

Legion of the Lost

**A One-Round Low-Rank Adventure for
Heroes of Rokugan: the Nightmare War
Month of Doji, 1302 (Summer)**

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A new world brings with it new opportunities and new threats.

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This module is written for the Legend of the Five Rings: Fourth Edition, published by Alderac Entertainment.

GM's Information

THIS SCENARIO SHOULD NOT BE RUN COLD!

Please read the scenario thoroughly before attempting to run it.

A four-hour time block has been allocated for playing this game. The actual playing time should be about three and a half hours.

It is a good idea to ask each player to put a name tag in front of him or her. The tag should have the player's name at the bottom, and the character's name, gender, glory and status at the top. This makes it easier for the players to keep track of who is playing which character.

Some of the text in this scenario is written so that you may present it as written to the players, while other text is for your eyes only. Text for the players will be in ***bold italics***. It is strongly recommended that you paraphrase the player text, instead of reading it aloud, as some of the text is general and must be adapted to the specific situation or to actions of the player characters. All bulleted information is just that, pure information. Feed it to the players through an NPC when appropriate, as sometimes reading it straight just doesn't sound right.

Players will have Module Tracking Sheets that need to be filled out at the end of the game, which is to keep track of certain circumstances and events for future GM's to create a better roleplaying experience for the player. Important information to be included in the game will be listed at the beginning of the module, and information that needs to be recorded will be listed at the end of the module. Please fill out the GM tracking sheet attached to the end of this module and return it to the Campaign Coordinator. If you need an electronic version of the form, please contact the Campaign Administrator or Campaign Coordinator (e-mail addresses are available on the website).

Rokugan has a complex and rich culture that is different in many ways from modern Western civilization. The Legend of the Five Rings book details these numerous differences, but it is suggested that GMs keep a few specifics in mind.

- *Family name precedes personal name for all characters; Akodo Toturi was a member of the Akodo family with the personal name of Toturi.*

- *Samurai do not commonly concern themselves with money or commerce; exchanges between samurai are treated as gifts, and payments are made to peasants as though humoring the lower orders petty ways.*
- *An event is not truly considered to have happened without samurai witness; even criminal investigations rely entirely upon eyewitness testimony.*

Glory and Honor Awards and Penalties

This adventure contains suggested Glory and Honor awards (and penalties) for dealing with the challenges presented herein. However, at times the players may take extra actions which the GM judges worthy of additional reward or punishment. **Please consult the Honor table on page 91 and the Glory table on page 93** of the Legend of the Five Rings Fourth Edition core sourcebook for more specific guidelines for Honor and Glory gains and losses. Specifically, be mindful of the performing PC's current Honor, Glory, and Infamy when meting out rewards and punishments.

Reminder

This module is intended for entertainment purposes; this means that the goal is to provide an enjoyable playing experience for the players. The events of the module should be challenging, so as to ensure the players have a sense of accomplishment, but the mechanics presented here are, ultimately, guidelines. If adjustments are necessary to adapt to the specific group of players, it is suggested that care should be taken to ensure the player characters do have a reasonable chance of achieving their goals (or at least of achieving an entertaining failure). Remember that the GM has the final word at the table, and use that power with both discretion and consideration.

Adjusting for Party Strength

This is a Low Rank adventure, and thus can involve parties of widely varying capabilities. The encounters have been optimized for a party of average Rank One.

Although most of the challenges here are role-play oriented and thus not terribly dependent on party strength, a few changes can be made to adjust the adventure difficulty for low-end and high-end parties, as follows:

Low End Party (all characters Rank One): The Yodotai Scouts have lost their first two Wound Ranks; the Yodotai Centurion has an Earth of 3; the GM may lower the TN of Skill Rolls by 5 at their discretion.

High End Party (there are more than three Rank Two non-courtiers): The Yodotai Scouts are uninjured; the Yodotai Centurion still has a broken arm, but has only lost the first Wound Rank; the GM may increase the TN of Social Skill Rolls in Zakyo Toshi by 5.

Adventure Summary and Background

The newly-created Owl Clan has been granted lands and a castle by the grace of Iweko VII. The Minor Clan will face many hardships as it attempts to solve the spiritual crisis that has brought them to this version of Rokugan, and they will need to establish control over their holdings in order to support themselves in this mission. A few hundred samurai transplanted into new lands would find this task difficult, and the adjustments many of them must make to the differences between what they are used to and what they now face do not make it easier. Additionally, the Owl are looked upon with suspicion by their two closest Great Clan neighbors, the Scorpion and Crab, making their political position somewhat tenuous at best.

Beyond that, however, Sezar's stabilization of this Rokugan has made it a rare point of constance among the shattered realms. A portal to yet another version of Rokugan has opened, to a world where the Ninth Kami was victorious on the first Day of Thunder and the entire world is torn by a millenia-long war with the Yodotai Empire. A legion of these hardened warriors has found their way to this Rokugan, and with no experience of samurai other than as Tainted monsters, are preparing to fall upon what they regard as a rare opportunity to strike at their enemies' interior.

It will be up to the PCs to decide how to face these invaders; will they attempt to slow their advance and cut off the portal that brought them, or will they turn to the invaders' target to warn them and attempt to make some ties with their neighbors in the Scorpion Clan?

Character Notes

Check the PCs' character sheets for the following:

- Shadowlands Taint (specifically, a full Rank)
- Advantages or Disadvantages related to the peasantry (Blessing/Curse of Ebisu or Daikoku, for example)
- Non-human PCs
- Language: Yodotai

Introduction

Shiro no Fukurou, the Castle of the Owl, was originally built in the seventh century during a period of conflict over expansion between the Scorpion and Crab. Eventually, both clans withdrew their claims, leaving a wide swath of unaligned territory to the east of the Shinomen Mori as a buffer zone between them, to be administered by the Imperial families. The Crab and Scorpion remain normally uneasy neighbors, but the distance between them has helped reduce the conflict between them.

All of this makes living in the middle less than comfortable, especially when one of the few issues the Great Clans agree on is a certain suspicion of anything spiritually out of the ordinary. The fledgling Owl Clan meets that description to an uncomfortable degree. However, the Imperial mandate given to the travelers from among the realms has earned you time to prove your value, and the first step will be taking control of the lands granted by the grace of the Emperor.

It has been a few weeks since the end of Fragile Dreams (NMW02); the PCs have formalized their oaths of fealty with the new families of their new Minor Clan, and all but a few members of the clan have taken possession of their territory. The ruined castle has been restored by the PCs' hard work and significant exercise of Lord Sezar's power. That the neighboring clans are keeping a close eye on the Owl goes without saying (save, unfortunately, by the occasional less-than-subtle Crab samurai), but the Owl have a start on a base of operations.

The Owl Clan's lands are between the River of Gold and the Shinomen Mori, north of the Crab and south of the Scorpion. The village of Kudo, headquarters of the

Minor Clan Alliance, is across the river, and several other Minor Clans have holdings to the east and south east.

The castle itself is obviously lacking in most of the refinements that samurai would expect in even a Minor Clan's seat of power. However, the practical considerations have been seen to, and while there may be little to no decorations, there are at least rooms for people to sleep out of the rain. Likewise, the start of a village outside the castle walls has sprung up. There is no industry or trade to speak of yet, as the only peasants in the area are those laborers involved in the construction and a scant handful of servants in the castle for the highest-ranking Owl. However, the basic infrastructure is being established as quickly as possible.

All of the samurai of the Owl Clan will be kept busy securing their new stronghold and establishing all of the basic organization for their mandate. This does not necessarily involve direct physical labor, but time is short and Sezaru is unwilling to devote too much spiritual attention to purely mundane matters (preferring instead to keep studying the supernatural crisis).

This is a good opportunity for the PCs to establish their characters and develop in-character relationships with the other PCs. They should be allowed to determine what their usual duties are, and what their living arrangements are like, within the bounds of the Status they earned during *Fragile Dreams*. PCs with a Status of 3 may have rooms in the castle itself at their discretion; PCs with a Status of 2 likely have a small house in the village springing up around the castle. PCs with a Status of 1 or less are most likely to reside with other samurai of like station, whether in barracks or as part of the entourage of a higher-ranking Owl. Quarters for the Sukune are in a separate building away from the central castle, with rooms designed to accommodate the mostly nonhuman family.

A given PCs' responsibilities are likely to stem primarily from their family, though more attention than usual in Rokugan is being given to the individual's strengths and preferences. As the Owl are a random collection of strangers, unbound by pre-existing ties of blood or loyalty, the leadership of the clan is trying to get as many of the spiritual refugees working together as they can.

Sezaru

The samurai who report directly to Sezaru are primarily shugenja or scholars, and those responsible for the direct service of them. Sezaru's first priority is to

resolve the crisis of the realms; to that end, he is intent on establishing methods of research, pooling the knowledge of the nascent clan, and getting the disparate samurai united. This last task goes beyond his family, however: Sezaru wants the Owl to work together as seamlessly as possible, which means forging them into a coherent organization without the benefit of centuries of tradition.

Hanashi

The Poison Chrysanthemum is a highly intelligent political mastermind; while Sezaru's power as a shugenja makes him the logical choice to lead the clan in its mandate, most of the practical matters involving the clan will likely be controlled by her. Her vassals are likely to be tasked with forming an internal bureaucracy to manage the Owl Clan's affairs, as well as trying to establish relations with the rest of the Empire.

Kobe

The bushi of the Owl, under the guidance of Kobe, are going to be busy developing basic defenses for the new Minor Clan. Like Sezaru, Kobe is focused on getting his samurai to work together, though his purpose is focused on keeping the castle and lands secure. Kobe's methods tend to be very straightforward, involving training methods easily identifiable as from the Imperial Legions (a group that frequently has to get samurai from different backgrounds to fight alongside each other).

Seizoku

Though he simply views himself as the most pragmatic of the Owl's leaders, Seizoku is far more willing to involve himself with less above-board methods. Seizoku has no need for (and tries to avoid) public accolades, and so his vassals tend to be assigned to support tasks for the other families, where they can handle those matters that other samurai might hesitate over. Seizoku samurai will be working with the Hanashi to develop intelligence assets in other lands, and with the Kobe to prevent such assets from being developed among the Owl.

Sukune

While the Sukune are something of a "catch-all" family, they have a purpose beyond just providing a place for the non-human members of the clan. In order to promote understanding, the Owl less familiar with normal Rokugan cultural practices will be working with all of the other families – with their survival potentially at risk dealing with "standard" samurai, giving them a basic understanding of etiquette is a priority. Additionally, the Sukune are most likely to be involved

with physical labor, as it does not have as much stigma for many of them.

Part One: the Plains of the Owl

The PCs will have a month or so to develop their routines and determining things like their living arrangements. This should also give them time to get acquainted with the other PCs at the table. In time, however, they will be summoned by one of the higher-ranking Owl samurai for a specific mission.

Meeting with Kobe

Kobe, the daimyo of the military family of the Owl, is only slightly over middle height, but his commanding presence and muscular build make him seem to loom over nearly any group of samurai. His face is stern, and though he appears to be a few years shy of thirty, a hint of premature grey frosts his temples. He nods courteously as you enter his receiving chamber. Another man, taller and with the bald pate of a monk despite the wakizashi tucked in the right side of his obi, rises and offers you a deeper bow.

It is this second man who speaks, in the easy, practiced tones of one used to the courts. "I am Kobe Hikaru, and I have the honor to serve as Kobe-sama's hatamoto. Thank you for your prompt answer to his summons, samurai. Please take your ease." At a gesture, a servant steps forward with a tray of tea cups.

Hikaru will exchange appropriate small talk with the PCs, while Kobe watches intently. It is important to note that Kobe rarely speaks (this is not entirely an affectation, as it is physically uncomfortable for him to do so); however, Hikaru is careful to keep an eye on the daimyo's face and responds to his lord's expression with grace and evident practice, pursuing lines of conversation that are of interest to Kobe and changing the subject when Kobe wishes.

Hikaru is, of course, studying the PCs and assessing their capabilities – he will not be terribly circumspect about it, though he will remain courteous at all times. Kobe, for his part, is generally more interested in those samurai in his service, and his attention will likely cause Hikaru to ask PC bushi about their training and Schools.

Once he has spent an appropriate amount of time for etiquette, Hikaru moves to the point:

With a slight inclination of his head toward the daimyo for permission, Hikaru orders the servant to move a table into the center of the room. Rising, he spreads a pair of worn and faded scrolls out, revealing a map of the central Empire and another of the River of Gold. Both maps cover a great deal of territory, so while the lands of the Owl are shown they are not given any significant detail. "These were the best I could find on our way here, unfortunately," Hikaru murmurs with a slightly dissatisfied air. "According to the Imperial tax records, there are nine villages on these plains. Unfortunately, since these lands were unaligned for seven centuries, there are no local daimyo or village gokenin to work with."

Kobe stirs in his seat, and Hikaru glances swiftly at his lord, nods fractionally, and continues. "Which means that it is imperative for us to learn about the lands we have been granted. Kobe-sama is sending several groups out to survey the region, and you have been chosen as one of these parties." [assuming that not all of the PCs are members of the Kobe family, he will assure them:] "Your lord has granted permission for your service in this matter. The Owl, more than any other clan in this Empire perhaps, must learn to work together efficiently and elegantly."

Assuming that the PCs agree to undertake the mission (though the players should naturally be allowed to formally accept it, and Hikaru would never deny anyone the chance to make a pretty little speech), the Kobe hatamoto will be glad to answer their questions and provide the basic parameters for the mission:

- What are we supposed to do? *"Your task will be to explore the northern quarter of our lands, between the River of Gold and the Shinomen Mori. Make contact with the villages, inform the local headmen that they are now the responsibility of the Owl Clan, and that they will be expected to behave accordingly. Taxation will begin this fall, and specific arrangements will be made in the next few months. Additionally, however, you will take what notes you can on the resources at the clan's disposal – both in the villages and in the territory."*
- What can we expect to find/what are the lands like? *"Well, if we knew that, there would be little point to sending you... We believe that there are a few villages on the plain and along the edge of the Shinomen Mori. I suspect our placement here was not an accident – it seems the Shinomen has a reputation in most worlds as a strange place."*
- What about our neighbors? *"The Scorpion to our north can keep any eye on us from Zakyo Toshi,*

and the Crab have Maemikake across Cherry Blossom Lake to the south. Neither clan trusts us, nor do the Hare, particularly, though that may simply be due to our sudden presence so close. The other Minor Clans have a strong presence in Kudo to the east, so I have some hope of diplomacy being useful. With any luck, the Hanashi family can do something to make allies among our neighbors soon.”

- What resources will we have? *“Provisions and supplies for maps will be provided. We do not have many steeds to spare, but mounts can be provided if you don’t have your own. A full inventory of the clan’s resources is still being taken, so you will have to provide your own gear otherwise.”*
- What should we do if we encounter trouble? *“It is to be hoped that you will not, but you are trusted to do whatever is necessary. If you can handle the situation, do what you can – these are our lands, after all, and it is our responsibility to defend them. If you cannot, then we have to know what we are dealing with. The closest military force of any size would be with our Scorpion neighbors to the north; petitioning a Great Clan for assistance so soon would be a significant loss of face, but better than risk losing things that cannot be recovered.”*
- Why does Kobe not speak for himself? *Hikaru frowns disapprovingly. “That is not relevant to your mission, samurai. Suffice to say that he is capable of speech, but it causes discomfort for him to raise his voice.” The hatamoto glances at his lord, and though Kobe has no discernable expression, he continues hastily, “Kobe-sama is accustomed to making his wishes known, I assure you.”* (This is not a question of Kobe or Hikaru keeping a secret, it is simply a fairly rude question to ask.)
- Why is a courtier speaking for the military leader of the Owl? *Hikaru smiles slightly, amused by the question. “I have a small amount of experience on the battlefield, and some familiarity with strategy and tactics. Also, my service to Kobe-sama predates our arrival here, so it is just my fortune to be in a position to serve.”*

Hikaru and Kobe will answer whatever other questions they can politely, though (again) Kobe will not speak. Of course, since they are sending the PCs to find things out for them, there is very little real information they can provide. When the PCs are ready, Hikaru will thank them on Kobe’s behalf and send them on their way with the maps and a basic itinerary.

Exploration of New Lands

The lands of the Owl Clan mostly consist of gently rolling plains; light woods sprout at the base of the hills from streams leading down to the River of Gold. The soil is fertile and highly likely to provide a rich bounty if given proper attention.

On the whole, early summer in the central Empire is fairly warm and humid, with greater heat later in the season. Travel is not necessarily uncomfortable, though a fan is more than a fashion accessory. The closest village to Shiro no Fukuro is more than a day’s travel away, necessitating a night of rest under the stars. Whatever guard arrangements the PCs set, there are no disturbances during the night. While summer is the “season of war”, there is no active military presence in the area (yet) and there is not enough trade to attract bandits.

Watashibune Kinpaku

The first village the PCs arrive at is a prosperous trade town located on the Imperial Road between the Scorpion city of Zakyo Toshi and the Minor Clan village of Kudo. There are farms built to the south and east along the less-impressive dirt track that leads to Shiro no Fukuro. The presence of samurai on the road attracts a certain amount of attention, though the locals seem far more wary than welcoming.

As you near the village marked on your map as “Watashibune Kinpaku”, the signs of habitation spring up around you. Small farms dot the landscape, with busy workers tending to their fields. Those farmers who stop their labors to watch your approach seem careful to keep their faces blank, though their wariness shows in every movement. By the time you arrive at the town itself, word has obviously spread of your presence: a small knot of peasants wait you at the southern gate into the village. The eldest, a wizened man with wispy white tufts clinging bravely to his scalp, bows deeply; the rest follow suit as he greets you in a dry, cracked voice. “Watashibune Kinpaku welcomes you, honorable samurai. I am Hamecho, the headman of this village. How may we be of service?”

Hamecho is somewhat more relaxed than the rest of the villagers, as well as being better at hiding his suspicion. The locals will do their best to avoid giving offense to a group of samurai, but it must be remembered that they were not responsible to anyone but the Imperial tax collectors for generations. The recent change is going to take them some time to get used to as well. Some of the peasants actually think that the PCs may be bandits

or monsters – the presence of non-human PCs will increase the odds of those assumptions.

All of that said, however, they are still peasants and will act appropriately subservient to the PC samurai. Hamecho does his best to answer the PCs' questions, and will in fact attempt to monopolize their time (on the belief that he is better at dealing with the samurai than anyone else in the village).

These are the major facts about Watashibune Kinpaku; the GM should paraphrase them to the PCs as appropriate for their interactions. Hamecho is eager to present his community in a good light, but all of this information can be learned by asking around town as well.

- Watashibune Kinpaku is between the prosperous Scorpion city of Zakyo Toshi and the village of Kudo, which serves as the headquarters of the Minor Clan Alliance.
- The village is moderately-sized, with a population of 300, and another 200 or so living in the farms scattered across the countryside.
- The village is just under a day's ride away from Zakyo Toshi, though the Scorpion never claimed it (leaving it to the Imperial authorities that had controlled it before they annexed the city a century and a half ago).
- Kudo is about two days' to the southeast, across the River of Gold. There is another village, Hashi Kinpaku, with a bridge for the Imperial Road across the river between Watashibune Kinpaku and Kudo.
- Watashibune Kinpaku has a ferry, a sizable marketplace near the river docks, several inns, and a healthy economy based on trade along the Imperial Road.
- The village also has a few artisans of note – a skilled blacksmith, a noted potter, and a master weaver. Other industries in the village are sufficient to see to their local needs, but those three are particularly capable in their fields.
- Word has come to the village that the Emperor has given the Owl Clan lands in the area, so they know that they are supposed to serve the new Minor Clan. However, they have little real idea what that actually means.
- The next village on the PCs' itinerary is Kuruma no Mura, two days' west. The locals trade with Kuruma no Mura, selling their lumber, produce, and trade goods on the river and to passing merchants, but they look down on the more isolated village as being somewhat backward.

What the PCs want to do in the village is entirely up to them. Simply talking to the headman and taking note of the village's presence is enough to qualify for their mission; however, a little bit of extra work can profit them and their new clan.

In order to get anywhere with these peasants, the PCs must first put the locals at ease – this requires a Social Skill roll (using a Skill depending on the method used) and Awareness. Courtier (Manipulation) for more subtle efforts, Perform: Oratory for a public speech, Sincerity (Honesty) for appeal to the standard social structure of Empire; it is ultimately at the GM's discretion what Skill should apply to a given method. The TN for this roll is 25, though it is increased by 5 if there are any obviously non-human PCs. Only one PC must make this roll to win over the community as a whole; this will allow any member of the party to approach individual villagers. If none of the PCs can succeed, however, they cannot overcome the locals' suspicions.

The traders, blacksmith, potter, weaver all represent business opportunities for the clan and PCs (these individuals are not detailed here, beyond the broad concept of their location and occupation, to allow the players to personalize their relationship with a potential vassal as they wish). By approaching a merchant with a direct offer of patronage, a PC can gain their support and revenue. This does require a social roll of either **Commerce / Awareness** or **Sincerity / Awareness** (TN 30). Success gains the PC a rank of the Wealth Advantage, with each additional Raise called gaining an additional Rank. This does not cost any experience, but does come with an Obligation to the merchant (for defense and protection, as part of the patronage agreement). Patronage cannot be offered to more than one merchant per village.

Searching for less-than-legal entrepreneurs is possible, though likely to take a great deal of time. There are a few smugglers who work in the area, bringing goods into or out of the Scorpion lands without the attention of the authorities. Finding these resourceful traders requires using **Lore: Underworld / Intelligence** (TN 30) and spending at least two days buying drinks in the less savory sake houses of the town (costing roughly two koku). Coming to an arrangement with them requires another Awareness-based roll as above, though Lore: Underworld can be used for the Skill and the TN is only 25. No matter what Skill is used, this counts as a use of a Low Skill for purposes of losing Honor. Note that this also does not provide enough testimony for any legal action against criminals.

As a village dependent on trade for its existence, there is a shrine to Daikoku in the town. However, it is not particularly well-maintained, as the locals are a hard-headed pragmatic sort and there is no member of the clergy in residence currently.

Kuruma no Mura

The PCs receive a much different reception at the second village. Two days from Watashibune Kinpaku, Kuruma no Mura is a sprawling community with rice paddies extending for miles east of the Shinomen. The village itself is built almost to the edge of the great forest.

The rolling plains begin to be covered by rice paddies as you head west. A dark line on the horizon resolves itself just before noon on the second day as the looming trees of the Shinomen Mori, and as you near the infamous forest, the rice paddies give way to a large village in its shadow. After your last stop, it is not surprising that your arrival has gained the attention of the locals. This time, however, their attitude is one of expectation. Where faces in the last village looked on you with suspicion, now you see a burgeoning hope.

A grey-haired woman, standing straight despite her years, gives you a deep bow. She offers her greetings in a greatly relieved voice, "Thank the kami, the samurai are here. Please, come this way, Kuruma no Mura is at your service."

The peasants at Kuruma no Mura are quite worried; many of the villagers make a living out of the bountiful resources of the Shinomen Mori, and several of them have disappeared in the last few days.

Again, the leader of the village – Mieshi, the woman that greeted the PCs – will tell the PCs everything they will want to know about the town. In this case, it is because she is serving as the spokesperson for her town, who are desperately hoping the PCs can protect them from whatever has claimed nearly a dozen of the foresters.

- Kuruma no Mura is slightly larger than the last village, having nearly 500 residents of the town proper and 300 or so farmers scattered across a much wider area of land.
- Virtually all of the local peasants make a living off the great forest to the west in some fashion; the town has a thriving lumber business and a decently-sized mill to support it as well as several skilled woodcarvers. Hunters provide game for the peasants, and several families have hereditary businesses gathering herbs, fruit, or mushrooms.

- Kuruma no Mura sends nearly all of their trade goods and lumber east to Watashibune Kinpaku; this has kept them prosperous despite some ill feelings between the villages. Most of the locals prefer to allow the other town the problems inherent in dealing with the larger Empire and are willing to lose out on a greater chance of profit by avoiding greater risks.
- The local villagers are very peaceful and generally happy; they have lived for generations here, avoiding most of the major conflicts in the Empire and always careful to maintain a respectful balance with the spirits of the forest.
- Apart from a few ghost stories, there are very few indications that the villagers have ever had any issues with the "haunted Shinomen." Credit for this is given to the local shrine, dedicated to Hikora, the Fortune of Oak (though all of the fortunes of trees and the forest are revered there).
- Yanagi, the monk that tends the shrine is one of the missing, having left the village five days ago to inquire at the next town, Shinomen no Kage Mura, if they have had any disappearances. Though she would be the first to tell the peasants to keep calm, her absence is one of the factors that has led to the increasing panic.

The same things can be accomplished in Kuruma no Mura as at Watashibune Kinpaku, though rather than getting the peasants to trust them, the first roll is necessary to calm them down. The local merchants and artisans of note include the sawmill that produces the lumber that is the town's main trade good, three furniture makers (specializing in cabinets, tables, and puzzle boxes, respectively), an artist skilled in woodcut printing, and a wagonwright that produces the means for the rest of the town's trade to make it to the larger markets to the east.

Despite being larger than Watashibune Kinpaku, Kuruma no Mura has no crime to speak of. Isolated from the rest of the Empire, there are no strangers in the small community and what small, petty crimes that take place are largely known to all.

The shrine to the forest is a holy site; the care it has been given and the offerings on the altar show that the locals have gone to some effort to remain pious and respectful of the spirits of the woods.

Shinomen no Kage Mura

The next village is a little over a day away, but was attacked by invaders from another world the week before.

Shinomen no Kage Mura (“Shadow of Shinomen Village”) is somewhat smaller than Kuruma no Mura, but built along similar lines with farms scattered across the nearby hills and the town proper built right up to the edge of the forest. However, no farmers tend the fields, and no villagers walk through the streets to stare at you in either suspicion or hope. Nothing moves at all, save for a few silken hangings drifting on the breeze...

The signs of the attack are not visible from outside the town, though it can be seen that a few buildings have been knocked down. Once the PCs approach, however, no roll is required to spot blood spattered on walls and pooled on the ground, indicating the violent assault that took place here. Further details can be gleaned with an **Investigation (Search) / Perception** roll:

- **10:** The villagers were attacked from several directions at once, forcing them all into the town proper in relatively short order. The assault took place more than a week before, though less than two weeks. After the attack, the village was thoroughly searched though little appears to have been taken.
- **15:** The attackers were not mounted and seem to have made no use of archery or fire; the only sign of any fire damage was at the town forge, and it appears to have been contained quickly. (This was most likely done to avoid warning the rest of the region.) The headman’s house, which doubled as a sort of town meeting hall and was the center of heavy resistance, has been gutted. Large crates have been stacked in the main room; they contain various military supplies, from grain and dried meat to stacks of rough paper and pieces of leather and metal that are not recognizable to anyone without some familiarity with the Yodotai (replacement material for armor).
- **20:** The attacking force, numbering roughly 250 troops, was highly disciplined and aggressive. Nearly Three of the larger buildings in the center of town were used to hold prisoners for some time.
- **25:** After a few days (less than a week), the attackers forced the survivors to dig mass graves in the woods and apparently killed most of them there. Some prisoners were taken west, further into the forest, when the attackers moved out.

The village appears to have had less industry than Kuruma no Mura, relying more on gathering resources from the forest (fruit, honey, or game) and farming than on lumber. Being even more isolated than Kuruma no Mura, it was a self-sufficient community with a population around 150.

As the PCs are looking around, they should be given the chance to roll **Investigation (Notice) / Perception** against the Scouts’ **Stealth (Sneaking) / Agility** of 7k3e. The Yodotai are at -5 penalty on their roll because of their prisoner. If the PCs fail, they will be Surprised when the Yodotai attack. Success means that they spot the three gaijin enter the village with a bound prisoner between them that they shove into one of the buildings. Unless the PCs have some reason to recognize Yodotai, they should not realize exactly what they are facing – the appearance of the gaijin is strange to typical Rokugani, and as scouts, this group is not wearing full battlefield armor or gear.

There are two Yodotai Scouts and one Yodotai Spirit-Caller. The Scouts have lost their first Wound Rank; on the assumption that the PCs are Tainted, the Spirit-Caller will begin by summoning a powerful Ancestor to purify the area. This causes a vast, insubstantial warrior to manifest and sweep the area with his enormous sword; while visually impressive, this has no effect unless any of the PCs have a full Rank of the Shadowlands Taint (in which case, they will take 6k4 Wounds). The Spirit-Caller will fight until he is incapacitated. The Scouts will fight until the Spirit-Caller is dropped, then attempt to flee.

Even if a PC is fluent in Yodotai, they will not be able to talk the scouts out of combat – as far as the legionnaires are concerned, the PCs are monsters. The fact that jade has not worked indicates they are powerful monsters. Any attempt to avoid confrontation will be assumed to be deceit.

Yodotai Scouts

Air 2	Earth 3	Fire 3	Water 2	Void 2
Reflexes 3			Perception 3	
Integrity 2.5	Status n/a		Glory n/a	

Initiative: 5k3 **Attack:** 8k3 (gladius or bow, Complex)

Armor TN: 23 (leather armor) **Damage:** 5k2 (gladius) or 4k2 (bow)

Wounds: 15 (+0), 21 (+3), 27 (+5), 33 (+10), 39 (+15), 45 (+20), 51 (Down, +40), 57 (Dead)

School/Rank: Yodotai Legionnaire 1/Yodotai Scout

Techniques: *the Way of the Eagle:* may Guard an ally as a Free Action if using a scutum; gains a Free Raise on all attack rolls if the target of a Guard Action; may give up usual benefit to gain +0k1 to damage rolls in Full Attack Stance

Eyes of the Eagle: +1 Water for movement, +2k0 to Skill Rolls using Perception as the Trait

Skills: **Archery 4, Athletics 3, Battle 3, Defense 3, Hunting 4, Investigation 4, Spears (Pilum) 3, Stealth (Sneaking) 4, Swordsmanship 4**

Yodotai Spirit-Caller

Air 3 Earth 3 Fire 2 Water 3 Void 2
Intelligence 3 Status n/a Glory n/a
Initiative: 5k3 **Attack:** 6k3e (gladius, Complex)

Armor TN: 20 **Damage:** 6k2 (gladius)
Wounds: 15 (+0), 21 (+3), 27 (+5), 33 (+10), 39 (+15), 45 (+20), 51 (Down, +40), 57 (Dead)

School/Rank: Yodotai Spirit-Caller 2

Technique: may call upon Yodotai ancestral spirits for a variety of effects; in this particular case, simplified by listing as earth magics (Jade Strike, Armor of the Emperor, Be the Mountain, Whispers of the Land)
Skills: **Archery 2, Athletics 3, Battle 3, Defense 4, Hunting 4, Investigation 3, Lore: History (Yodotai) 4, Lore: Theology (Yodotai Ancestors) 5, Spears 2, Stealth (Sneaking) 3, Swordsmanship (Gladius) 3**

After the fight, the monk prisoner attracts the PCs' attention, calling out until found by them if they did not spot her before the fight.

The bound prisoner in dirty, bedraggled monks' robes proves to be a plain-faced woman in her mid-thirties. She sighs in relief when she is freed, "Thank you, samurai. I am Yanagi, from Kuruma no Mura. I came here a few days ago to find out what happened to this village. I found it, well, like this. I followed the trail of the attackers deeper into the woods, hoping to learn something. They have a camp about a day west of here, in some strange stone ruins. I saw a huge troop of them, thousands of warriors, set out to the north, heading toward the Scorpion lands. There's some kind of... portal, in the ruins. The ones left behind seemed to be guarding it, and bringing supplies through. I ran back here, because I didn't want to lead them to my home, but I was captured just outside the village. I wanted to find some way to warn the samurai, and, well, here you are..."

Yanagi is a monk, and somewhat battered from her capture and ordeals. Her familiarity with martial matters is quite limited, but with some coaching from someone with military experience, she will estimate the enemy army as around 5000 troops on the march with about twenty soldiers remaining at the portal site. Being somewhat naïve, she is inclined to believe that the PCs can handle more than they might believe themselves capable of, suggesting that they move west to close the portal. *"I saw them manipulating it, and it looked like they had made some preparation to destroy it themselves. You can cut them off at their source."* Yanagi specifically saw the portal operating between the stones, and will tell the PCs that destroying the stones should break the link between realms. She can

give the PCs directions to the ruins and the portal, or accompany them if they insist (though she is not of any particular use in a fight). If the PCs are mostly non-human or more martial than social in nature, this is the best avenue.

Alternately, she can tell the PCs what direction the Yodotai army marched in, allowing them to guess what the most likely target in that direction is – the Scorpion city of Zakyo Toshi. Since the larger body of troops is moving through the forest (presumably to be able to attack without warning), the PCs would easily be able to make it to the Scorpion lands to provide warning if they chose. This would be a good option for a group that does not have any particular combat ability.

At this point, the PCs must decide what they wish to do. It may seem simple for them to head back to Shiro no Fukurou to inform their own clan, but doing so will prevent them from either warning the Scorpion before the attack or being able to close the portal immediately. If the players seem intent on this route or are concerned about "reporting in", Yanagi will offer to take whatever message they wish to the Owl Clan. Both options qualify as following the clan's mandate – the Yodotai represent a threat from another realm, as evidence by their use of a portal, and the closest military force to deal with their numbers would be found in the Scorpion.

If the PCs search the bodies or captured any of the scouts, they will find typical gear for a scouting party and a bundle of maps and supplies for making more. Most of them are recent notes of their exploration of the area, showing a few more supply depot locations and sources of water. However, one is carefully wrapped in silk and kept in its own scroll case – it proves to be made from human skin and marked with something similar to High Rokugani. It is in a completely different style than the rest of the maps (resembling traditional Rokugani maps) and depicts the lands of the Empire, though many of the city and castle locations are different and what can be read of the writing gives everything different names. The closest major city (noted as "Niku Toshi") is in a position roughly analogous to that of Zakyo Toshi.

If the Yodotai were captured, they will assume that they are in for cruel torture before being either killed or Tainted and made into monsters themselves. (Or both.) Talking them around, even if the language barrier is overcome, is essentially impossible within the timeframe of the module; these Yodotai are fully aware of the cruelty that Jigoku's minions are capable of. With no reason to cooperate, the prisoners are unlikely

to provide much in the short term other than identification as Yodotai Legionnaires.

Part Two: Hunt the Eagle

If the PCs decide to take the chance to attack the enemy's supply lines and close their portal, they will have to head deeper into the Shinomen Mori. Fortunately, the trail of the cohort that attacked the village is not terribly difficult to follow once into the woods. PCs who wish to roll **Hunting (Tracking)** / **Perception** may do so in order to learn more about their quarry, though simply following the trail requires no roll:

- **15:** The Yodotai move in a very disciplined fashion, even through uneven terrain. Doing so slows them down considerably. This group was an exclusively infantry force, with even leaders or officers on foot.
- **20:** After a few hours, the PCs find the remains of a camp and signs that it was fortified by temporary palisades and a trench. This allows an easy estimation of the attacking force's numbers, roughly 250.
- **30:** The Yodotai took twenty prisoners from Shinomen no Kage Mura, who appear to be in good health. There are signs that some of the gaijin were injured, though there is no sign of fatalities.

The Shinomen Mori is a massive, ancient forest; tales in nearly every version of Rokugan revolve around the many spirits, predominantly malevolent, that make it their home. Some of these have been influenced by the presence of the sleeping Naga, for whom the place is considered a homeland. For most samurai, travel through the dense woodlands should be somewhat claustrophobic, with the high tops of the trees closing off any sight of the sky or the Sun. Characters more in tune with nature should find it more welcoming, with a great diversity of all kinds of life. Oaks, elms, and willow trees are the most common, and most of them are hundreds if not thousands of years old.

Travel through such surroundings can be tiring for those inexperienced with it – there are no roads, the path rises and falls with the vagaries of the ground, and small streams are scattered in unexpected places. All of the PCs should roll **Hunting (Survival)** / **Stamina** at a TN of 15; a PC may call a Raise to allow another character to succeed. Failure on this roll results in the PC losing a point of Void (or its equivalent) that will not recover for the rest of the module.

It takes a full day to reach the ruins that the Yodotai portal is at. As the PCs approach it, they should roll **Investigation (Notice)** / **Perception**; those who succeed at a TN of 20 spot the camp well before stumbling upon it (the dense woods makes it easy to miss). Those who succeed at a TN of 25 spot the guards before the group is spotted. If none of the PCs succeed at these rolls, they will be Surprised in the first round of the ensuing combat as the Yodotai attack.

If the PCs do not simply walk into the ruins, and they are not noticed by the sentries, they may examine the situation before moving forward. This does require a **Stealth (Sneaking)** / **Agility** roll (TN 25) to avoid the guards, but allows them to pass into the fortified camp located in the overgrown ruins.

The Yodotai have built temporary palisades and dug a trench around their camp, which takes up most of the ruined village. The few still-standing stone walls have been incorporated into their defenses, but the center of the camp is taken up by what was once a large public fountain. No water flows in it now, but a hazy image hangs in the air between two weathered and ivy-covered stones. A large ballista is set up and aimed at the stones.

The camp itself seems largely deserted, since it was built for 5000 troops and has less than twenty remaining. Several crates are piled up not far from the portal, and a string of mules are tied up near one of the entrances to the palisades.

The camp is guarded by a single squad of legionnaires and their commander – all of them are at least slightly wounded, costing them their first Wound Rank, and the centurion has a broken arm. There are as many legionnaires as there are combat-capable PCs at the table, plus the centurion. The centurion will fight to the end, but the Legionnaires will probably break and flee if he is dropped (at the GM's discretion, based on the threat the PCs present).

There are another dozen or so logistics troops in the camp, though they will offer little resistance as they are actually little more than laborers responsible for loading supplies – they use the same stats, though are unarmored and armed only with swords. Their officer will man the ballistae, and destroy the gate if the PCs appear likely to defeat the squad. (Alternately, of course, the PCs can destroy the gate themselves by breaking the stones.)

Yodotai Legionnaires

Air 2	Earth 2	Fire 2	Water 2	Void 2
		Agility 3	Stength 3	

Integrity 2.5 Status n/a Glory n/a
Initiative: 3k2 **Attack:** 6k3e-5 (gladius,
Complex) or 6k3e-10
(pilum, Complex)

Armor TN: 25 (lorica and scutum)
Damage: 6k2 (gladius) or 5k3 (pilum)
Reduction: 3
Wounds: 10 (+0), 14 (+3), 18 (+5), 22 (+10), 26 (+15), 30 (+20), 34 (Down, +40), 38 (Dead)

School/Rank: Yodotai Legionnaire 1

Techniques: *the Way of the Eagle:* may Guard an ally as a Free Action if using a scutum; gains a Free Raise on all attack rolls if the target of a Guard Action; may give up usual benefit to gain +0k1 to damage rolls in Full Attack Stance

Skills: Athletics 2, Battle 1, Defense 2, Hunting 1, Spears (Pilum) 3, Swordsmanship (Gladius) 3

Note: the tower shields used by the Yodotai legions grant +5 to their Armor TN at the cost of -5 to all their attacks; additionally, if they are Guarding or being Guarded by another legionnaire with a scutum, it requires two additional Raises to perform a Knockdown or Disarm Manuever on them

Yodotai Centurion

Air 3 Earth 4 Fire 4 Water 4 Void 3

Integrity 4.5 Status n/a Glory n/a
Initiative: 6k3+5 **Attack:** 9k4e (gladius, Simple)

Armor TN: 25 (lorica) **Damage:** 7k3 (gladius)
Wounds: 20 (+0), 28 (+3), 36 (+5), 44 (+10), 52 (+15), 60 (+20), 68 (Down, +40), 76 (Dead)

School/Rank: Yodotai Legionnaire 3

Techniques: *the Way of the Eagle:* may Guard an ally as a Free Action if using a scutum; gains a Free Raise on all attack rolls if the target of a Guard Action; may give up usual benefit to gain +0k1 to damage rolls in Full Attack Stance

Strike Together: during Reactions Stage, may give out three Free Raises to members of his unit; no single legionnaire may gain more than two Free Raises per Round from this Tech; if not used in the next Round, these Raises are lost.

Talons Strike: Simple Action melee attacks or thrown plumbatae

Skills: Archery 2, Athletics 3, Battle 5, Defense 5, Engineering 3, Hunting 3, Spears (Pilum) 4, Swordsmanship (Gladius) 5

Note: the Yodotai Centurion has a broken arm and cannot use a shield; additionally, his first two Wound Ranks are full

Once the gate is destroyed, the PCs can return to Shiro no Fukurou to report in; proceed to the Conclusion.

Part Three: In the Scorpion's Den

If the PCs decide to warn the Scorpion, they can push through to Zakyo Toshi in two days of hard travel. This requires a **Horsemanship** or **Athletics / Stamina** roll (depending on if they are mounted or running) at a TN of 20. Failure means that they must either take a total of three days or they lose a point of Void that will not recover for the rest of the module. Success allows them to make the journey without becoming exhausted.

Zakyo Toshi is a large, prosperous city along a river; from outside, its reputation as a den of iniquity is not obvious. The city's wealth is, however, with bright banners, palatial estates, and throngs of wealthy pleasure seekers visible even from the road. The city is not a major military outpost, readily deduced from the lack of defensible fortifications, and the bored Scorpion guards at the gates give you only the most cursory of glances as you approach.

If the PCs attempt to breach the topic of the impending attack with the guards, they will be dismissed as "having started celebrating a little early", and ignored as if they were drunk. Otherwise, the guards will calmly take their names and suggest that the samurai go to the castle if they wish to deliver a message to the local governor.

Zakyo Toshi is a "Pleasure City", a Scorpion holding with a large number of geisha houses, sake houses, tea houses, gambling houses, and several other kinds of houses where one might acquire goods and/or services of a hedonistic and pleasurable nature (provided one is not terribly concerned what the Scorpion Clan might learn in the process). It is, in as much as Rokugan has destination vacations, a very popular location for samurai, ronin, and wealthy merchants to spend a great deal of money in a fashion they probably wouldn't wish discussed in open court.

Like most of the Empire, the Scorpion are xenophobic, particularly where non-humans are concerned. If there are any obviously non-human PCs in the party, all Social Skill Rolls made by any PC will have their TNs increased by 5 per such PC present. When dealing with Scorpion authorities, this penalty applies even if the non-human is not immediately present.

Though the Hanashi family has begun attempting to establish diplomatic relationships with the other clans, Zakyo Toshi is not high on the list of places that the Owl would have tried to open an embassy. As such, the

PCs have no resources to call upon other than what they brought themselves. They can find a reasonable inn, depending on their finances, and determine what their first step should be.

Going Public?

If the PCs simply attempt to spread word of the impending assault, they will get the word out with little difficulty. Unfortunately, in a city like Zakyo Toshi, strange rumors sprout up and spread all the time – in order to ensure that the appropriate audiences hear of the matter, they will have to succeed at a **Courtier (Gossip) / Awareness** roll with a TN of 25. (This does not suffer the penalty from non-human party members.) However, doing so will meet with denials from the governor's palace. If the PCs called a Raise to spread the rumor anonymously, the governor will announce that there is no cause for concern as there is no proof of the rumor, though he will open his court for anyone who wishes to provide testimony to support it. If the PCs did not spread the rumor anonymously, then they will be issued a challenge by Shosuro Tadamichi, claiming that they are liars and seeking to cause the Scorpion a loss of face – requiring them to face this challenge in the governor's court.

Keeping it Quiet

It is generally very important in Rokugan to handle delicate matters circumspectly, and if the PCs wish to avoid causing offense with the Scorpions, they would do well to remember this. There are several options for handling the situation with some discretion, though each will take a certain amount of time.

Trying to get in to see the governor of Zakyo Toshi requires sending a proper request with an **Etiquette (Bureaucracy) / Awareness** roll at a base TN of 20 (plus any penalties for non-human PCs). Raises may be called if they wish to expedite the matter; if they call two Raises on this roll, they may expect an audience the following day. Otherwise, it will be two days before they are summoned to speak with the governor.

If a PC wants to ask around town to learn what the local conditions are like, they may spend a few hours doing so and roll **Courtier (Gossip) / Awareness** to learn the following things, based on the result of their roll:

- **10:** The Scorpion Clan Champion Bayushi Oniji is known as ruling his clan with an iron fist. Two years ago, he gave the governor of Zakyo Toshi permission to commit seppuku, though the reason was never publicly announced.
- **15:** Bayushi Manaku, the new local governor, is one of the Clan Champion's many nephews. There

are some concerns even two years after his appointment that he was given the post entirely because of his family ties, though he has performed his duties adequately.

- **20:** Bayushi Isako, the Scorpion Clan Champion's daughter, has largely been in control of the Scorpion Clan's political affairs for the last few years. She is in Zakyo Toshi visiting with her cousin the governor while her elder brother remains at Kyuden Bayushi.
- **25:** Shosuro Tadamichi, the son of the former governor, has remained in the city as part of the current governor's court. He is a skilled bushi, though his attitude since his father's death has made him few friends in the Scorpion.
- **30:** Tadamichi has an eye on gaining glory, and has recently been studying the military history of Bayushi Tomaru – the Scorpion Clan general responsible for destroying the Hare Clan for a time during the twelfth century.
- **35:** Isako, the champion's daughter, has expressed some interest in the Owl Clan to the south, and it is possible her presence here presages a visit to the Scorpion's new neighbors.

Attempting to get in to speak with Bayushi Isako may occur to the players; doing so requires a similar **Etiquette (Bureaucracy) / Awareness** roll as seeking an audience with the governor, though doing so requires beating a TN of 30 before penalties. Mentioning in the message that the PCs are Owls *and* have heard about Isako's interest in the new Minor Clan gains them two Free Raises. Success means that she will meet with them at her chambers in the governor's palace within a few hours.

Meeting with Isako

The Scorpion Clan Champion's daughter is an important and influential courtier in her own right. In her mid-twenties, she is an accomplished leader with no small ability at building bridges her aggressive father and brother are more inclined to burn; most often, her instincts lead to benefits for the Scorpion, and her father has given her many responsibilities because she gets results. Her interest in the Owl Clan comes partly from the fact that they are brand-new and unprecedented, partly from the fact that the Scorpion legitimately are concerned about the influx of strange mystical beings from other realms, and partly because she is interested in what she has heard of the Hanashi family founder. (Isako, as a courtier that often has to deal with bushi setting policy, is always glad to find another competent courtier in a position of power in the Empire.)

If the PCs arrange to meet with Isako before going to the governor's court, she will meet them in her large

guest suite. Between her family ties and her own deserved reputation, she has a comfortable set of rooms with a phenomenal view of the castle's famous garden. She has a small army of servants and a squad of yojimbo, all of whom are quite skilled at remaining unobtrusive while their mistress tends to her business.

Bayushi Isako is a tiny, delicate flower of a woman. Face shrouded more by the midnight fall of her hair than the thin veil of silk that serves as her mask, she greets you with a warm smile. "I am glad to meet you, worthy samurai of the Owl. It has been some time since a new Minor Clan was created in the Empire, and to have you as close neighbors is a distinct pleasure."

As far as Isako is concerned, the Owl are a fascinating mystery. Sezaru's claims have largely been accepted by the Emperor, and as a loyal samurai, she has no desire to act against his command – but of course, if the Owl prove to be a threat, it is also the Scorpion's duty to know as soon as possible. Isako's interest is more in how the individual Owl feel about their duty than in the nature of that duty itself (she is not particularly mystical by nature); her understanding the Owls as a group will help her decide how the Scorpion should deal with the new Minor Clan. She is also curious about Hanashi, and will ask any members of that family for specifics about their daimyo. (This is NOT a romantic interest, simply curiosity about another powerful female courtier.)

How the PCs broach the subject of the attacking force is quite important. While it is a critical matter, and Isako is relatively willing to believe them, she will politely point out that they have literally no reputation in the Empire and that such a major claim is likely to meet with some resistance. If they become rude or aggressive, she will not be willing to help them without gaining something – each of the PCs must take a Minor Obligation to the Scorpion Clan or she will provide no assistance. A suitable apology and successful **Etiquette (Courtesy) / Awareness** roll (TN 25) will avoid this, as long as they maintain proper decorum for the rest of the audience.

If the PCs are polite and show some understanding of proper behaviour (or apologize well for any boorish gaffes), Isako will suggest that they come to the governor's court the next day, where she will have them officially announce the threat under her auspices. ***"While I cannot guarantee that you will avoid any unpleasantness in this fashion, it will at least put you in position to argue your case. A full military mobilization is outside my power, but if we are threatened here, the city's forces should be readied."***

Isako will not tell the PCs, but no matter how they behave, she will send a message to her father and his army will be prepared to respond to a threat on Zakyo Toshi.

The Governor's Court

Eventually, the PCs should wind up in the governor's court. How they arrive makes a significant difference in their reception, of course, and will set the base TN for most of their Social Rolls as follows:

- If the PCs spread rumors about the attack and did not hide their identity, they were called out by Shosuro Tadamichi; as a result, their base Social TN is **35**
- If the PCs spread rumors about the attack and did hide their identity, they were blindly invited by the governor and their base Social TN is **30**
- If the PCs arranged an audience with the governor by making their own arrangements and following proper protocol, their base Social TN is **25**
- If the PCs received an audience by invitation of Bayushi Isako, their base Social TN is **20**

If a group has received multiple methods of entry, they use the highest base TN applicable. +5 is added to these TNs for every obviously non-human PC at the table (whether they are present in the court or not).

The court of Bayushi Manaku is surprisingly staid and traditional, despite the nature of the city. The governor proves to be a stooped young man with a serious expression shadowed by the finely-lacquered flame mask that covers his upper face. A wide assortment of Scorpion nobility make up his court, their eyes hidden behind their masks and concealing whatever judgements they are passing when you enter.

The rest of this scene progresses in a similar fashion for each of the options that got the PCs here, with subtle differences in context based on the method that they used.

Keeping Quiet

If the PCs attempted to remain discrete about the threat, the court will be welcoming, having no reason to think that there is any issue. The group of Minor Clan samurai are obviously unusual, and attract a certain amount of curiosity from the court. Manaku is reserved but interested, and while Tadamichi is looking for an opportunity to gain, he does not yet know that the group of Owls might give him one.

Presenting Your Case

If the PCs are bringing the topic up in the relatively controlled environment of the governor's court, it gives them a great deal more control over how it is initially presented.

Going Public: Challenged

If the PCs were challenged by Shosuro Tadamichi, he is surrounded by a cluster of minor courtiers who are supporting him. He watches the PCs with a dangerous glint in his eyes, and he is not the only hostile presence in the court.

Going Public: Anonymous

If the PCs are present because they spread a rumor anonymously, then the court is in a furor of speculation as to who is responsible. Shosuro Tadamichi has made it known that he will challenge anyone who speaks against the Scorpion, and is being watched with interest by the rest of the court.

Tadamichi's Challenge

If the PCs were not discrete about spreading rumors, Tadamichi challenges them immediately upon the opening of court. (Specifically, he issued a public challenge already, bringing them here, but he will make a set speech as soon as the public event begins.)

If the PCs spread the rumors but hid their identity, as soon as they step forward to admit their responsibility, he will issue his challenge. They may attempt to support the threat while not claiming their responsibility by making an additional **Sincerity (Deceit) / Awareness** roll at the base Social TN above. Failure means that they will be challenged by Tadamichi.

Shosuro Tadamichi is a lean warrior, wearing a half mempo that leaves his lower jaw exposed to allow his voice to carry. That voice rings out thunderously now: "How dare you, Minor Clan dogs?! Whatever bizarre fantasy you've concocted to explain away your appearance, it does not give you the right to imply that the Scorpion Clan cannot defend itself! My family has guarded Zakyo Toshi for generations, and if you think it easy pickings for any rabble that comes along, then my blade will answer this insult!"

Tadamichi is deliberately overinflating his offense, as part of his campaign to gain glory and renown for himself – he will claim it as cause for a lethal duel, claiming to have permission from his lord. The local governor will authorize the challenge if a PC is willing to step up. As long as one of the PCs answers Tadamichi's challenge, they may still roll to convince Manaku that the threat is real.

Any PC may assist, per Cooperative Skill Roll rules, adding their ranks in the Skill to the total of the roll. Additionally, any PC who is involved may take a Minor Obligation to the Scorpion Clan to gain a Free Raise on this roll (this can result in gaining two Minor Obligations to the Scorpion, if they collected them in dealing with Isako).

If the PCs do not convince the Scorpion of the approaching danger, they will be asked to leave immediately. This will allow them to avoid the attack, and it should be clear that their duty at this point is to report in to Shiro no Fukuro.

Conclusion

If they went into the Shinomen to close the portal, than word will come to Shiro no Fukuro that a group of gaijin from another world attacked and razed the Scorpion city of Zakyo Toshi. The enemy legion is being pursued by the Scorpion Army under the command of the Scorpion Clan Champion. With the loss of their supply lines, they are unable to stop and fight, and are certain to be destroyed soon.

If the PCs warned the Scorpion and the Scorpion Clan Champion was summoned, the city of Zakyo Toshi was properly defended and the gaijin forces were essentially destroyed. Only a fraction of the Yodotai legion survived to flee back through the portal in the Shinomen, and scouts report that they left a few men behind to destroy the passage to their home.

If the PCs spoke with Isako but were unable to make their case to Bayushi Manaku, the city of Zakyo Toshi was largely destroyed by the time the Scorpion Clan Champion's forces fell upon the Yodotai. The Yodotai were largely destroyed, but the city's lack of preparation resulted in most of the city being put to the flame, and almost all of its citizenry killed or scattered.

As long as the PCs effected a positive outcome, Kobe is pleased with their efforts. Hikaru thanks them on his daimyo's behalf. *"Kobe-sama believes that the troops in the field have the responsibility to decide on a course of action and carry it out. You did well to pursue the clan's goals in the face of an unexpected situation. Congratulations, samurai; your service to the Owl has been noted."*

The End

Rewards for Completing the Adventure

At the end of the scenario, any PCs with Shadowlands Taint must make a Raw Earth roll with a TN of 5 + (5 x Taint Rank). If the roll fails, the PC acquires one additional point of Taint.

Experience Points

Surviving the adventure:	2XP
Good roleplaying:	+2XP
Made contact with villages:	+1XP
Discovered Yodotai presence:	+1XP
Closed Yodotai portal	
-or-	
Warned Scorpion of Yodotai:	+2XP
Total Possible Experience:	8XP

Honor

None beyond those listed in the text or based on PC behaviors

Glory

+0.1 Glory for destroying the spiritual portal

+0.3 Glory for successfully alerting the Scorpion to the impending attack

+0.3 Glory for defeating Tamadachi in the duel

Other Awards/Penalties

Alerting the Scorpion earns a Favor; Hanashi PCs who do so with Isako's aid gain two Favors instead

GM Reporting

None

Appendix #1: NPCs

Bayushi Isako

Air 3 Earth 3 Fire 4 Water 2 Void 4
Awareness 5 Intelligence 5 Perception 4
Honor 3.4 Status 6.5 Glory 4.1

School/Rank: **Bayushi Courtier 3**

Techniques:

Skills: **Artisan: origami 3, Calligraphy 4, Courtier (Manipulation, Gossip, Rhetoric) 6, Etiquette (Conversation) 5, Horsemanship 2, Intimidation (Control) 5, Investigation (Interrogation) 5, Jiujutsu 4, Knives 4, Lore: Heraldry 4, Meditation 3, Sincerity (Honesty, Deceit) 5, Stealth 5, Temptation (Seduction) 4**

Advantages/Disadvantages: **Allies (Crane Champion), Dangerous Beauty, Silent, Voice / Contrary, Small**

Shosuro Tadamichi

Air 3 Earth 3 Fire 3 Water 2 Void 4
Honor 2.2 Status 2.5 Glory 3.8
Initiative: 7k4 **Attack:** 8k3e (katana, Complex)
Armor TN: 20/25 **Damage:** 5k2

Wounds: **15 (+0), 21 (+3), 27 (+5), 33 (+10), 39 (+15), 45 (+20), 51 (Down, +40), 57 (Dead)**

School/Rank: **Bayushi Bushi 3**

Techniques: *The Way of the Scorpion:* +1k1 to Initiative Rolls. +5 to Armor TN against any opponent with lower Initiative.

Pincers and Tail: May make the Feint Maneuver for one Raise instead of two.

Strike at the Tail: When assuming a Stance at the start of Turn, choose a target within 30': if you successfully hit them during that Turn, they are Fatigued. During the Reactions Stage, an affected opponent may make an Earth Ring Roll at TN 25 to negate the effects of this Technique. If they fail, the effects of this Technique end during the next Reactions Stage.

Skills: **Athletics 3, Battle 2, Courtier (Manipulation) 4, Defense 3, Etiquette 2, Horsemanship 2, Iaijutsu (Assessment) 5, Intimidation 4, Investigation 2, Jiujutsu 2, Kenjutsu (Katana) 5, Kyujutsu 2, Lore: History 3, Sincerity 3, Stealth 2**

Advantages/Disadvantages: **Crafty, Luck / Brash, Overconfident**