT: Maho, Water
 DURATION: Permanent
 AREA OF EFFECT: 1 Oni
 RANGE: 100 Miles

The most powerful Oni within the range of this spell is instantly teleported to any location within 100' of the caster. This spell does not grant any control over the Oni. The caster may choose the direction that the Oni is facing when it appears. The caster must make a Contested Willpower Roll against the Oni; if the Oni succeeds, the Oni becomes aware who cast the spell. Beware, most Oni do not like being moved against their will...

Statistics of sample Oni can be found in the Book of the Void.

The Touch of Jigoku

ELEMENT: Maho, Void
 DURATION: Permanent
 AREA OF EFFECT: 100'
 RANGE: Touch

This spell is simple and brutally effective. The land around the caster changes steadily until it becomes as heavily Tainted as any part of the Shadowlands. This spell is very effective but highly noticeable; any maho-tsukai that casts this spell must be ready to handle the wave of investigators who will inevitably come to destroy him.

Mastery Level 5

Harvest of Death

ELEMENT: Maho, Earth
 DURATION: 5 minutes
 AREA OF EFFECT: Self
 RANGE: Touch

The caster calls forth the power of Jigoku in an unsubtle fashion. This spell is not favored by some maho-tsukai, as it tends to kill many and corrupt few, but it is certainly useful to battle-ready cultists. For the duration of the spell, anyone the caster touches must succeed on a Raw Earth Roll (TN 25) or take 5k5 Wounds.

The caster may maintain the spell, allowing him to continue touching and attacking for an extra time equal to the initial duration, by repaying the initial Wound cost. Wounds that Harvest of Death inflicts cannot be used to maintain the spell. Maintaining the spell does not incur new Taint.



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BOOK OF VOID



Yortomo Kakuei crouched on the stony outcropping, staring down at the city below.

"The place seems silent," Mashi Chiyeko said softly, moving to kneel beside him.

He grunted noncommittally at the shugenja maiden. "So it would seem," he said, "but that is to be expected. These are Phoenix lands. Our enemies are secure within their territory. They believe that Yasunabu's ship fled the coast shortly after his arrest. They think that we are thieves and pirates with no loyalty to one another, and their foolishness is our greatest weapon against them. They have no reason to suspect that we have remained here."

"That does not mean that they are unprepared," came a harsh whisper. A lean scout in dark green armor melted out of the shadows, an elegantly curved bow clutched in one hand. "Quite the opposite, I have discovered."

"What have you learned, Yoshida?" Kakuei asked, turning to the Tsuruchi.

"Nothing that will improve your mood, I fear, sama. Captain Yasunabu is being held in the magistrate's quarters of the village below. He is being interrogated regarding the Mantis Clan's involvement in the riots in the City of Remembrance, but I fear the magistrates have already made up their minds. The eta torturer has already been summoned, and soon the Phoenix will have the confession they seek."

"Ridiculous!" Kakuei said with a sneer. "I warned the captain this would happen. He came here to convince the Phoenix of our innocence but instead now he will be punished for our perceived crimes. These Isawa are fools. Where is their vaunted pacifism and understanding now?"

"No," Chiyeko said softly. "It is not that simple. The City of Remembrance has suffered much; these Phoenix have no reason to trust. Our hidden enemies have seized upon this. The Isawa have been manipulated, as we have. There is another force at work here, one that wishes to keep our clans at war."

"And who would do such a thing?" Yoshida asked.

"I do not know," Chiyeko answered, bowing her head. "I wish I did. Until we know for sure, I see only violence in the future for both Mantis and Phoenix."

"Then such theories are meaningless," Yoshida retorted. "All that matters is what we know, and I know our lord has been imprisoned by the Phoenix. It is only a matter of time before he is forced to confess to a crime he did not commit and is, in turn, executed for it."

"Then our course is clear," Kakuei said. "We must rescue him."

"Do you know how many Shiba samurai guard the City of Remembrance?" Yoshida asked, eyes widening. "Do you realize how difficult it will be to enter the magistrate's jail and slip the captain from beneath their notice? In all likelihood we will be killed."

Kakuei rose, steadying the blades on his hip. "And if we remain here, our lord and captain will be murdered while we do nothing. Our lives or our honor. That is our choice, my friends."

"That is no choice at all," Yoshida said with a sneer. "I am with you, Kakuei. I can show you a way past the walls. Perhaps Chiyeko's magic can distract the guards."

"Are you with us, Chiyeko?" Kakuei asked.

"We cannot let our master die," she replied. "And perhaps he might know who manipulated our clans into this conflict. We must save him."

Kakuei nodded. He felt much more confident with the support of his two closest allies. Perhaps this was not so impossible after all.

"But what will we do if the Phoenix attempt to stop us?" she asked, looking up at him with wide green eyes.

Kakuei returned her look with a grim frown. "Pray for their sake that they do not," he said.

Game Mastering Tips

Gaijin's First Samurai

A player's first Rokugani character will most likely not be the crowning glory of the Clan. Without a little direction from the Game Master, a character could end up either completely useless (a Crane courtier with nothing but combat Skills) or utterly wrong for the setting.

Rokugan lends itself to a structured approach to character creation; in many worlds, you can give your character very little in the way of background. In the Empire, however, a beginning PC must know his Clan and family (if any), and be aware of the situations surrounding them. Nearly everyone in Rokugan has an allegiance, and the key to a well-run campaign is playing those factions against each other. Where the players fit in is up to you and them as the game progresses.

Keep in mind that the setting of Rokugan has great potential for games of intrigue. When your players begin to make their characters, encourage them to pick Skills that may seem a bit useless to a non-courtier. Skills like Etiquette are invaluable in a court setting, and eventually any notable samurai will have to survive in such a situation. These skills come into play in everyday Rokugani life more often than one might think.

The First Party

Okay, so you've finally familiarized yourself with the rules and setting for Rokugan, and your players have heroically crafted their first characters. When you all finally get together, your party looks like this:

Gary is playing Mirumoto Kikaze, a Dragon samurai with duelist-heavy skills. Jared is playing Matsu Fujiaki, a Lion samurai with an exceptional archery talent. Michelle has created Iuchi Kejiko, a Unicorn shugenja focused on healing magic. And Casey is playing Dokatu, an unaligned Ninja.

At a first glance, the characters are well done, with the players even taking an extra step to make sure they've created something other than "Generic Clan Samurai #5." Things look fine until you realize that in your campaign, the Dragon and Lion Clans are currently at war. Why would two samurai from warring Clans be traveling together without hacking one another to pieces? On top of that, Michelle's character hates the Lion Clan, since dishonorable Lions pillaged her grandfather's estates. As if that were not enough, you suddenly realize Casey didn't bother to hide the fact he's a ninja. Once Kikaze, Fujiaki, and Kejiko finish trying to kill one another, they're probably going to be compelled to cut Dokatu to tiny ribbons.

There are two ways to handle this situation — adding a bit more story to the characters' background, or retooling the characters to fall within certain guidelines for your campaign. If the players wish to keep their characters (and most will), a little creative background explanation can smooth out the problems between characters. Perhaps Mirumoto Kikaze and Matsu Fujiaki were childhood friends before the war began. Now traveling

together, they are working to find a way to end the war between their two Clans. Not only does this solve the problem of the two samurai possibly killing one another, it adds a nice sub-plot to the existing campaign. As for the vengeful Iuchi Kejiko, it could be that she simply wants to avenge her ancestor by punishing those that attacked her grandfather's holdings in such a shameful manner. When Kejiko finally comes face to face with those she seeks to bring down, Jared's character will be in an interesting position, to be sure. Will he follow his loyalty to his Clan, or adhere to the tenets of honor?

As for the ninja, Dokatu, a cover story will be necessary — no honorable member of the samurai caste would travel in the company of a ninja. However, if Dokatu were perhaps a dishonored member of the Mirumoto family, hired by the same Lion that Kejiko seeks to destroy, another layer of character interaction and sub-plots has been created. Will Dokatu treat Kikaze as an irritating daily reminder of how he has failed, or will Dokatu look upon Kikaze as something he aspires to be again? What if Dokatu becomes smitten with Kejiko? How will he react when his Lion employer suddenly orders the death of the Unicorn maiden?

Not all GMs will be given a situation that can easily be turned into a well-formed party, or even a party that has any business traveling together at all. The other way to handle this situation is to set down some guidelines for character generation before the campaign begins. This method is generally best used when the GM tells the players before they actually make the characters. Constantly rejecting characters will lead them to either make characters too quickly, putting no real thought into each one, or just frustrate them. Guidelines do not have to be complex. Simple rules such as "All characters must have an Iaijutsu Skill of at least 2" can be used to bring together several characters at the beginning of a tournament. It is then easy enough to create a reason that could cause all the characters to wish to work together.

Another method that works well is the magistrate campaign. If the characters are Imperial Magistrates, they will more readily discard the prejudices of their Clans — after all, even the Great Houses of Rokugan must bow to the authority of the Imperial Throne. Their orders are considered to hold the weight of the Emperor's word. This is a common and simple approach, as it is the easiest way to bring characters of widely different backgrounds together. A similar approach is to make the characters members of the Imperial Legions. In a war-heavy campaign, being representatives of the Emperor's personal army will give the PCs several unique opportunities and experiences.

Finally, if you have a specific sort of campaign in mind, it may be best to lay out somewhat strict rules for character creation before your players start hammering out their samurai. If you have the intention of having the characters hunt down maho-tsukai as one of their main goals, you don't want your players to create a bunch of courtiers with no knowledge of magic. Campaigns with very specific goals in mind will require a few guidelines to keep things running smoothly. In the example of a maho-hunting campaign, your guidelines could be:

- At least one shugenja from the Crab Clan
- At least two characters with Lore (Maho) 3 or Spellcraft 3
- No more than two bushi

even stricter guidelines could be:

- One Crab Shugenja, with Lore (Maho) 3 or Spellcraft 3
- One Crab Bushi
- Two Dragon Shugenja, with Lore (Maho) 3 or Spellcraft 3
- One Dragon Bushi

Of course, the extreme form of this sort of character control is simply rolling up the characters yourself and allowing the players to choose from the stack. While this can be good for an introductory game or used as a way to give players a break from characters that may be getting a little old, players almost always want to make their own characters.

As with all campaigns, it's usually best to make sure your players are comfortable with whatever rules you set down before diving in. People aren't going to care if an Oni has possessed the Kitsuki lord if they didn't get to play the characters that they wanted.

Maintaining a Campaign

More daunting than the formidable tasks of helping players create characters and then helping them work together is the job of keeping them interested. This section isn't about being a good GM in general, only tips on how a Rokugan campaign can differ from almost every other setting out there.

INTRIGUE

Many times in the history of Rokugan, there are no fewer than six factions vying for position in the Empire. Shortly after the Ki-Rin Clan (later to become the Unicorn) left Rokugan, the Six Clans struggled to both define their place in Rokugan and place themselves in a position of favor with the Hantei Emperors. On the other end of the scale, shortly after the kidnapping of Emperor Toturi the First, there were countless forces at work against one another. The Eight Great Clans were at war, the Living Darkness was finally acting in earnest against the Empire, the forces of the Shadowlands sought to destroy the Crab in the Shadowlands, the Naga had attacked the Dragon, and even the gentle Brotherhood of Shinsei had been drawn into the conflicts surrounding Rokugan.

While these conflicts usually could be defined by open fighting, many of the subtler moves between these powers happened in quieter plots. Above all else, Rokugan is defined by its culture of etiquette. A messenger bearing papers of covert alliance between two families on opposite ends of the Empire can be more deadly than two hundred Akodo samurai. Accusations of dishonor, poisoned tea, false promises, and forced alliances can be far more interesting than simply commanding a legion of soldiers to charge headlong into a war. Imagine placing your characters in the position of that messenger traveling across the Empire, trying to reach another daimyo, bearing an offer of alliance from one's lord. Certainly enemies of the character's family or the family they were trying to reach would much sooner see them dead than successful.

And what if, when the characters reach their lord's would-be ally, they find out their enemy had already made an alliance with the lord whose guests they now were? So long as the characters tend to believe everything isn't as simple as it looks, the Empire will be a much richer world to game in.

HONOR AND DUTY

Even those who are without a shred of honor are usually aware of what it is, and what to expect from those who hold it in high regard. Simply put, the Empire concerns itself far more with questions

of "law vs. disorder" than "good vs. evil". Samurai are expected to behave according to the Emperor's law, no matter how wrong their actions may seem to those of us accustomed to more freedom. The daimyo who did not collect taxes from a few farms in order to let them live better will be dealt with far more severely than the daimyo who allowed some farmers to starve in order to meet his taxes.

This is not to say the culture of Rokugan is a cruel one; compassion is one of the Seven Virtues, after all. Most daimyo wish to rule according to Imperial law while maintaining the happiness of their people. In a western setting, the hero is naturally the loner, the one who fights against the status quo and wins. However, the drama of a setting like Rokugan comes when a samurai must compromise her personal views in order to follow the edicts of her lord.

To put it simply, the drama of Rokugan ultimately becomes tragedy — war, loss, betrayal, and sacrifice cannot be avoided. Even those who triumph over these forces are often haunted by them. A classic example is the samurai who secretly falls in love with an enemy of his Clan, and eventually becomes responsible for that enemy's death. The must maintain a stoic face while his lord awards him honor, gifts, and titles for an action he wishes he had never taken.

Though the players should not have to face such situations constantly, the conflict between emotion and duty should not be alien to the players (and characters).

ETIQUETTE

Rokugani citizens define themselves by the thing that sets them apart from "barbarians" and animals — manners. Even the most despicable Scorpion samurai knows better than to behave like a rude child in mixed company. If there are none present who can admonish the Scorpion for his behavior, rest assured that someone up the chain of command will hear about it and rectify the situation. The Empire simply does not tolerate those who do not take the time to act civilized, and punishments can range from a simple public humiliation to the dishonorable execution of the offender and revocation of noble status and name from his immediate family.

Those who feel the need to be offensive to one another are allowed to do so in accepted ways — cunning insults are a favorite in noble court, and those who cannot respond in kind or at least honorably handle the situation stand to suffer a great blow to their reputation. Enemy commanders meeting in the field rarely disrespect each other by childishly taunting. Accepted forms of boasting, or recounting (in a calm manner) the misdeeds of an opponent or his ancestors, are usual precursors to battle. If there is a situation where one can be seen doing something (and remember, Rokugani believe that ancestors, spirits, and the Celestial Heavens are always watching), there is some form of protocol to do it.

The Rokugani value those who can maintain a calm demeanor at all times over those who bluster with curses and boasts. Sometimes a character must keep his cool while his enemies sit two feet away, taking tea at the same table with him. This goes back to the matter of honor and duty, as there will be times that the edicts of civility will overrule the character doing something that he'd much rather do.

OTHER DIFFERENCES

A campaign in Rokugan has many small differences from other fantasy settings, and situations come up that rarely arise in other games.

Magic and Magic Items: Magic is a holy art in Rokugan. Those who are able to shape the forces of the Five Elements are priests and holy men, and their gift is rare and precious. Natu-

rally, those who abuse it are scorned by other shugenja. While the forces of magic are everywhere, with spirits in each rock, leaf, breeze, and drop of water, actual displays of magical power are unusual. Peasants usually drop to their knees in wonder at the sight of a shugenja casting the simplest spell, knowing that the shugenja is in tune with the forces that move the world.

In addition, items of a strong magical nature are almost impossible to come by. The vaults of the Great Clans usually home to five or six powerful relics created, discovered, or given to members of the Clan at some point in history. The Celestial Swords of the Clans are the most famous examples of these, carrying the power of the Fortune of Steel, and usually in the possession of the Clan's Champion.

Foreigners: Visitors to Rokugan are extremely rare. The Rokugani consider themselves the favored children of Sun and Moon, so outsiders are treated as inferiors at best. Even those who prove themselves to the samurai of Rokugan never find their standing in society on par with a native. The only general exception to this rule is the Clan of the Unicorn. Being accustomed to the ways of outsiders allows them to be quite a bit more welcoming than any others in Rokugan. Foreigners who offend a samurai usually end up dead, or imprisoned at best.

Equipment and Money: In Rokugan, most characters have a master. As a samurai devotes his entire being to his lord, his lord is in turn expected to clothe, shelter, and equip the samurai. Repairing and replacing armor, food, clothes, a steed, or other bit of equipment is a matter of course. Of course, samurai who abuse this privilege may be assigned to far less dangerous tasks, to allow the lord to allocate his koku to samurai more capable of caring for their possessions. A samurai's katana is a special case: a family sword can never be truly replaced. In the event that a samurai's sword is broken or lost, a replacement will usually be made (although a samurai whose blade was broken because he simply did not care for it may never get another blade from his master), but the matter is taken far more seriously than the replacement of a piece of armor or even a fine war-horse.

The exception to this rule is the ronin, who has no master. A ronin is responsible for his own items and money, and thus will generally possess items far inferior to those granted a samurai by his lord.

Nobility: PCs are nobles, in one form or another. In most cases, even ronin had a master and family at one point, or were the child of a samurai. Even if the character does not own land or have a group of vassals (and most won't), he is still a member of the ruling class of Rokugan, with its responsibilities and privileges. A samurai can demand almost anything he requires from a peasant: shelter, food, or assistance. Of course, too much demanding may attract the attention of the peasant's master, something the samurai may not want. On the other side of this coin, as a member of the noble class, a samurai must respect those who outrank him, and most likely has a lord keeping tabs on him.

Samurai are also expected to be educated as nobles are, with the main exception being the Clan of the Crab. The Crab fight a constant war, and do not have as much time to spend educating their children. Though most Crab samurai can read, write, and function in society, they rarely care about such skills beyond their application to martial life. For other Clans, being able to cut someone into tiny pieces is fine, but those who can do nothing else are usually scorned as barbarians.

Monks are not technically samurai, but should also work to maintain their status as intelligent, kind characters. They are priests, after all, and holy men that even samurai turn to for guidance and wisdom.

Creatures and Non-Player Characters

Non-player characters (NPCs) in Rokugan can be divided into two broad categories, creatures and humans. The defining differences are the presence of Void and general treatment by society. "Creatures" range from simple rabbits to prowling goblins to the curious Nezumi. Even though the Naga have been recognized as allies of the Empire and the Nezumi have gained a small measure of acceptance in some parts of Rokugan, a player is equally likely to find a rampaging Oni or ratling adventurer in the middle of a town or city. Chances are that these two "visitors" will be treated with the same level of acceptance.

For ease of reference, human NPCs are listed together, and creatures are listed together and grouped by location (such as forests, or the Shadowlands). This does not imply such NPCs can only be found in these locations, but they are most likely to be found there. Just as a lost bear cub can become the subject of an amusing story passed down through a family, so can a samurai or troll wandering into or out of the Shadowlands become a cautionary tale.



Creature Rules

CARAPACE

Some creatures shrug off powerful blows, making them more dangerous than they would otherwise be. This could be due to a thick hide, or merely because physical wounds do not affect the creature (such as Mizu no Oni, the corrupted demon of elemental water). Carapace can also apply to nonliving targets, such as stone walls, that have a natural resistance to damage.

Carapace is scaled from 1 to 10, representing the amount of damage a creature ignores. Whenever a creature is dealt damage, the number of dice rolled for damage is reduced by the creature's Carapace rating, to a minimum of 1. This reduction is calculated before the roll, so if an attack would cause more than ten dice of damage (which would normally be converted into dice kept), Carapace lowers the total dice rolled before the ten dice limit is imposed. If a creature's Carapace rating is 5 or more ranks higher than the number of damage dice normally rolled, it takes no damage from that attack.

Carapace can sometimes be circumvented. This may be due to a weakness in the protection represented by the Carapace, or in the case of many Shadowlands beasts, a vulnerability to a material that ignores the supernatural nature of the Carapace. A Carapace's vulnerability, if any, is listed in parentheses after the Carapace rating. For example, a hard-shelled Oni that is vulnerable to jade would have "Carapace 3 (except jade)." Attacks that take advantage of the vulnerability — in this case, a weapon made of jade — drop no dice due to Carapace.

FEAR

Even in a land as fantastic as Rokugan, not everyone can be prepared for every bizarre encounter. Brave samurai test their will against things that threaten to dull their minds with dread. The Fear mechanic represents the effect of something that could cause a character to hesitate, or even paralyze him. Fear is usually radiated by creatures, though certain magical effects also create Fear. A GM could determine that a particular situation or scene could generate a Fear effect, though this should be reserved for only the most horrifying situations (such as walking in on a ritual sacrifice).

Fear effects are scaled from 0 to 10. When a character encounters something that generates Fear, he may opt to run, though this is generally dishonorable. If the character chooses to confront the Fear's source in some way, he must make a Willpower roll at a TN equal to five times the Fear rating. Each die gains a bonus equal to the character's Honor Rank. If the character fails the TN by 15 or more, he flees as quickly as possible from the source of the Fear. If the character fails the roll by less than this, he may choose to confront the situation, but all dice he rolls for Skill checks are lowered by the Fear rating and he cannot spend Void. This penalty stays in effect until the source of the Fear is removed or fled from.

When faced with multiple Fear effects at once, the character must roll against the highest-ranking one. If the character succeeds in his Fear roll, he need not ever roll against that source of Fear again unless the Fear ranking increases.

INVULNERABILITY

Like Carapace, Invulnerability denotes resistance to damage, but to a far greater degree. Creatures with Invulnerability take no damage from mundane sources, though they are still subject any other effect of being struck — an Invulnerable troll would take no damage from an attack that would knock him down, but he would still fall over. Invulnerability is by default vulnerable to any sort of supernatural source of damage, such as blessed weapons, magical effects, and the like. Like Carapace, Invulnerability notes any effect that bypasses it in parenthesis next to it, but it may also denote Invulnerability to any sort of effect that might normally ignore Invulnerability (such as mutant goblin that is Invulnerable normally as well as Invulnerable to all fire, magical or otherwise).

Creatures

NORMAL CREATURES

This section details creatures that are mundane in nature and have unremarkable, animal intelligence.

APE

Air: 1	Earth: 2 Stamina: 3	Fire: 2	Water: 2 Strength: 3
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Rolls When Attacking: 4k2

Rolls For Damage: 4k2

TN to Be Hit: 20

Wounds Per Wound Level: 8

Apes are the largest primates in Rokugan, with the males standing up to six feet tall, having an arm spread of eight feet and weighing 400 pounds or better. Females average just over half the size of males. Apes forage during the day in densely vegetated hillsides, and live in troops of 10 to 20 with one dominant male. When a group is confronted, the dominant male beats his chest and hoots in an attempt to scare off the enemy. If intruders persist, the ape does not hesitate to protect his troop, and other males will likely join the fight. Apes are most commonly found in the lands of the Mantis, but infrequently appear in the southern coast regions in the mountain areas.

BADGER

Air: 1	Earth: 2	Fire: 1	Water: 2
Reflexes: 2		Agility: 2	

Rolls When Attacking: 3k2	Rolls For Damage: 3k2
TN to Be Hit: 15	Wounds Per Wound Level: 4

Special: A badger that has lost more than two full Wound Ranks attempts to flee if it can, savagely attacking anything near it.

Common badgers are forest animals, preferring to live their lives hunting grubs and roots beneath ancient trees. They are omnivorous, and eat small mice and other rodents. When angered, the badger makes threatening hisses and motions while moving to escape. Badgers are common in every major forested area in Rokugan.

BEAR

Air: 2	Earth: 4	Fire: 1	Water: 2
		Agility: 4	Strength: 6

Rolls When Attacking: 4k3	Rolls For Damage: 6k2
TN to Be Hit: 20	Wounds Per Wound Level: 10

Special: Carapace 1. A bear that has lost more than two Wound Ranks rolls and keeps an additional die on attack and damage, representing its frenzied state. Gains a Free Raise when attempting Knockdown or Grapple attacks.

There are several varieties of bear across the Empire, but the most common is the black forest bear found mostly in the Shinomen Forest or in mountainous regions near water, such as the Phoenix coast. All bears are extremely territorial and defend their homes violently without provocation. Trespassers are chased beyond the bear's home boundaries just to make sure they are driven off completely. Unless encountered as a group with a female and one or two cubs, bears are solitary by nature.

Left alone, bears are generally inactive and do not instigate violence towards anything outside their territories. In rare cases, bears have been known to acquire the taste for human flesh. Such bears must be hunted down and destroyed in order to keep them from slaughtering any peasants or samurai they smell.

Black bears can climb trees to pursue trespassers. Brown bears are less common and tend to adopt caves as their homes. Much more aggressive than the black bear, a brown bear usually attempts to knock a tree down, shaking its quarry out of the tree's branches, instead of climbing it. A standing bear is about six feet tall and weighs 500 lbs.

BOAR

Air: 1	Earth: 3	Fire: 1	Water: 2
Reflexes: 2		Agility: 3	Strength: 3

Rolls When Attacking: 3k2	Rolls For Damage: 3k3
TN to Be Hit: 15	Wounds Per Wound Level: 7

Special: Boars may charge, moving twice their normal movement to strike an enemy and roll two additional dice for damage. Their TN to Be Hit is lowered by 5 while charging.

Boars, or wild pigs, are highly aggressive and omnivorous. Fiercely territorial, boars are easily capable of disemboweling even a heavily armored bushi. The mouth of a boar is lined with widely spaced, sharp teeth perfect for tearing meat from bones, and its fearsome tusks are seven inches long.

Boars travel in herds of 1-3 adults and usually twice that number of young, which are non-combatative. Boars attack with their tusks, attempting to overrun and impale their targets when they have room to do so. Boars are found in a great many places, avoiding arid or extreme climates.

CONSTRICTOR SNAKE

Air: 1-2	Earth: 1-4	Fire: 1-3	Water: 1-4
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Attack: 2k2	Damage: 1k1
TN to Be Hit: 10	Wounds Per Wound Level: 5

Special: Gains +15 TN to Be Hit and +3k1 to attack rolls in water. Grappling attack and damage rolls are increased by two rolled and kept dice. Statistics vary greatly with size — ranging from 10 to 30 feet in length and lower to higher stats accordingly.

Constrictors are the largest snakes native to Rokugan and live in the dense foliage of a jungle or forest area. The rare constrictors are generally found only at the edges of the Shadowlands, in the deepest parts of the Shinomen Forest, or the dark jungles on the Islands of Silk and Spice. They have coils strong enough to crush a man's arm and some carry poison that paralyzes an opponent. The largest constrictor snakes are capable of unhinging their jaws and swallowing an adult dog or small child whole.

Constrictors attack when threatened or if they think they can make an easy meal out of something. Most constrictors blend in easily with their surroundings, and some even attack by dropping from trees and wrapping around a victim's throat and torso.

DOG

Air: 1	Earth: 2	Fire: 2	Water: 2
Reflexes: 3		Agility: 3	Perception: 4

Rolls When Attacking: 3k3	Rolls For Damage: 1k1
TN to Be Hit: 20	Wounds Per Wound Level: 7

Special: A dog attempts to flee a fight as quickly as possible once it loses a Wound Rank. Movement is calculated as if its Water Ring is 2 higher.

Feral dogs are rare in Rokugan, and are much more aggressive than their domestic counterparts. While easily domesticated at youth, feral adult dogs are nearly impossible to train and are generally killed when encountered. Once trained, dogs are fiercely loyal to their masters even unto death.

A dog's statistics may vary by breed and age, but some are bred specifically for battle. War dogs are almost exclusively trained by the Moto family, and have higher physical traits and more Wounds. Some of the more impressive Moto War Dogs are the equal of a trained bushi in combat.

FOX

Air: 1	Earth: 1	Fire: 1	Water: 1
Reflexes: 5			Perception: 3

Rolls When Attacking: 2k2	Rolls For Damage: 2k1
TN to Be Hit: 25	Wounds Per Wound Level: 5

Special: Always flees when attacked; attempting to track a fox adds +15 to the TN.

The common red-tailed fox is a frequent sight in Rokugan's hills and forests. Living on a steady diet of rodents and other small creatures, foxes frequent the Kitsune lands in particular, hiding in the lush forests of Kitsune Mori and living among the magical Kitsune spirits of that place. Foxes are swift creatures — faster than horses — and use their speed and cunning to keep themselves safe. It is illegal to kill a fox within Kitsune Mori, and considered extremely bad luck to kill one elsewhere.

OX

Air: 2	Earth: 2	Fire: 1	Water: 2
Reflexes: 3	Stamina: 5	Agility: 3	Strength: 5

Rolls When Attacking: 4k3	Rolls For Damage: 6k3
TN to Be Hit: 20	Wounds Per Wound Level: 10

Special: An ox that loses two or more Wound Ranks madly attacks anything near it.

The ox inhabits hilly forests and rugged terrain, and is the largest bovine in Rokugan. Occasionally called a gaur, the ox is known for its sturdy ruggedness and tenacity. A bull ox can weigh as much as 1800 pounds. By nature, the ox is shy and timid, but because of its massive size it effectively defends itself from most predators. Like most cattle, oxen have an acute sense of smell, while their eyesight and hearing are relatively poor.

RAPTOR

Air: 2	Earth: 2	Fire: 2	Water: 2
		Agility: 3	Perception: 4

Rolls When Attacking: 5k3	Rolls For Damage: 4k2
TN to Be Hit: 25	Wounds Per Wound Level: 6

Special: After losing three Wound Ranks, the bird can no longer fly and its TN to Be Hit drops by 20.

Raptors, or hunting birds, come in three major types in Rokugan — eagles, falcons, and hawks. Eagles are the largest of this group, while falcons and hawks tend to be smaller but more aggressive. Eagles are the largest raptors in Rokugan, measuring as long as seven feet from wingtip to wingtip. Their coloration is brown and gold, with occasional patches of white or black. Eagles mate for life, and a paired couple may have as many as three young in one nest. Falcons and hawks are often trained as hunting birds, capitalizing on their instinct and predatory nature.

STAG

Air: 1	Earth: 2	Fire: 1	Water: 2
Reflexes: 5	Stamina: 3	Agility: 3	

Rolls When Attacking: 2k2	Rolls For Damage: 4k2
TN to Be Hit: 25	Wounds Per Wound Level: 7

Stags and other deer are widely distributed throughout Rokugan's eastern forests and high mountain areas. Mature males generally stay apart from the main herd, congregating only during mating season. These creatures can be found anywhere from the sea coast up to an altitude of 8,000 feet. They feed on grass, especially greener grass near water, and various wild fruits. Herds usually consist of fewer than six animals, most of which are females and young. Adult males establish territories during the mating season, where they are joined by female herds for short periods. Gestation is about seven months. The stag generally attacks with antlers and hooves, and a large rack of antlers may weigh as much as 40 pounds.

TIGER

Air: 2	Earth: 4	Fire: 2	Water: 5
Reflexes: 4		Agility: 4	

Rolls When Attacking: 5k4	Rolls For Damage: 6k2
TN to Be Hit: 20	Wounds Per Wound Level: 10

Special: Tigers will flee after losing three or more Wound Ranks.

The tiger is one of Rokugan's most dangerous creatures. It inhabits a wide variety of habitats, from rain forests to grass plains to coastal swamps. The tiger's wide stripes provide it camouflage, and both the males and females generally live alone. They guard their territory fiercely, only allowing another tiger access during the mating season. Tigers can litter up to three times a year, with two to four cubs per litter.

WOLF

Air: 1	Earth: 3	Fire: 2	Water: 3
Reflexes: 3		Agility: 4	Perception: 4

Rolls When Attacking: 4k3	Rolls For Damage: 5k2
TN to Be Hit: 15	Wounds Per Wound Level: 6

Wolves are common to the forested hills and lonely mountain peaks of Rokugan's wilderness. They roam in packs of 1–10 adults, with about one cub or young wolf per adult. They subsist on deer, hare, and other game. Wolves are territorial, but shy from humans and are afraid of fire. Only when hungry and desperate do wolves attack humans. In cold months, wolves subsist on mice and small rodents.

The most common tactic wolves employ against larger prey is harrying. A pack of wolves surround and pursue their prey, nipping at its heels until it succumbs to fatigue. Death comes quickly, as the pack falls upon the downed prey.

INTELLIGENT CREATURES

The following creatures naturally possess human-level intelligence. This does not include possessed creatures or creatures enhanced by magic or supernatural means.

NEZUMI

Air: 1	Earth: 2	Fire: 3	Water: 2
Reflexes: 4	Stamina: 3		Perception: 4

Rolls When Attacking: 3k2	Rolls For Damage: 3k2
TN to Be Hit: 20	Wounds Per Wound Level: 6

Special: Variable equipment.

A race of bipedal rodents, the Nezumi, or "Ratlings," once boasted a sprawling empire in what is now the Shadowlands. It was shattered by the fall of Fu Leng and the corruption that emerged from the Festering Pit, and is now barely remembered even by the Nezumi themselves. Ratlings are immune to the Shadowlands Taint, and thus many Nezumi tribes make their home in Fu Leng's realm. Ironically, it is safer for them there than in the Empire, where many humans execute them on the spot or hunt them down if made aware of a Ratling "infestation." As with Rokugan's Clans, members of different Nezumi tribes exhibit significant cultural and physical differences. The Nezumi usually have only crude weapons that they can scavenge or steal, and flee from any fight that seems to be going against them. Generally, only when the tribe as a whole is threatened or their young are in danger will a Nezumi stand and fight against the odds.

KENKU

Air: 3	Earth: 4	Fire: 2	Water: 2
			Strength: 4

Rolls When Attacking: 4k2	Rolls For Damage: 6k2
TN to Be Hit: 15	Wounds Per Wound Level: 6

Special: Carapace 1. Kenku fly twice their normal movement speed. All Kenku may cast an illusion on themselves once per day to either appear as a human or become invisible, this lasts for an hour. Some Kenku are spellcasters; treat them as Soshi Shugenja.

A race of intelligent human-sized birds with arms, the Kenku rarely interact with others. Kenku are mysterious, mischievous, and unpredictable. They have been known as patrons of great heroes, and as incorrigible destructive pranksters. Kenku are usually solitary; if they have any civilization to speak of, they keep it a secret from mankind.

ZOKUJIN

Air: 3	Earth: 5	Fire: 4	Water: 4
Reflexes: 5			

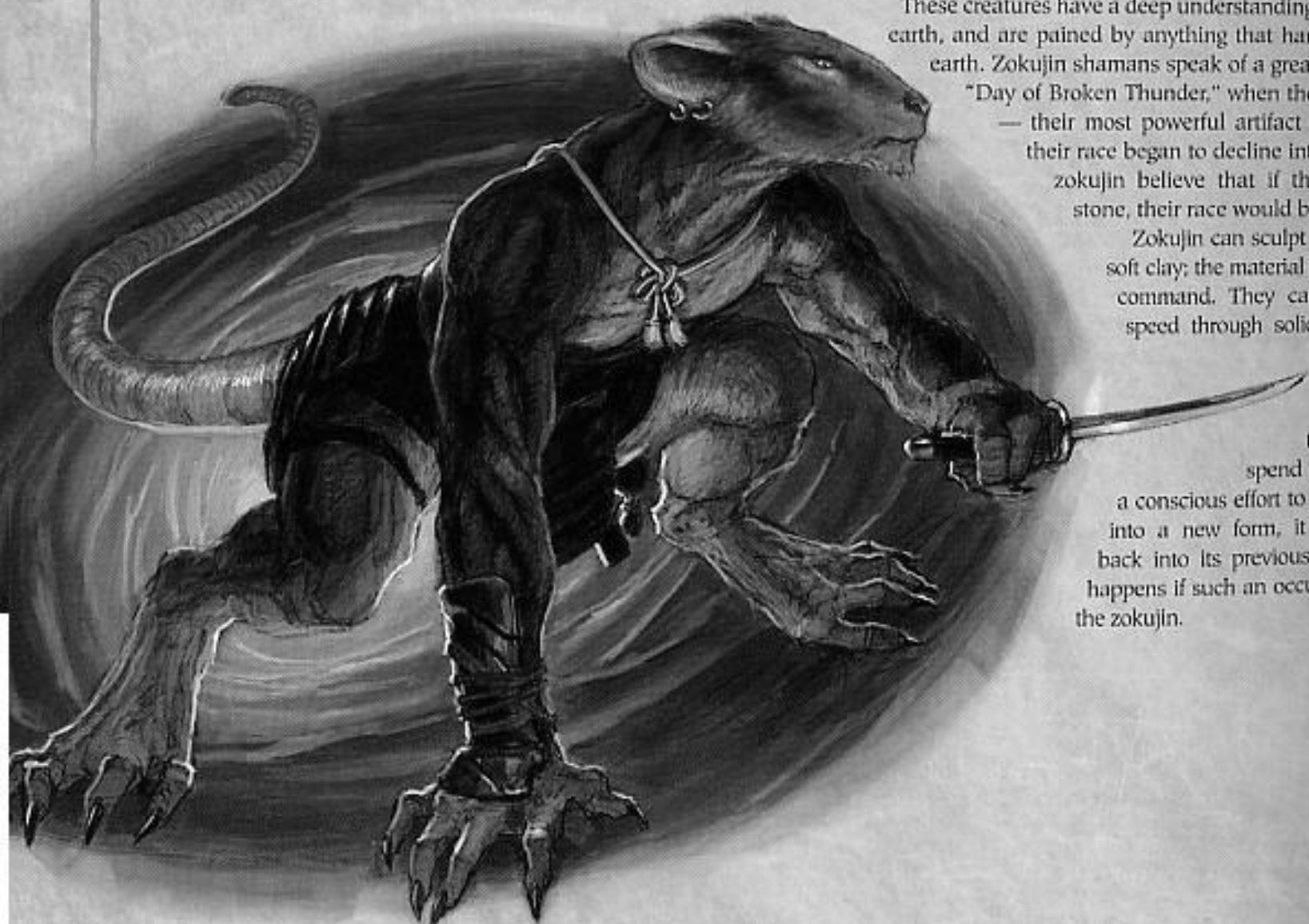
Rolls When Attacking: 6k4	Rolls For Damage: 4k1
TN to Be Hit: 25	Wounds Per Wound Level: 10

Special: Carapace 5 against stone or metal weapons. Many have spellcasting abilities as if they were Tamori Shugenja.

Zokujin are the living embodiment of patience. They live for a long, long time and are invulnerable to most weapons, so they see little reason to be belligerent. By their way of thinking, most things have a way of working themselves out in the end.

These creatures have a deep understanding of the magic of the earth, and are pained by anything that harms or corrupts the earth. Zokujin shamans speak of a great tragedy called the "Day of Broken Thunder," when the Bloodwhite Stone — their most powerful artifact — was stolen and their race began to decline into barbarism. Some zokujin believe that if they could find this stone, their race would be great once more.

Zokujin can sculpt metal and steel like soft clay; the material simply parts at their command. They can move at normal speed through solid stone and metal, and ignore metal or stone armor when attacking. If the zokujin does not spend a full round making a conscious effort to hold stone or metal into a new form, it immediately melts back into its previous shape. This never happens if such an occurrence would harm the zokujin.



SHADOWLANDS CREATURES

The following beasts are native to the Shadowlands. They have varying levels of intelligence, but all possess the Shadowlands Taint innately. This section does not include creatures that are Tainted by the Shadowlands but not fully under its influence, nor does it include the Lost — humans born in the Shadowlands or completely under its sway.

Any corrupted creatures of the Shadowlands (including human characters who have become Lost) possess ranks of the Shadowlands Taint. Unlike those who are merely Tainted (see rules for the Shadowlands Taint on page 261), creatures who have fallen completely under the Taint's sway no longer gain more Taint by remaining in the Shadowlands or by using maho. Only the direct intervention of Fu Leng or a dramatic increase in a creature's connection to Jigoku itself can increase a Shadowlands creature's Taint rank.

BOG HAG

Air: 2	Earth: 3	Fire: 2	Water: 2
Reflexes: 3			

Rolls When Attacking: 4k2	Rolls For Damage: 2k2
TN to Be Hit: 20	Wounds Per Wound Level: 6
Shadowlands Taint: 5	

Special: Carapace 1. If a Bog Hag inflicts Wounds on an opponent with her claws, the opponent has a 2 in 10 chance of catching a disease. The disease is permanent until treated by a healer or shugenja's healing magic, and causes boils, blisters, and a loss of one rank of Stamina per week.

A bog hag's natural form is that of a loathsome green crone with sharp nails and jagged teeth. It thrives by stealing the skin of human victims, especially those of beautiful young women. It wears such a skin like a suit, and can even masquerade as a recent victim for short periods of time.

GOBLIN

Air: 1	Earth: 2	Fire: 2	Water: 1
Reflexes: 3			

Rolls When Attacking: 3k2	Rolls For Damage: 2k2
TN to Be Hit: 10	Wounds Per Wound Level: 6
Shadowlands Taint: 2	

Goblins are found throughout the Shadowlands. These unsavory creatures populate every region of the Corrupted Lands, from the desolate plains to the stinking, waterlogged swamps. They are exceptionally hardy and adaptable — their survival depends on it, since they are too weak to fight over territory with any other native of the Shadowlands.

GOBLIN SHAMAN

Air: 1	Earth: 3	Fire: 2	Water: 2
Reflexes: 3			

Rolls When Attacking: 3k2	Rolls For Damage: 2k2
TN to Be Hit: 10	Wounds Per Wound Level: 7
Shadowlands Taint: 3	

Special: Goblins practice a primitive form of magic that resembles maho, as well as practicing actual maho. They use the maho rules on page 268. Goblin shamans are usually School Rank 1.

Goblins aren't very good at magic, lacking the focus and discipline that makes most maho-tsukai (or any spellcaster) effective. Every time a goblin shaman attempts a spell, increase his Target Number by at least 5, or by 10 if he's trying to do something complicated at the same time — like walk, or remember what he's aiming at.

GOBLIN WARMONGER

Air: 1	Earth: 3	Fire: 3	Water: 2
Reflexes: 3			

Rolls When Attacking: 5k3	Rolls For Damage: 5k2
TN to Be Hit: 15	Wounds Per Wound Level: 8
Shadowlands Taint: 4	

Special: May be equipped with armor.

Goblin warmongers are bigger and smarter than their counterparts. They are clever enough to figure out how to put on the armor and swing the swords left by dead bushi. When goblins raid Crab castles, the Warmongers always lead the way.

KANSEN, MINOR

Air: 3	Earth: 2	Fire: 3	Water: 2
	Willpower: 4		Perception: 3

Rolls When Attacking: 4k3	Rolls For Damage: 4k2
TN to Be Hit: 20	Wounds Per Wound Level: 5
Shadowlands Taint: 5	

Special: Invulnerability (except Crystal, Jade), Fear 1. Minor Kansen know up to 4 Maho spells and cast them as if they were shugenja with a School Rank of 2.

KANSEN, GREATER

Air: 4	Earth: 3	Fire: 4	Water: 3
	Willpower: 4		Perception: 4

Rolls When Attacking: 6k4	Rolls For Damage: 5k3
TN to Be Hit: 25	Wounds Per Wound Level: 7
Shadowlands Taint: 8	

Special: Invulnerability (except Jade), Fear 3. Greater Kansen know up to 10 Maho spells and cast them as if they were shugenja with a School Rank of 4.

Kansen are corrupted elemental spirits that have been touched by Jigoku. Like kami, they typically act unseen except when called upon by a spellcaster. Unlike their pure counterparts, they are far more likely to make their presence known when annoyed, or even bored. In the Shadowlands, kansen tend to single out shugenja and other holy figures, goading them into calling upon the corrupt magic of Jigoku. Failing that, they manipulate the environment around such a character in order to hinder his journey and call more powerful Shadowlands creatures into the area. Minor kansen know they are usually no match for an angry shugenja, and try to keep their harassment subtle. Greater kansen are far more confident in their ability to overpower someone who does not fall prey to their trickery — thankfully, they are rare even in the Shadowlands, although they become more frequent as one draws nearer to the Festering Pit of Fu Leng. Kansen are far more likely to harass foes with indirect means than direct confrontation.

Outside the Shadowlands, greater kansen are virtually non-existent, and the presence of a minor kansen is usually the result of a novice in the ways of maho attempting a spell or ritual. Such minor kansen are content to haunt a small village, home, or even a medium-sized city if they believe they can cause trouble without drawing the attention of a monk or shugenja that could banish them.

NIKUMIZU

Air: 1	Earth: 1	Fire: 1	Water: 1
Reflexes: 3			

Rolls When Attacking: 1k1	Rolls For Damage: N/A
TN to Be Hit: 15	Wounds Per Wound Level: 1
Shadowlands Taint: 1	

Special: When a nikumizu has squirmed beneath the skin of an opponent its attack is automatically successful, and deals 4 Wounds each turn. Once attached, it can only be removed by a character who has the Medicine Skill. The procedure itself deals 2k2 Wounds to the recipient for each nikumizu to be removed.

Nikumizu are small and grublike, about the size and shape of a man's forefinger. They lurk in dark, moist crevasses: among rocks, in swamps or dead trees, under fallen logs, or burrowed into the earth. They are worm-like, with a thin, brittle shell that can be easily crushed within one's fist. Their mouth parts are designed to pierce and burrow into flesh. If a nikumizu succeeds in getting under the skin, it begins to feed on muscle tissue, starting wherever it entered (usually somewhere on the limbs or extremities) and moving toward the torso at a rate of about three inches a minute. As this extremely painful feast continues, the affected portions of the victim's body become useless. This could become permanent, unless magical healing is employed.

OGRE

Air: 1	Earth: 4	Fire: 3	Water: 2
Reflexes: 3	Stamina: 6	Strength: 7	

Rolls When Attacking: 5k3	Rolls For Damage: 8k3
TN to Be Hit: 20	Wounds Per Wound Level: 12
Shadowlands Taint: 6	

Special: Fear 2. Carapace 2.

While huge and strong (and far cleverer than their smaller cousins), ogres lack certain advantages that human beings take for granted. They have no social structure and cannot organize into large groups. They lack the skills to make tools, surviving instead on hunting and banditry. And their battle tactics — while terrifying — have no finesse, and skilled samurai can usually find ways to defeat them. Ogres are solitary creatures, only gathering in times of great upheaval. They subsist by waylaying travelers, or by hunting the great beasts that prowl the Shadowlands. Of all Fu Leng's creatures, they are the most likely to be found in Rokugan proper, since their small numbers make it easier for them to penetrate Crab defenses.

ONI NO UGULU

Air: 1	Earth: 6	Fire: 2	Water: 2
		Agility: 4	Strength: 8

Rolls When Attacking: 4k2	Rolls For Damage: 8k3
TN to Be Hit: 10	Wounds Per Wound Level: 12
Shadowlands Taint: 6	

Special: Fear 3. Carapace 2. Immune to all arrows except armor piercing. Each Ugulu is immune to one or more spells. Each such Oni is different, and GM chooses to which spell each is immune.

Towering over thirteen feet tall, an Oni no Ugulu is a big, ugly brute with a nasty temper. Its footsteps shake the ground and its bellows and growling laughter echo across the land as it approaches. It has a thick purplish hide, covered with coarse hair. Normal arrows bounce harmlessly off it, though armor piercers can sometimes penetrate if fired from close range. With its great horns, glowing eyes, and tongue like a serpent of flame, Oni no Ugulu strikes terror in all who lay eyes upon it. It attacks mainly with great sweeps of its massive, clawed hands. A solid strike by Oni no Ugulu can crush a man's bones to powder. While it lacks skill and strategic cunning, its strength and stamina are great, and it may take a dozen or more men to bring it down by normal means. The Rokugani have not yet discovered its variable magical immunity, and think that it is still vulnerable to any magical attack. Those who have discovered the true state of affairs have generally not been in a condition afterwards to report their findings to the Empire.

ONI, TYPICAL

Air: 1	Earth: 2	Fire: 2	Water: 1
Reflexes: 3	Stamina: 4	Agility: 4	Strength: 5

Rolls When Attacking: 5k3	Rolls For Damage: 6k3
TN to Be Hit: 15	Wounds Per Wound Level: 6
Shadowlands Taint: 6	

Special: Carapace 3 (except Crystal, Jade), Fear 2. May possess anywhere from zero to three Minor Shadowlands Powers.

Many Oni gain physical form in the Realm of Mortals either as the spawn of an Oni Overlord or by being summoned from Jigoku by someone willing to share his name in exchange for power. In either case, an Oni's motivation and location is practically unlimited, though they are more frequently encountered in the Shadowlands. Usually, summoned Oni remain inside Rokugan during their period of servitude and only for a little while after gaining their freedom from their would-be master. A newly-freed Oni generally expresses its joy through wanton destruction, then eventually migrates to the Shadowlands.

An Oni's personality is rooted in its bestial nature — it is a living expression of the will of Jigoku — but can be influenced by the personality of the Oni Overlord or maho-tsukai that brought it to the mortal world. An Overlord's spawn tends to have the exact nature of its master, while a summoned Oni becomes more and more like its summoner the longer the two co-exist.

TROLL

Air: 1	Earth: 3	Fire: 3	Water: 2
Reflexes: 3	Stamina: 5	Strength: 5	

Rolls When Attacking: 5k3
 TN to Be Hit: 25
 Shadowlands Taint: 5

Rolls For Damage: 6k2
 Wounds Per Wound Level: 10

Special: Carapace 1

The green, flabby, but powerful trolls prefer to attack from ambush, and are much more likely to be met in the swampy parts of the Shadowlands than sneaking through Rokugin proper. If faced with superior forces, trolls disappear and remain out of sight until their foes are gone. They fight with all the ferocity they can muster until at least one of their number has been slain. When traveling through the Shadowlands swamps, it is imperative to maintain constant vigilance for these dangerous foes, and to give them a wide berth if at all possible.

UNDEAD

Air: 0	Earth: 0	Fire: 1	Water: 1
	Stamina: 3	Agility: 2	Strength: 4

Rolls When Attacking: 3k2
 TN to Be Hit: 5
 Shadowlands Taint: 4

Rolls For Damage: 5k2
 Wounds Per Wound Level: N/A

Special: Fear 4, Carapace 3 against edged weapons. Undead do not have Wound Ranks, but instead are destroyed when they reach 70 total Wounds or are torn apart as described below.

Whenever an undead suffers 15 or more Wounds from a single blow, it loses a random limb:

1-2: Left arm	5-6: Left leg	9: Cut in half
3-4: Right arm	7-8: Right leg	10: Decapitated

If an undead loses an arm or leg, the arm or leg slithers behind it, keeping up the best it can. The undead cannot reattach the limb. If it is an arm, the hand tries to attack anyone within reach. If the undead is cut in half, the top half continues to claw after its targets. A decapitated undead collapses and dissolves into black ooze the next morning.

HUMAN NPCs

This section details the widely varied human NPCs that may be commonly encountered. These are meant to serve as a reference for Game Masters in need of quick NPCs in an encounter. This does not include particular Clan characters.

TYPICAL COURTIER

Air: 3	Earth: 2	Fire: 2	Water: 2	Void: 3
Awareness: 4		Intelligence: 3		

Rolls When Attacking: 2k2
 TN to Be Hit: 10

Rolls For Damage: 1k1
 Wounds Per Wound Level: 4

TYPICAL BUSHI

Air: 2	Earth: 3	Fire: 2	Water: 3
Void: 3		Agility: 4	
Reflexes: 3			

Rolls When Attacking: 7k4
 TN to Be Hit: 20

Rolls For Damage: 5k2
 Wounds Per Wound Level: 6

TYPICAL BANDIT

Air: 2	Earth: 2	Fire: 2	Water: 2	Void: 3
Reflexes: 4	Stamina: 3	Agility: 4	Strength: 3	

Rolls When Attacking: 8k4
 TN to Be Hit: 15

Rolls For Damage: 5k2
 Wounds Per Wound Level: 4

TYPICAL NINJA

Air: 3	Earth: 2	Fire: 3	Water: 2	Void: 3
Reflexes: 4		Agility: 4		

Rolls When Attacking: 8k4
 TN to Be Hit: 25

Rolls For Damage: 4k2
 Wounds Per Wound Level: 4



Rokugan: Eras of Play

The Empire or Rokugan has a long and distinguished history. For a decade now the players and designers have woven its story, and more than a millennium of the Empire's history has been described. This offers a wealth of possibilities. Players and GMs need not feel constrained to the 'canon' time period presented in this book. The following section offers a number of alternative settings and timelines for an L5R campaign.

Dawn of the Empire

Approximate Dates: Pre-history through year 50

Emperor: Hantei, Hantei Genji

Great Clan Champions: Hida, Doji, Togashi, Akodo, Shiba, Bayushi, Shinjo

Notable Personalities: Shinsei, various family founders

Major Alliances: All clans are allied

Major Conflicts: Empire/Shadowlands

Notes: The Kami are born of Lord Moon and Lady Sun, but are consumed by their jealous father shortly thereafter. Hantei alone is spared and frees his siblings, who fall to earth and become mortal. A contest is held to see who shall rule, and Hantei is victorious. Each remaining Kami goes on to found a Great Clan, assembling mortals under their banners and claiming land to administrate in the new Emperor's name. The Dark Kami returns from Jigoku with a vast army of corrupt creatures and besieges Hantei's Empire. The Clans cannot stop him until a small monk called Shinsei appears and leads one mortal from each clan, the Seven Thunders, to defeat Fu Leng on the Day of Thunder. Fu Leng's army falls back to the land corrupted by his appearance, called the Shadowlands. The Crab Clan of Hida begins guarding against a new invasion, and Shinjo's Ki-Rin Clan leaves Rokugan to investigate the world beyond.

Mechanical Considerations: Many families (Toritaka, Asahina, Daidoji, Kitsuki, Horuchi, Moto) do not yet exist. The Yasuki are a Crane family. The Mantis and Fox are founded not long after the Day of Thunder, but no other minor clans yet exist. Technique Ranks above 3 do not yet exist except when practiced by school founders. Exceptional samurai may alter history and become family founders in their own right. All steel weapons are generally of lower quality and roll one fewer die for damage.

Reign of the Gozoku

Approximate Dates: 370-445

Emperor: Hantei Fujiwa (V), Hantei Kusada (VI), Hantei Yugo-zohime (VII)

Great Clan Champions: Hida Tadaka, Doji Raigu, Togashi (Hikaru), Matsu Itagi, Shiba Toshiken, Bayushi Atsuki

Notable Personalities: The Gozoku Triad (Bayushi Atsuki, Shiba Gaijushuko, Doji Raigu); Captain Garen Hawthorne of Thrane

Major Alliances: Crane/Phoenix/Scorpion

Major Conflicts: Loyalist/Gozoku, Empire/Gaijin

Notes: Although named for the Gozoku, this era likewise encompasses the Empire's struggle against extra-national forces in the form of gaijin ambassadors to Otsan Uchi. The first Yasuki war also takes place during this period. The three Gozoku leaders use kidnapping and blackmail to usurp control of Rokugan from two successive Emperors, and make many progressive social reforms during their reign. Hantei Kusada sends the Brotherhood of Shinsei against the Gozoku. The Gozoku punish the monks, outraging the peasants, who love the Brotherhood, and beginning to turn popular opinion against the Gozoku. Kusada's children are fostered elsewhere, and Yugo-zohime trains with the Lion. She returns and claims the throne by force, dismantling the Gozoku shortly thereafter. Five years after her coronation, gaijin ambassadors arrive in Otsan Uchi and are made welcome. Two years later, they are asked to leave. Fighting breaks out and the Imperial City becomes a war zone. The gaijin are defeated, but not before Captain Garen Hawthorne kills the Empress and is consumed by the Shadowlands in the Sea of Shadows.

Mechanical Considerations: The Yasuki leave the Crane to join the Crab Clan. The Sparrow Clan is created during the Gozoku's reign, and the Snake Clan destroyed. The Mantis Champion, Gusai, is awarded the Gusai family name and then immediately executed for his arrogance. The Tortoise Clan is created by Yugo-zohime's successor in recognition of their role in the battle. Gaijin weapons and equipment are much more readily available during this time, including a few firearms that illicitly find their way into the Empire.

The Second Rise of Iuchiban

Approximate Dates: 715-750

Emperor: Hantei XI

Great Clan Champions: Hida Banuken, Doji Daisetsu, Togashi Shotaro, Akodo Gaijuko, Shiba Esai, Bayushi Tenburo

Notable Personalities: Iuchiban, the First Bloodspeaker; Reichin, ronin scout

Major Alliances: None to speak of

Major Conflicts: Empire/Bloodspeakers

Notes: Believed to have been destroyed years before, both the dreaded sorcerer Iuchiban and his lieutenant Asahina Yajinden escape into the Empire as disembodied spirits, capable of possessing new bodies whenever they wish. Iuchiban plans his return carefully, ordering his followers to amass a great army of corpses near the remote Sleeping River. An ise zumi mystically detects Iuchiban's spirit, and the clans quickly move to find and eliminate him. Ultimately, the clan armies face Iuchiban's vast legions of undead at Sleeping River. The loss of life is enormous, but Iuchiban's spirit is imprisoned once more. In the battle's aftermath, the Hare Clan is formed as a reward to the ronin scout Reichin.

Mechanical Considerations: None.

Pre-Scorpion Coup Era

Approximate Dates: 1100-1124

Emperor: Hantei XXXVII

Great Clan Champions: Hida Kisada, Doji Satsume, Togashi Yokuni, Akodo Arasou/Akodo Toturi, Shiba Ujimitsu, Bayushi Shoju, Shinjo Yokatsu

Notable Personalities: Kitsuki Kaagi, Dragon Clan Magistrate; Doji Satsume, Emerald Champion; Akodo Kage, revered Lion sensei; Tsuruchi, Wasp Clan Daimyo and member of the Three Man Alliance

Major Alliances: Three Man Alliance (Fox, Sparrow, & Wasp Clans)

Major Conflicts: Lion/Crane, Crab/Shadowlands

Notes: A rare period of relative peace, the reign of Hantei XXXVII is largely uneventful save for the occasional border skirmish. The threat of open conflict is ever present, however, and the Emperor soon becomes disgusted by the constant squabbling of his Champions. He grows more dependent upon the counsel of his friend Bayushi Shoju. The Shadowlands slowly grow in power, preparing for the next Day of Thunder (of which the Empire is ignorant). An opium war wracks Ryoko Owari Toshi as three Scorpion-controlled cartels struggle for control of the market. Led by such ruthless men as Doji Satsume and Isawa Tsuke, Master of Fire, the Emerald Magistrates maintain a stranglehold on criminal activity. A minor crane lord, Tsume Retsu, launches a vicious attack on Lion holdings near the Crane border, seizing them and eliminating the Goseki vassal family of the Akodo, exponentially increasing border tension in the process.

Mechanical Considerations: This era is the default setting for all First Edition sourcebooks.

The Clan War

Approximate Dates: 1124–1128

Emperor: Hantei XXIX

Great Clan Champions: Hida Kisada, Doji Hoturi, Togashi Yokuni, Matsu Tsuko, Shiba Ujimitsu, Bayushi Shoju, Shinjo Yokatsu

Notable Personalities: The Hooded Ronin, heir of Shinsai; Fu Leng, the Dark Kami; Toturi, the disgraced Lion Champion; Yoritomo, Son of Storms and Mantis Clan Champion; the Seven Thunders (Hida Yakamo, Doji Hoturi, Mirumoto Hitomi, Toturi, Isawa Tadaka, Bayushi Kachiko, and Otaku Kamoko)

Major Alliances: Crab/Shadowlands, Crane/Mantis, Naga/Dragon/Ronin

Major Conflicts: Crab/Crane, Empire/Shadowlands, Lion/Crane

Notes: The Clan War is one of the greatest conflicts in Rokugan's history, and possibly the one that has come closest to dooming the Empire. Its foundation is laid with the Scorpion Clan's attempted coup in 1126 and lasts until Fu Leng's defeat in 1128. Campaigns set during this era should emphasize the period's incredible chaos as every clan wars against every other. Conflict is largely in the southern portions of Rokugan at first, but quickly spreads. The Scorpion operate behind the scenes in significant numbers, disguised as ronin. The Naga awaken early and appear prominently in the southern reaches, moving gradually upward to the Unicorn lands. The Battle of Beiden Pass and the Battle for Otosan Uchi are two of the largest battles ever fought.

Mechanical Considerations: The Mantis become a Great Clan after the Day of Thunder. The Hitomi and Yoritomo families are created. This era is described in detail in the sourcebook *Time of the Void*. This era is the default setting of all sourcebooks for Second Edition.

The Hidden Emperor/ War against the Darkness

Approximate Dates: 1130–1133

Emperor: Toturi I, Takuan (Regent)

Great Clan Champions: Hida Yakamo/Hida O-ushi, Doji Kawanami, Hitomi/Togashi Hoshi, Ikoma Tsanuri, Yoritomo, Shiba Tsukune, Bayushi Kachiko, Shinjo Yokatsu/Moto-Gaheris

Notable Personalities: Goju Adorai, champion of Nothing; Ginawa, ronin vassal of Toturi; Kage, exiled Kolat Master; Matsu Hiroru, ninja

Major Alliances: Crab/Lion

Major Conflicts: Crane/Mantis, Lion/Unicorn, Mantis/Phoenix, Empire/Darkness, Dragon/Naga

Notes: See the Book of Earth for a detailed calendar of this period's events. Start at "Disappearance of Toturi I," page 20, and read through until "The Battle at Oblivion's Gate," page 24. For more information, please consult the sourcebook *The Hidden Emperor*.

The War of Spirits

Approximate Dates: 1138–1150

Emperor: Toturi I

Great Clan Champions: Hida O-Ushi, Kakita Kaiten (Regent), Togashi Hoshi, Kitsu Motso, Yoritomo Aramasu, Shiba Tsukune, Bayushi Yojiro, Moto Gaheris

Notable Personalities: Hantei XVI, the Steel Chrysanthemum; Hida Tsuneo, the Stone Crab; Agasha Tamori, Dark Oracle of Fire

Major Alliances: No significant treaties

Major Conflicts: Loyalists/Traditionalists

Notes: After thousands of spirits return to Rokugan during the Battle of Oblivion's Gate, the despot Hantei XVI assembles a spirit army and begins a campaign to reclaim the throne. The entire Empire has divided loyalties, and samurai from every clan join the Hantei against Toturi. The insidious Steel Chrysanthemum ruthlessly punishes those who are not loyal to him, using dishonorable tactics to great effect against the Unicorn and others. He, together with his general Hida Tsuneo and Agasha Tamori, kidnaps a large number of noble Phoenix children and blackmails the clan into aiding him. A clever trap sprung by the Scorpion, Crane, and Phoenix draws the Hantei's armies into Beiden Pass, then collapses it, crushing them. A treaty is reached soon thereafter.

Mechanical Considerations: The Tamori family is created as part of the treaty between the Hantei and Toturi I. The majority of Traditionalist forces are comprised of spirits that returned through Oblivion's Gate (see the sourcebook *Fortunes & Winds* for stats on such spirits).

The Four Winds Era

Approximate Dates: 1158–1165

Emperor: Toturi I, Toturi II, Toturi III

Great Clan Champions: Hida Kuroda/Hida Kuon, Doji Kurohito, Togashi Hoshi/Togashi Satsu, Matsu Nimuro, Yoritomo Kikao/Yoritomo Kumiko, Shiba Mirabu, Bayushi Yojiro/Bayushi Sunetra, Moto Chagatai

Notable Personalities: Akodo Kaneka, the Bastard; Hantei Naseru, the Anvil; Toturi Sezaru, the Wolf; Toturi Tsudao, the Sword; Daigotsu, Dark Champion of Fu Leng

Major Alliances: Dragon/Scorpion, Lion/Phoenix

Major Conflicts: Crab/Crane, Dragon/Phoenix, Empire/Shadowlands, Mantis/Mantis, Scorpion/Scorpion

Notes: More information regarding the Four Winds Era is forthcoming in the L5R RPG's next release, the *Lotus Era* sourcebook. The Emperor Toturi I dies under mysterious circumstances without declaring an heir. His four children vie for control of the Empire; Kaneka, Naseru, and Tsudao begin

marshaling forces while Sezarú ruthlessly hunts his father's murderer. The Crab and Crane go to war over the Yasuki lands when the family daimyo dies without an heir. The Dragon and Phoenix likewise go to war when Dragon refugees escaping a volcanic eruption invade western Phoenix lands. Daigotsu succeeds in invading Otsan Uchi and opening a spirit portal so that Fu Leng can enter the Celestial Heavens. Kaneka declares himself Shogun, and Tsudao proclaims herself Empress. Civil wars within the Mantis and Scorpion limit the clans' ability to participate in important affairs. The Four Winds put aside their differences after their mother — the Oracle of Void and Empress of Rokugan, Kaede — returns to Rokugan, and set out to face Daigotsu in the Shadowlands. Tsudao and Daigotsu are both killed in the fighting, Fu Leng is cast out of Heaven, and Naseru becomes Emperor Toturi III while Sezarú and Kaneka join the Phoenix Clan.

Alternate Settings

While the Legend of the Five Rings franchise has an established history and storyline that is constantly evolving, GMs are in no way obligated to recognize any part of it. GMs are encouraged to change any element of the setting to suit the needs of their campaign. One example of a setting that changes major details is the Thousand Years of Darkness setting, first depicted in the CCG expansion of the same name.

THE THOUSAND YEARS OF DARKNESS

Approximate Dates: 1128+

Emperor: Fu Leng

Great Clan Champions: Hida Yakamo, Daidoji Uji, Mirumoto Hitomi (corrupted by the Lying Darkness), Ikoma Ujikai (corrupted by the Shadowlands), Shiba Tsukune, Bayushi Amoro (default leader), Moto Kumari

Notable Personalities: Toturi, the Black Lion; Hoturi the Heartless

Major Alliances: All surviving clans are allied

Major Conflicts: Fu Leng's Empire/Surviving Great Clans

Notes: On the second Day of Thunder, Fu Leng was victorious. Many Thunders died, and those who survived found themselves hunted across an Empire of Darkness. The Dragon seal themselves away in their mountains, using Hitomi's influence over the Lying Darkness to hide themselves from Fu Leng's grasp. The Phoenix and Crane are virtually wiped out, as are the Lion who do not stand with the Imperial forces. Toturi rallies what survivors remain and marshals the allied forces at the Mantis Islands, a bastion of purity in a corrupt world. Fu Leng sends his armies against the islands, killing Toturi. Toturi's son Kaneka arrives and avenges his father, and the rebellion lives on.

Mechanical Considerations: The overwhelming corruption in this setting makes it far more difficult for shugenja to cast spells. TNs for all spells are at +5. Stealth is no longer a Low Skill, but rather a means of survival.

Geography of Rokugan

The Lands of the Crab

Capital: Kyuden Hida

Population: Approximately 4,610,000 (258,000 samurai)

Imports: Jade

Exports: Iron, raw materials

CB1 — Shiro Kaotsuki no Higashi (Face of the East Castle): This northern castle hosts many Crab diplomatic endeavors. Its distance from the Shadowlands helps the Crab ensure their guests' safety. The castle also serves as a major center of lumber harvesting for the clan, as the Naga granted permission to the clan to harvest from the Shinomen Mori to the north before they returned to slumber. Northern Nezumi tribes once dealt with the Crab through this castle, but abandoned the area after the Naga awakened and have not returned.

CB2 — Watchtower of the East: This tower predates the Carpenter Wall and once served as a northern guard. When warning fires were detected to the south, guards here would rally troops from the north and warn of a Shadowlands attack. Technically, the tower's purpose is still the same, but the Carpenter Wall has rendered it almost pointless. Since the wall was built, this tower has been largely abandoned, its purpose fulfilled by the much larger structure. Those guards who serve here are largely criminals, dishonored samurai and those who have fallen into disfavor. An assignment here is a great dishonor, as the samurai are stationed in the wilderness of Crab lands rather than where the true battles occur.

CB3 — Kamisori sano Yotake Shiro (Razor of the Dawn Castle): The northwestern edge of the Kaiu wall is anchored here, a stout rock of a fortress squeezed between two steep hills. Shadowlands attacks are rarer at the Razor of the Dawn than elsewhere, and troops quartered here serve mainly as reservists. Samurai from other Clans looking to make a name for themselves are often stationed at Razor of the Dawn, as the Crab are loath to permit outsiders deeper into their defenses. The terrain around the castle makes it an ideal location to launch missions into the Shadowlands, so Hiruma scouts frequent it.

CB4 — Kaiu Shiro (Carpenter Castle): Kaiu Shiro houses the Kaiu family and is home to the largest smithy in Rokugan. The Kaiu maintain the Great Wall from here, upgrading its defenses and building new siege machines. Schematics adorn the palace walls, and a huge forge dominates the main courtyard. The plains around Kaiu Shiro are covered with ballistae and catapults waiting to be moved to their positions on the Wall. Beneath the castle lies a complex series of passages and catacombs running throughout the Kaiu Wall, and opening in several concealed locations in the Shadowlands. Crab scouts use the passages to enter the corrupted realm, reporting any significant developments. The entrances also serve as bolt-holes for spies trying to get back to the lands of the sun.



CB5 — Kuda Mura: Kuda Mura is a quiet village, one of the few in Crab lands that has plentiful arable land. This village is highly prized by the Hida, who often keep their magistrates nearby in the event of a northern attack. If the village of Kuda Mura were ever destroyed, Crab food production would be halved.

CB6 — Maemikake: This town is nearly a city, and much larger than any nearby Crab village. Once ruled by the Hiruma, it came under the control of the Tortika after the Hiruma returned to their ancestral lands.

CB7 — Midaki sano Mura (High Tree Village): High Tree Village is primarily a mining town. Few women or families live here; it is mostly samurai and the heimin that work the nearby mines. Some say that the spirit of the Twilight Mountains, the Shakoki Dogu, haunts this village by night, inhabiting floating lights that flash throughout the mountains. Few villagers are willing to travel deeper into the mountains, and none walk alone by night — not even in the streets of the village, and certainly not in the mines.

CB8 — Kakita Bogu (Breath of Kakita): This village, named during a time when the Crab were hostile toward the Crane, is on the edge of a salt marsh, and the reek alone keeps most samurai far from the village's humble huts. Those peasants who live here make their living working the metals and stone brought north from Midaki sano Mura, and are excellent stonemasons and metalworkers. They have few visitors.

CB9 — Nagai Aruki (Long Walk): This large village is a vital trade center for miners and other craftsmen from the Twilight Mountains and the eastern Crab lands. Most buildings are worker's quarters and shops; the others are scattered over the farmland in small pockets of civilization surrounded by bridges over thickly watered rice paddies. The village's name of 'Long Walk' comes from the need to walk many miles over these arched bridges, just to find the particular shop or person you were looking for. The town is spread over three square miles.

CB10 — Nishiyama Mura (West Mountain Village): Nishiyama is the second of two small towns located on the Wall above the Ocean Mountains. Nishiyama rests on the western side of a series of natural caverns and twisting underground paths that lead to Higashiyama, to the east. Although there is a road between the two villages, travel through the passages takes only half the time of traveling on the twisting mountain roads, and is never blocked by the snow that closes down the aboveground road for nearly half the year.

CB11 — Shiro Kuni (Castle of the Nation): This fortress is the heart of the Crab's defense against the Shadowlands. The huge castle accommodates an entire army, and commands an imposing view of the surrounding countryside. The Crab generals plot their strategies here, while messengers stand ready to relay their orders down the road that spans the length of the Carpenter Wall. A small army of bushi is always stationed here, serving as an anchor for the great Wall and a deterrent to any Shadowlands creature that perceives the castle as a weak link in the Crab defense.

CB12 — Higashiyama Mura (East Mountain Village): Higashiyama is a small town, located on the eastern side of a series of natural caverns and twisting underground paths that lead to the other side of the Wall above the Ocean Mountains. These passages are dangerous, and caravans cannot travel them, but are often used by travelers who wish to make haste over the mountains to the east or the west. Villagers know that the passages are haunted, and worse, inhabited by all manner of beasts and Shadowlands creatures, but that doesn't stop adventuring samurai from using the passages as a shortcut. The Hida come to Higashiyama once a year, to 'officially destroy the Shadowlands infestation in the mountains.' Sometimes the Hida assault cleans out the passages for as long as three weeks, but never longer than that.

CB13 — Shiro Hiruma (Daylight Castle): Lost to the Shadowlands over three hundred years ago, the castle and lands of the Hiruma family were occupied by hostile forces for centuries. The lands were recovered only a few decades ago following the defeat of Fu Leng on the second Day of Thunder. The battle to recover Shiro Hiruma cost the Crab Clan the life of their champion, Hida Yakamo, although he later ascended to become Lord Sun.

Shiro Hiruma is besieged by the Shadowlands daily, but the Crab will not relinquish it no matter the cost. The castle has been somewhat more at peace over the past year due to an uneasy truce with Daigotsu during the Bloodspeaker conflict.

CB14 — Koten: This ancestral hall was constructed to equal or surpass the Lion Clan's (L21), but initially was considered a failure. Crab heroes rarely have ashes to inter, after all. Since its construction, the monks who tend to the shrine have traveled the Crab lands in search of tales of valor, which they painstakingly memorize.

CB15 — Sunda Mizu Mura (Clear Water Village): This is the most significant port in the south. It is one of the oldest settlements in Rokugan, and has kept its old village name even though it has become one of the largest trading centers in the Empire.

CB16 — Yasuki Hanko (Yasuki Defiance): In the Empire's early days, this village belonged to the Crane even after the Yasuki family defected to the Crab. The peasants defied the Crane, and many were killed by the Daidoji until concessions were made between the two clans that transferred control of the village to the Crab. Since the second Yasuki War it has served as the headquarters for Crane-affiliated Yasuki, although it remains a Crab holding for tax purposes.

CB17 — Kyuden Hida (Crab Clan Palace): Kyuden Hida, the Hida family's ancestral home and the mightiest fortress in Rokugan, towers over the mouth of the Last Stand River. The Crab Clan palace has the largest garrison of any single stronghold in Rokugan: almost a thousand men. The walls are hewn from pure granite and merge seamlessly into the rock foundation. The thick steel gates are so heavy that ten men must work together to haul them open. The skull of two huge Oni lords, the Maw and Tsuburu no Oni, hang above the ramparts.

The castle houses the Hida Bushi School's primary dojo, where students train in full armor, and graduates must venture into the Shadowlands and slay one of its denizens before they receive their wakizashi.

CB18 — Yasuki Yashiki (Black Crane Estates): The Yasuki Palace was once owned by the Crane Clan, but has served the Crab for nearly 700 years. Since the second Yasuki

War, the two clans have cooperated to a previously unseen extent, and this castle has become a major center for Crab-Crane diplomacy.

CB19 — Watchtower of the West: Created to guard against the Crane, this watchtower is considered a post of honor for Crab samurai. Those who are given this job are completely trusted by the Hida, and considered worthy to stand guard over the lands of two clans.

CB20 — Tani Hitokage (Valley of the Spirits): Located between the Shinomen Mori and the Twilight Mountains, this valley was once the home of the Falcon Clan. Since that clan's absorption into the Crab as the Toritaka family, this has become a Crab territory and the center of the Toritaka family holdings.

CB21 — Kyuden Toketsu: Founded by a terrifically wealthy Yasuki merchant who wished to retire in comfort, Kyuden Toketsu was established near a monastery where the monks remembered the sacrifice of Kuni Harike, a great hero of the Crab. Harike sacrificed his life to imprison the Kusatte Iru, perhaps the most powerful Oni that has ever existed.

CB22 — Shinsei's Last Hope: Built upon land blessed by Shinsei a thousand years ago, this village exists on ground that cannot be corrupted, despite its location inside the Shadowlands. The village is a major staging ground for attacks made in the Shadowlands, and is more heavily fortified than any Crab holding save for Kyuden Hida.

The Lands of the Crane

Capital: Kyuden Doji

Population: Approximately 3,820,000 (213,000 samurai)

Imports: Raw materials, foodstuffs

Exports: Fine goods

CN1 — Shiro sano Kakita (The Dueling School of the Crane Clan): The Kakita believe in doing one thing perfectly. For many, that one thing is the art of dueling, which they master here. The family's palace is dangerously close to Lion lands, although the recent truce between Lion and Crane has eased tensions somewhat.

CN2 — Kosaten Shiro (Crossroads Castle): The Daidoji's first line of defense against attack from the west is Kosaten Shiro. It is strongly fortified, but not as nearly as strongly as they would like. Daidoji trickery and unorthodox tactics have so far proven sufficient to hold off attackers, but should Kosaten Shiro fall, all of the northern Crane provinces would be threatened.

CN3 — Shiro Daidoji (Son of the Crane Castle): While perhaps not as cultured as the Doji or Kakita, the Daidoji are the Crane's strong arm. The Crane's traditional disdain for military solutions to problems has been reconsidered, and the Daidoji now enjoy the same influence within the clan as other Crane families.

CN4 — Yufuku and Heigen Toshi (Prosperous Plains City): Among the greatest marketplaces in Rokugan, Yufuku and Heigen teem with merchants from every Clan, even those from clans out of favor with the Crane. Rokugan's largest open-air market is here, protected by the Daidoji from the west and the Doji from the south.

CN5 — Kyuden Doji (Crane Clan Palace): Only the Imperial Palace is more luxurious than the Doji palace. Built on the gentle seashore, the palace grounds abound with rock gardens, dozens of shrines, and vast flocks of cranes. Diplomats and nobility from all across Rokugan come to politick, but also to mar-



vel at the magnificent surroundings. Kyuden Doji was destroyed during the Clan War, but was rebuilt shortly thereafter. It was damaged again during the Crane civil war, but no sign of that unfortunate conflict remains.

CN6 — Kyuden Otomo: After the destruction of Ootosan Uchi, the Otomo family was without a home. The Crane graciously provided everything the Imperial family required, and a new Kyuden Otomo was built near Kyuden Doji. The Otomo have moved many of their important personnel to the new capital of Toshi Ranbo (A30), but maintain a healthy presence near their Crane allies.

CN7 — Musume Mura (Daughter Village): This village looks out over the ocean bay toward the island where the first Hantei found his bride. The large village houses a shrine to both the first Hantei and his bride, which exhibits the single jade tear shed by the First Emperor when he asked the young Doji maiden to marry him.

CN8 — Benten Seido: This shrine to Benten, the Fortune of Romantic Love, is difficult to reach, but offers a spectacular view of Crane lands. Legends tell of an ancient Doji Champion who forced his daughter to choose between leaving her lover and losing her life. He brought her here to decide, and she leapt from the cliffs. The wind suddenly gusted so strongly that the maiden was lifted back up to the cliff's edge, where her beloved caught her. In the face of the Fortune's wisdom, the father relented, and the two were married.

CN9 — Samui Kaze Toshi (Cold Wind City): Named for the cold winds that sweep down from the mountains, Samui Kaze is a vital trading port for the Crane. The Spine of the World Mountains make overland travel to the village difficult, so most trading must be done by ship. Those traveling to the south often book ship passage from here to Lonely Shore City (CN13).

CN10 — Aketsu: Another important trading post, Aketsu often contains unusual items brought to the mainland by the Mantis. Certain silks, fabrics and stones unlike any in the Empire can be found here. It was once whispered that the Kolat held a secret haven within this small city, but the Doji magistrates have searched extensively and found no such hideaway.

CN11 — Umocru Mura: This once-thriving trade city was reduced to rubble by a Crab attack over sixty years ago and never fully recovered. Not until the recent Crane-Crab alliance have reconstruction efforts made any progress. Finally, the village is becoming a city again.

CN12 — Ookami Toshi (Wolf City): This city overlooks a sharp cliff at the mountain's edge. Ookami Toshi is well-guarded, and contains an extraordinary messenger system. If this area ever came under attack, Daidoji runners would spread the word within days, maybe even sooner. Some say that the heart of Ookami Toshi holds a great mirror, capable of passing messages back and forth to another mirror hidden somewhere in the Empire, and that its partner may rest in the bowels of Kyuden Doji.

CN13 — Mura Sabishii Toshi (Lonely Shore City): A key city in the Crane's trade and supply lines, Mura Sabishii lies south of the Spine of the World mountains, with roads leading to Wall Above the Ocean Village (CN16) and

toward Kyuden Kitsune (A23). Most trade comes from Samui Kaze (CN9), but that is strictly nautical. Mura Sabishii is a flourishing port town, mainly because of its frequent commerce with Samui Kaze. If travelers wish to go north, they can travel many hundreds of miles on foot, or they can commission a ship and arrive in Samui Kaze in less than a week.

CN14 — Daidoji Training Grounds: Some of the most civilized and well-tended training grounds in the Empire adjoin the Daidoji daimyo's personal estate. Daidoji guardsmen who draw special notice for their exceptional understanding of the land are trained here, and massive maps cover the lower floors of the watchtower that stands guard over their labors.

CN15 — Oni Mura (Demon Village): 'Demon Village' is completely deserted. Although the fields around the village are tended, the heimin refuse to live on the ruined village grounds, for fear that an Oni that ravaged the village decades ago might still be living within the small town's stone enclosure. The heimin live in ramshackle huts they have built in the surrounding forest.

CN16 — Yama ue no ho ni Umi Mura (Wall Above the Ocean Village): Located just west of the foothills of Rokugan's southernmost mountain range, this small village is noted for its friendly inns and taverns. It is an ideal travel stop between the central and southern Crane estates, and contains many shrines and temples.

CN17 — Jukami Mura: Among the southernmost Crane villages, Jukami Mura is an important link in the Crane's trade with the Mantis and Crab. Many mercenaries can be found here, including ronin, Minor Clan samurai, and Mantis thugs, and people who need to hire warriors often come here first.

CN18 — Shinden Asahina (Temple of the Morning Sun): Shinden Asahina is a sizeable cluster of temples located just south of the Yasuki estates. The Asahina shugenja are completely devoted to a peaceful existence. There are no samurai assigned to protect the temples, and no army would dare draw the wrath of the Emperor by attacking these pacifistic shugenja. Jade Champion Asahina Sekawa has an estate here, but rarely has time to visit it.

CN 19 — Aiso ni Ryokosha Mura (Friendly Traveler Village): Friendly Traveler is a small, wealthy village on the outskirts of Yasuki territory. Friendly Traveler offers a variety of types of sake, and claims with some justification that its brew is the best in the Empire. The village is quite friendly to tourists, and has become a popular stop on the road, even when it's a bit out of travelers' way. A forced truce in this village led to the eventual end of the Second Yasuki War.

CN20 — Shizuka Toshi: Constructed within a clearing in Osari Mori, north of Kyuden Doji, Shizuka Toshi is a major dojo for the Doji Academy. Promising courtiers receive their training here. Visitors are rarely admitted, and the dojo is remote so as to ensure that young courtiers in training do not have an opportunity to embarrass the clan.

CN21 — Giji Seido: A humble shrine built upon the ruins of a tragedy, Giji Seido hides a secret: the long-lost Shiro Giji hides beneath it. This hidden secret is the training ground for the deadly Daidoji harriers and saboteurs, who ensure that any enemy does not benefit from a numerical advantage over the Crane armies.

The Lands of the Dragon

Capital: Shiro Mirumoto

Population: Approximately 1,830,000 (101,000 samurai)

Imports: Fine goods

Exports: Gold, minerals

D1 — Takaikabe Mura (High Wall Village): This village overlooks the rough terrain of Exile's Road, the Unicorn passage beyond the Badger lands and into the Northern Wastes. Legends say the road ends in the Burning Sands, but no traveler in recent memory has returned to tell the tale. Those who are banished often have a kinsman move permanently to this village, always watching the pass in order to defend the clan's banishment. Such a sentinel is considered an honored, if permanent, guest and is always treated with the utmost respect by the Dragon heimin. After fifteen years of such service, such samurai are invited to join the nearby monastery and spend the rest of their lives in prayer for their dishonored relatives.

D2 — Fukurokujin Seido: The shrine to Fukurokujin, Fortune of Longevity, is less resplendent than other shrines throughout the Empire. It is, however, the best made and sturdiest of such shrines, and every visitor is asked to give something crafted with their own hands. Paintings, sculptures, and all manner of crafts adorn the temple, making it a popular destination for artisans.

D3 — Yushosha Seido Mura (Champion Shrine Village): This small village marks the halfway point between Shiro Mirumoto (D10) and the High House of Light (D4). As a result, many important Dragon leaders stay here while traveling between the two, often offering prayers at the village's shrine to Togashi Yokuni, the Dragon Champion who died on the Second Day of Thunder and who is rumored to have lived here as a child.

D4 — The High House of Light: Formerly known as Kyuden Togashi and then as Kyuden Hitomi, the High House of Light is the chief monastery for the Dragon Clan's tattooed orders. The "tattooed men" are popular figures in Rokugan's literature. The *ise zumi* rarely venture outside their monastic castles, but when they do, their bizarre actions reflect their unexplainable attachment to the Five Elements. The road that leads to this castle is a sharp-angled steep climb. An armored man trying to make the climb would certainly fall.

D5 — Maigo no Samurai Mura (Lost Samurai Village): This small, ancient village was established by would-be followers of Togashi who became lost. When they were discovered, their survival impressed the Kami, who made them Dragon samurai. Ogres attacked from out of the mountains some decades ago, decimating the village's population. A pall has hung over it ever since.

D6 — Yamasura: The majority of Dragon trade with the western Empire takes place here, especially with the Lion and Unicorn. It is a widely spaced city on a tall flat plain among the high mountains. Many Emerald Magistrates gathered here after the Emerald Champion died in the Scorpion Clan Coup. Bandits learned to give the city a wide berth, and it is still relatively safe even though the Emerald Magistrates moved on long ago. Since the War of the Rich Frog, the city has seen reduced trade levels.

D7 — Shiro Tamori (Tamori Castle): Formerly Kyuden Agasha, the Tamori family was established here after their predecessors defected to the Phoenix Clan. All Agasha holdings defaulted to them, including the ancestral castle. The Tamori oversee the Dragon Clan library, and their castle houses the clan's largest shugenja dojo. Fortified deep in the mountains, the Tamori are less receptive of visitors than the Agasha were, and conduct most diplomacy in the city of Yasamura (D6).

D8 — Heibetsu: A sister city to Yasamura (D6), Heibetsu is where the Dragon Clan trades with the eastern Empire, including the Phoenix, Ox, and Crane clans. The city suffered during the Dragon-Phoenix war a short time ago, but blossomed after the war's end. Sadly, the demise of Otsan Uchi has only increased the city's trade value, as Toshi Ranbo (A30) is not yet large enough to handle all the trade that took place in and around the previous capital.

D9 — Shiro Kitsuki (Last Step Castle): Called "Last Step" because of the steep climb that leads away from this castle to the High House of Light (D4), Kitsuki Castle is the gateway to the Dragon mountains. It was awarded to Agasha Kitsuki after he was given permission to found a family, and has served as the Kitsuki palace ever since. Some say there is a secret path from the flatlands to Kitsuki castle, but if there is, it is hidden well.

D10 — Shiro Mirumoto (Last Glance Castle): The Mirumoto ancestral home stands high at a pass through the Great Wall of the North Mountains. The road spirals upward into a wide ravine under the watchful gaze of those in the castle. Those who wish to visit must climb the steep path. Invaders must avoid arrows, pitch, and fire from above with no way to retaliate. Seven years ago, the Mirumoto daimyo was murdered within his private chambers. Since that time, security has increased, transforming the castle into a virtually impregnable fortress.

D11 — Kyuden Tonbo (Dragonfly Clan Palace): The Dragonfly Clan sprang from a marriage between a samurai from the Phoenix Clan and a shugenja from the Dragon Clan. The Dragonfly Clan's castle is not formidable, but is protected by enchanted walls and the clan's cousins: the Dragon and Phoenix. The Tonbo family's lands have only recently recovered from a devastating Lion attack during the Dragon-Phoenix war.

D12 — Toi Koku (Distant Paddy Village): Although the Dragon are different than other clans in many respects, they still must eat, and their mountainous lands do not grow crops well. When merchants come to deliver rice to the Dragon, this is the village where they conduct business. This village was vital in keeping the Dragon alive during the famine after the volcano called Wrath of the Kami erupted some years ago.

D13 — Nanashi Mura (Anonymous Village): Near the southern Dragon border stands this anomaly of a village. The village is, in fact, inhabited and ruled entirely by ronin with the sanction of Dragon Champion, a sanction that has been upheld since Togashi Yokuni's initial decree. The Dragon forbid the ronin village any obvious defenses, limit the size of the city guard, and watch the village with a careful eye. Thus far there have been no major disorderly incidents. A ronin who comes to Nanashi is asked no questions about his past, so long as he causes no trouble. Although close to Dragon lands, Nanashi Mura is technically outside the clan's borders.



D14 — The Wrath of the Kami: This previously dormant volcano was coerced into erupting by Dark Oracle of Fire Agasha Tamori almost a decade ago. Fleeing Dragon refugees touched off the Dragon-Phoenix war, and later the volcano was used to destroy many dangerous artifacts by the Dragon nemurani seekers. As a result, the volcano is surrounded by volatile kami, and it is dangerous to practice magic nearby.

D15 — The Northern Towers of Flame: A chain of five towers that lie along the northern Dragon border, the Towers of Flame were created after the new Dark Oracle of Fire, Tamori Chosai, was banished from Rokugan. The Dark Oracle seeks to destroy his former clan, and constantly sends his Yobanjin minions to disrupt Dragon life. The towers stand stoutly against the Oracle's predations, and have thrown back all assaults thus far.

D16 — Tetsu Kama (Iron Mountain): This mountain shares a name with the greatest Dragon dojo. The mountain has extremely rich iron deposits, and supplies the vast majority of the clan's metal. The mines at the mountain's base have been in operation for centuries, but continue to produce as much ore as ever.

D17 — Sulgeki Toshi (Water Hammer City) [NEW ENTRY]: The greatest Dragon smiths dwell in Sulgeki Toshi, where the Tamori family constantly develops new techniques for forging stronger metals. Almost every structure within the city contains a forge. Most weapons forged here have a distinctive pattern, the signature of the Water Hammer Technique the smiths here practice.

The Lands of the Lion

Capital: Kyuden Ikoma

Population: Approximately 5,280,000 (292,000 samurai); **Imports:** Raw materials

Exports: Copper

L1 — Toshi no Meiyo Gisei (City of Honor's Sacrifice): This city is famous throughout the Empire for the acts of a single Lion samurai-ko. She kept a secret lover here, and when her daimyo discovered her secret, she vowed to commit seppuku to show her loyalty to her lord. The daimyo agreed, but at the ceremony, gave her a wooden sword to perform the act. The samurai-ko took the wooden sword and performed the ceremony, despite the insult. A shrine to her memory still stands in this village.

L2 — Mura sano Eiyu ni Suru (Village of the Reinstated Hero): Ikoma Teidei was a promising young samurai whose daimyo was assassinated. Teidei became a ronin and spent seven years seeking his daimyo's killer, finally running him to ground in this village. A shrine stands today on the spot where the ronin killed the assassin and then committed seppuku to join his master.

L3 — Shiro sano Ken Hayai (Castle of the Swift Sword): Home of the largest Akodo dojo, this castle is located in Kitsu lands on the site where Akodo and Matsu first met. The school here teaches far more than warfare, and the students of Shiro sano Ken Hayai are among the best-educated bushi in the Empire.



L4 — Rugashi: This bustling city is the crossroads for those traveling through Lion territory. Merchants heading in all directions stop here for supplies. The sheer volume of trade inspires the greedy to turn a corrupt profit, and the Lion are ever vigilant to ensure that their many guests do not practice their dishonorable mercantile practices here.

L5 — Oiku: This village serves as a permanent military outpost from which the Lion may move to defend Toshi Ranbo, the Imperial City (A30). Once, it was used to attack the city, but now a large Lion force stands ready to come to the Emperor's aid should any threat present itself. With the Shogun in power in Toshi Ranbo, the mood at Oiku is extremely tense.

L6 — Shiranai Toshi (Darkness City): This city, founded in the lee of Lookout Mountain (a singular mountain rising from the Lion plains), is an ancient Ikoma stronghold dating back to the Lion occupation of Unicorn lands during that clan's long absence from the Empire. Following the War of the Rich Frog, Shiranai Toshi has become a heavily guarded fortress warding against the threat of Unicorn invasion.

L7 — Foshi: This dull city has the distinction of being the most productive food resource in the Lion lands; the crops it grows can feed entire armies. A great number of troops are stationed here to guard the Lion army's provisions, and a tremendous number of silos outside the city hold the grain until the military needs it.

L8 — Renga Murai (Brick Village): This village, constructed almost entirely of stone, was established to harvest lumber from the only major Lion forest. The lumber goes entirely toward military purposes, and the peasants of this village are not allowed to use it for building purposes; thus the village's construction and name. An obsolete military base nearby, Shiro no Shinjin, is the unofficial headquarters for the Lion Deathseekers.

L9 — Ninkatoshi (Permission City): Once a farming village, the Clan War saw Ninkatoshi transformed into a military outpost for the Lion's battles with the Crane. Despite the current peace between the two clans, the Lion maintain a strong military presence here. It is considered an honor to receive this appointment, as only the most skilled officers and valiant bushi are considered.

L10 — Kyuden Ikoma (Sacred Watch Palace): The Ikoma palace is located at the base of the Mountain of Thunders, at the foot of the mighty Seikitsu mountain range that divides the Empire in two. Once an informal meeting place for Lion daimyo, Kyuden Ikoma has become the clan's capital since Ikoma Otemi was granted the Championship. The castle sees heavy traffic from Ikoma wardens, who constantly patrol the border with the Unicorn and Dragon.

L11 — Bishamon Seido: The Shrine of Bishamon, Fortune of Strength, is elaborate and ornate, maintained by no fewer than one hundred Kitsu shugenja and priests. It is one of the best-maintained buildings in the Lion lands, and also hosts the training grounds for the elite Matsu unit called the Lion's Pride. Males who wish to set foot on the Lion's Pride training grounds must accept a challenge to prove their sincerity and strength in battle.

L12 — Tonfajutsen: Legend holds that the smith Gozuki first developed a fighting style that turned farming implements into what are today known as peasant weapons while living in this city. Despite this poor reputation, the city has prospered as a military outpost, like so many other Lion cities. The helmin here are well trained and work with the city's magistrates to maintain order.

L13 — Shiro Akodo (Loyalty Castle): Abandoned after the Scorpion Clan Coup and reopened after the Battle at Oblivion's

Gate, Shiro Akodo is among the Lion's greatest fortresses. The Akodo are not keen on creature comforts, and most visitors find the castle stark. Shiro Akodo houses Yu Seido, the Shrine of Heroic Courage.

L14 — Kenson Gakka (Humility's Lesson): This fortress, once known as Shiro no Meiyō — the Castle of Honor — stands as a reminder to the Lion's southern neighbors. Over six hundred years ago the Scorpion tried and failed to take Ikoma Castle. In response, the Matsu attacked the Scorpion's nearest castle. When the Matsu overtook the castle, they killed every man, woman and child inside and claimed it for the Lion Clan, renaming it "Humility's Lesson."

L15 — Shiro no Yojin (Castle of Vigilance): Seventy years ago, this castle belonged to the Crane, but they abandoned it when the occupants saw a Lion army marching toward them to avenge a Crane diplomat's slight. The castle has changed hands more than once since that day, but the Lion currently retain control despite the efforts of many Kakita officers.

L16 — Kyakuchū Mura (Footnote Village): Footnote Village was built to watch the Scorpion at the Hidden Watch Keep (S4), but in the aftermath of the Scorpion Clan Coup it became a staging ground against the Scorpion lands. With Beiden Pass destroyed after the War of Spirits, the village has indeed literally become a footnote, and remains in existence only because the Imperial Legions train some of their students here.

L17 — Kaeru Toshi (Captured City): The Lion took this city from the Crane shortly before the Clan War. It was renamed and made into a staging ground for assaults on the Kakita Palace and the Osari Plains. Years of quiet rebellion followed, but the Crane were welcomed into the city following the recent Lion-Crane alliance. Thus far, both clans exist in harmony here.

L18 — Shiro Matsu (Last Breath Castle): This is the ancestral Matsu home, where Lady Matsu established her family. The largest contingent of Lion samurai are here, carefully guarding the supply lines on which the vast Lion armies depend. The armies are made up of all the Lion families, Kitsu, Akodo, Matsu, and Ikoma alike.

L19 — The Kitsu Tombs: Although not the Kitsu family's ancestral home, the Kitsu Tombs are the seat of their power. Here the greatest Kitsu heroes have their remains interred, although most other Lion families choose to have their dead placed within the Hall of Ancestors. The Tombs were once corrupted by the traitorous Jade Champion, Kitsu Okura, but have been cleansed of that dishonor. Tsuno attacks caused extensive damage less than a decade ago, but that too has been repaired.

L20 — Toshi sano Kanemochi Kaeru (City of the Rich Frog): Administrators of a prosperous city of ronin and merchants, the Kaeru family petitioned the Imperial Court for protection during the Four Winds Era. The Lion Clan responded to this petition, and the Kaeru were inducted as Ikoma vassals, making the city a Lion holding. The Unicorn did not receive this well, for the Khan regarded Rich Frog to be his city. War broke out between the Lion and Unicorn, and later the Dragon and Scorpion became involved, but the Lion maintained control.

L21 — Hall of Ancestors: This grand shrine is the most sacred site in Lion lands. Here, the ashes of the Lion's greatest heroes are interred, and their stories recorded in the clan annals. Every Lion family maintains a presence here, each fulfilling its role in turn. Traditionally, the second child of the Matsu daimyo is the primary defender of the Hall, and commands the troops stationed here.



Lands of the Mantis

Capital: Kyuden Gotei

Population: Approximately 1,110,000 (66,000 samurai);

Imports: Raw materials

Exports: Silk, spices, exotic goods

M1 — Kyuden Gotei (Mantis Clan Palace): Perhaps the least traditional palace in Rokugan, the Mantis palace is also perhaps the most splendid. Unconcerned with simple gardens and expressions of Shinsei's teachings, the Mantis palace looks like a treasure trove. Gold, silver, and precious stones adorn every surface, sharply contrasting with the simple homes of other great families. From here, the mighty Mantis fleet guards their islands.

M2 — Toshi no Inazuma (City of Lightning): At least once a year, the tall towers of this city are struck by lightning. The temple of Osano-Wo, among the most extravagant temples in Rokugan and the tallest building in the city, is usually the target.

M3 — Kalmetsu-uo Seido: This shrine to Kalmetsu-uo was erected upon the ascension of the great Mantis Clan daimyo, Yoritomo, who wished to honor his ancestor, and ask his blessing on the Mantis. Since that time, the Mantis have been blessed with good harvests, good trade, and few storms, not to mention elevation to Great Clan status. Most Mantis consider their ancestor to be holding up his end of the bargain, and consequently visit his temple regularly to express their appreciation.

M4 — Tokigogochu: This small Mantis village is famous for two things: fish and festivals. During the times when the boats aren't sailing and there are no holidays to celebrate, it is an ordinary fishing town, quiet and bland. When there is a festival, the city comes to life, with fireworks, celebrations, parades and magnificent parties worthy of the Emperor himself. In fact, several Emperors are said to have visited the New Year's Day celebration in Tokigogochu, although always in disguise lest the Emperor be found in so humble a city.

M5 — Maigosera Seido (Shrine of Lost Sailors): A massive bonfire is always lit in the great tower that rises over this shrine, in

the hopes that the souls lost at sea will see the light and be able to return home to Rokugan and find peace. The tower looks out over the Bay of Dark Water (YYY) and over the wide ocean to the south. Some claim a city of horrible creatures lies at the bottom of the bay, and local sailors throw rice over the side when they cross, so as to avert curses on their heads from the creatures below.

M6 — Kyuden Ashinagabachi (Wasp Clan Palace): The Tsuruchi are the finest archers in Rokugan, and their castle's defenses take advantage of their prowess. The road to the castle cuts through a steep mountain pass, allowing archers to fire upon advancing armies with impunity. Decades ago, long before the Wasp Clan became the Tsuruchi family, this castle was a Scorpion holding that was claimed by the first Tsuruchi. The Tsuruchi and Scorpion still harbor great hostility toward each other.

M7 — Shaiga: This quiet village is governed by the Tsuruchi family and populated only by heimin, all of whom have secretly been taught to wield weapons such as the tonfa. This village accounts for the majority of the Tsuruchi family's food production, and is guarded by the vigilant heimin. The village holds one other secret as well: a vein of gold that exists nearby and is mined only lightly by the Tsuruchi in order to keep its existence secret — and tax-free.

M8 — Tani Senshio (Valley of the Centipede): This secluded valley occupies a small stretch of land between the Treacherous Pass (Location Y) and the sea. The matriarchal Moshi family dwells here, studying their strange blend of magic. Many shrines to Amaterasu, the Sun Goddess, still stand within the valley, despite Amaterasu's death years ago.

M9 — Tempest Island: This small island lies north of most other Mantis holdings. It was avoided early in the clan's history because of the frequent storms that ravage the island. Shortly after the Clan War, Yoritomo ordered a shugenja temple to be established on the island. All Yoritomo shugenja now study there, and the finest go on to become Storm Riders, an elite cadre of shugenja whose mastery over weather and the sea is the stuff of legends.

Lands of the Phoenix

Capital: Kyuden Isawa

Population: Approximately 1,590,000 (88,000 samurai)

Imports: Exotic goods

Exports: Silver, lumber

P1 — Yobanjin Mura (Barbarian Village): This difficult-to-find village trades with the barbarians from the north, the Yobanjin tribes. The materials gathered from these tribes are primitive, but often useful to the Phoenix for their spell research. The Phoenix rarely mention this small village, as its existence is a technical breach of the Imperial Law against trading with gaijin. The Yobanjin tribes, who look Rokugani and speak a primitive dialect of Rokugani, are very much like the early Unicorn, and the Phoenix use this as an excuse for their continued trade.

P2 — The Hidden Temple : Unknown to Rokugan, the secretive Kolat maintain their ancient stronghold deep in the Phoenix mountains. The Ten Masters meet here on occasion, and at least one is present at all times. The temple houses a monstrous crystal called the Oni's Eye, an extremely powerful nemuranai, that affords the Kolat unparalleled surveillance and communication with their agents.

P3 — Seido Jurojin: Asako priests and Brotherhood monks maintain the shrine to Jurojin, Fortune of Longevity. The shrine's distant location makes pilgrimages rare, and visitors are welcomed as unusual diversions from daily life. A small village has sprung up on the shrine's outskirts, filled with those who wish to pray to the Fortune for the secrets of eternal life.

P4 — Kitamihari (Northern Watch): Isawa erected this tower during the Empire's first days. It was originally designed to guard the passes toward Isawa's city, but Gisei Toshi was destroyed hundreds of years ago, and the tower's purpose now is largely memorial. Nevertheless, the Isawa maintain it, stationing troops there and keeping constant watch over the surrounding area. Some say that the Isawa desire to know when the Yobanjin tribes are massing for war, and that the troops stationed here are to keep guard against the barbarians. Others state that the Isawa are hiding something in their northern mountains; none can say for sure.

P5 — Shiro sano Chujitsu and Shinpu (Castle of the Faithful Bride): The Castle of the Faithful Bride was built by an admirer of Matsu Hitomi after her tragic death. The first stone was laid on the first anniversary of her death, and it was completed after 27 years — her age when she died. The samurai lord who loved her never married, and his line ended with his death. Since her return through Oblivion's Gate, Matsu Hitomi has refused to visit the castle built in her honor.

P6 — Doro Owari Mura (Road's End Village): An entirely unremarkable and inhospitable village, Road's End Village is home to many Asako Henshin who wish to avoid interaction with the outside world.



P7 — Reihaido sano Ki-Rin (Shrine of the Ki-Rin): The Ki-Rin is a mystical creature, incomprehensible to the mortal mind. Its rare appearances in the Empire have usually betokened monumental events. The Ki-Rin appeared before the Unicorn Clan's return, and shortly before the Rain of Blood. The shrine devoted to it was a pivotal area in the Dragon-Phoenix war some years ago, and remains one of the largest shrines in Phoenix lands.

P8 — Aojiroi Oku Shiro (Pale Oak Castle): Located on the Pale Oak Plain, the magnificent castle of the same name has been the site of many Imperial Winter Courts, and has often hosted Imperial marriages, treaty signings, and other auspicious events. On his deathbed, Hantei XVII broke with tradition and demanded to be buried in the nearby plains, where his wife had been born. From his ashes, a great white oak grew. A castle was erected about the oak to protect it. Many believe that bark from the tree has healing abilities.

P9 — Kyuden Isawa (Phoenix Clan Palace): The walls of the castle that houses the Isawa family have been enchanted with runes to protect them against both magical and physical attack. The Isawa library, housed here, is the greatest repository of knowledge in Rokugan, containing the researches of a thousand years of Phoenix shugenja.

P10 — Michita Yasumi (Hopeful Rest City): This small city in the center of Phoenix lands is a bustling trade center for the Dragon, Crane, and northern Phoenix lands. Young shugenja often come here to seek a Phoenix patron who can grant them access to the Isawa libraries.

P11 — Shinsei and Sumai Mura (Holy Home Village): It is said that Shinsei dwelled in this village for two months, teaching its inhabitants. Ever since Shinsei's death, the village has been a popular pilgrimage destination. For reasons they did not understand, many early pilgrims brought stones from their homes, which were collected for decades before Shiba Esade, a Master of Earth, used them to create the village's main shrine. The stones fit together perfectly and the shrine has lasted for centuries.

P12 — Ukabu Mura (Floating Village): This village has been politically contested by the Dragon on numerous occasions, but remains in Phoenix hands. It overlooks the banks of Drowned Merchant River, which winds down into Lion and Unicorn lands. Floating Village is renowned for its geisha houses, where geisha are trained to continue their careers in the Imperial city.

P13 — Reihaido Uikku (Uikku Shrine): This ancient shrine was built in honor of Uikku, the prophet whose interpretations and prophecies regarding the Tao have been studied for centuries. His words, recorded by the Phoenix, gave humanity its first roads to understanding the enigmatic wisdom of Shinsei. The entire area is considered sacred, including the large plain that surrounds it (known as Yogen-sha Heigen or Prophet Plain).

P14 — Kyuden Asako (Morning Glory Palace): Also called Castle of the White Phoenix, Kyuden Asako stands atop an outcrop of black rock, and its white walls are so high that the first rays of sunlight make it a shining beacon

for miles. It was once known as Shiro Asako, but was renamed in honor of holding the Emperor's Winter Court decades ago. Many Winter Courts have been held here since that time.

P15 — Shiro Shiba (Shiba Castle): Located in the far northern reaches of Rokugan, Shiro Shiba is a maze of courtyards, donjons, and walls put together in a seemingly haphazard fashion, with the main castle rising from its center. There are those who say the entire castle is an elaborate puzzle. Crab engineers call it the result of bad planning. In addition to housing the Shiba family's daimyo, the Shogun of Rokugan, Kaneka, makes his home here as well.

P16 — Nikesake: This small city, located near Toshi Ranbo, has cemented the Phoenix/Crane alliance for over three centuries. The Phoenix once helped defend Toshi Ranbo from the Lion; now they maintain estates here to supplement those in the Imperial City. Two joint shrines honoring both Crane and Phoenix stand outside the city. It is said that so long as these two shrines stand, there will always be peace between the Phoenix and the Crane.

P17 — Morikage Toshi (Forest Shadow City): When a Shiba governor scorned his Dragon bride, her mother put a curse on Mori Kage. Today, it looks as if the limbs of the nearby forest have reached out to claim the castle. It is completely deserted, save for the ghostly court that walks the castle's halls. The Lying Darkness once held sway here, and it was from this dark place that the kidnapped Emperor Toturi I was rescued following his disappearance.

P18 — Mamoru Kyotei Toshi (Honored Treaty City): Seven hundred years ago, a great war broke out between the Phoenix and Lion. The war raged many years, ending only when both sides sued for peace. The City of the Honored Treaty is the final repository for the peace treaty between the Lion and Phoenix that ended the bitter struggle. The treaty that united Lion and Phoenix against the Dragon, however briefly, was negotiated here, as was the peace between the Phoenix and Dragon.

P19 — Toshi no Omoidoso (City of Remembrance): Centuries ago, the Lion heroine Matsu Hitomi spent her last day of life within this city, and the people there honored her. Upon her return through Oblivion's Gate, the samurai-ko once again took up residence here. The city was badly damaged during the Rain of Blood, and was saved only through the actions of Hitomi and the Phoenix Champion Shiba Mirabu. The Phoenix have since rebuilt the city. Many claim it is the greatest Phoenix city of all, having risen from its ashes like the clan's namesake.

P20 — Zumiki-mihari: This watchtower once stood watch over Otomo lands. Since the Otomo departed after Otosan Uchi's demise, it is largely obsolete. The Shiba nonetheless station men here to provide an early warning should enemies approach.

P21 — Kyuden Agasha: Far more opulent than their previous home with the Dragon Clan, Kyuden Agasha is home to the Agasha family. Here, they continue to study the strange alchemical magic that has been their secret practice for centuries.

Lands of the Scorpion

Capital: Kyuden Bayushi

Population: Approximately 1,810,000 (102,000 samurai)

Imports: Raw materials

Exports: Information

S1 — Pokau: This small village was completely unremarkable until the Unicorn Clan returned to Rokugan. Pokau became the Scorpion holding closest to the Unicorn lands along conventional travel routes. The village has become a city, teeming with merchants and travelers throughout the year. The creation of Seikitsu Pass has only increased the city's importance, both as a trade hub and a military outpost.

S2 — Shiro no Soshi (Castle of Organization): From their tallest towers, the Soshi family can overlook Lion lands from their castle. Shiro no Soshi is hidden away in the mountains, and those who do not know the way can easily become lost for days, just as the Soshi prefer it.

S3 — Ryoko Owari Toshi (Journey's End City): The so-called "City of Lies" is the largest city in the Empire. Vice and crime abound, with gambling dens, geisha houses, and opium parlors readily available. The city retains a mask of legitimacy, of course, as it is the center of Rokugan's medicinal opium trade. The Unicorn retained control over the city for many years, but the Scorpion have finally negotiated its return. The Scorpion were unsurprised to learn that the Unicorn had little success in reducing crime in the city.

S4 — Kakusu Keikai Torid-e (Hidden Watch Keep): High in the mountains, the Hidden Watch Keep overlooks the remnants of Beiden Pass. The Scorpion always manned this high tower with shugenja, who would send signals back to their clan informing the Bayushi family of all traffic through the Pass. Despite the Pass's destruction, the keep remains in use, overlooking the many small passes that are now traveled in place of Beiden.

S5 — Shiro no Shosuro (Castle of Pretending): The Shosuro have always been famous for their herbalist skills and alchemical experiments. Far beneath the entertainment halls, the Shosuro distilled brews both fair and foul. And in the infamous Shosuro Gardens, all manner of strange plants and herbs can be found. Despite its sinister reputation, Shiro no Shosuro is a popular destination, as it is home to the Silken Smile theater, famous throughout the Empire for its magnificent productions.

S6 — Nihal Tower: This great watchtower stands on the only road to Yogo Shiro, and guards a treacherous bit of swamp and cliff walls. From this vantage point on the Spine of the World Mountains' edge, guards can see watch-fires in both the Yogo palace and in nearby Shiro no Shosuro. Messages can be passed between the two in this manner, although none outside the Scorpion have ever deciphered the code.



S7 — Yogo Shiro (Castle of Learning): This great and foreboding Yogo family estate is isolated from the Empire. It is located in the foothills of the Spine of the World Mountains, and once concealed a Black Scroll. The Yogo rarely invite outsiders to attend their courts, and even fewer choose to attend. The Yogo family often hosts Kuni Witch-Hunters and Asako Inquisitors, however, as a sign of their commitment to purity following the Clan War.

S8 — Beiden : The small city south of Beiden Pass has perhaps seen more of war than any other single site in Rokugan. Every conflict between Lion and Scorpion caused Beiden to suffer, as did the Clan War, the Unicorn Clan's return, and countless other skirmishes over the centuries. With Beiden Pass destroyed, Beiden has become a quiet city of largely empty barracks. The helmin who live here seem quite relieved.

S9 — Ginasutra: This small village 'guards the road' to the Shrine of Osano-Wo, though it would be more appropriate to say that its purpose is to lighten a traveler's burdens as he journeys toward that holy site. Supplies can be purchased here, as well as incense, cookies, and other gifts for the Fortunes, and everything is reasonably priced.

S10 — Kyuden Bayushi (Scorpion Clan Palace): The Bayushi family castle is located south of Beiden, the former crossroads of the Empire. The castle was entirely rebuilt after the Clan War, and has returned to its former glory as one of Rokugan's finest palaces, home to many extravagant court sessions.

The infamous Traitor's Grove stands to the castle's south. No one other than the Scorpion have ever dared enter it, not even after the Scorpion Clan Coup.

S11 — Kagoki : This fertile plains village in the center of Bayushi lands provides more food and resources than any other Scorpion settlement. It is said that the only honest Scorpion helmin live in Kagoki, though this saying is often quoted mockingly by those who trade there.

S12 — Hotei Seido: The shrine to Hotei, the Fortune of Contentment, is small but luxurious. Every art form is practiced here, and artisans of all sorts choose this shrine as their destination when they retire. The Scorpion choose to leave the monks of Hotei to their own devices, and have little to do with the shrine save protecting it and taxing it as is their duty.

S13 — Shutai: A rather uninteresting farm village, Shutai is populated by ronin and filled with bandits. Shutai is widely considered to be perhaps the largest bandit gathering place in the Empire, but its distance from Imperial lands keep the Magistrates generally uninterested in the proceedings here.

S14 — Shimomura (Frost Village): This village, on a high plateau, tends to receive the season's first frosts south of the Seikitsu Mountains. It lies on a major travel route between the Scorpion and southern Crane lands, and has many fine inns and tea houses to cater to wealthy travelers.

S15 — The Yogo Towers: While Shiro Yogo serves as home to the Yogo family and as the center of their administrative duties, the Yogo Towers are wholly devoted to the family's shugenja dojo. Here, young Yogo first come to grips with magic, and learned Yogo masters constantly seek a means of breaking their family's ancient curse.

Lands of the Unicorn

Capital: Shiro Moto

Population: Approximately 3,650,000 (203,000 samurai)

Imports: Finished goods

Exports: Exotic goods, horses

U1 — Exile's Road: This shrine guards the entrance to the mountain passes leading to the lands far north of Rokugan. It is called "Sorrow's Path" by the Unicorn, and "Exile's Road" by others in the Empire. Occasionally, a samurai's burden of dishonor will be so great that the Emperor sentences him to permanent banishment through Exile's Road.

U2 — Kibukito (Far North Village): This village trades with the reclusive Badger Clan who live in the northern mountains. It also contains a shrine for the souls of those who have been banished to travel Sorrow's Path (U1), and an active monastery dedicated to the study of Shinsei's Tao.

U3 — Exile's Road Watchtower: This watchtower exists for the purpose of maintaining guard over Exile's Road, so that no person sent into the pass can return unnoticed.

U4 — Egami Mura: Owned by the Shinjo, this village specializes in breeding tough ponies and horses for the Shinjo. Visitors are rarely allowed to see the barns or training areas, as none but members of the Unicorn Clan may ride these horses.

U5 & U6 — Bikami and Akami: These twin farming communities work the fields that give the Unicorn their massive food production, feeding their armies, horses, and nobles each year from the harvest of only two locations. These fields are not rich, but are wide, and contain a great number of helmin. The population density in these two villages is immense; if any Unicorn daimyo wished to press ashigaru soldiers into service, this is where he would come to do so.

U7 — Shiro Shinjo (Far Traveler Castle): It is here the Shinjo make their home. The Shinjo palace is not large, but is designed strangely, with high towers and bulbous caps on the buildings. Unicorn architecture draws on design elements the clan encountered during their travels outside the Empire, and nowhere is this more evident than in Shiro Shinjo. Once the Unicorn's center of activity, Shiro Shinjo now entertains few visitors, as the family was greatly dishonored by the actions of Shinjo Yokatsu two generations ago.

U8 — Yashigi: This small village offers supplies and a place to rest along the journey through the Unicorn lands toward Shiro Shinjo. It is simple, clean, and suffers from frequent earthquakes.

U9 — Bugaisha (Outsider Keep): This is where the Unicorn assign dishonored samurai. In order to remove them from the public eye, a samurai thus exiled from his clan may as well shave his head and retire. There is no exit from Bugaisha. Until the Dark Moto's destruction, this keep also served as the primary dojo for the Moto Bushi School. The school has since relocated to Shiro Moto.

U10 — Oshindoka Toshi: This city was founded by a Unicorn who loved a Crane. It was his hope that if he could build a city for her, she would see his worth and join him in marriage. While he was building the city, however, the Lion attacked the Kakita lands, sacking her village and slaying her and her family. He spent seventeen years hunting down her murderers, leaving his city in ruins until he returned. The murderers are buried where they fell, but his lost love's image graces the city wall's high arched gates.

U11 — Shiro Utaku Shojo (Battle Maiden Castle): The Utaku family's home lies in an ideal location, affording freedom of movement for defending troops while at the same time inhibiting the movement of advancing armies. It lacks the splendor of other Unicorn castles, but it is perhaps the best fortified.

U12 — Kurayami-ha Mura (Dark Edge Village): This village is small, but boasts the greatest tournament fields in the Empire. It is considered a great honor for two samurai to duel on these well-tended fields. The Emperor is said to have held the first duel for the Emerald Championship on these fields, and although that tournament has since moved elsewhere, these fields still host many formal Imperial occasions.

U13 — Shirol Kishi Mura (White Shore Village): Just to the west of White Shore Lake is a small village that shares the lake's name. This village of fishermen supplies the Unicorn with both fresh and dried fish.

U14 — Mura nisa Kawa Nemul (Village by the Sleeping River): This quiet village on the shores of the Sleeping River has a small traveler's inn for those walking or riding to Unicorn cities.

U15 — Otaku Seido: This shrine, dedicated to the first Otaku, is a necessary pilgrimage for any young Unicorn maiden on the edge of becoming a Shiotome. Young Utaku girls are not allowed to accept their gempukku name until they have spent one night in this shrine, communing with their ancestors and seeking their guidance. This shrine maintains the Otaku name rather than dishonoring the original Otaku by changing it.

U16 — Daikoku Seido: The shrine to the Fortune of Wealth is opulently decorated in gold and jewels. The Unicorn insist on decorating it to their tastes — which tends to keep common pilgrims away — but it is nevertheless numbered among the most sacred places in Rokugan.

U17 — Toshi no aida ni Kawa (City between the Rivers): This castle guards the junction of the two rivers that flow from the Unicorn lands. Only once has an invasion force tried to move against the Unicorn by traveling up-river. It was such a dismal failure that it has never been attempted again.

U18 — Mizu Mura (Laketown): Shirol Kishi Mizu-umi is called "White Shore Lake" because the sands on its shores are a pristine white, and the village near its southern border is simply called Mizu Mura. This inland fishing village depends on the purity of the lake's waters.

U19 — Duzaki Toshi [FORMERLY U20]: This small city on the far side of the Unicorn lands houses the private estates of the Utaku and Shinjo daimyos. Often used for treaties and solitary training, the guards who serve these lords call these lands home.

U20 — Shiro Ide (Great Day Castle): An excellent school but a poor fortress, the Ide palace is regarded for its unorthodox magical teachings. The Ide family specializes in spatial magic, although the majority of the family serve as courtiers rather than shugenja.

U21 — Shiro Iuchi (Gatherer of Winds Castle): Called "Gatherer of Winds Castle" because of the violent gusts that sweep down from the mountains, Shiro Iuchi is the home of the Iuchi family. Despite its being the ancestral home of a shugenja family, Shiro Iuchi is a virtual fortress due to its proximity to Iuchi Pass (U30). Any army wishing to attack the Unicorn from the south must first contend with Shiro Iuchi.

U22 — Hisatu-Kesu: Built into the foothills, Hisatu-Kesu is a sprawling village that spans many miles in every direction. The city became a popular destination for tourists after Ryoko Owari



became more difficult to reach following Beiden Pass's destruction. Even though the Tuchi Pass and now Seikitsu Pass now offer easy access to Ryoko Owari, Hisatu-Kesu still draws many visitors to the southern Unicorn lands due to its numerous hot springs.

U23 — Okuyaki: Built along an empty stretch of road and surrounded by rice fields, the central village of Okuyaki is more a collection of random buildings than a planned settlement. Although many travel through the area heading south toward Seikitsu Pass, few bother to stop in Okuyaki. Those who do are often slick-talking con men who seek to separate the backwards villagers from their hard-earned profits. Unicorn samurai are stationed in the village to prevent this, although they consider the duty a punishment.

U24 — Watchtower: Facing the River of the Unexpected Hero, samurai stationed in this watchtower can see for miles on clear days. In the event of a Shadowlands assault, more Unicorn samurai are stationed here than at other such fortifications. Heavily armed and armored, they drill and train constantly. For two miles in every direction, the ground is scarred and trampled by the combat maneuvers conducted by the Unicorn regiment stationed here, fondly nicknamed "The Unexpected Legion."

U25 — Turo-Kojiri: Just a few days' ride from Shiro Ide, the important village of Turo-Kojiri extracts ore from the nearby mountains, and the fertile valley just below the village provides the Unicorn with over 2,000 koku of rice a year. Although occasionally contested by a greedy Iuchi daimyo, the Ide have had little trouble in managing this fertile and resource-rich landmark. In recent years, many ronin with a touch of prosperity have made their way to Turo-Kojiri, enjoying the remote and quiet surroundings.

U26 — Shinomen Tower: This watchtower overlooks the Naga lands, and the Naga city of Iyotisha. This was the first location to treat the Naga's awakening seriously, and it maintains watch over their cities as they sleep. The Unicorn stand ready to defend their sleeping allies from any threat.

U27 — Shiro Moto (Moto Castle): The Kami Shinjo designated Moto Gaheris as the new Unicorn Clan Champion to succeed Shinjo Yokatsu when she exposed Yokatsu as a Kolat. Disgusted by the Shinjo family's corruption, Khan Gaheris commissioned the construction of a new castle for his family. Shiro Moto is a formidable structure of obvious gaijin design, but its interior is quite comfortable.

U28 — Shinden Horiuchi (Horiuchi Temple): This small temple is home to the tiny Horiuchi family, sworn followers of Horiuchi Shoan, a hero from the Clan War and Battle at Oblivion's Gate. Shoan retired to a monastery years ago, but those who have taken her name continue to serve the Unicorn Clan to the best of their ability.

U29 — Seikitsu Pass and the Great Crater: Not long after the destruction of Beiden Pass, Lord Sun sent a mighty ball of fire from the heavens to destroy the rubble blocking Seikitsu Pass, a pass closed by Akodo One-Eye centuries ago. The Unicorn have laid claim to the pass, as it lies very close to their lands. Rumors of an ancient city in the crater have persisted for years despite the scoffing of Unicorn scholars.

U30 — Iuchi Pass: Small and often overlooked, Iuchi Pass has been a secondary means of crossing the Spine of the World Mountains for centuries. It was overshadowed first by Beiden Pass and later by Seikitsu Pass, but the Unicorn and nearby Miya have made great use of it for hundreds of years.

The Unaligned and Minor Clan Lands

Capital: Toshi Ranbo

Population: Approximately 2,500,000 (143,000 samurai)

Imports: Various

Exports: Various

A1 — Kyuden Miya (Castle of the Miya): The Miya, the Emperor's heralds and diplomats, live farther from the Emperor than any other Imperial Family. Their palace is nestled among the Spine of the World Mountains, just north of the Plain of Thunder. Kyuden Miya is famous for its extensive records on the heraldry and personal mons of clans both Great and Minor. Once a year, the Miya fund the Emperor's Blessing, a caravan of builders, artisans, and shugenja who travel to areas of Rokugan in need of assistance, repairing landmarks, building schools, and otherwise doing good deeds.

A2 — Shiro Usagi (Hare Clan Stronghold): A Scorpion army leveled the Hare Clan stronghold shortly before the Scorpion Clan Coup. In a tragic but unrelated twist, the Emperor dissolved the Hare Clan shortly thereafter due to accusations of maho. The claims were later proven false, however, and the Usagi family rebuilt their home larger than before. Since that time, the Hare have become stronger than ever, adding a second family, the Ujina, to their clan.

A3 — The Castle of the Emerald Champion: For a thousand years, the lands north of Otosan Uchi have belonged to the Emerald Champion. No army has ever dared threaten its borders, as all daimyo are painfully aware that such an action is an invitation for the other Clans to raise their own armies against the invader. The current Champion, Yasuki Hachi, has refused to abandon his traditional estate despite Otosan Uchi's destruction.

The castle sits on a high hill surrounded by a wide, empty plain. Any army would be seen days in advance of its arrival. A chrysanthemum — the Imperial mon — is proudly displayed at the castle's front gate.

A4 — Kiken and Roka Toshi/Ryu Bannin Toshi (Treach-erous Pass City/Dragon's Guard City): A narrow pass through the mountains gave this city its name. It sits in a valley on the seashore surrounded by high mountains. A famous storyteller once told a tale of a small child who gave a dragon a rice ball here. The dragon promised the child that her family and all her descendants would know peace for a thousand years. Since that time, the little girl's descendants have been numbered among the most prominent fishermen in Rokugan.

A5, A6, A8, A10 — Hub Villages: The huge villages that surround Otosan Uchi fared better than the city when it was destroyed some years ago, but not a great deal better. Many surviving residents have moved elsewhere, leaving the villages strangely quiet.

A5 — Mura Kita Chushin (North Hub Village): This village has been more or less overtaken by the Tortoise Clan. The buildings emptied by fleeing heimin are now filled with shops and warehouses full of exotic goods the Tortoise sell all along the coast.

A6 — Mura Higashi Chushin (East Hub Village): Once a home away from home for ronin and mercenaries of all sorts, East Hub Village is a shadow of its former self. The mercenaries have gone elsewhere, and there is very little in the village to bring in outsiders. The Tsi, a family of ronin, still live and work here, and the beautiful weapons their smiths produce attract the only visitors that still travel to the village. The House of Green Koi, a tea house founded by a former Imperial Herald, is the center of all activity in the village.

A8 — Mura Nishi Chushin (West Hub Village): West Hub Village has the fewest remaining citizens of all Hub Villages. Its great Imperial storehouses stand empty and unused.

A10 — Mura Minami Chushin (South Hub Village): The South Hub Village is slightly more active than the East and West Hubs, but not as busy as the North Hub. The village's proximity to Kyuden Seppun, which is visible to the north, keeps it slightly more active, with travelers and pilgrims coming through on a semi-regular basis.

A7 — Yoake Fuseru (Dawn Tower): This ancient tower once guarded the Emperor's Bay. Now it stands in ruins, destroyed by a monstrosity from the sea during Daigotsu's attack years ago.

A9 — The Ruins of Otsan Uchi: Founded by the first Hantei, Otsan Uchi was the Empire's capital for over a thousand years. During that time, it saw many invasions and conflicts, including the Battle at White Stag, the Scorpion Clan Coup, the second Day of Thunder, and the Battle of Otsan Uchi. After this last battle, the city was nearly in ruins. The Lion Champion, Matsu Nimuro, declared that the city was cursed and that, in the absence of an Emperor to purify it, it must be destroyed. The Lion razed it with little protest from other clans.

The city is not entirely abandoned. Nezumi haunt the ruins, as do a few pathetic scavengers. The Yotsu ronin family lives here as well, protecting those who remain within the city to the best of their ability.

- **Kyuden Seppun (Castle of the Seppun):** This great palace is just south of Otsan Uchi's ruins. The Seppun have mostly moved to Toshi Ranbo, but they maintain their primary home here, both in memory of and as penance for their failure to protect Otsan Uchi from the Shadowlands. Kyuden Seppun is still regarded as holy by the Brotherhood and many other honorable orders in Rokugan, and they do not view it with the same shame the Seppun feel.

A11 — Nichibotsu Fuseru (Sunset Tower): This ancient tower continues to guard the Emperor's Bay, having been spared during the Battle of Otsan Uchi. The Tortoise maintain a duty post here, more as a sign of their devotion to the city than anything else.

A12 — Mizen Mura: The small town marks the border between Imperial and Crane lands. It is protected by Seppun guards, nearly all of whom are related to the Crane in one way or another.

A13 — Reihaido Shinsei (Crow Shrine): The animal most associated with Shinsei is the crow. When he and his Seven Thunders needed a scout, the crow — then a bird with a white chest and beautiful colorful wings — volunteered. The crow survived his journey, but he was blackened by the powerful forces that passed between Shinsei's Thunders and Fu Leng. Crows are now regarded as birds of omen, ever watchful for troubles ahead. Only those with a pure heart and true devotion can find Shinsei's shrine. It is said that those who do learn Shinsei's greatest secrets from the Kenku.

A14 — Shinden Osano-Wo (Temple of Osano-Wo): The Fortune of Fire and Thunder is Osano-Wo, and his greatest temple is here. The monks who keep the temple are known for their rituals of scarring and secret magic. Constant thunderstorms encourage the local vegetation to become green and lush, but the land itself is rocky and difficult to traverse. Moss grows over the rocks, and the area is humid, even in the driest seasons.

A15 — Koeru Mura: This small village grows rice and grain for the Minor Clans. Every year, the ronin governor of Koeru meets with the surrounding Minor Clans, and sells the past year's harvest to the highest bidder. This is the only means by which this small, independent ronin town survives from year to year.

A16 — Shiro Heichi (Boar Clan Stronghold): Once home to the Boar Clan, this ruined castle has stood empty for centuries. No one knows for certain what fate befell the Boar, but since their disappearance, a restless spirit called the Shakoki Dogu has haunted these mountains, feasting on madness.

A17 — Zakyō Toshi (Pleasure City): Five hundred years ago, this city's name might have suited it; now it is simply a decorative name given to one of the busiest commercial cities in the south. Zakyō is a haven for lechery and vice, kept clean only through the constant interference of Imperial troops stationed here to watch the Scorpion border with the Fox and Sparrow lands.

A18 — Dangai : A small monastery in the center of unaligned lands, this haven of enlightenment takes advantage of the arid land by constructing rock gardens and libraries. The monastery relies on travelers to bring food for its monks.

A19 — Daidoji Yukan-se (Valiant Daidoji Tower): The ronin who hold this tower were once Crane, or at least their ancestors were. The tower was claimed by the Crane after a victory over the Scorpion, but some secret vice caused the samurai here to be cast out. Their descendants constantly struggle to gain entry to the Crane once more, but without success.

A20 — Kudo: This small farming village is in lands that once belonged to the Hare, but did not fall within their borders after the clan was reformed. Possession of Kudo has been something of a sore spot between the Fox and Sparrow Clans, who share its crops.

A21 — Meidochi: A farming village in the Hare lands, Meidochi is where the Ujina family conducts much of its business.

A22 — Kaia Osho Mura (Humble Priest Village): A quiet Fox Clan village on the edge of Kitsune Mori, this village accounts for the majority of Fox food production, and is guarded by the vigilant shugenja of that peaceful clan. Unicorn samurai can often be found here, seeking rest from their travels in the lands of their distant cousins, the Fox.

A23 — Kitsune Mori Mura: This village within the forest of the Fox is filled with strange architecture — houses grown from trees, and sliding screens made of forest leaves rather than rice paper. The Fox Clan makes use of all the forest's bounty, harvesting its acorns, berries and nuts as well as the food grown in Fox villages elsewhere. There is a large shrine to Inari, the Fortune of Rice and friend to the spirit kitsune that inhabit the wild forest groves around the Fox Clan Palace.

A24 — Kyuden Kitsune (Fox Clan Palace): When Lady Shinjo left Rokugan, some of those who remained behind became the Fox Clan. While they do not have the same affinity for cavalry as their Unicorn cousins, their skills in hunting, herbalism, and woodsmanship are unparalleled.

A25 — Kyuden Suzume (Sparrow Clan Palace): The Sparrow Clan was formed several hundred years ago when a young Crane's inappropriate comment, combined with a difficult tax season, led to the unlikely elevation of his father to head a new Minor Clan. The Sparrow Clan "palace" is stark and functional, providing a fortified position that the Sparrow and their heimin can defend in time of war.

A26 — Koutetsukan (Iron Turtle City): This humble city is the single largest producer of boats and ships within the Empire, building vessels for the Mantis, Crane, Phoenix and Crab fleets as well as for the Seppun. It is said that with a ship built in Koutetsukan and a Mantis navigator, there is no port a captain cannot reach.

A27 — Shiro Morito (Ox Clan Castle): For his valor during the War of the Spirits, former Unicorn bushi Morito was awarded a small fief in the northern regions of the Dragon Heart Plain to found his own minor clan. Morito adopted the nickname given to him by his fellow ronin as the name of his new clan: the Ox Clan. Many former members of the Shinjo family, cast out or dishonored after the revelation of Shinjo Yokatsu as a Kolat Master, joined Morito in hopes of beginning a new life.

A28 — Toku Torid-e (Virtuous Keep): One of Toturi's chief lieutenants throughout the Clan War, the samurai known as Toku was first promoted to captain of the Imperial Guard by Emperor Toturi I, then later given leave to found his own Minor Clan. Toku called it the Monkey Clan and proceeded to serve Toturi until the latter's recent death. The great hero Toku sacrificed himself to stop the Bloodspeakers from gaining a Black Scroll, but his children carry on the Monkey traditions in his memory.

A29 — The Ruins of Shiro Ichiro (Badger Clan Stronghold): Once a remote and often overlooked clan, the Badger came into prominence when virtually their entire clan was slain by an Oni attack shortly before the Clan War's onset. The few surviving Ichiro family members gave their support to Toturi during the war and were allowed to keep their name despite their lack of a homeland. To this day, the castle remains mostly ruins, and the Badger have sworn to rebuild it only when the rest of their lands are made whole at last.

A30 — Toshi Ranbo wo Shien Shite Reigisaho (Violence Behind Courtliness City): Once, this city was the center of border disputes between Lion and Crane, changing hands constantly for years. It was not until an unlikely alliance between Matsu Nimuro and Doji Kurohito, Champions of their clans, that the wars ended and the city was declared the new capital of Rokugan.

Toshi Ranbo is growing faster than any city in the Empire. The Imperial families were the first to establish estates, but the other Great Clans and several Minor Clans soon followed. Despite setbacks due to fires and conflict, at the rate it is currently expanding, Toshi Ranbo will need only a few more years to reach the size that Otosan Uchi was.

A31 — Vyakarana: Called by some the City of Magic, this Naga city lies well inside the Shinomen Forest. The city never fully recovered from the first Great Sleep, and much of it remains covered in thick, mystical webs that even the Naga do not fully understand. Since allying himself with the Naga, the Unicorn general Moto Chen and his cohort Akasha, the half-human Legacy of the Naga, have made their home here together with several hundred awakened Asp warriors. They chose this city due to its proximity to their Unicorn allies, although they do not venture into certain quarters for fear of what may lie hidden there.

Major Geographical Features

The following location descriptions refer to the locations labeled on the color map at the front of this book.

A — Kanashimi no Komichi (Sorrow's Path): This natural mountain pass leads to the lands far north of Rokugan's northern mountain range. Some call it "Exile's Road," for the banished souls who depart along it heading north.

B — Yakeru yoni Atsui (Burning Sands): The Unicorn and Scorpion know this treacherous desert, but no other clan has ever crossed it and survived. It is rumored that a great city, surrounded by many strange Empires, lies in the distance beyond the sands.

C — Kyodai and Kabe sano Kita (Great Wall of the North): These mountains isolate Rokugan from the north. The Unicorn say that there are steppes to the north where barbarians ride on great steeds, killing and pillaging without mercy. The Dragon and Phoenix are not certain, but maintain a steady vigil just in case.

D — Hinanbashi sano Mitsu Shimai (Refuge of the Three Sisters): High in the mountains above the Dragon keeps, one of Rokugan's rare shrines to Lady Moon sits on at the end of a treacherous path called "The Climb of the Moon." Those who are diligent and discover the hidden path find the shrine occupied by three sisters who have tended the shrine for as long as any can remember. Speculation makes the sisters out to be ghosts, but none can say for certain. The three sisters speak in riddles, answering any question put to them. Legends say that any question put to them is answered truthfully, but ruin befalls any who ask.

E — Heigan Ryo Kokoro (Dragon Heart Plain): This high, barren plain overlooks the Dragon fortresses to the southwest and the Shrine of the Ki-Rin to the southeast. Only broken stones and shattered foundations remain to mark the home of the Snake Clan, who were utterly destroyed by the Phoenix Clan over seven and a half centuries ago. Occasionally, foolhardy shugenja dig about in the ruins hoping to find some remnants of the Snake's dark magic. The lucky return home disappointed. The unlucky do not return at all.

F — Tani Giza (Jagged Valley): This area of the mountains is largely made up of loose shale, large chunks of which break off of the mountains and slide away into the valleys below. The Phoenix sometimes train samurai in this area, to teach them alertness.

G — Mori Isawa (Phoenix Woodlands): There was a reason the Phoenix settled in this area of Rokugan. The wood from the Isawa forest has an unknown quality that is particularly beneficial for their shugenja's scrolls.

H — Nani-aku Heitai Heigen (700 Soldier Plain): It was here that seven hundred soldiers were victorious against an army of seven thousand, according to legend.

I — Mizu-umi Ryo (Dragon Lake): The locals call the lake in the northwest "Dragon Lake" because of the shrine to the Guardian of Water that is on the south side of the lake. Some say the Dragon of Water will appear at the shrine to the worthy.

- **Nagashi Naga Toshi (Sunken Naga City):** At the bottom of Dragon Lake, there is said to be a city that remains perfectly preserved. Statues suggest it may have once been a Naga city, but none can say for certain, and the Naga were strangely silent on the issue while they were awake.

J — River of the Lost Valley (Kenku Home River): Though it is far from any settlements, many bushi risk the journey to this remote river. Its source is rumored to be the home to the wise and mischievous Kenku. Many legendary Rokugani swordsmen are said to have been trained by these swordmasters.

K — The Utaku Meadows: Though the Unicorn boast many large cities, such areas exist mainly for trade and to meet with foreign dignitaries. It is open land like this that is truly their home. This area is particularly popular for the nomadic clan, and many mobile villages of yurt and chomchog tents arise here overnight, only to be moved miles away at a whim. When not dealing with matters of state in Shiro Moto, the Khan can often be found hunting or training his troops here.

L — Kyodai and Josho Suru (The Great Climb): These are the foothills that lead to the Dragon Clan's mountain palaces. They are tight, twisting and confusing and easy to get lost in, eventually reaching impossible heights. There is a single pass that climbs the mountains, and that is guarded by the Mirumoto family.

M — Kyodai and Taiyo (The Great Fall): Due to heavy volcanic activity, there are many rockslides in this area, making it quite dangerous. The Dragon Clan train young samurai in this area — it keeps them on their toes.

N — Nemui Kaminari Yama (Sleeping Thunder Mountain): The volcano south of the Shrine of the Ki-Rin rumbles from time to time, but has yet to erupt.

O — Kanawa Taki (Iron Rings Cascade): One thousand years ago, Shinsel stopped at this waterfall and quenched his thirst. Since that day, its waters have been considered holy. Blacksmiths come from across Rokugan to this waterfall to use the pure waters for quenching their steel.

P — Heigen Yuki (Snow Plain): Every winter, a great deal of snow drifts down from the mountains onto these plains. The mountain passes beyond "Snow Plain" (as it is called by the Unicorn) lead to lands far to the west, details of which are only known to Unicorn scholars.

Q — Shiroy Kishi Mizu-umi (White Shore Lake): "White Shore Lake" gains its name from the white sands on its shores. It is rumored that ningyo dwell at the lake's bottom. Popular belief holds that those who eat ningyo flesh become immortal, but the Unicorn have declared such an act illegal in light of their alliance with the sleeping Naga.

R — Kawa Nemui (Sleeping River): The river that runs down from the Lake of the Sunken City is called the Sleeping River, after the sleeping city from which its waters run. The local peasants insist that if sand from the bottom of this river is placed in a sake bottle, any who drink from the bottle will fall into a magical slumber.

S — Shiroy Kishi Heigen (White Shore Plain): A great battle was fought here over 300 years ago. A force of Scorpion attacked the recently returned Unicorn, but the Unicorn fought them off. According to the Unicorn, the Scorpion thought them to be weak, uneducated barbarians, and were swiftly shown the error of their thinking. The Scorpion, when asked about it, concede the point and change the subject.

T — Hae Moete Kawa (Firefly River): Firefly River is important for the Unicorn Clan's commerce. This river carries most Unicorn trade goods, both upstream and downstream.

U — Oboreshinu Boekisho Kawa (Drowned Merchant River): Hundreds of years ago, bandits attacked a prominent merchant near this river. They tortured him and his family, eventually drowning them in the river. Local peasants say that their ghosts wander the bank, looking to exact justice upon the bandits who drowned them.

V — Tanima sano Futatsu Taisho (Valley of the Two Generals): It was here that two of the Empire's greatest commanders — Matsu Kijoruko and Daidoji Wasutsubo — fought the Seven Day Battle. In the end, the commanders faced each other on the battlefield, surrounded by bloody corpses after hundreds of hours of constant combat. Although Kijoruko was the victor, her wounds from the duel overcame her moments later. The battlefield remains a holy site with a shrine dedicated to both generals located where they fell.

W — Seikitsu sano Yama no Oi (Spine of the World Mountains): This is the mountain range that splits Rokugan in two. The Seikitsu Mountains contain the tallest peaks in Rokugan (including the legendary Mountain of the Seven Thunders), and the few trails through it are narrow and fraught with peril. With the destruction of Belden Pass, the only pass large enough to move an army through is Seikitsu Pass.

X — Kawa Mitsu Kishi (Three Sides River): Perhaps the most contested body of water in Rokugan is the Three Sides River. Historically, it has provided the heart of trade and commerce for three clans, the Scorpion, the Lion and the Crane, in the heart of the Empire.

Y — Kiken Roka (Treacherous Pass): A story tells of a merchant who lost his life in this pass hundreds of years ago, and his ghost still haunts the mountainsides. At night, haunting winds whip through the gorges, making it sound as if the mountains themselves weep. It is a long and dangerous pass, but it is also the shortest route from the Phoenix lands to the lands of the Emerald Champion.

Z — Yama no Kuyami (Mountains of Regret): This range is called Regret because of the many lives lost in the only pass through the mountains. In the light of the sunset, the snow on the mountaintops turns red, as if the mountains were bleeding with the setting of the sun. Sightings of ogres and goblins in this area lead some shugenja to suspect an ancient breeding ground somewhere in the caves, but if it exists, the Phoenix have yet to find it.

AA — Kawa sano Fui no Dansei wo Sasu (River of the Unexpected Hero): It was here, about two centuries ago, that the Unicorn battled an army of Shadowlands creatures that had broken free from the Crab. The creatures tried to despoil the Chrysanthemum Petal Lake, but the courage of a farmer proved to be the crucial factor in the battle. He turned the tide, and the river at which the battle was fought has been named in his honor.

BB — Mizu-umi Kiku Hanabira (Chrysanthemum Petal Lake): Hundreds of chrysanthemums line the shores of this lake. Legend holds that the original chrysanthemums were planted by Hantei XVII to mourn the loss of his son. Indeed, most Emperors visit the lake to celebrate the annual Chrysanthemum Festival.

CC — Plum Blossom Pass: It is said that in this pass, the Kami Togashi first reached enlightenment, eating a plum to break his fast. Oddly, no plum trees grow here. In fact, the harsh climate seems to forbid the possibility of such a tree ever having grown here.

DD — Yama sano Kaminari (Mountain of the Seven Thunders): The tallest mountain in Rokugan is named after the Seven Thunders who went with Shinsei to face the dark lord Fu Leng on the first Day of Thunder. There is a shrine dedicated to their memory at the highest peak, maintained by the Brotherhood of Shinsei.

EE — Heigen no Otaku (Plains of Battle): This is the heart of Lion country, guarded by Lion samurai. However, the Lion have no protection from the Emerald Champion's taxes. The taxation of Lion lands has often fallen to a Crane, who have dominated the Champion's position for centuries.

FF — Heigen no Hayai Mondai (Plain of Fast Troubles): The plains surrounding Otosan Uchi are known as the "Plain of Fast Troubles." It was once illegal to move armed men through this area, but that law is a dead letter now that the Imperial capital has fallen.

GG — Rokugan Yogasha Heigen (Emerald Champion Plain): These rich plains surround a large, well-fortified castle. Both castle and lands are granted to whomever succeeds at the Test of the Emerald Champion. Yasuki Hachi has held this position for almost a decade now.

HH — Hanto no Yoake (Peninsula of Dawn): Pinched between North Hub Village and the Bay of the Golden Sun, this peninsula is home to the Tortoise Clan. The Tortoise once lacked a daimyo, answerable as they were to the Emperor directly. The clan is autonomous now, and heads an alliance of Minor Clans, representing the others in court. The Tortoise have thus far refused to abandon their holdings in Otosan Uchi, perhaps fearing that they would not be given new lands if they did so.

II — Naga Doro Heigen (Naga Road Plain): For many years, scholars have studied and picked over the ancient Naga ruins in this area. After their awakening, the Naga allowed scholars from the clans to study here once more. Now that they have returned to their slumber, most outside the Unicorn choose not to study here out of respect.

JJ — Heigen no Kaminari (Plain of Thunder): The plain of thunder is dedicated to the Fortune of Thunder, Osano-Wo. It is here that the Test of the Emerald Champion is held, in honor of the Fortune who is the patron of all bushi.

KK — Heigen sano Doji (Doji family lands): The Doji family's plush lands are dotted with rice farms and merchant caravans, presenting an inviting target for bandits. The Daidoji have ensured that those bandits who do attack rarely survive to enjoy their bounty.

LL — Wan sano Kin Taiyo (Bay of the Golden Sun): The harbor of Otosan Uchi sees little traffic anymore. Peasant fishing vessels and Tortoise ships are the only traffic through the largely ruined port. But the setting sun still casts the city's remains in a majestic, golden shine in the evenings, and it is not uncommon to find the city's survivors gathered here to enjoy a moment of beauty in the evening.

MM — Shinomen Mori (Hidden Forest): The Shinomen Forest is the most expansive and mysterious forest in Rokugan. It is said to be enchanted, and that all manner of giant creatures can be found within it. The outer edges have been explored, but there are hundreds of miles within the forest that no man has ever seen. Even the Naga do not claim to know all the forest's secrets.



NN — Kawa no Kin (River of Gold): Once a major trade route of the Scorpion, no clan now claims the River of Gold. Some have attempted to send cargo ships along its waters, but lightning-fast pirate raids have harassed all who attempt it. Most consider the river more trouble than it is worth.

OO — Roka Beiden (Beiden Pass): Once the crossroads of Rokugan, Beiden Pass was the largest and most frequently used pass through the Seikitsu Mountains. It was contested by the Lion, Scorpion, and Crane for hundreds of years, and many great battles were fought here. The pass was destroyed during the War of Spirits, collapsed by magic and sabotage to destroy the spirit armies of Hantei XVI as they traveled through it.

PP — Mizu-umi no Fuko (Lake of Sorrows): Stories say that this lake is haunted by the souls of those who died at Beiden Pass and were not properly buried. Small shrines dot the shoreline in homage to those who fell and whose names are not remembered.

QQ — Osari Plains (The Plains of the Crane Clan): The plains here are lush and rich, but local peasants warn against wandering about after sunset. Hungry ghosts are said to roam free during the night, looking to feed on the blood of the living and drag the wicked screaming to the spirit realm of Gaki-do.

RR — Kawa sano Okami Jikan (River of the Hour of the Wolf): Named for a battle between the Scorpion and the Lion in which ten thousand samurai died during the Hour of the Wolf, shortly after sunset. The battle took place at Beiden Pass in torchlight, and the dawn was so horrifying that "Hour of the Wolf" was deemed ill-omened. That hour is now referred to as the "Hour of the Dog."

SS — Aka Mizu-umi (Red Lake): The lake that the River of the Hour of the Wolf feeds into is known as the Red Lake. After the battle, the blood ran into the river and down into the lake many miles south. For months afterward, the lake remained as red and as thick as blood. On the anniversary of that terrible battle, during the hour of the wolf, the lake's waters turn red and blood washes up on its shores.

TT — Kawa sano Zatu Shudoshi (River of the Blind Monk): This river gains its name from an old monk who lives in a small shrine by the riverbank. He will ferry any who can answer a riddle. He has lived in his little shrine for at least two hundred years now, and passengers who ask his age get a knowing smile from the monk and a bath from the river.

UU — Michi ni Mayotta Musume Irie (Lost Daughter Inlet): This is the famous island where the first Hantei found his bride. The most famous telling of this tale was the play by the famous Lion playwright, Akodo Taberu. Acknowledged as his masterpiece, the play manages to tell the tale in such a way that makes villains of the Crane characters without portraying them as villainous.

VV — Nanatsu hi Otaku Heigen (Seven Day Battle Plain): Three hundred years ago, a ronin named Reichin assisted the Emerald Champion in defeating Iuchiban and his order of Bloodspeakers. Reichin was granted a small castle and the lands that surrounded it. The battle with Iuchiban lasted for seven days; thus the name of the plain.

WW — Ronin Chiiki (Ronin Plains): These lands are owned by the Three Man Alliance, the alliance of Fox and Sparrow clans with the Tsuruchi family (formerly the Wasp Clan). The Ronin Plains were once heavily guarded because they bordered the Scorpion lands; now they are somewhat more relaxed, since a Scorpion attack would incur the Mantis Clan's wrath.

XX — Takia Kusa Heigan (Tall Grass Plain): These so-called plains were once an area of rich farmland, but were abandoned ten years ago when the fields suddenly became infertile. Recently, a great forest of bamboo has sprung up from the previously barren land, baffling farmers and shugenja alike.

YY — Umi Yakamo (Sea of Lord Sun): The sea where Lord Sun rises every morning is usually quiet and calm. Buoys line the coast to help sailors guide their ships from harbor to harbor and to keep them from sailing too far out to sea. The sea was once named Umi Amaterasu, but was renamed when Hida Yakamo ascended to the position of Lord Sun.

ZZ — Heigen yori ue ni Warul (Plains above Evil): This broad expanse of wilderness remains untouched after nearly a thousand years. Even Shadowlands creatures seem to fear the area. Many strange ruins jut up from the plains, built by inhuman hands an incalculable time ago. Rumors abound about the true nature of the ruins, but the most credible attribute them to the Naga who confirm that they could be a failed settlement. It is considered extremely bad luck to even approach the crumbling buildings.

AAA — Yugure Yama (Twilight Mountains): Smaller than the mighty Seikitsu Mountains, the Yugure range covers the southwestern Crab lands. Tough and rocky, the mountains are littered with elaborate Crab defenses against the Shadowlands. There are many passes through the Yugure, but most are either garrisoned or booby-trapped. Wise samurai traveling the mountains first announce their presence to the Crab, and then arrive by the Kaiu pass, one of the few places travelers can move about unmolested. The northern mountains support a large number of tea plantations, and much of Rokugan's tea supply comes from Crab lands.

BBB — Mittsu Otoko Rengo Heigen (Three Man Alliance Plain): Many years ago, a Scorpion general led an army through this plain and was defeated by an alliance of Wasp, Fox, and Sparrow samurai, setting a startling precedent of power and interdependence among the Minor Clans.

CCC — Haka no Iuchiban (Tomb of Iuchiban) (Order of the Blood Speakers): Five hundred years ago, the Seven Clans defeated Iuchiban and his cult of Bloodspeakers. Iuchiban's body was placed in a tomb and his followers put to death. Not all the Bloodspeakers were captured, however, and so those who entombed Iuchiban set traps all through his tomb to keep his servants from restoring the evil sorcerer to life. Sadly, this effort was futile, as Iuchiban escaped twice from his prison before being finally defeated.

DDD — Heiwa and Kaze Heigen (Quiet Wind Plain): Soft winds from the Shinomen Forest blow across the Quiet Wind plain, and sometimes, haunting music can be heard.

EEE — Mizu-umi no Sakura Yuki (Lake of Cherry Blossom Snow): Cherry blossoms line the lake, and when they fall in the autumn, they cover the waters, making the lake look as if it is covered in snow. Many monks and devout samurai come to this lake during the Cherry Blossom Festival. The truly devout sit under a tree and meditate until the blossoms fall from the tree. Tradition says that he who sits longest (his blossoms fall last) is the purest.

FFF — Shirol Kin Kawa (White Gold River): The small river that spills into the Lake of Cherry Blossom Snow is called "white gold" due to the white rocks that line the riverbed and the golden leaves that fall into its waters in the fall. During many festivals, monks and pious samurai can be found on the shores fasting and meditating.

GGG — Shukufuku Suru Jimen Heigen (Blessed Ground Plain): This plain received its name when it was chosen by Shinsei and the Thunders as a place to rest during their journey to the Shadowlands. A monastery and shrine now stand here to mark their historic journey.

HHH — Kin Taiyo Heigen (Golden Sun Plain): A past Emperor declared this rich, fertile stretch of land sacrosanct. No farming or cultivation of land is allowed, and no one dwells here but a few Sparrow bushi whose duty it is to see that the Emperor's holdings remain undisturbed.

III — Kaiu Kabe (Carpenter Wall): It is called the Kaiu Miracle, perhaps the strongest structure built by man. It stands almost one hundred feet high, reinforced by buttresses and garrisoned by the fiercest warriors the Crab Clan can produce. Situated on the northern side of the Last Stand River, it is the Empire's greatest defense against the horrors of Fu Leng.

The wall was constructed during the Battle of the Cresting Wave, over three hundred years ago. The valiant Kuni Osaku gave her life to maintain a spell for 73 days, keeping the Shadowlands at bay with a great wall of water while the Crab built the Wall. Upon her death, the Crab were ready, and the Wall was enough to repel the invaders. Since then, it has been strengthened and built upon, and entire armies have spent themselves trying to breach its walls. It is a testament to the power and resolve of the Crab Clan, and the Hida family has sworn that it will never surrender it to the Shadowlands. Thus far, no force has been enough to topple it, although a portion of it was seized and held by the Shadowlands for a short time several years ago.

III — Kawa sano Saigo no Kamae (River of the Last Stand): This river runs before the Carpenter Wall, and it was on these waters that Kuni Osaku cast her legendary Cresting Wave spell while the Wall was being built. During that battle, Hida Banuken swore he would not take a single step back, and since that day, the Shadowlands have been contained south of the River of the Last Stand.

KKK — Lookout Mountain [Remove this location from its current place at the tip of the mountains between the Crab and Crane, and drop it in the middle of the triangle formed by L7, L11, and L12.]: A geological anomaly, this singular mountain stands directly in the midst of the plains of the Lion. The Kitsu revere the powerful kami within the mountain, and maintain a temple here. On a clear day, almost the entire territory of the Lion Clan is visible from this mountain.

LLL — The Black Finger River and The River of the Dark Moon: Just to the north of Crab holdings, the River of the Last Stand forks into two. The eastern fork winds its way through the mountains, splitting again before finally entering the Shadowlands. Its waters become dark and stagnant, twisted by the corrupting magic around it. The two forks have been named The Black Finger and The Dark Moon by the few Rokugani who have seen them. Unwholesome plants grow along their sides, and unspeakable things come down

to drink from their impure banks. Beneath their stagnant surfaces, frightening monstrosities have spawned; not even the Oni know for certain what dwells within them. No being that has fallen into the rivers — man, beast, or Oni — has ever emerged again.

The Black Finger is the furthest into the Shadowlands any Rokugani has ever traveled. Beyond it lays the unknown horrors of Fu Leng's realm.

MMM — Kabi ue no ho ni sa Umi (Wall above the Ocean): The lowest of Rokugan's mountain regions, this area defines the border between the Crab and Crane Clans.

NNN — Bells of the Dead : Two hundred years ago, twelve shugenja died on this spot while battling a powerful evil spirit. In memory of the shugenja, a shrine was constructed in the lonely mountains. It is said that so long as the bells ring regularly, the shugenja's spirits will protect the mountains.

OOO — Kaiu Roka (Carpenter Pass): The Kaiu Pass is the largest passageway through the Twilight Mountains, and the easiest means of moving troops through it. Soldiers coming to man the Kaiu walls always travel through this pass, as well as countless individual samurai hoping to test their mettle against the forces of Fu Leng. The road through the pass is wide and well maintained; the Crab understand the need for open supply routes. Many merchants, peddlers, and hucksters frequent the road, plying their wares to any who pass by. Anyone who wishes to sell anything here must pay a tithe to the Yasuki, and indeed most of the traders along the pass belong to the family. The Crab tolerate their presence for this reason alone.

PPP — Haikyo sano Kappa (Ruins of the Kappa): Once a strong fortress of the Crab Clan, the Kappa palace fell long ago to the Shadowlands. Now, it houses a great goblin city, shabbily rebuilt in a mockery of its original style. Dozens of tribes gather here to meet, haggle, debate, and fight in a hideous mockery of human society. The goblins claim that a great king rules all goblin-kind from here, but the highest authority anyone has ever seen are the squabbling tribal warlords.

QQQ — Kuni Areno (Kuni Wastes): Once conquered by the Shadowlands, the Kuni wastes have been retaken by the Crab after centuries of brutal warfare. It is a flat plain of cracked mud and blowing dust, where no living thing will grow. The odd Shadowlands creature wanders about, looking for lone travelers to prey upon. The only humans who live here are the mysterious Kuni, who practice their fell arts in seclusion. They live alone in ramshackle huts which dot the landscape, and rarely seek the company of outsiders. Rumors abound about the terrible experiments they conduct on the Oni they manage to capture, and the unnatural screams sometimes heard echoing across the wastes lend credence to such speculation.

RRR — Jinshin Sakana Wan (Earthquake Fish Bay): The bay that separates the Crane and Crab provinces has a portentous history. It is warmer than it should be due to volcanic activity occurring beneath the waves. When an earthquake occurs, its water becomes so hot that it kills many of the fish in the lake, causing a great mess of dead fish to wash ashore. This has only happened three times in Rokugan's long history, but each time it has happened, it has been an omen to an event of disastrous portent.

SSS — Kano Suru Ana no Fu Leng (Festering Pit of Fu Leng): When Fu Leng was cut from his father's grip and fell from the heavens, he landed here. The resulting crater stretched deep into the underworld, releasing all manner of foul creatures into the world. The Pit is the center of the Shadowlands, focusing Fu Leng's power and hatred into solid form. Evil emanates from it in palpable waves, and the darkest spirits congregate around its surface. Crab scouts say that it stretches all the way to Fu Leng's resting place, and that he uses it as a window to spy on the world of men. No human has ever seen the Festering Pit without going mad, but the largest and most fearsome Oni often travel here to worship their dread master.

TTT — Okiwasureru Haka no Fu Leng (Forgotten Tomb of Fu Leng): After his defeat at the hands of Shinsai, Fu Leng was banished beneath the earth. Soon thereafter, the Forgotten Tomb appeared, the representation of Fu Leng's power on earth. All the creatures he created, goblins, Oni, and others, emerged from the tomb, spreading across the Shadowlands. A squat structure of ancient stone, it is decorated with hideous symbols and terrifying statues depicting Fu Leng's eventual victory. Unlike the Festering Pit, no creature has ever been found near the tomb, even after Fu Leng's death.

UUU — Shio Senkyo no Riku (Tidal Landbridge): The Landbridge is a small strip of turf on the entrance to Warm Springs Bay. At low tide, it is nearly a half-mile across, allowing large groups of men to pass from one side to the other. At high tide, it is swallowed beneath the waves. Ships wishing to pass through the strait must wait for the tide to rise, and both the Crab and the Crane regulate the traffic that passes through it. The Hida and Daidoji share ownership, but the rolling waves have the ultimate authority over its possession.

VVV — Bunya sano Asahina (Fields of the Morning Sun): A great temple to Jurojin has been constructed on the beaches here. All are welcome to come and meditate. Often, prospective herbalists and shugenja journey to the temple to learn the healing arts from the resident monks.

WWW — Ruined Keep of Fu Leng: This haunted castle's origins are a mystery. It seems to move about the Shadowlands at will, and has a malevolent intelligence. Once a traveler becomes trapped inside, only solving the Keep's endless riddles and tests of bravery allows a possibility of escape.

XXX — Shima no Koshinryo and Shima no Kinu (Island of Spice and Island of Silk): The islands of Silk and Spice are, obviously, named for the two chief exports of the Mantis Clan. They are heavily guarded by the Mantis fleet, the largest standing fleet in Rokugan.

YYY — Wan no Asaguroi Mizu (Bay of Dark Water): Only those who put no stock in superstition cross the Bay of Dark Water. The standard sailor superstition is that a city of horrible creatures lies at the bottom of the bay, and that those who do not throw rice over the side when they cross bring doom upon their heads from the creatures below.

Lands beyond Rokugan

Historically, the people of Rokugan have been extremely xenophobic. Only in recent years has this maniacal opposition to gaijin, an aftereffect from the Battle at White Stag hundreds of years ago, begun to abate. As a result, more information is available regarding other lands than at any point in Rokugani history, and many scholars are taking great pains to increase the Empire's knowledge of what lies beyond.

THE BURNING SANDS

Beyond the Northern Wall Mountains lies a vast expanse of sun-scorched nothingness known as the Burning Sands. It is a merciless, lethal place, unlike anything in all of Rokugan. To walk the Sands is to risk a horrible death, and they are both feared and respected by the citizens of the Emerald Empire.

Over one thousand years ago, the Ki-Rin Clan disappeared into the Burning Sands. They were not seen or heard from again for nearly eight centuries, leading most in the Empire to believe they had been slain by barbarians, or perhaps succumbed to the deadly environment itself. During all that time, the Sands were associated with an uncertain death. Even after the Unicorn Clan returned to Rokugan, most considered the Sands a place of death.

Several generations ago, the Scorpion Clan was banished from Rokugan by Kakita Toshimoko, the Emerald Champion of that era, to prevent their destruction after they had been accused of kidnapping Emperor Toturi I. Many Scorpion perished on the difficult trek. Many more died or were enslaved by the forces of the Senpet, a strange desert folk that dwell far across the desert. This banishment was short-lived, and the Scorpion successfully crossed the desert a second time to return to Rokugan, their numbers strengthened by the strange foreign allies who accompanied them.

The Burning Sands have played an important role in Rokugan's history one final time over the last millennium. During the combined clans' struggle against the Living Shadow at the city of Volturum deep within the Shadowlands, a great force of Moto nomads from far across the desert rode to the Empire. Uniting with their long-separated kinsmen in the Unicorn Clan, the Moto destroyed the corrupted Dark Moto among the Shadowlands forces, cleansing their family name once and for all. The Moto Khan Gaheris went on to become Unicorn Clan Champion, a position that has remained with his family for decades.

Despite all of this, the Burning Sands remain an enigma to Rokugan. The Unicorn and the Scorpion know a fraction of the secrets they contain, but far more remains a mystery. Dozens of civilizations lie beyond the sands, all foreign to the ways of the Empire and with their own dishonorable sorceries and practices. The only truth that the clans of Rokugan can be certain of is this: the Burning Sands are treacherous, deadly place where honor means nothing. They are no place for samurai.

Suggested Reading

The Legend of the Five Rings setting draws upon a decade of source material. There is an incredibly rich and diverse body of work already in existence, and which this volume has been built upon. For more information on Rokugan and its history, culture, and politics, you may want to consult some of the following works.

Legend of the Five Rings Sourcebooks

THE WAY OF THE CLANS SERIES

Published primarily for First Edition, these sourcebooks were the first real insight into the Great Clans, and established many traditions that persist even in Third Edition. Each book details the history and origin of a major faction in Rokugan, and present a great deal of cultural information besides.

- *Way of the Crab*: The history of Rokugan's war against the Shadowlands
- *Way of the Crane*: Rokugan's art and culture
- *Way of the Dragon*: Dragon philosophy, alchemy, and swordsmanship
- *Way of the Lion*: Military ranks and organization, history of famous battles
- *Way of the Minor Clans*: The history of twelve Minor Clans
- *Way of the Naga*: The culture and history of the mysterious Naga race
- *Way of the Phoenix*: Religion, the Fortunes, and shugenja practices
- *Way of the Ratling*: The history and culture of the Nezumi race
- *Way of the Scorpion*: Espionage, subversion, and general villainy
- *Way of the Shadowlands*: Using the Taint as a driving force in a campaign
- *Way of Shinsei*: Shinseism philosophy and monastic organizations
- *Way of the Unicorn*: Galjin lore and exploration of lands beyond Rokugan
- *Way of the Wolf*: How ronin fit into (or don't) Rokugan society

SECRETS OF THE CLANS SERIES

Building upon the material in the Way of the Clans series, the Secrets books take a closer look at the lands controlled by each clan, the practices of each specific family, and the dark secrets that each clan keeps hidden from outsiders. Each book contains a detailed location map of one clan holding that can be used as an adventure location or the basis for an ongoing campaign.

THE WINTER COURT SERIES

This three-book set, consisting of *Winter Court: Kyuden Seppun*, *Winter Court: Kyuden Kakita*, and *Winter Court: Kyuden Asako*, goes into great detail regarding the customs and practices of many different aspects of Rokugani society, focusing on the long winter court sessions that many prominent samurai lords hold each year.

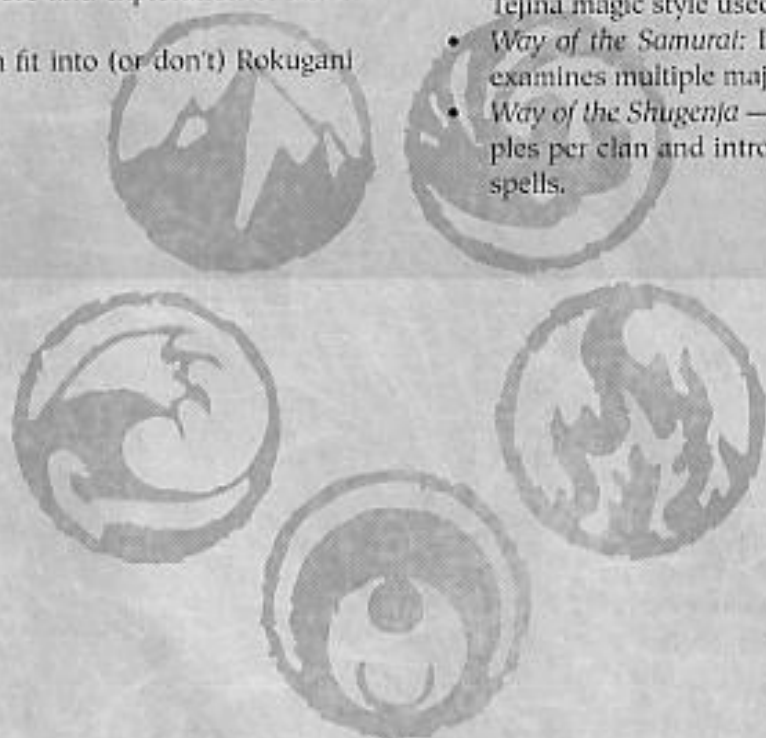
THE STORY ARC SERIES

These books each encapsulate a story arc from the L5R CCG, the parallel game line that shares a setting and storyline with the RPG. Each book covers in great detail a finite time period, giving all the details needed to manage a campaign during that era.

- *Time of the Void*: Describes the Clan War period, years 1126–1128.
- *The Hidden Emperor*: Details the Hidden Emperor story arc, years 1130–1133.
- *The Lotus Era* (forthcoming): Describes the Four Winds Era and the Bloodspeaker Saga, setting the stage for the Lotus Era. Covers years 1158–1167.

OTHER SOURCEBOOKS OF NOTE

- *Fortunes & Winds*: An examination of Rokugan's cosmology, including the different spirit realms that exist within the Celestial Order and the denizens of those realms.
- *Way of the Dalmyo*: Systems to support high-level play, allowing characters to take the role of ambassadors, warlords, sensei, temple masters, and governors.
- *Way of the Open Hand*: An in-depth examination of Rokugan's monastic sects and traditions, and an introduction to the varied fighting styles used by the clans.
- *Way of the Ninja*: Defines the different shadow warrior groups in existence in the Empire, including the shadowy Teijna magic style used by the Scorpion.
- *Way of the Samurai*: Introduces the dojo mechanic and examines multiple major martial academies per clan.
- *Way of the Shugenja* — Examines multiple shugenja temples per clan and introduces the notion of multi-element spells.



Cultural Resources

Rokugan is a unique creation that draws heavily upon cultural elements from many different historical civilizations. The following may provide you with insight into the mood and themes we are attempting to capture with Legend of the Five Rings.

ESSENTIAL SOURCES

- Miyamoto Musashi, *The Book of Five Rings*.
- Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*.
- Turnbull, Stephen. *The Samurai Sourcebook*. Arms and Armour Press, 1998.

BOOKS, STORIES, & ARTICLES

- Allyn, John. *The 47 Ronin Story*. Charles E. Tuttle Publishing Co., Inc., 1970.
- Basho, *On Love and Barley: Haiku of Basho*. Penguin Books, 1985.
- Charette, Bob and Hume, Paul. *Bushido*. Fantasy Games Unlimited, Inc., 1981.
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- McAlpine, Helen & William. *Japanese Tales and Legends*. Oxford University Press, 1989.
- Morris, Ivan. *The World of the Shining Prince: Life in Ancient Japan*. Kodansha Globe, 1994.
- Murasaki Shikibu. *The Tale of Genji*.
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- Polt Georges. *The 36 Dramatic Situations*. The Writer, Inc., 1977.
- Ratti, Oscar and Westbrook, Adele. *Secrets of the Samurai*. Charles E. Tuttle Publishing Co., Inc., 1991.
- Roberts, Moss (editor). *Chinese Fairy Tales & Fantasies*. Pantheon Books, 1980.
- Russell, Sean. *The Initiate Brother and Gatherer of Clouds*. DAW Books, 1991 and 1992.
- Sadler, A.L. (trans). *The Code of the Samurai*. Charles E. Tuttle Publishing Co., Inc., 1988.
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- Sato, Hiroaki. *Legends of the Samurai*. The Overlook Press, 1995.
- Sawyer, Ralph D. (trans). *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China*. Westview Press, 1993.
- Shonagon, Sei. *The Pillow Book of Sei Shonagon*. Columbia University Press, 1991.

- Shosan, Suzuki. *Warrior of Zen*. Kodansha America, 1994.
- Tsai Chih Chung. *Zen Speaks*. First Anchor Books, 1994.
- Tsunetomo, Yamamoto. *Hagakure: The Book of the Samurai*.
- Turnbull, SR and McBride, Angus. *The Mongols*. Osprey Publishing, Ltd., 2001.
- Turnbull, Stephen. *Ninja: the True Story of Japan's Secret Warriors*. Firebird Books, 1991.
- Turnbull, Stephen. *Samurai Warfare*. Arms and Armour Press, 1997.
- Tyler, Royall. *Japanese Tales*. Pantheon Books, 1989.
- Yoshikawa, Eiji; Terry, Charles S. (trans). *Musashi*. HarperTrade, 1986; Kodansha America, 1995.

SUGGESTED VIEWING

Inspiration is in no way limited to the written word. There are many wonderful films that capture the drama and rich culture of feudal Japan, the primary inspiration for Rokugan. For a window into the type of world we are creating together, consider the following films to help your group understand the setting.

- Jarmusch, Jim, dir. *Ghost Dog: The Way of the Samurai*. USA, 1999. 116 min.
- Kalge, Chen, dir. *Temptress Moon*. China/Hong Kong, 1996. 127 min.
- Kadokawa, Haruki, dir. *Heaven and Earth*. Japan, 1990. 119 min.
- Kurosawa, Akira, dir.
 - *Kagemusha*. Japan, 1980. 159 min.
 - *Ran*. Japan-France, 1985. 161 min.
 - *Rashomon*. Japan, 1950. 88 min.
 - *Sanjuro*. Japan, 1962. 96 min.
 - *Seven Samurai*. Japan, 1954. 141 min.
 - *Throne of Blood*. Japan, 1957. 108 min.
 - *Yojimbo*. Japan, 1961. 110 min.
- Lee, Ang, dir. *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*. China/Hong Kong/Taiwan/USA, 2000. 120 min.
- London, Jerry, dir. *Shogun*. United States, 1980. 125 min.
- Miyazaki, Hayao, dir. *Spirited Away*. Japan/USA, 2001. 125 min.
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 - *Raise the Red Langer*. China/Taiwan/Hong Kong, 1991. 125 min.
 - *Red Sorghum*. China, 1987. 91 min.
 - *Shanghai Triad*. China/France, 1995. 109 min.
 - *To Live*. China, 1994. 132 min.
- Zwick, Edward. *The Last Samurai*. USA, 2003. 154 min.

Character Conversion

Players familiar with the earlier editions of the *Legend of the Five Rings Role-Playing Game* will no doubt be curious about adapting their existing characters to the new system. Modifying existing First and Second Edition characters is quick and easy.

Clan and Family Trait Bonuses: Check your character's family and school to see if the Trait bonus has changed in this edition. If you wish, you may change your previous Trait bonus to the new one, lowering and increasing your Traits accordingly, or keep the previous bonus.

School Techniques: If your School was updated in this book, be sure to check your School Techniques for any new abilities. If your school Skill List has changed, give your character one free Rank in any new Skills offered by his school. Generally most schools not featured in this book are still entirely playable. However, be sure to check our website (www.L5R.com) for updates of old schools, spells, and other goodies.

Glory and Status: Your character's previous Glory remains the same. If you were not already using the optional Status rules in *Way of the Daimyo*, your character gains Status equal to his Insight Rank. Make sure to consult with your GM and the Status Rank table. If your Status would be different than your Insight Rank due to events in the campaign (promotion, demotion, etc.), adjust it accordingly.

Spells, Kata, and Kiho: All of these character options are presented in this book, in updated versions. If this book features a new version of a spell, kiho, or kata you already possess, you must use the new version. If a spell, kiho, or kata you already possess is not in this book, be sure to check our website (www.L5R.com) to see if there is a new version. If not, then you may keep it with the GM's approval, or exchange it for an ability of equivalent power level. First Edition spells use a Mastery Level system that is much different from the Third Edition rules. Consult with your GM to find an appropriate Mastery Level for your existing spells, or replace them with similar spells in this book. If you possess a spell that you are no longer able to cast, you may instead select a new spell from the same element or gain five Experience Points.

Skills: Check the current Skill list to see which Skills are still present in Third Edition. Some skills, such as Sincerity, are now Emphases of other skills. If your character possesses a Skill that has become an Emphasis of another skill, replace the old Skill with the new one, and gain the appropriate Emphasis for free. If you already have the Skill in question, your char-

acter gains Experience Points equal to the amount he would have needed to increase the obsolete Skill to its previous level. If the Skill that has replaced your obsolete Skill is not as high as the obsolete Skill, these Experience Points must be immediately spent to increase it to the previous level. Any leftover Experience Points must be used to purchase Emphases for this Skill or they are lost.

For example, Bayushi Tanaka is a Second Edition character with Etiquette 4 and Sincerity 6. Sincerity is now an Emphasis of Etiquette, so that skill is lost. Tanaka's Etiquette Skill gains the Sincerity Emphasis, and Tanaka also gains 21 Experience Points (the amount needed to purchase Sincerity at Rank 6). He must immediately spend 11 of these Experience Points to increase his Etiquette to 6, the previous level of his Sincerity Skill. He has 10 Experience Points remaining to buy new Emphases for his Etiquette skill.



If you possess any Specialized Weapon Skills, they now function just like Emphases. Thus if you possess both the Kenjutsu and Katana Skills, the Katana skill is lost, the Katana Emphasis is gained, and Experience Points are gained as illustrated in the above example.

Also, be sure to note whether any of your existing Skills now offer Mastery Abilities, and add these to your character accordingly.

Overall, the largest amount of work in translating a character will come in converting Skills. It is extremely likely that a character translated from an earlier Edition will seem to have a far smaller number of Skills, due to many former Skills being consolidated into single Skills. Keep in mind that all Skills now offer Insight Bonuses at certain Ranks, and many of the Skills that were consolidated offer additional Insight Bonuses. It is extremely likely that a character highly focused in Skills will come out with greater Insight than he had before.

Advantages and Disadvantages: Check all of your existing Advantages and Disadvantages to see if they follow new rules. If you possess an Advantage or Disadvantage that is not in this book, you may choose to keep it or trade it in for another appropriate Advantage or Disadvantage of equal point cost, at the GM's approval.

General Functionality: First Edition characters relied upon Traits. Second Edition characters emphasized Skills. Third Edition seeks to strike a balance between the two, but this also means that characters optimized for the previous systems may experience difficulties. If you wish, you may reduce either (but not both) your existing Skills or Traits, cashing them in for the equivalent amount of Experience Points needed to increase them to their current level. You may gain a maximum amount of Experience Points equal to ten times your Insight Rank in this manner. These Experience Points must immediately be spent on Skills (if you gained them from reducing Traits) or Traits (if you gained them from reducing Skills). Any unspent Experience Points gained in this manner are lost permanently.

Insight: Be sure to recalculate your Insight using the new rules for doing so. If you now qualify for a new Rank Technique, you may learn it in the usual manner. If for some reason you no longer qualify for Rank Techniques you already possess, you do not lose them.

A converted character with a strong focus on Skills is likely to have a great deal more Insight than in previous editions, due to options designed to make Skills more attractive in Third Edition. Consult your GM to determine if any sudden Insight leaps are acceptable, or if it would be preferable to reduce your character's overall power level in return for other considerations. Remember, a single Skill can now perform the duties of multiple old Skills, and a high Skill Rank is less necessary than it was in Second Edition. In general, it is best to arrive at a character who meshes well with the rest of the party than one who retains exactly the same number of Skills he had in previous editions.

Glossary of Rokugani Terms

- Agasha** — Formerly of the Dragon Clan, the Agasha defected to the Phoenix decades ago, taking their unique alchemical magic with them.
- Akodo** — A family of honorable warriors and tacticians, the Akodo serve the Lion Clan.
- Asahina** — A family of pacifistic shugenja that serve the Crane Clan.
- Asako** — Perhaps the most mysterious family in Rokugan, the ascetic Henshin of the Asako family serve the Phoenix Clan.
- Bayushi** — Cunning and deceitful, the Bayushi rule the Scorpion Clan in battle and in the courts.
- bushi** — A warrior of the samurai caste. Bushi are trained in the use of weapons and the ways of battle from their childhood.
- Champion** — A position of great authority. Traditionally, the term champion applies to the victor of a prominent tournament, such as the Test of the Emerald Champion or the Test of the Jade Champion. It also applies to the daimyo of a Great Clan, who are often referred to as the Clan Champions.
- Chuda** — This family of shugenja that led the Snake Clan; they now serve the Dark Lord, Daigotsu.
- chui** — A military rank similar to lieutenant. A chui commands many gunso and the troops under their command. Chui report directly to the taisei who command their divisions.
- Daldoji** — A family of scouts, spies, and bodyguards that serve as the military arm of the Crane Clan.
- daimyo** — Any lord with samurai sworn to his service. There are traditionally three levels of the daimyo position. Provincial daimyos govern a single province in the name of their clan. Family daimyo rule over the affairs of a single family within their clan. Clan daimyos, also known as Clan Champions, are the ultimate rulers of their clans.
- daisho** — The daisho is the name given to the set of swords that are the symbol of status as a samurai. It is treasonous and blasphemous for any but samurai to wear the daisho. The daisho consists of the katana (a long blade) and the wakizashi (a short blade).
- Doji** — A family of powerful courtiers that rule the Crane Clan.
- doshin** — The lowest level of law enforcement in Rokugan. The doshin are the assistants to a yoriki, or a magistrate's deputy. Even helmin can serve as doshin if there are not suitable numbers of samurai in the area.
- eta** — The lowest social stratum in Rokugan's society. The eta are those hinin that must handle dead flesh, which is seen as a disgraceful and loathsome task in the Empire. This includes torturers, leather-workers, and those that handle the bodies of the dead. The eta are pitied by the other classes because their work is so disgraceful that

- they have no chance of being reincarnated into a higher class. Only gaijin are beneath the eta.
- Fuzake** — A small family of shugenja in service to the Monkey Clan.
- gaijin** — Travelers from outside Rokugan. Gaijin are almost universally distrusted and disliked throughout the Empire. While a few have found a niche with some of the Great Clans, most gaijin are turned away from the Empire or killed.
- gempukku** — The coming of age ceremony that signifies the passage from childhood to adulthood. This is a very somber occasion when a young samurai chooses his adult name and takes his place beside his brothers in defense of his clan. Some gempukku ceremonies have elaborate competitions to give the young men and women an opportunity to display the knowledge they have gained during their training.
- gunso** — A military rank similar to a sergeant. A gunso can command up to 200 soldiers. They report directly to their commanding chui.
- Hantei** — The descendants of the first Emperor, the Hantei ruled the Empire for over a thousand years. Now they are all but extinct.
- hatamoto** — The chief aide and advisor to a daimyo. Hatamoto is a position of great respect and influence, as it means the daimyo has chosen them as their most trusted and capable assistant. The hatamoto is often left to run a daimyo's estate while the daimyo travels.
- Heichi** — The ruling family of the Boar Clan, the Heichi warriors were wiped out by Agasha Ryuden, creator of the dreaded Anvil of Despair.
- heimin** — The peasant class of Rokugan, also known as "half-people." Farmers, artisans and merchants are all heimin roles, although some have representation among the samurai caste as well.
- Hida** — A family of warriors who emphasize strength and endurance. The Hida rule the Crab Clan.
- Hiruma** — A family of scouts who serve the Crab Clan.
- hinin** — The "non-people" of Rokugan. Criminals, entertainers, charlatans, gamblers, and geisha are all hinin. The eta are a sub-division of the hinin class.
- Hitomi** — A recently founded family of dark warriors and monks that serve the Dragon Clan.
- hohei** — A military rank similar to a private. The hohei are the rank and file of the clan armies. They report to the nikutai who commands their squadron.
- Horiuchi** — This tiny family of shugenja serves the Unicorn Clan.
- Ichiro** — The samurai of the Badger Clan, the Ichiro are all but extinct. They wander the Empire aimlessly, desperately seeking a way to rebuild their shattered clan.
- Ide** — A family of courtiers and ambassadors that serve as the diplomats of the Unicorn Clan.
- Ikoma** — Bards and historians, the Ikoma family serves the Lion Clan.
- Isawa** — Unquestionably the most powerful shugenja in the Empire, the Isawa are led by the Council of Elemental Masters. The Isawa serve the Phoenix Clan.
- Iuchi** — The shugenja of the Unicorn Clan, the Iuchi are experts on gaijin magic.
- Kaeru** — A family of ronin merchants, the Kaeru rule the City of the Rich Frog, a prosperous city lying between the Unicorn and Lion lands.
- Kaiu** — A family of the Crab Clan who produce the greatest engineers in all of Rokugan.
- Kami** — The ten children of the Sun and Moon: Hida, Doji, Togashi, Akodo, Shiba, Bayushi, Shinjo, Hantei, Fu Leng, and Ryoshun.
- kami** — The spirits that exist in everything. These are the spirits that shugenja communicate with and convince to power their spells. Kami are aligned with one of the four physical elements: fire, earth, air, or water.
- kansen** — The dark, evil spirits that exist in the Shadowlands. They are the spirits that power maho blood magic.
- Kasuga** — Not a proper family, the Kasuga are a conglomeration of samurai who rule the tiny and despised Tortoise Clan.
- katana** — The longer sword of the daisho and the primary weapon of every samurai warrior. The katana symbolizes both the status of the samurai caste and the soul of the warrior. They are handed down from generation to generation. One who touches a samurai's blade without his permission faces dire consequences indeed.
- Kitsuki** — A family of magistrates who perceive justice and investigation much differently than the rest of Rokugan. The Kitsuki serve the Dragon Clan.
- Kitsune** — One of the oldest of the minor families, the Kitsune rule the shugenja of the Fox Clan.
- Kitsu** — A family of mysterious shugenja, the Kitsu serve the Lion Clan with a brand of spirit magic no other family in Rokugan understands.
- Kuni** — A sinister family of shugenja who serve the Crab Clan.
- maho** — Blood magic. It is an evil sorcery, one powered by the dark god Fu Leng. Anyone caught practicing maho is immediately sentenced to death.
- Matsu** — Brash, aggressive warriors, the Matsu family rules the Lion Clan.
- mempo** — An armored mask. Mempo are very common on the battlefield, and many members of the Scorpion Clan choose to use them at all times in place of a cloth mask. Mempo are often decorated with images designed to frighten or intimidate a foe.
- Mirumoto** — A family of warriors who emphasize the style of swordsmanship that uses both blades of the daisho. The Mirumoto serve the Dragon Clan.
- Miya** — This family of heralds serves the Emperor directly.
- Moshi** — Formerly the samurai of the Centipede Clan, the matriarchal Moshi family of shugenja have become a house within the Mantis Clan.
- Moto** — This family of dark and determined warriors rule the Unicorn Clan.
- nikutai** — A military rank very similar to a corporal. A single nikutai will have a squadron of hohei under his command and will report directly to a gunso.
- Otomo** — The Emperor's courtiers, the Otomo strive to keep conflict alive in Rokugan so that the Emperor never needs fear another coup.
- rikugunshokan** — A military rank similar to a general. A rikugunshokan command an entire army and reports directly to his daimyo.

ronin — Literally, a "wave-man." A samurai who has lost or abandoned his family and clan affiliation, instead relying exclusively upon himself. Ronin are looked down upon by the rest of the samurai class.

seppuku — The act of ritual suicide. Seppuku is a means for a samurai to atone for failure or dishonor. Successful completion of the ceremony removes the stain from one's name and returns him to honorable status, even if posthumously.

Seppun — This family serves as the bodyguards and protectors of the Emperor.

Shiba — The ruling family of the Phoenix Clan, the Shiba are quiet and contemplative warriors and bodyguards.

Shinjo — Formerly the ruling family of the Unicorn, the Shinjo lost their command after their lord proved treasonous. Now, they seek to find their place within the clan and the Empire.

shireikan — A military rank similar to commander. A shireikan can command up to an entire task force or number of divisions. Shireikan report directly to the rikugunshokan, the general of the clan's armies.

Shosuro — Dark and enigmatic, the Shosuro serve the Scorpion Clan as actors and assassins.

shugenja — A samurai priest or spell caster. Shugenja are the priests of the kami, those rare samurai who have the ability to summon, communicate with, and coerce the kami into doing their will.

Soshi — The most mysterious family of the Scorpion Clan, the Soshi possess the secrets of shadow magic.

Suzume — Quiet and introspective, the warriors of the Suzume family rule the Sparrow Clan.

taisa — A military rank similar to a captain. A taisa will have many chui and their units serving beneath him, and reports directly to a shireikan, who commands the force in which the taisa serves.

Tamori — A family of shugenja, the Tamori were formed from the remnants of the Agasha family. The Tamori serve the Dragon Clan.

Togashi — Though the leader of the Order of Togashi rules the Dragon Clan, most of the members of this order are content to distance themselves from politics.

Tonbo — Children of the Dragon and Phoenix, the Tonbo family rules the Dragonfly Clan and serves as the emissaries of the Dragon Clan.

Toritaka — Formerly the samurai of the Falcon Clan, the ghost-hunting Toritaka were absorbed into the Crab Clan several decades ago.

Toturi — The family founded by the recently deceased Emperor Toturi I. There are only a handful of Toturi in the Empire, mostly his descendants and their sworn followers.

Tsuruchi — Formerly the samurai of the Wasp Clan, the peerless archers of the Tsuruchi family have become a house within the Mantis Clan.

Ujina — A family in service of the Hare Clan, the Ujina are skilled archers and hunters.

Usagi — The founding family of the Hare Clan, the Usagi are swift warriors who hunt maho-tsukai wherever they are found.

wakizashi — The short sword of a daisho, which symbolizes

the honor of the samurai who wields it. A samurai who does not wield a wakizashi is likely to be looked upon with suspicion. Many shugenja who lack martial training wield only a wakizashi as the symbol of both their honor and their status.

Yasuki — A wily and cunning family of merchants. The Yasuki defected from the Crane Clan to the Crab Clan centuries ago, but a Crane has recently been declared the Yasuki daimyo by Imperial decree.

Yogo — A family of shugenja that serve the Scorpion Clan. The Yogo are cursed, and many have fallen to maho over the centuries.

yojimbo — A bodyguard. Yojimbo are often assigned to valuable members of court, shugenja with little combat training, merchants, or important members of the clan who might be the target of assassination attempts. Generally speaking, yojimbo are trained as bushi. Bushi themselves rarely have yojimbo unless they are highly ranking members of the clan.

yoriki — The deputies of a magistrate. Yoriki are normally samurai, but in unusual circumstances it is not unheard of for peasants to fill this role.

Yoritomo — The ruling family of the Mantis Clan. The Yoritomo family are warriors and sailors who prefer using peasant weapons to the daisho of a samurai.

Yotsu — The Yotsu is a family of ronin who protect the ruins of the former Imperial Capital, Otsan Uchi.





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	City
	Cliff
	Forest
	Fortress
	Mountain
	Palace
	River
	River
	Road
	Temple/Castle
	Village

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KUGAR



Scale in miles

0 100 200

The Shadowlands

	City
	Cliff
	Forest
	Fortress
	Mountain
	Palace
	River
	River
	Road
	Temple/Castle
	Village



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Scale in miles

The Shadowlands

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