

Stand Against the Waves

**A One-Round Low-Rank Adventure for Heroes of
Rokugan: Spirit of Bushido**

Part One of *Legion of the Crow*

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A hunt for bandits within the territory of the Lion holds unexpected danger and questions of how far a person must go to stand up for what they believe in.

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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 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 high-end parties, as follows:

High End Party (there are three or more non-courtier characters of Rank 2):

- The peasant ashigaru have Agility 3.
- Raise all of Yamato's skills by 1 rank.

Adventure Summary and Background

An Emerald Magistrate assigns a group of yoriki to investigate reports of bandits active somewhere in Lion lands who are raiding both the Crane and Imperial lands as well. The last village that was struck is called Hidochi, and it is there that the investigation begins.

A group of about a dozen bandits have been striking along the Crane, Lion, and Imperial borders, always fleeing from one land to another to avoid magistrates. Finally, the case comes to attention of the Emerald Magistrate Doji Oharu and he is ordered to do something about it. Oharu is a master of accomplishing much with little, and specifically is highly skilled at getting others to accomplish it for him – as one might expect from a Doji Courtier. Calling in several favors, he has arranged for a new group of yoriki to investigate the matter on his orders.

Ironically, he need not have bothered. A group of Lion ashigaru, returned to their home village after the March to Voltturnum decided to take matters into their own hands. With their knowledge of the terrain and skill at arms, they dispatched the bandits without any difficulty.

This action, however, came to the attention of Ikoma Gennai, the local samurai governor, who condemned their independence. Instead of facing his judgement, the ashigaru slew him and hid the body, hoping no one would come to investigate.

Enter the PCs, eager to find a group of bandits to slay.

Introduction

Following orders from your daimyo, you find yourselves in West Hub Village to meet with and assist one of your lord's allies. After the tragedy of the Topaz Championship, tensions are obviously running high and everyone is doing their best to look busy. Perhaps they hope that work will distract them from the grief that grips the entire Empire.

Your instructions are to meet at the Pine Garden Inn. It is a two-story building that seems to have weathered the chaos and warfare of the last ten years in surprisingly good condition. Upon entering, you are treated to a breath of fresh woodsy air from a pot of incense kept near the door. The smiling proprietor bows and greets you, summoning a servant to lead you onwards to a room on the second floor. He calls up after you, "Don't hesitate to ask for anything, samurai-sama!"

In a room on the second floor is a handsome older man in the light blue and white of the Crane Clan with the mon of the Emerald Magistrates clearly displayed on his haori. Silver streaks his topknot, and his fine silks cover a slight paunch. He sits behind a table where a steaming pot of tea and several cups are waiting to be filled. An ornately carved walking stick leans against the wall behind him. He rises painfully to his feet and offers a cordial bow when you enter, but the polite greeting seems somewhat stiff, as though the years have taken their toll. "Greetings, my friends. I am Doji Oharu, and it is an honor to make the acquaintance of samurai of such distinction." A friendly smile tugs at the corner of his mouth, and he motions for everyone to sit.

Characters who make a **Lore: Heraldry / Intelligence** roll at a TN of 25, or a **Courtier / Intelligence** roll at a TN of 30, recognize Doji Oharu as an older, highly experienced Emerald Magistrate. He is not exactly a handsome man, but seems to possess a certain amount of charisma. He is known to be currently out of favor with the Emerald Champion, but no one is really certain why. (Oharu's methods are not to Toshiken's tastes, though the Emerald Champion has not publicly revealed this fact in order to save face for his predecessors, who allowed Oharu to continue.) His current case is something of a punishment from his superiors, but he has used his network of contacts to acquire a group of young samurai to turn into cat's paws. He believes this case to be simple enough to begin this new association.

As everyone settles in, Oharu speaks in calm, well-modulated tones. “Let us share tea before we begin dealing with the unpleasant matter that brings us together this day. I am, through my correspondence with your lords, somewhat familiar with each of you, but perhaps introductions are in order for the benefit of the others.” He pours the tea himself and hands the cups out with a smile for each PC, providing their name for the group and encouraging them to share something about themselves with everyone. That done, he sits back and sips his tea, chatting idly with the PCs over the first cup. He is very interested in the younger samurai: their ambitions, their goals, anything that may give him leverage with them in the future. He will only use his Rank One Doji Courtier Technique with particularly reticent PCs, trying to feel them out and determine what their desires and ambitions are. Oharu is a smooth manipulator, who is interested in developing the PCs into valuable future contacts. It is entirely possible (probable, even) that the players will not realize they are being manipulated in this first meeting.

After finishing his tea, he sets the cup down and sighs regretfully. His pleasant attitude becomes serious as he gets down to business. *“As enjoyable as this may be, duty does call. I have had the opportunity to be of some small service to each of your daimyo at some point in the past. Because your daimyo are honorable samurai, they have sent you to assist me in turn upon hearing of my need.”* He smiles briefly and inclines his head toward the group in thanks. The smile then fades and he continues soberly. *“Recent, unfortunate events seem to have caused some to believe that the laws of this land no longer apply to them. You are to have the honor of proving them wrong. A group of bandits has been reported raiding along the Crane, Lion, and Imperial borders. This is an insult that cannot stand, therefore I am appointing all of you as yoriki. These bandits were last reported near a village in Lion lands called Hidochi. I will provide you with a copy of the local governor’s report when you depart.”*

At this point the samurai may have some questions for Oharu.

- **Will you be accompanying us/Where will you be?** “Recent... events have demanded the attention of a number of senior magistrates. Surely dealing with a few bandits is not beyond your abilities?” (He is obliquely referring to the demise of the Empress, and deliberately giving the impression that he will be dealing with the investigation.)
- **What do we know about these bandits?** “A small band, no more than a dozen or so. Just another

group of ruffians. They recently raided the village of Hidochi and we received a report from the governor, Ikoma Gennai. His report was filed quickly and is sparse on details, but we believe this is the same group. Gennai-san’s description was, well, less than helpful, but we do know Hidochi is only a half-day’s journey from the last village to be attacked.”

- **Who is Ikoma Gennai?** “The governor of the village. He was a functionary at the Lion Embassy in Otosan Uchi many years ago, and was rewarded with this village after impressing Matsu Tsuko when she was the Lion Clan Champion. A suitable situation for a man of his particular ‘zeal’. I trust his sense of duty has inspired his peasants to hold firm in the face of adversity.” Oharu’s voice is slightly ironic at this.

Any PC can attempt a **Lore: Lion / Intelligence** roll at **TN 25**, or a **Courtier / Intelligence** roll at **TN 30** to learn more about Ikoma Gennai – PCs who have an Oath of Fealty to Matsu Yoshiko gain a Free Raise on this roll. His reputation is much as Oharu presents it: he is a very tradition-minded samurai known for his bombastic attacks upon the other Great Clans, and the Minor Clans, and just about anything that the Lion don’t support. He is known to live alone after losing his only son during the Unicorn invasion; his grandson is away being trained at the re-established Akodo Bushi School.

- **What do you know about the village?** “A tiny farming community in the Lion lands, hardly more than a hamlet. This bandit group has apparently specialized in attacking such small villages; that is part of why we believe it to be a small band.”

Oharu is being a bit evasive with his answers; if the PCs question him further on why he is not going, or what he knows about Gennai, he will shrug slightly and spread his hands. *“I admit, I have something of a history with Gennai-san, and it is not exactly a congenial one. He ought not give you trouble for merely serving temporarily as my yoriki, but I suspect that he might do something... rash were I to arrive in his village.”* If they seem to perceive this as cowardice, he will calmly respond, *“Assault on an Emerald Magistrate in the pursuit of their duty is essentially treason, and I do not wish to put him in a situation where his pride might demand it of him.”* This is all true, as far as it goes, but it is worth remembering that Oharu has no real interest in putting himself in harm’s way – he views this sort of task as best suited for others.

Once they are finished asking him questions, Oharu will give them a copy of the official report, which contains little more than the information located above. Gennai sent his report as soon as there was word of bandits in the area, and indicated that he would be dealing with them himself. According to the message, the only reason he even sent a report was because “Rintaro” (evidently the village blacksmith, who witnessed the first bandit attack) recognized some of their gear as being of Crane manufacture, which indicated they had come from another Clan’s provinces and therefore were technically an Imperial matter. After answering any last-minute questions and providing the PCs with travel papers, Oharu will politely bid them go on their way.

Part One: On the Road

Hidochi is located deep in the Yojin province of the Lion Clan, well away from the main Imperial roads. The journey will take about two days, and along the way the PCs will see other villages that have been hit by bandit raids. Many women and children seem to be out working the fields, and anyone who looks closely can see looks of expectant hope in their eyes as the PCs travel past them.

Some PCs may be interested in picking up local rumors either before they leave or during the trip out there. They can roll **Courtier (Gossip) / Awareness** at **TN 10** to pick up some useful information – success grants one of the following rumors at random, plus one extra rumor for every 5 points by which the roll beats the TN. (PCs who have sworn Fealty to Matsu Yoshiko gain a Free Raise on this roll.)

- The Lion Clan are building forces in Oiku, though not to the same degree they have in the past when preparing an assault on Toshi Ranbo. Perhaps the rumors of a Lion offensive against the Crane-held city are false... or perhaps the Lion are planning to approach it from a different direction.
- Many of the farms in this area are having trouble meeting their quotas for tax season, as so many of the recent wars and battles have rendered villages short-handed or even abandoned. It hasn’t turned into a famine yet and it does not seem likely to do so, but there are those among the peasants who worry about such things even if the samurai have not noticed.
- There are whispers concerning one of the nearby shrines: a flock of dead crows was found in the courtyard. The monks do not have an explanation

for the dire omen, and have assured any who have asked them that there is nothing worth worrying about. Still, the temple has seen better days...

- After the death of the Empress, some peasants are beginning to leave the capital when they can, seeking more settled places to live. A few of them have taken to stealing and there has been an increase in the number of bandit gangs of late. One group is known as the Boar’s Tusks and are known for the brutality of their raids. They were last sighted along the Lion-Scorpion border, surely far too distant to be encountered here.
- When the PCs pass to the south of Tsuma late on the first day of travel, they hear that the small city has essentially become a ghost town. Nearly all of the peasants have fled the town, and there are reports that the site of the Empress’ death is haunted. Barely enough residents remain to tend to the needs of the nearby Kakita Academy.

Direct questions put to the residents of the villages that have been attacked will yield some information for skilled samurai. An **Investigation (Interrogation) / Awareness** roll with a TN of 15 will give the PCs a rough description of a motley bandit gang that engage in hit and run tactics. They are on foot, with a range of weapons (swords, spears, heavy weapons, and bows). The peasants are uncertain on exact numbers, but are sure there are between fifteen and eighteen of the bandits.

Part Two: Arrival in Hidochi

Hidochi is a village of maybe fifty people, and covers an area perhaps a mile and a half in diameter. There are signs of a recent attack on the village: several huts are scorched slightly and there are still arrows in some of them. Several of the village men grip farming implements in tight hands when they see the group approach, but relax a bit when they see these are Clan samurai, not more bandits.

A few children will run out towards the PCs, gaping openly before one of the other villagers catches them. All of the peasants bow deeply and respectfully. One man, whose face is half-covered by a scrap of cloth, steps forward stiffly. *“Welcome to our humble village. Forgive the poor state of our unworthy dwellings. There were bandits.”*

The man who speaks is named Yamato. He lost his left eye when the Lion armies marched south to aid the Crab four years ago. If asked about the bandits, he will try to downplay the severity of the attack. *“Ikoma-sama insisted we leave the village as much like it was as possible so that the magistrates could see for themselves what had happened.”* He glances around impassively. *“We can have this cleaned up in a day or so. It is not so bad.”*

Any samurai who takes a closer look at the village can make an **Investigation (Notice) / Perception** roll at **TN 20** or a **Commerce (Appraisal) / Intelligence** roll at **TN 15** to realize that despite the recent signs of damage, this village is actually well-tended and the peasants seem to be well-fed and healthy, though all but one or two of the men sport some manner of injury or maiming. Also anyone who wishes to make a raw **Awareness** roll, **TN 20**, will catch an air of concern and unsettlement around the village, as though they are afraid of something.

What happens next depends on the choices of the players. Yamato has stepped up to handle the samurai interlopers, and the villagers are all too eager to stay out of his way.

Request to See Ikoma Gennai

As newly-arrived samurai, the PCs may insist on paying their respects to the lord of the village (this is the most polite thing for them to do, though Oharu's concerns over Gennai may make them wary). Yamato will frown at this and look down. *“I am sorry, samurai-sama, but I do not know if Ikoma-sama is available to see guests right now. He deeply values his privacy and is quite insistent on propriety. We would be glad to take a message up to him if that is your wish.”*

The peasants will stall the PCs as long as possible, “delivering messages” and returning with replies that the “lord is unavailable”. Yamato and his cronies will run interference, and will not lie directly to the samurai, but suspicious PCs may roll **Etiquette / Awareness** at a TN of 20 to determine that they are hiding something and not just covering for their lord (as might be normally expected). If the samurai insist that they must see Gennai as soon as possible (or if they eventually run out of patience with the peasants), Yamato will bow deeply and show them up to Gennai's home.

Ikoma Gennai's home is a two-story building on a small hill overlooking the village. There is a worn footpath leading up to it, though to anyone with at least two ranks in the Hunting Skill it will not appear as though anyone has done so in days. (See below for active

searching.) The grounds are surrounded by a low stone wall, with a simple garden and an empty stable. The house is not empty, however – Yamato's wife Tsuki is here. She has served as Ikoma Gennai's servant for years, and is very frightened for both her husband and her village. Tsuki will welcome the samurai and deliver the same stonewalling tactics that Yamato and the others used, but her nervousness is noticeable to anyone who can make an **Etiquette / Awareness** roll at a TN of 10. Tsuki will be happy to find refreshments for samurai guests, and will offer them a comfortable place to rest and wait.

Tsuki will not speak with the samurai beyond the requirements of polite service while Yamato is present. If she is separated from her husband, a PC can get information out of her by gentle persuasion with a **Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness** roll at a TN of 20 or by browbeating her into submission with an **Intimidation (Bullying) / Willpower** roll at a TN of 15. Tsuki knows that her husband served with distinction as an ashigaru spearmen in the Lion armies through both the Clan War and the Lion Clan's march to the Crab lands, and was honored by Gennai for his valor on the battlefield. She also knows that Yamato and his cronies (all veteran ashigaru) have been working together to protect the village, without Gennai's sanction. She suspects that Yamato and his friends did something about the bandits, and is afraid that they are responsible for Gennai's disappearance as well. If pressed, she will admit that she cleaned blood off Yamato's clothes a few days ago, but is flatly in denial about where it might have come from. She will plead for mercy for her husband, whatever he might have done. *“Please, samurai, please... Yamato is a good man. Everything he has done, he has done for our village, our family.”* Yamato's suspicions will be roused if the PCs were not all that subtle about separating Tsuki, or if they reduced her to tears (by forcing the information from her with the Intimidation roll).

Searching the house will show that some provisions have been removed from the kitchen, and that Gennai's daisho and armor have both been removed from their racks.

Conversing with the kami will not reveal much more of what occurred. Two nights ago, Ikoma Gennai put on his daisho and armor and left the house (to go confront the bandits). He was in a towering rage, and eager to face another battle despite his advancing years.

Searching the grounds outside will require a **Hunting (Tracking) / Perception** check at **TN 15**, or an

Investigation (Search) / Perception check at **TN 25** to find several sets of footprints that lead off into the woods. Following further into the forest requires **Hunting (Tracking) / Perception** at **TN 25**. Success allows the characters to discover the game trail that leads to the bandit camp (this will lead them to the Boar Encounter; see Part Three).

Questions About the Bandit Raid

If questioned, Yamato attempts to deflect the questions towards the headman. “Please, he knows much more than I do. I am sure he will be able to aid you far better.” He will not refuse any insistence though and will tell much the same story as Akuo, however, Yamato is easier to read and all TNs to notice what he is thinking or to convince him are reduced by 5.

Speaking with the Blacksmith

Rintaro, the local blacksmith, was the first local to encounter the bandits, and dutifully reported it to Ikoma Gennai. If the PCs wish to speak with him, Yamato will pause slightly, then escort them there as requested. Rintaro, however, is not all that helpful – he is not particularly articulate at the best of times, and is quite cowed by Yamato and his gang of ashigaru veterans. (As a blacksmith, Rintaro was not conscripted to march, and therefore lacks both the practical experience the former peasant soldiers had and the bond that they share with each other.) The smith will try to steer the PCs toward Gennai’s house, but will be very careful to keep from doing anything to rouse Yamato’s suspicions. He will openly dismiss the headman, but if Yamato is present, the ashigaru ringleader will contradict him, and Rintaro will backpedal hastily. The sight of Rintaro (a fairly large man) cringing before the much smaller Yamato may strike the PCs as odd, but Yamato obviously takes it in stride.

Under no circumstance will Rintaro denounce Yamato; guiding the PCs to what he believes to be the clues that will lead them to the ashigaru veterans is as much risk as he is willing to take. Like most of the other villagers, he is as afraid of the veterans as he is of the samurai – the ashigaru know where his family is.

Request to See the Headman

Yamato is all too happy to lead the PCs to the headman, an elderly man with a missing left hand, stubble, and jowly features named Akuo. Akuo grunts as he regards the samurai, not really impressed but careful to avoid any offense – he has managed to survive nearly sixty years as a peasant in the Lion lands, after all.

Akuo will attempt to downplay any problems the village may have had, showing much pride for the work that his

people have done, and quite insistent that they do not need any help from the samurai. If asked about Ikoma Gennai, he is noncommittal and will avoid answering much.

- **What can you tell us about the bandits/bandit attack?** “A group of men raided our village less than a week ago, firing arrows to light some of the huts on fire. While we were putting them out, they struck at our granary and carried off as much as they could. We managed to chase them off before they took too much, but it will still hurt come tax time.”
- **Why doesn’t anyone wish to admit the bandits are a problem/want our help?** “Ah, samurai-sama, many of us here were around during Daidoji Uji’s march.” (if there are no Crane PCs here he will spit at the name) “If we were able to survive the Crane army attacking, what consequence are these bandits? We can handle this problem.”
- **Why hasn’t your village been fully repaired?** “Ikoma-sama ordered it be left as much as it was as we could so that the magistrate would see what happened.”
- **What sort of man is Ikoma Gennai?** “It is not our place to comment on our master. Ikoma-sama is Ikoma-sama, we have not known many other samurai.” After asking this question, anyone who wishes can roll raw **Awareness** at **TN 20** to realize that Akuo is clearly holding back some information. If anyone presses him on this information further it will take either a role-played show of sympathy or kindness, using **Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness** or an overt threat or show of authority to force him to speak up, using **Intimidation (Bullying) / Willpower** at a **TN of 25** for either. If pressed, Akuo admits the following: “Ikoma-sama... has always been a hard man, very dedicated to his ideas. He requires all to share his ideas, whether or not they can or if it is practical. Samurai can hold high ideals in their life, but we are peasants, we must ensure that there is rice in the fall. Otherwise we all die.”
- **Can we meet with Ikoma Gennai?** “That would not be possible, samurai-sama. Ikoma-sama declared his intention to rid these lands of bandits even if he had to do it himself. He has not been at home for at least two or three days now, so perhaps he has gone to do just that. Surely you can leave the matter to Ikoma-sama, and not suggest that he is

unfit for such duty?” If pressed further on this subject, he will bow deeply, “Forgive me, but at your words I must question whether Ikoma-sama is still alive, given how long he has been gone. Perhaps he has come to misfortune within the forest... would you be willing to go and find out what fate has befallen him? I am certain he could answer your questions to greater satisfaction..”

- **What can you tell us about the forest?** “We harvest lumber from it, though not as much as other villages – we just don’t have enough able-bodied men for a large operation. There are some game animals in it... not that any samurai would wish to bother themselves with such things. A few sloping hills, but mostly flat and plenty of trails. You should have no trouble navigating it.”

If the PCs immediately accuse the headman of wrongdoing, Akuo will deny it, but he unfortunately only has a 3k2 **Sincerity (Deceit)** roll and so his lies will most likely be obvious. Akuo knows everything that has happened, but is resigned to the actions of Yamato and his veterans. He is not really part of the gang, but he is complicit for allowing them to get away with their deeds. He will try to deflect a direct accusation, but if the PCs force the issue, you should head to the final encounter – Yamato and his men will take their chances with attacking the PCs immediately.

Part Three: Exploring the Forest

One way or another, it is likely the PCs will eventually decide to enter the woods. Headman Akuo will offer to send a few guides with them. “This is our village, we will see to its protection. And we know the land quite well.” Should they accept this offer, Yamato and three spearmen will accompany them into the woods. Several other ashigaru will follow discretely. Should the offer be refused, then Yamato and the others will all follow discretely.

The peasants roll 4k2 for **Stealth / Agility**; should they be discovered, Yamato will attempt to convince the PCs that they are only trying to help. This is, unfortunately, a bald faced lie and Yamato is untrained in Sincerity. If ordered to return to the village after being spotted, they will comply, but ready themselves for a fight.

Searching for the bandit lair requires either a **Battle / Perception** roll at **TN 25** (to find a suitable location that bandits might hide a camp) or a **Hunting /**

Perception roll at **TN 20** (to figure out the same thing from game signs). If they fail this roll, Yamato and the ashigaru guides will be happy to escort the PCs back to the village – unless Yamato suspects the PCs already know too much, in which case he will lead the samurai to the bandit camp to be dealt with.

Success on either roll, or escort from the ashigaru, will bring the PCs to a game trail that leads straight to the bandit camp. However, they are not the first to find it: a young boar has been rooting through the remains of the camp. Alerted by the scent of the samurai, it will explode from the underbrush and attack.

Boar, Angry Local Wildlife

Air 1	Earth 5	Fire 1	Water 2
Reflexes 3		Agility 3	Strength 3
Initiative: 4k3		Attack: Tusks 5k3 (Complex)	
Armor TN: 20		Damage: 5k2	
Reduction: 12			

Skills: Jiu-jitsu 3

Special Abilities:

Disembowel: May initiate a grapple with its tusks.

When it controls the grapple it deals 4k3 damage every round.

Goring Charge: When a boar is in the Full Attack Stance, it adds +1k1 to its attack and damage rolls.

Huge: May not be Grappled.

Wounds: 30: +5, 75: Dead

The boar is a young one, and out of its normal territory (having chased the boy up the tree). It will fight until it is at Wound Penalties (it has taken more than 30 Wounds past its Reduction), and then flee.

The Bandit Camp

Eventually, the trail will lead the PCs to the bandit camp. It is a set of tents in a clearing atop a small rise. An alert PC who makes an **Investigation (Notice) / Perception** roll at **TN 20** will spot a bandit sentry lurking behind a tree as the group approaches. Oddly, he shows no reaction even if the PCs are noisy or open in their approach. Once they are nearby they will find that he has been pinned to the tree by an arrow through his back. Moving further they are treated to a scene of carnage and death. There are eighteen bandits lying about the camp, in various states of decay. Death seems to have come from either arrows, spears, or cuts from short chopping weapons. Some of the bodies are noticeably more decayed than others, indicating a longer time since death. Also in the pile is the body of an elderly man in Lion-marked armor, dead of a slit

throat. There is an expression of surprise and shock on his face.

Anyone with one actual rank in Lore: Anatomy, two ranks in Medicine, or three ranks in Battle can tell that the bandits were killed separately then dragged here and left to rot for several days. Gennai's body looks slightly fresher than most, but it is clear he has also been here for a few days.

After only a few minutes (about as long as a cursory glance around the camp), the stench of rot and decay will be overwhelming and everyone should make a raw **Stamina** roll at **TN 15** or be **Dazed**. This test only applies to those who entered the camp itself. At this point any ashigaru that may have been traveling with the group will confront them.

Part Four: Confronting the Guilty

The Ashigaru Ambush

Sooner or later the PCs will realize that both the bandits and Ikoma Gennai were slain by the ashigaru veterans. Their reactions will probably be hostile, especially if the ashigaru in their panic decide to take the first strike as they did with Ikoma Gennai. Unless the PCs manage to find out what happened without the ashigaru realizing it and immediately attempt negotiation, a battle will likely result.

The fight should include Yamato, as well as a number of ashigaru spearmen equal to the number of PCs at the table, plus half that number of archers. If the ashigaru have had a chance to prepare, they will have all the equipment listed, and will take any advantage they can from knowing the terrain. If the confrontation takes place in the village before going out into the woods, the ashigaru will not have their armor or any weapons other than parangu or knives. (If the PCs sent the ashigaru back to the village while they were exploring the forest, then the ashigaru will be fully armed and armored.)

During the fight, Yamato will single out one PC to fight (preferably one that has Ebisu's Curse, Daikoku's Blessing or Hero of the People; failing that, he chooses the most aggressive of the bushi) and shout bitterly at them, "We did not need your help! We have never needed your help! He told us we could stand up on our own, and we did! Now you all want to kill us for realizing we're not dependent on you! He told us! But now, first Gennai, now you... you just want to put us down like dogs! Well the monk's words were right!

We can solve all our problems on our own!" His voice will lower from his defiant shout to a quiet, threatening tone. "Just like we're doing now."

Ashigaru will double up spearmen on bushi PCs while the archers remain out of immediate melee range and go after shugenja. If there are no shugenja, they will target courtiers, and if everyone is engaged in melee they will target anyone attacking Yamato.

Yamato, Ashigaru Veteran

Air 2	Earth 3	Fire 2	Water 2	Void 2
Reflexes 3		Agility 3		
Honor 1.0		Status 0.0		Glory 0.5

Initiative: 4k3

Attack: 7k3(yari)

Armor TN: 23 (ashigaru armor)

Damage: 4k2 (yari)

Reduction: 1

School/Rank: none

Skills: Athletics 2, Battle 1, Craft: Farming 2, Defense 3, Hunting 2, Investigation 1, Kenjutsu (Parangu) 3, Spears (Yari) 4, Stealth 2

Mastery Abilities: May retain the result of a previous Defense/Reflexes roll rather than make a new roll if the Full Defense Stance is being maintained in subsequent rounds. The total of all damage rolls with a sword is increased by 1k0. During the first round of a skirmish may ignore 3 points of Reduction when making a melee attack with a spear.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Way of the Land (Hidochi Village), Missing Eye, Social Disadvantage (Heimin)

Equipment: Yari, Parangu, Ashigaru Armor.

Wounds: 15: +0; 21: +3; 27: +5; 33: +10; 39: +15; 45: +20; 51: Down; 57: Dead

Ashigaru Spearmen

Air 1	Earth 2	Fire 1	Water 2	Void 1
Reflexes 2		Agility 2		
Honor 1.0		Status 0.0		Glory 0.1

Initiative: 3k2

Attack: 5k2 (spear)

Armor TN: 18 (ashigaru armor)

Damage: 4k2 (spear)

Reduction: 1

School/Rank: none

Skills: Athletics 1, Battle 1, Craft: Farming 2, Defense 2, Hunting 2, Investigation 2, Investigation 1, Kenjutsu 2, Spears 3, Stealth 2

Mastery Abilities: During the first round of a skirmish, may ignore 3 points of Reduction when making a melee attack with spears.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Way of the Land (Hidochi Village) / Social Disadvantage (Heimin)

Wounds: 10: +0; 14: +3; 18: +5; 22: +10; 26: +15; 30: +20; 34: Down; 38: Dead

Ashigaru Archers

Air 1 Earth 2 Fire 1 Water 2 Void 1
Reflexes 2 Agility 2
Honor 1.0 Status 0.0 Glory 0.1
Initiative: 3k2 **Attack:** 5k2 (bow)
Armor TN: 18 (ashigaru armor) **Damage:** 4k2 (bow)
Reduction: 1
School/Rank: none
Skills: Athletics 1, Battle 1, Craft: Farming 2, Defense 2, Hunting 2, Investigation 1, Knives 2, Kyujutsu 3, Stealth 3
Mastery Abilities: May string a bow for use as a Simple Action. May move Water x 5 feet as a Simple Action while using Stealth.
Advantages/Disadvantages: Way of the Land (Hidochi Village) / Social Disadvantage (Heimin).
Wounds: 10: +0; 14: +3; 18: +5; 22: +10; 26: +15; 30: +20; 34: Down; 38: Dead

Believing themselves to be already dead, the ashigaru will fight until they can fight no longer. They will also try to defend their leader, though once he falls, they will only try to avenge him once before fleeing (running away from the village, and in all probability, taking up the life of bandits themselves elsewhere). Yamato will refuse to surrender, and if he cannot die fighting he will try to kill himself. Questioning any of the ashigaru will reveal that a monk passed through a few weeks ago, but none of them other than Yamato can remember the monk's exact words.

Negotiating with the Ashigaru

It is possible that the PCs may have sympathy for the actions of the peasants, or may decide that a fight is just not in their interests. They will have to act quickly to assure the peasants that they will not try to have them all executed, though a quick-witted and glib PC may attempt to pin Gennai's death on the bandits. Yamato is on edge and naturally suspicious so not only will it take a convincing story, which requires both roleplay and a **Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness** roll **TN 35**, or a **Sincerity / Awareness** roll **TN 30**. If they manage to present their case to Akuo, the TN is reduced by 10 as he is more calm and resigned about the whole affair.

Whether the PCs kill Yamato and his men or negotiate with them, the full tale will come out (either from Yamato or Akuo, or possibly from Rintaro or the other villagers; Tsuki will tell this tale only if Yamato is dead):

About three weeks ago, a traveling monk passed through the village tending to spiritual needs as he made his own journey towards enlightenment. He heard the villagers bemoaning the troubles they faced and he asked the simple koan, "What problems have you that do not have solutions?" This seed would later come to blossom in unexpected ways after the first bandit attack. The koan became a practical answer then, "What problems do we have that we cannot solve?" Rather than follow the lead of the strict and traditional Ikoma Gennai, the war veterans, led by Yamato, decided to deal with the bandits immediately and on their own.

They were smashingly successful, cutting down the entire band with no losses to themselves. However, when Ikoma Gennai found them at the camp and learned what they had done, he decreed that it violated his orders and the Celestial Order. He told them that he would have them all punished for their temerity. As their moment of triumph came crashing down, Yamato could stand no more. Raising his crude blade, he slew the old Ikoma. Yamato took the old Lion's daisho and hid it in his house, along with the weapons, armor, and supplies looted from the dead bandits.

If the PCs have not found the bandit camp before fighting the ashigaru, they should still go looking for it; they were sent to deal with the bandits, and simply taking the word of the peasants is hardly fulfilling that duty (move back to Part Three). Directions from the villagers will allow them to find the camp without making a roll, though they will still have to face the boar.

Conclusion

Once the ashigaru have been either dealt with or placated, the table must decide what they are going to tell Doji Oharu. Oharu will not be satisfied by anything other than a report that the bandits are dead and have been dealt with. Since the bandits are dead, that will be easy, but the PCs have the opportunity to take credit for the deed. Additionally, the PCs ought to mention how they dealt with the ashigaru. Should they wish to tell him anything other than the truth, it will require a **Sincerity (Deceit) / Awareness** roll at **TN 40**. Giving him an honest report will earn a frown and a grunt, followed by a solemn shake of his head. "This is an Empire, not a band of individuals. Everyone must do their duty, remain in their place. Anything else, and the whole system falls apart and our Empire is lost." Convincing him that they handled the bandits themselves will earn them great praise, though it is

obviously a violation of bushido. If they try to lie and fail, however, he will give them a sharp smile and seemingly accept their word. “Be certain that I will remember your deeds for some time to come, samurai. This tale will spread through the land, and I congratulate you on your success.”

One last question Oharu will ask the PCs is what should be done about the village. The death of so many young men, and possibly the treasonous behavior of some of its members, make it rather untenable to keep around. But as it is a Lion village, dealing with them is the Lion’s business. “What advice should I offer the Lion regarding this issue?” It is largely up to the PCs if they wish to plead for mercy for the villagers or abandon it to its fate. A particularly heartfelt show of compassion may be worth honor at the GM’s discretion.

points of Influence and 1 point of Devotion. If, however, they tried to lie to him and failed, they gain a Minor Obligation to him as well.

Module Tracking Sheets

Ally: Doji Oharu (2 Inf/1 Dev) and/or Obligation: Doji Oharu

Rewards for Completing the Adventure

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

Experience Points

Playing through the adventure:	2 XP
Good role-playing:	+1 XP
PCs submit a report to Oharu declaring the bandits have been dealt with	+1 XP

Total Possible Experience: 4 XP

Other Awards/Penalties

Since the PCs undertook a mission for an Emerald Magistrate, any PC with less than Glory Rank 3 gains 2 points of Glory. If they took credit for killing the bandits (successfully lying to Oharu or not), they will gain 2 extra points of Glory, but will lose a point of Honor unless their Honor Rank is less than 2.0. (It may be worth mentioning that Oharu himself will receive a fair amount of Glory, though he is not stingy with sharing it.)

If the PCs either gave an honest report or managed to successfully deceive Oharu, he will be impressed by their abilities and remember that he owes them for their services. All PCs can gain Doji Oharu as an Ally with 2

Appendix #1: NPCs

Doji Oharu, semi-corrupt Emerald Magistrate

Oharu was a promising duelist before being lamed in a skirmish with the Lion. He chose to serve the Clan as a courtier rather than retire at a young age, and has been quite successful in his own, unique way. Doji Oharu is a very complicated man: a dutiful samurai and exemplary courtier, but one intimately familiar with the dark side of human nature. He acquired his position as an Emerald Magistrate almost twenty years ago by trading favors to gain the attention of his distant cousin Doji Satsume (the Emerald Champion at the time). His utter loyalty to the Crane and willingness to do what most other Crane would not made him valuable to Satsume, but Oharu's fortunes have changed somewhat over the years. The current Emerald Champion, Kakita Toshiken, does not share his predecessor's tolerance for Oharu's differences.

Oharu's fondness for the finer things is not all that uncommon among his Clan, but he is addicted to opium. His bad leg pains him regularly, and he has used medicinal opium (entirely legally) for years. He is a fairly skilled combatant, but goes to a fair amount of effort to keep that quiet; he is a master of getting other samurai to do things for him and taking credit for their actions.

Air 4	Earth 3	Fire 4	Water 2	Void 4
Awareness	Willpower		Perception	
6	4		3	
Honor 3.2 (6.2)	Status 4.5		Glory	

Initiative: 10k4+10 **Attack:**
Armor TN: 25 (32 **Damage:**
Defense Stance)

School/Rank: Kakita Bushi 1/Doji Courtier 4

Skills: Artisan: Origami 3, Calligraphy 3, Courtier (Gossip, Manipulation) 5, Defense 3, Etiquette (Courtesy) 5, Games: Go 2, Horsemanship 1, Iaijutsu (Focus) 3, Investigation 1, Kenjutsu 5, Kyujutsu 1, Lore: Law 1, Medicine 2, Perform: Oratory 4, Sincerity 7, Tea Ceremony 3, Temptation 5.

Mastery Abilities: +1k0 to Contested Rolls using Courtier or Etiquette. +13 Insight. +5 to total of all Contested Rolls using Sincerity or Temptation. Ready sword as a Free Action. +1k0 to damage rolls with swords.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Allies (Many), Benten's Blessing, Crafty, Perceived Honor (3), Strength of the Earth, Voice / Compulsion: Opium (I), Lame