



# *Legend of the Five Rings*

GAME MASTER'S SCREEN  
AND ADVENTURE



AEG 3302





# DESCENT INTO

# DARKNESS

*For the Legend of the Five Rings RPG, 4th Ed.*

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## Introduction

**T**he village of Mushi Mura used to be a quiet place. Its only claim to glory was its famous dried salted plums, which a few discerning brewmasters use in their specialty sake. Located in a remote place, not wealthy enough to attract bandit attacks, but rich enough to guarantee a fulfilling life of honest work, Mushi Mura and its inhabitants were happy and satisfied with their lot... until a few months ago.

Terror and pain now hang over Mushi Mura, and not even death seems able to offer relief to the villagers. It will be the characters' duty to investigate and hopefully solve Mushi Mu-

ra's mystery. When they learn the truth, will they have the courage to do what must be done?

This adventure is designed for characters of Insight Rank 2 or 3. In the spirit of Legend of the Five Rings RPG Fourth Edition, it is designed to allow for maximum customizability, making it easy for the Gamemaster to plug it into an ongoing campaign, regardless of the era chosen for play. Mushi Mura can be located almost anywhere in the Empire, and the family names of the Non-Player Characters (NPCs) have been left to the Gamemaster to decide. This is particularly important because, as it will become apparent at the end of the adventure, the Gamemaster will have the option to use the village as a base of operation for the PCs' future adventures.

## Overview of the Adventure

This section presents with broad strokes the events that took place before the Player Characters (PCs) arrive in Mushi Mura, and what is likely to happen when they are there.

### DESCENT INTO DARKNESS

Shinroku is the leader of a small cell of Spider Clan mahotsukai. A few months ago, they settled in the ruins of a Naga outpost in the forest near Mushi Mura and immediately started their sinister work. Shinroku's goal is simple: he wants to create a hidden pocket of Tainted land that can be used as a safe haven for both creatures of the Shadowlands and worshippers of Fu Leng. He intends to transform the Naga ruins into a necropolis where he will hide a small army of zombies. When the master of the Shadowlands needs strength, Shinroku will be able to answer the call and bargain for a position of greater power.

As soon as the ruins were refitted, Shinroku and his loyal followers turned their attention toward Mushi Mura. They ambushed the village's samurai protector Takashi and his budoka (armed peasant retainers). There was little Takashi could do against the sorcerer's blood magic and the Tainted strength of his bodyguard, and he was forced to flee with three surviving budoka. He returned to Mushi Mura and dispatched a

request for help with a carrier pigeon. While awaiting help Takashi had no choice but to retreat to the woods to try to prepare a counterattack. Over the next few days, he watched as Shinroku spread corruption to all the villagers, and he could feel in himself the Taint the mahotsukai had forced in him. If he could not defeat the evil sorcerer, he swore at least he would cleanse the village from the touch of Jigoku and then commit seppuku while he still had his own mind.

Shinroku, not satisfied of Tainting the villagers, took away all those who were unable to work. He told the rest of the villagers these hostages would remain unarmed as long as they cooperated. In truth, they were the first to be sacrificed in foul maho rituals to begin the desecration of the Naga ruins and their transformation into a piece of the Shadowlands.

Shinroku is a cunning man and anticipates that more samurai will eventually come to investigate. He stays in the village and poses as a carpenter. This also allows him to better watch the rest of the villagers as they pretend everything is normal. Toji, Shinroku's chief follower and bodyguard, has taken Takashi's place as Mushi Mura's samurai protector. Together they are ready to hide their activities and send any investigators back wherever they came from. And if they can manipulate them into getting rid of Takashi, all the better.

### PRISONERS OF FEAR

When the PCs arrive, Toji will try to send them away with assurances that everything is fine and Takashi's message was a false alert. If the PCs remain suspicious, Shinroku will try to deflect their worries toward a new target: Takashi and his budoka assistants, who Shinroku depicts as bandits raiding the village.

In all likelihood the PCs will investigate these bandits and track them into the woods. Depending how successful the PCs are in establishing communication with Takashi, they will either attack these so-called "bandits" or learn the truth about the situation. If they defeat the bandits, it is possible they will end the adventure with failure, although they may not even realize it. If they do manage to talk with Takashi, he will explain his shame and his intentions regarding the village, and hopefully join the PCs to help them kill Shinroku and his maho cell.

One way or the other, the PCs will have to confront Shinroku, Toji, and the rest of the cult.

And after the battle, they will have to decide what to do with the Tainted villagers... Will they follow their heart or their duty?



## A Call for Help

### Chapter 1

Hoshimitsu, the chief magistrate of the city the PCs are currently visiting, has received a message from the remote village of Mushi Mura. Delivered by a courier pigeon, it was extremely short and clearly written in haste: "Need help. Send reinforcement quickly."

Hoshimitsu would like to send someone to investigate, but most of his yoriki (assistants) are away at the opposite part of the province, chasing a bandit group. Those who are left are busy managing the influx of visitors arriving for the locally famous Festival of the Red Maple Leaf, which happens to be the following week. Fortunately for him, he has heard of the PCs' presence, and will ask for their help.

There are several ways to handle this, depending on the composition of the party. If there is at least one samurai in the group of the same clan as Hoshimitsu, the magistrate will approach the samurai and ask for help. If the party has at least one magistrate (or better yet an Emerald Magistrate), Hoshimitsu will specifically seek their help. If the party has no one fitting, the GM can opt to have Hoshimitsu seek them out after getting his lord's permission to enlist local samurai for the problem, and will offer the favor of his lord in return for their assistance. If the entire party is composed of ronin, he will simply offer to pay them 5 koku each to work for him.

Hoshimitsu tells the PCs about the message he received, and explains his situation. The PCs' task is simple: go to Mushi Mura and assist the local yoriki, a man named Takashi, in dealing with whatever problem seems to be so urgent. Hoshimitsu does as much as he can to help the party, but he has no spare men to accompany them. He can, if necessary, offer to loan the PCs some horses to expedite their travel, and can provide enough food for several days (enough to reach Mushi Mura with some left over).

If the PCs ask for more information about Takashi, Hoshimitsu will reply he does not know him very well. In fact, the only news he normally gets from him is the expected seasonal reports and feedback from the tax collector visiting the village once a year. Given the remoteness of the village and its modest size, this is hardly surprising. Hoshimitsu describes Takashi as a very honorable man but not ambitious. He has lost his wife to sickness two years ago and requested the assignment to Mushi Mura, apparently so he could grieve in peace. He has no children.

Mushi Mura is located 4 days' travel away from the city, at the edge of the province's border. The region beyond is mostly wild and empty.

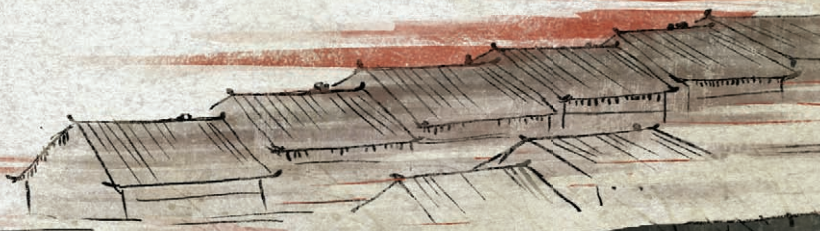
## A Quiet Village

### Chapter 2

The party has a quiet trip to Mushi Mura. Takashi has a scout watching over the village and sees the PCs coming, but he does not try to approach them; Shinroku cursed him and corrupted him with the Shadowlands Taint, and he is unable to speak coherently. He is ashamed of his defeat and hesitant to approach the PCs.

The land around Mushi Mura is hilly, with numerous patches of woods interspersing the rice fields. The road to the village is barely more than a wide trail, and it ends there. A mile beyond the village lies a sprawling old cedar forest, covering the rolling landscape. As the party approaches, everything seems normal: peasants are toiling in the fields or working in craftsmen's shops. If the PCs try to spot any oddities, an Investigation / Perception roll at TN 20 will allow them to notice there are no elderly and no children below the age of 6 visible in the town.

As they enter the village, a man who appears to be a samurai, presumably the yoriki, will approach them and introduce himself as Takashi. In truth, this is Toji, the maho-tsukai's henchman.





## MEETING TOJI (“TAKASHI”)

The PCs can quickly determine Toji is not happy to see them. He is not openly hostile, and he offers the PCs all the respect they deserve, but there is no warmth in his words and he is not especially hospitable. To the characters, he appears to be a somewhat proud samurai who takes their arrival as an insult to his ability to manage the village efficiently.

Once proper introductions have been made and the PCs explain the reason for their trip to Mushi Mura, Toji tries to reassure them that everything is under control. There is nothing unusual here, he says, pointing out the seemingly normal village activities. If the PCs mention the call for help, he dismisses it as the deed of a disgruntled ronin named “Kirou” who once worked for him. Toji says he was not satisfied with Kirou’s services and has dismissed him, and suggests Kirou sent the message to make him look bad.

If the PCs insist on seeing things for themselves, Toji grudgingly takes them on a tour of the village. During the day, most peasants are out in the fields – the few remaining in the village are craftsmen and artisans. Every time a character approaches a villager (especially in the presence of Toji), the PC is met with extreme wariness and anxiety. Peasants are usually subservient and quiet, but the GM should allow the PCs to feel there is an unusual amount of fear underlying their behavior here. If they are questioned, the peasants all support Toji’s story.

- ❶ Questioning the peasants and exploring the village should make it more obvious that there are no children or elderly in Mushi Mura. The PCs may also notice that a few houses are uninhabited.
- ❷ If the PCs ask Toji about the fearfulness of the villagers, he replies he is very strict and punishes all unacceptable behavior. As a result, they fear him, which is just the way it should be in an efficiently run village.
- ❸ If the PCs ask about the lack of young children and elders, he claims a disease swept through during the last winter and took away all the younger children, along with several adults and many of the elders. It has been a painful blow, but it has not disrupted the village’s production capacity too much, so he does not think it is a big problem.

It should be apparent during these discussions that Toji does not care about the plight of the peasants. He is cold-hearted toward the heimin, but this is not a rare attitude among samurai. However, some PCs may feel this lack of compassion does not fit Hoshimitsu’s description of a highly honorable samurai – after all, Compassion is one of Bushido’s seven Virtues.

During the tour, the maho-tsukai Shinroku will observe the PCs while maintaining his pose as the village carpenter. It should eventually become clear that Toji’s behavior is too suspicious, and instead of sending the visitors back where they came from he is giving them reasons to stay and investigate further. At that point Shinroku takes matters in his own hands and tries to salvage the situation to his advantage. Toji will pretend he has other things to attend to, leaving the PCs to continue their tour alone – the PCs should perceive this as a welcome turn of events, since it should appear that Toji’s presence is cowering the peasants into silence.

## MEETING SHINROKU

After the glum faces of most of the villagers, it is a welcome change for the PCs to meet Shinroku. Although he initially mimics the others’ behavior, once Toji departs he will “relax” and start talking openly with the PCs about how Mushi Mura is living in fear. According to Shinroku, the village has been attacked several times in recent months by a small bandit gang, and “Takashi” seems unable to deal with them. Shinroku is careful to speak respectfully of “Takashi” and make his accusations unspoken, since he is posing as a heimin who knows his place in the social order. At this point it should become evident to the PCs that they need to take action (see Chapter 3).

Shinroku will also try to establish himself as a prominent leader of the peasant community. If the party needs any kind of help during the investigation, he suggests they come back to him and he will make sure that they have the whole village’s full cooperation.

If the PCs ask Shinroku about “Kirou the ronin,” he mostly confirms the story of “Takashi.” If pressed for more details, he claims Kirou was a good man who perhaps was starting to become too popular in the village. Kirou often pushed the limits of his station, such as by suggesting they needed more men to deal with the bandits. This could be the reason why “Takashi” dismissed the ronin. (Of course, Kirou is a fictional character, invented by Shinroku and Toji to explain the call for help.)

PCs who suspect falsehood by “Takashi” or Shinroku can make Contested Rolls of their Investigation (Interrogation) / Perception against the villains’ Sincerity (Deceit) / Awareness to try to get a sense of their truthfulness. Of course, figuring out they are lying does not necessarily tell the PCs how to continue their investigation.

## OTHER VILLAGERS

There are about 60 people in Mushi Mura, most of them normal farmers. Notable individuals are listed below. They are not used to seeing strange samurai, and even before the arrival of Shinroku they were easily scared by the arrival of samurai, whose presence usually meant bad things – taxes being collected, men drafted into the clan’s armies, and so forth. Now that the village has been corrupted, they are equally afraid of both the maho-tsukai and the PCs, since they know their life is forfeit should the PCs learn of their Taint.

- ❶ **Kurata:** Kurata is the village’s headsman. He was a good leader before the maho-tsukai’s arrival, when there was little pressure on him. Now he is so scared for his life he barely talks to anyone. He is afraid for himself and is such a coward he will not hesitate to push other villagers into harm’s way to protect himself. He is fully committed to Shinroku’s cause, hoping his cooperation will save him in the end.
- ❷ **Minami:** Minami is a 15-year-old girl. She is so scared by the whole situation that she will try to flee during the first night the PCs are in Mushi Mura. If she is caught by the PCs she will remain mute, too frightened to speak. If they do not catch her leaving, Toji will catch her and kill her.
- ❸ **Okomi:** Old Okomi is the village’s midwife. Although she looks disheveled and alarming, almost like a

witch, she is harmless. She has a gift (although she would say it is only the result of years of experience) that allows her to predict the weather for the next few days. However, she has lost the ability since she became Tainted.

- **Shizu:** Shizu is a young farmer. His first son and his pregnant wife have been taken away by Shinroku (they are now dead, though he does not know this). He is on the verge of mental collapse, and if it looks like the PCs are going to discover the truth, he will break down and try to tell them all he knows. He does not care about his own life but he still desperately hopes the PCs might be able to save his family.
- **Sochuro:** Sochuro is an eta and a hunter. He spends a significant amount of time outside the village fishing and hunting small game. As a result, he is quite knowledgeable about the lands surrounding Mushi Mura, and the woods in particular. He knows about the Naga ruins (although he has no idea of the builders), and has a good feel for where “bandits” might be hiding. Since he is an eta, he feels no compulsion to help or protect samurai, and will readily guide the PCs to Takashi’s hiding place if Shinroku asks him to do so.

## CUTTING TO THE CHASE

It is possible for the PCs, either via smart investigation, a hunch, or just impatience, to push Shinroku to end his charade and attack them before they have a chance to go after the “bandits.” If that happens, and the PCs survive the maho-tsukai and his zombies, the curse on the real Takashi and his men will be lifted when the spell expires. A few hours later, they will come back to Mushi Mura and explain the situation to the PCs. Understanding what Shinroku’s defeat and Takashi’s imminent return mean for them, most villagers will flee to the woods as quickly and discreetly as they can.

From there, the PCs will have the same choice as presented at the end of the adventure: go after the Tainted peasants and hunt them down to the last, or let them flee. Some of the running heimin will regroup with the cultists at the maho-tsukai camp in the Naga ruins. Takashi will help the PCs to exterminate the remaining cultists and their followers. Takashi will then commit seppuku to atone for his failure to protect Mushi Mura.





- ☉ **Taro the Ugly:** As his name suggests, Taro was born with severe deformities that twisted his face's left side (his left eye is blind) and left his left arm hanging limp. His infirmity prevents him from fully participating in the village's activities, and he hates the way others look at him (or avoid looking at him altogether). When Shinroku revealed himself as a powerful maho-tsukai Taro welcomed the Taint, turned his back on his village with no second thought, and became Shinroku's primary informant in the village. He is devoted to the cult and hopes to someday become as powerful and feared as Shinroku. Taro knows all the village hostages are already dead.
- ☉ **Tetsu:** Tetsu is the village's smith and also works in the plum tree orchard. He forges farming tools, cookware, and household knives. He once served the clan as an ashigaru and has many scars from his experiences. He has not told anyone, but he possesses a few fingers of jade which he keeps at home or hidden on his family. So far the jade has protected them from the Taint. Unlike the rest of the villagers he has no reason to fear the PCs, but he will not reveal his secret for fear that if he is discovered the maho-tsukai will kill him. He also does not want to confess to the PCs because revealing the truth will also expose that the other villagers are Tainted and he does not wish to betray them. If he is forced into a fight, he knows how to handle himself with knives and peasant weapons.

## Something Is Not Right

### Chapter 3

It should be quickly apparent that Mushi Mura is hiding secrets. The words the PCs will hear most often are "everything is normal," which of course should make them suspicious that things are far from normal indeed. During their investigation, the party may collect part or all of the following information:

- ☉ **The bandits:** Everybody in the village knows about the "bandits." Shinroku has explained his plans regarding the former yoriki, Takashi, and convinced them that Takashi must die if they are to keep their Taint secret and live. The villagers reluctantly support the plan, but most have not forgotten that Takashi was a fair and just man, and they are not too eager to betray him. The PCs should be able to sense reluctance, but eventually everybody agrees the bandits must be hiding in the woods. Sochuro the eta hunter knows several places where they could have set up a camp, and can guide the party there.

Shizu the farmer or old Okomi may hint that direct confrontation with the bandits should be avoided: "Maybe we should just leave them alone." "Maybe they can be reasoned with." In contrast, Kurata the headsman, Taro, and Sochuro seem convinced they should be killed as soon as possible, and describe them as "rabid dogs" and "madmen."

Most villagers say the bandits attacked twice already, but a few may make a mistake and give a different number. If called on their slip-up, they are quick to cor-

rect themselves and blame faulty memory. Of course, the PCs may think a traumatic event such as a bandit attack should not be something so easy to forget.

- ☉ **Toji, the false "Takashi":** With the exception of Shinroku, no other villager speaks ill of "Takashi." In fact, they are very loath to talk about him at all, especially to another samurai. It is however very clear that they all fear him. If pushed to their limits, some villagers may blurt out Toji's real name by error, but the GM should use this trick only if the PCs seem completely stuck in their investigation.
- ☉ **Shinroku, the "carpenter":** Shinroku has a well-prepared story to cover his real identity, and most villagers have been careful to remember it well. In fact, maybe too well, as the story may sound a bit rehearsed: "Shinroku was born in Mushi Mura. He is a good carpenter and always willing to help. People often listen to what he has to say when decisions regarding the day-to-day life in the village have to be made. He is a trustworthy man." Observant PCs may notice the villagers talk about Shinroku with the same reluctance they show about Toji, and their speech is very controlled, as if afraid to say something wrong. (The GM may wish to require an Awareness or Perception roll for the PCs to pick up on this pattern.)
- ☉ **The Shrine:** The village has a small shrine to Inari, the Fortune of Rice. However, there is no monk or priest to attend the shrine. Kagome, the attendant assigned here, was born here but spent her early years as a temple helper in the nearby city before returning home two years ago. The villagers often came to her when they were injured. When Shinroku chased Takashi away, she fled with him. Her absence from the village is one discontinuity with Shinroku and Toji did not think about explaining. Questions about the shrine will lead to mentions of Kagome's name. Whoever tries to explain her absence will do so without prior discussions, creating inconsistency between testimonies.
- ☉ **The missing people:** This is a very sore spot for almost all the villagers, but they will try to lie as well as they can because they think they are protecting the lives of the hostages. Shinroku took away 14 children and 5 adults, and half the village has a relative being held as a hostage. Aside from Taro, none of them know the hostages are already dead.

If the PCs check the empty houses, there is something to notice: first of all, even though they look vacant, a successful Investigation (Notice) / Perception roll at TN 25 reveals they are much cleaner than they should be if they really had been unoccupied for months. The villagers, under orders from Shinroku, removed the houses' content, but the amount of dust and cobwebs suggest it has only been about a week since the houses were occupied.

Also, some of the unoccupied houses were used by the budoka who fled with Takashi. These houses are smaller than the others in Mushi Mura, suggesting a single occupant rather than a family. An expert carpenter's eye (Craft: Carpentry / Perception at TN 30) will notice the craftsmanship in these houses is of slightly lower quality than the rest of the village residences: the people living in these houses did not take particular care of them.



## The Strange Bandits

### Chapter 4

Whether the party decides to go after the bandits to talk with them or kill them, they will have to find them first. There are several ways for them to do that.

- **Track them:** If the party has at least one proficient tracker, they will probably try to find the bandit camp alone. This is not very hard, as the so-called bandits are not used to hiding. Tracking the bandits in the woods requires a successful Hunting (Tracking) / Perception roll at TN 30 and one hour to find the trail, followed by three more consecutive rolls at TN 20 (one every 15 minutes) to follow the trail to the “bandit camp.”
- **Spot the scout:** Twice a day for about an hour, one of Takashi’s men comes to watch the village from the outskirts (once in the early morning, once in the late afternoon). The PCs could spot him and capture him, or follow him back to the camp. Spotting him by a stroke of luck is a hidden Perception roll at TN 30 (the GM should not let the PCs know about the roll). If the PCs suspect they are being observed or are actively looking for someone spying on them, spotting the scout is a Contested roll of the PCs’ Investigation (Notice) / Perception against the scout’s Stealth / Agility.

## MIMING TIPS

Here are a few suggestions for the GM to help describe Takashi’s gestures

- **THE TAINT:** Takashi represents the Taint with a handful of cold ash taken from the firepit, held in his fist in front of his heart.
- **THE MAHO-TSUKAI:** Takashi pretends to cut his arm and then pours ash from his hand next to his fake cut, miming the flow of black blood.
- **SHINROKU:** Takashi mimes a carpenter at work, cutting wood and drilling holes, to describe Shinroku.
- **TOJI:** Takashi makes an overly stern face and points at his sword to describe Toji.
- **TREACHERY:** Takashi holds a small dagger in his hand while he is putting on an excessively genial smile. He pretends to hide the weapon behind his back, then mimes a stabbing.
- **SHAME:** Takashi nods very deeply, his chin touching his chest, then hides his face in his hands. Then he kneels and places his wakizashi in front of him, as if preparing for a seppuku.





## SO, THEY KILLED THE “BANDITS”

If the PCs kill Takashi and his men, they have denied themselves a crucial source of information on what really took place in Mushi Mura. More importantly, they probably still have no real clue that Shinroku is the evil mastermind of this story. There are two main possible outcomes for this situation.

First, the PCs can return to the village, where they are celebrated for “saving” Mushi Mura. Most likely they will think their mission is over and leave. Nothing will stop Shinroku from finishing what he has started. A few months later, the party will hear news of the mysterious disappearance of everyone in Mushi Mura, while other rumors speak of Tainted monstrosities in the nearby woods.

Second, even with the fake celebrations, the PCs may think there is still something wrong in the village and decide to stay a while longer. If so, Shinroku will become impatient and after a couple of days he and Toji will try to murder the PCs, either in their sleep or during some other moment when they are vulnerable. If the PCs survive the assassination attempt, Shinroku will unleash his zombies and maho spells, while taunting the PCs that they cannot save the village even if they defeat him. Assuming the PCs win the fight, most of the villagers flee and a few try their luck at joining the remaining maho-tsukai cultists in the Naga ruins. The PCs might follow them and discover the ruins, or report back on the results of their mission.

Following the scout back to his camp is a Stealth (Shadowing) / Agility roll, contested against the scout's Perception. This roll must be made twice in a row or the scout becomes aware he is being followed. In that case, he tries to lose his pursuers and the contested roll becomes the PCs' Hunting (Tracking) / Perception against the scout's Stealth / Agility. If the scout is captured, the PCs have to overcome the obstacle of his curse to communicate meaningfully (see “Communication” later in this chapter for details). After the scout is captured, Shinroku will attempt to eliminate him discreetly as soon as possible, since he does not want to risk the PCs learning the truth. If he does manage to kill the scout, Shinroku will dispose of the corpse (one more zombie...) and try to make it look like he escaped.

- Use Sochuro's help: If the GM thinks the PCs are stuck in their investigation, or the party does not have a good tracker, Shinroku will have Sochuro step forward and offer his help tracking the bandits. He will use his tracking skills and knowledge of the forest to lead the party to the bandit camp.

## TAKASHI'S CAMP

Takashi and his men have settled under a rock outcropping near the top of a small hill, closely surrounded by trees. The camp is approximately one hour away from Mushi Mura. They have set an improvised barrier of wooden pikes around the camp, planted between the trees. Walking through them is easy (no roll required), but charging is impossible unless the character attempts to jump over with an Athletics / Agility roll (TN 25) combined with a Move Action. Failure results in serious injuries (3k2 Wounds).

**Recon Action:** A study of the camp will reveal a few things. There are normally 5 persons in the camp (Takashi, three budoka, and Kagome), although the GM should feel free to adjust these numbers to balance the encounter with the PCs. When the “bandits” talk to each other they seem to not make any sense. A roll of Intelligence at TN 15 will show their sentences are a jumble of random words, yet they seem to understand each other. It is clearly not a foreign language, since the words are distinctly Rokugani, and it is unlikely to be some sort of code. A roll of Lore: Maho / Intelligence or Spellcraft / Intelligence at TN 40 may suggest the origin of this strange ailment (the Curse of the Black Tongue maho spell).

Smart PCs may notice that despite the dirtiness of their clothes, these “bandits” do not look like typical law-breaking scum. Kagome is dressed as a plain monk. Takashi wears well-kept light armor in the colors of his clan, and his men have plain ashigaru armor in the same good condition. In fact, a roll of Craft: Armorsmithing / Perception at TN 25 suggests their armor looks like they have not been through much action at all.

**Attack:** If the party decides to attack immediately, not allowing Takashi time to think, he and his men will fight back as best they can, to the death if necessary. However, if the PCs do not make some sort of surprise assault, Takashi tries to stall the attack by taking Center Stance – the dueling stance. He stands resolute and silent, waiting for the PCs to accept or decline his challenge. (This will also allow the PCs another chance to see that Takashi does not look like a standard bandit. Even his dueling stance is one taught by a Great Clan bushi school.) If one of the PCs accepts the challenge and takes Center Stance, a formal duel begins. However, after the Assessment roll is made, Takashi bows to formally concede, drops his stance, and attempts to communicate.

If the PCs refuse to acknowledge the challenge, they should probably lose 1 or 2 points of Honor. Takashi and his men will fight to defend themselves.

If the PCs give him the chance, Takashi tries to explain his story (see “Communication” below). Otherwise the combat proceeds until one side is defeated and presumably killed.

## COMMUNICATION

If the party tries to talk with Takashi, they have to find a way to work around the effects of the curse. The most obvious way is to mime actions or concepts. Another is to draw simple pictures in the dirt. This scene is a great opportunity for some intense roleplaying, and players should be rewarded for their efforts by getting information from Takashi. However, if the GM prefers he can have the PCs glean information with skill rolls. An Acting / Awareness or Artisan: Drawing / Awareness roll at TN 25 should be made each time someone formulates a simple visual "sentence." The other side must succeed in an Intelligence roll (TN 25) to correctly translate what has been expressed. Raises can be made on the first roll to reduce the TN of the Intelligence roll (by 5 per Raise).

## REVELATIONS & DECISIONS

Assuming the PCs did not kill Takashi's group and managed to establish communication, they now have a clearer understanding of the situation. However, much depends on how well they could communicate. At the very least, the party should know these people are not bandits. If everything went exceptionally well, they know Mushi Mura was attacked by maho-tsukai cultists, led by Shinroku and Toji, and that Takashi is convinced the villagers have all been corrupted by the Taint.

## SPICING UP THE ENCOUNTER

If the GM thinks the party will too quickly realize the "bandits" are not a real threat, making the encounter lack tension, he can use the following twist: Shinroku wants to make sure the two groups will fight each other. To that end, he instructs Sochuro to shoot an arrow at the party from a hidden location while shouting nonsense, attempting to represent a treacherous ambush by the bandits. He hopes to provoke the PCs into retaliating, or at least to create tensions and distrust between the "bandits" and the party.

## NOT DARK ENOUGH?

If the Gamemaster thinks his player can handle a more gruesome and disturbing tone for this adventure, he can describe some of Shinroku's zombies as the recently murdered villagers of Mushi Mura. Shizu may even try and defend his dead wife and son from the PCs, out of some madness-induced hope that he can save them.



More importantly, Takashi has located the cultists' camp in the Naga ruins, and has seen their revolting human sacrifices. He will try to convince the PCs to join him in dealing with this problem. It is likely the PCs will try to take care of both situations, but the order in which these things happen remains flexible.

## Confrontations

### Chapter 5

At this point, the obvious thing to do is to alert Hoshimitsu or anyone else who is able to order a large detachment of troops into Mushi Mura. (It is also what Takashi should have done, but he let his shame overcome his better judgment.) This is a legitimate choice, especially if the PCs are mostly courtiers or other noncombatants. However, the party may decide they can handle the situation alone, or that time is of the essence and action must be taken immediately. If they do, they have to choose which problem needs to be addressed first: the maho-tsukai holding Mushi Mura hostage, or the group of cultists in the Naga ruins.

### DEALING WITH SHINROKU

If the party decides to cut off the snake's head first, they will most likely return to Mushi Mura with Takashi and his men. If Sochuro accompanied the PCs, he disappears the minute he sees them talking with Takashi. If the PCs found Takashi's camp on their own, Shinroku will have sent Sochuro to follow them. Either way, Shinroku is aware of the new alliance and has a small head-start to prepare for their arrival, and he raises the corpses he has left buried in the nearby rice fields. As the PCs enter the village they see Shinroku and Toji standing in the center of a small crowd, giving orders to the villagers to take arms and fight against the samurai, as it is their only hope of survival. Shinroku has left his zombies just at the edge of the village, and will call them in only if the villagers appear incapable of defeating the party.

As soon as Shinroku sees the PCs, he orders the villagers to attack. However, most peasants are too scared to follow orders. Instead of fighting they will flee to the woods, and Taro will lead some of them to the cultists' camp at the Naga ruins. Only a handful remain loyal to Shinroku, with Sochuro at their head. To Shinroku's surprise, there are also a few villagers who will decide to side with the PCs, hoping for redemption and a clean karma before their deaths. Tetsu the smith and Shizu the farmer lead those who join the PCs.

Exact numbers on both sides are left to the GM's discretion. Assuming an average party of 4 characters and their allies (Takashi, his 3 men, Kagome, Tetsu, and 3 villagers), there are 13 fighters on the PCs' side. On the maho-tsukai's side, there should be Shinroku and Toji, Sochuro and 10 villagers, plus 12 zombies

in reserve, for a total of 19 fighters. Complete stats for all combatants are available in the Appendix, but to keep things from bogging down it is recommended the GM only roll for combatants facing the PCs. Combats between NPCs should probably be dramatized to keep the flow of the battle quick and exciting.

As soon as at least four of his villagers are killed, Shinroku calls the zombies to join the fight. At that point all remaining villagers, whether allies or enemies, run away, terrified by the arrival of the shambling undead. Only the seasoned Tetsu and the desperate Shizu will stay at the PCs' side.

Toji will not concede defeat until he is killed, but Shinroku will certainly attempt to run away if the battle seems lost. In fact, Shinroku could certainly make for an interesting recurring villain for future adventures. Whatever his fate is, before he is removed from the action he makes a point of telling the PCs the village is doomed and that he corrupted its inhabitants with the Taint.

### THE NAGA RUINS

The cultists' camp is deep in the forest (three hours' difficult walk away from Mushi Mura) and hard to find. Takashi's men followed a cultist returning to the ruins in order to locate the camp.

The ruins comprise a single conical tower with a flat summit. A circle of tall columns, topped by a horizontal stone ring and two stone arches connecting in the middle at a right angle, crowns the tower. A rusty metallic wire frame with engraved Naga symbols creates a filigree dome under the stone arches, suggesting the structure might have been used as an astronomical observatory. Stairs climb up in a spiral around the building to the observatory. The tower is approximately 30' tall, 60' wide at the base, and 20' wide at the top. Some distance from the tower, there are four tall spires, one at each of the four cardinal directions. Between the tower and the eastern spire is a shallow rectangular pool, dry for centuries but now filled with corpses and dark with dried blood-stains. On one side of the pool is a long low stone house with a flat roof. Half the building has collapsed and tall trees have grown over the rubble, their sinuous roots entwined with the broken stones. The cultists have set up their sleeping quarters in the section of this building that is still roofed. All of the ruins are covered with trees and vines except for the higher sections of the tower.

There are four cultists and two Tainted ronin at the camp. The maho-tsukai spend their days conducting the rituals that will permanently defile the ruins and imprint the Shadowlands Taint on them, while the ronin patrol the perimeter and protect them. The cultists can also raise the decaying corpses and use the zombies to defend themselves if necessary. As usual, the GM should feel free to adjust these numbers to better suit the PCs' abilities.

If the party confronted Shinroku first, some villagers (led by Taro) have probably fled to the cultists' camp. By the time the PCs arrive, most have been killed and turned into extra zombies, and the others are bound and helpless, ready to be sacrificed to power the maho-tsukai's dark magic.

If the party decided to destroy the cultists first, however, they have a good chance of taking them by surprise, especially if they can intercept and dispose of the two ronin guards.



## A Doomed Village

### Conclusion

Once the maho-tsukai have been defeated, the PCs have to decide the fate of Mushi Mura. They have both Takashi's shameful confession and Shinroku's damning final declaration to tell them the village is Tainted. If they test the villagers for signs of corruption, however, only a couple of them are actually Tainted, showing a reaction to jade. (In game terms, most have only a few points of Taint, putting them in the "Seeds of Darkness" category.) Thus the PCs must decide whether to kill only the clearly Tainted villagers or to wipe out the entire village to prevent any risk of the corruption spreading.

Any PC who rolls Lore: Shadowlands / Intelligence at TN 20 will know that nothing can remove the Taint, and its eventual growth is all but inescapable. Typical policy in this situation is that if there is even the shadow of a doubt that the peasants are corrupted, they will be executed to spare their souls and prevent any risk of further corruption. Some of the PCs may feel conflicted about this merciless policy, but Takashi is not: he firmly intends to wipe out any seeds of corruption in his clan's lands, and once his task is completed, to perform the ritual seppuku that will cleanse his shame and allow him to die honorably before the Taint can claim him.

Will the PCs take on themselves the responsibility to carry out the task? Will they assist Takashi or just stand out of his way? Will they depart Mushi Mura and send others to kill the villagers? If they decide to exterminate all the villagers, they will have to hunt them down one by one in the forest and the surrounding plains. A long, arduous, and traumatic task that is unlikely to end with total success.

Or will they show mercy? Will they stop Takashi and let him die in shame? Will they kill only some and spare the others? And in that case, how will they choose who dies and who lives? Tetsu and his family were carrying jade – is that enough to spare their lives?

### A NEW BEGINNING

Mushi Mura is now a crippled village: most or all of its population is dead or missing, and its yoriki Takashi is also gone, in battle or by seppuku. But the leadership of the clan does not want to lose this profitable asset. Harvests have always been good, and many sake enthusiasts would miss the special blend brewed with Mushi Mura's dried salted plums.

As a result, the GM can have the PCs be asked to stay and oversee the reconstruction of the village until a suitable replacement for the yoriki can be found. If the party has shown the clan's leadership they can be trusted to have the clan's best interests in mind, they may even be offered the chance to permanently administrate Mushi Mura. This is even more likely to happen if they have shown mercy to the villagers, since the village's future status and actions, good or bad, have become the PCs' responsibility. This is a new beginning, a new challenge. After the destruction, they can assist in reconstruction as new villagers are resettled in the village.

But what other horrors or wonders may lurk in the forest? Has Shinroku really been defeated, or will he come back for revenge? The GM has many options for the future of Mushi Mura.

## NEW MAHO SPELLS

### *Curse of the Black Tongue*

RING/MASTERY: Air 2

RANGE: 30'

AREA OF EFFECT: 1 target

DURATION: 1 day

RAISES: Duration (+1 day per Raise)

This curse sends kansen to confuse the target and render him incapable of articulate speech. Words are still of a language the target would speak normally (usually Rokugani), but what he says or writes makes no sense whatsoever – sentence structure is gone and words are randomly replaced by others. Worse, the target cannot understand others who are not affected by the curse, since what he hears or reads seems to be made of the same gibberish. Simple means of communication, such as mimicking an action or drawing pictures, are not hindered by this curse, but anything more complex is affected. The targets of the curse are able to understand each other normally, however.

Shugenja affected by this spell suffer a +10 TN penalty on spellcasting rolls because the kami are somewhat confused by the strange prayers.

### *Sharing the Darkness*

RING/MASTERY: Earth 4

RANGE: 1 mile

AREA OF EFFECT: The casters and an equal number of targets

DURATION: Permanent

RAISES: Special (each Raise grants the caster a +1k0 bonus to his Willpower roll for the Contested roll)

This curse is a more powerful ritual based on the maho spell Spreading the Darkness. Several maho-tsukai can cast the spell together so long as they all know the spell and succeed in their Spell Casting Roll. Casting the spell requires one hour of uninterrupted chanting.

Sharing the Darkness transfers a number of Taint points (up to a maximum equal to the combined total Earth + Insight Rank of the casters) to a number of targets equal to the number of casters. The Taint points must be removed from the casters and distributed to the targets as evenly as possible, and the spell cannot reduce any of the casters' Taint below 1 point. The casters do not need to see the targets, but each target must have been recently marked (physically touched) by one of the casters within the last day. Targets who are not aware and willing to receive the Taint may resist the spell's effects with a Contested Willpower roll, and if half or more of the targets successfully resist, the whole ritual fails.



# Appendix - Characters

The various NPCs presented here are designed to be challenging for Insight Rank 3 characters, but can easily be adjusted to fit a party with a lower power level or with few or no bushi. The simplest way to lower Shinroku's and Toji's power level is to reduce their School Rank. For instance, at rank 2 Toji does not get to make attacks as Simple Actions. Reducing Traits like Agility or Reflexes, or reducing the Earth Ring, will also considerably weaken the NPCs. As usual, the Gamemaster is the best judge of what will be an appropriate challenge for the players.

Also note that while Shinroku and his cultists have the ability to force the Taint upon the PCs, the GM should consider the permanent nature of the Taint before inflicting such a fate on them. Evil is seldom fair, but not all players will relish the challenge of playing a character who spends a lifetime fighting against internal corruption.

## SHINROKU, MAHO-TSUKAI

AIR 3	EARTH 3	FIRE 3	WATER 3	VOID 2
AWARENESS 4	WILLPOWER 4	-	-	-

Honor: 0.5      Status: 0.5      Infamy: 1.0

Initiative Roll: 6k3      Attack Roll: 7k3  
 Damage Roll: 4k1      Armor TN: 20 (with Ashigaru Armor: 23 and Reduction 1)  
 Primary Weapon: Knife (Tanto)      Wounds: 0-18 (+0), 19-27 (+3), 28-36 (+5), 37-45 (+10), 46-54 (+15), 55-63 (+20), 64-72 (Down), 73-80 (Out), 81: Dead

School/Rank: Chuda Shugenja 3  
 Shadowlands Taint: 3.2  
 Skills: Acting 3, Calligraphy (Cipher) 2, Courtier 2, Defense 2, Etiquette 3, Forgery 3, Horsemanship 1, Hunting 1, Intimidation (Control) 5, Knives 4, Lore: Maho 4, Lore: Shadowlands 4, Meditation (Void Recovery) 2, Sincerity (Deceit) 7, Spellcraft 6, Stealth (Spell Casting) 3, Temptation (Bribery) 2  
 Shadowlands Powers: Blessing of the Dark One, Father of Lies

## UNDEAD OPPOSITION

The complete stats for Zombies and Undead Revenants can be found in the Legends of the Five Rings Fourth Edition corebook.

Spells: \* denotes memorized spells that can be cast without the scroll

- ☉ Maho: Bleeding\*, Blood Rite, Disrupt the Limb\*, Summon Undead Champion\*, Sinful Dreams, Curse of the Black Tongue, Spreading the Darkness, Sharing the Darkness, Essence of Undeath
- ☉ Elemental: Sense, Commune, Summon, Call upon the Wind, Armor of Earth\*, The Fires From Within\*, Path to Inner Peace

Advantages:

- ☉ Friend of the Elements: Earth
- ☉ Magic Resistance (4 points)

Disadvantages:

- ☉ Dark Fate
- ☉ Insensitive

Equipment: Knife, Scroll Satchel, Ashigaru Armor, Stolen Peasant Clothes and Carpenter Tools

## TOJI, TAINTED WARRIOR

AIR 2	EARTH 4	FIRE 2	WATER 3	VOID 3
REFLEXES 3	-	AGILITY 3	-	-

Honor: 0.5      Status: 0.5      Infamy: 1.0

Initiative Roll: 6k3      Attack Roll: 8k3 +3  
 Damage Roll: 10k2      Armor TN: 20 (with Light Armor: 25 and Reduction 3)  
 Primary Weapon: Black Steel Blade (Katana)      Wounds: 0-31 (+0), 32-42 (+2), 43-53 (+7), 54-64 (+12), 65-75 (+17), 76-86 (Down), 87-98 (Out), 99: Dead

School/Rank: Daigotsu Bushi 3  
 Shadowlands Taint: 3.7  
 Skills: Athletics 4, Battle 2, Defense 6, Etiquette 2, Forgery 2, Heavy Weapons (Ono) 3, Horsemanship 4, Hunting 4, Iaijutsu 5, Intimidation (Bullying) 4, Jiu-jutsu 3, Kenjutsu (Katana) 5, Lore: Maho 3, Lore: Shadowlands 3, Meditation (Void Recovery) 2, Sincerity (Deceit) 3, Stealth 3  
 Shadowlands Powers: Monstrous Strength

Advantages:

- ☉ Sacred Weapon: Black Steel Blade
- ☉ Strength of the Earth
- ☉ Touch of the Spirit Realms: Jigoku

Disadvantages:

- ☉ Brash
- ☉ Insensitive

Equipment: Wakizashi, Katana (Black Steel Blade), Ono, Light Armor, Stolen Clothes and Magistrate Badge of Office.



## MAHO-TSUKAI CULTIST

AIR 2	EARTH 3	FIRE 2	WATER 2	VOID 2
AWARENESS 3	-	-	PERCEPTION 3	-
Honor: 0.5		Status: 0.5		Infamy: 0.5
Initiative Roll: 3k2		Attack Roll: 6k2		
Damage Roll: 3k1		Armor TN: 15		
Primary Weapon: Knife (Tanto)		Wounds: 0-15 (+0), 16-21 (+3), 22-27 (+5), 28-33 (+10), 34-39 (+15), 40-45 (+20), 46-51 (Down), 52-56 (Out), 57: Dead		

School/Rank: Insight Rank 1, no School  
 Shadowlands Taint: 1.9  
 Skills: Calligraphy 2, Commerce 2, Etiquette 2, Forgery 2, Hunting 2, Intimidation 2, Investigation 2, Jujutsu 2, Knives (Tanto) 4, Lore: Maho 5, Lore: Shadowlands 3, Medicine 2, Sincerity (Deceit) 3, Stealth 2, Temptation 3  
 Spells: All maho, \* denotes memorized spells that can be cast without the scroll. Bleeding, Disrupt the Limb\*, Summon Undead Champion, Pain\*, Spreading the Darkness, Sharing the Darkness  
 Advantages: none  
 Disadvantages:  
 • Gullible  
 • Insensitive  
 Equipment: Tanto, Blood-stained Monk Robes

## TAINED RONIN

AIR 2	EARTH 3	FIRE 2	WATER 2	VOID 2
-	-	AGILITY 4	STRENGTH 3	-
Honor: 1.5		Status: 0.5		Infamy: 0.5
Initiative Roll: 3k2		Attack Roll: 4k2		
Damage Roll: 5k2		Armor TN: 15 (with Light Armor: 20 and Reduction 3)		
Primary Weapon: Katana		Wounds: 0-18 (+0), 19-27 (+3), 28-36 (+5), 37-45 (+10), 46-54 (+15), 55-63 (+20), 64-72 (Down), 73-80 (Out), 81: Dead		
Secondary Weapon: Yumi				

School/Rank: Ronin Rank 1 (Forest Killers)  
 Shadowlands Taint: 1.5  
 Skills: Athletics 2, Commerce 2, Defense 2, Hunting 2, Intimidation 2, Investigation (Notice) 2, Jujutsu 2, Kenjutsu (Katana) 5, Kyujutsu 2, Lore: Maho 1, Ninjutsu 2, Sincerity (Deceit) 3, Stealth 2  
 Advantages: none  
 Disadvantages:  
 • Insensitive  
 • Social Disadvantage  
 Equipment: Katana, Yumi and 20 Willow Leaf Arrows, Light Armor

## TARO, MAHO-TSUKAI LAPDOG

AIR 2	EARTH 2	FIRE 2	WATER 1	VOID 1
-	WILLPOWER 3	-	PERCEPTION 3	-
Honor: 0.5		Status: 0.0		Glory: 0.0
Initiative Roll: 3k2		Attack Roll: 5k2		
Damage Roll: 3k1		Armor TN: 15		
Primary Weapon: Knife (Tanto)		Wounds: 0-10 (+0), 11-14 (+3), 15-18 (+5), 19-22 (+10), 23-26 (+15), 27-30 (+20), 31-34 (Down), 35-37 (Out), 38: Dead		

School/Rank: Insight Rank 1, no School  
 Shadowlands Taint: 0.8  
 Skills: Animal Handling 2, Athletics 2, Commerce 2, Craft: Farming 2, Hunting 2, Intimidation 4, Investigation 2, Knives (Tanto) 3, Medicine 1, Sincerity (Deceit) 5, Sleight of Hand 3, Stealth 5  
 Advantages:  
 • Luck (3 points)  
 • Quick  
 • Wary  
 Disadvantages:  
 • Bad Fortune: Disfigurement  
 • Driven (Gain power)  
 • Missing Eye (left eye)  
 • Missing Limb (Crippled left arm)  
 • Seven Fortunes' Curse: Benten' Curse  
 Equipment: tanto

## SOCHURO, ETA HUNTER

AIR 2	EARTH 2	FIRE 2	WATER 2	VOID 1
REFLEXES 3	-	-	PERCEPTION 4	-
Honor: 0.5		Status: -2.0		Glory: 0.0
Initiative Roll: 4k3		Attack Roll: 6k2		
Damage Roll: 3k1		Armor TN: 20		
Primary Weapon: Knife (Tanto)		Wounds: 0-10 (+0), 11-14 (+3), 15-18 (+5), 19-22 (+10), 23-26 (+15), 27-30 (+20), 31-34 (Down), 35-37 (Out), 38: Dead		

School/Rank: Insight Rank 1, no School  
 Shadowlands Taint: 0.6  
 Skills: Athletics 2, Hunting 5, Intimidation 2, Investigation 2, Jujutsu 2, Knives (Tanto) 4, Kyujutsu 5, Sincerity (Deceit) 3, Stealth 5  
 Advantages:  
 • Wary  
 • Way of the Land (Mushi Mura Area)  
 Disadvantages:  
 • Brash  
 • Insensitive  
 Equipment: Tanto, Han-kyu and 10 Willow Leaf Arrows



### TAKASHI, CURSED YORIKI

AIR 3	EARTH 3	FIRE 3	WATER 2	VOID: 2
-	-	-	PERCEPTION 4	-

Honor: 6.0      Status: 3.0      Glory: 1.0

Initiative Roll: 6k3

Attack Roll: 7k3

Damage Roll: 6k2

Armor TN: 20 (with Light Armor: 25 and Reduction 3)

Primary Weapon: Katana      Wounds: 0-15 (+0), 16-21 (+3), 22-27 (+5), 28-33 (+10), 34-39 (+15), 40-45 (+20), 46-51 (Down), 52-56 (Out), 57: Dead

School/Rank: Bushi 3 (select an appropriate bushi school from Takashi's clan)

Shadowlands Taint: 0.4

Skills: Athletics 3, Battle 2, Calligraphy 2, Commerce 2, Defense 4, Etiquette 2, Forgery 2, Horsemanship 4, Hunting 4, Iaijutsu 4, Intimidation 2, Investigation (Interrogation, Notice, Search) 4, Jiujutsu 3, Kenjutsu (Katana) 5, Lore: Law 4, Lore: Theology 2, Medicine 2, Meditation (Void Recovery) 3, Sincerity (Honesty) 3, Stealth 3, Tea Ceremony 2

Advantages:

- Seven Fortunes' Blessing: Ebisu

Disadvantages:

- Ascetic
- Lost Love (Wife)

Equipment: wakizashi, katana, light armor

### AKANE, BOKU, CHIKATA, CURSED BUDOKA

AIR 2	EARTH 3	FIRE 2	WATER 2	VOID 2
-	-	AGILITY 3	STRENGTH 3	-

Honor: 4.0      Status: 0.2      Glory: 0.5

Initiative Roll: 4k2

Attack Roll: 6k2

Damage Roll: 5k2

Armor TN: 15 (with Ashigaru Armor: 18 and Reduction 1)

Primary Weapon: Nagamaki      Wounds: 0-15 (+0), 16-21 (+3), 22-27 (+5), 28-33 (+10), 34-39 (+15), 40-45 (+20), 46-51 (Down), 52-56 (Out), 57: Dead

Secondary Weapon: Yumi

School/Rank: Insight Rank 2, no School

Shadowlands Taint: 0.3

Skills: Animal Handling 3, Athletics 4, Commerce 2, Defense 3, Games: Fortunes & Winds 3, Hunting 4, Intimidation 2, Investigation (Notice) 3, Jiujutsu 3, Kyujutsu (Yumi) 4, Lore: Law 2, Lore: Underworld 2, Medicine 1, Polearms (Nagamaki) 4, Stealth 5

Advantages:

- Large (Akane)
- Luck (Boku, 3 points)
- Daredevil (Chikata)

Disadvantages: none

Equipment: Nagamaki, Yumi and 20 Willow Leaf Arrows, Ashigaru Armor





## KAGOME, CURSED NUN

AIR 3	EARTH 2	FIRE 2	WATER 3	VOID 3
-	-	AGILITY 3	-	-

Honor: 5.0      Status: 0.0      Glory: 1.0

Initiative Roll: 5k3      Attack Roll: 7k3  
Damage Roll: 4k2      Armor TN: 20 (with Soul of the Four Winds: 25)  
Primary Weapon: Un-armed      Wounds: 0-10 (+0), 11-14 (+3), 15-18 (+5), 19-22 (+10), 23-26 (+15), 27-30 (+20), 31-34 (Down), 35-37 (Out), 38: Dead

School/Rank: The Four Temples Rank 2

Shadowlands Taint: 0.1

Skills: Acting 2, Athletics 4, Calligraphy 3, Commerce 2, Courtier 1, Defense 3, Etiquette 2, Jiujutsu (Grappling) 5, Lore: Theology 5, Medicine (Disease, Herbalism, Wound Treatment) 5, Meditation 4, Staves (Bo) 4, Stealth 2

Kiho: Chi Protection, Ride the Water Dragon, Soul of the Four Winds, Void Fist, Way of the Earth

Advantages:

- ☉ Friend of the Elements: Water

Disadvantages:

- ☉ Soft-Hearted

Equipment: Bo, Monk Robes

## TETSU, FORMER ASHIGARU

AIR 2	EARTH 3	FIRE 2	WATER 3	VOID 3
REFLEXES 3	-	AGILITY 3	-	-

Honor: 4.5      Status: 0.1      Glory: 0.4

Initiative Roll: 5k3      Attack Roll: 6k3  
Damage Roll: 6k3      Armor TN: 20  
Primary Weapon: Axe (Masakari)      Wounds: 0-15 (+0), 16-21 (+3), 22-27 (+5), 28-33 (+10), 34-39 (+15), 40-45 (+20), 46-51 (Down), 52-56 (Out), 57: Dead

School/Rank: Insight Rank 2, no School

Skills: Athletics 2, Commerce 1, Craft: Blacksmithing 5, Craft: Farming 3, Defense 3, Heavy Weapons (Masakari) 3, Hunting 2, Jiujutsu 2, Knives 3, Lore: War 3, Spears (Yari) 3, Stealth 3

Advantages:

- ☉ Crab Hands
- ☉ Large
- ☉ Quick Healer

Disadvantages:

- ☉ Dependant (Family)

Equipment: Knife ( Tanto), Axe (Masakari), Jade Finger, Blacksmith Tools

## AVERAGE VILLAGER

AIR 1	EARTH 2	FIRE 2	WATER 2	VOID 1
REFLEXES 2	STAMINA 3	-	STRENGTH 3	-

Honor: 3.5      Status: 0.0      Glory: 0.0

Initiative Roll: 3k2      Attack Roll: 4k2  
Damage Roll: 3k2      Armor TN: 15  
Primary Weapon: Sickle (Kama)      Wounds: 0-10 (+0), 11-14 (+3), 15-18 (+5), 19-22 (+10), 23-26 (+15), 27-30 (+20), 31-34 (Down), 35-37 (Out), 38: Dead

School/Rank: Insight Rank 1, no School

Shadowlands Taint: 0.2

Skills: Animal Handling 3, Athletics 3, Commerce 1, Craft: Farming 5, Hunting 2, Jiujutsu 1, Knives 2, Lore: Farming 5, Lore: Peasant Superstitions 3, Stealth 3

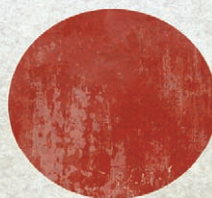
Advantages:

- ☉ Bland

Disadvantages:

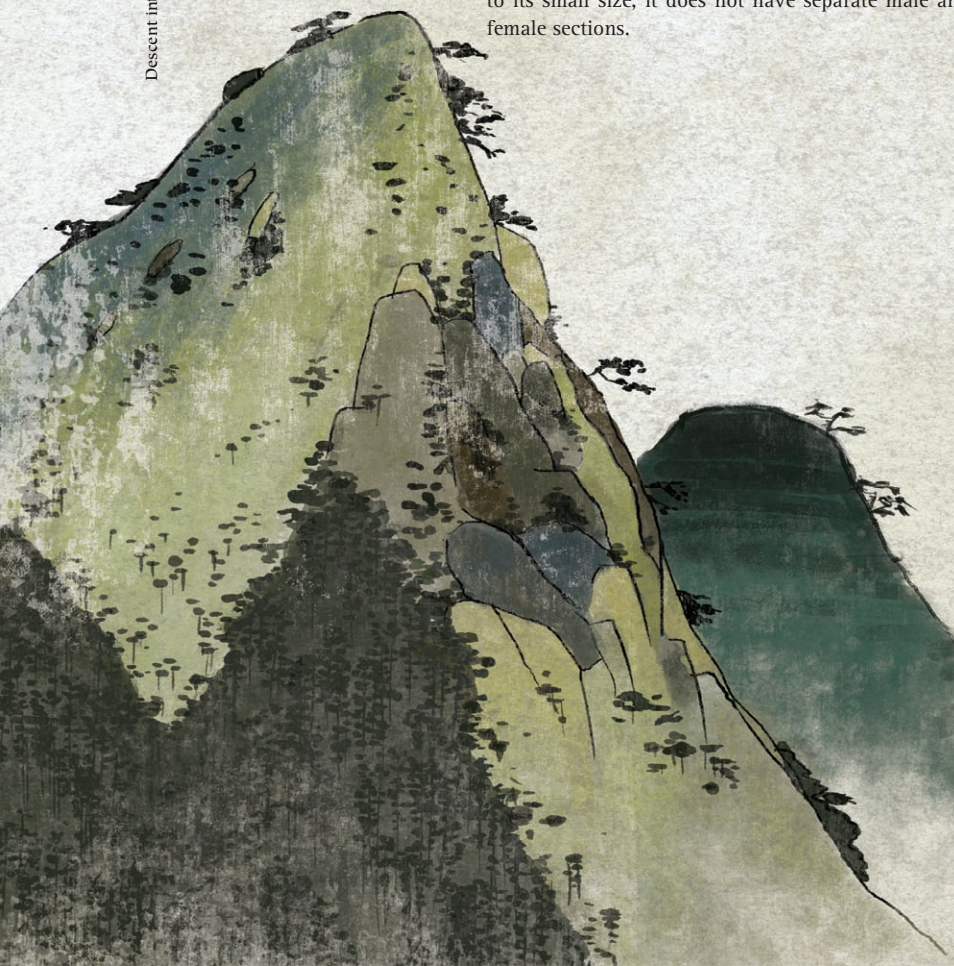
- ☉ Dependant (Family)

Equipment: Sickle (Kama), Axe (Masakari), Farming Tools



# Mushi Mura Map

1. **MAIN GATE:** A low dry stone wall surrounds Mushi Mura to protect it from wild animals which could come from the nearby woods. This is the main entrance to the village, the only one which can let wagons pass through.
2. **FOREST GATE:** This gate allows villagers to exit Mushi Mura and access the woods. The woods near the village are not thick and the undergrowth is minimal. This is where villagers go to harvest lumber and wood for fire. It is barely wide enough to let a warhorse through.
3. **ORCHARD GATE:** This narrow gate leads to the plum tree orchard.
4. **SEMI KAWA (CICADA RIVER):** this narrow stream is the main source of water for the rice paddies' irrigation canals. It is only 6' deep at the center of its bed and it often dries up during the last month of summer. Its water is a bit murky and the villagers prefer drinking water from the well.
5. **THE YORIKI'S HOUSE:** This is the largest and most sophisticated house of the village, but remains quite modest by the standards of a larger city. The yoriki's living quarters and office are in this building.
6. **GUEST HOUSE:** On the rare occasions when other samurai visit Mushi Mura, they are put up in this building, connected to the yoriki's house. This is where the PCs will be offered to stay.
7. **PRIVATE BATHHOUSE:** Even though the village has a communal bathhouse, the yoriki and his guests have access to a private bathhouse where they can relax. Due to its small size, it does not have separate male and female sections.
8. **KAGOME'S HOUSE:** this is where the nun Kagome usually lives. There is a small study where Kagome practices calligraphy. Among the scrolls there is a copy of the Tao of Shinsei. There is also another room where Kagome treats the sick or injured.
9. **SHRINE:** The village's only shrine is dedicated to Inari, the Fortune of Rice. It is a simple wooden sculpture surrounded by food offerings and burning incense sticks.
10. **WELL:** This square stone well is the village's main source of clean fresh water.
11. **HALL:** This is Mushi Mura's communal house. When the sun is the hottest in summer, or during the long cold days of winter, this is where most of the village's population gathers to talk or do handicraft work (like weaving baskets or making clothes).
12. **WASHHOUSE:** Under the wooden roof, there is a large stone basin where women wash their family's clothes.
13. **BATHHOUSE:** Even a small village like Mushi Mura has a bathhouse. After a hard day in the fields, villagers can enjoy a quiet rest here. There is a single large pool in the building, but a bamboo fence keeps men and women separated.
14. **GRANARIES:** All the village's rice and barley production is stored in these round stilt houses.
15. **SALT CELLAR:** Dried fish and plums are stored in salt in this stilt house.
16. **BUDOKA HOUSE:** Each of these houses accommodates one or two of the yoriki's budoka assistants. They are currently empty.
17. **STABLE:** The yoriki owns one pony, and visiting travelers can leave their horses here.
18. **TETSU'S HOUSE:** This is the village's smithy, where Tetsu lives with his family.
19. **KURATA'S HOUSE:** This is the village headsman's house.
20. **SOCHURO'S SHACK:** This is where the eta hunter lives alone.
21. **MINAMI'S HOUSE:** This is where young Minami lives with her family.
22. **SHIZU'S HOUSE:** This is where Shizu lived with his wife and son until the maho-tsukai took them away.
23. **SHINROKU'S HOUSE:** This is the carpenter's workshop. Shinroku killed him and took his place.
24. **OKOMI'S HOUSE:** This is the old midwife's house, where she lives with her two children and their spouses.
25. **TARO'S HOUSE:** This is where Taro lived with his parents. Both have been sent to the maho-tsukai's camp at the Naga ruins where they have been sacrificed.
26. **GATEKEEPER'S HOUSE:** One of the yoriki's budoka usually stays here to open the gate and check visitors. It is currently empty.
27. **COWSHED:** The village's cattle are kept here when they are not used in the fields.





**Mushi Mura**

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