

# COURT OF THE MINOR CLANS

An Unofficial Collection of Homebrew Minor Clans for the 4<sup>th</sup> Edition of the Legends of the Five Rings Role Playing Game



## INTRODUCTION AND DISCLAIMER

*This makes quite a long time now that I route internet looking for quality material to be incorporated into my game. My thought at this moment was to save the data and to keep it for my personal use. Indeed, some clans were originally posted on the L5R AEG forums but between this moment and now, the project was jettisoned and many inconsistencies appeared.*

*But the fortunes are sometimes capricious and the situation changed now. The disappearing of AEG's L5R forum has cut nearly all the accesses to some marvelous material and I'm sure some players would be happy to use it...Because I lost hope to make this document published freely on internet, I gathered everything I could in a lone document that I decided to make it available to everyone. Some of my ideas were refused by the authors but I had to make some modifications to keep the document cannon and alive.*

*Here is a list of my personal "errata's":*

- ☉ *I only found the techniques of the Carp Clan by Alien Rope Burn, but when I developed their background I found more appropriate and symbolic to name the clan the Albatross Clan as it already has a way of the Carp as a Yasuki Technique.*
- ☉ *The Desert Warrior School of Clan of the Camel Clan is an adaptation of the The Desert Moto (Warrior) from the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition.*
- ☉ *As there is a cannon Owl clan introduced in Imperial Histories 2, I transformed the original "Owl clan" into "Moth clan". I also changed the Fukuro family name (meaning owl in Japanese) into the Ga family (meaning moth in Japanese). I changed the Moth Clan technique that was too similar to the Bat Clan technique to give them an original one and to link it to their animal.*
- ☉ *As there is a cannon Raven clan introduced in Imperial Histories 2, I transformed the original "Crow clan" into "Swordfish clan". I also removed the paragraph about their relations with all the other clans because I lacked of space.*
- ☉ *I removed the Lark Clan ancestral item: Staff of Heaven because I lacked of space.*
- ☉ *I removed a paragraph in the Octopus Clan founding because I lacked of space and simplified some of their school techniques.*
- ☉ *I changed the original "Shark clan" introduced in Imperial archives into "Crocodile clan". I also changed their clan colors to match the new animal.*
- ☉ *I gave a mon to all the clans who were missing. (Thanks to Evan B. Walters Design)*
- ☉ *I gave the Swan clan and the Dog clan more legitimacy by linking them to the official story. Their original stories were timeline free.*
- ☉ *I gave the Hummingbird clan a motto, changed their single technique schools into alternate paths and renamed the Bushi School as Hummingbird Factotum [Bushi].*
- ☉ *I completed and slightly changed the description of the Otter clan new spell.*
- ☉ *I gave the Scarab, Albatross, Hummingbird and Drake clans a motto.*
- ☉ *I renamed the Wolf Fenroku Bushi School as Fenroku Ranger School [Bushi].*
- ☉ *I re-gave the original Yoshun Family name to the Owl Clan in place of Sezar.*
- ☉ *I created techniques for the Takahiro Nakodo School*
- ☉ *The Cat clan comes from the fusion of the Butterfly clan, the Cat clan and the Geisha school material, all from Jason C. Marshall. I just developed the founding, assembled and revamped the school techniques.*
- ☉ *As it has already an Eel clan and an Anago family, I changed the Unagi Family name for Samon, the Eel for Salmon and the Anago name for Unagi. I completed the original founding, changed the purpose of the clan that was too close from those of the Crocodile clan and created a new alternative path.*
- ☉ *I added some connections between clans from this book and others.*
- ☉ *Most of the material of this book has not been play tested. Use it at your own risk.*

Within these pages you'll find more than 20 new minor clans with their full stories and techniques, new ancestors, spells, kiho, kata, disadvantages, advantages, ancestral items and many other things...  
Feel free to use it or not, to adapt it for your needs or not, the best way to play L5R is always your way.

***I do not have the rights to use the original texts.***

You can find them here:

<https://fr.scribd.com/doc/283882204/Court-of-the-Minor-Clans-1>

[https://1d4chan.org/wiki/tg/Custom\\_L5R\\_Minor\\_Clans](https://1d4chan.org/wiki/tg/Custom_L5R_Minor_Clans)

<http://l5rrpg.blogspot.be/2013/05/the-owl-clan.html>

[http://forum.rpg.net/showthread.php?763511-L5R-Creating-a-Minor-Clan-\(or-101-Minor-Clans-\)/page2](http://forum.rpg.net/showthread.php?763511-L5R-Creating-a-Minor-Clan-(or-101-Minor-Clans-)/page2)

<http://www.kazenoshiro.com/forge/2/Unofficial%20Supplements-Geisha%20School.pdf>

<http://www3.sympatico.ca/jcmarshall/L5r/minor/>

<http://twisted-fates.enjin.com/forum/page/3/m/3788491/viewthread/11449088-new-basic-schools>

<https://forums.somethingawful.com/>

***All the original authors are credited on this page.***

I present my apologies to the original authors if they might take offense; this collection is nothing more than a tribute to their work. I have no intention of appropriating it for myself, just to keep it alive and make it available to the greatest number. Thank to them!

Deeply yours, Droidscotty.

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*"You have to smile to death, because she smiles at us all one day ..."*

## The Albatross Clan

### Founding

The Albatross Clan comes from the Yasuki family of the Crab Clan. Yasuki Kohaku was renowned for always had a keen sense of humor. Even in the deepest trouble he always kept his good mood. He was often sent away from the main holdings of the family as the rumor said that his corrosive humor earned them many disappointments with the trade relations. He doesn't care of this as he liked to travel. But his jokes even finally led almost to war with the Crane Clan. They take offense at a remark by Kohaku, and it took great effort on the part of the Yasuki family to remedy the problem.

The daimio of the Yasuki however chooses to dismiss the young man some time by sending the Kaiu wall in hopes of giving him a good lesson. But even with this punishment, overused on the Wall, Yasuki Kohaku stood hard as iron his some corrosive and amusing remarks, up to make fun of the onis themselves when they rubbed against the wall. The commander wondered how he could keep such derision in adversity and made him call. Yasuki Kohaku remained serious throughout the interview but did not fail to drag some allusion. So he was sent on a mission in the Shadowlands hoping he acquires a little more maturity.

And it is precisely where he proved to be of great wisdom. Yasuki Kohaku fully embraced the fate that the celestial wheel reserved for him without worrying about it. Even later in this cursed country, he strengthened the morale of the troops and prayed every morning many Fortunes in the hope that they enlighten others as he was himself.

Yasuki Kohaku never returns from his patrol, as he sacrificed himself in a great laugh, content to keep out a powerful oni lord while the rest of the gang had to retreat. He keeps their humor intact even when the Crabs had to admit their defeat. Rumor says that he even managed to make the oni himself laugh before they killed each other in a flood blades and claws.

Back to the wall, the survivors shared their strange epic story to their commander who made a report to his daimyo. He decided to send it to the Emperor so he judged the thing incongruous but also worthwhile. The emperor consulted the Brotherhood and together they admitted they had there a being who had found his own path to enlightenment.

Yasuki Kohaku then accesses Yomi as the minor Fortune of Joy and the Emperor asked those who had known to come together under the name of Kohaku. As their founder had a great pleasure for journeys and like to laugh they choose the Albatross as their symbol for the clan. Their sacred mission was simple: to study how Kohaku had reached enlightenment, understand it and spread it. The Emperor also asked them secretly watching over the Crab so they never forget the enjoyment of life.

## Geography & Economy

The Albatross Clan has a modest house south of the Crab Clan territory, north of Kyuden Hida, near the shore. They called it Shiro Kohasku, more as a joke than a reality, as the estate himself is too small to qualify as a shiro.

The clan is not very rich and most of its revenues come from a renowned hostel. Many members of the Crab clan come here on leave because it is both quiet and full of good humor.

The Albatross Clan service many small altars dedicated to many fortunes but specially to their ancestor and to Natsu-togumara, the Fortune of Travel and Experience. They hope from the Fortunes they give them the way to enlightenment just as Kahaku did. So they're happy and encouraged to visit many temples and to share their experience with others.

The small clan is sufficient to itself in terms of food as heimins abound because they know they will be well received and generally treated with more compassion than within the other clans.

## Demography

Kohaku Shiro is inhabited only by a handful of samurai, taking their classes, others browsing the Empire. Even well maintained, the clan as not many people to defend by itself. Their daimyo himself admitted they often count on the near Crab capital to supply them for raw materials and to protect them from Shadowlands incursions and pirates. They are nearly a branch clan of and within the Crab clan but they enjoy maintaining their independence. The Crab Clan considers them peacefully.

## Customs

The Albatross are bushi fortunists who are mostly known for their unique tradition: after gempukku, each Albatross samurai must travel abroad and make a name for themselves with only marginal clan assistance. Many never stop exploring, while those who return often get involved in the

Imperial bureaucracy or the Exploration Corps. Though they're traditional fortunists and their role is often politically conservative, Albatross samurai tend to be less reserved, more plain-spoken and more fashionable than most samurai. The Albatross Clan is allied with his neighbor, the Seahorse Clan and has good relations with the Sparrow Clan with their share a taste for simplicity.

## KOHAKU FAMILY: +1 AWARENESS

The Kohaku Family is still a humble one but also one of the most famous at least among the Crab Clan. Having a Kohaku for a court is always synonym for good amusement and an exotic way of entertainment. But when the time for combat comes, the Kohaku fights until the death, with the blessing of the Fortunes and the determination that the victory is already won.

## Schools, Paths & Dojos

### KOHAKU BUSHI SCHOOL

- ☉ **Benefit:** +1 Reflexes
- ☉ **Honor:** 5.5
- ☉ **Skills:** Athletics, Firearms, Kenjutsu, Lore: Theology, Meditation, Sincerity, and any one Games or Perform skill
- ☉ **Outfit:** Light Armor, Sturdy Clothing, Daisho, any 1 weapon, Traveling Pack, a Pillow Book, 5 koku
- ☉ **Kata:** Spinning Blades Style

## TECHNIQUES

### RANK 1: JOY IN ADVERSITY

The Albatross learn to laugh off failure, confident that the rise and fall of fate will ultimately fall in their favor. When you miss an attack or take damage, you gain a free raise to be used on your next roll. If you have the Luck advantage and reroll a failed roll, the raise may then be applied to that roll. Additionally, they gain +1k0 on rolls when participating in a contest or duel, or +1k1 when a life is at stake.

### **RANK 2: SHOWING THE PATTERN**

Albatross bushi have a flashy, distinctive swordsmanship style that distracts and confuses foes. For each raise you make on an attack, you may raise your Armor TN by 3 until your next action. This bonus does not stack if you make multiple attacks in a turn; simply take the highest number instead.

### **RANK 3: THE FORTUNES' FAVOR**

One can wait for luck, or one can politely request it. By meditating, you may gain any one Seven Fortunes' Blessing advantage until you rest, even if you already have a Seven Fortunes' Blessing advantage (though one cannot double up on a given blessing). You may only gain one additional Seven Fortunes' Blessing at a time in this fashion. The GM may rule you cannot take a given advantage if your behavior has angered the fortune's will in some way.

### **RANK 4: THE RAGING WATERFALL**

You may make attacks unarmed or with samurai weapons as a Simple Action instead of a Complex Action.

### **RANK 5: THE WHEEL OF KHARMA**

Once per turn, you may spend a Void Point to gain three free raises on any roll involving a high or bugei skill. The Void cost is waived if your roll is a contested roll or an attack that targets a foe with a Void Ring, but the target of that contest or attack then gains two free raises on their next roll following the attack or contest.

### *New Ancestor*

KOHAKU [5 points]

There are many stories of the wild adventures had by Kohaku, but few believed his stories of adventure in the Shadowlands. However, the resulting pillow books remain classic literature. When there are no samurai around to witness your actions, you gain a +1k1 bonus on Bugei and Social Skill rolls.

**Demands:** If you ever abandon a call to adventure or a chance to travel to exotic destinations, Kohaku will forsake you.





*"The souls of the dead  
Float free with the void. They speak  
And I kill my thought*

## The Butterfly Clan

### Founding

The Butterfly clan traces its history back to the actions of its founder, Tomomori Ageha, who was the retainer of a minor family that lived on the edge of Crane lands. It consists only a small estate and shrine complex near a grave of trees – the shrine simply being known as the “Tomomori Shrine”. Its original name has been lost to the mists of time, though it was referred to generally as the “Shrine of Lost Souls.”

Tomomori Ageha was a, plainly speaking, remarkably samurai-ko. Though she had great reverence for the kami and spirits, and most of her time was spent in keeping up the shrine for the Tomomori daimyo. The shrine complex is nearly as large as the estate and filled with many graves, necessitating much respect. Ageha more than once considered becoming a nun, feeling it was a better suit for her, but continued to serve her daimyo out of loyalty.

All this would change with the arrival of a traveling monk who became a close adviser to her lord and began to spend much of his time in the shrine complex. Ageha was uneasy with this man from the first – while he was polite in front of her daimyo, he adopted a crude and arrogant manner elsewhere-. The butterflies of the Tomomori shrine, which flocked in great numbers and were said to be the spirits of the dead, fled from the monk and would never alight upon or even near him.

At night Ageha would find the Kindly Monk, as he wished to be referred to, alone in the shrine gardens. The suspicious death of Ageha’s father and then mother, and many others in the small family, led her to investigate the Kindly Monk in his quarters – where she found him practicing maho. Enraged and distraught, realizing that those she had loved had been murdered without her being able to do anything, she sought her daimyo. Apologizing profusely, she warn him of the maho in the midst of his court, and beg to be allowed to commit seppuku after the maho was dealt with. To atone for her failure to see the threat before it was too late.

However, the situation was grimmer than she realized. As the Kindly Monk approached and spoke with the daimyo, she realized her master was under the blood sorcerer’s sway, and would not believe her, even as the maho openly mocked her. Eventually, in a desperate rage, she left to fetch her katana and returned, trying to cut down the maho – only for him to outdraw her with her daimyo’s own blade and wound her-. Taking sick pleasure in watching the spirit of this samurai be crushed, the maho advised her daimyo to forbid her from committing seppuku, and banish her for her insolent actions. But not before he have the rest of her family summoned, including the man who was to be her husband, and executed them like common criminals before her eyes, as “accomplishes” to her attempted “assassination of a valuable retainer.”



And so Tomomori Ageha was cast out and made ronin. She struggled with her new existence, and the knowledge of her failure, and soon found herself contemplating seppuku in the room of the lowly inn she was staying at. As she prepared herself, a butterfly flew into the room and fluttered near her face. Enraged at the distraction and reminder of the home she had lost, she struck at it with her hand. But it easily fluttered around her clumsy blow, and came to rest on the hilt of her wakizashi. Ageha was ashamed at her momentary anger, and decided not to disturb the little creature. Eventually, a multitude of butterflies flew through her window, unafraid and alighting upon her. In a moment of epiphany, she realized that these must be the souls of her family, come to comfort her and remind her of her purpose. And so Ageha was humbled.

Tomomori Ageha began to work hard to improve her lax skills, traveling from monastery to monastery, up into the lands of the Dragon to learn from Taoist swordsmen. She sought calm and enlightenment, and used her sword as a method to contemplate the void, only drawing it to shed blood when necessary. She became as a butterfly, a lost soul wandering the Empire, swept along in the void. Fate was not finished with Ageha, however.

For her travels eventually brought her back close to her home, where she saw a procession with the Imperial seal passing. A member of the Otomo family was on a sojourn visiting shrines, and wished to see the humble Tomomori shrine. This Otomo found himself well received at the estate of the daimyo, though the daimyo did not talk as much as the Kindly Monk who served him.

The pleasant dinner was interrupted, however, by the arrival of a ronin who made the shocking claim that the hosts of this place were all slaves of a maho sorcerer. It was an outrageous claim, but the ronin spoke with elegance and sincerity, and challenged the Kindly Monk as a maho sorcerer, letting him pick someone to duel her if he disputed her accusation. The Kindly Monk mocked her as insane and said he would

happily thrash a madwoman ronin himself. This angered the Kindly Monk, who prided himself on his powers of manipulation, and he began to openly slander Ageha and her family. He try to confusion the Otomo dignitary watching the drama unfold. Ageha simply turned away and suggested they walk out into the gardens. Now enraged, the maho once again took the sword of his daimyo and attempted to strike Ageha down as her back was turned. But in one fluid motion she drew her katana from within the folds of her cloak, and beheaded the maho with a clean blow. She then bowed before the dignitary and apologized for bringing a katana into his presence. However, the dignitary wished to understand what had happened here. Ageho told him, long into the night, her story, saying in the end that she could not let a member of the Imperial family be corrupted. She knows that the Empire might be threatened, and offered to commit seppuku. Instead, she was requested to come to the Capital and demonstrate her techniques. And as they left, in the gloom, the dignitary saw from the shrine a swarm of butterflies circle into the twilight sky.

Ageha demonstrated her technique for the Emperor and, at his prompting, told her story to an enraptured court. The Emperor was impressed by both her skill and heroism. He ordered the Tomomori family extinguished and replaced with the new Ageha Family. He permitted her to form a minor clan, so that the swordsmanship of Ageha would not be lost, and that the Shrine could be protected from Maho. Ageha agreed, on the condition that the Shrine retained the Tomomori name. Soon Ageha attracted a following of interested students, including one whom she would go on to marry, and the Butterfly Clan was formed.

### *Geography & Economy*

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The lands of the Butterfly clan are rather small, located in the southern foothills of the Mountains of Regret. Their main holdings include the village and Shrine of Tomomori, both named after the small nearby wood. The small forest is known for its flowers, butterflies and ancient ruins from some

forgotten war. Also included is the Ahega estate, a fortified manor somewhere between a house and a castle, and the Ahega dojo. Aside from substance agriculture, Tomomori Village is only noted for the quality of its handcrafted and decorated pottery.

The Tomomori Shrine gardens are quite extensive and are believed by many to be haunted or to have some connection to the spirit realms - it is known that without proper respect and rituals, *gaki* have arisen here. This made the area, and still makes it, a place of interest for monks, *shugenja* and *maho*, and the Ageha tend to be circumspect regarding it, rarely letting any venture among the ruins, shrines and foliage without good reason.

### Demography

The small Ageha clan spends most of their days devoted to studying the Kenjutsu style of their founder, and her teachings, with much time spent meditating to further a samurai's connection with the Void. They're rarely more than an hundred people in their estate to keep it calm. It's voluntary even if the dojo and shrine are often visited by those curious in either of them. The Ageha do their best to become polite hosts.

The Ageha, despite having a tight knit community, are often taken to travel, and their daimyo are historically encouraging towards warrior pilgrimages. Most Ageha desire to, at least once, travel in the Dragon Mountains and to visit the monastic orders and shrines of Rokugan to increase their understanding of the Void. Ageha samurai are always interested in helping to restore and protect shrines and holy sites, and take interest in rumours of blood sorcery or displeased spirits. Sometimes on their travels they will meet a ronin or samurai with promise, and invite them to visit the Ageha estate, or even to join with the Clan.

### Customs

The clan's duties see them tending and guarding the Tomomori shrine and forest. An interesting development is the growing tradition of Ageha samurai becoming renowned bonsai gardeners, with many seeing the methodological art as a connection to void just as strong as meditation.

The placid appearance of the gardens and their tenders, however, considers hidden steel: the Ageha clan produces some of the most deadly duelists in the Emerald Empire. Secluded among the multitudes of butterfly and bonsai gardens that dot the Ageha lands, the Butterfly Clan dojo is always busy with clan samurai learning Kenjutsu, Kyujutsu, and Iajutsu. The Ageha clan tend to dress simply, if elegantly.

Their clan colors usually tend towards black and orange, with white highlights being common, white being the color of the dead. Many Ageha do their best to try and appear humble and unobtrusive, with many in the family tending to be slender and plain looking.

### THE AGEHA FAMILY: +1 AWARENESS

When Ageha allowed her first recruits into her clan, she showed little interest in those who came to her seeking the secret of the Swallowtail Cut. She seemed more interested in those with respect for the spirits, or who wished to use her techniques for meditation, and investigated the artistic skill of the applicants as much as their swordsmanship. The current clan is descended from her initial followers and those who married into her family.

### Schools, Paths & Dojos

They often have to turn down those they feel seek the secret of the Swallowtail cut for the wrong reasons, which occasionally include violent ronin.

## AGEHA BUSHI SCHOOL

- ☉ **Benefit:** +1 Void
- ☉ **Skills:** Any Artisan skill, Etiquette, Kenjutsu (Katana), Kyujutsu, Iajutsu, Meditation, any other High skill
- ☉ **Honor:** 5.5
- ☉ **Outfit:** Light Armor, Sturdy Clothing, Daisho, Kumi with 20 arrows, traveling pack, 5 koku.

### TECHNIQUES

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#### RANK 1: PERFECTION IN ALL THINGS

The Ageha Bushi chases the moment of perfection in all things. A number of times per day equal to your Void Ring, you can add your highest Bugei Skill level to an Artisan roll of your choice, or add your Artisan Skill level in a Bugei Skill roll of your choice. In a skirmish, you may only use this technique on an attack made after spending a turn in the Center Stance.

#### RANK 2: EMPTY, AND BECOME WIND

The Ageha Bushi can sense the flow and intent in all things, if they but find peace and listen. While in the Center Stance, increase your TN by your Void Ring. Additionally, you gain +2k0 to all Meditation rolls.

#### RANK 3: READ THE UNWRITTEN

An Ageha Bushi can easily read the world, for all things have the same emptiness. Whenever you enter the Center Stance you may select any one opponent you can see, and make an Iajutsu (Assessment)/Awareness roll against the Target's Void Ring x 5. If you succeed, any maneuvers that target makes against you require an additional raise. For every raise you make on the Iajutsu roll, their maneuvers require an additional one raise. As well, you gain +2k0 to all Iajutsu (Assessment) rolls, including duels and this technique.

#### RANK 4: ENTER THE VOID

In a moment of nothingness, time vanishes. You may attack as a simple action with weapons that have the samurai keyword.

#### RANK 5: THE SWALLOWTAIL CUT

The Ageha has mastered the attack of No Thought, striking without thinking. Whenever you are attacked in a skirmish while in Center Stance and equipped with a weapon with the samurai keyword once a turn, you may spend a Void Point to activate this technique. You make an immediate single attack before the enemy does - they then continue with their attack. On your next round, you may still earn your bonuses from having spent this round in Center Stance. Note that if you are ambushed, you may still decide to have started in the Center Stance.

## The Camel Clan

### Founding

The origins of the Camel Clan are ancient and unclear, to say the least. There are various rumors about it and all probably have some truth to them, although it is hard to tell. Camel Clan members would have it no other way, of course, as it suits their sense of identity, as well as their purpose. One thing is sure, however, and that is the Camel was originally an obscure vassal family of the Unicorn. When the Clan of the Ki-Rin came back from the Burning Sands, the Rakuda (ラクダ). No less obvious, at least at the time, was that the Rakuda had even more gaijin influences (both culturally and from an ethnic point of view) than the rest of the Unicorn, Moto excepted. Every Rakuda had sworn fealty to the Shinjo daimyo. As a vassal, their purpose was to handle the complex and heavy logistics of the Clan, a task which was seen uncouth by most samurai and not as exciting as it seems.

The family founder was not a Rokugani but an influent Ra'Shari woman who had fallen in love with a Shinjo samurai, Hiroshi, while the Clan was in the Burning Sands. The event created some tensions between both nomadic groups, but it was resolved when the Ra'Shari accepted the marriage. They asked 20 camels as part of the bargain, plus an important amount of various merchandises, but agreed to let several junior members of their Caravan join the newly wed



*"On the roads and beyond"* (official).

*"Let the dogs bark, the caravan goes on"*  
(unofficial, but widely accepted).

family. Finding the camels and merchandise should have been nearly impossible for the young Shinjo at the time, but his shroud Ra'Shari fiancée, Selma'ya, used all her influence and bargaining power with other caravans to help him gather them all. The couple joined the Shinjo at first, but their reputation was tarnished by all the bargaining that had occurred and it was at first difficult for them to be accepted by the Rokugani. They were already nicknamed "the camel couple", which was not particularly pleasant. At the same time, the Ki-Rin Clan was going through very rough times and needed resources and supplies very badly. The family daimyo of the time solved the issue by asking them to found their own vassal family and take care of the supply aspect of things for the Clan. At first the daimyo wanted to use Hiroshi name as family name, but an Ide present at the discussion tried to ridicule them by suggesting "Rakuda" (camels). Selma'ya wittingly answered: "Why not: they are what you need so badly, after all? » The name, originally a disparaging joke, stuck as a matter of pride.

After the Unicorn came back from the Burning Sands, each of the Clan families got a piece of land, but the Rakuda got a special assignment. They would continue their duty as normal, being caravanners and suppliers, but they would also be used to discretely keep contact with the Burning Sands and the Ra'Shari especially. The Ide at the time had realized that this kind of low honor task would be better served by a vassal, rather than proper Clan Family samurai. Instead of being assigned lands, the Rakuda kept their

nomadic ways, wandering the Unicorn Clan territory and the Burning Sands, buying what was necessary for the Clan and selling their surplus. Everything changed for them when Shinjo came back and began purging the Clan from the Kolat with Toturi. The Ra'Shari had warned the Rakuda against the Burning Sand Qolat and the Rakuda had kept away from the organization which had then infiltrated the rest of the Clan. Instead, they had kept tabs on whoever they suspected of belonging to the subversive group. When the purge came, they supported it and actually gave Toturi and Shinjo several agent networks. Toturi was so pleased that he decided to give the Rakuda their freedom and Minor Clan status. By Imperial charter, they would be a landless Clan, always on the move, protected against the other Clans by the Miya Family and exempt of merchandise taxes. The daimyo usually would follow one of the biggest caravans, but no one outside of the Clan would know which one. This suited everyone, because the Rakuda had gathered a lot of bad feelings during the purge and many Unicorns saw them as villains. For the Imperials, it was a great way of getting insight and contacts within the Burning Sands without having to go through the Unicorns. For the new Moto leaders of the Unicorn, it was a great way of taking control back on the Clan supplies.

Since then, the Camel Clan and its Rakuda family wander the roads of Rokugan (and discretely the Burning Sands) to exchange goods... and stories. They are very similar to Ra'Shari and their culture has major common points. Their art, dances, music and customs are directly linked to the desert Caravans. Many of them can even speak Mekhemite. They are very popular amongst Rokugani (particularly the children) because they are a major source of entertainment when they arrive in a village or town. On the other hand, they are too "gaijin" both in appearance and customs and are thus very much despised for it. The Imperial protection is usually good enough, but it is also true that if something wrong happens in a place where they are camping for the night, the fault is all too often attributed to them.

## *Geography & Economy*

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The Camel has no lands, but they can be found just about everywhere. At any given time, they have at least three major caravans on the move and three times that number of smaller ones, linking them.

The caravans use of course camels (the two hump type reflected on their mon, also called Bactriane Camel), but also various types of animals such as donkeys, horse, ox, zebu and even goats. They often have some cattle with them (mostly sheep and goats), for subsistence purpose, and of course dogs to help with the cattle.

The Camel Clan is not very rich, by Rokugani standards, but it is wealthy enough, although for security reasons it tends to hide it. More importantly, the Clan is often able to provide exotic goods and rare items. What they don't have immediately, they can often get for you... at the next season. Because the Clan has no lands, though, most of the revenues of this trade simply are used in supporting the caravans. The bulk of goods, while travelling North-West to the Burning Sands are made of silk, precious wood, tea, paper, dried tropical fruits and alcohol. On the way back, the caravans carry gems and rare metals (such as the tin which can come from as far as the Yodotai Empire), salts and other minerals, wool, aloe, oil, amber and dates. Manufactured goods are less common, because of the Rokugani aversion for anything gaijin.

## *Demography*

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The Camel Clan is not very diverse ethnically. Most members are directly or indirectly descending from the original couple and their retainers. This has given a distinct ethnic type, a mix of the Shinjo Oriental features and Ra'Shari sensual desert type. Camel Clan people have a dark skin, almond shaped eyes and black thin hair. Eyes vary from green to brown and the most common bright black. There are a couple hundred of them alive and this population is stable.

Because of their relatively low numbers, the Camel Clan often try to improve their caravans defenses by either teaming up with magistrates or heralds when possible, or hiring ronin for muscle. It has happened quite regularly that such ronin eventually joined the Clan, particularly after some years of hire or after an extraordinary feat in the Clan's service.

### Customs

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The Camel Clan is typically matriarchal. Since Selma'ya, every Clan daimyo has traditionally been female and even when there was no female heir, the charge has been passed to the wife of the male heir. Some Rakuda say that there are practical reasons for this, but the truth is that it is a custom created by and for Selma'ya and kept as a tradition.

Typical of people living on the road, Camel Clan caravanners have an absurd amount of superstitions that they take more or less seriously. Caravanners tend to avoid certain words as they are seen as taboo. For instance, they will never say the word "fire" which is too close to "tiger" in Rokugani for their liking. The same goes for "small wood" which strangely resembles the word for "wolves".

The Khadi delight in capturing them and penning them in the Jandaq slave caravans with the remnants of other cultures they have subjugated. The house of Dahab offer bounties on their heads, and hire armies to protect their merchant caravans, which turned even the most pacifistic tribes of the Ivory Kingdoms against them. Within their own homeland, the Clan of the Camel have no allies to call upon, and lose as many of their children to hunger as to the knife.

But adversity has been the Rakuda's greatest teacher. Every child of the clan is taught from birth to survive in the harsh wastes, with or without tools of civilization. They are shown how to train and ride the famed stallions of the desert,

and how to use them in war. And they are taught how to protect themselves from the predators that hunt them - both human and otherwise. Caravanners do absolutely everything on the move, from cooking to teaching, playing, eating and of course fighting, if necessary. Their attachment to the animals they use is proverbial and they treat both horses as well as beasts of burden with great respect. When stopping anywhere for the night they will always ensure that their animals are fed, cared for and healed if necessary, then their children and then themselves.

Caravanners live in tents or, if they have reached a major city, in caravanserais. Their tents are different in style from the round shaped used by the Moto. Rakudas favor the wide, low and angular shapes more common in the Burning Sands. These are very effective against sand winds and can be used to protect animals as well. Because of these low tents, the typical dances of the Rakudas women are done with the knees half bended. These dances are famous for their sensuality and it is common for village and city dwellers to come and watch them in the evening is a caravan has stopped in their neighborhood.

### War

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The Camel Clan is a peaceful one (as peace is very much needed to continue its activities). However, it has been actively involved in the conflict against the Kolat when Shinjo returned. Since then, there has always been a low level of hostility, with Kolat agents disrupting the caravans or their trade, and several assassination attempts against prominent family members or daimyo. Although some where successful at times, it never impacted the Camel Clan to the level expected; they would always reply in kind, and Camel bushi (often informed by Ra'Shari) could be seen sometimes raiding Qolat or Kolat operations at the border of the Burning Sands.

## Recent Events

The current daimio is a 19 years old only head caravanner, Rakuda Myriem. She received the leadership from her agonizing parents who had been assassinated by suspected Kolat operatives in 1169. Her first action was to hunt down the two killers, interrogate them, hang them to the same tree, find the Yasuki Kolat who had sent them and gut him in front of his retainers with her Ra'Shari knife. After two weeks, Myriem returned unscathed and took command of the Clan. She is yet to marry, but the suitors are quite numerous and she will have to make a choice soon.

The Camel Clan Caravans fled Kali-Ma's advance during the War of the Destroyers. Their agents had been desperately trying to gather any intelligence they could about them, via their usual sources in the Burning Sands, but without results. On the other hand, they did manage to get bits of information about the human generals and the Rakshasa in the Destroyer army.

## THE RAKUDA FAMILY: +1 STAMINA

The Rakuda family is scattered all over Rokugan and beyond. This has given them a unique aura and a strong identity. It favors subtlety over force and knowledge over aggressiveness. However, when defending what is important to them (their caravans or the unique privileges of their Clan), the Rakuda are merciless and very able foes. Rakuda are melancholic because they are outsiders wherever they are. A small handful of Rakuda settle down in fixed places as some are feeling too crippled for travel; some have found a spouse who can't consider a life on the roads; others because it was needed and this is their duty. The handful that do settle down are all used as trading agents by the Clan (and sometimes as information agents as well).

Two of these agents have built the biggest Caravanserai's of Rokugan. One is just outside the Western Gate of Toshi Ranbo, and is by far the

richest and most comfortable. It is the domain of Rakuda Nureya, a very old woman (she used to be one of Selma'ya's aids). Her back is so hunched that she can't travel any more. Myriem's mother asked her to take care of the Clan's interests in the capital and she has thrived in what she considers as a second chance in life. She is very fond of Myriem and fiercely loyal to the head caravanner. She made an arrangement with the Myia heralds when their own facilities were damaged in the Khan attack: she invited them to use the Rakuda's estates for free. Since then, mutual exchanges of services have been common, as long as it does not become a conflict of interest. The Myia provide military protection and she provides them supplies and an extra space when no caravan is present.

The other major Rakuda fixed facility is called Sabaku no Minato ( 砂漠の港, Desert Harbor) and is situated about a half a mile east of the Khol Wall. Far less comfortable than its equivalent near the capital; it is nevertheless a very important place for all caravans coming back from the Burning Sands. It is the first place where they can find safe water and supplies. Nearly all Rakuda have fond memories of seeing it for the first time after a daunting trip in the desert. The place is managed by Rakuda Soiko, a man who lost his leg in a fight to protect the caravan. The shugenja tended to his wounds, but they could do nothing for his missing limb. Since then, he has been welcoming his fellow Clan men every year, in Desert Harbor, his wooden leg clicking on the flat stones of the caravanserai's pavement. It is important to know that, because the Camel Clan doesn't own any land, these two caravanserai's are technically built on land leased from the Otomo family in Toshi Ranbo and from the Unicorn at Desert Harbor.

Since the opening of the Colonies to exploration, the Camel Clan has operated on the Unicorn route to the Second City. However, due to a lack of resources after the War, these caravans are smaller and less frequent than in Rokugan proper. Myriem is now planning to open a new caravanserai in the Colonies, but she hasn't

decided where to place it yet. She is balancing between the Second City (the end of the road), Twin Fork City (conveniently central but not as interesting commercially) or Journey's End (nearer to the Burning Sands but strongly under Unicorn control).

Rakuda have no proper dojo. However, each Caravan has one person (usually an older member of the family), responsible for training the younger members of the Clan and act as a sensei. Like most other Rakuda activities, much of the training is done on the move, alongside the caravan. Some additional training is often given in the Toshi Ranbo caravanserai and at Sabaku no Minato. It is traditional (although not mandatory) for Rakuda to try and complete both "training visits" before their gempuku. Rakuda Soiko is known to train and test students on desert survival, while Rakuda Nureya usually gives a bit of extra training on trading with the Imperials. Camel has rare contacts with the scarab clan.

### Schools, Paths & Dojos

#### RAKUDA CARAVANEER SCHOOL [COURTIER]

- **Benefit:** +1 Awareness
- **Skills:** Knives (Ra'Shari). Orientation. Either two of Storytelling, Performing (Ra'Shari dance) or Seduction. Animal Handling. Commerce. Etiquette.
- **Honor:** 3.5
- **Outfit:** Sturdy cloths (Ra'Shari styled for women, Shinjo style for men, with some exceptions), Travelling pack, Ra' Shari knife, Yari, Rough map of Rokugan's main roads. 5 Koku.

#### TECHNIQUES

##### RANK 1: THE WAYS OF THE LAND

The traveling merchants of the Rakuda are known to always find their way. So long as you can see a clear night sky (thus dense fog and stormy weather negate this benefit), you can never get lost when

traveling on land or river while in Rokugan. Additionally, if you have trained at Sabaku no Minato, you gain a +1k1 on all orientation rolls while in the Burning Sands.

##### RANK 2: THE WAYS OF THE TRADE

A Rakuda can always find what you are looking for... for the right price and in due time. Providing the object in question does not fall under the definition of forbidden knowledge, a Rakuda can find a commodity or merchandise. Whenever you are asked for an object as part of a commercial transaction, make a Commerce/Intelligence Roll and compare the result with the following table (adding any bonuses and penalties imposed by the GM):

Roll > 30: The Rakuda has it in the caravan.

Roll > 25: The Rakuda knows where to acquire it in a day's search radius.

Roll > 20: The Rakuda knows another caravan has it within a week's travel distance.

Roll > 15: The Rakuda knows another caravan has it within a month's travel distance.

Roll > 10: Come back later...

*Note:* this technique relates only to availability, not prices. This has nothing to do with the similar Yasuki Rank 3 technique.

##### RANK 3: THE WAYS OF THE HEART

The Rakuda have trained in many ways to captivate their audience, and future clients. Whenever you gain this technique, choose either Storytelling, Performing (Ra'Shari dance) or Seduction. You gain +1k1 on all rolls with the chosen skill. If such a roll is successful, for the next 24 hours you gain a free raise in any one skill during negotiations with the target of your skill.

##### RANK 4: THE WAYS OF THE KNIVES

A merchant must always be able to defend his goods. You may make your melee attacks with knives as a Simple Action instead of a Complex Action. Additionally, you gain +1k0 when throwing a Ra'Shari knife.



### RANK 5: THE WAYS OF THE HEAD

Your travels in Rokugan have given you great allies... and enemies. As long as you have trained in the Toshi Ranbo caravanserai, you can always request a (reasonable) service from the Miya heralds. They will usually ask something in exchange, but such a repayment can often be delayed (at the GM's discretion). You must always be ready to escape or defend yourself, whenever you are in a dangerous situation, your Animal handling skill is considered one rank higher. Finally, you may now use a Ra'Shari knife in each hand without penalties.

### RAKUDA DESERT WARRIOR SCHOOL [BUSHI]

- ☉ **Benefit:** +1 Agility
- ☉ **Skills:** Kyujutsu (Horse Archery), Horsemanship, Hunting, Kenjutsu, Lore: Burning Sands, Stealth (Ambush), any one Bugei Skill.
- ☉ **Honor:** 3.5
- ☉ **Outfit:** Sturdy Clothing, Heavy Armor, Bow and 20 arrows, Scimitar, Wakizashi, any two weapons, Gaijin Riding Horse, Traveling Pack, any combination of 10 total koku and copper.

### TECHNIQUES

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#### RANK 1: UNDER COVER OF NIGHT

Camel bushis are trained to use shadows and the cover of night to move about without being detected. They are also given their first chronicle - their own passage in the continuing verbal tradition. You never suffer any penalties to Stealth Skill rolls from wearing armor, and may make Stealth Skill rolls while on horseback. Additionally, select one of your School Skills as your Chronicle (what you are currently famous for among your clan). You gain a free Raise in this Skill, which does not count against your normal maximum, and a +1k0 bonus on all rolls involving this Skill.

#### RANK 2: NIGHT'S SWEET STING

Like the shadows cast by lingering moonlight, the camel warriors learn to confuse their enemies and adapt to any situation. At the beginning of your Turn in the first Round of a skirmish, you may select a number of Skills equal to your School Rank. You gain a +1k0 bonus to all rolls involving your chosen Skills until the end of the current skirmish.

#### RANK 3: BLADE OF THE CAMEL

The Rakuda Bushis fight not just for themselves, but for the survival of all their people. You may make melee attacks as a Simple Action instead of as a Complex Action.

#### RANK 4: NIGHT'S BLIND FURY

At this, the last true stage of "development" for the Camel, the Rakuda is shown the secret of combining all his previous knowledge into one startling attack. Whenever you successfully ambush a target with a Stealth (Ambush) Skill roll, you begin the Skirmish with a +20 bonus to your Initiative and gain a +3k0 bonus to all of your attack and damage rolls for the duration of the Skirmish.

#### RANK 5: THE FINAL CHRONICLE

The Camel warrior has made a name for himself among his own people. He is granted his final Chronicle and recorded in the Great Chronicle of Age, a record of the greatest heroes of the Camel. You gain an additional +5k0 bonus on rolls with your Chronicle Skill, and your Raises with this Skill are no longer limited in any way.

#### Ancestral Item

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#### SELMA'YA'S VEIL

Selma'ya's veil is a simple light blue cotton veil. It was worn by the Clan founder when she met her fiancé for the first time and they both fell in love. It is not particularly magical, but its exquisite design gives a free raise for any seduction attempt to its female wearer. It's usually passed from mother to daughter (or stepdaughter).

## The Cat Clan

### Founding

Members of the minor Cat clan are teach and believe strongly that they banded together at a crucial moment seeking on mutual protection and admiration of each other's capabilities. It's a very beautiful story made of romance and betrayal. But in truth, the exact circumstances of their creation are darker than the deepest secret still guarded from anyone but the Scorpion highest ranks. Most presume well that the manipulative clan designed it with his own ranks, manipulating some of their own members and the Emperor himself. But no one in the Scorpion Clan or in the Imperial families will ever admit such blaspheme...

It's perhaps one of the most tremendous successes of the Shoshuro family: the Neko have become de facto rulers of the Cat minor clan since the dark reign of the Steel Chrysanthemum. They thought that the clan would survive and become a proper minor clan, self-sufficient with itself. Thankfully for the member of the Cat clan, they have ingrained themselves to such an extent without drawing much attention that the imperial and clan court societies couldn't survive without them.

Sadly the Cat clan is really nothing more and glorified lamprey, existing solely on the wings of the courts, both Imperial and clans. In reality, it's one of the most powerful spy network in the Empire. They chose the cat as the symbol for their clan because of the beauty that it possessed and thus inferring the beauty that the minor clan would be capable of.



*"We live to serve."*

### Geography & Economy

The Cat clan holds no land so to speak and no ancestral holdings. Most are housed within households of imperial and clan emissaries, under deep cover while older members tend to be owners of the geisha houses. They run many members of the Neko themselves and some of them have been gifted households due the popularity of their works.

The clan has no centralized economic system, most of the revenues from the exploitation of tearooms or geisha houses.

### Demography

It is said that among the Cat clan, there are a few that have left their former loyalties and formed something rather sinister. The Cat is still a small "inner" minor clan, apart and yet, not apart of their parent Scorpion. They number perhaps 100 in total, nearly all women but nobody has the exact answers.

### Customs

The Cat Clan is perhaps one of the most enigmatic social groups of Rokugan culture. A geisha is always a hinin and considered to be an entertainer of men: She provides the necessary romance that few samurai find in their court arranged marriages. All Neko sensualists are samurais and more spies and courtiers than geisha... It's not always easy to assemble their duty with their honor or to conceal their true identity. The price worth the effort as all the sensualists are experts to discover the deepest secrets of their customers and so blackmail their silence but it's a harsh way to attain glory. Only high ranks of them are sought after for high level houses in the most auspicious courts and cities. So the competition is

sometimes rough but the operating mode of the clan in cells tends to prevent conflicts of interest. This rather allows the clan to maintain a high level of efficiency and vigilance when it's needed moving a member from a cell to another can provide a safe shelter.

The cats seem to almost delight in their prey thinking that he or she is safe and in control...until they pounce. After all, all clans use their services whether they admit or not... Many of them revere Benten. They hope so to obtain the forgiveness of Fortune of Romance for their sometimes questionable acts.

This is almost a matriarchal clan but the true identity of the daimyo is known only by few members as the clan function primordially cell by cell, only receiving their orders from a mother cell and always by the back door.

All sensualists receive a daisho just before their gempuku. The true challenge of their ceremony is to manage to hide it well from their sensei and to act in a convincing manner, hiding their true identity, in another cell official gempuku ceremony. Simple peasants, ronins, heimin people, and even etas are always invited to assist at this second and official celebration to make the thing even harder. Thus, the wakizashi is more a symbol of their status as samurais than a useful weapon. Because they're often acting as simple hinins or heimins, they're rather nearly always specialists of unarmed combat.

### War

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The Cat clan is obviously not made for war. The only kind of conflict they know is a kind of "cold war" they nourish against the Rat Clan for obvious reasons.

### Recent Events

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The clan has deliberately kept out of the Scorpion Clan Coup. Not to betray his mission, his home clan or his clan Emperor. In fact, many dissidents found refuge and safety within the Cat clan after the coup failed. This only gave more importance to the minor clan. After the Scorpion Clan was back again to its holds and endowments, the Cat clan was none more affected. He just received many "gifts" from the Scorpion, for his help regarding information transmits and manipulations performed to restore it...

### THE NEKO FAMILY: +1 AGILITY

Comprised nearly solely of women, the Neko family functions like a sisterhood, each supporting the other in their plans and endeavors. The rare male of the family are nearly always husbands who take care of the samurai house or the children of the couple when the spouse is "at work". The number of men who acts as sensualist is much reduced.

### Schools, Paths & Dojos

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Sensualists are sought after by high nobles and lords for not only their skills of pleasure, but for their discerning wit, intelligence and ability to almost see into anyone's very soul to determine their loyalties. But also often for their loss...

Only a few ever attain the last level of skill within this hidden school, perhaps less than 30 in all of Rokugan. Nobody knows really the number or where to find the dojo that teaches these techniques. It is rumored that Bayushi Kachiko herself was in fact a grand mistress of the Sensualist School and a daimyo of the Cat Clan.

## NEKO SENSUALIST SCHOOL [COURTIER]

- ☉ **Benefit:** +1 Reflexes
- ☉ **Skills:** Acting, Courtier (Manipulation), Etiquette, Jujutsu (Martial Arts), Sincerity (Deceit), Temptation (Seduction), any one Perform skill,
- ☉ **Honor:** 1.0
- ☉ **Outfit:** Three beautiful kimonos, Wakizashi or Tanto, Travelling Pack, 4 Koku

### TECHNIQUES

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#### RANK 1: WAY OF THE CAT

All Neko Sensualist know how to pleasure their partner with their body movement and discrete allusions. It is the first technique taught to all potential recruit. This is because if the pupil decides not to go any farther in the school he or she can at least provide some comfort to the customer that visit him or her. A good cat courtier is able to ease tension through massages, soft words and gentle caresses, as well as other skills. Any character who spends at least 4h in the care of a Neko Sensualist will feel relaxed and will benefit as if he had meditated for the night. All neko also learn how to act gracefully and sensually from the start so they may keep an additional 1k1 die for all Temptation (Seduction) rolls.

#### RANK 2: CARESS OF THE CAT

For those who enter the second rank, the school teaches the second part to knowing of the body. They learn of the pressure points that channel the body's ki to touch to cause the greatest pleasure in a customer. Characters who are recipients of acupressure from a Sensualist will not only benefit from the Rank 1 benefit, but also be able to re-roll any result of 1 they will roll on all Earth-ring based next for the next 4h. Above this, Neko now learns to play with its prey, learning of his or her weakness and fears so that they can exploit. You can spend a Void point and make contested Temptation (Seduction)/Awareness against Sincerity/Perception of your target. In case of success, you can lure your prey into revealing one of his or her Disadvantages.

#### RANK 3: CLAWS OF THE CAT

True to its name, the Neko is now capable of moving without sound, thus gaining surprise on its intended target. You may make attacks as a Simple Action instead of a Complex Action while making unarmed attacks or using weapons with the Peasant keyword.

#### RANK 4 MIND OF THE CAT

The Neko fully understands of how the mind and heart work together to drive the body to do what it does. She or he is now capable of mentally stimulating her or his customers as well as physically and emotionally. The target of this technique is considered to have the Clear Thinker Advantage for the next day. All Neko also gain an additional 1k1 die for all Temptation (Seduction) rolls that stacks with the Rank one technique.

#### RANK 5: POUNCE OF THE CAT

The Neko finally learns how to unlock the very soul of her or his customer and examine it carefully. They use then their knowledge to great success, in spurring a warrior to greater feats of glory and honor or in destroying him through subtle manipulation of his emotions and fears. If you spend 4h with another character, you can spend a Void point to attempt a Temptation (Seduction)/Awareness roll of TN 30. If your success, you can give your target the Blackmailed disadvantage for your benefit with a rank equal to one plus the number of Raise of your roll. This effect last as long as the target succumb to your charm.

A Cat Clan member can buy the Stolen Identity Advantage for 5 points instead of 6.

#### Ancestral items

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#### NEKO'S FAN

Shoshuro Neko was a Geisha to Emperor Hantei XVI. She was his favorite and would often spend many nights entertaining him. Her fan is said to contain a secret map in its design that would allow someone to enter the Forbidden Palace and gain entrance to the Emperor's personal quarters. This map gives The Way of the land Advantage for Otosan Uchi.

## Advices for players and GMs

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The real reason for the creation of the Cat clan resides in the handling Shoshuro Sakura manages to have on an Emperor himself. At the time when the Steel Chrysanthemum, Hantei XVI became a menace for the Empire itself, many were those who wondered to get him rid of. However the conflict of honor was too great and only the Scorpion Clan resigned himself to carry out the task he was entrusted to. But he could not afford to act on its behalf...

That is why some of the elite elements of Shosuro family agreed to sacrifice their honor for that of the Empire. The ploy was simple: given the advanced state of debauchery of the Emperor, the Scorpion clan made its best "geishas" available to meet its needs. In fact they were all volunteer samurai-kos. The maneuver was risky because the Emperor had shown great paranoia and do execute anyone put him in doubt.

A samurai-ko does her job better than anyone: Shoshuro Neko. The rumor said that the Emperor himself has asked her to found her own minor clan to spread her "expertise". Others suggest that it is the samurai-ko herself that bartered this right. Some believe it's the successor of the Steel Chrysanthemum that gave the cat clan his status and family name in appreciation for the amount of information he had collected. No one really knows.

The mission of the clan has remained the same since then: to protect the Empire of its corrupted leaders, even the Emperor himself if he should fail...

## The Crocodile Clan

### Founding

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The Crocodile clans origins stretch back to the days of the of the Steel Chrysanthemum's rule. In the Year 592, at the height of his power the Emperor was virtually insane with paranoia and had executions held almost daily for imagined slights. One such scheduled execution involved a shamed Lion named Matsu Shiako who was accused of being an assassin in disguise, but before he was put to death the man escaped his bonds and started to slaughter the guards in a rage. Watching the commotion the Emperor unknown to any but himself ordered the guards to spare the man and denied Seppuku. Quickly the group became hated by all the others and Shayu knew he and those under him would be exterminated when Hantei XVI died so he turned to Otomo Tanaka for help. The Emperor's brother saw an opportunity to use Shayu Shiako and his killers and agreed to intercede for them with the court if they assisted him in removing the Steel Chrysanthemum. After the events of the Emperors death Otomo Tanaka keep his word and prevented the group from being destroyed by placing them under Imperial protection. When the new Emperor was crowned he named Shayu Shiako the daimyo of his own minor clan which was named the Crocodile Clan after their nature and curse. For a long time after they received protection the newly formed Clan maintained a low profile and performed minor tasks for the Emerald Champion and Otomo Family before they were once again called on to perform the duties for the Empire. This time however they were charged with protecting the



*"Blood on the Water"*

have him brought forward. He told the Matsu that he was impressed with the man's bloodlust and if he agreed to serve as the Emperor's executioner he would be spared. With little choice the Lion agreed and the Steel Chrysanthemum then named the man Shayu Shiako with the instruction to gather other brutal men and women and slay the Emperors enemies. He then cursed the man and his descendants to always show their nature and be identifiable to his enemies.

For several years Shayu Shiako and those relegated to his service performed brutal killings and raids against any the Emperor ordered. They also conducted many of the executions in the court when Samurai were accused of treason and Empires river ways from bandits and creatures that would prey on Imperial citizens. A task no other clan wanted but to which the Crocodile clan would be suited. Since then they have maintained close ties with the Tortoise Clan and trade their goods and services in exchange for Information and courtier support. In the Twelfth century they also gain the good graces of the Scorpion Clan in protecting their river trading routes after the second festering pit opened. In the past they also had good contact with the minor shark and firefly clans.

### Geography & Economy

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The lands of the Crocodile Clan are small yet placed in a strong position to patrol the rivers. Shiro Shayu itself is actually built into a recess in a cliff face with part of the castle coming out over the water of the Three Mans River. Large supports

hold up docks and small decked areas tiered up to the castle. It is carefully constructed so that it does not impose on the river trade passing or that it faces towards any of the holding of the Crane, Scorpion or Lion clans. The Crocodile Clan used much favor as they could possibly muster to have Crab engineers oversee the construction so despite having a simple appearance it is defensible if ever required.

On the tops of the cliff exists the Village that supports the clan. Due to the mountainous area the village does not grow much food and frequently has to buy in food. What they do have though is iron with the discovery of a large deposit soon after the castle was built. Despite the Lion clan choosing to ignore the ancestry of the minor clan they are one of the biggest buyers of iron to keep up demand for weapons for their armies. Some of the iron is also crafted into decorated mundane items that are then sold as normal or decorated to be sold to the nobility of other clans. This is a sizable portion of the clan's income as mundane items made to be elegant and beautiful can fetch quiet a high price on the markets of Rokugan. Some income comes from the cargos of the bandits that are dealt with by the Crocodile. Goods that are clearly not identifiable are claimed by the clan and used to pay for whatever else they need to survive. Most also whisper that the Crocodiles bandit other clans vessels when they are able but this has never been proved.

The Crocodile Clan also has a second small holding on the River of Gold. This is a small set of docks and a few buildings that serve as a base of operations. Traditionally the Daimyo's successor will be in charge of this location to learn what it means to rule when they come of age.

## Demography

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Although tiny by the enormous standards of the Great Clans, the Crocodile Clan has around 800 Samurai at any time but with a slightly unsteady demography due to the violent nature of their duty and the constant conflict. Most of their numbers are spread across the Empire though on the various rivers and estuaries and thus it appears that the clan is a lot smaller to a casual observer. The clan also always has a detachment of Samurai stationed with the Tortoise Clan as part of their mutual standing agreement.

A strong use of a light Green with a dark crimson red are the colors of the Crocodile Clan although deep grey highlights are not uncommon.

## Customs

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The Crocodile Clan had such an unusual beginning that it took time for it to develop many of its customs. But like many of the Clans in Rokugan, simple acts have become tradition and certain ways of performing tasks have become ritual. There are few practices that do put them apart from other clans though.

The first is ritual scarring on the chest and arms to reflect their clan animal skin and their acts of note in service to the clan, a practice that would possibly horrify other more honorable clans if they knew. The Crocodile obviously maintain a high measure of secrecy when it comes to the scarring and are always noted to wear long sleeved clothing no matter the weather when they have to make an appearance in other clans' courts.

The second would surprise many based on the Clans violent reputation but the Shayu have developed a very fine art of metal etching due to large iron mine that they discovered in their lands. Part of every young Crocodile's Gempukku is to produce at least one small piece of art to show they can temper their more aggressive nature.

## War

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The Crocodile Clan avoids wars very carefully as although they have Imperial protection it is dependent on their duty to keep banditry on the river systems as low as possible. Despite it being centuries since their creation, the Great Clans do remember what the Shayu family started as and would leap at a chance to have some revenge. When they do have to participate in military conflict though they have excellent shock troops and have aided several in the minor clan alliance over the years when they were needed. In more recent times though they have gained some respect for their actions in the War of spirits, where they defied the wishes of the Steel Chrysanthemum.

In the course of their duty to keep the rivers safe The Shayu has developed a strange tactic on river combat. The normal ship boarding is of course still practiced but the Shayu family developed a method of swimming in full light armor to ships at night and boarding them silently. Then when they are aboard they launch a brutal attack to take the ship. This tactic would of course be looked on poorly in the empire but so far the Crocodiles have kept it secret. They are also not in the habit of taking prisoners who can talk.

## Recent Events

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The war of spirits was a dark time for the Crocodile Clan when Hantei XVI returned. He demanded their loyalty but they refused and sided with the Toturi Empire. Several times during the war the Crocodile were attacked as part of larger military movements and only through the timely assistance of loyalist armies allowed them to survive. During the subsequent periods of conflicts (such as the Four Winds period) the Crocodile Clan took its usual tactic of avoiding notice in the greater scheme of things and just focused on their duty as well as building the clan up again. When the Iwoko dynasty was formed they took their place and swore fealty without hesitation and were

a very small footnote in most reports and histories until the Destroyer war came. In the war that followed the Crocodile lent all their strength to the Imperial forces and despite heavy losses gained respect from other clans and a firmer place in the order of Rokugan. The Scorpion Clan even requested the Crocodile assist in a larger capacity to patrol the rivers in their territories as they now had larger military concerns with the second festering pit.

## THE SHAYU FAMILY: +1 WILLPOWER

The Shayu family is the only one in the Crocodile Clan but is a relatively large one compared to other minor clans due to its age. They are competent sailors and vicious fighters who have little to no mercy for their foes when they attack. As per the reviled nature of their creator, the Steel Chrysanthemum had cursed the Founder of the clan to always show his violent nature and as such the eyes of Shayu Shiako and those of his blood changed to resemble the slitted eyes of a Crocodile which would become completely black in combat.

### Family Rules (Optional)

The family suffers from the Disadvantage Bad Fortune: Evil Eye but only costs 2 points.

### Schools, Paths & Dojos

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## SHAYU BERSERKER SCHOOL [BUSHI]

- ☉ **Benefit:** +1 Agility
- ☉ **Skills:** Athletics (Swimming), Kenjutsu, Intimidation, Sailing (River Boat), Stealth, Knives, Any one Merchant or Low skill
- ☉ **Honor:** 2.0
- ☉ **Outfit:** Light Armor (Crocodile armor), Sturdy Clothing, Daisho, Any one Weapon, Travelling Pack, 3 Koku



## TECHNIQUES

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### **RANK 1: PREDATOR ON THE WATER**

Swift and silent as a Crocodile stalking its prey. You get +2k0 to your first attack when you get surprise on your opponent in combat. Intimidation can be used in place of Etiquette when in social defense. You do not lose honor for use of Stealth and Intimidation skills as long as you do so as a part of your Clan or Imperial duty.

### **RANK 2: BLOOD IN THE WATER**

A Crocodile becomes more aggressive when it senses that its prey is injured. At any time an opponent is wounded you receive a +1k0 to all attack rolls for the combat for every wound level that they suffer up to your school rank. The maximum bonus is +5k0. This lasts until the end of the combat.

### **RANK 3: TEARING JAWS**

Crocodiles attacks are quick and brutal when they want to feed. You may make attacks as simple actions instead of complex actions with any medium or small melee weapons against any opponent who is injured.

### **RANK 4: SCENT OF BLOOD**

People become unnerved when they smell blood and predators always smell of blood. Your attacks cause others to lose heart and as a simple action during combat you can make an Intimidation/Willpower vs. Etiquette/Willpower check to make an opponent take raises against you. For every 5 you win by the opponent must make an additional raise for any action against you for the next round.

### **RANK 5: FEEDING FRENZY**

Once a feeding frenzy has started a Crocodile will not stop until it has had its fill. You get a cumulative +1k0 to damage after every successful attack until the end of combat. During combat you can declare 3 raises and spend a void to make your next damage roll explode on 9s and 10s with any small or medium melee weapon. If combined with Kenjutsu Rank 7 mastery then damage explodes on

8s, 9s and 10s when using a Katana.

### **The Ragged Tooth Dojo**

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The Crocodile have their main dojo built into the cliff face next to their main holdings on the Three Mans River. The main hall is quiet a high above the water with smaller training rooms off to the sides and on lower levels. The Dojo also has its own dock where students learn how to sail their boats and also partake in grueling swimming practice daily.

Beginning students start at the lowest level and as they progress they move up the levels until they are allowed to train in the main hall. From her they have a magnificent view out across the rivers they are duty bound to one day protect in service to their clan. Unsurprisingly very few students come from other clans but it is not unheard off.

The Mantis occasionally sends some students they feel are better suited to travelling on the rivers of the empire. The Crab have been known to also send recruits to have them toughened up after an incident in the Seventh Century when a Crocodile Bushi named Shayu Ashinjo was serving on the Great Carpenters Wall. A Hida warrior made a joke at the Crocodiles expense about being a soft water fish and promptly found himself being thrown through the barracks wall. The Crab immediately went into a rage but was bludgeoned unconscious with his own Tetsubo before he could react. When the Crab finally awoke he found that Shayu Ashinjo had covered his shift on the wall and apologized to the Crocodile Bushi. Apparently the tale is still popular whenever a warrior of the Crocodile clan serves on the Wall.

## CROCODILE ARMOR

The Crocodile clan has developed a special type of armor that they use to silently ambush ships by swimming up to them. Its practice is similar to Light armor but incurs no negative on Athletics or Stealth. The armor is not quite as tough though as it has been lightened to allow mobility and reduce the wear of water on it. Where the original design for the armor came from is not commonly known but is in fact gaijin in origin. The Tortoise gave a set of this armor to the Crocodiles as a token of their mutual agreement and the Crocodiles built their own versions. The original gaijin armor is safely hidden away in the Castle vaults away from prying eyes.

- **Bonus to TN:** +5
- **Reduction:** 1
- **Special Rules:** bonus +1k0 to Athletics (swimming) and Stealth when in water
- **Cost:** 30 koku



*"You cannot adhere to the Bushido if you do not know your place."*

## The Dog Clan

### Founding

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The creation of the Dog Clan has happened only recently both compared in relation to the history of the Empire and also to the other Minor Clans, during the reign of Toturi III. But its true origins begin some 40 years before, when the Mantis became a Great Clan in the ninth day of the Month of the Ox of 1128...

When the Fox, the Wasp, the Centipede and Mantis minor clans finally merged to form the Mantis Great Clan, all of them were not willing to join the final alliance. Some of them would even quit other clans or even the way of the ronin in sight of protest rather than seeing the creation of a new Major Clan without a kami guiding them. One of them was a young Monkey Samurai called Toku Katsuro that would become their leader, the others were Matsu Sadao, Moshi Yukio, Kitsune Kimiko, Tsi Atsushi, Yorimoto Sayuri and Tsurichi Masato.

Not all of them were true ronin, some of them conserved some relations with their original clan, only Kitsune Kimiko declared her officially as a ronin shugenja, willing to preserve the original wilderness of the Fox Clan rather than permit "domesticating" her by the mantis. Indeed, it was a group of seven young samurai who began to seek for justice and finally unraveled the complex plans of a group of ronin to put the empire into a state of all-consuming warfare and overthrow the emperor while the Great Clans were busy fighting.

Recognizing them a kind of legitimacy, they all were appointed as legionnaires of the Minor Clan Alliance, heading out for a simple quest to investigate the sudden rise of bandit activity in Minor Clan territories, just to stumble into the spider web of a conspiracy against the emperor and whole Rokugan. By combining their skills and knowledge, they cut through this web, finding the manipulators and killed them at great personal risk and for some of them also cost. It took nearly a year more until words reached the Imperial Court and thus the emperor herself. As stories presented Katsuro as the leader of the group, he was invited to speak with the emperor and report what has happened.

When the man who had lost an eye during the final fight arrived at the emperor's palace, he humbly knelt down before the emperor, not getting up from this position during the whole conversation. His report was without any signs of boasting, he even did not try to hide the faults they had done and that fortune must have smiled upon them sometimes. Impressed by the deeds done and truth of his words, the emperor gave leave to him to found a Minor Clan of his own, so he might start a lineage of humble and noble samurai, that served the empire by taming the wilderness at the eastern outskirts of Shinomen Forest and protect the empire against any vile creature that might leave the forest.

Little did they know, for it was merely a small part of a bigger threat, being the Spider Clan which had infiltrated the empire. For now they were safe, as their annihilation would arise unwanted attention, but the day would come, then the Spider Clan will try to utterly destroy them.

Some say the Dog Clan is nothing but a bunch of peasants and Ronin, some say they are virtuous Samurai, dedicated to the Emperor like only few other Clans in the whole Empire. Whatever one thinks, no one can deny that they are humble and make it difficult to let anyone see any offense in their words or deeds.

Few even care about this upstart clan at all, for their land does not offer any riches and their influence is almost non-existent, besides bit of respect inside of the Minor Clan Alliance, as they do not consider it proper to boast with one's mere duty, which they fulfill with utmost dedication

### *Geography & Economy*

The Dog Clan lives in a harsh land, where man has but only two choices to survive: to tame the land, wrestling with the wilderness until the soil yields the fruits of one's work or to take it directly from nature itself. They do both, plowing the rough valleys and fields on the outskirts of the Shinomen Forest from late winter until early summer, felling trees, collecting berries and plants and hunting birds during summer, harvesting the rice sowed during spring in the autumn. Having no name before, they called their land the Shizen no Tani or "Valley of Nature", lying south of the Hare Clan territory, at the northeastern outskirts of the Shinomen Forest. It is comprised of the outskirts of the Shinomen Forest and the shallow hills beyond its reach, that still are overgrown with bushes and small trees, whose roots are the worst enemies of the peasants. There are only a few villages in their land, most of them located at some valleys at the farthest reaches of their territory, where the peasants live that grow the rice of the clan.

The rest of the Clan is concentrated in the small town at the very outskirts of the forest, Hokori no Rangui or "Palisade of Pride", which is the location of Toride no Hokori and also the center of their economy.

From a far distance one barely can make out the town, as it is built out of the same trees that make up the outskirts of the forest. The quickly built town has been surrounded with a solid palisade-wall, that is adapted every year when new buildings are built, so not a single building ever stands outside the protection of the wall. Knowing that a single fire could burn the town down to ashes, the wood is lacquered with a secret mixture created with some plants and which protects the wood from being set on fire too quickly. Also they have built artificial sewers of the small stream that runs through the town, so water is accessible everywhere in case of a fire. Most citizens are craftsmen, who work with wood, either carving small wooden statues and other decorations or more practical things, which are traded for ores and other goods they cannot get themselves. Only the Samurai are allowed to craft bows and other wooden weapons like staves, spears and pole arms.

At first the Fortress of Pride has been constructed out of wood, but much of the imported stone has been used to replace the wood by stone, so even in case of a fire, the Clan would be able to hold its homestead.

### *Demography*

The Clan barely counts 100 samurai, which is also the reason why one seldom sees any beyond their lands. To keep up their population and also have it rise over time, only few ever get permission to leave, mostly only for a short time, like assisting Imperial Magistrates to hunt down some criminals or when they are offered a position within the Imperial organizations or the Minor Clan Alliance.

The true military and economical might of the Dog Clan though are their ashigaru and heimin, which are quite able with axes, be it in matters of warfare or felling a tree, which is why they did manage to build up a small fortified town at the edges of the Shinomen Forest, using the only resource they have access to in abundance: lumber.

The Dog clan has good relations with the Fox clan and Hidden Sword ronin group and sometimes tries to recruits from their ranks.

### **Customs**

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It is not uncommon for the Great Clans to frown upon the ways the Dog deal with heimin and hinin, yet it is their belief, that though these people are of lower status in heavenly order, it is the duty of the Samurai to protect and guide them, so they might get the chance to prove worthy of becoming Samurai in the next life. Also they are part of the cycle of life as anyone and anything stemming from this realm and serve the Empire through their hard work, feeding themselves and all others. Treated with respect and often offered help during harvest time and food in harsh years, the peasants and other heimin of the Dog Clan are loyal to their masters and gladly offer their assistance wherever and whenever possible.

Through this mutual agreement, there is not time where people do not work, as even in summer and winter, where peasants usually rest, waiting for plowing and harvest time, they help the Clans building projects, carve wooden objects or serve as reinforcements for the army.

Those who dedicate themselves to warfare are taught in basics of warfare even more than other ashigaru, since the small Clan simply can't afford using them as simple distraction. Since most heimin of this region are used to employing hatchets, their already existing skills in the use of axes is refined and they are equipped with Masakari and wooden ashigaru-armor.

What really makes the Dog Clan stand aside from all other Clans though is the symbiotic relationship with the prized war dogs originally bred by Kitsune Kimiko and Matsu Sadao within a few years, who used some secret techniques of breeding, only few know of. Since she had the ability to commune with animal-spirits and use spells on animals, it is quite possible that the breed that is called Inubuki has been intertwined with animal spirits of Shinomen Forest or enhanced by magical means. Whatever may be true, these dogs are way too intelligent to be the result of natural breeding. They seem to understand more complex orders and are loyal to death. Some experienced dog handlers have even been able to teach them to let someone put on a lightweight armor on them. Their flat, muscular snouts are strong enough to shatter bone and armor alike and their muscular, large bodies can easily knock over heavily armored opponents and sometimes even riders if they have enough room to accelerate.

### **War**

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Since its founding the Dog Clan has not yet fought any real war, but their lands are frequently ravaged by bands of bandits, which they quickly put to a bloody end.

### **Recent Events**

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It is part of the philosophy of the Dog Clan to keep themselves out of the political intrigues of the influential and mighty, as they are a Minor Clan and all they have to do is serve the Emperor by fulfilling their duties. Lately however there has been an increase of attacks of crazed animals and Shadowland beasts, which has led them to start exploring the depths of the Forest.

**THE HOKORI FAMILY: +1 AGILITY**

The Hokori Family has but a few things in common, which no surprise is considering their founders different backgrounds. They all share an inherent love for the Shinomen Forest and animals at large, which is due to the influence of Kitsune Kimikos teachings. Also they are a pragmatic lot, seeing no use for luxury or certain traditions. It is not uncommon for a Hokori to wear his hair short, independent of gender and age. Years of patrolling at the outskirts and inside of the Shinomen Forest makes the young Hokori bushi quite nimble.

**Schools, Paths & Dojos****HOKORI BUSHI SCHOOL**

Since their founding, the Dog Clan only strived to prove themselves worthy of the respect of the Emperor and dedicated themselves to their duty and an honorable life. Their school is the result of their strive and is based on the teachings of all founding members, who put their knowledge and expertise into shaping a school worthy of being a master of the wilds.

The Hokori Bushi Dojo is a rather strange in its teachings, emphasizing outdoor-training and expeditions into the forest. They learn everything they need directly on the field, as it is against the philosophy of the School to teach through written or spoken word alone. One year, before they are old enough to try their gempukku ceremony, they are entrusted with a Inubuki pup, which will be their companion for the years to come.

The gempukku ceremony is a simple but dangerous one that puts their skill of survival at a test: survive in the forest for a week, without any help beyond your equipment and your companion. It is only known of a few cases where students have failed, which means they have died, either out of starvation, injury or illness.

☉ **Benefit:** +1 Perception

- ☉ **Skills:** Animal Handling, Etiquette, Hunting, Kenjutsu, Lore: Nature, Medicine(Herbalism), any one Bugei Skill
- ☉ **Honor:** 3.5
- ☉ **Outfit:** Ashigaru Armor, Sturdy Clothing, Daisho, a knife or a bow with 20 arrows, Medicine Kit, Inubuki Companion(see below), 1 Koku

**TECHNIQUES****RANK 1: READ THE BODY**

When one has read body language long enough, one can easily read your opponents intentions. You and your companion add +1k0 on all attack rolls when you attack the same target and you never suffers a penalty for the fact that your target is attacked by your companion. Additionally, you/your companion add your/his Perception Rank on your/his Armor TN.

**RANK 2: FANGS OF FURY**

Once unleashed, the Dogs fury will only stop when blood has been spilt. You may add +1k1 to your DR when you and your companion attack the same target.

**RANK 3: STRENGTH OF THE PACK**

Even the strongest beast may be overwhelmed by a pack of dogs, overwhelming their prey with their number. You may attack with Simple Actions instead of Complex Actions whenever you and your companion attack the same target.

**RANK 4: WATCHING YOUR BACK**

A pack is not just a group to hunt down prey, but also a pact to protect each other. You may add your companions Perception/he may add your Perception on your/his Armor TN. This bonus stacks with the Rank 1 technique.

**RANK 5: TWO BECOME ONE**

In a pack everyone works together when hunting, protecting each other from danger and helping when attacking the prey. Whenever you attack an opponent twice in a round, your companion may attack that target twice in the next round.

## Ancestral Items

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There is no ancestral Item in the Dog Clan. Instead, the ancestor's heritage is the Inubuki war dog, which will probably exist as long as the Clan exists.

### INUBUKI WARDOG

At character creation treat the Inubuki as if he was a character with following exceptions:

- ④ Only has 20 GP for attributes, skills and advantages/disadvantages.
- ④ Starts with all attributes at 2
- ④ Has no Void what so ever and can never use it
- ④ May only choose physical advantages/disadvantages. GM can always object if choice does not make sense.
- ④ May only learn skills adequate for a dog. GMs decision what fits.
- ④ Has no School or Family, but is affected by owners School-Techniques
- ④ Initiative equals owners Initiative+1
- ④ Have two basic attacks: Bite(DR 1k3) and Scratch(DR 1k2). Strength applies as usual.

Later he may increase attributes and skills using the owners Experience Points, to represent the time the owner spends on training his dog.

The Inubuki War dog is controlled by the GM, though it will be obedient and carry out any orders the Dog Bushi may give through Free or Simple Actions.



*"Attack first, ask questions after..."*

## The Drake Clan

### Founding

The inevitable introduction of gunpowder and firearms by the Gaijin on Rokugan brought many conflicts between traditionalists and innovators in the clans. One of such innovators was Mirumoto Seiryu, a Bushi who saw Merenae sailors fighting with polvora pistols in one hand and rapiers on another. Seiryu saw that as the next logical step in warfare and desired to improve the Niten style by substituting one of its swords by a small pistol, giving the Samurai an edge when dealing with both close and distant targets. Seiryu and his disciples ended up being banished from the Dragon Clan by more conservative members of his family that saw his new style as an insult to his ancestor Mirumoto.

Now a Ronin, Seiryu named his new style Jigokuten, the Heaven and Hell style, and became a wandering warrior, wishing for a chance to prove the honor and power of his new style. This chance came during when remnants of the Cult of Kali-Ma started attacking the Spider and Mantis colonies on the Ivory Kingdoms. As Seiryu and his group travels brought them to study the Ivory Kingdoms' gunpowder weapons, they met the cultists razing a small village and brutally slaughtering peasants and warriors alike. The Ronin came down on them with a terrible yell, shooting out volleys of guns as they advanced forward and killing almost half of the Ruhmalists before engaging them in melee combat and cutting them down, killing a hundred enemies while suffering minimal casualties.

The stories of that battle reached the Emperor, who made Seiryu the head of his own family and Clan. Wanting to honor the Merenae men who brought firearms and let him create Jigokuten,

Seiryu named the new clan the 'Drake', after the winged creatures in Gaijin legend.

### Geography & Economy

The clan only holding is within the new established colonies and they have no territory on Rokugan herself. Shiro Seiryu is only a small house and most of its economy comes from making and sold gaijin pepper and firearms to use it. They try to maintain a forge, a small reserve of gaijin pepper and an armory within the house but the clan is not very rich and has not many supporters unless among the local heimins. So the finances are very precarious and the samurai must still find some way to survive by themselves.

### Demography

Those who openly display total allegiance to the Drake Clan are very rare. Thus the clan counts officially no more than a dozen samurai at this time. They still depend totally on the Tortoise that covertly supports them for food and raw material supplies in exchange for firearms. They recruit from ronin as much as they can as long as they are not criminal. Survival of the clan is the main concern but no member managed to arrange a good marriage from the moment.

### Customs

Clan members are not authorized to carry or even use firearms within Rokugan even if they are the first and probably the only officially authorized by the Emperor to do this in the colonies. Their activities are strictly and strongly controlled by the Tortoise and the other clans. They know that trying to bypass these regulations will make the clan vanish quickly.



Drake clan's members are often solitaires that sold their duties as mercenaries. They give much of their revenues to the clan itself. The fact that they use firearms and disputable techniques makes them very unpopular. But as long as they didn't openly displays firearms they are tolerated pretty well.

They try to establish some relations with local population but still have to this day a fierce rivalry with the Dragon and Lion Clans, who they see as literal fossils. They try to have better relations with the Unicorn and Scorpion, who also have a reputation of thinking outside of pre-established conventions but have still to make proof of their honorability to be truly accepted.

#### THE SEIRYU FAMILY: +1 AGILITY

Originally formed by Seiryu and his disciples, the Seiryu family is made of warriors who like to couple honor with pragmatism and look down on traditionalism. This and their focus in innovation in all spheres of life made them incredibly unpopular with many other families and clans. The family lacks of women and for this reason is more firmly patriarchal than the average one.

#### Schools, Paths & Dojos

Now while the Jigokuten Style can be found being used by many warriors of Rokugan, only the Drake can boast knowing the true intricacies of its fighting style.

#### SEIRYU BUSHI SCHOOL

- ☉ **Benefit:** +1 Reflexes
- ☉ **Skills:** Craft: Firearms, Defense, Iaijutsu, Firearms, Lore: Bushido, Lore: Gaijin Culture (Merenae), Kenjutsu
- ☉ **Honor:** 6.0
- ☉ **Outfit:** Light Armor, Sturdy Clothing, Daisho, Standard Sidearm, Traveling Pack, 5 koku.

#### TECHNIQUES

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##### RANK 1: WAY OF THE DRAKE

Seiryu wished to make a more efficient Niten style when he created Jigokuten, or at least one that could let the swordsman be more efficient when dealing with both close and distant opponents. When you wield a Katana or Wakizashi on your main hand and a Sidearm on your off hand, you suffer no penalties of any kind for dual-wielding. You also don't lose Honor for using gaijin pepper as long as you do it out of Rokugan and for the sole glory of the Empire.

##### RANK 2: SHOT BEFORE SLASH

The Drake Bushi values getting the first strike when fighting an opponent, no matter what. You add your Firearms skill rank to your Initiative rolls and gain +2k1 only on your first shot with a sidearm in a combat.

##### RANK 3: THE BASICS STILL STAND

The Niten still has many useful techniques that were preserved in the Jigokuten style, yet if only to serve as a way to reach new heights. Attacking is a Simple Action for you while you use weapons with the Samurai keyword.

##### RANK 4: FIRE EFFICIENCY

By increasing the efficiency of his shots and slashes, the Drake Bushi can completely overwhelm an enemy with a flurry of attacks. When in Full Attack Stance, the Bushi gains two free raises when making an Extra Attack maneuver with his Main and Off-Hand attacks.

##### RANK 5: MAXIMUM KILL ZONE

At this point the Drake Bushi becomes an efficient killing machine able to mow down multiple opponents. Once per skirmish, the Bushi can make an attack with his main-hand weapon to every enemy in melee range and an attack with his off-hand weapon to every enemy in half his sidearm weapon's range. You may not make Raises on these attacks.





*"Coils within Coils"*

## The Eel Clan

### Founding

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The Eel are widely regarded as a minor footnote in the reign of Toturi I. Their genesis came with one Soshi Anago, a Scorpion Shugenja who presented the Splendid Emperor with a collection of priceless scrolls, secured from the length and breadth of the Empire. What is not common knowledge is that Anago later burned those very scrolls while Toturi looked on, destroying the heretical and blasphemous messages hidden within them.

Soshi Anago became Daimyo of his own Minor Clan, the Eel, officially charged with gathering and disseminating knowledge among the courts of the Empire. Their true duty, known only to Toturi I and the Eel themselves, was the collection and destruction of dangerous texts—anything from recipes for Gaijin Pepper to Maho.

Maintaining a facade as unassuming scribes and librarians, the Eel routinely buy, copy, and distribute perfectly harmless (in point of fact, boring) texts to any Clan, Great or Minor who asks, with a guarantee of discretion in exchange for a minor financial consideration. And if their mass purchases turn up a Kolat treatise, or a collection of Bloodspeaker incantations, those inevitably disappear, both from their physical inventory and from their records of their dealings.

### Geography & Economy

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Their literary efforts require a great deal of financial backing... Fortunately, the Eel's small

holdings are quite rich, located on Three Sides River between the Scorpion, Lion, and Crane lands. While their territory is nearly impossible to defend militarily, their location insures that if any one of their neighbors moves on them, the others will object. While they do not control the trade on the river, the Eel do make heavy use of it in their travels.

### Demographics

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The Eel are almost all descended from Scorpion families, and they possess the same pale skin and sharp features as their forbearers. Their long hours copying, reading and sorting scrolls have led to their most marked feature being pronounced crow's feet around the corners of their eyes. They also lack the elegant bearing of their ancestors. A graceful Eel is a rare sight indeed.

### Customs

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The Eel do their best not to stand out, and their customs are a blend of their three neighbors... at least publicly. Internally, they police themselves ruthlessly. The examples of Yogo Junzo and Kuni Yori are never far from their minds, and it's not all that uncommon for an Eel Samurai to have an "inexplicable accident" if they get caught reading texts marked for destruction. On the lighter side, the Eel are fond of riddle games and scavenger hunts, the better to keep their minds and senses sharp. Their colors are dark green and black.

## War

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In the event of a major military invasion, the Eel have a simple strategy- roll over and beg for mercy. Their army is tiny and ill-suited to mass battle, and their terrain is almost impossible to defend. They rely upon the value of their location to keep their three neighbors mutually interested in their neutrality. So far, it's worked.

## Recent Events

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The invasion by Kali-Ma's forces has presented the Eel with a very serious problem. Some among them wonder if they may have destroyed information that could have helped alert the Empire to her approach... or at the very least, to have had more knowledge of how to fight her forces. The fact the Destroyer Horde is getting closer every day doesn't exactly fill the Clan with serenity, either.

### THE ANAGO FAMILY: +1 AWARENESS

Soshi Anago's descendants have become masters of noticing little scraps of information tucked innocuously away. As Deception runs in their blood, they have become quite adept at ferreting out the truth.

## Schools, Paths & Dojos

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A relative rarity among Minor Clans, the Eel have two schools to their name- One, a Shugenja School in honor of their founder, and the other, a Courtier School which absorbs the bulk of the Clan's samurai.

## ANAGO LIBRARIAN SCHOOL [COURTIER]

The rank and file of the Eel Clan, the Anago Librarians are an uncommon but unremarkable sight in many Courts in Rokugan.

- **Benefit:** + 1 Intelligence
- **Skills:** Calligraphy, Etiquette, Investigation (Search), Any 1 Lore Skill, Sincerity (Deceit), Commerce, Forgery
- **Honor:** 3.0
- **Outfit:** Sensible Clothing, Wakizashi, Calligraphy Set, Traveling Pack, 3 Koku

## TECHNIQUES

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### RANK ONE: THE WAY OF THE EEL

The duties of an Anago Librarian are onerous and not particularly glorious, but they are still a sacred charge. You do not lose Glory for using the Commerce skill in pursuit of your duties, nor Honor for using Low Skills to conceal your removal of a dangerous text.

Additionally, Anago Librarians are known for being particularly unassuming. Any attempts to spread rumors about you or otherwise besmirch your reputation suffer a TN penalty equal to 5 x Your School Rank (After all, there's no *possible* way you did anything that interesting). However, any Glory you gain is reduced by half, for the very same reason. Perceived Honor costs one point less for Anago Librarians.

### RANK TWO: THE EEL'S EVASION

No matter how dull an Anago manages to be, there are times when someone notices what you are doing. Thankfully, the Anago are past masters of feigning incompetence or deflecting interest. You add +1k1 to all Sincerity (Deceit) rolls taken to evade responsibility for your actions.

### RANK THREE: SHIMMERING SCALES, EMPTY EYES

Misdirection can be a powerful aid in the true duty of the Eel Clan. Whenever you spend a Void Point to enhance a Forgery or Sincerity (Deceit) roll, you add +2k2 to the roll.

**RANK FOUR: THE TEETH OF THE EEL**

Sometimes, the owner of a text doesn't know what he has... or worse yet, knows exactly what he has. Convincing them to part with your target can therefore be difficult.

Fortunately, the Eel Clan keeps piles and piles of truly boring information on hand... including financial records. By spending a few hours in the Anago Library, you may make an Investigation/Intelligence Roll against your target's Honor x 10 to dig up a bit of Blackmail (as per the Advantage) on them, usually in the line of minor tax irregularities that the Anago understand even if more traditional samurai do not. If this first roll fails, you may make a contested Forgery/Awareness Roll against your target's Commerce/Awareness to make up something spurious to blackmail them with.

**RANK FIVE: COILS WITHIN COILS**

By the time an Anago masters the School, he's seen and read all manner of information, most of it dull, some of it horrifying, and all of it the product of someone else's work. You gain the Sage Advantage (if you already have it, the 4 XP are refunded), and a permanent +5k0 to any Lore Skills you actually have Ranks in.

**ANAGO SHUGENJA SCHOOL**

The Shugenja of the Anago specialize in divination, deception, and destruction... in that order. While they owe a heavy debt to their Soshi forefathers, the Anago Shugenja School have forged their own path in the years since the Clan's

- **Benefit:** +1 Perception
- **Skills:** Forgery, Spellcraft, Sincerity (Deceit), Lore: Theology, Any 1 Lore Skill, Investigation, Divination, Calligraphy
- **Honor:** 2.5
- **Outfit:** Robes, Wakizashi, Scroll Satchel, Calligraphy Set, Traveling Pack, 3 Koku
- **Affinity/Deficiency:** Water/Earth

**Technique:** *Plumbing the Depths*- The Anago must routinely ferret out hidden information- often without any human sources, and without being terribly obvious about what they're doing. All Anago have memorized Reflections of P'an Ku. You also gain a Free Raise on all founding Divination spells, and may expend a spell slot to reduce the time needed to read any text by half. If you stop reading, you must expend the spell slot again to use this benefit.

**Spells:** Sense, Commune, Summon, Reflections of P'an Ku, 2 Water, 2 Air, 1 Fire

Perceived Honor costs one point less for Anago Shugenja.



*The truth behind the eyelids.*

## The Grasshopper Clan

### Founding

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In the latter half of the 10th century, Kakita Inago was one of the most influential men in all of Rokugan. As brother-in-law of Hantei XXXIII, he was the closest advisor to the Emperor himself.

With a mind as sharp as his blade, Inago was also frequently assigned as a consulting sensei in the dojos of the Seppun. However, as the years passed, Hantei XXXIII became a paranoid and distrustful man and grew suspicious of the power and influence of his personal advisor. He devised a plan to test the Kakita's loyalty to his lord, as the task he was given was nothing short of impossible. Kakita Inago was commanded to find a way into Sakkaku, the Spirit Realm of Mischief, and bring back a token as proof of his journey. He had ten days to finish this task, otherwise he would be stripped of all his titles.

Being a man of honor and duty, Kakita Inago left the capital immediately. Hantei XXXIII was so sure of the success to let the upstart Crane disappear, that his face turned white as porcelain when only three days after his departure, Inago once again knelt in front of the throne. From his bag, he produced a patch of glowing red fur, taken from a Bakeneko trickster spirit. Bound by his own word, the Emperor had no choice but to accept the Kakita back into his service.

Several years had passed and Inago once again worked beside the Emperor, but something had changed. Suddenly, all that seemed to interest

him was the training with the Seppun, a task that filled him with an unusual delight. However, more and more days ended in utter frustration and resignation from the students, ridiculed even more by the joy of their teacher. He would pose overly complicated riddles to the young Seppun, or outlandish and insulting tasks, or games that were almost impossible to beat.

The weird affectations of the Kakita found their peak one day, when the young trainees entered their training grounds and suddenly found themselves surrounded by a buzzing swarm of grasshoppers, covering the walls, clothes and hair. Their sensei closed the gate shut behind them and explained with a grin: three of their fellow students had been turned into insects, whoever managed to catch the right ones was allowed to leave again.

Chaos broke out as students stumbled over one another, fingers and boots mixing with insect wings, until one man raised his voice. There, in the middle of the scene, stood another Kakita Inago, identical to their sensei. He explained calmly that he knew the solution to the puzzle. When asked by the sensei what it was, the new Inago drew his katana and challenged the old one to a duel. A minute of silence followed. Then the grinning Kakita sensei suddenly vanished and a small cat with red fur emerged from underneath his empty kimono, quickly fleeing the scene.

The real Kakita Inago explained the situation. He had indeed found a way to Sakkaku, however it had taken him several years to find a way out again. In the meantime, a malicious trickster spirit must have taken his place. When he was able to return to the capital, he was able to sense the trickery at work. In truth, no students had been transformed into insects, they were surrounded by normal grasshoppers. The only false creature that day had been the shapeshifter himself.

Inago was once again offered to retake his position in the palace, but this time he refused. He did not accomplish the task in ten days, he reasoned, so he had no right to claim his title.

Emperor Hantei XXXIII saw the sincerity in the Crane's words. Instead of inviting him back into his service, Inago was given the right to create his own Clan, training new students with the knowledge he gained from his journey to Sakkaku. Inago humbly accepted and chose the grasshopper as his mon, to always remember the trick that gave birth to his new family.

### *Geography & Economy*

The Grasshopper Clan still maintains the humble dojo that they were given shortly after their founding: the small, open training ground beside the Seppun dojo that had now become commonly known as the *Koutsuinekoba*, the Grasshopper Chasing the Cat Square. However, while all Grasshopper Bushi train and work in the vicinity of the old capital, the actual home of the Clan is farther to the south, just beyond the Spine of the World Mountains, on the shores of the Crane coastline. In lieu of making the capital or its surroundings the base of the Grasshopper Clan, where their dojo was already located, Inago instead decided to use his personal freehold in the shadow of the mountains as the Grasshopper's ancestral home. The reason for that is simple: while it is important for every Inago Bushi to get comfortable with the dazzling business of a metropolis such as the capital, which was also the working place for a

large number of the Clan's samurai, it was also vital to have a place of calmness and serenity to return to. This way, every Inago samurai was able to rest and revitalize before heading off to root out malice and deceit in the larger cities.

There are, however, some suspicious whispers telling stories of strange occurrences on the old Inago estate, even before the founding of the Grasshopper Clan. It has even been speculated that the ancestral home of the Inago was in fact itself a gateway to Sakkaku, and the Grasshopper samurai are only barely able to keep the area under control. The Inago themselves stay suspiciously quiet about those rumors.

That being said, it is not uncommon for many Inago to travel farther, beyond the capital or their own provinces. Especially when there are stories of supernatural trickery and magic in other parts of Rokugan, it is almost certain that at least a few Grasshopper samurai make their way there to investigate. This is especially true for those places where the borders between Ningen-do and Sakkaku are thin and penetrable.

Being a Clan with strong ties to the Imperial Families and the Crane alike, the Grasshoppers never really had any economic problems. As long as they were doing their jobs as hunters of malicious trickster spirits and experts on all things concerning Sakkaku, they usually found themselves well fed, financially secure and politically stable.

### *Demography*

With about 300 samurai, the Grasshopper are by no means a large Clan. However, they do maintain a large enough number of samurai to protect their own home in the Crane lands, train and work in and around the capital and still send a handful of bushi to all corners of Rokugan to investigate supernatural phenomena.

Members of the Grasshopper Clan tend to stay rather distant towards the common folk. On the one hand, given their Crane heritage, many of them are clearly identified as samurai and do not shy away from showing their status. On the other hand, even though they do have the usual amount of peasants and other commoners living and working in the Grasshopper province, the Inago usually prefer to do things on their own without reliance on servants or subordinates. The Inago estate and training grounds are almost exclusively manned by samurai only, and the peasants of the area usually know better than to disturb the eccentric Grasshoppers in their strange duties.

### Customs

Being a Clan that stands with one foot in another Spirit Realm, the Inago usually come across as peculiar, to say the least. They do honor their Crane heritage and know very well how to behave when around other samurai. In fact, seeing an Inago talk and act in the environment of court, for example, it is not uncommon to mistake them for members of one of the Crane families. When they focus on their work, though, it is entirely possible to see a complete change of character in the Inago. As long as it serves the purpose of ferreting out shapeshifters and other mischief makers, the Grasshoppers do not shy away from using some tricks of their own, dishonorable or not. Often times, this leads to rather irritating reactions from their clients, which is why one of the core principles of employing an Inago samurai is: they best work alone.

Of course, this seesaw between honorable and less honorable behavior is equally difficult to handle for the Inago samurai themselves. Because of that, many of them have unofficially developed a code of conduct on what is and what is not permitted when hunting trickster spirits, known simply as *The Law* in the ranks of the Inago Bushi. The general idea is that as long as it is for the greater good and no harm comes to the innocent, everything is allowed. Many samurai of the Grasshopper Clan are quite skilled in the ways of

deception or even thievery, however they usually only use these measures as long as there is a good chance that they help catch a target or unveiling a dark secret. Nevertheless, as is always the case, not every member of the Clan interprets these guidelines in the same way, and some even develop a questionable delight in using those dirty tricks as often as possible.

The official motto of the Clan, “The truth behind the eyelids”, is supposedly a quote from Kakita Inago himself. It captures the essence of the Clan's modus operandi: do not let yourself be deceived by looks and appearances. The Inago are known to use all of their senses to find the truth and, if need be, look behind doors that should normally rather stay shut.

Their habit of shutting off any outside distractions also means that most Grasshopper samurai tend to be fairly resistant to superstition. This does not mean that they do not care for these things, far from it. In fact, many Inago Bushi actually spend a great deal of time collecting all kinds of rumors of the supernatural, ghost stories, and rituals to ward off evil spirits and so on. However, every bit of information that they gather is then rigorously tested in its truth and effectiveness. An Inago does not believe what he cannot prove for himself.

### War

A Minor Clan with such a specific purpose, the Grasshoppers do not usually find themselves in situations of conflict with other parties. They know their place in the Celestial Order and do not have any reasons to pick a fight with another Clan. Their focus on their work usually makes them stay away from politics as much as possible.

That being said, the Inago are trained bushi and know very well how to defend themselves and others. They lack the discipline and cooperation of a proper army, but should the Clan be forced to go into war, they would certainly be a force to be reckoned with. Their greatest strength might be their knowledge in the ways of

deception and unusual methods of warfare. Inago Bushi have quite a few tricks up their sleeves and might even be able to trick a Scorpion in a skirmish if need be.

### Recent Events

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The status of the Grasshopper Clan has not changed much since their founding. They go about their usual business of hunting shapeshifters and other mischievous spirits, and forged new alliances with other Clans along the way. The Kuni, Kitsune, Konpaku and Toritaka families in particular have been valuable allies for the Grasshopper, pooling their knowledge and expertise concerning creatures from the other Spirit Realms. Especially the Fox Clan has proven itself one of the closest allies to the Inago and at least until the Fox's joining with the Mantis, marriages between the two families had become increasingly common.

The Grasshopper Clan frowned somewhat on the use of Sakkaku spirits in several of the more recent wars in Rokugan. Indeed, whenever there was a group of Mujina or a few Orochi between the ranks of a Clan army, the Inago were sure to send at least a few of their bushi to keep an eye on the situation.

Lately, however, the numbers of traveling Inago Bushi have decreased noticeably. Especially in and around the Clan's home estate south of the Spine of the World Mountains, there have been reports of people going missing and other strange and increasingly dangerous occurrences. The Inago refuse to let anyone from the outside investigate the situation, stating they prefer dealing with the problem on their own.

### THE INAGO FAMILY: +1 AGILITY

The Inago are the descendants of Kakita Inago and his first students and form the only family of the Grasshopper Clan. Their Crane roots are easily recognizable in their appearance and natural dexterity. Almost all of them are trained in the

Inago Bushi Dojo near Kyuden Seppun, with some of their bushi opting to take up the mantle of courtiers and ambassadors. In the rare occasions that an Inago child is born with the gift of a shugenja, they are usually send off to other Clans for training, most notably the Asahina and Seppun dojos. The Inago's clan colors are beige and dark blue.

### Schools, Paths & Dojos

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#### INAGO BUSHI SCHOOL

The Grasshopper Dojo is in its essence a school for warriors and swordsmen, however in many cases, they also fill the role of traveling investigators and experts on all manners of otherworldly phenomena, with a specialty on fighting shapeshifters and spirits from Sakkaku, the realm that their founder Kakita Inago spent several years studying. Their techniques are not only meant to root out malicious trickster spirits, though, and many of the more advanced students of the Inago Bushi Dojo in fact draw a good deal of inspiration from the habits of Sakkaku's denizens to complement their own talents of trickery.

- ☯ **Benefit:** +1 Perception
- ☯ **Skills:** Defense, Etiquette, Investigation, Kenjutsu, Lore: Spirit Realms (Sakkaku), Sleight of Hand, any one High or Bugei Skill
- ☯ **Honor:** 5.0
- ☯ **Outfit:** Ashigaru or Light Armor, Sturdy Clothing, Daisho, any one weapon, Traveling Pack, 5 koku

#### TECHNIQUES

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##### RANK 1: THE TRUTH BEHIND THE EYELIDS

The bushi of the Grasshopper Clan have an acute sense for deceit and trickery. The first lesson they master is how to pierce these illusions with the sharpness of their mind. Against anyone who you know is deliberately hiding something from you (e.g. by having succeeded at an Investigation (Interrogation) roll against them), you add your Honor Rank to all attacks, Investigation Rolls and



Contested Social Skill Rolls. Double this bonus against creatures from Sakkaku.

#### **RANK 2: SAKKAKU'S SCORN**

Inago's profound knowledge about shapeshifters and trickster spirits forms the core of the Grasshopper's fighting style. When fighting against shapechangers (including creatures with the Shapeshifter ability, at the GM's discretion also shugenja or Maho users with the ability to change form), you gain a number of additional unkept dice equal to your School Rank that can be used as a bonus on attack rolls, damage rolls or split up between the two (for example, on Rank 2 you could either get +2k0 on attack, +2k0 on damage or +1k0 on both). You can choose a new distribution of these bonus dice every round.

#### **RANK 3: THE TRUTH BEHIND THE BLADE**

The fight against otherworldly tricksters requires quick strikes as well as quick thoughts. You may make melee attacks as a Simple Action instead of a Complex Action while using weapons with the Samurai keyword.

#### **RANK 4: SAKKAKU'S JUSTICE**

The Realm of Mischief is not always an antagonistic force for the Inago. Sometimes, it can even serve as a source of inspiration. You gain a bonus of +3k0 on all rolls of Acting, Forgery, Sincerity (Deceit), Sleight of Hand, Stealth and the Feint Maneuver, as long as they are not motivated by malice or self-enrichment. The GM is the final arbiter on this matter, but possible examples include stealing something that is rightfully yours or lying to your lord to protect the innocent. This bonus improves to +3k1 when used against denizens of Sakkaku.

#### **RANK 5: THE TRUTH BEHIND THE BLOOD**

When all else fails, the Inago do not shy away from using force to expel illusions and tricks. Whenever you successfully hit a shapechanging enemy with a melee attack, you may make a Contested Water Ring Roll to force your opponent back into its natural form, dispelling any shapechanging effects

## **Ancestral Items**

### **IKASAMA**

#### **ANCESTRAL KATANA OF THE GRASSHOPPER**

In the stories that are still told about Inago, the Emperor's mission is one of the core pieces of the legend: to find and bring back an item from the Realm of Mischief. However with the commotion around the impostor taking Inago's place and the Crane's vengeance after his return to Ningen-do, most people have forgotten that Inago did in fact bring back a token from Sakkaku, as he was commanded. That token was a weapon, a strange looking Katana that Inago himself crafted while he was wandering through the Realm of Mischief. He named it Ikasama.

Having lost his Daisho at some point during his travels, Inago was forced to look for a new weapon to defend himself against the dangers of Sakkaku. He salvaged what he could find or take from his enemies, and soon he had collected enough material to forge an unusual weapon. The blade itself was part of a Kenku Katana he had won in a duel against one of the Birdmen. The tsuba was made out of the shell of a Kappa, and Kappa water was used to forge parts of the weapon as well. The same was actually the skin of a Mujina, while the ito was made of a Bakeneko's fur. Two Pekkles were worked into the back of the blade. The kashira was indeed the only item from Inago's own possessions – a flat, round stone from the stone garden of his home estate.

Ikasama is a Katana with DR 4k2, or 4k3 when used against creatures of Sakkaku. The wielder is immune to Sakkaku's influence when traveling through that Spirit Realm. When it first comes into the possession of a new owner, they must make a Willpower Roll against TN 20, otherwise they find themselves unable to wield the blade. Once Ikasama is under their control, the wielder can use a simple mental command to spontaneously change the appearance of the weapon to make it look like a completely ordinary katana, a bo staff, or a bokken (a wooden training sword). This effect only changes the outward appearance of the weapon.



*"Know thyself..."*

## The Hummingbird Clan

### Founding

It's a story we've all heard, and if we haven't, we should have. The Emperor is traveling through his Empire when his entourage is suddenly ambushed by Bloodspeakers, slaying his guards and nearly him as well. Only the efforts of a heroic ronin come between the Emperor and death at the hands of a maho-tsukai; one samurai saves the Empire from falling into chaos and darkness. To show his gratitude, the Emperor rewards his savior by granting him a Minor Clan. You know this as the origin of the Hare Clan. But that was just the first time it happened.

The second time, it was Hantei XXIII ambushed on the road, managing just barely to escape, covered in his own blood, jaw shattered, royal finery stripped away, suffering from a serious concussion. And the ronin was a taciturn samurai named Naomi, who came across the half-dead Hantei by a river. She traveled with a band of peasants she had evacuated from an area threatened by the Bloodspeakers, and she took the Hantei with her as well, despite the fact that she had no idea he was anything but a peasant and he could not speak to tell her, despite the fact that the seriously wounded man would slow them down and drain their resources, because she would not see anyone, samurai or peasant, be left behind.

When she led her group to safety in the next province and the Emperor had his jaw healed enough to speak, he revealed who he was, shocking everyone. He turned to address Naomi,

who feared she would be executed for having the peasants place their hands on him to carry him, and thanked her. He said she would be rewarded with rulership of a Minor Clan, and bade her to return to Ootosan Uchi with his new entourage as soon as it was assembled.

As they traveled back to the Imperial Capitol and the haze of the concussion lifted, the Emperor had a horrible realization: He had totally forgotten about the existence of the Hare Clan, and they existed for the exact purpose he would give to Naomi's clan. He could not cheapen the deeds of Reichin and his ancestor in creating the Hare by essentially copying them, but nor could he go back on his word that he would award Naomi her own clan.

So he delegated, and the Otomo were tasked with finding purpose for the clan. After some deliberation, it was decided this clan would be protector of the peasantry, and would be called the Hummingbird Clan -- as Naomi expressed no preference of animals and the Otomo daimyo liked hummingbirds.

Naomi and some ex-ronin followers who took her name settled in their land in White Grass Village, and began protecting the peasantry to the best of their ability. The Crane saw this and spread word that this meant the adjacent Lion lacked the ability to take care of their own peasants, enraging the Lion Clan. The Otomo, fearing their pet

project would be destroyed due to their error, decided to change the Clan's purpose -- after all, the dictates of the Otomo are not the immutable will of the Heavens, why can't the Otomo say they have found a better solution? The task of the Hummingbird clan was changed. Precedent was established, and from there, the floodgates were open.

Over the years, the Hummingbird have had hundreds of purposes. They have been bushi, courtiers, artisans, scouts, merchants, navigators, diplomats. They serve each task to the best of their ability, and inevitably some other great or minor Clan objects to their task, how they perform it, or the fact that they perform it and not someone else, and the Otomo family changes the Clan's purpose to something less objectionable. There was a time when the Naomi samurai hoped that the Otomo would find a permanent place for them in the Empire, but now they don't even bother with that false hope. They have to study everything, be ready for any job, because the Heavens alone know what the Otomo will have them do next.

### *Geography & Economy*

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Shiro Naomi, the Hummingbird capitol, lies next to the Hummingbird's only city, White Grass Village. The village was once on the edge of Crane and Lion territory, but due to recent military victories of the past fifty years, now lies entirely within Lion lands. It has avoided annihilation at the hands of its neighbors solely because it happens not to lie on any line drawn between any major Lion stronghold and any major Crane holding.

The size of Hummingbird territory cannot produce enough rice to feed its population, and the Clan must import the rice to feed itself and pay its taxes. The Naomi produce little goods, and those they do make are highly varied, weapons and armor to tools to artwork to on a few occasions, boats. Most of their economy centers around the exchange of services; a samurai who requires a consultant or who is tasked to do something he is not skilled at may employ a Naomi to substitute

for him, in return, he either goes to Shiro Naomi to teach a skill he does possess, or he can simply remunerate in the form of rice.

To prepare for whatever task they may be asked to do, the Hummingbird clan is always looking to add to its skill base by taking in, temporarily or permanently, skilled instructors from other Clans in exchange for offering their services to the other Clans; most Naomi samurai will spend a great deal of time employing their skills for other samurai in order to secure knowledge or funding for the Clan.

### *Demography*

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The Hummingbird Clan consists of roughly 750 samurai, about half to one third of which are 'abroad' at any one time. Most of them come from Lion, Crane, and Scorpion stock, with a small smattering of members from other Clans. The Hummingbird's samurai population is quite high in relation to its peasant population, only about 3000 peasants, owing to a population boom during the prosperous period when the Naomi were merchant patrons.

The population, samurai and peasant, is mostly urban and is completely unsustainable on the lands the Hummingbird own. This is why around half of all Hummingbird samurai are out working for other Clans at any given time, not just so that they can bring others with new knowledge back to teach the Clan, but so they can secure enough rice to feed their people, using the one thing they have in abundance.

Peasants under the Hummingbird clan number among the most well-treated in the Empire. They are well-educated, offered limited tutoring at Shiro Naomi, treated kindly, and given a great deal of autonomy. The last item is considered the most beneficial to their samurai masters; if the content and loyal peasants will happily run their own affairs, that's one less thing the Naomi have to worry about, freeing up a lot more time and effort to pursue their studies at home and abroad.

## Customs

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It is ironic that the Clan's lack of consistent purpose throughout the years has not left them listless and adrift, but shaped their lives and customs into a very defined, very unusual structure. The Naomi have experience in a broad number of fields, and seek to expand their base of knowledge to pass on to their descendants. Their lives are devoted to the pursuit of knowledge; not for its own sake, but because they believe they might be called upon to use it. Naomi samurai begin their studies from a very young age, taught in groups by their elder samurai in every topic in which they have expertise, offering hands-on lessons where applicable. The samurai gempukku early, at 13, by undergoing a series of tests on topics they have never been educated in, to see if they can infer from what they do know how to solve the unfamiliar problems. And after this gempukku, the Naomi samurai go right back to classes, the only change to which is that they may now be tutored by teachers from outside the Clan. Samurai of the Hummingbird clan are expected to remain in school for most of their lives, with exceptions for infirmity and for times when the samurai is abroad.

The tradition of "trading knowledge" might be called mercenary by some, but not within earshot of the Naomi family. They don't consider that they are really "selling their services", they are trading, and they are substituting. A samurai has something he needs done that he hasn't the skill to do, so a Naomi samurai will substitute for him. And that samurai has some skill or expertise the Naomi lack enough of, so he will travel to Shiro Naomi for a time and teach it, in order to increase the depth or breadth of their knowledge. The fact that sometimes they receive money for the service is really only secondary.

Members of all Clans have been known to employ the services of the Hummingbird, generally low- to mid-ranking samurai without the means or pull to have things done themselves, or who need long-term advisors without having the status to merit one. The most frequent patrons of the Clan's services are the Crane, Dragon and Scorpion. The Crane are fond of sponsoring Naomi artisans for the unconventional "outsider art" perspective they can bring, as well as the fact that a Naomi taking care of the mundane things frees them up to enjoy the finer things. The

Dragon can sometimes find, in their search for inner wisdom and knowledge for its own sake, that they lack knowledge of a more immediately useful and practical nature, and employ the Naomi to fill this gap. And the Scorpion, those who know of them, absolutely adore the services of Naomi samurai because nobody can ever be sure just why one was brought in. The Naomi could have been called in as a yojimbo, a code breaker, a healer, an engineer, or he could be there to remodel the interior of the lord's house -- and over his career he may have done all of those at one point or another!

One other custom of note for the Hummingbird Clan is the fact that they have an open invitation to every samurai in the Empire to attend their Winter Court. Those few who know of it and have no better place to go will find the Naomi are hospitable and accommodating, and quite grateful for their presence. Soon after that they will find that the Hummingbird has very little politics to discuss and doesn't have a Winter Court so much as a Winter Semester, where they are expected to contribute.

## War

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While individual Hummingbird samurai may be employed as bodyguards or advisors for Clan armies, and in years of especially bad harvest the Clan's budoka have been lent to other Clans for use as sappers, the Clan's general attitude toward warfare is to stay as far away from it as possible. This is not always easy with the Lion adjacent to them, but by carefully ensuring they never, ever do anything to offend them, they've managed to stay out of harm's way.

## Recent Events

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No specific timeline of duties for the Hummingbird Clan is given, players and GMs are encouraged to invent as many absurd and unlikely Clan duties as they want to justify why the Naomi samurai might teach a certain fact or skill. They are currently without a specific purpose, after the Mantis Clan declared themselves Defender of the People and, for the ninth time, the Hummingbird

had the task of some form of "protect the peasantry" taken from them. Before that, the mission to be the liaisons between the Great Clans and the Imperial Families, which was shot down by the Miya due to the fact that they were barely being used and it overlapped far too much with the Miya's duties, preceding another period of joblessness.

The current daimyo is Naomi Yui, a woman who was granted the position by Naomi Norio after he stepped down. She has served for far longer than most daimyo, a period of eight years, and shows no sign of preparing to step down from the traditionally-temporary position. She aged about ten years over the first half of her tenure as daimyo, overstressed and overworked tracking all of the Clan's business and comings and goings, every year certain that this is the year the ends won't meet, they won't make enough rice to feed the people and pay taxes. In the most recent four years her health and mood raised considerably, though she remained an intensely private woman. This is because she began taking advice in private from her budoka assistant, a peasant named Sae, and after that took more and more until the peasant is now expertly conducting most of the Clan's business through Yui. The stress of keeping this secret is starting to outweigh the load lifted from Yui's shoulders -- respecting the peasantry is one thing, and this is another. This is the kind of thing that gets entire Families destroyed.

#### THE NAOMI FAMILY: +1 INTELLIGENCE

Always eager to marry new members in from the Great Clans, the Naomi have blood from all corners of the Empire, but are primarily Scorpion, Crane, and Lion. Physically fit but almost never muscular, the Naomi would tend to be quite attractive if they dressed or carried themselves in a way that in any way accented their appearance. They favor short, conservative hairstyles for both men and women, go clean-shaven, and wear clothing that is functional rather than attractive.

The Naomi family has suffered a long string of minor humiliations at the hands of the

Otomo's constant attempts to find a place for them, and they tend to take such things in stride, not because they don't value their own honor but because they don't see the importance of the insult. They have a well-developed sense of humor, though ironic and a touch cynical, and they are far more likely to roll their eyes and inwardly scoff at another samurai's ignorance than they are to do or say anything about it. Though they appear humble, they do like to show off their knowledge in subtler ways -- they often give a complicated or obscure answer when a simple one will do, then pretend not to notice when anyone reacts.

The Naomi are often traveling around the Empire, filling in for one samurai or another who finds he lacks a skill he needs. This, and their constant and wide range of educations, engenders a worldly and generally pragmatic outlook on life. By this point, most families of samurai would have found some other way to make the koku for their taxes, and nearly all would have stopped putting up with the Otomo's efforts and just accepted being a Clan without purpose. That's really the Naomi family's secret: Deep down, they like to feel wanted and useful.

The Naomi actually hate being called the Hummingbird Clan, or showing their clan mon (a simple drawing of a hummingbird), because hummingbirds have nothing to do with any part of their Clan identity and there's nothing glamorous about them. They much prefer to just be called the Naomi family. They never show the Naomi family mon, either, though that is for practical reasons. As every time the Otomo have given them a purpose, they have added something signifying that to the family mon, and since they won't deny their past by removing something from the mon, the Naomi family mon is now an absolutely indecipherable mass of squiggles. Copies of the mon, scaled up to three feet across so as to be readable, are kept at Kyuden Otomo, Toshi Ranbo, and Shiro Naomi; Naomi samurai wear a mon that contains the kanji for "substitute", meaning "This is a substitution for the actual mon, on file with the Otomo."



**Family Rules (Optional):** Members of the Naomi family receive one additional character point for the Obligation disadvantage.

### Schools, Paths, & Dojos

It is a bit of a misnomer to say that the Hummingbird clan has a bushi school or a courtier school (though we will say it anyway). The Naomi dojo is an everything school, teaching bushi, courtier, scout, and even a smattering of shugenja techniques to those who can learn them, all side by side. The difference between a Naomi Bushi and a Naomi Courtier is not which school they have entered and trained in, but which skills they have been better able to pick up when taught. There is, of course, marked amounts of overlap, and a Naomi Bushi may be called upon to perform courtier duties and vice versa. All the more reason for the Hummingbird samurai to have as wide a range as possible.

### NAOMI FACTOTUM

#### [BUSHI] (New Path)

- ☉ **Technique Rank:** 1
- ☉ **Replaces:** Any bushi school at Rank 1.
- ☉ **School Bonus:** +1 Agility
- ☉ **School Skills:** Athletics, Defense, Kenjutsu, and any four other skills
- ☉ **Starting Equipment:** Same as the origin school
- ☉ **Starting Honor:** 2.0

#### TECHNIQUE: THE NAMELESS WAY

The Naomi bushi does not limit himself to just the study of combat and you still maintain the wide expertise for which is Clan is known. When you take this technique, you gain an additional 12 experience points that may only be spent on purchasing and increasing High, Merchant, and Bugei skills. If taken at character creation, you must still obey the normal maximum limit for raising skills. Additionally, after you have directly encountered a School or Class's technique once, you count as having "studied it in some detail" for purposes of buying ranks in the Know the School skill

### NAOMI ADVISOR

#### [COURTIER] (New Path)

- ☉ **Technique Rank:** 1
- ☉ **Replaces:** Any courtier school at Rank 1.
- ☉ **School Bonus:** +1 Awareness
- ☉ **School Skills:** Calligraphy, Courtier, Etiquette, any Lore skill, and any three other skills.
- ☉ **Starting Equipment:** Wakizashi, tanto, kimono & sandals, traveling cloak, traveling pack, 3 koku.
- ☉ **Starting Honor:** 2.5

#### TECHNIQUE: THE CONSTANT WAY

Nobody knows when a bit of knowledge might come in handy, least of all the Naomi. You hold on to a wide store of knowledge, revealing the right skill at the right time, sometimes surprising yourself with what you've picked up. At any time, without conscious effort or use of an action, you may use accumulated experience to purchase skills, up to a maximum rank of your Insight Rank +1. You may also purchase skill emphases for an XP cost as though you had one fewer emphasis attached to the skill in question, to a minimum of one. Additionally, you count as having "studied in some detail" any School that has existed in Rokugan for more than thirty years for purposes of buying the Know the School skill.

## Shiro Naomi Dojo

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- ④ **Schools:** All Ronin schools.
- ④ **Paths:** Naomi Bushi, Naomi Advisor
- ④ **Benefit:** When a student of Shiro Naomi gains a new Insight Rank and returns for training, she may select a number of her Skill Ranks up to her new Insight Rank. She loses those ranks and has their XP cost refunded; this XP may only be used to purchase new skills. The first Rank of a skill may not be lost in this way, and the Ranks of the skill can be re-purchased normally.

This Dojo benefit has a student's knowledge in one area languish with disuse as they intensively study other subjects at the school. It's not so much that the student forgets the skill as they simply become "rusty" at it after concentrating on other things.

## Ancestral Items

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### USEFUL YARI

The original Yari was carried by the Clan's founder, Naomi. She did use it in battle as a spear, but far more often it was a fishing harpoon, a walking stick, a lever, a knife, an awl, an eating utensil, and occasionally a toothpick. She didn't have more specialized tools for those tasks, and she didn't need them so long as she could make do. Her original yari became an Ancestral Item of the Hummingbird Clan, but is not the only one: Naomi samurai who carry a yari of their own on their travels abroad and use it in such a way may occasionally find when he returns home he's carrying another one of these; as such, they are given out far more easily than the Ancestral Items of other clans. Nobody really knows why this happens, the best theory is that Shiryo Naomi is doing it, but she never speaks to anyone to confirm or deny it.

In combat this weapon is a standard yari, six feet long, 2k2 damage, can be thrown at a range of 30' for 1k2, adds +1k1 damage when mounted. However, in non-combat applications, the yari grants a Free Raise on any task you could theoretically accomplish with the use of a long stick with a sharpened point on the end, and the user suffers no penalty for the use of improvised or improper tools (even if, say, the large shaft on the end would normally make it too unwieldy, the user can use the tip of it as a knife just as dexterously as a normal knife). The spear is also unusually resistant to breakage.



*"Each voice is a flower on the road of the Tao"*

## The Lark Clan

### Founding

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During the Gozoku era, one of the few supports the Emperor could count on was the network of monks which spied for him. When they were discovered and many of them executed, it set off a chain of events that ultimately brought on the end of the Gozoku. But both the Imperial throne and the Brotherhood of Shinsei were wary of repeating that experience.

There was a particular area that stood out when both set out to disentangle religion from politics. The Silver Morning Hills, also known as Shinsei's Walk, is traditionally considered to be the area where the Little Prophet spent the most time and gave his most important lectures before he moved North to recruit Isawa and leave for the Shadowlands. As such, the area has great theological importance, and is home to a great many shrines, temples and abbeys, which over time coalesced into a small number of loose alliances and ideological currents. These are called the Three Schools and constitute an important stronghold for philosophical and religious thought in the Empire.

In order to remove the Three Schools from the influence of the nearby Imperial Court and the Great Clans (the neighboring Phoenix in particular), Hantei Yugozihime decided to elevate the local magistrate, Asako Fushii, and create the Lark Clan to administer the region. He in turn recruited his first followers within his family, but

also among pious samurai of other Clans, often sponsored by one Brotherhood sect or another.

Because the pilgrimages and trade routes passing through the area carry significant amounts of money, and because of the prestige associated with the support of one of the Three Schools, the Lark Clan spends a lot of time protecting the shrines from the predatory appetites of powerful Clans and individuals. They expend their efforts in the courts, defending the independence of monastic orders; in exchange, they benefit from the monks' wisdom, and sometimes even their protection.

The Lark is a paradox: they are a courtly, cultured and sophisticated clan, but with a declared allegiance to goals of humility, asceticism and piety. They are samurai and masters of their land, but ostensibly, the most important people in the area are monks and Lark noblemen defer to them on many points. Yet the Lark seems content with its place in the world - and is that not what Shinsei spoke about?

### Geography & Economy

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The Silver Morning Hills are the first foothills of the Mountains of Regret. Most of the population is concentrated on the western side where hills gently rise out of the plains, while the eastern area steeply and quickly becomes more inhospitable.



The main activity of the region is religious, especially in the form of pilgrimages to various shrines, abbeys and holy places. In fact, the high pilgrimage or *Junrei* involves visiting 99 of the largest temples in the region in a specific order. The number of pilgrims and scholarly visitors to the temples has led the inhabitants to create many inns and restaurants and to develop a friendly, caring culture towards their customers.

The area has precious few natural resources. Three mines exploit silver ore and have seen small mining villages spring up around them. At least one of these has since steadily declined as the lode is drying up. The population of these villages is not particularly pious, and in fact many bandits hide out there.

The largest town is known as Silver Morning City. It includes Kyuden Fushii, the ancestral home of the Lark Clan, a small but quite opulent estate at the center of the town, straddling the local river. Four minor shrines dedicated to cardinal directions mark the town's limits. The fifth shrine, or Center shrine, is part of Kyuden Fushii. Most of the town's activity revolves around providing services to pilgrims and travelers, and a peculiar mixture of commerce and reverence makes up the city's atmosphere.

### Demography

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The Lark Clan is mid-sized, counting between 200 and 400 adult members depending on the period. It runs a fairly large territory for a Minor Clan, but in reality spends much more time mediating between the temples, the Imperial Court and nearby Great Clans than providing actual administration to the population ; this is usually the province of the local shrine. In addition, much of the Clan is often out of the territory at a time, being dispatched to various courts. The remaining Lark samurai are stretched thin providing justice, collecting taxes and surveying security.

### Customs

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Lark Clan courtiers generally try to spend at least a month each year in retreat in a monastery or temple; they view this as necessary to remain grounded and focused when they spend so much time in the dissolute environment of court. Monasteries gladly receive them, as this makes sure they will be heard in time for the next political season.

Even while in court, the Fushii try to attend regular services and prayers. While this gives them a reputation for stuffiness and a holier-than-thou attitude (which not many would outright speak against), they are also known to genuinely enjoy festivals and spread appreciative spirit at those times.

Many among the Lark also tend to practice martial arts as a morning exercise routine. It is not unusual - but quite startling - to come across one of them practicing slow kata in the palace gardens in the wee hours. Although few of the courtiers are actually skilled in combat, they are assiduous in this practice. Of course, those Fushii who become yojimbo or officers practice martial arts as well.

### War

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The Lark clan was created to avoid war in the region, and in that respect it has admirably succeeded, although the influence of the nearby Phoenix and Crane clans has also played its part. Nevertheless, bandit activity and times of turmoil such as the Clan War have required the activity of Lark-led levies as well as militant monk units. In times of necessity, the Lark has been known to request help from other Minor Clans.

## THE FUSHII FAMILY : +1 INTELLIGENCE

The Fushii family is originally descended from Phoenix bushi and scholars. They tend to be thin and wiry, quite often unassuming. Most Fushii study diplomacy and theology, as they see themselves as the caretakers of the Three Schools, but a significant few manage to train at the Shiba or Daidoji bushi schools to become yojimbo.

### Schools, Paths & Dojos

#### FUSHII COURTIER SCHOOL

The Lark Clan provides a voice in court for the monks of the Three Schools, but they also see it as their duty to serve as examples of a life led with piety and virtue in such a sinful place as court. They are a subtle and understated voice in politics, but they have been found very hard to destabilize by greater powers.

Mechanically, the Fushii courtiers excel in two areas: resisting manipulation by higher-ranked opponents, and helping others. This supporting role is the result of the Brotherhood's influence, as most Monks are designed to be supporting characters in varied areas.

- ☉ **Benefit:** +1 Willpower
- ☉ **Skills:** Courtier, Etiquette (Courtesy), Sincerity, Lore: Theology (choose one emphasis), Meditation, Medicine, any High skill.
- ☉ **Honor:** 6.5
- ☉ **Outfit:** Traditional clothing, wakizashi, calligraphy set, travelling pack, 3 koku

#### TECHNIQUES

##### RANK 1: THE WAY OF THE LARK

The Fushii spend their lives under the watchful gaze of powerful people, and have learned to draw on learned discourse to support their position. When attempting to persuade or influence someone, you gain a bonus to your roll equal to

your Lore: Theology rank. When resisting an attempt to Intimidate, Seduce or Convince you by someone whose status is superior to yours by at least 2 full ranks, you receive a Free Raise.

##### RANK 2: THE HEALING HAND OF GRACE

The Lark courtier is trained in the high art of acupuncture and can press specific spots to realign someone else's chi. You may spend a Void point as a Complex action to heal an ally's wounds by applying pressure to certain areas on their body. This ally regains 2k1 hit points. You may not heal the same person more than once per day. Similarly, you may spend a Void point to give an ally a 2k1 bonus on their next Etiquette roll this day. You may not help the same person in this manner more than once per day. You may not use this ability to heal or help yourself.

##### RANK 3: THE STONE ENDURES

At this rank you learn that everyone possesses the same Shinsei nature, regardless of the trappings of rank or privilege. When conversing with an individual for five minutes, you may roll Willpower/Lore: Theology against your target's Awareness/Sincerity. If you succeed, this individual will not benefit from the effects of any Social Advantage in any roll against you for the next twenty-four hours.

##### RANK 4: THE STRENGTH OF ONE MAN

The courtier's knowledge of chi flows and patterns now allows him to organize any task to benefit from auspicious dispositions. Any cooperative roll that you take part in, either as main protagonist or as « assistant », receives as many extra rolled dice as your Void. If the action requires several participants to roll, you choose how the dice are distributed.

##### RANK 5: THE SHRINE IN THE HEART

At this rank, you are able to truly overcome the illusion of power or wealth. You gain +5k0 to any contested social roll you make against someone with a higher Status rank than yours.

## The Three Schools

The important monastic and religious population of Shinsei's Walk has accreted over time into three major currents. They gather temples within the following groupings: the militant orders, the most important of which is the devoutly Shinseist Shrine of the Stone Sutra; the worldly orders, which cater to the needs of pilgrims and are usually represented by the Temple of the Silent Blessing; and finally the more reclusive mystical orders, exemplified by the idiosyncratic Order of the High Path.

### SHRINE OF THE STONE SUTRA

The Shrine of the Stone Sutra is home to a sect of militant monks. They are devoted adherents of Shintao and believe that physical prowess can be a direct consequence of spiritual enlightenment. Therefore, they test themselves in physical activity the way other sects use koans, in order to bypass the incomplete tools of words and logic. The Shrine and its affiliated temples also offer protection to the pilgrims and to other sects in the Three Schools region.

- ☉ **Devotion:** Shintao
- ☉ **Benefit:** +1 Stamina
- ☉ **Honor:** 4.5
- ☉ **Skills:** Jiu-jitsu, Staves, Lore: Theology (Shintao), Meditation, Defense, any two skills.

*Technique: Even the Pebble* – The Order teaches that strength is much less important than the ability to endure the tribulations which will bring enlightenment. Whenever you spend a Void point to reduce damage received, you can ignore up to 20 points of damage.

### TEMPLE OF THE SILENT BLESSINGS

The Temple of Silent Blessings is devoted to two main fortunes: Ebisu and Daikoku. Its monks seek truth and beauty in the act of creating, especially works of art. They have developed a simple yet elegant style that is much prized in painting, calligraphy and sculpture. But the temple also

opens its doors to poets, musicians, and any other soul trying to find peace and beauty. Although the Temple and other similar shrines in the region receive criticism for selling charms and prayer beads, they see this as providing a service to the outside population.

- ☉ **Devotion:** Fortunist
- ☉ **Benefit:** +1 Awareness
- ☉ **Honor:** 5.5
- ☉ **Skills:** Artisan (any), Craft (any except Weaponsmith and Poison), Lore: Theology (Fortunes), Meditation, Etiquette, Commerce, any one Merchant skill

*Technique: Making the World* – The Fortunes' blessings bring peace and skill. Whenever you spend a Void point on an Artisan skill or a Merchant skill roll (except those considered Low skills), you receive 2k2 extra dice instead of 1k1.

*Reminder:* as you are not a samurai, you do not lose honor for using the Commerce skill.

### ORDER OF THE HIGH PATH

The Order of the High Path is an offshoot of Shinmaki, a highly heterodox sect questioning many strictures of society as imposing limits on enlightenment. Yet they are not firebrands, but rather tend to isolate themselves in order to explore enlightenment. Many members are hermits or the lone caretakers of small shrines, but there is one large and isolated monastery, which is traditionally headed by an elder nun.

- ☉ **Devotion:** Shinmaki (Shintao)
- ☉ **Benefit:** +1 Intelligence
- ☉ **Honor:** 4.5
- ☉ **Skills:** Meditation, Tea Ceremony, Defense, Investigation, Lore: Theology (Shintao), any Lore skill, any one skill.

*Technique: Inwards, Outwards* – The Order's relentless pursuit of internal enlightenment allows them to unlock their potential. You can have two Internal kiho active at the same time.

## The Moth clan

### Founding

Most samurai, outside of the Moth at least, are blissfully unaware of the history of the Moth. Founded in 396 by Isawa Ga, who had been rewarded for Moth unspecified services to the empire, their initial purpose was never clear: Their official charter was to protect a revered shrine to Fukurokujin in the at-then unaligned village of Forests Crossing but beyond that they had little land, no duties and few supporters in other clans. Even from the beginning, in spite of his imperial recognition, Ga found himself stonewalled by his former clan. The neighboring Lion were little more respectful, combining their disdain for the minor clans and their contempt for Phoenix philosophy.

While all the details of their founding given in the official records are, strictly speaking, true they fail to capture the true reasons for the creation of the Moth: As a dumping ground for those samurai whose tendency to imagine dark conspiracies had led them to stumble upon (or arouse the suspicion of) the first Gozoku. It was a largely successful campaign – the poor men and women 'honored' with marriage into the Moth became too busy adjusting to life in the ever more secluded clan and the sheer breadth of samurai sent down to them made it nearly impossible for anyone to see the patterns emerging exempting the Moth themselves. The scholarly and courtly traditions that were common to their early recruits quickly allowed them to perceive something of a guiding nature to their predicament and how it



*“Amongst the Blind, the Sighted shall go unseen”.*

related to the ever-shifting imperial records. This led Ga to create a second, unofficial, charter for the Moth: To catalogue all information they could gather, regardless of content or the politics of history.

Among the others clans, the Moth as become a myth. In time, it became a conspiracy into them.

### Geography & Economy

The lands of the Moth lie to the north of the Lion and west of the Phoenix, on the eastern edge of the forests that lay to the southeast of Drowned Merchant River and almost directly west of the Valley of Two Generals. It is largely a flat, temperate area that becomes damper and more wild the further one progresses away from the plains and past the copses into the deep recesses of the forest. Once tamed, these grounds have proven quite fertile and rich in resources such as timber and, surprisingly, stone. Because of this the clan has managed to become almost self-sufficient, though they must still trade during the rare times they require iron or other metals.

With most of their samurai being out in the empire, the Moth has needed external ways to pay their way. This has often been by acting as messengers, scribes or just as scholars for hire. Particularly amongst the minor clans who do not command the favors necessary to retain the services of a great clan sage on anything approaching a regular basis.

The primary 'city' of the Moth is Shiro Ga, situated right on the edge of the forest proper. Considering it a true Shiro is perhaps somewhat presumptuous on the part of the Moth – many clans think of it as little more than a fortified household overlooking a small village – but it does satisfy the traditional requirements of a Shiro. The fortified castle occupied by a daimyo even if it is roughly the size of a Crab outpost, with far fewer defenses.

Shiro Ga sits not far from a common trade route between the Lion and Phoenix lands, as well as being situated within a reasonable distance of the eastern section of Drowned Merchant River. The clan does a brisk trade in allowing travelling samurai the chance to lodge in their houses and, in the case of more scholarly persons, the use of their remarkably broad library, which also doubles as a shrine to Fukurokujin. Unusually astute theologians will find that it also contains a large section dedicated to Muzaka, the Fortune of Enigmas.

### Demography

The Moth clan is extremely spread out. They maintain one main household/outpost in their ancestral lands along with several villages and small outposts but the majority of their samurai are spread throughout the empire, at various smaller courts and cities. As a result, they rarely have more than 50 samurai in their lands, despite several times that number being active across the empire. The Moth have always considered this necessary to their goals – after all, few are going to seek out an unimportant minor clan to garnish them with the information they seek.

They have also been blessed with a vastly disproportionate number of shugenja amongst their ranks. Nearly one third of the samurai within the Moth clan are shugenja, with the remainder being spread amongst courtier and bushi duties, with crossover between two of the three branches not being uncommon.

### Customs

Amongst the Moth, there is perhaps no limit to the number of local customs that has sprung up only to be abandoned with the passing of each generation. The shugenja of the Moth are a strange breed even to those within the clan that are not blessed with their mystical gift, and to those outside the clan they are often considered an enigma little more understandable – and far less worthy of the time needed to do so – than the Togashi.

Fundamentally, the shugenja of the clan stand apart from all others even within the family. Their training instills in them a very real mental link to others of the school, a link that is rarely able to be extended to non-shugenja and has only thrice been extended to samurai outside the clan. Outsiders who stay within the Moth's lands often find discussions between shugenja to be exceedingly arcane and difficult to follow and are frequently unnerved by the tendency for word to spread faster than a man on foot could carry it.

One of the few constant beliefs within the clan is that outsiders are to be trusted only after proving their faithfulness. While the clan is willing to grant the use of many things in return for the right favors, much of their library and understanding is withheld from visiting samurai until the relationship has blossomed.

Moth clan shugenja who trained in the Ga school do not marry out of the clan. The rare few who trained outside of the family traditions are allowed to leave for marriage, though it seldom happens. Other shugenja are not allowed to marry into the clan, though there is no formal prohibition against it – it is simply not done. Bushi and Courtiers are not subject to the same restrictions, being often married out of the clan for political favors. Disregarding the shugenja, samurai do not commonly marry into the family but it is not unknown. Those who do are almost always those who are already close to the clan, and even they will regularly find themselves subtly distrusted and observed for some time after joining.

The clan has sneaky relations with the clans of the Phoenix and Eel with whom they share the same passion for books trying to save the more obscure of them from destruction. They have little but sincere contacts with the Bat clan and the Dragon clan is also sometimes solicited to overcome the toughest puzzles. Moth would be delighted if they could excavate the ancient lands of the Snake clan in their quest for obscure information.

### War

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The Moth clan does not participate in warfare. This is not to say they are pacifists – either by practicality or ideology – but even gathering all of the clans' bushi into one force would still result in fewer warriors than the average Lion patrol. As a result, they have remained officially neutral in every recorded conflict (recorded by them, typically. Such a small faction is rarely important enough to be afforded recognition in the annals of a great clan) though this has not stopped them covertly aiding those they consider friends, usually by passing on information through their shugenja.

Should an enemy force march on the ancestral lands of the Moth, they would have little choice but to abandon them and spread throughout the surrounding provinces. History has twice taught them that it is utter folly for a band of scholars to stand firm against an incoming army.

### Recent Events

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Whilst the clan has long held onto items and records that many would consider unsavory at best and blasphemous at worst, never before has there been a movement in the clan to consider the use (as opposed to the mere study) of these artifacts. It is true that the clan has been threatened many times in years past, now they stand terrified by the appearance of the Plague. An enemy they know nothing about, cannot negotiate with and cannot even flee.

Ga Kajiko, second child of Ga Genichi, has begun to rally a small number of the outpost's samurai to her cause. She believes that should their home be encroached on any further, no cost will be too great to preserve their lands and their collection. Even if it means using every scroll and treatise kept within the sealed section of their library.

Fortunately, or perhaps unfortunately, they possess few of these weapons. A handful of maho scrolls taken from denounced maho-tsukai. Some aged, unfinished tomes on the Shadow copied from the Scorpion when Shosuro Heiji fled the purging of the Shinobi after Oblivions Gate, feigning death before eventually joining the Moth, and two Obsidian-tipped Yari recovered near the Wall.

It may not be much, but in the hands of Kajiko it may be enough. Even as she and her followers pore over every text in a terrible search for a hope of survival, she prays that her treachery will do more than delay the destruction of her family.

### THE GA FAMILY+1 INTELLIGENCE

The Moth clan has only one family, the Ga. It was founded by Isawa Ga and the leadership of the family has passed down the line uninterrupted since. It is currently led by Ga Genichi, who is soon to reach the age of retirement. He plans to step aside in favor of his first child, Ga Keichi, though there is a growing tide of sentiment that favors Ga Kajiko over the quiet and staid Keichi.

## Schools, Paths & Dojos

Over many generations, the Ga have honed their predilection for learning into an almost single-minded drive towards discovering new information.

### GA SHUGENJA SCHOOL

- ☉ **Benefit:** +1 Perception
- ☉ **Skills:** Calligraphy, Divination, Spellcraft, Meditation, Any one Lore skill at 2, Any one Lore skill.
- ☉ **Honor:** 3.5
- ☉ **Outfit:** Robes, Wakizashi, Knife, Scroll Satchel, Travelling pack, 2 koku
- ☉ **Affinity/Deficiency:** Water/Fire

*Technique: Hole in the Reality* – Ga Shugenja are noted for their ability to not just acquire details they have no business knowing, but also to achieve conceal the means used to obtain them. Ga Heiji created a greatly lessened form of the Shadow Brand practiced by the Scorpion Shinobi that allows its bearers to avoid such inconveniences.

You may spend a Void point as a Complex Action and roll of your Perception/Water against your enemy Willpower/Earth. Add your Insight Rank to your result. If successful, the target is drained of all thought and forgets everything she lived for the 10 minutes (or an entire skirmish) and is dazed for a Round. You also gain a free raise on any spells with the Divination tag.

**GMs Note:** For games with a more conspiratorial/horror tone, the above technique should be adjusted to play up the corrupting nature of its use – feel free to throw in any or all the signs of shadow corruption, up to and including Shadow Points for using it. In a particularly grim game, this could even spill over into affecting a non-branded recipient of such technique.

*Spells:* Sense, Commune, Summon, 3 Water, 2 Air, 1 Earth

## Ancestral Items

### KEY TO THE LIBRARY (3 POINTS)

Knowing that they would be annihilated if the truth of their library contents ever came to light, the Moth have been exceedingly careful about granting access to the second chamber, containing the things they would rather not acknowledge. Only a small number of Moth samurai, the bearers of the Keys, have access to it at any one time.

These bearers can enter the library at any time they wish (though excessive or unexplained use will result in the remainder of the clan taking quite an interest in the offenders activities), granting a 1xp reduction per rank when purchasing ranks in 'dark' knowledge skills such as Lore: Maho, Lore: The Lying Darkness and similarly stigmatized fields. This does not mitigate the honor losses for learning or using these skills.

At the GMs discretion, this advantage may also grant a discount on learning Maho spells.

### Advices for players and GMs

The Moth make good fall guys for a conspiracy or even a minor threat on their own for when you want the PCs to be able to cut loose and butcher their now-revealed foes after penetrating the web of lies. They're unimportant enough that their elimination wouldn't be too badly taken but known enough that there would be some glory involved for the righteous bringers of justice. It'd make for an especially paranoia-inducing tale if it happened on the Moths home territory – how do you escape an enemy if even a single survivor can unravel your plans from a continent away? They also make decent behind-the-scenes allies for the scholastically inclined, provided the PC isn't too hung up on status and honor.

## The Obake Clan

### Founding

The balance between the worlds of the living and the dead are constantly shifting in Rokugan. However now, more than ever, the two worlds have come into constant friction and the balance tips ever so gradually into the land of the dead. Beginning with the Battle of Oblivion's Gate the barrier dividing mortals from spirits has been weakened greatly to the point where more pathways between Ningen-Do and other more harmful realms like Gaki-Do or Sakkaku are formed more often. Normally the Toritaka keep this balance in check but with the invasion of Kali-Ma and the fall of Crab lands, their ability to focus on spiritual shenanigans is at an all-time low.

This rise in spiritual aberrations is what inspired the monk Konpaku to devote his remaining life to dealing with these beasts. Originally a Toritaka, Konpaku was forced to retire at an early age due to a grievous injury to his left leg and a political scandal in Scorpion lands. Undeterred to cease fighting against spiritual beasts and without the responsibilities of Clan life to uphold anymore, Konpaku devoted many years to developing a new series of techniques for dealing with a variety of uncooperative spirits, from ghosts to zombies.



*The more militant clans will often say "If it bleeds, we can kill it." For us however the phrase is "If it's already dead, we'll deal with it."*

Konpaku began to build a reputation as a renown exorcist due to his newly developed technique and soon developed a small unofficial following of monks seeking to learn from his mentoring. Eventually the invasion of Kali-Ma took place in the year 1172 and the Crab lands and numbers were severely crippled. The weakened spiritual borders gave way and spirits from Gaki-Do start passing through in numbers larger than ever before. While the Major Clans worked together to close the portals these beings were passing through, Konpaku and his monks worked tirelessly to deal with the creatures who had already reached Ningen-Do.

However when one portal was finally sealed it would seem that another would open shortly after in an entirely different location across Rokugan. Though without any resources and only a handful of monks the problem was beginning to get out of control. As the Winter months approached Rokugan and the first Winter Court of Iweko began, Konpaku himself traveled to the Imperial Capitol and attempted unsuccessfully for many weeks to gain an audience with the Empress to explain the crisis. But fate worked in his favor during the latest month of the year, when a small portal to Gaki-Do opened up right in the middle of Winter Court and a powerful Gaki attacked all those present.



With great effort Konpaku defeated the Gaki and the portal was sealed soon after. If not for his intervention the Gaki would've caused far greater damage than it managed to do. In recognition for his acts Konpaku was granted his audience and the Empress granted him and his followers' permission to form the Obake Clan.

### *Geography & Economy*

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The Obake Clan, although new, have received enough funds from the Empress to quickly construct a temple for their numbers to train in the ways of their founder. Because Crab lands have been overtaken there was no way for the temple to be build close to their Toritaka counterparts so instead the Obake have built their temple, Shinden Youma, on the southernmost boundary of Hare Clan lands. Because some Gaki and other spiritual creatures have been additionally influenced by Jigoku and/or Maho, this proximity to the Hare serves as a mutual benefit to both; allowing an easier exchange of information between the two groups. This location also places them fairly close to the Imperial Capitol which ensures they get their funding in relatively short order; also it allows them to interact with Toritaka coming up from the Crab lands as refugees as the Destroyers advance northwards.

Shinden Youma is a fairly large temple designed to hold up to 500 monks at any given time. Much of the temple's space is devoted to areas where scrolls of knowledge on spiritual creatures are kept, as well as many different areas to help train an Obake Monk's spiritual awareness. The greatest secret of Shinden Youma is a hidden antechamber in the center of the temple that leads to a deep underground bunker. Here a small assortment of Gaki and kept in confinement and used as the final training exam for the Monks undergoing gempuku. With there is a small "court" area as well as rooms for guests visiting the Obake Clan these areas are relatively small compared to the rest of the facility.

Because the rampant spirits would cause more chaos and unrest in Rokugan, the Empress

has diverted part of the Imperial Treasury to funding the Obake Clan and making sure they become operational as soon as possible. Due to this the Obake's economy really doesn't exist in any true form. They need very little besides food and materials for training. As a temple they have a donation box which tends to provide small bits of additional income, usually just enough to pay whatever taxes the Obake Clan owes for that year. This is mostly due in part to the Obake Clan having an extremely low tax placed on them compared to other Minor Clans. It is part of their arrangement with the Empress that their service as exorcists will serve to predominately account for what would normally be paid with Koku.

### *Demography*

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Unlike most other clans, be they Major or Minor, the Obake Clan tends to be mostly populated by older or retired samurai who seek enlightenment through spiritual awareness. Obake Clan samurai are often of a calmer nature, ones who have had their fill of the world's more visceral activities and now seek a lifestyle of a quieter nature that isn't entirely without purpose. Currently the Obake consist of 200 fully trained monks who actively seek out spiritual problems in Rokugan, however the number of new recruits to the clan continue to pour in on a regular basis as their reputation spreads.

### *Customs*

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Those of the Obake Clan tend to be just as superstitious as their Hare Clan neighbors and as a result practice many of their customs in addition to their own. Many Obake Clan customs usually revolve around the spirit in some form or another. Whether it is a ritual to cleanse one's spirit for the day's routine, to protect one against evil spirits, or just to appease the local spiritual balance it is a theme that pervades the daily lives of every Obake Clan member.

To list examples of some of these rituals: Many Obake Clan Monks will meditate in a place of great spiritual importance for a few hours a day in order to focus their own awareness of the spiritual realms. Offerings of peace and respect are given in areas where a neutral or harmless spirit, such as an animal spirit, is said to be residing. Different prayers to the Kami are learned involving spiritual purification in order to ready an Obake Clan Monk's mind for any task he might have to perform for the day. Funerals amongst the Obake Clan are given an extra level of formality and purpose in order to make the deceased's soul is put to absolute rest without any chance of it being corrupted or coming back as one of the vengeful spirits they dealt with in life.

Finally it is of note that many from the Obake Clan have an obsession with temples and will often pray at any temple the cross in their journeys; often for several hours or days depending on the connection felt with that temple.

The Kuni, Kitsune, Inago and Toritaka families in particular have been valuable allies for the, pooling their knowledge and expertise concerning creatures from the other Spirit Realms.

#### THE KONPAKU FAMILY +1 AWARENESS

The Konpaku family derives a lot of its supernatural prowess from its founder, Konpaku himself. Through a lifetime of dedication he obtained what most considered an uncanny awareness of his surroundings at all times. It was quite difficult for anyone to slip anything past him when speaking face to face. His descendants retain this sense of awareness as their family's spiritual awareness results in the ability to read other people quite easily.

#### KONPAKU MONK SCHOOL

Those of the Konpaku Monk School dedicate themselves to a unique lifestyle that is sure to produce encounters not many individuals fair their entire lives. For some this is seen as a once in a

lifetime event, for others it is a quest for spiritual purity and enlightenment. Regardless of the intention every Konpaku Monk is a spiritual force to be reckoned with.

- ☯ **Benefit:** +1 Perception
- ☯ **Skills:** Athletics, Intimidation, Investigation, Jujutsu or Staves, Lore: Spirit Realms, Meditation, any one skill.
- ☯ **Honor:** 4.5
- ☯ **Outfit:** Monk Robes, Bo, 5 Spiritual Talismans, Traveling Pack, 2 Koku.

#### TECHNIQUES

##### RANK 1: REBUKING SPIRIT

Those of the Konpaku Monks first learn how to deal with less hostile spirits while protecting themselves from the more dangerous variety. When using any Social Skill to interact with a ghost or spirit (in order to find out why they're here and convince them to pass on) you gain an additional +0K1 to the roll. You also may create a number of Spiritual Talisman, called Ofuda, (typically made out of 2 bu of paper with holy words written on them requiring a Calligraphy TN 10 to craft correctly) equal to your Insight Rank + 3 per day. These Talisman may be placed upon the doorway or walls of any building to prevent any creature from a non-native Spiritual Realm from passing through that particular wall. 1 Talisman will protect an entire section of wall or entrance way up to 50'. Walls or doors longer than 50' will require multiple Ofuda.

##### RANK 2: CROSSING THE BOUNDARY

Once the basics of spiritual interaction are learned, the Konpaku Monk them moves onto more direct methods to remove the more stubborn variety of spirit. Against the Undead and Spirit Creatures, your Unarmed Attacks or attacks with a Bo staff overcome any Invulnerability these creatures possess. Additionally you roll an extra +1K0 against any Fear effect.

### **RANK 3: DISRUPTING THE SPIRIT**

The most efficient way to deal with a spirit is to sever their connection to the realm they are currently in. Konpaku Monks cannot sever this connection, but they can disrupt it and cause distress to the spirit in question. When you make an attack roll against the Undead and Spirit Creatures you may spend a Void point, if your attack is successful these creatures take a -2K0 penalty to all rolls for 3 rounds.

Additionally you may make a Jiujutsu or Bo attack as a Complex action and now destroy one Ofuda upon its success to seal it into any Undead or Spirit Creature after an opposed roll (Your Raw Air vs their Raw Earth). If successful you can control the creature and have it carry out basic commands for a number of hours equal to your Air Ring. Additional Ofuda may be applied to extend the duration.

### **RANK 4: STRIKING WITH THE SOUL**

While the Konpaku Monks focus more on spiritual training, they do not neglect to fine tune their physical skills for when they are needed. You may now make unarmed attacks or attacks with your Bo staff as a Simple Action.

### **RANK 5: HEAR THE ROAR OF MY SOUL**

Those who have finely honed their spiritual powers are the bane to any such creature that dares cross them. Spirits can sense this power and tend to fear its possible effects. You may now destroy one Ofuda as a Complex Action in order to unleash a pure blast of spiritual energy upon any Undead or Spirit Creature up to 30' away. This attack has a DR equal to your Water Ring. Additionally you may spend two Void Points in order to give yourself a Fear 5 effect against any Undead or Spirit Creature within 20'.

## The Octopus Clan

### Founding

The Octopus Clan is one of the least known clans of Rokugan, and one of the most bizarre and they prefer both of these things to be true. Their motto has always been “Nobility is art, but not all art is noble”. They are a clan that blends the roles of artisan and shinobi together in equal measure, like the Kasuga, Daidoji or Yasuki, they have deep roots amidst the more unsavory parts of Rokugani culture. The formation of the clan is cloaked in quite a bit of mystery.

What is known is that their founder was Kakita Tako - though even this is uncertain, for Kakita Tako admitted himself to altering his name at least once to give himself a new identity. Tako was a Kakita Artisan who had nothing notable about him, except, perhaps, his lack of notability.

He was constantly compared unfavorably to his classmates, and his sensei deemed him worthy of only a life of mediocrity. Disillusioned and wanting for money, Tako let his honor slip in order to make ends meet, killing his integrity as an artisan. He began making goods for rich merchants or upstart local magistrates, who were eager to gain “Authentic Kakita Artwork”. Usually such objects would only be obtainable through gift giving or large sums, but Tako made offers that were considered quite reasonable, at least by his new clientele.



*“The night city teems  
Like the sea. Color crashes  
I reach for my brush”*

Tako soon found that his new contacts opened up a whole new, disreputable world for him which he took to with a gusto that surprised even himself. For the first time in his life, he no longer felt like he was useless. It was a dishonorable living but it was a living! Tako was a flexible artist, one reason he had never really excelled at his studies was because he dabbled in many fields, a little interested in all of them. Now he found himself forging documents and artwork, inventing poems for merchants to impress their mistresses and even printing propaganda leaflets for people he never asked questions of.

Soon samurai patrons were requesting, very discreetly to make wedding night manuals, portraits of their favorite geisha and personally commissioned pieces that regular society would find shocking. Tako was very useful because he would happily produce these pieces, while, at the same time, having a level of quality beyond the normal peasant artists who would usually create these sorts of things. It wasn't long before Tako had to get help in meeting the demand. He scraped together some of the least prestigious members of the famous artisan schools, and began to tutor ronin samurai seeking a touch of refinement.

What is still vague is exactly what earned Tako the grandest prize of a Minor Clan, for whatever it was apparently it was sworn to secrecy. The records only state that he did a “Great Service to the Imperial Family”, without saying anything more on the matter.

Tako took the Octopus as his symbol to represent how he was not the master of one focus, but of many, and as homage to one of his personal favorite works. The Octopus also represented the distribution of the clan – instead of having any central holdings, the clan instead established humbler bases in most major Rokugani cities.

### *Geography & Economy*

The Tako have no great holdings, like the octopus, their reach is everywhere or at least in most major Rokugani cities. If they have anywhere that can be considered the Octopus's "Head", it could be an estate outside of Lonely Shore City, where the clan daimyo traditionally lives and manages his networks. Any who do know of the Octopus Clan usually think of this location. The Octopus daimyo is by tradition open and friendly to travelers, and will usually happily tell a false history of his clan. As an example, they were a minor family of the Crane elevated for their production of quality paints and inks, with which they won an important artistic challenge at an Imperial Winter Court.

### *Demography*

To this day the Tako Family, as they became known, provides a coarse, freewheeling, anarchic approach to art, existing in the shadows beyond the higher artisan families. This position never bothered Tako much – to him, all art served a purpose, in one way or another.

### *Customs*

The Tako exist in a sort of "art underworld" of their own creation. They undertake jobs requiring the hand of an artist with the skill level of a samurai, but with a sense of dishonor or secrecy attached.

This can range from creating objectionable art, to forging documents, to spreading propaganda among the lower classes. The Tako also undertake the more prosaic task of producing artwork that is affordable and accessible

by poorer samurai and ambitious merchants and ronin, who wish for a measure of quality but are unable to normally procure it from loftier artisans. Many Tako artisans never make anything particularly beyond the norm, focusing on swiftly made and satisfactory pieces and imitations.

The Tako are more willing to swallow pride in their work than most artisans as well, and for an extra fee, they will keep quiet about the true authorship of the skillful poem a ronin composed for his mistress. As well, much of their "objectionable" art serves a social purpose. These include their Wedding Night Manuals, pictures to help identify monstrous creatures, and detailed anatomy diagrams. Many Tako also work as tutors in art for ronin and merchants - the world of the Octopus is always a busy one.

Those Tako with less artistic skills aid their clans in other ways, often more criminal. The Tako are known to use art in the smuggling of information or even goods - secret codes worked into paintings, or messages hidden at the bottom of flower vases. Though it is not something they speak about, even among themselves, the Tako have, on occasion, fallen into the role of art thieves for patrons, stealing artwork and replacing it with a near identical forgery. The Tako are also often asked to produce particularly evocative prints for the purpose of advertisement and propaganda. Unbeknownst to even the Tako themselves, their patrons for this are very often members of the Scorpion Clan, Daidoji or Yaskui families, who are fully aware of what the Tako do and consider them a useful tool.

The Tako spend most of their time honing and practicing their skills and most of their samurai have much leeway in the commissions they take - usually all Tako in a single city report to a senior member of the family who acts as an overseer. The Tako tend to dress plainly. Indeed, if not for their mon, many would mistake them at first glance for ronin. The one exception to this is the Tako court at Lonely Shore City, where glamorous purple and black robes are generally the fashion.

To those not actively seeking the wide range of their services, the Octopus tend to assume a nature of humility. They present themselves as but a simple clan of minor artisans, not as lofty as a Great Clan, but ones who attempt their best, and will be happy to demonstrate the more mundane examples of their artwork. There are even a few samurai who honestly appreciate the Octopus's legitimate work, describing it as "quaintly urban, with a clear appreciation for the city and the sea."

The rise and acceptance of the Mantis clan and their gaudier art forms has done much to help the Octopus clan gain a small and narrow niche of acceptability for their "mainstream" pieces.

### THE TAKO FAMILY +1 AGILITY

The first Tako retainers were a combination of the fallen and the raised samurai artisans, mostly Kakita, who struggled to succeed or had been shamed in some way, and ambitious ronin who aspired to have at least some artistic training.

This invariably led to a suspicious character among many of the new recruits. Kakita Tako did a remarkable job in giving such a disparate group of samurai training in such a disparate style some semblance of unity. Unlike other artistic schools who attempt to instill a sense of beauty first, Tako believed in teaching practical technique as a priority, letting his students develop their own senses of beauty over time. As he enjoyed reminding his students "Unskilled hands on a brush are as disastrous as unskilled hands on a katana."

### Schools, Paths & Dojos

### TAKO ARTISAN SCHOOL

- ☉ **Benefit:** +1 Awareness
- ☉ **Starting Honor:** 2.5
- ☉ **Skills:** Commerce, Courtier [Manipulation], Forgery, Lore (Underworld), Temptation, any two skills chosen from the following list:

Artisan (Bonsai, Ikebana, Origami, Painting, Poetry, Sculpture or Tattooing), Calligraphy

- ☉ **Outfit:** Simple Clothing, Wakizashi, Art Supplies, Calligraphy Set, Any 1 Weapon with the "Small" Keyword, Traveling Pack, 5 Koku

### TECHNIQUES

#### RANK 1: EIGHT ARMS, SEVEN VIRTUES

When making an opposed Artisan roll, as long as you possess more total Artisan skills (not ranks) than any of your opponents, you gain a free raise. In addition, whenever you succeed in a contested Artisan or Perform Skill Roll against an opponent who has more ranks than you in that skill, you gain 1 point of Glory. You do not lose Honor for using Merchant Skills.

#### RANK 2: HIDDEN IN COLOR

You may add your Forgery skill ranks to the total of any Artisan skill roll. When making a Forgery skill roll, you may spend a Void point to add the rank of your highest Artisan skill to the total. Using this ability also increases the TN to determine the forgery by the same amount.

#### RANK 3: FLOATING EXISTENCE

You gain a +1k0 on all Low Skill Rolls, Perform Rolls and attack rolls made unarmed or with weapons with the "Small" keyword.

You now only lose half Honor, rounding down, for using Low Skills.

#### RANK 4: ARMS THAT GIVE

You gain a bonus of +2k0 to all Social Rolls against heimin, etas, ronin, geisha, criminals and all targets you know currently in ownership of a piece of your artwork.

#### RANK 5: REACH ALL CORNERS

Whenever your artwork is commissioned and accepted by a target, you may spend a Void Point to gain them as an Ally at devotion 1 or to gain the Blackmail advantage against them. This benefit is lost within 30 days.



*"To heal the ill and the sick, without concern for birth or status".*

## The Otter Clan

### Founding

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The Otter Clan, like many others, was created by Imperial decree, some years after the Battle of White Stag. At the time, an epidemic of a disease similar to pox was ravaging the Empire. The daughter of the Emerald Champion was dying from it. An old Asahina Shugenja had opened a small aisle of his mansion, on a mountain lake near the Phoenix-Crane border and was doing wonders in treating the illness. His family and he were welcoming everyone the disease had struck, regardless of cast or status. Working tirelessly, they were saving many lives.

The Emerald Champion's wife heard about the place and wanted to send her daughter there. The Emerald Champion stubbornly refused that his daughter would "fray with heimin". Afraid that her daughter would die, the mother sent a message to the Asahina Shugenja praying him to come cure her daughter. Although it was only a couple of hours trip, the shugenja respectfully refused, arguing in his answer that he could not condemn others to death by his absence, just to save the pride of one stubborn father.

This answer made the Emerald Champion reflect on his previous position and he was ashamed of himself. He agreed to send his daughter to the Asahina's house, although it was already quite late. The Shugenja and his family doubled their effort to cure her and, after a week of exhausting magical and natural healing, were eventually successful.

The Emerald Champion was so happy about the outcome and felt so much remorse about his arrogant attitude that he petitioned the Emperor to give minor Clan status to the old Asahina and his family and he gave his daughter in marriage to the Asahina's son. The Otter Clan (named after the animal most common around the eponymous lake) was born. After the Asahina's death, his son and daughter in law thus took the Kawauso (獺) name.

### Geography & Economy

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The Clan estate is limited to a small village and a mansion, half on the Otter Lake itself and built pier-like, half on the bank. The mansion is at the highest point of the village and has a beautiful South-West view on the lake. Most villagers on the lake are fishermen, while most inhabitants on the firm ground are retainers of the daimyo (yojimbo, nurses, apprentices, cooks and so on), craftsmen or local shopkeepers. There is a small inn with a corral, an herbalist shop, a baker, a clothier and several basket makers. Otter Lake Village is peaceful and doesn't have much of a defense. The proximity with the residence of the Emerald Champion makes it an unlikely target. Only the mansion itself is fortified and there is a watch tower about a mile away in the hills, at the border with the Phoenix, while another is planted in the lake waters, approximately where the Crane border begins.

The Clan lives on fishery, like its animal symbol, as well as some rice production and basket making. Most of the revenues of the mansion come from donations from rich ex-patients and from the taxes on the locals (rather light ones by Rokugani standards).

### Demography

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The Clan has about 500 heimin and a half dozen Shugenja with about 20 bushi and other retainers at any given time. The population is extremely grateful and loyal to its daimyo and his family for everything they do for them. This gratitude is shown in various ways, such as small gifts to the mansion's hospital, flowers being spontaneously thrown under the feet of family members when they walk in the village, songs being made in their honor and so on. In the extremely rare cases when the daimyo seemed to have been threatened from outside forces, heimin also spontaneously took arms to defend the mansion and help the bushi. Such displays of affection can feel inappropriate or even excessive propaganda for many visiting foreign samurai and heimin, but it is nearly always genuine.

### Customs

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The customs of the otter Clan are fairly similar to what can be met in Crane lands. The only oddity is that, in case of sickness, the cast and status of the patient is always totally disregarded by the Clan members, at least upon complete healing. While foreigners can be shocked by this, all Clan members seem to find this totally normal and will abundantly quote the Tao of Shinsei if questioned about the topic. In general, Otter samurai and shugenja are famous for their hospitality and fairly popular amongst those who know of its existence.

Otter Lake Village, home of pious people, has two very small shrines, one at each opposite side.

The first is a temple to several local minor gods: Okuni-Nushi (Fortune of magic medicine), Gama-Sennin (Fortune of pills and drugs) and Binzuru-Sonja (Fortune of curing illness and good vision). It is a simple square house with a double roof, build pier-like on the lake's shore. A wooden statue representing a toad (Gama's symbol) sits on the middle altar. The shrine is often full of simple offers from various locals or travelers and is attended 24 hours a day by an old monk or a retired shugenja from the Kawaso family.

The other one is a wooden Torii, at the village entrance near the road, with two blocks of stone serving as altars to Hosono-Kami (minor fortune of pox) and Ekibyogami (Fortune of plague and epidemics). There are usually no less offers at the Torii than at the temple, as inhabitants are careful about not attracting the attention of these dangerous gods by their lack of piety.



### War

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The Otter Clan is as pacifist as the Asahina family where it originated, if not more. Its location makes it unlikely to be attacked and the only time it had to actually defend itself was after the Rain of Blood, when Bloodspeakers tried to raid the mansion. The fight was bitter and many lives were lost, but reinforcement arrived in time to save most of the Clan. Some were lost to the Rain too, but the Clan had no serious difficulty in replenishing its ranks.



## Recent Events

Like with most Clans, the Otter shugenja have been astonished by the Zombie Plague. While it is mostly specializing in mundane illnesses, the current daimyo has sent his own daughter, a very promising young shugenja to help the Phoenix Clan in its study of the disease. He sent the only two Clan members afflicted with the illness with her and the Phoenix have been studying them since. The fact that they are both heimin fishermen hasn't gone unnoticed. During the War of the Destroyers, the Clan sent most of its bushi to fight with the Imperial Legions and very few returned. The 25 years of peace have helped with the replacements. The Clan has no presence in the colonies, but the current daimyo would be extremely interested in any information about tropical diseases and the way to treat them.

## THE KAWAUSO FAMILY: +1 AWARENESS

The Otter Clan is a primarily shugenja oriented Minor Clan. It is a very obscure and small one, with a specialization on treating diseases. Otter Clan mansion is the only dojo of the Clan. Special attention is given to the study of medicine, herbalism, the kami and the Tao of Shinsei. Its only stronghold can only be described as a sort of hospital or "lazaret" for rare or terminal diseases.

## Schools, Paths & Dojos

### KAWAUSO SHUGENJA SCHOOL

- **Benefit:** +1 Intelligence
- **Skills:** Medicine (Illnesses), Theology (Tao of Shinsei), Herbalism, Etiquette, Spellcraft.
- **Honor:** 4.5
- **Outfit:** Shugenja robes, travelling pack, mortar and pestle, medicine scrolls, tanto, 6 koku.
- **Affinity/Deficiency:** Water/Fire.
- **Spells:** Sense, Commune, Summon, Jurojin's Balm, 3 Water, 1 Earth, 1 Air.

### Technique: The Way of the Otter

Shugenja of the Kawauso School have a Free Raise when casting spells with the **healing** keyword (see the link for this new keyword definition).

The duration of Path to Inner Peace and Jurojin's Balm spells is doubled.

Otter Clan members can buy the Battle Healing Advantage for 4 Points.

## New Spell

### FENCE OF THE WATER KAMI

- **Ring/Mastery:** Water 3 (Healing)
- **Range:** Personal
- **Area of Effect:** 100' radius around the caster
- **Duration:** 2 days
- **Raises:** Duration (+1 day per Raise), Area of Effect (+50' per Raise)

The Water Kami prevents any form of contagion by stopping germs from passing through the air, any fluids or direct contact in the affected area. It doesn't cure illness, poison or other affections.

## Ancestral Item

### THE MORTAR AND PESTLE OF THE OTTER

The mortar and pestle used by the founder of the family is still in display at the Otter mansion. It is normally not used any more, but some shugenja whisper that it is awoken. The fact is that the current daimyo's daughter was seen brewing some potions with it just before she departed for the Phoenix capital to help finding a cure to the Zombie Plague.

## New Ancestor

### KAWAUSO [5 POINTS]

You benefit from your ancestor knowledge and gain +3k0 to all of your Medicine (Illnesses) rolls. **Demands:** If you ever voluntarily refuse to treat a patient for a disease even if (s)he's a demanding enemy, Kawauso forgets you.

## Advices for players and GMs

The Otter Clan is there to provide a convenient "hospital" and any kind of story related to it to the GM and his PC's.

NOTE: The following spells have the healing keyword:

- ☉ Jurojin's Balm (Earth 1)
- ☉ Wholeness of the World (Earth 2)
- ☉ Earth Kami's Blessing (Earth 3)
- ☉ Essence of Earth (Earth 4)
- ☉ The Kami's Strength (Earth 5)
- ☉ Power of the Earth Dragon (Earth 6)
- ☉ Path to Inner Peace (Water 1)
- ☉ Rejuvenating Vapors (Water 2)
- ☉ Near to Ice (Water 3)
- ☉ Regrow the Wound (Water 3)
- ☉ Heart of the Water Dragon (Water 4)
- ☉ Power of the Ocean (Water 5)
- ☉ Peace of the Kami (Water 6)
- ☉ Balance of the Elements (Void 4)
- ☉ Rise from the Ashes (Void 6)



*"Even the smallest creature needs company..."*

## The Rat Clan

### Founding

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The Scorpion Clan had a lot of information about the precarious situation of the Empire in the seventh century: the Great Famine. It was the worst crop failure in the empire's history. When an Imperial order came to ask the Scorpion Clan to do something, it didn't discuss, he done it. But the daimyo only had few options to resolve the problem and no idea on how to proceed quickly. Fortunately he heard about a young promising courtier named Bayushi Takahiro.

Takahiro took some time to consider an offer and debate it with his daimyo but it was often too heavy or too long put in place: rokugan people will need rice very quickly. He then found a simple solution when he heard about Isawa Michikata - then Phoenix Clan Master of Earth- who could use his powerful magic to put an end of it. He just had to find a way to convince him...

Some of the Phoenix shugenja's children were on an advanced age but where still single. He saw an opportunity to forge an alliance by taking on negotiation to marry them. He managed pretty well with only a few efforts. But when the negotiations were nearly complete, Takahiro received a written letter from his daimyo ordering him to sabotage the marriage arrangements. The order was falsified but Takahiro had no way of knowing that. Still, he refused to follow it.

Following the restoration of the empire's agriculture, by a thankful Isawa Michikata, Takahiro's conduct has to be investigated by his daimyo. It was determined that while he had disobeyed an order, the outcome had been much preferable. Punishment and reward seemed equally inappropriate to the Scorpion daimyo. So he eventually decided a combination of them was in order: he petitioned the Emperor to sponsor Takahiro as a minor clan daimyo. The Emperor seeing the original way used to resolve a problem or accorded him the family name of Takahiro. The Scorpion consider rats to be the favored animals of Daikoku, the Fortune of Wealth and Prosperity, so the now Yoshi Takahiro chose the rat as his clan symbol.

### Geography & Economy

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Takahiro and his family were given some minor agricultural holdings in the hills east of Beiden, which included a small, all but abandoned shiro.

They were also provided a modest manor house within the city of Beiden itself. The lands of the Rat are rather poor, so they have aggressively invested in businesses in the city, providing them with liquid cash that they use to pay their taxes.

Their castle, Shiro Kodokuna, is barely occupied even to this day, with most of the family matters taking place at the House of Still Water, their dojo located within the city.

## Demography

The Rat is not a particularly famous clan and many samurai are surprised to find their existence but almost every major family in the empire has some taise, city governor or local magistrate who has made use of their humble but vital services.

## Customs

Due to the nature of their niche combined with their somewhat low profile, the Rat enjoys a moderately positive reputation with those samurai in the empire who know of their existence at all.

The Rat are cordial and cooperative with their parent clan, though the Scorpion keep them at arm's length, considering them cousins who cannot quite be trusted. The Rat enjoy a friendly rivalry with their counterparts in the Crane Clan. However the immense resources and prestige of the Crane put them in an entirely different playing field when it comes to arranging noble marriages. Among the rest of the clans the Rat are an occasionally useful curiosity, considered harmless and polite enough to invite to Winter Court, should they be in the area.

Sadly, as the world is not like heaven, the Rat have need for bushi as well. Most of their warriors are trained to a modest standard though there are a few every generation that show greater promise. The daimyo of the Rat Clan will often call in favors to have these students attend more prestigious dojo. Most train with the Bayushi, but Rat samurai have been known to train with the Hida, Shiba, and Daidoji as well. The bushi of the Rat Clan typically guard the clan's holdings or act as yojimbo for their nakodo brethren who travel abroad

Musubi-no-Kami, the Fortune of Marriage is obviously venerated by the clan's matchmakers who wish to make their choices for their clans, and by unmarried samurai wishing to betroth. The Fortune has a small shine within the clan territory.

## War

Due to its strategic and centrally-located position, the city of Beiden, the lands of the Rat has been the site of many battles throughout the history of the Empire. This has thrust the militarily-weak Rat Clan into harm's way quite a few times. Though they have rarely participated in any full-scale wars, the Rat Clan has always suffered when war came to Beiden. However, the aftermath of war usually provided opportunities for their unique talents, and many of the Rat Clan's most prestigious marriages were arranged following the conclusion of a destructive conflict.

## Recent Events

By the 12th century the Rat Clan are well-established in the city of Beiden. They have expanded their interests, owning several small businesses, as well as patronizing many merchants that travel north through Beiden Pass. The disastrous folly of the Scorpion Clan coup left the Rat in a very precarious position: they were the only legitimate samurai near and in Scorpion lands, but they lacked the manpower, resources, and authority to maintain much law and order outside the city.

### THE TAKAHIRO FAMILY: +1 INTELLIGENCE

They are a family that specialize in finding suitable marriages for middle-class samurai and who may lack the connections and know-how to find such spouses on their own. They are especially adept at brokering marriages between minor samurai from differing clans.

Contrary to most of the clans, the Takahiro nearly always marry by love and not for political ascension. The clan is still too small to pretend anything more than give company to those who need it.

## Schools, Paths & Dojos

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The Takahiro Nakodo School is a courtier school that use his techniques to find a suitable spouse or husband for a client, though they can be used in other advisory capacities as well. Suggesting the geisha house that best matches a certain samurai's interests and budget is a good example and a Rat nakodo never forgets a name or a face...

### TAKAHIRO NAKODO SCHOOL [COURTIER]

- ☉ **Benefit:** +1 Perception
- ☉ **Skills:** Courtier (Gossip), Calligraphy, Etiquette, Lore (Heraldry) 2, Sincerity, any one High skill
- ☉ **Honor:** 3.0
- ☉ **Outfit:** Sensible Clothing, Wakizashi, Calligraphy Set, Traveling Pack, 2 koku

### TECHNIQUES

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#### RANK 1: SEARCH IN THE PAST

With the knowledge of the lineage of your customer and a detailed understanding of the wants and needs of another person you are at the best place to show them they are the perfect husband or spouse. You gain a Free Raise on any Skill Roll with the Lore and Etiquette Skills. You also gain this bonus on all Social Skill Rolls made with your customers.

#### RANK 2: KNOWING THE PRESENT

Finding the good person for another person demands a detailed understanding of the eligible bachelors and bachelorettes of the Emerald Empire. As long as you have a contact with civilization, you can spend a Void point to find pertinent information about a family relation or genealogy. (GM has the final decision)

#### RANK 3: TWO HEARTS THAT BEAT AS ONE

Finding the good person is not the end of the work, you've still to convince them they are made one for each other. After spending at least one day observing a potential couple, you can roll Lore: Heraldry / Perception against Sincerity/ Awareness of your customer. In case of success you gain a bonus +3k0 to the total of all your Social Skill Rolls for the next two days against the two people you're trying to connect.

#### RANK 4: MAKE THE CONTACT

A nakodo can forge bonds with his customers that continue as long as a true love. When you manage to arrange a marriage for a customer, even if the union is not celebrated, you may immediately take that person as an Ally with 2-point Devotion, without XP cost (subject to the GM's permission).

#### RANK 5: PREPARE THE FUTURE

Your choices are so precise than persons you bonds are truly connected...or not. After spending a week with them, you can spend a Void Point to give a potential couple the Blissful Betrothal advantage or Bitter Betrothal disadvantage for each other. Then you gain a number of points of Glory equal to your customer Status Rank.

## The Roach Clan

### Founding

In the year 1172 of the Imperial Calendar the ever taxing war against the Kali-Ma brought the Empire's morale to a new low. Even those of stiller mind and greater resolve began to visit the Sake Houses more frequently to alleviate the war's mental taxation. One of these individuals was a middle-aged Seppun who often donned monk robes to visit a place of lesser repute. This particular Sake House lay on the more degenerate edges of the city but those brave enough to enter learned of the finer beverages it served. It was at this Sake House the Seppun discovered an old Ronin whose torn, haggard appearance was only matched by his unusual talent.

This Ronin, a man named Aburamushi, made his living through engaging in drinking contests and maintaining a perfect win record even against experienced tanuki monks. The Seppun was amused as he himself was known as one who could hold his sake quite well so he challenged the Ronin to one of his contests. After two straight hours of drinking the Seppun passed out; completely astounded upon awakening to learn that the Ronin had not even tipped in the slightest during the entire contest. Impressed by his skills the Seppun extended an invitation to the Ronin to attend that year's Winter Court with him, so that he might humiliate his political opponents with Aburamushi's skill.



*"There are some jobs too dirty for a Ronin, too tough for a Crab, and too dishonorable for a Scorpion...that's when they call us in."*

Winter Court arrived and virtually all present were quite put off by Aburamushi's presence. Despite the Seppun's best efforts no one seemed to want to even come near the Ronin, let alone drink with him. Finally after a particularly strong bit of goading a Crab accepted the drinking challenge with Aburamushi. Some of Rokugan's strongest sake was brought out and the Crab passed out within 7 cups; yet Aburamushi was still sitting upright, apparently unaffected by the brew's contents. This prompted a series of challengers to try and best this Ronin but all failed with a pile of samurai passed out on the floor before him.

Finally a Scorpion stepped forward and asked if the Ronin would perform a different contest, one of the Scorpion's own choosing. Aburamushi silently nodded and the Scorpion brought out a plate of raw Fugu for the Ronin and stated that the first one to complete his meal would be victorious. As both sat down at the table Aburamushi looked over at the Scorpion who sat there smiling patiently at the Ronin, not touching his plate. Aburamushi simply returned the smile and consumed the Fugu in short order.

Some in the court passed out from the Ronin's actions, as Fugu was known to kill even the hardiest man upon digestion. The Scorpion's challenge was obviously a trap meant to present the Ronin with an obviously impossible challenge. Yet the Ronin had done the unthinkable and ate the Fugu without a second thought. Many held their breath and waited as minutes dragged by;

most expecting Aburamushi to keel over any moment from the poison in his veins. It was then Aburamushi spoke for the first time that night, addressing his Scorpion competitor. "...if you're not going to eat that may I finish? No use letting fine food goes to waste."

Only a slight nod from the Scorpion's blanched face could respond as Aburamushi helped himself to the second portion of the Fugu. While he was eating one of the heavily drunken Crabs accused Aburamushi of using foul arts to keep himself alive after ingesting something so fatal and charged the Ronin with an tetsubo. The Ronin continued to enjoy his fish and consumed the final bite just as the tetsubo impacted his side and send him hurtling across the room. The Crab was soon restrained by the guards just as the Empress' Voice came into attendance. Much to the amazement of all present the Ronin emerged from the battle with only severe bruising despite having taken a direct unguarded hit from the Crab warrior. When questioned by the Empress how his feats of endurance were possible he simple shrugged and answered. "In this era we lay a hard life. But those who voluntarily force themselves into a life even harder can soon realize that which we found unbearable before really isn't that bad." Because of his feats of endurance and composure during the Winter Court, the Empress granted Aburamushi to found his own Minor Clan, which would be known as the Roach Clan.

### *Geography & Economy*

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Because the Roach Clan was only recently founded they have not had enough time to organize themselves onto their new lands yet. The Empress has allowed the Roach, once their numbers have grown enough in size, to make their new home (at the request of Aburamushi) in the Twilight Mountains once Crab lands have been reclaimed from the Destroyers. Aburamushi himself has often stated he considers Black Tear Mountain an ideal choice for building Shiro Aburamushi. However at present Aburamushi and the few he has gathered to his clan are slowly

traveling south from Dragon lands on a Musha Shugyo in order to recruit more people into the clan's fold. After this pilgrimage has reached the Crab lands they plan to reside there in temporary camps and fight the Destroyers until their new home land is accessible.

Because of their transit state the Roach Clan has a very fragile economy based upon hiring themselves out as mercenaries for whatever needs done in the lands they travel to. Due to the multiple troubles the Empire is experiences (Gaijin from the North, the Plague, and Kali-Ma from the South) the Roach Clan actually is financially stable and relatively wealthy for their size because there is no shortage of work to be found for them.

Wealth within the Roach Clan itself is predominately for purchasing things from other clans they might need to survive for the time being. Trade within the Roach Clan itself it done on exclusively a barter level as no one individual Roach is wealthy by any standard. Fellow members of the clan will often conduct fair trades with each other for the sake of helping everyone get by in these hard times. Usually Koku earned on an individual basis is given directly to Aburamushi so that the clan can pay their taxes and save up for the massive cost that building a city within the Twilight Mountains will entail.

### *Demography*

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While Aburamushi himself might be an elderly man the tales of his incredible feats of stamina and endurance have drawn many youth under his banner. The Roach's population consists of approximately 100 samurai with the number slowly growing as the pilgrimage continues southward. Amongst these 100 samurai are a surprisingly even number of young men and young women; each hoping to gain some of Aburamushi's legendary fortitude through his training and instruction. There are some middle ages samurai amongst their numbers but the very Ronin-esque lifestyle of the Roach tends to drive off most samurai who are hard set in their lifestyles.

## Customs

Those who join the Roach or are born as part of the clan all partake in some very unusual and strenuous customs meant to build up one's mind and body so that it can withstand anything. A Roach begins his day by taking a bath in either extremely hot or cold water, whichever is more easily available. If this is not possible they simply go without bathing as part of their morning ritual. For meals the Roach eat a traditional breakfast however they intentionally add bitter and slightly poisonous herbs to their food. As a Roach grows with ages he is expected to put more potent herbs in his meal in order to help strengthen his body against their toxins.

For body training a typical Roach custom is to let a friend, at least once a day, find the largest stick they can reasonable carry and beat you with it as many times as you can stand without crippling yourself. This is done without any armor or clothing to soften the blow for the Roach believe that true endurance comes from toughing the body itself rather than encasing it in armor for practice. It is not unusual for tougher or more ambitious Roach samurai to take this tradition up to the next level of extremity in order to toughen their bodies. In fact it is often rumored that Aburamushi asks monks to pound upon his body with their fists and bos for his toughness exercises.

Another Roach tradition shows in their choice of sleeping locations. If offered the choice many Samurai would choice to relax in an inn or tea house during the night while traveling. The Roach find the hardest, most uncomfortable place to sleep and make their bedding there with minimal coverings. If foul weather occurs during this time the Roach do not seek shelter from in and will instead sleep in a place that ensures maximum exposure to the elements.

They have good relations with the Tanuki Clan by their common love for strong drink. The Otter clan would be also very interested in studying their so particular metabolism to develop new remedies.

## THE ABURAMUSHI FAMILY +1 STAMINA

Those who take the name "Aburamushi" are expected to be able to withstand the most strenuous of circumstances a body could ever physically endure. For those naturally born as an Aburamushi this trait is usually present in the child from the moment they first open their eyes. Aburamushi are said to have the eyes of a hardened old man even as a baby; and there are many "horror stories" told in court of Aburamushi children who survive tremendous falls or injuries that resulted from childhood curiosity.

## Schools, Paths & Dojos

### ABURAMUSHI BUSHI SCHOOL

Like the men and women of the Roach Clan themselves, those from the Aburamushi Bushi School are renowned for their incredible resilience to virtually any form of damage. Be it from an external attack or from an internal poison it is one of the hardest things a samurai could attempt to try and put down a Roach Bushi. What they may lack in speed, precision, or power a Roach Bushi more than makes up for with his ability to take a beating without stopping.

- ☉ **Benefit:** +1 Willpower
- ☉ **Skills:** Athletics, Commerce, Defense, Games, Kenjutsu, any one Bugei skill, any one Low skill.
- ☉ **Honor:** 1.5
- ☉ **Outfit:** Ashigaru or Light Armor, Sturdy Clothing, Daisho, any 1 weapon, Traveling Pack, 5 Bu.



## TECHNIQUES

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### **RANK 1: NEVER FALLING**

It is said that there are two ways to differentiate between a Ronin and a Roach; one smells worse and can take a longer beating. Only the foolish assume the answer is "Ronin". You may add your School Rank + 1 to the maximum number of Wounds you may sustain at least Wound level. Additionally your Wound Penalties are reduced by 5.

### **RANK 2: NEVER FADING**

The hardiness of the Roach aptly describes their ability to take a beating both on the inside and the outside. A Roach never simply fades away, but has to be crushed outright to be dealt with. You may now roll an additional number of die equal to your Earth Ring on all checks to resist Poison, Diseases and Intoxication. Additionally you gain Reduction equal to your School Rank.

### **RANK 3: NEVER CONCEDED**

Although the toughness of a Roach is near legendary, they still know how to strike back when angered. You may now make attacks with weapons that have the Samurai keyword as a simple action.

### **RANK 4: NEVER DYING**

If there's anything a samurai remembers after fighting a Roach to the death, it's that they're unusually hard to kill. A blow that might fell an ordinary samurai will only slow a Roach down. You may now calculate your "Down" level of Wounds using your Earth Ring x 5 (the same way you calculate your "Healthy" level of Wounds).

### **RANK 5: NEVER STOPPING**

When fully trained in the ways of the Roach a Bushi can be nearly impossible to bring down without inflicting a mortal wound in one strike. You may now negate up to 5 plus your Earth Ring x 5 in Wounds when spending a Void for that purpose. Additionally you may also spend a Void to negate all Wound Penalties for two rounds.

## The Salmon Clan

### Founding

Most minor clans have their origins in time of turmoil, and the Salmon Clan is no exception. During one of the frequent instance in history the heroic actions of Tsuruchi Funji and a band of fellows one moonless night on the Three Sides River earned them the right to create a new clan, and the responsibility that came with it.

Tsuruchi Funji had long earned a name of himself in the longtime tradition of young Tsuruchi by wandering Rokugan as a bounty hunter. His habit of tenaciously hunting down his targets, and his prowess in surviving the worst ambushes and traps that the collective scum and villainy of the empire could throw at him earned him the nickname "Samon" or The Salmon. However, the deeds that led to the creation of the Salmon Clan result not from when he was hunting a target, but when he missed from determination.

The samurai was known for its severe methods and summoned by his daimyo therefore suggesting that it soften its methods. First-conscious, he took it as a punishment and almost burst with anger. As the daimyo suggested he take a break and make a pilgrimage along the Three Sides River.



*"Reeds bow in the wind  
Like courtiers before their lord  
When our boats glide past. "*

Returning to the inn where he had spent the night before to pass the time till the next boat, he would overhear a conversation of much importance. Two men, neither looking like the upstanding type, were in hurried debate over spoiled food traffic.

Tsuruchi Funji, despite his head feeling like the inside of a prayer bell and being one man against two, lacked no time in marching up to the two men and introducing himself as the man who would be taking their heads to the Daimyo for conspiracy. It was only after that the entire patronage of the inn stood to draw swords alongside Tsuruchi's targets did it occur to him that he perhaps had spoken too loud. However, Tsuruchi Funji was not known as The Salmon for no reason and acted in fashion true to himself by throwing himself out the window and into the river below; surfacing only when the inn was out of sight and he was thoroughly covered in mud.

Pulling himself onto a passing boat, he was surprised to find that it was none other than the "Floating Blossom", the most renowned pleasure boat on any of Rokugan's rivers. But as fate led him to overhear the conspirators so too would fate now lead Funji, for as he was still catching his breath a door to his left opened and let out none other than an Emerald Magistrate, one who Funji was fortunately much acquainted with as a Bounty Hunter. The Magistrate seemed nonplussed with the unresolved plot, stating as they came into dock that it would be simple to recruit the local Daimyo's help in hunting down the pirates. But Funji quickly came to the

realization that the boat moved past the dock that it wasn't going too easy as that, as he recognized the Daimyo quickly striding to the landing and his bodyguard as none other than the men who had tried to kill him no more than an hour ago.

He quietly followed the boat up the river to its source to find out that she had been corrupted. A manipulation based maho was at work to obtain bigger fish faster but that carried taint of the Shadowlands within them. It seems obvious that the Magistrate was not as loyal as he seemed to be. After investigation it appeared that it was in fact an agent of the Spider Clan.

The threat was real because the first deliveries to the capital itself had already had place. And the soiled river might quickly contaminate the whole neighborhood. Alone and helpless before the soiled purity, Tsuruchi Funji, undertook to spend its own kokus to hire some trusted ronins and mercenaries.

As soon as he had enough men, he sent some of them to the capital to destroy counterfeit goods. He took with him twelve men and went into action. The personnel exploitation of entire pond was massacred not without violence in the name of sullied purity. The magistrate, however, managed to escape, vowing he would find a way to get revenge. Rumor also said that mercenaries arrived just in time at the Imperial Palace before a contaminated sushi touches the lips of the Emperor.

The Emperor himself convenes Fuji to explain this macabre affair and after a long explanation, he was granted permission to form a new minor clan, with the edict to preserve the purity of water and check the condition of the food of the whole Empire. And since then the rightfully name Salmon Clan has patrolled the rivers, and can now be found on nearly every major river. But they do not forget their origins, they display an oar under their mon, and will not hesitate to wade into battle wielding the instrument of the water.

When the Emperor needs a taster, it always comes from the Salmon clan. And if other clans sometimes come to taunt the lightness of the legitimacy of this purpose, they usually dissipate quickly in front of the support of the Emperor.

### *Geography & Economy*

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The Salmon clan does not have much in the way of lands in the traditional sense. Many of their members live a nomadic existence on boats and can be found anywhere along the Drowned Merchant River, Three Sides River, Sleeping River, River of the Blind Monk, River of the Hour of the Wolf, the River of the Lost Valley and the Firefly River, and all their tributaries, allowing the clan to spread over almost all of Rokugan east of the Spine of the World Mountains. The only true holding they have is a small River Fort located where the Drowned Merchant River ends and joins with the convergence of the Firefly River - the fort is on a small island a little ways into the middle of the river.

Whenever possible they use their peasant vassals to conduct trade, but the Salmon are a practical people and will trade when needed to - however, they have managed to avert much commerce through an unofficial system of donations, where peasants and local daimyo will give them gifts in exchange for maintaining a presence along a stretch of river.

### *Customs*

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The protection of the purity of the water and food of the Empire is the main concern of the Salmon, for they know how quickly and easily smugglers and bandits can use the rivers to escape retribution, moving from province to province ahead of interest in their apprehension. The Salmon, however, are always on the alert and maintain a sophisticated level of communication among their dispersed clan, through both meeting of boats and messages left at river villages. Calligraphy is one of the most popular art forms



among the Salmon, to the surprise of outsiders who assume them to be rough and uncouth samurai - when two Salmon groups meet, there is always a great deal of ceremony in the exchange of letters.

The Salmon tend to dress more practically than other samurai, due to their livelihood - flowing kimonos are no help on an active boat where they can get tangled and soiled. Many Samurai consider the Salmon uncouth due to, like the Unicorn, enjoying sleeveless wear and breeches - although it is a misconception that the Salmon always dress like this, and they usually have more traditional wear for when the day is done, and when making official visitations. When the Salmon have need of courtiers, they normally train with the Ide, who they see as honest or open, but the wealthiest Salmons pride themselves in sending their children to train with the Doji.

The Salmon tend to comport themselves practically in other ways - men usually wear the top-knot or other short hairstyles, and women either keep their hair short or find a way to secure it. The Salmon often forgo armor or wear only the lightest - but many have been surprised at how powerful swimmers the Salmon are, able to swim and wade in all but the heaviest armors. The Salmon tend to avoid over ornamentation, not wanting accouterments that could be lost or become tangled.

One aspect of their appearance where the Salmon do allow for the artistic are tattoos - Salmons are often heavily Tattooed, most usually on their arms, with a style particular to their clan. Most Salmon tattoos, while not magical like the Dragon's, have deep personal meaning, and are considered a way to pay respect to the water spirits, and even as a way of directly communicating with them.

## Demography

The Salmon clan differs from many other clans due to the diffusion of its members, and small amount of land ownership. The most obvious result of this is the fact that the clan divides itself into multiple family units that are based on sturdy river boats or groups of boats. The Salmon clan therefore makes most of their living from fishing and trade. There are famous for their sushi houses.

The Salmon have a relatively small ratio between the amount of samurai and peasants in their clan - often the peasant servants of the Salmon operate their own rafts separate from the houseboats of their masters. This means that the Salmon often have to engage in many duties Samurai would find rather distasteful, such as fishing and punting their boats.

### THE SAMON FAMILY: +1 REFLEXES

The Samon are a hardy stock, taking their original members from a variety of clans and places along the rivers of the eastern Empire. They tend towards wiriness and swift movement. To many their appearance appears slightly crude, due to not making much use of the kimono on their river patrols, preferring to wear as simple clothing as possible for maximum ease of movement, similar in some ways to the style of the Yoritomo. They are known for heavily tattooing their bare arms, as a ritual to gain the favor of the water kami of the river.

## The Unagi Vassal Family

The Unagi vassal family of the Samon was founded by a Samon Bushi who sought to extend the reach of the clan out into the shorelines of Rokugan to combat pollution near coastal towns. In his ambition, he then sought to capitalize on his success and expand operations into the River of Gold, known for its rampant piracy and growing presence. While successful for a time, this eventually drew the ire of the Scorpion Clan, who organized a large ronin ambush that killed many of the Unagi and severely curtailed their power - what remaining Unagi there are live in small numbers along the coast near where the Three Sides River meets the ocean.

### Schools, Paths & Dojos

Most Salmons practice the Bushi School of their clan, one that was developed over years of protection of Rivers, and assaults on Bandit boats and exploitations. The Salmon quickly learned the advantage of being able to turn punts and oars into deadly jabbing weapons, as well as the use of spears and, harpoons, fishnets and hooks in boat to boat combat, both for offense and defense. Like the Mantis, the Salmon tend to be wary about using their Daisho where it could be lost. Some prefer the range of the Yari in fording off enemies, while others find the Nage-Yari more manageable in close quarters and useful for throwing if need be.

### SAMON BUSHI SCHOOL

- ☉ **Benefit:** +1 Strength
- ☉ **Skills:** Athletics, Defense, Investigation, Jiujutsu, Sailing, Spears, any one Skill
- ☉ **Honor:** 3.5
- ☉ **Outfit:** Light Armor, Sturdy Clothing, Daisho, Knife, Yari OR Nage-Yari, Traveling Pack, 6 koku

## TECHNIQUES

### RANK 1: WAY OF THE SALMON

The Sasumata, Sodegarami and Bo Weapons may be used with the Spear Skill instead of their normal respective skills. Note when doing so, they may not benefit from their normal rank bonuses, but can benefit from any Spear Rank bonuses – you must pick at the start of each turn how you will use these weapons. As well, when you're using a punting pole or oar to fight, count it as a Bo staff instead of an Improvised Weapon, including being able to roll attacks with it with the Spear skill. You also gain a +1k0 to Initiative rolls and suffer no penalties to movement due to being on an unstable surface, like a boat on the water.

### RANK 2: ESCAPE THE NETS

You gain a bonus equal to twice your School Rank to your TN against Grappling Attacks and attacks with the Entanglement rule. You also gain +1k1 to the Contested Strength roll to resist Knockdown, and Light Armour no longer penalizes your Athletics Rolls.

### RANK 3: TWO FANGS IN THE MOUTH

May make Attacks for a Simple Action with Spear weapons and weapons with the Samurai keyword. For the purpose of this rank, Spear weapons count as the weapons affected by Rank 1 when being used as a Spear.

### RANK 4: THE RIVER CALLS

Whenever you use a Knockdown on an enemy, you may add your Spear skill to your contested Strength Roll. When you do Knockdown the opponent, you may move them 3 feet plus a number of feet equal to your water ring in a direction of your choice.

### RANK 5: SINK THE FANGS

Whenever you make an attack, you may choose to make 2 Raises to make a strike that will be as painful and crippling as possible – you may make a Water Ring Roll contested by the enemy's Earth Ring. If you succeed, the target is Dazed. This ability does nothing if used on an already Dazed Target.

**SALMON INFILTRATOR  
(NEW PATH)**

Technique Rank: 4

Requires: Athletics 5, Knives 3, Stealth 3

Replaces: Samon Bushi Rank 4

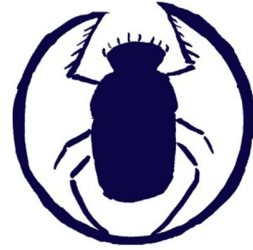
While you are swimming or wading in water, you gain +1k1 to your Stealth rolls. As well, you gain +2k0 to your Jujitsu and Knives skills, and increase the damage you roll with Knives by +1k1 during the first round of any combat. Also, you no longer lose honor for ambushing or making sneak attacks, as long as they are against anyone with less than 3 points of honor.

**SALMON TASTER  
(NEW PATH)**

Technique Rank: 2

Replaces: Any School at rank 2

You have been specially and extensively trained to observe and smell before to taste. You are an expert on food, provenance, regional specialties and your tremendous sense of taste -one of the finest of all Rokugan- makes you're sometime solicited as food critic. You've a bonus of 2k1 to all your rolls of Investigation to detect any suspicious presence in food or beverage. At any moment you can buy the Seven Fortunes' Blessing (Fukurokujin) Advantage for 2 points instead of 4.



*"Silence, patience and freedom ... We will be there when needed."*

## The Scarab Clan

### Founding

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Gaijin have no knowledge of the Celestial Order, and thus no place in it. This makes them, in the eyes of Rokugan, less than human, less even than the eta. The Rokugani are superior, noble, because only they have honor, only they occupy the great karmic cycle, only they know of the Order. Thus, a Rokugani is superior to any gaijin in every way.

Of course, that attitude might be tested if the Empire at large were to know of the Scarab Clan. The Emerald Empire has children it doesn't know about, you see. And they are about to return to their beloved father.

Around the turn of the first century IC, there was a bit of a debate amongst the Dragon Clan and the Brotherhood of Shinsei. At certain times during his travels around the Empire, Shinsei had made mention of the "people of the scarab" who apparently lived some ways north of Rokugan, though as he did not mention them in his conversation with the Hantei, there was no record of them in the Tao of Shinsei. Most students of Shinsei's teachings had a passing interest in them at the very best, but a few were convinced if they could speak to these people of the scarab, and learn what they knew of Shinsei, they could expand their understanding of the Tao.

Though the Empire had not codified its strong anti-gaijin stance yet, this was met with skepticism by most; and besides, weren't the Ki-Rin going to talk to them anyway? The group was

insistent, however, saying that while they did not doubt Shinjo and her clan's abilities as explorers and diplomats, they probably didn't know the specific questions to ask of the people of the scarab to gain understanding of the Tao.

Eventually this fringe group was given permission to mount an expedition north to meet the people of the scarab, and learn what they could. They assembled together, said their goodbyes, packed their supplies, and headed northward. A week and a half later, the kami Togashi 'died', an event whose historical significance utterly blotted out the departure of a small group of monks and samurai who everyone else thought were probably crazy.

The contingent made their way north, into the harsh desert of the Burning Sands. It was a harsh and perilous journey, and not all of them found their destination, but the Dragon are hardy folk; eventually, they found themselves in a strange land of brown-skinned men with hooked swords, buildings crafted of yellow stone, and obelisks bearing the image of a scarab beetle. They had found their destination, a land the locals called the Senpet Empire.

The expedition never spoke to the Pharaoh directly, as they were but simple students and holy men, but they were welcomed into the Empire by those with whom they did meet, as the Senpet's borders are far more open than Rokugan's. The place was strange, its customs bizarre, the language barrier nearly impossible to overcome, but the Dragon persevered. They



learned of the Prophet called Mekhem, and deduced that he must have been Shinsei. They learned of the people's religion, of Re and Toth and Anubis and Bastet and the Ten Thousand Gods, and found its parallels and deviations from Fortunism fascinating. There was so much knowledge to be found in this place!

Eventually, they realized this would not be an endeavor they could complete in a few years and return home with a report. They began to establish a permanent base, a monastery and village of the style with which they were accustomed, on a remote mountain near the Senpet's border. They sent messengers back to Rokugan to inform them of this decision, saying where and how they could be contacted, outlining their plans and goals, and informing Togashi (who was still alive as far as they knew) he could contact them if he needed anything from them. They formally requested that since they were still loyal samurai and monks of Rokugan but were no longer really connected to the Dragon chain of command, Togashi might, if he agreed, petition for them to be named a Minor Clan for administrative purposes. They suggested the name "The Scarab Clan".

The party of messengers bearing this message were devoured by a giant on their way back to the Empire and it never found its way to its recipient. Those who remembered the expedition assumed the Sands claimed their lives before they ever reached their destination.

From their monastery, the "Scarab Clan" began their study. They studied the Tao, the teachings of Mekhem, the Fortunes, the Ten Thousand Gods, the elemental kami, the strange creatures of smokeless flame, and all the customs of the Senpet people. Their monastery was regarded as a local curiosity by the Senpet who lived near it, and the monks who lived there coming out to speak with them about philosophy and ultimately harmless oddity.

So they stayed, and they spoke, and they studied for many years. They had children and grew old. In time, they began to be approached by Senpet who wished to join their order, and study their strange ways to attain enlightenment. They were happily let in, as the Scarab were glad to spread the wisdom of the Tao and were glad to have Senpet natives help them unravel these mysteries. The Senpet monks integrated, were accepted as part of the group. Further years passed, and a new generation was fathered, descendants of samurai who were half-blooded Senpet. And more Senpet joined, and the next generation was three-quarters Senpet. And so on, and so forth.

Today the Scarab Clan consists entirely of Senpet members with vanishingly little Rokugani blood, Senpet who have not forgotten their ancestors' mission. They study the ways and riddles of Rokugan and the Senpet and this tradition, and an expected amount of cultural drift, has led them to have a strange mishmash culture that is both Senpet and Rokugani at the same time. They revere the Ten Thousand Gods, holding special significance for the one thousand that are also Fortunes. They honor and pray to their ancestors, and mummify their bodies as a sign of respect and so that their spirit will be intact when it goes to be reincarnated. They follow the honor of Bushido and the laws of the great Pharaoh Hantei. They consider themselves loyal Rokugani citizens on Rokugani soil, next to the Emerald Empire's most steadfast ally, the Senpet. And always, they seek enlightenment, in the Tao, the Ten Thousand, even the Book of the Dead.

They carried out their task dutifully for generations, thinking that if the Empire had need of them, it would call for them, and the long silence meant everything was running smoothly. But now, it is they who have to travel to Rokugan, bearing grim news. The Yodotai now occupy all of the Senpet lands and hold them in a blasphemous death-grip. Worship of the Ten Thousand Gods and Thousand Fortunes is forbidden. Rokugan would never stand for such aggression against its oldest, most loyal ally!



## *Geography & Economy*

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The Scarab Clan monastery lies just outside the western edge of the Senpet Empire, north of Medinaat-al-Salaam, on a low mountain named Mount Zurkhaneh. It actually lies between the Yodotai and Senpet and is currently "administered" by a Yodotai governor whom the Scarab have managed to, out of necessity, hide the religious nature of their practices from, appearing as a secluded cadre of athletes and martial artists.

The Scarab lifestyle is ascetic, much like the Dragon. Though not in the Burning Sands proper, food and resources are still scarce, leaving little room for luxury. Most of the wealth the Clan had come from a small marble quarry at the base of the mountain; since the Yodotai invasion, it was taken over and mined dry.

Before the days of the Yodotai occupation, the Scarab clan members were regarded among the nearby Senpet populace as a local curiosity; it was not uncommon to entertain visitors in the monastery who were simply there to gawk at the weird customs of the monks. The Scarab never really objected to it, (or the donations the visitors sometimes left), but nor did they feel the need to explain themselves in depth to people there simply to watch; consequently their Rokugani origin was widely unknown, most people knowing them as having traditions that were "exotic".

## *Demography*

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The original Togashi bloodline to which all Scarab claim ancestry has been diluted so thin that it's invisible to all but the Scarab themselves. Though each member can trace back his or her heritage to one of the original samurai that founded the "clan", every other area of that heritage is likely to be Senpet, with about one in ten or so members coming from the pre-Prophetic tribes that settled the Jewel of the Desert. There are around 250 Scarab samurai -- but no peasants

or eta, all members being of equal standing. This is not an egalitarian position -- the original Dragon samurai didn't bring a contingent of peasants, and none of the natives wanted to volunteer for the position. The samurai-monks are all expected to participate in the duties peasants normally perform, a practice that also helps build a needed sense of humility.

## *Customs*

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The Scarab Clan have a worldview that encompasses Rokugani, Senpet, and Mekhem tradition, creating a bizarre mélange of all three.

The world is not as it once was. The Day of Wrath, when Shilah-Amaterasu made her displeasure manifest, did not simply scorch the Burning Sands but change the fundamental nature of reality, changing the world from an ordered place of harmony to a dissonant place of chaos. Should man overcome his inner disharmony, he shall find the secret of Enlightenment, and live as men once did before the Day of Wrath. The Prophet was first to know the secret, and for this he is revered above all others. He gave out his knowledge to the people so that they might find harmony as well, giving to each land the wisdom they needed to find the path for themselves.

The teachings of Shinsei speak of humility, honor, wisdom, of lofty ideals; the sayings of Mekhem speak of harsher and simpler truths. The man seeking Enlightenment is therefore wise to recall that he is but a man even for all his wisdom, that overcoming inner turmoil cannot affect the world's outer turmoil, that he seeks not to be one with the perfect world, but that it is Shilah's will that he find harmony with this world, for all of its faults and flaws.

Thus, the spirit cannot be perfected if the body is left to languish; enlightenment is as much to be found with one's hands as with one's thoughts. The Scarab practice their own martial arts, based long ago on Dragon jujitsu, as a way to

purify the body and mind but also as a way of anchoring oneself to the physical world. A man who studies alone for a thousand years will still lack the wisdom of a man who has been in a good, clean, honorable fight. Until recently, these arts have mostly been about fitness and athleticism than about combat, but the shattering of the Jewel and the conquest of the Senpet Empire have seen the Scarab Clan pit their fists against spear and blade far more than they would have liked. Above all gods is Lady Sun, Shilah, Amaterasu, whose continued grace sustains mankind, prayers are to be offered to her at dawn and dusk, thanking her for her grace in allowing mankind continued existence, and for watching over his works.

Scarab clan has only very few contacts with the Empire and virtually no connection with it. At most a camel caravan clan passes there by once or twice a year.

### Schools, Paths & Dojos

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#### ORDER OF THE SCARAB

- ☉ **Devotion:** Fortunist
- ☉ **Benefit:** +1 Willpower
- ☉ **Honor:** 3.5
- ☉ **Skills:** Meditation, Defense, Lore: Senpet, Lore: Theology (Fortunes), Jiu-jitsu, any two skills

*Technique: Going Forth by Day*

The curious blend of Senpet cosmological lore and Rokugani erudition that the Order studies tend themselves well to impressive, if somewhat flashy, displays of power. You get a Free Raise when you activate a Mystical kiho with a Meditation roll.



*"The darkness does not come from the abyss."*

## The Seahorse Clan

### Founding

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Like some other clans, the creation of the minor Seahorse clan comes from a disaster. But this birth didn't emanate from pain but from honor. The origin of this clan dates back to the Battle of White Stag. At the end of it, there were many families who lost some loved ones at sea. The bodies sometimes having been swallowed by the ocean with their property, it was sometimes very difficult or impossible to make the appropriate funeral rites for them. Although the samurai are not known for openly expressing their sadness, this provoked among them many discomfort and malaise that cannot be appeased. And that sadness might sooner or later turn into anger or bitterness...

A young bushi of the Mantis Clan, Yoritomo Shojo, could not bear to see so many people burdened with suffering. She has therefore into her head to find a way to bring the bodies and souls of the dead to those in needs. She tried to ask a favor to water kami's but received only modest results since she did not hear their whispers. But that does not discourage her and then she prayed Suitengu, Fortune of Sea, pleading for help and promised to serve him in return. She remained prostrate for days and nights in the small temple chanting and asking the fortune to share with her the suffering of his fellow men. His determination and faith were such that when exhaustion tears touched the altar, Suitengu manifested.

He gave her and to her descendants the gift of being able to breathe underwater as long as her intentions remained pure. In exchange, he asked her to ensure that the seas were preserved from the corruption of the taint of the Shadowlands so that he never again has to get angry, as it was the case centuries earlier against the family Morehei.

Yoritomo Shojo with this new asset from Suitengu, decided to devote her life to him and became a nun. She recovered without too much difficulty the bodies and property of those who had perished at sea and brought them back to their families without asking anything in return. These were met and told the matter which did not fail to come to Hantei Muhaki ears.

The new Emperor seeing that the young woman did not hesitate to risk her life to preserve the honor of the dead and to show unwavering devotion immediately gave her the family name of Tatsunotoshigo. The Emperor allowed her to found her own minor clan, bowed to the will of Suitengu and asked the new clan for preserving the seas of the taint of the Shadowlands. Shojo then quickly attracted supporters, mostly people from families she had helped and who swore on their honor to help her in return. The minor Clan of the Seahorse had seen the day.

### Geography & Economy

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Shojo received an island from the Emperor, south of the lands of the clan of the crane, off the Shadowlands where the taint had already felt its influence. It took all the cunning of the Kuni

family from the nearby Crab Clan to purge all traces of corruption. This demanded years of effort but allowed Shojo to forge the technique that the seahorse school still teaches today. Since then, no one rule on the island that peace, tranquility and prosperity.

The lands themselves are as a modest concession as the clan itself. Its main sources of supply come from the sea and every inch of arable land is exploited. Fortunately these are fertile because supplied with undertows and skimming from the seas. Seahorses also grow salt marshes and give the fine flower of salt they produce onto the table of the Emperor. They may also sometimes put the hand on a treasure hidden on the seabed and their natural pearl artisans are renowned throughout the Empire.

The modest clan does not have more than one Kobune and a small fleet of fishing vessels to defend but it's enough for the seahorse clan to stay autonomous and exist by itself.

The vast majority of the clan community lives in the monastery of Tatsunotoshigo Shūdōin. It's a large fortified residence located on the heights of the island. There is no provision for preserving it from the sea to allow free access to Suitengu if he were to have the desire to do them the honor of his visit. However the modest home is able to repel the attack of possible looters and pirates.

### Demography

The clan is sparsely populated and the island never has more than a hundred permanent residents. It is not unusual to see a member of the clan in mission but especially along the coasts or seas. It is unlikely to see a member of the clan of the seahorse in the inner lands but they never fail to respond favorably to the invitation from another clan.

The monastery has more rooms and accommodations than necessary to accommodate any visitor in need with minimal comfort. But all

that space needs to be maintained. Thus, it's asked in return to participate in the daily tasks according to her capacity as the clan need or to pay a penny to keep the home in good condition. A Kaiu can repair a wall, while an Akodo would provide overnight guard duty for example.

### Customs

The minor clan of the seahorse gives a lot of time to the Fortune of the sea and has good relations with the Order of the Sea from the Brotherhood. It obviously has also altars dedicated to Haruhiko, the Fortune of fishermen, to Isora, the Fortune of coasts but especially to Suitengu that allowed the creation of the clan. All the inhabitants of the island whether resident or just passing, from samurais to etas, up as soon as they are old enough to reason, should go there at least once a day to revere fortunes. This is taken very seriously and constantly reminded as disrespect to the fortunes may cause the wrath of Suitengu again.

All seahorses monks make it a point of honor to rescue the sailors and fishermen in distress. To deny such a request would cause the worst dishonor to those who would. The island is a haven and refuge for those who have found peril at sea or looking for a way to honor those who have experienced such a misfortune.

Seahorses also provide the bulk of diplomatic relations between the Empire and the Ningyo. Very elusive and xenophobic, contacts with them are very rare because they prevent and repel almost any access to the nearby sunken city of Candas.

The clan also has good contacts with the Mantis, Crane and Crab Clans with whom they cooperate when it comes to explore the seabed and does not fail to report any strange activity to the Turtle and Firefly clans.

## War

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The Seahorse Clan is not built for combat and is only attached to neutrality, content to help anyone in need without distinction of clan. They do not, however, trade and have relationship with the gaijin. This position prevails and deserts the clan by its modest pretensions and status of minor clan.

## Recent Events

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It happened often the monastery serve as a relay and provisioning point during the recent war against the Ivory Kingdoms. However, the clan was never actively involved in the conflict.

### THE TATSUNOTOSHIGO FAMILY: +1 WILLPOWER

After receiving her family name, Shojo still in the prime of life had several children who received the same gift than her. In accordance with the will of the Emperor and Suitengu, her descendants and disciples always tied to preserve the purity of the sea. The family is essentially monastic but not matriarchal and anyone demonstrating unwavering devotion is welcome. Any evidence of greed for marine treasures is strongly and firmly reprimanded, as the family is always endearing to protect the seas as her sole purpose of subsistence. It also remains strongly tied to modesty and humility to preserve her faith and they encumber themselves with few needs. Their strong and flawless devotion seems to protect so far the surroundings of the corruption of the Shadowlands Taint.

## Schools, Paths & Dojos

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## TATSUNOTOSHIGO MONK SCHOOL

Working together with the Kuni family, Shojo has come -at the cost of great efforts- to develop a rare and much requested gift. The clan does not make advertising of this fearing that too much popularity can cause overwhelming the island with requests and jeopardizes their livelihood. But when it is already too late and the Shadowland Taint is already there, it is sometimes possible -with great sacrifice of willingness and an unwavering devotion- to overcome it.

- ☉ **Devotion:** Fortunist
- ☉ **Benefit:** +1 Awareness
- ☉ **Honor:** 5.5
- ☉ **Skills:** Athletics (Swimming), Defense, Investigation, Lore: Theology (Fortunes), Lore: (The Sea), Meditation, Sailing.

*Technique: Purity of the ocean:* This technique works only on a willing target having at least one full Rank of Shadowlands Taint and is ineffective against the Nothing corruption.

After an interrupted seawater bath on a beach and meditation of at least one hour, you must, you and your target, as a Complex Action use your maximum of Void points. Neither you nor your target cannot regain any Void point until the next morning that the technique was successful or not. You can then attempt a Perception / Water roll against a Rank of Shadowlands Taint / Willpower roll of your target. If the roll is successful, the target immediately loses 3 points of Taint. Purge entirely a target in this way is impossible and this can be very long and exhausting.

### *New Ancestor*

#### SHOJO TATSUNOTOSHIGO [5 POINTS]

You do not need any spell or ability to breathe in and cannot drown in salt water. You can move, hear and speak within without any constraint or time limit. This capacity does not increase your ability to move and does not work in freshwater.

**Demands:** If your honor score is less than 5.0, if you wear the smallest trace of Shadowland Taint or plunder the seabed for your own benefit, Shojo abandon you immediately.

## The Swan Clan

### Founding

Most Minor Clans are small and obscure, because of fate or bad luck. One, however, is inconsequential by design. The Swan Clan, since its founding near 50 years ago, has a secret duty it performs for the Imperial Throne: to protect and hide selected individuals sent to it.

When some of the Scorpion's daimyos started to complot to build what would become the Scorpion Clan Coup, not all of them were willing to participate. Rather than betray the purpose of the Scorpion, they would join together to protect the imperial throne even from itself. They begin to seek a solution in case of the worst could happen and finally discover the first of their « guests » Hantei Shimanashi. He was born heir to the throne, preceding his twin brother by twelve minutes. However, their parents had been warned by the Oracle of Air that « the First shall bring doom if he sits on the throne, though the Second will be First if he but rises ». Nozumi's existence was kept a secret; his rare visible actions passed off as those of his brother. However, he was still theoretically heir to the throne, and when his father Hantei XXXVIII died, something had to be done to remove the threat of the Scorpion permanently. In particular, the Emerald Magistrates who investigated the Emperor's demise had come very close to uncovering the truth.

Hantei Shimanashi having seen what the responsibility of being the supreme leader could do



*"To know the truth, look under the surface"*

and the horror of his father possessed by Fu Leng, should finally refuse to claim the throne himself, rather joining them to preserve the secret of his protectors.

Thus the new Emperor Toturi I rewarded the magistrates with the creation of a new family and a new Minor Clan, then provided them with their secret but fully official new purpose of housing sensitive refugees, caring for them and protecting their lives and giving the blood of the Hantei family a way to survive. He also gave them a false legitimacy to bear in front of the other clans: to educate them in the good way of the court, to preserve purity, simplicity, courtesy and honesty, hoping that this way conspiracies like this should never happen again. The leader of the magistrates and the Clan's first daimyo was Asahina Ryoshin, who chose the name of Shimanashi for the new family. He was an ancient and very honorable shugenja, and rumors had it that at the time of his death he was enlightened.

Nowadays, the Swan Clan maintains its duty. There are rarely more than two or three individuals who are sent to the clan for protection each generation, but they are integrated within the clan, given a new name and identity, and provided with a new future. The clan sometimes refers to them as « distant cousins » or « honored relatives », or more informally, « teacups », from a story Shimanashi Ryoshin first told to Hantei Nozumi

relating the to the imperfection of enameled teapots and the worth they acquire thereby. Children make up most of these permanent guests, as they can't be retired to monasteries or executed. In all cases, they are formally (although secretly) adopted within the Clan.

Beyond that duty, the Swan makes every effort to appear as an archetypal Minor Clan, concerned with its small territories, maintaining a small Court, and having no distinguishing characteristics whatsoever.

### *Geography & Economy*

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A small valley at the edge of the Twilight Mountains was given to the Clan and renamed Swan Valley. It is a harsh terrain, but it holds several beautiful mountain lakes well populated with fish. In the valley are two main villages: Swan River Village downstream among the rice paddies and Restful Morning Village, a somewhat larger town which includes Kyuden Shimanashi. Other small hamlets dot the valley until it flattens out into Crab territories.

Kyuden Shimanashi is a recent castle, larger than it needs to be to house the entire Shimanashi family. Sometimes ago, an Emperor decided to hold its Winter Court on the Clan lands to test his political enemies and keep an eye on some of the Clan's guests. The palace was hastily enlarged to comfortably house the Emperor and his suite, even though the other courtiers had to make do with more rustic accommodation. Since then, the palace is maintained at its current size, although many of the rooms are closed all year round.

But the main political location for the Clan is Swan Springs, a bath-house complex high in the mountains, surrounding hot springs that are reputed for their medicinal properties. It is a high point of the region's political landscape and sees most of its activity in autumn, between the war season and the first Winter Courts. The Clan

maintains a number of herbalists and apothecaries who roam the mountains for rare plants and essences. In truth, these men and women also maintain the numerous discreet strongholds that the Clan keeps in case it needs to actively hide some of its guests.

The valley also holds the Temple of the Ringing Bell, a small shrine which houses the ancient forge of past master Kaiu Kunshuo. The forge was restored by Hantei Nozumi (under his new name of Shimanashi Toryu) and still attracts some pilgrims. A large Brotherhood abbey, the Shrine of the Seven Thousand Clouds, is also in activity and often serves as a liaison to the Emperor.

### *Demography*

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There are around 450 adult samurai at any one time in the Clan, with a steady demography, as the Clan is well-protected by its Crab neighbor and rarely suffers wars. However, a high proportion of the Clan volunteers to serve in the Imperial Legions, seeing this as a repayment for the Imperial favor which gave birth to the Clan.

### *Customs*

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Many of the Clan's guests come from the Imperial families, as only they know of the Clan's purpose and make use of it. Making the guests uncomfortable would be unbecoming, and therefore many of the Clan's customs closely resemble those of the Seppun, Otomo and Miya families. However, a few stand out.

Because several of the Clan's founders (including the first daimyo's wife and Hantei Nozumi) were hobbled or had trouble walking, lame people are considered lucky. The Clan maintains a few beautifully crafted palanquins in which lame people are carried around the valley at festivals to bring good fortune to the Clan. Young

samurai just before their gempukku traditionally have the honor of carrying the palanquins.

Swans are considered sacred to the Clan, and those that live in the mountains are not hunted. Many of the wealthier households own natural or artificial ponds and raise swans on them. Not all of the Clan's members know of the exact nature of its duty. Younger samurai are told that the guests of the Clan are really estranged family members, and elaborate fictitious genealogies are created to explain these away. These genealogies are maintained from generation to generation, leading to a remarkably obscure body of lore concerning people who never existed. This is also used as the basis for the Clan's cypher.

### War

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The southern border of Swan Valley is shared with Crab lands. The Clan makes it a point to always maintain good relations with the Crab, and therefore benefit from their protection. However, the mountains lead into unclaimed, dangerous territory, which is often roamed by bandits. The Clan monitors bandit routes through the mountains but does not close them, in case one day needs to use them itself. Most of the Clan's military activities come from skirmishes in these areas.

### Recent Events

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The Swan Clan carefully avoids involvement with politics or major events. However, it has had to adapt to both its geographical position and the political developments of its time.

During the Four Winds Era, both Isawa Yoshun and Toturi Tsudao became aware of the Clan's purpose and duty. While Yoshun only sent two of his students to make sure that his siblings would not attempt to use the Swan as a power base, Tsudao once had to send twelve survivors of a Bloodspeaker attack to the Swan Clan as she hunted the cell down. This unprecedented influx

of arrivals forced the Swan to close its Winter Court and most of its borders to make sure none of the guests would be recognized.

This posed a problem with the Crab, who were counting on the Swan as a client in its economic efforts to beat back the Crane. The resulting time of turmoil left the Swan Clan with several important favors owed to the Crab, which have not been collected yet.

### THE SHIMANASHI FAMILY: +1WILLPOWER

The original members of the Clan were drawn from the Scorpion Clan but many Crane, Dragon, and Lion Clans, members also joined it making it quite varied. Most of the following members who swore fealty were either ronin or former magistrates encouraged to do so by the Throne. Therefore the Swan Clan demonstrates a very average-looking population.

However, their location and the influence of their Crab neighbor tends to make them solid people with unyielding characters, even if their focus and strength of mind tends to be oriented towards more traditionally honorable pursuits than the Crab. The result is a family of determined and honest samurai, very much like what a family of magistrates could be. Members of the Swan Clan are taught to demonstrate patience and humility. They know that life as a Swan is hardly what a high-ranking child can expect, but ultimately, no one should want more than a life led with honor. It is their place to demonstrate this.

### The Ryoshin Vassal Family

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The Ryoshin were founded, not by Shimanashi Ryoshin, but by his nephew, who had been raised as a hostage in the Crab Clan. From his days as a political pawn he had kept a determination to tutor children with respect and grace rather than distance and cold. He gathered students at his temple and taught them in the ways of his enlightened uncle, creating a serene environment that continues long after his death.



## SHIMANASHI BUSHI SCHOOL

The Shimanashi Bushi School was founded by the bodyguard for Hantei Nozumi, a dour man from the mountains who brought practicality and focus to his duty. Because the first members of the Clan came from everywhere, but were mostly ronin and former magistrates, the School founder went back to basics and taught a very streamlined form of kenjutsu, favoring economy of effort over elaborate flourishes. This makes Shimanashi bushi very versatile. "Do one thing, and do it well; then you can do anything" is a school maxim.

In terms of mechanics, the Shimanashi school uses its streamlined kenjutsu to minimize the penalties that various combat Stances bring. This frees Swan bushi to use the best suited Stance for their purpose, without fear of crippling or overextending themselves. Swan bushi are also taught several yojimbo techniques, the better to protect their charges.

- ☉ **Benefit:** +1 Agility
- ☉ **Honor:** 5.5
- ☉ **Skills:** Kenjutsu, Etiquette, Defense, Iaijutsu, Jiujutsu, Athletics (Swimming), any one High skill.
- ☉ **Outfit:** Light Armor, Travelling pack, Kimono and sandals, Katana, Wakizashi, 3 koku.

### TECHNIQUES

#### RANK 1: THE WAY OF THE SWAN

Excess is the doorway to failure. When in the Full Attack stance, you gain a bonus to your Armor TN equal to your school rank (this does not remove the general penalty to your Armor TN from your stance, but mitigates it). You may make one Simple action per turn when in the Full Defense stance. This action can never be an attack.

#### RANK 2: TAKING FLIGHT

Shimanashi bushi are taught to trust their charges when defending someone. When you use the Guard action to protect someone, that person gains a free Simple Action on their next turn. If they use this action to move, the distance they can cover is doubled.

#### RANK 3: SWAN'S WINGS

You are taught to adapt quickly, just as the swan flies and swims equally at ease. You may make attacks as a Simple action when using Samurai weapons.

#### RANK 4: STEP INSIDE THE DOORWAY

Shimanashi bushi are taught to exploit every opportunity. You may spend a Void Point to attack once per turn when in the Defense Stance. This attack follows all normal rules otherwise.

#### RANK 5: SWAN'S BLOOD

A Swan bushi never gives up, but becomes more deadly as the fight goes on. When you hit an opponent, their next action to attack you or someone you've Guarded since your last turn suffer penalties equal to twice your own Wound penalties. This is in addition to their own, if they have any.

### SHIMANASHI MAGISTRATE (NEW PATH)

**Technique Rank:** 2

**Replaces:** Shimanashi Bushi 2

#### TECHNIQUE: UNDER THE SKY, UNDER THE LAW

The Shimanashi maintain a devotion to Imperial law and honor that has never wavered. Even far away from the gaze of the Emperor, they remain his servants. You may add your Willpower to contested Social rolls and to Investigation rolls.

## Ancestral Items

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### SWAN KIMONO

The Swan Kimono was bought by Ryoshin's ronin karo on the day the Clan was founded and he went out in Otosan Uchi to recruit ronin for the new Clan. It is rather tasteless, representing swans taking flight in orange and black, but the karo's confidence and the sense of destiny of the new Minor Clan permeated it. Bearers of the Swan Kimono can add the difference (in rolled dice) between their Glory rank and their opponent's Glory Rank to any contested Social roll and any Investigation roll.

### ANCESTRAL SWORD OF THE SWAN CLAN

This simple sword, forged by Shimanashi Toryu, has always remained in its first presentation, originally intended to be temporary. The handle and saya are made a single piece of white birch wood. It is a finely balanced sword, usually only worn for ceremonial occasions, but the Champion also carries it whenever he visits the Swan dojo. Anyone who wields the sword is considered to have the Katana emphasis for the Kenjutsu skill, whether he possesses it or not.

## Advices for players and GMs

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The Swan was designed to provide a blank slate for GMs and PCs who want to enjoy a "standard" Rokugani samurai experience. It is intentionally bland, or rather, simple; it doesn't have any of the quirks and particular points of view that Great Clans have. Use the Swan Clan if you want to create Generic Bushi n° X, unburdened with the particularities of more established clans.

The Clan's secret is supposed to come as a surprise, even to characters hailing from the Swan Clan. It is a very sneaky thing to spring on players, who come from the most average of clans and have experienced all the dirty tricks and secrets of the wide world, to come back home to their simple family life and discover that their clan has always harbored a great secret...



*"A samurai's soul is her sword"*

## The Swordfish Clan

### Founding

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The Swordfish Clan's origin is shrouded in myth. Rumors have portrayed the clan's founder as everything from the secret daughter of a Crane champion, the pupil of tengu swordmasters, or even a mountain kami.

What is certain is that the ronin swordswoman Marumaru was involved peripherally in the momentous events of the 12th century. She first enters the records defending helpless villagers from bandits. Her prowess with the sword and devotion to the tenets of bushido earned her the respect of other samurai. In particular, she became a favorite of moralists, who saw her as a paragon of an older and simpler code, in opposition to the esoteric and abstract ideas that had grown up around bushido.

These attitudes were best displayed in a famous event just before the Clan was founded. Unscrupulous parties manipulated court proceedings to deny Marumaru her swords before a duel with the brilliant Doji Iori in an attempt to discredit both. The plan backfired badly. Iori first offered Marumaru the use of her own katana, intending to fight with her wakizashi. This honorable display raised Iori's standing. In return, Marumaru declined, explaining, "A samurai's soul is her sword." This inversion of the old proverb was so often repeated afterwards it is essentially the Swordfish's motto.

In any event, Marumaru faced Doji Iori with no weapon in hand. Iori won the duel on a technicality as she drew blood first, but acknowledged Marumaru as the superior warrior as she was able to land the first blow - though Iori later was to win several duels against Marumaru, when no outsiders intervened. The two were rivals and friends for the rest of their lives, a relationship

that describes the Swordfish Clan's on-again, off-again connections with the Crane.

### Geography & Economy

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The Clan's most important holding is the Yamashoko, a library, dojo, and temple. It contains many rare, and even some unique, records on the history of and treatises on the practice of bushido. Donations for accessing the archive and visiting the temple, plus dojo fees, form a major part of the Clan's income. In addition, the Clan maintains many smaller libraries, which double as small hostels for Clan members and other wandering samurai. These are often tucked into awkward, out of the way place and are quite spartan.

### Customs

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The Emperor charged Marumaru to create a clan that would continue the tradition of bushido as the path of the individual swordsman, adhering to duty and honor as a personal duty. The Swordfish have always interpreted this as a calling to both individual heroism and study of bushido. By tradition, after their gempukku Swordfish bushi are expected to wander the empire, traveling by their own means and taking on problems no one else is willing to deal with.

This regularly causes tensions with other clans, who do not appreciate interference and view the Swordfish as little more than up-jumped ronin. A consistent refusal to take advantage of their position to their Clan's benefit and several storied examples of defying impossible odds with no thought to self-preservation because bushido demanded it have made it politically difficult for any Clan to move against them directly.

Additionally, the Swordfish have amassed perhaps the most extensive collection of writings about and examples of bushido. Their archives are

often consulted by scholars from other clans, especially since they often include a great deal of otherwise forgotten history. Moreover, the Swordfish's origins and views have often led to them interacting with non-Rokugani, and even non-humans, on equitable terms. The Clan's unquestioned devotion to bushido shields them usual disapproval of such interactions.

The Clan's reputation for incorruptibility and personal prowess has led to a disproportionate number of magistrate appointments. This has led to the Swordfish becoming involved in important events regularly, but rarely in a way that benefits the Clan directly. It does, however, mean the Clan has excellent relations with the Imperial families and bureaucracy, which provides a shield against hard feelings from more powerful Clans.

### Demography

Due to their small number, the Swordfish have never been particularly important militarily. Though Swordfish units often perform above expectations for their size, there are never enough of them to tip the scales except on a local scale. Politically, what influence they have stems from a reputation for unbiased arbitration, limiting their ability to make use of it. The Clan is fairly poor as well, as their customs work against acquiring major holdings.

The Swordfish are close allies and supporters of the Monkey, stemming all the way back to the founding of both clans (Marumaru and Toku were supposedly friends). They find the Carp to be kindred spirits, even if they think the other Clan a bit too frivolous and happy-go-lucky. They also have some of the best relations with friendly non-humans, and still regularly act as intermediaries when non-humans interact with the Empire on an official basis. Their history generally insulates them from the disapproval this sort of interaction leads to, but does contribute to the widespread view that the Swordfish are something of country cousins to more cultured samurai.

### The Kurita Vassal Family

Within a few decades of their founding, Marumaru invited the Kurita into the Clan, beginning the Swordfish practice of collecting information about bushido. Though the Clan sought to follow bushido as a living, practical way of life as opposed to an esoteric philosophy, the founder felt the Clan couldn't just muddle through, or they would eventually lose their way. They needed to balance studying bushido with putting it into practice. For many years the Kurita were small and quiet, little known outside scholarly circles.

The Kurita scholars spend their time cajoling others to not forget bushido in these eras of change, and reminding samurai that their duty extended to all their subjects, regardless of origin, and generally making a nosy nuisance of themselves. Ultimately the Kurita's legacy is the Swordfish archives, and in several important treatises on applying bushido in foreign lands, comparing non-Rokugani practices with bushido, and interacting honorably with non-humans

### The Sanada Vassal Family

The expansion of the Empire led to the creation of a third family, the Sanada explorers. The Swordfish were very active after the colonization of Ivory Kingdoms and the absorption of Medinaat Al-Salaam, and into the eventual conquest of the Yodotai. The Sanada specialized in providing an interface between subject cultures and Rokugani court, and were key in spreading Rokugani ideals to them. They naturally dwindled as assimilation progressed.

### Recent Events

In the modern age, the Swordfish are much as they have always been - small, poor, but respected. They continue to be at the forefront of Imperial expansion, exploration, and interaction with non-humans, nearly always on an unofficial basis. They have been a long-time stalwart of the Minor Clan Alliance. Their Imperial connections are very valuable, as is their reputation for adherence to bushido. This, along with their close relationship with the Monkey, means they still provide a disproportionate number of Alliance magistrates and officials.

## THE MARUMARU FAMILY: +1 REFLEXES

The core and currently only family of the Swordfish Clan, the Marumaru embody the Clan's founding credo. Younger members typically travel far from home, which keeps them from becoming too insular. Every Marumaru trains rigorously with the sword and studies bushido extensively. They are taught to focus more on practice than theory, though. Swordfish bushi are respected throughout the Empire, but not always warmly welcomed, given their connection with officialdom and penchant for heralding future trouble.

### *Schools, Paths & Dojos*

#### MARUMARU BUSHI SCHOOL

- ☉ **Benefit:** +1 Agility
- ☉ **Skills:** Athletics, Defense, Iaijutsu, Lore: Bushido 2, Lore: Theology, Kenjutsu
- ☉ **Honor:** 6.5
- ☉ **Outfit:** Light Armor, Sturdy Clothing, Daisho, any 1 weapon, Traveling Pack, 5 koku

#### TECHNIQUES

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##### **RANK 1: THE SWORDFISH MUST LIVE LIKE A SHARK**

The Swordfish school is founded on the notion that any one man can make a difference; samurai, however, can make a more martial difference. For each foe you are engaged with past the first, you may add +1k0 to attack rolls while in the Attack or Full Attack Stance, or +3 to Armor TN while in the Defense or Full Defense stance. The number of bonuses you may gain from being outnumbered in this fashion is limited to your School Rank. All Kata cost 1 XP less for you. You can learn the Kata

of other bushi schools provided you can find a sensei to teach them to you, which may require you to obtain the appropriate Ally advantage.

##### **RANK 2: SHARPEN YOUR TALONS**

Each blade is a soul, but with two blades, a person may divide their soul. You may have two Katas active at once. Katas activated in this fashion may not stack the same bonus, but only take the higher of the two. Bear in mind added dice and kept dice are counted separately - if one kata adds 2k0 to a roll and another kata adds 1k1 to the same roll, the total bonus would be 2k1.

##### **RANK 3: SUN FLASHES BEHIND STORM CLOUDS**

Swordfish bushi learn to strike without fear or delay. You may make an attack as a Simple Action if you are engaged with more than one foe, or if you are engaged with an opponent who is capable of making attacks as a Simple Action.

##### **RANK 4: HERALDS THE STORM**

Even when surrounded by chaos, a Swordfish bushi learns to become the eye of the storm. When you take the Center Stance, the bonus increases to Xk1 plus double your Void Ring, where X is the number of foes you are currently engaged with to a maximum of your School Rank. In addition, you gain a Simple Action while in the Center Stance that can only be used to activate a Kata.

##### **RANK 5: A SWORDFISH IS MORE THAN A SWORD**

You may now have three katas activated simultaneously, subject to the same stacking restrictions as Rank 2. In addition, at the start of the day you may meditate to activate one Kata, which is treated as active for the rest of the day unless replaced by another Kata or until you rest.



*"Trust in the Pack"*

## The Wolf Clan

### Founding

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The Wolf Clan was founded during the early days of the twelfth century. Either just before or during the reign of Toturi, records are unclear of exactly when. But what is known is that it was both a reward and an assignment of duty to the Clan's founder, Fenroku, a ronin who never quite seemed like he was meant for this realm.

Fenroku was born into the Akodo, but to say he was a true Lion would be to stretch the truth. It's said by the Wolf that their founder was born under the sign of the Wolf and was in fact blessed from birth by Ōkami, the Fortune and Patron Spirit of Wolves. Not only was this reflected in his mindset which was primal and animalistic in nature, but also his physiology. He stood well above most Rokugani by the time of his gempukku and displayed animal characteristics, such as large fang-like canine teeth, eyes that seemed to reflect light and almost glow in the dark and an aura that made others feel as if he were a beast in human form.

While his family did care for him quite a deal, his father couldn't get it in himself to see past the differences that marked Fenroku as not quite a Lion, and as such he took action. Shortly before Fenroku's gempukku his father approached him and told him in non-hidden words that he was to give up his family name and leave their lands. While this was emotionally painful for Fenroku, he did not disagree with his father's wishes. He never felt like he belonged among the Akodo and knew

he would only cause trouble for his family. His father did say he could complete his gempukku before heading out into the world but Fenroku declined, thinking it would be better he left as soon as he could. He was gifted a daisho as a final gift from his father and then he set out into the world alone, or at least he thought so.

He did not know it at the time, but he was never without companion. Over the course of his travels he always walked with at least one animal spirit or even a simple animal at his side. The most common creature he saw among his travels was a white wolf which he felt was checking in on him from time to time, as if it were watching over him. He felt a deep connection with nature at large and preferred to be on the trail in between cities rather than in the actual cities themselves. This caused him to be traveling for just about every day for years.

Rarely would he have to draw his sword, but when he did he fought with the feral intensity of a beast. This tended to cause more problems than it solved, especially among other samurai. He was often called "Beast" or "Wolf" among his peers, less often than not in flattering ways.

He never quite felt at home, no matter where he was, even among the wilds, so he kept traveling. Eventually his travels lead him to a part of the empire not many even knew existed. It was almost cut off from the rest of the empire by natural terrain features that made travel hard and long to enter its borders. The last of these features he would have to pass to get to his next stop, which happened to be a small town known as Kataka, was a very dense and almost mythical

forest known as the Wolf's Wood.

Fenroku always had been quite the predator, never faltering on the hunt and always knowing how to travel the wilds as swiftly as a beast, but this time the forest proved too much for even him. He quickly became lost within its endless sea of trees and soon he had lost his bearings. His rations quickly ran dry and he thought he might have met his end. This forest seemed to resist an outsider within its borders as if it were alive.

Days after the last of his rations ran dry he finally came across what seemed to be a human trail and he followed it with haste. It leads to what appeared to be a small clearing in the woods around a temple. As he neared the clearing's edge he could hear the sound of a woman's scream. This caused him to add even more speed to his step and rush from the woods. When his eyes adjusted to the light of day after being in the dark forest for so long he saw a large grotesque humanoid figure swinging a small tree in place of a weapon at a young woman. Fenroku drew his katana and dashed at the creature. The young woman was fond of telling just how ferociously Fenroku fought to protect her that day. His fangs bared, his eyes wide but pupils narrow, he looked truly like a wolf in human form. Fenroku was able to slay the creature relatively easily, but it was able to land a few blows on him as he used his body to shield the young woman. This, combined with his already weakened state proved to be too much for his body to handle and as soon as the creature hit the ground lifeless Fenroku lost consciousness, the last thing he sensed was the young woman rushing to his side.

When he awoke he was in the temple's living quarters, bandaged and in a clean robe. In a state of confusion and fear at being helpless he quickly rose to his feet and searched for his daisho. The sudden quick movements caused his wounds to rip open. As his bandages reddened with his blood he fell to his knees. The loud thump that followed drew the young woman rushing back into

the room. She introduced herself as Oka, a shrine maiden for the temple he now rested in. She explained that happened since he had passed out and for some reason her words were able to calm the fear and confusion in Fenroku. He later said it was because he felt that she, like him, was too a beast in human form. Although the way he put it was she was a much kinder beast than he.

After he had recovered to full health he ended up staying in the town the temple resided near, Kataka. The men and women that called his town home did not seem to care that he was a ronin and treated him as they would treat any clan samurai, and eventually as one of their own. It had been a long time since Kataka had had a samurai protector as it did not belong to any clan and the emperor did not consider it in need of protection at the time. Fenroku quickly assumed the responsibilities of a samurai protector and earned the respect and devotion of the village. Anytime he was able to sneak away from his duties he could be found at the temple, spending time with Oka. It was not long before the town began to talk about the love sparked between a brave samurai who saved a maiden in distress and how she nursed him back from his wounds. Fenroku and Oka would deny this, of course, but deep down they knew the spark was there. For the first time in his life, he felt as if he had a home.

The local temple secretly protected a very powerful and sacred site at the top of mountain the town and surrounding wilds laid on, Mount Chikiba. Atop Mount Chikiba stood a Spirit Gate, a mystical doorway into the Spirit Realm of Animals, Chikushudo. Unknown at the time, a maho-tsukai who knew of this gate was hiding deep within the woods. Planning to use ancient and vile rituals to alter which spirit realm the gate connected to. He planned to change it to a gate for Gaki-do, the Realm of the Hungry Dead. He already had begun to build a small army of the dead and shadow creatures, planning to use the gate to bolster his forces enough so he could carve out an empire for himself.

After a few short months in blissful peace, the village of Kataka found itself under attack. One evening just as the sun was starting to fall below the horizon a force of dark and evil creatures combined with undead abominations stumbled out of the woods in front of the town and temple. The local guard quickly grabbed their weapons and manned the few defenses the village had, but it was clear they had little hope. Then, breaking the heavy silence, a lone samurai walked down the main road in the town, towards the gate. It was clear he planned to defend this town, even if it cost him his life. Oka pleaded with him to stay in the walls and defend them with the villagers, but she knew by now he would not abandon his plans. He gripped her close and gave her their first kiss, publicly acknowledging their love. Then he marched off to battle.

What ensued was a battle which will forever be remembered by those who live on Mount Chikiba. A lone samurai slew the army of the evil and damned. Fighting with the strength and instincts of a wild beast he leapt around the battle field, slaying creatures with each swing of his blade, so quickly some say it looked like a wolf dashing after its prey. The final being to taste Fenroku's steel was the maho-tsukai who stood in shock, unable to accept a single man was able to end all he had planned. As he passed he placed a curse upon Fenroku, saying that he would not pass from this life alone. And as the maho-tsukai perished Fenroku fell to his knees, racked by pain and dark magics.

Oka burst from the town gates, running towards Fenroku, the rest of the town following behind her. As she held her lover, now dying, in her arms she began to weep. The village of Kataka stood silently as they believed they were about to lose their guardian. Oka then revealed to her lover and the town that she was not quite what she seemed. She was in fact Ōkami, the Fortune and Patron Spirit of Wolves. It was always Fenroku's destiny to guard Kataka from the dark, and to help him in his trials she did bless him upon his birth. Unable to accept his death she then pleaded to the heavens, to Tengoku. She asked them to grant her permission to split her power and share her station

with Fenroku, so that they may be together forever. The heavens were moved by this request, and so they granted her the permission she sought. She then gave Fenroku yet one more kiss, though along with this one she also gave half of her divine power. A bright and holy light shone from them both. This light seemed to heal his wounds and rebuild his body, and when they parted lips it was clear he was not quite the same. He was now a Fortune, one to share the duties Ōkami once carried alone.

They stayed in the village, worshiped as heroes, and even though it was now known they were not mortal the townsfolk still treated them as family. The largest shrine in the local temple, which was dedicated to Ōkami, was remodeled and rededicated to, the now, two Fortunes of Wolves. When news of these events finally reached the imperial throne the emperor sent word to Kataka, requesting that both Fenroku and Oka stand before him and recount exactly what had happened. They immediately set out for Otosan Uchi, to do as they have been asked. After hearing what had happened and having it recorded for the imperial records the emperor agreed that Fenroku was indeed the second half of the Fortune of Wolves, and decreed that all shrines to Ōkami must now include Fenroku as well. After learning the exact reason Kataka had been attacked the emperor decided that it was too important of an area to let go unguarded any longer. He turned to Fenroku and declared him a hero of the empire and told him to establish a new minor clan, modeled after himself and his love, to forever guard Mount Chikiba and the surrounding wilds and to a lesser extent the wilds of the whole empire.

After they left Otosan Uchi they returned to Kataka and told the townsfolk the news. The very joyful townspeople quickly threw together a festival to celebrate and honor their heroes. At the height of this festival Fenroku stood before everyone in the town and asked Oka to be his bride. She immediately said yes and then and there they got married. This also marked the official founding of the Fenroku family and Wolf clan.



## Geography & Economy

What the Wolf lack in riches they make up for in lands and natural resources. They patrol a vast and expansive forest which covers most of Mount Chikiba and the surrounding foothills. The main holding within their lands is the town of Kataka, which can be found about a fifth of the way up the side of the mountain. It rests within the only decently sized clearing of the Wolf's Wood. Though this is the only town there are a few smaller settlements and outposts situated among the woods and on the mountain, usually only a few buildings each they are mainly used as forward bases for the Wolf Clan and serve as safer home locations for the people who live away from the town.

Watching over the holding of Kataka is the, now, ancestral castle of the Wolf Clan. Until the formation of the Wolf Clan it was simply known as Chikiba Castle, but now it is most often called the Wolf's Den. There are no records of when it was built, but it was already standing by the time the Wolf Clan was founded. It lay in a ruined state when the Wolf formed, but quickly, with the help of the townsfolk and Wolf samurai working together, it was restored and added upon, becoming a rather sizable and formidable structure. The main road of the town becomes a pathway leading up to the Wolf's Den near the edge of the official town edges, the pathway has many shrines to various nature fortunes and animal spirits lining it's sides.

Kataka is a decently sized frontier town filled with all sorts of people who have various talents. Being so disconnected from the rest of the empire they people who inhabit the area have learnt to be self-sufficient. A sturdy wooden wall surrounds the main parts of Kataka and shield it from both beasts of the wilds and shadow creatures that lurk the more remote and dangerous parts of the Wolf's Wood. The only other structure of note is the rather ornate temple located in Kataka. Records show it is older than the town itself and it

holds many ancient relics from ages gone by. It's now assumed it was originally constructed to watch over the Spirit Gate at the top of Mount Chikiba until its true protectors could be born into the world.

Other than Mount Chikiba itself, that largest and most impressive natural holding of the Wolf is the Wolf's Wood, which was named that far before there founding, which only made the name seem all the most destined. It's a very expensive and complicated forest, which has an almost magical and mystic atmosphere about it. You will almost always get lost if you don't know exactly where you are going, and it seems as if the trees themselves move around in order to confuse trespassers. Luckily it seems the forest has accepted the Wolf as its rightful guardians and in fact seems to aide them in their duties. There is also a river which runs down the mountain and through the woods running right by Kataka, supplying it with fresh water. Oddly enough there are many ruins of unknown origin within its borders and the Wolf do their best to keep any outsiders out and anything that lurks within in. There are rumors of odd creatures who still roam the dark corners of the Wolf's Wood, but none have been seen since the formation of the Wolf, something they take great pride in.

Atop Mount Chikiba rests the ancient and sacred Spirit Gate to Chikushudo. It stands two stories high and is made of carved yet living trees. When one looks into the mystic light that radiates from the gate they see a land untouched by man with many animals roaming naturally. The Wolf have built a small outpost surrounding the gate and keep a constant honor guard to shield it from any further attempts at misuse. They consider this to be the highest and most sacred of their duties handed down to them by the emperor himself.

While the lands of the Wolf hold vast amounts of natural resources the Wolf do not take more than they need to survive. They cut lumber from the Wolf's Wood, but make sure to carefully

keep track of how much and allow the forest to naturally heal before they harvest again. Mount Chikiba does hold no small number of veins of ore, particularly iron. Though the Wolf only mine small amounts each year, just enough to craft the new year's batch of weapons and armor. The forest also yields plenty of wild game and the river gives good yields of seafood in the right seasons, this has allowed the Wolf to survive as they have few farmlands due to the rough nature of most of their holdings. All of this regulation and conservation has made it so the Wolf cannot profit from their lands, but they do not mind their relative poorness compared to other clans.

### Demography

The Wolf is still very young compared to most clans and so does not have many samurai among their ranks. At any one time they may have roughly 300 warriors they can call to arms, roughly half of that being honorary clan members who have been trained to take up arms to defend their home when needed. Though as time passes the Wolf keep growing, getting larger and larger with each generation.

Oddly enough, and perhaps because a mix of their small numbers and rough homeland, the Wolf consider every person living within their lands, including eta, to be honorary Wolf Clan members. They extend certain benefits, rights and privileges alongside this, and tend to see themselves as living alongside those they rule and not above them. It's not that uncommon for a Wolf samurai to marry a peasant from their lands, which may draw strange looks from other Clans yet the Wolf do not care.

The happenstance founding and rough area of life of the Wolf Clan has led to having a diverse and well-rounded selection of people among their ranks. Though the most common attribute all Wolf share is the willingness to do hard work and an honest and tough heart.

### Duty

The sacred duty of the Wolf Clan is to safeguard and patrol Mount Chikiba, the Wolf's Wood and the surrounding wilds and to also maintain a constant vigil and honor guard at the Spirit Gate to Chikushudo atop the peak of the mountain. They consider this both a duty and a tribute to their founder who almost died to protect this land. Another, more secret duty of the Wolf is to track down and slay the unnatural creatures who call the ruins of their lands home. It is not yet known why or how these creatures keep appearing, but so far the Wolf have been able to hold them back without much trouble as nature herself aide them in their cause.

### Customs

The Wolf have a handful of oddities and customs they adhere to when compared to most Rokugani samurai. The most obvious to outsiders first meeting a Wolf would be how much they respect and revere nature and the creatures that inhabit it. And as a way to emulate the animals they hold high and as a method of keeping self-sufficient on the lands they've been given, they consume red meat. They hunt regularly in the woods and use all parts of what they catch, the meat for food, the furs for clothing and the like and the bones to be milled into fertilizer for their crops, although they keep these most of these practices to themselves and only within their own lands sometimes a Wolf will wear fur when traveling outside their borders.

They also appear to be rather straight forward individuals, never beating around the bush and always getting right to the point. This reflects in almost every action they undertake, be it conversation or fighting. Some say they have an animal vibe about them, and they would not be incorrect in saying so. Not only do they have animal tendencies and mindsets but most, if not all, Wolf samurai have some form of animal trait or marking on their physical body. This is a result of both their bloodline and their gempukku.

When a young Wolf has mastered their school's first technique they are considered ready to undertake the trail that will make them an adult and full member of the Clan. They are gifted a new set of clothing and one weapon they feel best suits their personal fighting style then they are lead, sometimes alone, sometimes as a small group, to the summit of Mount Chikiba. It is then they are brought through the portal to Chikushudo for the first time and left among its untamed wilderness. They are expected to survive and live among the animal spirits of this realm. For how long depends fully on the individual, but it's always after they have formed a deep and strong bond with one of the minor spirits that calls this realm home. Once this has happened the spirit will lead them back to the gate where they entered from and even follow them through it and into Ningen-do. Once this bond is formed, it lasts until death.

When the, now, Wolf samurai returns from the spirit realm they are lead back to the Wolf's Den by their sensei to a feast and celebration held in their honor and the honor of their now bonded Animal Spirit. From this point on the spirit is almost always at the samurai's side and does it's best to aide them in their duties. Contrary to what you may think, the spirit is not always that of a wolf. In fact, most of the time it is not, though those of direct blood descent from Fenroku and Oka almost always have some form of wolf. Among the Wolf Clan there as many different types of spirits as there are samurai.

One last custom that has caused confusion when interacting with other Clans and Rokugani as a whole is that the Wolf tend to refer to their clan as "The Pack" and their Clan Champion as "Alpha" or "Alpha Wolf". And while this is normally cleared up with a simple question, this causes much confusion on imperial paperwork and records and has led to some confusing conversations.

*GM Note:* You should not make a Wolf lose honor for consuming red meat, wearing fur or handling animal corpses as it's a honorable part of their culture and history, though openly doing such acts in front of non-Wolf may lose them Glory. This ultimately is a GM's Call.

## War

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Partly because the Wolf is still young and partly because they like to avoid conflict with other humans when possible the Wolf did not participate in any war up until the Destroyer War. During said conflict they acted as scouts and light shock and raid troops for the armies of the empire. While not many got to see them in action due to their limited numbers, those who did said a pack of wolf samurai descending on their prey was not like anything they have ever seen before. For their service they have gained a small amount of respect among the larger clans, although this is limited by the fact they are still very small in number.

Other than the Destroyer War the only conflicts they have participated in have been skirmishes with bandit forces in and around their lands and the constant fight against the unnatural creatures that lurk their forest.

## Recent Events

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The Wolf have not actively participated in any modern event of note to Rokugan as a whole. They keep to themselves most of the time and stay within their borders when they can help it. Though they do send rangers when events of great importance to the natural order take place outside their borders, and are normally welcomed when such events take place. The most noteworthy event that has taken place within the Wolf lands in recent years has been the disappearance and suspected death of the fiancé of the current Clan Champion, Fenroku Kuroke. Although he still maintains hope that she is alive and they will be reunited someday soon.



## THE FENROKU FAMILY: +1 AGILITY

The family founded by Fenroku and Ōkami the, now, Fortunes of Wolves. Their descendants take after their namesake both in body and in mind. They tend to have animalistic tendencies and traits even before their gempukku and these only exaggerate or deepen once they've come of age. They carry themselves with an almost unnatural beastly grace which is said to be a blessing from their founders.

Males born of Fenroku and Oka's direct bloodline tend to be larger in height and build than most of Rokugan, which is attributed to their founder who was said to be larger than life both literally and figuratively. The females of this bloodline tend to be on the contrary to the males, being rather small in height and build for the family, tending to be around the Rokugani average. Hair color is almost always coal black or snow white, with the males normally being the former and the females the latter. Eye color ranges from any natural shade, mostly earth tones or blue greens to those of direct blood descent often having blood red eyes, the same shade as both Fenroku and Oka. A Fenroku samurai considers it a great honor to bear the hair and eye color of the families' founders and it's often a sign they have been marked for greatness by Fenroku or Oka.

### Schools, Paths & Dojos

#### FENROKU RANGER SCHOOL [BUSHI]

The Fenroku Ranger School was founded by its namesake shortly after the formation of the Wolf Clan as a way to pass on his skills and strengthen the bond between his Clan and his new home, Chikushudo. During their gempukku they will form a bond with a minor animal spirit of Chikushudo and they will learn from one another as much as the samurai will learn from their sensei. They tend to spend as much time if not more out in the wilds of the Wolf lands and more rarely

Chikushudo itself, as inside the dojo. There is a saying among the Rangers; Nature is the greatest sensei and the wilds the greatest dojo. They also value putting their skills and knowledge to use over learning in a formal setting. It's not uncommon for a samurai to take on a one-on-one sensei-apprentice relationship and learn the skills and techniques of the rangers that way instead of in a large formal classroom, although the Wolf do maintain one such dojo in their castle. Eventually a Fenroku Ranger learns to make the wilds his home and hunting ground, able to vanish in the blink of an eye to suddenly attack from a different angle with the strength and fury of the wilds themselves. It's been said by more than one foe of the Wolf that being attacked by a pack of Fenroku Rangers was like nature herself was bringing her wrath down upon them and as soon as they appeared out of nowhere, they quickly vanished right back into the trees.

- ☉ **Benefit:** +1 to the Attribute associated with your Animal Spirit (see Rank 1 technique).
- ☉ **Skills:** Animal Handling (same type as your spirit), Athletics, Hunting, Kenjutsu, Lore: Nature, Stealth, 1 weapon skill associated with your Animal Spirit (see Rank 3 technique).
- ☉ **Honor:** 5.5
- ☉ **Outfit:** Light Armor, Sturdy Clothing, Cloak (Fur or Silk), Daisho, any 1 weapon, Traveling Pack, Animal Spirit (see below), 2 koku.

### TECHNIQUES

#### RANK 1: STEP OF THE WOLF

A Ranger learns to don their armor as if it were their skin and to move among the wilds as the beasts themselves. You may ignore the TN penalties for wearing light armor for all skills. In addition you take no movement or roll penalties due to natural terrain. You are also skilled at survival and can make all food and water rations last twice as long for a number of people equal to your Hunting Skill Rank. You also do not lose honor for any use of the Stealth Skill.

Also, when you take your first Rank in the Fenroku Ranger School you must select which type of Animal Spirit you have bonded to during your gempukku. You may not change your selection once it has been made barring a very drastic life change or event (GM's call). Example Animal Spirit choices and the Attributes associated with them are:

Stamina: Monkey, Bear, Boar

Strength: Badger, Shark, Wolf

Reflexes: Hawk, Owl, Snake

### **RANK 2: ALLY OF THE WOLF**

A Ranger gains a deep connection to the natural world around him and by extension the creatures that call it home. A number of times per day equal to your insight rank you can Sense, Commune and Summon animals (as per the spells, Summon results in the appearance of a single animal). You may use the questions granted by Commune to ask for small favors (guidance, food, information) or, if a proper offering is given, large favors (aide in combat, anything that puts the animal at great personal risk). You may only Summon animals who are indigenous to the area around you. When using this technique make an Animal Handling skill roll in place of the spellcasting roll.

### **RANK 3: FANGS OF THE WOLF**

A Ranger strikes with the speed and fury of a feral beast. Often resulting in their weapon appearing to be a pair of fangs to those onlooking. You may make attacks as a Simple Action instead of a Complex Action while using weapons from the group associated with your Animal Spirit's Attribute. This is also the skill you gain for your School Skills.

Bows (Kyujutsu): Reflexes

Samurai (Kenjutsu): Strength

Unarmed (Jujutsu): Stamina

At this rank your Animal Spirit also grows in strength and may take one of two paths.

*Warrior Spirit:* Your Animal Spirit is a fighter at heart and loves nothing more than to be on the front lines beside you, watching your back. They

may make attacks as a Simple Action instead of a Complex Action while using their natural attacks.

*Mystical Spirit:* Your Animal Spirit taps into the mystical nature that makes up its very core. It gains a mastery level one, two and three spell. It gains one more spell each time you gain an insight rank which can be chosen from any mastery level equal to or less than your new insight rank. It casts these spells on its own without the aid of the kami, though they must still spend as many complex actions required to normally cast such a spell. They have "spell slots" equal to their highest ring which can be used for all their spells regardless of its normal ring. They cannot learn void magic. It is much more likely that the Animal Spirits of male Wolf samurai would become warrior spirits as it is much more likely the Animal Spirits of female Wolf samurai to become mystical spirits as the Wolf emulate their founders.

### **RANK 4: SHADOW OF THE WOLF**

A Ranger stalks their prey from the shadows with an almost unnatural grace only seen among the deadliest of predators. Your eyes also become those of a spiritual predator, eerily reflecting light and their stare can pierce the veil between Spirit Realms. You can now see spirits and beings from Spirit Realms as clearly as you can see a normal human or creature and are always able to tell which beings are native to Ningen-do and which are not. Your ability to Sense, Commune and Summon animals can now also be used on animal spirits (Summon results in the appearance of a single animal spirit). In addition while in any form of natural terrain you gain a bonus of +1kl on all Stealth skill rolls and may make such skill rolls even while being observed (if you win the contested roll you seem to just "vanish" into the terrain).

### **RANK 5: BOND OF THE WOLF**

One of the most important lessons Fenroku passed along before his departure was that a Wolf need not stand alone, no matter where he may be and that through bonds all can grow. When you reach this rank your Animal Spirit ascends to become a

major animal spirit and is no longer limited in some of the ways it has been until now. You no longer need to spend a void point to grant it a physical body and doing so is a free action instead of a simple action. It also receives a humanoid or even human form which it can take with or without its physical body (this is just an aesthetic change). It is still bonded to you and will stay at your side though it may be given new duties as a, now, major animal spirit. As a gift for helping it achieve this station your spirit will bestow upon you one shapeshifter ability (examples found on pages 244-245 of *Enemies of the Empire*) that makes sense for your spirit and character (GM's call).

*GM's Note:* The Humanoid/Human form is purely for roleplaying purposes, feel free to either control how the spirit looks when taking this form or allow the player to decide.

### WOLF ADVANCED SCHOOL: GREAT WOLF

Among the Wolf exist a small number of elite rangers called the Great Wolves who access the mystical blood in their veins as descendants of Fenroku and Oka to become something more than human. Only those with the purest blood can reach the final ranks of this school. Being a Great Wolf among the Clan is a very honorable and prestigious position and you are seen as an almost emissary between the clan and the spirit realm of animals.

#### Requirements:

- **Rings/Traits:** Water 4, Agility 4, Reflexes 4
- **Skills:** Animal Handling 5 (Wolf), Hunting 5
- **Advantages:** Inner Gift (Animal Ken), Touch of the Spirit Realms (Chikushudo)
- **Special:** Must be of direct blood descent from Fenroku and Oka, the founders of the Fenroku family and Wolf Clan. Must have a wolf as your Animal Spirit. Only the current Clan Champion of the Wolf

Clan, who has also been found worthy of the gift by Fenroku and Oka (GM's call) can reach rank 3 in this school.

### TECHNIQUES

#### RANK 1: HUNTING GROUND OF A GREAT WOLF

A lesson Fenroku passed on to his descendants was the ability to make any natural land your hunting ground. With this technique the samurai becomes blessed in the eyes of the denizens of Chikushudo and are welcomed among that realm as any animal would be. Using this technique is a complex action which can be performed alongside a move while in any natural terrain. You seem to simply vanish into whatever terrain they were walking into and appear out of any natural terrain within 100 feet times your insight rank. You may also use this action to slip into Chikushudo, appearing in roughly the same area you were when you used the technique (see side note below). You may also return to Ningen-do using this technique, appearing in roughly the same area you are in Chikushudo.

#### RANK 2: PACK OF A GREAT WOLF

Less of a lesson and more of a realization, soon a Great Wolf finds themselves with such a deep connection to nature that nature treats them as fully one of its own. You may now use Sense, Commune and Summon as per the rank 2 and rank 4 techniques of the Fenroku Ranger School as many times per day you wish. In addition you can speak to animals and animals spirits as if you shared a language, and when dealing with animals or animal spirits you gain a +2k0 bonus to all Social Skill Rolls.

#### RANK 3: THE ALPHA WOLF

The most powerful gift that lies within the blood of the Fenroku is not something that can be taught but simply realized. Once a Great Wolf becomes the new Clan Champion, if they are found worthy by Fenroku and Oka, they will undergo a dramatic change at the next full moon. A lengthy and painful process of change, which is usually overseen by either Fenroku or Oka, who like to

keep an eye on their descendants. When this is over the new Clan Champion will look the same as before but to all that knew them can sense a change about them. They almost seem as if they are not quite of this world, much like their ancestors. You are an honorary animal spirit and the denizens of Chikushudo will treat you as one of their own, providing help and asking for it when needed. You also gain the ability to enter an animal like form which resembles a humanoid wolf with the same hair color as yourself. In this form you gain the following:

- Fear 2, Regeneration, Scent, Spirit and Swift 3 Special Abilities.
  - Your Agility and Strength increase by 2.
  - You grow sharp claws and fangs, increasing your base unarmed DR to 0k2. You also gain an unarmed bite attack with a DR of 0k2 which can be used in a grapple or against an opponent you are in melee combat with as a free action once per round. These unarmed attacks do not use Juijutsu but instead use your Insight Rank as the skill level with Agility as the attribute.
- You cannot stay in this form for long however, a total of your insight rank in minutes per day, divided up in one minute bursts as you choose (you may end the minute early, but lose any excess time). Under the light of the moon the time you expend in this form halves, doubling the length you may stay in it and under the full moon you can assume this form without expending any of the time you have saved up.

*Chikushudo and the Rank 1 Technique:*  
Chikushudo is almost identical to Rokugan in every conceivable way, except there are no traces of civilization ever have existing. As a Ranger who has spent considerable time in this Realm, one would be able to tell where they would be if he were in Rokugan and not Chikushudo, and vice versa. This is needed for the Rank 5 Technique to function properly. When it is in use, assume the two worlds are identical, except that Chikushudo is untamed wilderness. When exiting or entering Chikushudo there must be natural terrain on both sides for the technique to work properly.

*Regeneration:* Your body heals at a rapid pace, your wounds disappearing in the blink of an eye. During the Reactions Stage of every round you regenerate 5 wounds. Under the light of a full moon this increases to 10 wounds.

*GM note on the Great Wolf School:* The final rank in this school is one that is near game breaking powerful. It is highly suggested you never let a player take Rank 3 in the Great Wolf School, unless it makes sense for your specific game and you and the player have worked it out and agreed on it before hand. Remember, only the Clan Champion of the Wolf can achieve this rank, and even then not all are found worthy of the gift by Fenroku and Oka. Use with caution.

### Ancestral Items

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### ANIMAL SPIRIT

During the Wolf's gempukku a Wolf Clan samurai will bond with a animal spirit of Chikushudo. This spirit will stay with them even after they return from the spirit realm. Unlike other animal spirits the samurai will always be able to see and communicate with their bonded spirit (this does not require the expenditure of one of the uses of their rank 2 or 4 technique). This spirit starts off as a relatively minor spirit and as such cannot take on physical form or change shape on its own. The relationship they form is a symbiotic one, the spirit aides the samurai and through the experiences they share the spirit grows in power.

At character creation treat the Animal Spirit as if they were another character with the following exceptions:

- Starts with attributes as normal for a normal animal of its kind (in the case of no official stat line go with the closest example).
- Has the traits and abilities of a normal animal of its kind (in the case of no official stat line go with the closest example).
- Has no void ring and can never acquire or use one.

- Only has 20 experience points to spend on attributes, skills and (dis)advantages.
  - May only choose (dis)advantages that make sense for the kind of animal spirit it is (GM's call).
  - May only learn skills that make sense for the kind of animal spirit it is (GM's call).
  - Has no family or school.
  - Initiative is equal to the samurai it is bonded to (acts on the same round as the samurai).
  - Has basic attacks normal for the kind of animal it is a spirit of (in the case of no official stat line go with the closest example). It uses your Insight Rank in place of the Skill for its natural attacks with Agility as the Attribute.
  - Has the spirit quality.
  - Has no physical body and cannot normally interact with the physical world. As a simple action you may spend a void point you may give it a physical form (and therefore the ability to interact with the physical world) for a number of minutes equal to your insight rank. When the time is up it simply returns to its non-physical form. If it is slain while in its physical form you take 1k1 wounds and it returns to its non-physical form. You may use this ability as many times as you have void points to spend.
  - If the Animal Spirit is aquatic by nature it is assumed to be able to "swim" through the air as naturally as it could through water. (GM may choose to disallow aquatic Animal Spirits)
- As you gain experience points so does your Animal Spirit at a rate of one third of what you gain. These may only be spent in the ways outlined above.

The Animal Spirit is controlled by the GM, although it is obedient and loyal to its bonded samurai and will carry out any orders it can understand and conceivably do.

(GM Note: If a player abuses their Animal Spirit by forcing/ordering it to do things that place it at great personal risk for sheer convenience often, such as setting off traps because they know they will be able to resummons it later, or by ordering it to do things it greatly disagrees with often, the Spirit will abandon the samurai and return to

Chikushudo. Causing great dishonor and most likely seppuku.)

### WOLF'S FANG

Wolf's Fang was gifted to Fenroku by Tengoku to serve as his, newly founded, clan's ancestral weapon during his wedding ceremony. He wore it proudly up until his departure from Ningen-do and it has been worn by the Wolf Clan Champion, or as they call them Alpha, since. It's only been drawn a handful of times in its existence so far but each time it has proven to be a weapon worthy of the title Ancestral Sword of the Wolf. The blade is a blood red reminding most of a beast's fang after it has stricken. Its tsuba depicts a black and white wolf chasing each other in a circle, which represents both Fenroku and Oka and their love for one another. Its hilt made from pure white wood and wound in deep black silk.

Mechanically Wolf's Fang is a 3k3 katana which is unbreakable and counts as jade or crystal for determining what resistances apply to its attacks. While it is in its owner's possession it grants the ability to sense the general direction and strength of beings not native to Ningen-do up to a distance of one mile per insight rank of the owner as it constantly strives to keep the balance of the natural order. The sword only functions for the rightful Wolf Clan Champion or a direct blood descendant of Fenroku and Oka who also has an honor rank of 4.0 or higher. For anyone who does not meet that description Wolf's Fang functions as an ordinary 3k2 katana with no special properties.

### ŌKAMI'S TEAR

An unusual relic of the Wolf Clan is the suit of armor known as Ōkami's Tear. It is said that when the third Champion of the Wolf, Fenroku Teru, fell in combat against the dark creatures that inhabit the Wolf's Wood, Oka let out a stream of tears that were so imbued with the love of her grandchild that they became stronger than any natural steel. As an act of condolence for his fellow Fortune, Xing Guo offered to forge these tears into a suit of armor which would shield her bloodline from harm for all of time to come. While Oka was too distraught by grief to acknowledge



the offer, Fenroku, her husband, accepted and handed over the tears. The suit of armor forged from these carries the same love and want to shield the Fenroku family from harm that Oka felt the day she let them fall. It was soon gifted to the son of Teru and now Wolf Clan Champion Fenroku Kuroke, upon the completion of his Gempukku. The suit of armor appears to be a series of armor plates that are fitted and attached to a kimono of the Wolf's colors. The helmet takes the form of a wolf's head, with the wearers face in the open mouth. There is also a slide in mask that completely hides the wearers face, the mask itself shares the colors of the rest of the armor and is almost featureless, only have two slits where the eyes should be. A long flowing red cloak rests attached to the armor at the shoulders, with a hood that can easily cover the wearer's head and helmet.

Mechanically Ōkami's Tear is a suit of Light Armor that provides an additional +5 Bonus to Armor TN, for a total of +10, and an additional +2 to Reduction, for a total of 5. In addition when the wearer is the target of an attack from any non-human creature with the Spirit Special Ability or with a Taint Rank, the Armor's TN Bonus and Reduction are both doubled for the purposes of that attack. These effects only work for a direct blood descendant of Fenroku and Oka, for anyone else Ōkami's Tear functions as an ordinary suit of Light Armor.

### **Advantages/Disadvantages**

Wolf characters may purchase the following [Spiritual] advantages:

- ☉ Inner Gift (Animal Ken) for 6 points.
- ☉ Touch of the Spirit Realms (Chikushudo) for 4 points.
- ☉ Child of Chikushudo] for 6 points.

Child of Chikushudo advantage may be acquired multiple times (even after character creation), gaining a different power each time.

They may also pay an additional 2 points to not develop a penalty as per normal for the advantage (they must pay these 2 additional points each time

they wish to negate the penalty for taking the advantage).

### **NEW ADVANTAGE:**

#### **WOLF'S BLESSING**

#### **[SPIRITUAL] (5 POINTS)**

One of the halves to the Fortune of Wolves and the founders of the Wolf Clan has taken notice of you and placed their blessing upon you. These are powerful boons but come with expectations and failure to use them in the way deemed proper by Fenroku or Oka can result in ill fortune.

The gender listed after each blessing may purchase that Advantage for 1 point less than its normal cost.

#### **FENROKU'S TACTICS (MALE)**

While Fenroku spent many of his days relying on him and only himself he realized soon that fighting as a pack has many advantages. He implants this way of thinking on those who have received his blessing, granting them a +1k0 on all attack rolls made against an foe who is also engaged in melee combat with an ally. The samurai's allies also gain this benefit if they know the samurai personally and have become considered a part of their "pack" (GM's Call).

#### **OKA'S TEACHINGS (FEMALE)**

Oka, or as she is more commonly known Ōkami' is a gifted traveler and passes on parts of her wisdom to those who have received her blessing. While in any sort of natural terrain you gain the benefit of the Way of the Land advantage. This does not extend into the non-natural holdings within the land, just the surrounding wilds. This also does not represent full knowledge of the lands, more of an internal feeling of where things should be.

## *Advices for players and GMs*

The Wolf Clan's purpose is to provide an interesting and wilderness/feral themed Clan of samurai who act as rangers do in many other settings. Perfect if you need a hook or idea for a game based in the middle of the wilds, or if you need an npc who would be particularly knowledgeable about animal spirits and the realm they come from. When roleplaying a Wolf, as a GM or player, remember how the Wolf view the world differently than others and that their senses are much sharper than an average human. You may constantly leer often into the distance, looking at things your allies can not see. Or be always reacting to noises that are out of earshot for the others. They also tend to think of how society should work very differently from other samurai, treating almost every person the same, no matter what station they actually are. Also make sure to add either an animal physical trait, such as fang like teeth, reflective eyes, marks on the cheeks that look like whiskers... etc., or a psychological trait such as howling at the moon, thinking in a pack mentality or conversing with animals, or even better add a mix of both! Remember to have fun, and if the Wolf don't fit your version of Rokugan feel free to change what you must! First and foremost have fun and play L5R your way.

## The Lost Minors Clans Techniques and Families

Here is the Imperial Archives content that was cut...

### The Bee Clan



#### THE HACHI FAMILY: + 1 AWARENESS

The Hachi were a small family of sharp witted samurai, led by the five matriarchs descended from the founders of the Clan. Most dedicated their lives to the arts, and to their deeper meanings. They were in their natural element in the highest courts of Rokugan.

#### HACHI COURTIER SCHOOL

Although it was difficult to realize at times, the Hachi were truly passionate about the arts. They saw the ability to create deeper meaning out of mundane means as the greatest skill of mankind, akin to magic and a gift from the Fortunes. But this also meant they hated to see mediocrity, considering it an offense to the Kami and a stain on one's honor. As such, the Hachi became merciless courtiers, travelling the courts of Rokugan to dispense their judgments, like magistrates of the fine arts. This gave them significant political clout which, true to their Crane heritage, they never hesitated to use to solidify their position in the Empire.

- **Benefit:** +1 Perception
- **Skills:** Calligraphy, Courtier (Gossip), Etiquette (Conversation),

Games: Sadane, Lore: Fashion, Tea Ceremony, any one Artisan or Perform skill

- **Honor:** 6.5
- **Outfit:** Three sets of Extravagant Clothing, Wakizashi, Calligraphy Set, 8 koku

#### TECHNIQUES

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##### RANK 1: THE STING OF THE BEE

The first thing a Bee samurai learn is how to properly criticize art, finding the smallest of flaws in any work. Rare is the samurai who can measure up to their standards, but for those their reputation is assured. You gain a +2k0 bonus to all Games: Sadane rolls, and to any Artisan or Perform rolls made to appraise the quality of somebody else's work. If the work of art or performance you're reviewing was made with at least as many raises as your school rank, the artisan or performer gains an amount of glory points equal to your school rank if you publicly praise them.

##### RANK 2: COLORS OF THE SEASON

The Bee know that fashion follows cycles not unlike those found in nature, and choose their outfits accordingly, subtly enhancing their social talents. Before attending court, you can make a Lore: Fashion/Intelligence roll at TN 15 to select your outfit. If successful, you gain a +2k0 to rolls using a specific emphasis of the Courtier or Etiquette skills (ex: all Courtier (Manipulation) rolls, or all Etiquette (Conversation) rolls) for the duration of the day. You can roll again for a new outfit the following day, but must choose the same bonus unless you successfully make two raises on your roll. The GM is free to disallow usage of this technique if your supply of clothing is somehow limited, but the ones included in the school's starting outfit are considered enough for the purposes of using this technique.

**RANK 3: THE WORDS OF MY SISTERS**

Members of the Hachi Family are a tightly knit group, and although their activities often cause them to be separated they kept contact through extended correspondence. Using the flowery language of the arts, the Bee were able to communicate information to one another, hidden even to those who might read their letters. By writing a letter and succeeding at a Calligraphy/Intelligence TN 20 roll, the Hachi Courtier can request information from another member of the Family. The letter cannot be fully understood by anyone who doesn't have access to this technique – the metaphors used are unique to the Bee Clan. The information usually pertains to the arts and fashion, such as upcoming new trends, the rise and decline of specific artists, or the location of performer groups. The information can take from one to four weeks to come, but once obtained can provide a +3k0 onetime bonus on a roll related to it, such as reviewing a piece of art related to the new trend or obtaining favors through showcasing a popular artist.

**RANK 4: SHATTER THE EGO**

At this rank, the Hachi courtier learns how to completely destroy the confidence of a samurai based on his works or representation. By succeeding at a roll of the appropriate artisan or performance skill/Awareness, at a TN equal to the roll used to create the work or performance, the Hachi

Courtier can spend a Void point to activate this technique. Verbally pointing out the flaws of the performance or work, and through it of the performer or artisan, causes him to suffer from a -2k0 penalty on all further social skill rolls the same day, and prevents him from spending Void points on social skill rolls.

**RANK 5: BEYOND THE VEIL**

The most senior members of the Bee Clan look for those rare displays of artistic skill which can be considered perfect. For those so attuned to the deeper meaning of the arts, such a sight can be akin to a temporary moment of enlightenment, allowing them to see everything around them more clearly. Upon witnessing a work of art or performance accomplished with at least 5 raises, the Hachi Courtier can roll the appropriate artisan or performance skill/Void, at a TN of 25. If successful the Courtier recovers all spent Void points, and gains three extra Void points on top of his maximum.

Those three Void points disappear if not used by the end of the day, and this technique cannot be used more than once a day.

**The Raven Clan****THE KARASU FAMILY: +1 STAMINA**

Shaped by a tough existence as warriors and rugged, inhospitable homelands, the Karasu were a hardy people. Taciturn and hard-working warriors, they would frequently travel across the length of the Empire to find honorable employment as mercenaries, usually in service to one of the Great Clans. They reversed most of their profits to the Brotherhood of Shinsei, content to live a life of frugality and service. Karasu Bushi School The Raven Clan thought that as samurai, war was their duty and if war wouldn't find them,

then would find war. Not that they were chasing honor or glory, but they simply saw it as their role in the world.

This didn't mean they couldn't positively impact the Empire though, and by contributing to the Brotherhood of Shinsei, they sought to create a more harmonious empire, both in this world and the next. Trained in a wide variety of weapons, the Raven were dangerous foes, for what they lacked in refinement was made up by years of continued fighting experience.

### KARASU BUSHI SCHOOL

- ☯ **Benefit:** +1 Agility
- ☯ **Skills:** Battle, Hunting, Jiujutsu, Kenjutsu (katana), Kyujutsu, Lore: Theology, any one weapon skill
- ☯ **Honor:** 5.5
- ☯ **Outfit:** Light Armor, Sturdy Clothing, Travelling Pack, Daisho, Yumi and any 20 arrows, any one weapon, 1 koku

### TECHNIQUES

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#### RANK 1: WINDS OF WAR

A young Karasu bushi learns that there are many ways to wage war, but like many things in life they are an illusion, and are in fact all one. You gain +1k0 to all your attack rolls, regardless of what weapon you are using. This also applies to unarmed and ranged attacks.

#### RANK 2: NEVER WITHOUT AN EDGE

Samurai are warriors, and as such cannot afford to be defenseless at any time. The Raven learns to always be on guard, and to strike hard once the fight begins. You gain +2k0 to all rolls to avoid being surprised. Furthermore, you can add +2k0 to your first damage roll in each fight, regardless of what weapon you are using, or even if unarmed or using improvised or ranged weapons.

#### RANK 3: THE RAVEN'S WINGS

At this point the Raven begins to better understand how all moves flow into a single one, and is able to attack his enemies from many directions at once. You can attack as a simple action when using one of your school skills, including kyujutsu and jiujutsu.

#### RANK 4: THE FORTUNES' BLESSING

While mercenaries, the Raven believe they are doing their duty by waging wars for the other Clans in service to the Empire. This faith carries them through many battles, enabling them to push themselves further than other samurai would. You can reduce all your wound penalties by an amount equal to your Lore: Theology skill rank.

#### RANK 5: NO MORE LIGHT

This dangerous and cruel technique has been said to have been told to Karasu himself by a monk, who had abandoned the blade after using it only once. It allows a Raven samurai to slice at his opponent's eyes, causing blindness and excruciating pain. To activate it, the Karasu bushi must first spend a Void point, and then succeed on an attack roll with three raises. If successful, the target is blinded for the remainder of the combat. Additionally, unless the target succeeds at a TN 20

Willpower they are unable to fight, and are considered to be at the Down wound rank until they receive some help. With five raises, instead of three, the target permanently acquires the Blind disadvantage, and the TN of the Willpower to remain standing is now TN30. At the GM's discretion, usage of this technique can cause an honor loss if inappropriate, such as in a first blood duel or against an unarmed target. It can only be attempted once day, whether successful or not.

## The Shark Clan



### THE JIROZAME FAMILY: +1 AGILITY

When the mysterious man only known as Jirozame recruited followers for his Clan, there didn't seem to be much those samurai had in common. But soon it became apparent that the Shark samurai were all brilliant killers, if totally devoid of any empathy. Thus the Jirozame quickly gathered a dangerous reputation, which often prevented retribution for their debauched habits.

### JIROZAME BUSHI SCHOOL

While his origins remained a mystery for all, Jirozame seemed to have received extensive training in both Kenjutsu and Iaijutsu, and passed those talents on to his followers. The original Jirozame samurai were often talented warriors themselves, and honed their skills by "raiding" villages outside their own territory, somewhat like legitimized bandits. Those samurai brave enough to face them found the Shark to be obsessed with the demise of their opponents, with no concerns for their own safety. While skilled with the katana and in duels, the Jirozame particularly enjoyed using the nodachi, for sheer power and intimidation potential.

- ☉ **Benefit:** +1 Reflexes
- ☉ **Skills:** Courtier, Defense, Etiquette, Iaijutsu, Intimidation, Kenjutsu (nodachi), any one High Skill
- ☉ **Honor:** 2.5

- ☉ **Outfit:** Heavy Armor, Extravagant Clothing, Travelling Pack, Daisho, No-dachi, any one weapon, 5 koku

## TECHNIQUES

### RANK 1: THE SHARK'S TEETH

While many schools cover topics such as first blood dueling and how to disable an opponent without wounding him, the Jirozame Family consider these a waste of time, seeing the kill as the ultimate goal of any warrior. You add twice your School Rank to all damage rolls made with a sword.

### RANK 2: EYES OF THE PREDATOR

In the wild many animals are paralyzed when faced with a clearly superior predator, and the Shark bring this attitude to the fight, purging all emotion from their mind to establish superiority. Before initiative is rolled (or before the Assessment roll in a iaijutsu duel) you can make an Intimidation/Awareness roll, contested by your opponent's Honor/Willpower. If successful, you can add +5 to your Initiative roll, or to your Focus roll in a iaijutsu duel.

### RANK 3: BLOOD FOLLOWS

The Jirozame bushi knows that each blows only calls for another, and another, and so on until he or his opponent is no more. You may make attacks as a Simple Actions while using a sword.

### RANK 4: THE SHARK'S BITE

Once a shark holds its prey in its jaws, the fight is almost over, for it will not relent after having tasted blood. If you have wounded an opponent in the current fight already, you gain +3k0 to all further attack rolls against him. This technique only applies to one opponent at a time, which you must pick at the beginning of your turn.

### RANK 5: DEATH COMES

The Jirozame's disdain for life extends both to themselves and their enemies. Those who fully embrace their philosophy are capable of launching near suicidal assaults, almost always resulting in death – of one fighter or the other. You can activate this technique before initiative is rolled for a fight, and before using your rank 2 technique. You must spend a Void point and adopt the Full Attack Stance to do so.

Once activated, the technique grants you +10 on your initiative roll, the regular +2k1 bonus to Attack Rolls from the Full Attack Stance, and a +2k1 bonus on all damage rolls for the first round.

However, your armor TN is reduced to 5 for the entire first round of the fight. This technique cannot be used in an iaijutsu duel.

### The Salamander Clan



#### THE HITOKAGE FAMILY: +1 INTELLIGENCE

Born out of a talented shugenja's naïve mistake and idealistic quest for knowledge, the Hitokage was an eclectic Family. Its members shared a natural curiosity and talent for magic, but often pursued different avenues of knowledge along the course of their travels through the Empire.

### HITOKAGE SHUGENJA SCHOOL

When he started to organize his Clan, Hitokage refused to adopt the traditional model which other shugenja school employ. Instead of focusing on one area of magic or a specific element, Hitokage encourage his students to diversify themselves, and to learn the basics of all elements. Without the resources of the Phoenix Clan, this proved difficult, but Hitokage eventually found a balanced approach.

With great effort, this allowed the Salamander to emulate some of the powers of the Void shugenja, although it still wasn't true Void magic.

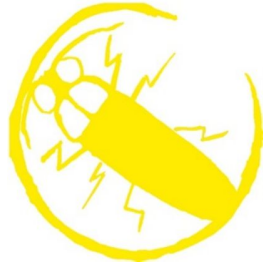
- **Bonus:** +1 Perception
- **Skills:** Calligraphy (Clan Cipher), Lore: theology, Spellcraft (Spell Research),
- **Honor:** 5.5
- **Outfit:** Sturdy Clothing, Travelling Pack, Wakizashi, Calligraphy Set, 3 Koku
- **Affinity/Deficiency:** None/none

#### Technique: *One Way Through Many Paths*

The Hitokage embraces all forms of magic, giving him an unparalleled variety of abilities. You gain one Void spell with each rank, but you cannot cast it as a Void spell. To cast it, you need to spend one spell slot from each one of two opposed elements (one Fire slot and one Water slot, one Earth slot and one Air slot, or two Void slots) and roll your lowest Ring/Rank. You cannot learn any other Void spells than the ones learned through this technique (unless you possess the Ishiken-do advantage) and they are not considered Void magic, but simple elemental spells of your lowest Ring (you can pick in case you have more than one Ring at the same, lowest level).

**Spells:** Sense, Commune, Summon, any six non-Void spells (and at least one from each non-Void element) and the bonus Void spell from your technique.

## The Firefly Clan



### THE HOTARU FAMILY: +1 PERCEPTION

The Hotaru Family was always a small one, even for a Minor Clan, as the Clan Champions were always careful not to overtax the resources of their small Province. However, this was more than enough for them to keep vigil over the coast, and for a few individuals to lend their services as magistrates, scouts or guards in the Empire.

### HOTARU BUSHI SCHOOL

The techniques of the Hotaru bushi school were in large part shaped by Hotaru Oshio, Hotaru Jainu's first yoriki. A ronin who had studied the blade for his whole life, Oshio relished the opportunity to formalize his style and teach it to a new generation as part of a Minor Clan. Oshio had a similar temper to the Clan founder's, and preferred observation to rushed attacks. His techniques focused on studying the enemy's style, and adapting to it, only striking when the time was right. Although not as aggressive as other Schools, the Firefly style of fighting served the Clan well in their various duties. Jainu also contributed to the School whenever he could, and it shows some influence from the Shinjo bushi school, including horseback combat.

- **Bonus:** +1 Awareness
- **Skills:** Defense, Horsemanship, Hunting, Investigation (Notice), Kenjutsu, Kyujutsu, any one High or Bugei skill
- **Honor:** 5.5

- **Outfit:** Sturdy Clothing, Travelling Pack, Light Armor, Daisho, Steed, Any 1 weapon, 2 koku

## TECHNIQUES

### RANK 1: THE FIREFLY'S LIGHT

The first lesson of the Firefly bushi school teaches how to assess an opponent before the fight has even begun, gaining an advantage just by picking up on subtle clues. At the beginning of the fight and before initiative is rolled, you may roll Investigation/Awareness opposed by the opponent's weapon skill/relevant trait. If successful, you may add your Investigation Skill to your Armor TN, to a maximum of Twice your School Rank.

### RANK 2: FIREFLY IN FLIGHT

Once the fight has begun, a Hotaru bushi makes subtle corrections to his own moves, making it even harder for his opponent to land a decisive blow. You gain +2k0 to all your Defense rolls, and add +2 to your Armor TN when adopting the Defense stance.

### RANK 3: PREPARED FOR THE NIGHT

A Firefly bushi knows that the difference between being off-duty and on-duty is just an illusion for the truly honorable. They are always ready to strike, in any situation. Every day, you receive a number of Free Raises equal to your School Rank. They can be used on any School Skill rolls, but never more than one at a time. The raises refresh after a night of sleep.

### RANK 4: THE STRENGTH OF DUTY

Assured of his place in the Empire, the Firefly bushi's strikes show no hesitation. You may attack as a Simple Action when using a samurai weapon or bow, including from horseback.



### RANK 5: TWILIGHT STRIKE

Having perfecting the art of studying his opponent, the Firefly bushi is able to defend and strike in a single move. Immediately after an enemy fails to hit you while you are on the Full Defense Stance, you can spend a Void point to activate this technique. You can immediately attack this opponent, ignoring the restrictions of the Full Defense stance, with a +2k0 bonus on both the attack and the damage roll.

### The Tanuki Clan



#### THE TANUKI FAMILY: +1 STAMINA

The Tanuki was a small Family of simple samurai, who mostly came from other Minor Clans and as such were used to a lack of luxuries. Used to the toughening forester lifestyle and avid consumers of sake and all kinds of food, many Tanuki were quite rotund, but it would have been foolish for anyone to interpret it as a sign of softness.

#### TANUKI BUSHI SCHOOL

The majority of samurai thought the Tanuki were somewhere between lunatics and buffoons, pointing to their large consumption of alcohol and odd superstitions, such as never going outside without wearing a broad straw hat, or bowing to the tanuki effigies at the entrance of their home when coming in. A small minority thought their explorations were bearing fruit though, and found the Shinomen Forest to be a somewhat safer place in their presence. The Tanuki never seemed to care much for any opinion, preferring their

forest expeditions to discover more about the spirits hiding there, and the parties they held after such trips. To protect themselves, they developed an odd fighting style, which didn't attract much praise from other bushi Family. Still, the Clan thrived in a dangerous environment, so they must have done at least one thing correctly... or been extremely lucky.

- **Bonus:** +1 Agility
- **Skills:** Chain Weapons, Defense, Hunting (Survival), Jujutsu, Kenjutsu, Lore: Shapeshifters, any one High or Bugei Skill
- **Honor:** 4.5
- **Outfit:** Sturdy Clothing, Travelling Pack, Light Armor, Daisho, Any 1 weapon, Sake Jug, 1 koku

#### TECHNIQUES

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##### RANK 1: DANCE OF THE TANUKI

The Tanuki's movements may seem odd to an observer, but still have the same aim as any warrior's: landing blows on the target. Once per day, after an attack roll (but before re-rolling any dice because of any emphasis), you may turn a single die which rolled a one into a ten, which doesn't explode.

##### RANK 2: SACRED BEVERAGE

A real Tanuki samurai is rarely seen without his trusty sake jug in hand, and seems to be constantly sipping from it, even before a fight. Yet this never seems to play against the Tanuki in combat. You suffer no penalty for inebriation in combat. Furthermore, if you've had at least one cup's worth of sake in the thirty minutes preceding the fight, you may add +3 to your Armor TN.

##### RANK 3: SWING, SWING, SWING

Missing is not something which bothers a Tanuki samurai; he just keeps attacking, regardless of the circumstances. You may attack as a Simple Action when using a samurai weapon or a chain weapon.

**RANK 4: MORE THAN ONE SHAPE**

The Tanuki laugh when they see samurai practicing rigid kata, or speaking of specific stances. For them, just because one stands and moves one way, doesn't mean the same thing will happen each time. If your Stance this turn is different from your Stance the previous turn, you may add +3k0 to any one skill roll this turn. This technique cannot be used on the first turn of a fight.

**RANK 5: PART OF BOTH WORLDS**

At this rank, the Tanuki Bushi is fully aware that the mortal world is only part of reality, and even a simple human may slip out of it, if only for a moment. Once per day, after a successful attack against you but before damage is rolled, you may spend a Void point to activate this technique. You lose all of your remaining Void points, but the attack is now considered to have missed, and you suffer no damage or effects from it. To outsiders, this looks like a last moment fluke, but the Tanuki believe they momentarily pass into the spirit world when this happens – up to the GM to decide whether this is true or not.

**TANUKI SAKE MASTER SCHOOL [MONK]**

- ☉ **Benefit:** +1 Void
- ☉ **Skills:** Athletics, Defense, Jiujutsu, Meditation (Void Recovery), Staves (Bo), Tea Ceremony (Sake), any one High or Merchant Skill.
- ☉ **Honor:** 2.5
- ☉ **Outfit:** Straw Hat, Bo Staff, Sake Flask, Promissory Note, Robes, Traveling Pack, Daisho, and 2 Koku.
- ☉ **Special:** Mechanically this School is treated on page 231 in the L5R 4th Core rule book as a Brotherhood Monk School.

**Technique:** *Just One More Drink*

Whenever your character becomes intoxicated by sake, you may double the mechanical effects of spending a Void Point (if applicable). This ability can be used a

number of times per session equal to your School Rank. Also, your character can perform the Tea Ceremony with sake. If your character is intoxicated while performing the tea ceremony, participants regain an extra Void Point.

You also begin the game knowing two Kiho. You must meet all prerequisites in order to use these Kiho. You may purchase additional Kiho normally as per the rules for a Brotherhood of Shinsei monk. You may also perform Martial Kiho (including Atemi), while using a Bo Staff.

**TANUKI AMBASSADOR****[COURTIER] (New Path)**

- ☉ **Technique Rank:** 2-4
- ☉ **Replaces:** Any Tanuki school rank from 2 to 4 of your choice.
- ☉ (Ronin Sake lovers have been known to swear fealty into the Tanuki clan. Those who do may access this Technique provided that they find a suitable teacher who is sober enough to teach them.)
- ☉ **Requirements:** Craft: Brewing 3, Temptation 3

**Technique:** *One More for the Road*

You may use the Temptation skill to entice someone else into entering a drinking contest. While doing so, Temptation is not considered a Low Skill for you. This is a contested roll of your Temptation/ Awareness against their Etiquette (Courtesy)/Awareness. By spending a Void point, you may immediately roll the same against another bystander, who will join the drinking contest as well, to a maximum number of participants equal to your school rank +1 (not including yourself). All participants who fail to resist MUST have as many drinks as you do, or a number of drinks equal to your Void Ring, whichever is higher. Those who beat your contested roll may choose to decline, but if there are witnesses, they lose 2 points of Glory.

Needless to say that if this happens in your establishment, the victims need to pay for their drinks (business is business). Failing to do so may incur an Obligation to you, at the GM's discretion.

## NEW KIHŌ

### THE GURU'S THOUSAND FIRES

☯ **Ring/Mastery:** Fire 5

☯ **Type:** Spiritual

Taught to the Tanuki Clan since their transportation to the colonies by 'Yogi Gurus' (under the direction of Sainka Guru 'Dhalsim'), this kiho allows a Tanuki samurai to turn his most reliable companion, sake, into a most potent weapon. To activate this kiho, you must spend a Void Point and then drink some sake as Simple Action. For a number of rounds equal to your Stamina Rank, you are considered to be mechanically benefiting from the Breath of the Fire Dragon spell (see pg. 183, 4ED Core rule book).

## NEW ADVANTAGE

### ABLE DRINKER [PHYSICAL] (1 POINTS)

You can really put the liquor away. This could be due to naturally high constitution, or maybe just a lot of experience. Add 2k1 to the total of Earth Rolls to resist inebriation. Tanuki, Crab and Mantis characters add a 3k1 to the total of Earth Rolls to resist inebriation.

## KINCHO THE SIXTH

(CURRENT DAIMYO OF THE TANUKI CLAN)

Kincho is a man of refined tastes and considers himself a true expert on sake. After visiting many sake houses across the entirety of Rokugan with his father, Kincho the Fifth, Kincho has come to the escapable conclusion that Rokugan samurai are missing out on something truly sublime. Most samurai only ever get to enjoy the regional blends of sake and miss out on some of life's most truly excellent brews. To remedy this, he has gathered up many of his Tanuki vassals to

open-up a new sake-house, the House of the Blue Tanuki. The House of the Blue Tanuki offers up some of the strangest and strongest sake available in Rokugan and, as a result, has gained sort of an infamous reputation amongst proper samurai (no doubt due to machinations from the Peacock Clan). However, rumors persist that some of the finest sake masters of the different clans, ranging from the Crab, Unicorn, and Dragon, have made pilgrimages to the establishment. If this is true, Kincho is tight-lipped about it, but the strange gaijin juices and "fire" brews are evidence that the House of the Blue Tanuki offers a most comprehensive, albeit strange, assortment of sake.

## KINCHO THE SIXTH

.....  
**AIR: 3 EARTH: 3 FIRE: 4 WATER 3: VOID: 5**  
**STAMINA: 6**  
 .....

*Honor: 2.7 Status: 7.5 (Most samurai assume 1) Glory: 3.5 Infamy: 5*

*School/Rank: Tanuki Sake Master 5*

*Skills: Athletics 3, Defense 2, Craft: Brewing (Sake) 7, Commerce 5, Etiquette (Conversation) 4, Intimidation 4, Jiu-jitsu 3, Kenjutsu 2, Lore: Sake (Various) 10, Medicine (Antidotes, Wound Treatment) 4, Meditation (Void Recovery) 4, Sincerity 3, Staves (Bo) 5, Tea Ceremony (Sake) 6*

*Advantages: Allies (Many), Bland Forbidden Knowledge (Sake Brews), Gentry (Sake House), Hero of the People Social Position (Tanuki Clan Champion)*

*Disadvantages:*

*Compulsion (Brew the Best Sake) 4, Dark Secret (Tanuki Clan Champion), Infamous Sworn Enemy (Peacock Clan)*

*Kiho: Chi Protection, Cleansing Spirit, Harmony of the Mind, The Guru's Thousand Fires, Root the Mountain, Slap the Wave, To the Last Breath, Spin the Kharmic Wheel, Unbalance the Mind, Waves in All Things*

## The Peacock Clan



Though its humble foundations began hundreds of years ago during the reign of the 19th Hantei Emperor, the proud and noble Peacock Clan has served every dynasty that has ever sat on the throne including the current Iweko Dynasty. Their role as guardians of the Royal Peacocks is one that the clan takes very seriously and has led to its near extinction more than a few times in tumultuous history.

During the Scorpion Clan Coup, the Clan Champion at the time Kujaku Hakanai died against Scorpion conspirators while defending the peacock pens in the Imperial aviary known as The Righteous Sun. In response to this act of heroism, the Scorpion nearly slaughtered all the peacocks. Luckily Hakanai's son, Sochi had spirited away four pairs of the lovely birds during the confusion to preserve the integrity of the family and clan. Thought to have been destroyed by many during the Coup, the remnants of the Clan stayed in hiding throughout the Clan War and only reappeared on the day of the coronation of Toturi I.

The empire rejoiced when Kujaku Sochi appeared in the throne-room with more than a dozen peacocks, those four he spirited away had been quite busy, and the Peacock Clan was reborn. It was during the subsequent Four Winds Saga that the clan nearly faced extinction again, when Daigotsu attacked and razed Otosan Uchi and the members of the clan struggled to save the Emperors precious

peacocks. The clan and the peacocks managed to survive this tragedy only to have their good name and deeds stripped from them when the current Champion at the time, Kujaku Tansei, drunkenly declared his love for Toturi Tsudao in her presence while meeting her and her entourage in the House of the Blue Tanuki after the harrowing attack on the former capital. This act was perceived as crude and ill-timed and Tsudao, in her first act as Empress, took their clan status away. Though shamed, the former clan went into hiding in the fringes of the Empire taking the prized peacocks with them. It would not be until decades later that the Peacock Clan would come into fame again with the coronation of Iweko I.

The Clan presented the new Empress and her dynasty with two golden peacocks, the rarest of the rare, and cemented their loyalty to the new power on the throne and with that hopes of reinstatement as a clan.

### THE KUJAKU FAMILY: +1 REFLEXES

The glamorous Kujaku family are the heads of the Peacock Clan. Their founder, Doji Kujaku was the most beautiful samurai in all the land and son to the Crane Clan Champion during the reign of Hantei XIX. He was a master of the sword and master of wit and left a long string of devastated opponents in his wake. He was also known to be quite the lothario and was rumored to have fathered several children throughout the Empire. In a drunken celebration during a very momentous winter court, Kujaku "accidentally" slept with and subsequently impregnated the Emperor's niece, whom was betrothed to the son of the Phoenix Champion at the time. To save face of both the Imperial line and the Crane, Kujaku was "promoted" to guard the Emperor's prized peacocks. He took to the duty like a good son and served his post until the day he died nearly 18 years later

during the Night of Five Fires when the crazed son of the new Phoenix Champion set fire to several buildings within Otosan Uchi. He died saving his wards from the deadly flames and thus maintaining the integrity of his exalted position. In his honor, Hantei XIX posthumously awarded him his own Clan, the Peacock, and named him its illustrious founder. From that day forth, the Kujaku family have served with distinction in their post and are some of the most cunning courtiers and deadly swordsmen in all of Rokugan.

### KUJAKU BUSHI SCHOOL

- ☯ **Benefit:** +1 Awareness
- ☯ **Skills:** Kenjutsu, Iaijutsu, Defense, Etiquette, Perform (choose one), Temptation (Seduction), Animal Handling (Peafowl).
- ☯ **Honor:** 6.5
- ☯ **Outfit:** Light Armor, Sturdy Clothing, Extravagant Outfit, Daisho, any one weapon, Make-up Kit, Traveling Pack, 5 koku.

### TECHNIQUES

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#### RANK 1: VOW OF THE PEACOCK

The Kujaku are known for their honorable stewardship of the regal birds whose name they bear.

When performing the Guard Maneuver you may add your School Rank plus one to the Armor TN of your target, in addition to the normal benefits of the maneuver.

Additionally, you have learned that a seductive glance can be just as effective as a swift sword, and gain a +1k0 bonus on your Temptation(Seduction) rolls.

#### RANK 2: GAZE OF A THOUSAND EYES

Like the watchful and weary peacock, nothing can get by your gaze. When you assume the Center Stance, you gain a bonus to your Iaijutsu (Assessment) Roll equal to your Animal Handling Skill Rank. You also gain a +1k0 bonus on all rolls to detect ambushes or other unseen opponents.

#### RANK 3: THE HEAVENLY ARRAY

The spirit of the peacock flows through you, giving you influence similar to that of a male peacock over its harem. When using the Guard Maneuver, you may extend the benefits of the maneuver to a number of targets equal to your Air Ring. Furthermore, you have come to understand that the ways of the peacock are beautiful and glorious, and not something to be looked down upon. You no longer lose honor from using the Temptation (Seduction) skill.

#### RANK 4: AN IMPRESSIVE DISPLAY

Mimicking the graceful speed and deadliness of an enraged mother peahen, you may now make melee attacks with Samurai keyword weapons as a Simple Action instead of as a Complex action.

#### RANK 5: WRATH OF THE GOLDEN PEACOCK

At the pinnacle of your training, you realize that the peacock is not just an animal of extraordinary beauty, but that it is also a creature of extreme wisdom and cunning. During the Focus segment of an Iaijutsu duel, you gain a Free Raise on your Iaijutsu (Focus) roll for every 2 ranks you possess in the Animal Handling skill. In addition, if neither you nor your opponent beats the other's Iaijutsu (Focus) roll by at least 5, you may still make the first strike in the Strike segment of the duel.

PEACOCK ADVANCED SCHOOL:  
**PEACOCK PROVOCATEUR**  
 [COURTIER]

Requirements:

- Status: 4.0 or greater
- Glory: 2.0 or lower
- Skills: Animal Handling (Peafowl) 5

While many see being assigned as a tender of the Emperor's favored menagerie as a sign that one has clearly displeased a superior of great influence, many of those who 'earn' such a promotion have taken to it with all the devotion and duty that such an important role requires. A small number of them have even managed to learn something from studying such proud and self-important animals.

TECHNIQUES

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RANK 1: DEEDS OF THE PEACOCK

Those who are fortunate enough to earn a place in this highly selective group have learned to wield the power of their position in conjunction with the disregard most of the Empire pays their deeds.

If during a contested social roll, your Status is higher than your opponent and your Glory is lower than your opponent, add twice your rank in Animal Handling to the result of your roll.

RANK 2: GRACE OF THE PEAFOUL

The Peacock is known for its awesome strut and magnificent plumage which it uses to both frighten off enemies and attract mates. You must spend a Void Point to activate this ability. For every consecutive round in which you both move and speak, you gain a cumulative +1k0 to all intimidation and temptation rolls to a maximum of +5k0. While this ability is active intimidation and temptation do not count as low skills for you.

RANK 3: CALL OF THE GOLDEN  
 PEACOCK

Once per session you may 'recommend' another samurai, with lower status than yours, for service in this most exclusive of positions, they immediately gain a number of status points equal to the difference in status ranks between you. However they also lose 1 full rank of Glory for every point of status they gain as the mere mention of their name in such circles causes others to think that they have fallen into disfavor. This cannot reduce their Glory below their Insight Rank.

NEW KATA

SUBLIME PEACOCK STYLE

- Ring/Mastery: Air 4
- Schools: Kakita Bushi, Mirumoto Bushi, Peacock Bushi, Seppun Guardsman, Firefly Bushi.

**Effect:** You have mastered a really demonstrative kata to impress your opponents. When in the defense stance and wielding a melee samurai weapon, you can make an intimidation / awareness roll as a simple action with a TN equal to a target opponent's highest ring x 5. While this kata is active, your Armor TN is increased against this opponent by the difference as you totally impressed him.

NEW ADVANTAGE

GAZE OF THE COCOTTE [SOCIAL] (2 POINTS)

You have the uncanny ability to know who is more susceptible to the wiles of seduction just by looking at them. When engaged in any Social Contests you know instantly when your target has the Lechery Disadvantage. Peacock, Scorpion and geisha characters may purchase this Advantage for 1 point.

## (KUJAKU) TADATSUGU

(CURRENT DAIMYO OF THE PEACOCK CLAN)

Tadatsugu is a man possessed. He is the last true descendent of the Kujaku family and is striving to restore his family and clan's good name. When his clan lost favor in the Empire over a decade ago due to his father's drunken transgressions against Toturi Tsudao, Tadatsugu gathered what remained of his clan and their followers and retreated into hiding in the western reaches of the Empire. Tadatsugu blames the machinations of the scheming Tanuki clan for what happened to his father and his clan while in their establishment, the House of the Blue Tanuki, and has spared no expense in slandering their "good" name to any who will listen. During the last few years he and select number of his finest men have been roaming the Empire in an attempt to restore the Peacock clan to good standing once again through heroic deeds. While many would dismiss the upstart and his fallen band, many among the Imperial families remember their bravery and did all they could to support and aide him. It was not until the conclusion of the Celestial Tournament that Tadatsugu and his elite peacock handlers presented the new Empress with the fabled golden peacocks.

## (KUJAKU) TADATSUGU

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*AIR: 5 EARTH: 3 FIRE: 4 WATER: 3 VOID: 4*  
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*Honor: 6.0 Status: 0 (7.5 when clan is restored) Glory: 3.5*

*School/Rank: Peacock Bushi 5*

*Skills: Kenjutsu (Katana, Wakazashi) 7, Iaijutsu (Focus) 7, Defense 3, Etiquette 3, Perform (Song) 3, Temptation (Seduction) 7, Animal Handling (Peafowl) 7, Courtier (Gossip) 3, Horsemanship 5, Spears 3.*

*Advantages: Allies (many among the Imperial Families), Dangerous Beauty, Gaze of the Cocotte, Great Destiny (Restore the Peacock Clan), Gentry (Hidden Peacock Grove), Paragon (Duty)*

*Disadvantages: Brash, Driven (Restore the Peacock Clan), Sworn Enemy (Tanuki Clan)*

*Kata: Sublime Peacock Stance, Striking as Air, Striking as Fire, Striking as Void*

## Using the Owl Clan into a normal game

Imperial History II introduces the Owl clan as the clan of Hantei in the Togashi Dynasty chapter. Their charter in is to handle non-human threats to the empire that aren't shadowlands related.

So oni and taint are the Crab job, the Owl will handle Naga relations and taming Nezumi. Togashi's empire is filled with more magical critters and thus there is a stronger need for a clan that specifically deals with otherworldly beings.

So translating them to a normal game can be somewhat challenging if you want to keep the essence of what is presented for the Owl while finding a need for them.

### The Owl Clan

#### Founding

Shortly after the Destroyer War ends Iweko is put in the position of having the empire accept the Spider clan and in exploring the former Ivory Kingdoms. Just as important though is reconciling the traditions of old with forging a new path in an uncertain future. In steps the Owl clan.

To show her respect for the past Iweko instructs her imperial historians to find any living members among the Imperial families who may have had Hantei blood. These scant few individuals pool together to take on the Hantei family name. Carrying on the Hantei name these individuals will serve as a reminder of Rokugans glorious past and traditions. Iweko doesn't stop there however, choosing to honor the Toturi line Toturi Shigekawa becomes daimyo of the fledgling Owl clan's second family as the Toturi daimyo.

Moving forward the Hantei and Toturi families adopt a number of ronin shugenja. The Empress grants her blessing for them to combine into a single family and to honor one of the most powerful shugenja's known to the Rokugan they take on the Yoshun family name.

#### Schools, Paths & Dojos

Mechanically speaking you can make use of the Hantei bushi school as the main bushi family.

The Yoshun family would make use of the Seppun shugenja school from Imperial Histories II.

Meanwhile the Otomo Diplomat School from that book would become the Hantei Diplomat School, with the Hantei taking on the responsibilities of leading family in both bushi and courtier. Similar in structure to say the Bayushi family does business.

There isn't really a good equivalent for the Toturi family as far as bushi schools go. Their initial training could start out as Lion or even Toku. However the advanced school, Tsudao's Legion would fit in very well as a school for the Toturi family.

Their role in the empire going into the Age of Exploration is to help keep an eye on the Spider clan while also reminding Rokugan of it's past.

The non-human bent of the Owl clans' mechanics makes them ideal for helping to lead the development of the colonies as the clans face down a number of non-human enemies.

Just think how different the War of Serpents would have been if there was something like the Owl clan around...