Magic, Madness, Heaven, Sin

A 1-Round Mid-Rank Adventure for Heroes of Rokugan: The Nightmare War

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Can the PCs find weapons to save the Owl?

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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 preceds 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.

Some events that occur within this module affect the storyline and may need to be reported by the Campaign Administrators. This module has an effective 'active' period which is 3 months after its release, and these events (listed at the end of the module) MUST be reported by the GM to the campaign administration before the end of the active period for them to take effect.

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 mid-rank adventure, and thus can involve parties of widely varying capabilities. The encounters have been optimized for a party of average Rank 3-4.

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 (most/all characters Rank 2): None. This mod can be played out of order any time after NMW 02; however, the TNs for all rolls remain the same due to the rewards that can be achieved at the end of the module. It is highly recommended the mods are played in the order they are written.

High End Party (most/all characters Rank 4-5): None. This mod can be played out of order any time after NMW 02; however, the TNs for all rolls remain the same due to the rewards that can be achieved at the end of the module. It is highly recommended the mods are played in the order they are written.

Adventure Summary and Background

The Sukune calls for the PCs asking for them to travel to another world in the hopes that the PCs will find someone to help increase the Owl Clan's strength against threats both internal and external. The PCs and Sukune Takeshi are transported to a world where Iuchiban and the Bloodspeaker cult were victorious. There they find Asahina Yajindin who, with Takeshi's Anvil of Hope, can create seven swords, one for each member of the party and Takeshi. However first he needs star steel, metal from a meteorite that had landed nearby. After the PCs retrieve the star steel, they must keep Yajindin safe from Iuchiban's followers as he forges the blades. Finally, Yajindin finishes and as each PC grasps their sword, the portal returns them to the lands of the Owl.

Check the PCs character sheets for any who have the Paragon advantage. They will get the sword associated with that virtue.

Introduction

The PCs awake one morning and find an attendant with a request from Sukune asking if they would meet with him after lunch. At this point, the PCs can roll Courtier (Gossip)/Awareness for rumors around the Empire. Base TN is 10 with another rumor every 5 over the TN.

- The recent destruction caused by incursions has hit the Unicorn and Phoenix the hardest. It is no surprise then, that they are the Great Clans most vocal that the Owl Clan is not fulfilling its mandate.
- The Scorpion Clan has begun military maneuvers in their western and northern provinces. Some military observers say that the Scorpion are training to stop a force from Spider lands, though no one knows what is truly hidden behind the masks of the Clan of Bayushi.
- The Spider and Unicorn have begun joint military exercises in their southern borders. The two Clans have historically been allies; however, others note that these maneuvers come almost insultingly close to Owl lands.
- The Emperor's displeasure with the Owl Clan has abated somewhat due to the courtiers of the Crane and Scorpion. While previously detractors of the Owl, the Owl Clan's success in closing incursions in Crane and Scorpion lands have gained them significant strength in the courts.
- The Phoenix have begun speaking out against the Owl's ability to stop the Yume-do strikes. While not outright saying it is beyond the Owl Clan, the Isawa have certainly implied that they would be more competent in handling these attacks than the minor clan.

As you enter into the meeting room, the starkness of the stone walls and Spartan furnishings take you by surprise. Rather than the elegant furnishings of Hanashi or subtlety of Seizoku, this room is purely utilitarian. In fact, the only trappings are weapons on the wall, war trophies, and a single painting of two young men in Crab armor, one larger with a large tetsubo, and the other slimmer and shorter, seeming almost scrawny compared to the larger one. However the two are obviously related, brothers, and the smaller man is unmistakably The Sukune. Shortly after arriving, the door opens again and The Sukune walks in.

The Sukune is a solidly-built man of middle height with a shaved head save for a black topknot. He lacks the typical bulk of his Hida ancestors, and he wears unusual face paint: red circles around a red dot on each cheek, and a red triangle pointing up on his chin. His eyes – brilliant, inhuman yellow – belie a sadness, kindness, and wisdom many would not believe in such a stoic warrior. As he returns your bows and requests you be seated, your eyes are drawn to his right hand. It looks like a normal hand if a normal hand were made of pure jade. Though the more you look at it, the more

you could swear that instead of catching the light, it glows with an inner light all its own.

"Forgive my tardiness, samurai," Sukune begins, "I..." His words die in his throat as he closes his eyes and cocks his head, as though listening to something only he can hear. After a moment it passes and he begins again. "Apologies. Social situations are not my...strongest suit. To that end I will be brief. Our clan is surrounded by enemies both hidden and obvious, both mundane and supernatural. We do not have the strength to combat these forces. To that end I have searched for a method to bolster our forces. I believe we have found a piece of Yume-do that would help us gather strength. In that world is a powerful sword maker who would be a valuable ally. If you could secure his help, we would be better situated to deal with any threats.

At this point, the PCs might have questions for The Sukune.

Who is this sword smith? ***I fear we do not know. Though I suspect one with his or her talents would not be hard to find***.

What is this world like? ***I am uncertain. The strand is near to ours, and as far as I understand these things, means that it should be relatively the same time and style of Rokugan as our own. What differences there may be, however, I don't know.***

How do you know about this sword smith? ***At this, The Sukune shifts uncomfortably. "I… that is… my family contains several shugenja of unusual talents, relative to what most of Rokugan is familiar with. In Sezaru-sama's… indisposition… Kobe-san and I have become concerned about our Clan's security situation. When Kitsuki Ryoushi and Sukune Ryobei recently approached me for aid in studying an artifact recovered from Toshigoku that may be related to the Nightmare Storm, I agreed to lend the assistance of my samurai… but in exchange, I requested that Ryoushi work with my followers to locate someone in a nearby Dream Shard that could supply us with weapons. Nezumi name magic and… whatever it is that Ryoushi does… were both involved."***

When do we leave? ***In a few hours. I have spoken to a few shugenja I trust in my family and they will open a portal after you have gathered what you need for the journey.***

Will anyone be traveling with us? ***Yes. A samurai from my family will accompany you – he is the bearer of an unusual nemuranai that might prove valuable to this sword smith. You will meet him at the portal.***

At this point, the PCs have a few hours to do what is needed before they travel to the other world. At the appointed time, the PCs meet again in a larger room not far from the meeting room earlier.

The Sukune stands there with another samurai, a willowy samurai in worn robes bearing only an Owl mon and no school mon. Interestingly, the two humans seem to be in the minority as many Naga and Ratlings scurry around making preparations for the ritual. The Sukune motions the newly arrived samurai over and says, "It is good to see you. We are nearly ready. With the pearl magic of the Naga and name magic of the Ratlings, we have found a method of creating the same portal as the ritual Yanoko-sama researched. It is a little less stable but I did not want to...impose on Yanoko-sama. However, that is not important." He turns to the samurai at his side. "This is Sukune Takeshi, a member of my family." Takeshi bows low in greeting. "He will travel with you. I hope you find some value in him… and in what he carries." At that the Naga and Ratlings take their places and with chittering and the shine of pearl magic, the familiar silver portal opens.

Part One: Wildest Dreams

The portal deposits you outside of a small village. Daylight is bright and the weather warm. The smell of salt carried by the wind leads you to believe you are close to the sea. Behind you, away from the village are small hills. Rolling farms with peasants working the fields surround the village.

Overall, this is not dissimilar from the Rokugan that the PCs just left.

The ashigaru guards are stumble to attention, confused as they only saw the flash and now several samurai stand there. They look with a mixture of awe and fear at the samurai, and awkwardly brandish their spears at you. "Halt," calls one. "Who are you?"

The PCs can try to explain their presence, ask for the village chief, or attempt to bully their way through with status as samurai. No matter the explanation, the ashigaru mention that they should take the samurai to see the village chief.

As the PCs walk through the village, they can roll a **Battle / Perception** roll at TN 20 to realize that the

village is preparing to defend itself. Men who should be working the farms are instead building fortifications and digging a moat.

The chief's building can only be called large by the standards of the others in the village. The wooden slats are worn with age. The man who greets you much like his house, an elderly man bent with age and responsibility. His eyes however are bright and clever. As you approach, he bows low as appropriate. "Greetings, samurai. I am Gisaku. How may I serve you?"

At this point, the PCs would probably explain who their looking for and may ask questions of the chief.

Where can I find the sword smith? ***Unfortunately we have little in the way of smiths here. Our local smith does little more than sharpen kama for harvest. I would guess, however, that the local monk at the temple might know more. He has been more places than the rest of us in the village put together.***

Where are we? ***The small village of Shichinin. It is about two days travel from Shinden Asahina, in the Shinkyou Provence of the southern Crane lands.***

When are we? ***The eight hundred thirty fourth year of the reign of the Immortal Emperor.***

Who is the Immortal Emperor? *"**He is the emperor." At this, Gisaku looks very confused. "He has been the emperor for the past 834 years."***

What about the fortifications in the village? ***At this, Gisaku looks incredibly uncomfortable. "Apologies, samurai, but there have been bandits of late and we are trying to prepare ourselves."***

Anyone can roll **Investigation (Interrogation) / Awareness** at TN 20 to realize he is lying. If pressed, he asks that you discuss it with the monk saying that it was the monk's idea to build the fortifications.

At this point, the PCs may roll for rumors throughout the village or proceed directly to the temple with the monk.

Rumors amongst the village require a raw awareness roll TN 5 with another rumor for every 5 over that.

- Last night, a piece of the stars fell from the sky. In landed in an area near Yohei, the old man that lives in the nearby woods. Yohei says that the star appears to be steel of some kind and brought it back to his cabin.
- The priest at the local temple has been in the village for the last five years. While he keeps to himself mostly, none of the villagers seem to have anything bad to say of him. The temple is to a minor Fortune, but none of the villagers seem to know or care too much about which Fortune it might be.
- The first Imperial Legion, led by the immortal general Jama Suru is in the area looking to find a traitor to the Empire. No one knows who they are looking for, but it must be an important person to have Emperor Iuchiban's right hand hunting him.

If the PCs go to the priest, read the following.

As you approach the temple, you notice it is neither grandiose nor prosperous. It is simple, with no flashy adornments, although the temple is a good bit larger than the chief's dwelling. Inside is a small shrine to a Fortune you do not recognize, centered around a statue of the Fortune in its wrathful aspect, its scowling face and sharp fangs made all the more threatening by the large hammer it carries in one hand. A lone monk sweeps the shrine and looks up at you as you approach.

The monk is of medium height and young for a member of the Brotherhood, perhaps no more than thirty. His arms are powerfully built, the muscles toned, bulging through his simple robes. Strangely, the monk retains his hair. The white hair is pulled back into a ponytail. The monk frowns forbiddingly as he offers a perfunctory bow. "Good day, samurai. I am Kikuchiyo. How may I be of service to you?"

Any PC with the Engineering skill can roll **Engineering / Perception** at TN 15 to realize that the outside and inside don't match. The temple has much more space than it should. At a TN 25, you recognize several air holes used for a large furnace or forge.

If the PCs explain what they are looking for, the priest's frown grows deeper. Finally, he interrupts them.

"I have no time for your meaningless trinkets, samurai. You waste my time with demands for scraps of metal that any half-trained cooper's bastard could make. I am an artist, and I serve the Dark Fortune of Perfection by hammering away at the imperfect until I release the flawless work within. Seek elsewhere for your errand, I have no patience for it." He glares at you for a moment, then sneers, "What makes you think you are worth even this much interruption?" He flicks the nail of the smallest finger on his left hand – left to grow long, unlike the others, which are trimmed short for hard manual work – across his right arm, and a line of

bright red appears there. At once, the room seems to darken, and Kikuchiyo's eyes turn red as well, blood flowing down his face like tears.

The PCs may, if they wish, respond to this obvious display of maho with violence with Kikuchiyo always going last during the combat round. Unfortunately, it does them no good whatsoever. Although his unarmored Armor TN of 35 is not likely to protect him from most bushi, Kikuchiyo is a khadi, an immortal sorcerer who cannot be killed while his heart – removed from his chest in a foul gaijin rite and usually stored in a distant, secret place – remains intact. All damage they deal to him is instantly healed during the Reactions Phase, and he only suffers Wound Penalties from attacks dealt by nemuranai or crystal weapons (jade and obsidian have no special power against him). Grappling him can impede him to a certain degree, but is not easily accomplished – he has Strength 7 and Jiujutsu (Kaze-do) 6, giving him a Free Raise on grappling checks.

Kikuchiyo's blood-filled gaze sweeps across you. "Yume-do," he murmurs, apparently to himself, "ishiken-do, and… what is that… a Realm I do not know? Impossible…! And yet… Wait!" He focuses entirely on Sukune Takeshi. "You! What have you brought me?" He makes a flicking gesture with his fingers, and a rope of blood leaps out from them, lashing around a satchel at Takeshi's waist and ripping it free, almost sending Takeshi to his knees. The bag falls open, and something tumbles out of it: a small piece of metal, almost like a netsuke, in the shape of an anvil. Kikuchiyo stares in surprise and, suddenly much more respectful, waves at Takeshi. "Show me how it works."

If the PCs have been attacking him through this, Kikuchiyo sneers and casts another maho spell, wrapping himself and all the PCs – he excludes Takeshi – in an aura of sickly green flames. The next attack that hits him only deals ¼ of its damage to him; the other ¾ is dealt equally to all the PCs. ***"I do not have time for your lack of courtesy, samurai. You are poor emissaries, to assault one whose favors you have come to seek."*** While the spell is in effect – it will last for 7 Rounds – the PCs are really only capable of killing themselves by attacking him.

Takeshi slashes a hand through the air at Kikuchiyo's request. "Never! I won't allow your maho foulness to threaten a holy relic!"

"Don't be a fool," sneers Kikuchiyo. "Even in its current state I can tell from here it is incorruptible. But it seems familiar, and if it is what I think it is… well. You might well turn out to be worth my attention after all. Isn't my help what you came here for?"

It is up to the PCs to decide whether to have Takeshi activate his nemuranai so that Kikuchiyo can study it more thoroughly. If they do not wish to work with Kikuchiyo, they are not obligated to do so – but he is the smith they have come to seek, and their only alternatives are to seek someone else (there is no one else) or to return empty-handed to The Sukune. PCs who choose to do so gain 4XP and are out of the adventure.

Assuming they do agree to have Kikuchiyo examine the nemuranai, Takeshi leans down and touches it, murmuring a brief prayer to the kami within. It suddenly grows to become a full-sized anvil. Kikuchiyo smiles with genuine warmth, the first time he has done so in the PCs' presence.

"The Anvil of Hope," the tsukai says, reaching out to lay a finger on the cool steel. "I knew its brother once, and together we made great things… my finest works…" He pauses, seemingly lost in the memory for a moment, then shakes his head. "Naturally, the work I would do on this would be very different. I suspect you would find it more acceptable than my previous creations." He shrugs. "The work is all that matters, however."

If a PC is familiar with the Anvil of Despair, or makes a **Lore: History, Lore: Shadowlands,** or **Craft: Swordsmithing / Intelligence** roll, TN 30, they will be aware that the Anvil of Despair was once used by the notorious maho tsukai Asahina Yajinden, the infamous lieutenant of Iuchiban. With it, he made the Bloodswords. If the PCs ask Kikuchiyo if he is Yajinden, he waves the question away, as if it does not matter.

"Yes, long ago, I was known as Asahina Yajinden and I served Hantei Jama, now known as the immortal Emperor Iuchiban. After our victory against Iuchiban's brother over 800 years ago, I was given a comfortable assignment in Otosan Uchi. However, as time passed I became bored and restless. I never truly cared for Iuchiban's desires, I lived for my art.

"Iuchiban's petty scheming and endless games of politics entertained him, but I never sought immortality for something as unimportant as politics. Finally, I decided to leave Iuchiban's service. I snuck into the crypt where my heart was concealed and stole it. I disappeared into the Crane lands desiring nothing but a workshop and the few materials I would need to practice my art. My former master, of course, took my departure poorly. He believes it was an insult to him.

Of course, that is just one more way in which he proves himself a fool. I don't care enough about him to insult him.

"I will make you your swords, samurai. They will be my finest creations since the Bloodswords. However, I will require suitable resources. The oils and incense I require I have in abundance, but I need an acceptable grade of steel. While I have steel aplenty here in this village, the steel that is here is tainted by the blood magic that has been so useful in Rokugan these last 800 years. I usually find it entirely appropriate for my creations, but the Anvil of Hope will not respond positively. I require pure, untainted steel."

If any PCs that offer their personal katana or wakizashi, Kikuchiyo declines saying that he would need to create it from scratch. To melt down and reforge the PCs katana or wakizashi would make it too difficult to awaken the weapons during forging due to their previous incarnations.

If any PC mentions the star that fell in the nearby field, Kikuchiyo nods saying that would be perfect to use. (If no one mentions it, Takeshi brings it up.) Kikuchiyo gives the PCs directions to Yohei's cabin and he asks Takeshi to stay with him to help set up his forge. ***"Trust me, Sukune-san," Kikuchiyo smiles. "I will bring no harm to you. After all, it is a poor craftsman who abuses his tools."***

Part Two: I Knew You Were Trouble

Exiting the village through the southeast gate, the PCs travel down a well-worn road. The rice fields and farms finally give way to a small wooded area. The bright light of Amaterasu is dimmed by the trees around. As they turn down the lane, moving deeper in, the PCs can roll **Hunting (Trailblazing) / Perception** at TN 20 to not lose sight of the road. If they succeed, they arrive before the Imperials (scenario 1), if they fail, they arrive after (scenario 2).

Scenario 1: **Arriving without incident to Yohei's cabin, an elderly man comes out to meet you. He introduces himself as Yohei and begs you welcome. Yohei is an elderly man with a quick humor and good grin.** When asked for the meteorite, he readily agrees to hand it over even offering his cart to move it, saying he has no reason to keep it and that he expected samurai to claim it. As the PCs finish loading the meteorite, a small band of ashigaru led by another samurai approaches. The samurai has the mon of the Seppun family, shugenja robes, and an odd school mon. His school mon is an Imperial Chrysanthemum with the kanji of moon in red stitching overlaying it. He gives his name as Seppun Mifune and explains that he is here for the fallen star for the Emperor and his commander, Jama Suru. He brokers no attempts to dissuade him. Finally, he rudely issues an ultimatum for the PCs to either leave or face the consequences. If the PCs don't leave, they are forced into combat.

Scenario 2: **Having lost yourself in the woods for a time, you finally stumble upon the path once again. You reach a small clearing in the forest.** The PCs need to roll raw Perception at TN 10 to hear voices. A **Stealth / Agility** roll (with no honor loss) of TN 15 will get them close enough to see that someone else beat them to the cabin. Upon looking, there are a number of ashigaru equal to the PCs and one samurai wearing a Seppun mon. The elderly peasant, who must be Yohei, is bowing profusely. However it is apparently not enough for the samurai and the Seppun draws his blade, killing Yohei where he stands. The ashigaru and the Seppun start to move off with the meteorite. Should the PCs move out, the Seppun yells, "Bandits!" and combat starts.

Combat: There are a number of ashigaru equal to the number of PCs, two of which are archers and one Seppun bloodspeaker.

Once the Bloodspeaker is in the Injured Wound Rank or all the ashigaru are down or killed, Mifune flies off to the north on wings of blood, leaving the meteorite behind. (GM note: Mifune cannot be killed during this fight.)

From there, returning to the village is a simple matter.

Part Three: Bad Blood

From here, the GM should keep track of the number of battle points the PCs gain. PCs start with zero and gain some throughout the remainder of the mod.

Upon returning to Kikuchiyo, the PCs find that the forge is complete. The Anvil of Hope sits in the center, and the fire burns white hot. Once the PCs bring in the metal, Kikuchiyo looks it over, seeming satisfied. He turns to the PCs saying, ***"Welcome back, samurai. I fear, however, your actions have not gone unnoticed. Jama Suru, Iuchiban's second in command and leader of the Imperial Legions is nearby. Your actions, I fear, have turned his attention to this town. He is headed this way with about one hundred of his legionnaires and will likely be here tomorrow morning. Unfortunately, it would be too difficult to move and try and forge the swords elsewhere. I fear we haven't the time. While***

Suru will not be able to kill me without my heart, he can certainly ruin my work – and he does know things that might well cause me to suffer. I need to be protected while I work. I have asked the village elder and the men; they will help. However, the people of this village are not warriors. We will need your help as well. Samurai, will you help protect this village?

Questions the PCs might have:

Where will the Imperial Legions attack from? ***There are three routes into the village: the northwest road, the southwest road, and the southeast road. The imperial legions will likely send the bulk of their forces at the northwestern road. The southwestern road will likely see moderate fighting and the lightest fighting will be at the southeastern road.***

What will the elderly, women, and children be doing? ***Those that cannot fight will be in the village elder's home. It is the most spacious and can accommodate the most people. None of them should get in your way on the battlefield.***

How long must we hold out? ***I do not know how long it will take. I will begin work immediately.***

What should we do? ***I do not know. War was never my specialty, though I would imagine you should protect one of the entrances to the village. The villagers have already decided how to array their forces, so it is up to you to decide where to fight. Though with the danger, I would recommend against splitting your forces.***

Takeshi-san has agreed to stay by me and protect me. If a lot of the enemy locates the forge, Takeshi-san will fire a humming bulb arrow to alert you. I ask that you come assist. Remember, these blades are more important to whatever happens to this village.

Once the PCs are complete with their questions, Kikuchiyo goes to work with Takeshi nearby, his hand on the worn katana handle. (If the PCs check, Takeshi is not Tainted, and reports that Kikuchiyo has been entirely, almost obsessively, businesslike in their absence.) The PCs have the rest of the day.

The PCs can choose to help train the villagers. They will need to use either **Kyujutsu / Intelligence** or **Spears / Intelligence** to train the bowmen or spearmen respectively. The TN is 30 and doing so gains them one battle point for each roll. Alternatively, the PCs can assist with the defenses. A roll of **Engineering / Intelligence** at a TN 20 gives the PCs one battle point.

As the dawn breaks, a young boy, a runner asking them to come to the main entrance of the village, awakes you. Once at the main gate, they see the banner of the Imperial Legion and the banner of an Imperial chrysanthemum overlain with the blood read kanji for "moon." At the head is a massive, monster of a man. He would dwarf the hardiest of Hida. The undead warhorse he rides looks like a simple pony. His arms are the size of young trees. His body seems carved from rock. His face is hideous, scars crisscrossing the entirety of his visage. Looking at him, you can feel an aura of wrongness, a sense that this thing is not human, but rather a demon wearing a human skin. Perhaps it is the way it moves, an oddly smooth, unnatural grace. Perhaps it is the size, that no man could possibly be that massive without some infernal help. Most likely, however, it is the eyes. Even from the several hundred yards, you can tell that they burn with an unholy fire. The red light underneath tells that there will be no mercy, no quarter, not for the villagers, not for Kikuchiyo, not for you. This, you know, is Jama Suru.

Already the Imperial Legionnaires have begun surrounding the village. Small detachments move to the other gates around the village. A large detachment of ashigaru move forward towards the main gate.

If any of the PCs decide to use magic (i.e. Fist of Osano-Wo) to destroy the legionnaires, Jama Suru grabs the nearest ashigaru and slits his throat. The spell will not go off as the kansen counterspell the magic (this includes Naga pearl magic). In addition, the kansen force any elemental kami to leave the area. Spells of that element have their TN increased by five for the battle.

PCs can now choose where to fight of the Main Gate, Southwest Gate, and Southeast Gate. The main gate gives the PCs three battle points. The Southwest Gate gives the PCs two battle points. Finally, the Southeast Gate gives the PCs one battle point.

The main gate has a number of ashigaru spearmen equal to the number of PCs, and a number of ashigaru archers equal to half the number of PCs.

The Southwest Gate has a number of ashigaru equal the PCs with one third as archers and two thirds as spearmen. (If there is an odd number of PCs, try to keep to the rule as best you can, with any extra ending up as spearmen.)

Finally, the Southeast Gate has only ashigaru spearmen equal to two-thirds the number of PCs (rounded up).

Each battle only lasts three rounds and if the PCs kill all the ashigaru prior to last round, they gain one additional battle point.

At the end of the third round, in the reactions stage, the PCs hear a humming bulb arrow from towards the shrine. The PCs move towards the shrine and enter the forge, finding Takeshi engaged with three samurai.

As you arrive, Takeshi slices through a samurai wearing the mon of the Unicorn. Takeshi breathes deep and falls to his knees among his fallen foes, and puts his hand to his side, blood seeping through his armor. Kikuchiyo, meanwhile, seems not to have even noticed the fighting.

As you reach Takeshi, you hear a noise near the entrance. Turning, you see Jama Suru flanked by two other samurai. One is the bloodspeaker they met in the forest, Seppun Mifune; the other is a samurai who has both the Kitsu family mon and the Bayushi school mon. The Kitsu speaks, "Samurai, your behavior here is shameful. You willingly assist a known criminal of the Empire and blasphemer of our Eternal Emperor. However, if you stand down now and allow us to bring justice to this felon, we will ignore your trespasses. I promise this on the honor of Kitsu Tsuko, chui of the First Legion."

When the PCs refuse to stand down, combat starts. The PCs have a number of rounds equal to their battle points to kill the three samurai. (I.e. if the PCs have four battle points, they have four rounds to defeat the enemies.)

At the Reactions Stage on the second to the last round, the PCs can hear the screaming from the women and children as the Imperial Legions attack the village elder's house.

The smell of smoke permeates the air and the women's high-pitched wails carry through the town, screaming they are being burned alive. The mothers cry out asking someone to save them and the laughter of the Imperial Legions echoes through the streets. You know that the sounds of this night will haunt you for the rest of your lives. The screams produce a Fear 3 effect against anyone with Honor 3.0+, unless they have the Insensitive Disadvantage.

If the PCs defeat the three samurai within the specified number of Rounds, go to Scenario 1. If they fail to defeat the three samurai in the time allotted, go to Scenario 2.

Scenario 1: ***As the last of the samurai falls to your blade, Jama Suru screams in defiance. Suddenly, a blood red light releases from his body and an unearthly sound issues from his corpse as the kansen trapped within are released.***

With the death of the samurai, you realize the hammering from Kikuchiyo gains in volume. You turn seeing the sweat bead off his forehead, this muscular arms pumping repeatedly. Instead of one sword, seven sit on the anvil, glowing with a bright light. Each strike of the hammer brings forth a different tone, Kikuchiyo's arms moving in a blur blending the sounds into a harmonious song. The pace quickens and Kikuchiyo's concentration peaks as the song reaches its crescendo. Finally, with a strike like a thunderbolt, the song ends in a deafening silence and seven beautiful blades sit completed on the anvil.

The kami swirl around the blades, and lift them up bringing one to each of you, as you stand transfixed. The blades are beautiful, not a flaw among them. Moreover, you can feel the power flow through you as you hold the blades. They sing to you, a continuation of the song that created them; the song resonates within you and begs you to be more than you are.

These are the Seven Virtues Bonding to one of the Virtues requires an Honor Roll, which *cannot* be enhanced with Void Points, cannot be rerolled with the Luck advantage, cannot be rerolled using the Honor Roll rule, and cannot be rerolled through any other means. Wound penalties and any magical bonuses do not apply to this roll. The PC may only attempt to bond with a single sword – they may choose which one they wish to attempt, but if they fail, none of the Virtues will accept them. A character with a Paragon of Honor Advantage automatically bonds with the sword corresponding to their Paragon virtue. (Takeshi gains Duty automatically under this rule *unless* another PC successfully bonds with it – Takeshi chooses last, and will not be able to bond with any other weapon besides Duty.) In the case of two samurai having the same Paragon virtue, the PC with higher honor gains the blade. (For example, Asahina Renge has Paragon of Compassion. She automatically bonds with Compassion without needing a roll or needing to choose that blade, it chooses her.) A character with the Failure of Bushido Disadvantage cannot attempt to bond the sword that corresponds to that disadvantage. If he/she tries to do so, the PC automatically fails the roll. The baseline TN for the Honor Roll is 40; if the GM believes that the PC has demonstrated that virtue of bushido during the session, the TN is reduced to 30, while it is raised to 50 if the PC has actively violated that virtue in the session.

When you finally pull yourself away from your blade, you see Kikuchiyo, tired and haggard, leaning against the anvil with a smug, self-satisfied smile. He offers a brief nod of the head as the portal opens, pulling you through Yume-do back to the Castle of the Owl.

Scenario 2: ***A lull in the fighting occurs as you and the Imperials step back. Their eyes are fixed at something behind your back. You turn to look, seeing seven glowing blades resting upon the anvil. Kikuchiyo's arms are awash with power, his body and mind fully concentrated on the task before him. The strikes increase in pace and each time they hit a blade, a different sound issues forth. The sounds blend into a beautiful song, one that would pull tears from the hardest of men. Each strike of the hammer seems to take more of the smith, but he does not stop. Rather, the pace increases and as it reaches its crescendo, the final strike hits like a thunderbolt.***

Kikuchiyo drops to his knees, his breathing haggard and his body shaking. The kami swirl around the new swords and bring each to you. The blades are beautiful, not a flaw among them. You take them, feeling the power of the blades. Each sings to you, a continuation of the song that birthed them. It pulls at your heart, asking you to be better than you are, to be more.

As above, the PCs may attempt to bond with one of the Seven Virtues.

As you pull yourself away from the blades, you see the portal to Shiro no Fukurou open. The portal pulls you back, but the last sight you see is the blade of Jama Suru, risen in his horror, swiftly moving down on the helpless Kikuchiyo. The unholy blade cleaves the man in two and flames rise from the cut begin to devour his body. The fires and his screams are cut off by the dark of Yume-do.

Conclusion

The stars of Yume-do seem dimmer as you travel back to the Castle of the Owl. Suddenly, you realize there is a blackness following you back. The Nothing swirls behind you, coiling like a snake about to strike. When it does, however, the light from the seven blades drive it back, seeming to wound the Lying Darkness and allowing you to reach Shiro no Fukurou unharmed.

When you arrive back in the chamber you left, The Sukune is there, along with the stoic and silent form of Kobe. Kobe's eyes immediately dart toward the weapons the PCs carry, but The Sukune seems more interested in what happened to you on your journey.

Once you have finished telling your tale, the Sukune shares an unreadable look with his fellow daimyo. The Sukune says, "I would ask you, samurai, not to speak of your encounter with the Nothing. It would cause…unrest within the lands and possibly undo some of our work in this realm. As for the blades, however, it seems they are exactly what we need to combat the enemies of the Owl Clan. They seem to have acknowledged some among you as worthy, as well. To that end, we name these blades the Seven Virtues and command that you use them in the defense of the Owl Clan, Rokugan, and the realms." With that, he bows to you
and departs with Kobe.

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.

If a PC has a Crafting cert, they may make a Crafting roll at this time.

Experience Points

Surviving the adventure:	2XP
Good roleplaying:	+2XP
Gaining materials for Yajindin:	+2XP
Returning with the Seven Virtues:	+2XP
Total Possible Experience:	**8XP**

Honor

Each PC who bound themselves to one of the Seven Virtues gains one Rank of Honor minus their current honor.

Glory

Each PC gains one full rank of Glory minus their current Glory.

Each PC gains one additional rank of Glory if they successfully defeated Jama Suru and his henchmen.

Other Awards/Penalties

Each Sukune PC gains 2 points of status

If a PC failed the Fear check when heard the screams of the dying women and children by more than 15, they gain Phobia: Fire as a one-point Disavantage. If such a PC also watched Kikuchiyo be burned alive by Suru's blade, they instead gain Phobia: Fire as a two-point Disadvantage.

Module Tracking Sheets

Write down which of the Seven Virtues you received.

GM Reporting

Which PCs received which of the Seven Virtues?

GM must report this information BEFORE the end of the convention for it to have storyline effect.

Appendix #1: NPCs

Sukune Takeshi

Sukune Takeshi is a quiet, retiring samurai, naturally inclined to allow others to take the lead. A ronin before being chosen by Sezaru to join the yumemusha, Takeshi was trained by one of the reclusive kenku swordmasters on his home world. The kenku recognized Takeshi's phenomenal potential with a blade, but Takeshi himself felt unworthy of the kenku's teachings, and even now, despite being one of the most skilled kenjutsu masters alive, he still feels unequal to the task of justifying his training. Perhaps this mission from The Sukune himself will finally give him the validation he needs…

Air	Earth	Fire	Water	Void
3	2	3	2	3
Honor 5.0		Status 1.6		Glory 3.7

Armor TN: 25 (+6 against those with lower initiative) **Reduction:** 3

Attack: Katana 10k4e (Simple); Wakizashi 10k4 (Complex) **Damage:** Katana 6k2m; Wakizashi 5k2m

Initiative: 6k3

Wounds: 10 (+0), 14 (+3), 18 (+5), 22 (+10), 26 (+15), 30 (+20), 34 (Down, +40), 38 (Dead)

Taint Rank: 0.0

School/Rank: Kenku Swordsman 3

Techniques: *Wing of Thunder:* You may add the total of your Reflexes and School Rank to your Armor TN against any enemy with lower Initiative.

Heaven's Claw: Any time you inflict more than 10 points of damage with a single attack, your opponent loses one Void Point. Against opponents with no Void Points remaining (or no Void), you may instead re-roll a single damage die and take the better of the two results.

Lightning Kiss: You may attack as a Simple Action while using any melee weapon in which you possess a Skill Emphasis.

Skills: Defense 1, Hunting 3, Kenjutsu (Katana) 10, Meditation 1, Tea Ceremony 1, Lore: Heraldry 1, Iaijutsu 5, Investigation 2, Etiquette 1, Craft: Cooking 1, Commerce 2, Athletics 3, Medicine 1, Lore: Bushido 1, Lore: Law 2, Sincerity 2, Lore: Shadowlands 2, Battle 1, Courtier 3, Stealth 1

Advantages/Disadvantages: Great Destiny, Great Potential: Kenjutsu, Wealthy, Quick, Paragon of Duty / Idealistc, Doubt: Kenjutsu

Seppun Mifune

Air	Earth	Fire	Water	Void
4	4	4	3	3
Honor 6.7		Status 4.0		Glory 2.3

Armor TN: 30 **Reduction:** 0

Attack: Wakizashi 6k4 (Complex) **Damage:** Wakizashi 5k2

Initiative: 8k4

Wounds: 20 (+0), 28 (+3), 36 (+5), 44 (+10), 52 (+15), 60 (+20), 68 (Down, +40), 72 (Dead)

Taint Rank: 2.1

School/Rank: Bloodspeaker Technique (Insight Rank 4)

Techniques: *Iuchiban's Method*: The high-ranking Bloodspeakers realize they are meddling with the Taint, but have learned ways to mitigate this, in part by shunting the corruption off onto their misguided followers. You learn two Maho spells of your choice and gain a Free Raise for Spell Casting Rolls with Maho spells. When casting a Maho spell, you may reduce the amount of Taint you gain by 1 point for every 2 additional Wounds you take when casting the spell. (This cannot decrease the Taint gain below 1 point.) However, if you are using someone else's blood to power the spell, you may instead use this technique to transfer the Taint for the spell onto that person, at the rate of 1 point of Taint for every 2 extra Wounds infl icted. This can reduce your own Taint gain to 0.

Spells: *Air* (9k4 Spell Casting roll for that element): Inspire Fear (Maho Rank 1 Core Book), Hate's Heart (Maho Rank 3 Core Book); *Earth* (9k4): Pain (Maho Rank 2 Core Book), Chains of Jigoku (Maho Rank 4 Core Book), Tomb of Earth (Maho Rank 4 Enemies of the Empire) *Water* (8k3) Wings of Blood (Maho Rank 2 Enemies of the Empire).

Powers: *Above the Elements* (All traditional Rokugani spells against him gain TN +10. All maho spells targeting him gain a free raise.)

Skills: Courtier 5 (Manipulation), Defense 3, Intimidation 3, Sincerity 2, Etiquette 2, Lore: Maho 3, Spellcraft 5

Advantages/Disadvantages: Social Position/Contrary, Brash, Insensitive

Ashigaru Spearmen

Air	Earth	Fire	Water	Void
2	3	3	3	2

Honor 4.7 Status 0.5 Glory 0.7

Armor TN: 20 (Light) **Reduction:** 3
Attack: Yari 8k3 (Complex) **Damage:** Yari 5k2
Initiative: 4k2
Wounds: 15 (+0), 21 (+3), 27 (+5), 33 (+10), 39 (+15), 45 (+20), 51 (Down, +40), 57 (Dead)
Taint Rank: 0.0
School/Rank: None (Insight Rank 2)
Techniques: *None*
Spells: *None*
Powers: *None*
Skills: Defense 3, Intimidation 3, Spears (Yari) 5

Ashigaru Archers

Air	Earth	Fire	Water	Void
3	2	2	3	3

Honor 4.0 Status 0.5 Glory 0.7

Armor TN: 25 (Light) **Reduction:** 3
Attack: Yumi 8k3 (Complex) **Damage:** Willow Leaf 5k2
Initiative: 4k2
Wounds: 10 (+0), 14 (+3), 18 (+5), 22 (+10), 26 (+15), 30 (+20), 34 (Down, +40), 38 (Dead)
Taint Rank: 0.0
School/Rank: None (Insight Rank 2)
Techniques: *None.*
Spells: *None*
Powers: *None*
Skills: Defense 3, Intimidation 3, Kyujutsu (Yumi) 5

Kitsu Tsuko

Air	Earth	Fire	Water	Void
3	4	5	4	3

Honor 7.0 Status 4.0 Glory 4.2

Armor TN: 25 (+5 against those with lower initiative) **Reduction:** 5
Attack: Katana 10k6 (Simple); **Damage:** Katana 8k2 (Explodes 9's & 10's)
Initiative: 8k4+5
Wounds: 20 (+0), 28 (+3), 36 (+5), 44 (+10), 52 (+15), 60 (+20), 68 (Down, +40), 72 (Dead)
Taint Rank: 0.0
School/Rank: Bayushi Bushi 4
Techniques: *The Way of the Scorpion:* Gain a bonus +1k1 to your Initiative Rolls. You also gain a bonus of +5 to your 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 your Turn, you may choose a target within 30'. If you successfully hit him during your Turn, the target is Fatigued as if he had gone without rest for 24 hours. During the Reaction Stage, an affected opponent may attempt an Earth Ring roll against a TN of 25 to negate the effects of this Technique. If he fails, the effects of this Technique end during the next Reactions Stage (the second Reactions Stage after he was struck).
Strike From Above, Strike From Below: May make melee attacks as a Simple Action instead of a Complex Action.
Spells: *None*
Powers: *None*
Skills: Athletics 3, Battle 5, Kenjutsu 7, Courtier 3, Defense 4, Lore: Bushido 4
Advantages/Disadvantages: Virtuous/Idealistic

Jama Suru

Air	Earth	Fire	Water	Void
4	4	5	4	2

Reflexes 5 Per 6

Honor 0.0 Status 9.0 Glory 10.0

Armor TN: 30 **Reduction:** 5

Attack: Katana 10k5 (Complex); **Damage:** Katana 8k2;

Initiative: 10k5+5

Wounds: 72 (Dead)

Taint Rank: 3.5

School/Rank: Shiba Bushi 2/Bloodspeaker Technique (Insight Rank 5)

Techniques: *The Way of the Phoenix:* When spending a Void Point to gain +1k1 on a roll, you may choose to spend 2 Void Points (to gain +2k2) on the roll instead. You may Guard as a Free Action; however, if you do so, your target only adds +5 to his Armor TN instead of +10.

Dancing With the Elements: When you assume your Stance for the Round, you may choose a target within 30'. Whenever your target casts or is the target of a spell, you may choose to increase or decrease the TN of the spell by 5. Additionally, whenever you are the target of a spell, you may immediately choose to increase or decrease the TN of the spell by 5.

Iuchiban's Method: The high-ranking Bloodspeakers realize they are meddling with the Taint, but have learned ways to mitigate this, in part by shunting the corruption off onto their misguided followers. You learn two Maho spells of your choice and gain a Free Raise for Spell Casting Rolls with Maho spells. When casting a Maho spell, you may reduce the amount of Taint you gain by 1 point for every 2 additional Wounds you take when casting the spell. (This cannot decrease the Taint gain below 1 point.) However, if you are using someone else's blood to power the spell, you may instead use this technique to transfer the Taint for the spell onto that person, at the rate of 1 point of Taint for every 2 extra Wounds inflicted. This can reduce your own Taint gain to 0

Spells: Jama Suru has learned and memorized all known maho spells except for Take the Body. His nature as a twisted kansen-bound entity also gives him perverse insight into the realm of maho, allowing him to create unique spells and rituals that cannot be replicated.

Powers: *Counter spell:* If a PC decides to cast a spell at Jama Suru, they must make an opposed roll of their **school rank/element** against Jama Suru's **Insight/opposing element** (Fire v. Water, Earth v. Air, Void v. Void). If Jama Suru wins, the spell does not go off as the kansen around the area disperse the kami. In addition, all spells of that element have their TN increased by 5 due to the presence of the kansen. If it is from pearl magic, the spell goes off, but the pearl is corrupted and destroyed by the kansen and cannot be used again. *Hidden Name:* Nezumi Name Magic has its TN increased by 30 due to the difficulty of finding the name of both a kansen and its host.

Skills: Battle 5, Courtier 2, Defense 4, Etiquette 3, Intimidation (Control) 4, Kenjutsu (Katana) 5, Knives 3, Lore: Battle 3, Lore: Heraldry 2, Lore: Maho 7, Lore: Shadowlands 3, Lore: Shugenja 3, Meditation 3, Sincerity (Deceit) 4, Spellcraft 6

Advantages/Disadvantages: Forbidden Knowledge (Maho), Quick/Antisocial, Disturbing Countence

Appendix #2: The Seven Virtues

All blades are awakened nemuranai and act as having the crystal keyword

Compassion - Katana; when acting for those beneath your station gain 1k1 to attack and damage rolls when using this katana. When acting for those beneath your station and wearing the katana, gain 1k1 to either your attack or your damage roll. Acts as a mundane katana for anyone with the Insensitive disadvantage or ever willingly deny help to those beneath your station without cause. (GM's decision)

Courage - Katana; Immune to fear. Gain 1k1 to attack and damage rolls when attacking anyone with a higher insight rank than you when using this katana. When attacking anyone with a higher insight rank than you and wearing the katana, gain 1k1 to either your attack or your damage roll. Permanently becomes a mundane katana if ever flee from battle.

Courtesy - Wakazashi; When bound, divide a number of +1k0 bonuses equal to your Etiquette skill as evenly as possible between attack and damage (player's choice where to put leftover bonuses); increases to Etiquette skill later provide additional +1k0 bonuses to add. Permanently becomes a mundane wakizashi if discourteous to someone who was not discourteous to you first. (GM's decision)

Duty – Katana: add 1k1 to attack and damage rolls while directly defending your lord or carrying out their orders. When directly defending your lord or carrying out their orders and only wearing the katana, add +1k1 to either your attack or your damage roll. Permanently becomes a mundane katana if you are dismissed from your lord's service or refuse an order from them. If your lord gives you permission to commit seppuku instead, this penalty is waived.

Honesty - Wakazashi; When bound, divide a number of +1k0 bonuses equal to your Sincerity skill as evenly as possible between attack and damage (player's choice where to put leftover bonuses); increases to Sincerity skill later provide additional +1k0 bonuses to add. Permanently becomes a mundane wakizashi if ever successfully make a Sincerity (Deceit) roll.

Honor - Katana; Add 1k1 to attack and damage rolls against any enemy with lower Honor when using the katana. When wearing the katana and attacking an enemy with lower honor than you, gain 1k1 to either your attack or damage roll. Any honor losses count double. Mundane katana for anyone with Honor Rank below 4.0.

Sincerity - Wakazashi; Gain a number of free raises per combat equal to your Sincerity skill that can only be used on the Feint maneuver. Permanently becomes a mundane wakizashi if you ever fail a Sincerity roll by 15 or more.