

Poisoned Gift

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

By Stephen Bongner and Andy Budnick

Module Number SoB05

Release Date: 1/14/2011

Month of Shiba, 1137 (Late Summer)

Yasuki Ebi has been granted the assistance of trustworthy vassals to resolve a merchant feud that is brewing in his city. Will they stand firm or will they fall prey to the corruption that plagues Friendly Traveler Village?

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

GM's Information

THIS SCENARIO SHOULD NOT BE RUN COLD!

Please read the scenario thoroughly before attempting to run it.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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 discretion and consideration.

Adjusting for Party Strength

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

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

High End Party (most/all characters Rank Two): Mayoki's Ronin have Agility 3.

Adventure Summary and Background

Aiso no Ryokosha Mura, or Friendly Traveler Village, has been one of the most important trade hubs for the Crab Clan for the last fifteen years, when Yasuki Taka, then the daimyo of the Yasuki family, bought a number of holdings there and began developing the village into a small city. It is best known as the producer of some of the Empire's finest sake and as a stop for travelers passing through the area for its vast array of entertainment and commercial opportunities.

The current daimyo of the Sunda Mizu province, Yasuki Ebi, has been having a problem lately with two extremely crafty merchants, Yasuki Mayoki and Yasuki Kumo. With a combination of skill, luck, and good funding both of these men have managed to climb their way up the business ladder in the town and now between the two of them control almost all the business that goes on in Friendly Traveler Village.

Yasuki Mayoki and Yasuki Kumo have only one thing in common: both want to monopolize all trade that takes place in the city. The only thing stopping them is each other. A great deal of crime has picked up in the city due to the feud taking place between the two merchants. Both have hired numerous thugs that regularly threaten local businesses in order to ensure that the other merchant does not gain any influence over ventures they have already claimed. Street brawls and general public disorder has become commonplace.

The town's magistrate, Yasuki Tora, is an honorable and dedicated man who took it upon himself to put an end to the "war" going on in Friendly Traveler Village. He had some success in tracing some of the crime that occurs in Friendly Traveler Village to Yasuki Kumo,

and attempted to arrest the merchant, only to find that the crafty businessman was able to outwit his every move. Before he knew it he had fallen for a trap that rendered him unable to pursue his goal: Yasuki Kumo found the one thing that Yasuki Tora wanted most and used it to bribe the magistrate. Tora is now caught in a personal struggle between his desire for order in the city and his inability to act against Yasuki Kumo for fear of the bribery being exposed. He has also been investigating the merchant Yasuki Mayoki, but with less success.

Word of this situation has reached the ears of Yasuki Oguri, the current Yasuki family daimyo (and son of Yasuki Taka). Oguri is displeased with the disruption that has overtaken one of his father's greatest triumphs, and has chosen to express that displeasure without removing Ebi from his position. Oguri has arranged for a number of samurai to be temporarily assigned as yoriki to Yasuki Tora, with orders to resolve the situation. This is somewhat shameful for Ebi, though not as great a loss of face as if he had been publicly censured – a small favor from Oguri for Ebi, who had been one of Taka's favorites.

When the PCs first arrive they may believe that this case is a simple one. The villains are Yasuki Mayoki and Yasuki Kumo. Go catch them. Open and shut. However, they will find that there is a reason that the magistrate has had such trouble catching them. The PCs are thrown into a city where two nearly-invincible crime lords evade justice, and it is their job to expose any weakness in the merchants and use that weakness to issue an arrest order, track down, and ultimately end the villainy that plagues Friendly Traveler Village.

Character Notes

Check the PCs' character sheets for the following:

- Oath of Fealty: Yasuki Ebi (Sunda Mizu Province)
- Oath of Fealty: Yasuki Minoru (Junkin Province)
- Scorpion PCs with an Oath of Fealty to Shosuro Atsumori (Ryoko Province) gain an additional 3 koku to their starting outfit for this module.
- Ask each player to name one thing that their character would like to receive as a gift. This can be anything that money can buy – nemuranai are obviously unique magical items

and ineligible, but can include services and other more abstract things. Even Ascetic characters must answer – they may focus on things that may be of service to their lord, but everyone needs or wants something. (If it is necessary, note that any item that would normally cost character points must still be paid for with experience.)

Introduction: Aiso no Ryokosha Mura

Friendly Traveller Village is a highly prosperous town, almost a small city despite being referred to as a “village”. Bustling docks bring food and goods from across the Empire into the Crab lands, and send out strong metal and stronger drink in exchange. Two large structures dominate the town: the small castle that serves as the daimyo’s seat, and the famous sake works where the renowned “Friendly Traveller” sake is brewed. The town also boasts three marketplaces, a moderately-sized temple to Daikoku, and numerous inns, shops, tea houses, and other businesses that cater to the city’s many visitors.

Lord Yakamo has begun his descent, casting long shadows ahead of you as you approach the city from the west. Despite the approaching evening, the city’s bustling trade shows no sign of slowing as you make your way to the castle.

The PCs have been sent by their lords to Friendly Traveler Village at the behest of Yasuki family daimyo Yasuki Oguri to assist the local lord, Yasuki Ebi. PCs who have sworn fealty to Yasuki Ebi have been summoned by their lord. Ronin have been hired by Yasuki Oguri for two koku as well as room and board for the duration of the investigation.

PCs from outside the province will arrive in late afternoon. The orders that they were given state that they are to present themselves at Shiro Aiso no Ryokosha Mura (the castle) upon arrival in the city. There, they will be greeted as honored guests by the servants, and shown to an expansive guest wing with very comfortable rooms. Crane, Minor Clan, and ronin PCs will find themselves a floor below everyone else, in rooms not quite as spacious or ostentatiously decorated – a not-terribly subtle slight for the Crane, though more than likely still better than Minor Clan or ronin are used to. Facilities will be provided to clean themselves and rest before dinner, where the PCs are expected to meet with the local daimyo.

Dinner at the Castle

You are shown into a large, sumptuously-appointed dining room; a long table dominates the room, set with places for each of you. Next to each plate is a small clay bottle with the mon of your Clan engraved into it, indicating which seat you should take. Crab are seated at the head of the table, with direct vassals to Yasuki Ebi positioned closest to him, and the other Clans placed further down the table.

The order is Crab, Imperial, Lion, Mantis, Dragon, Unicorn, Phoenix, Scorpion. At the furthest end of the table are Crane and any Minor Clans or ronin.

Standing at the head of the table near his seat is Yasuki Ebi, daimyo of the province. He is a short, heavyset man with a polite smile. In one hand he holds an ornately carved walking stick, which he leans on heavily. “Welcome to Friendly Traveler Village, and thank you for responding to my lord’s request so quickly. Before we discuss the reason for that request, I would ask that you enjoy the hospitality of my house.” He gestures for you to sit, and painfully lowers himself to his seat. Ebi is normally very amiable and open with his emotions, quite unlike most Rokugani samurai; however, the situation has left him tense and unhappy. He will dine with the PCs, speaking with different degrees of openness according to how they are seated. He will be warm and jovial with his vassals but distantly polite to those at the far end of the table; Crab are treated quite well, except for vassals of Yasuki Minoru, who he will be very cautious toward. Seated directly to the right of Yasuki Ebi is his vassal Yasuki Tora, the town magistrate. Tora is a tall man who sits proudly but is relatively quiet throughout the meal, preferring to let his lord do the talking. Leaning against the wall behind him is a walking stick similar to Yasuki Ebi’s, though there is no obvious reason Tora would have need of such assistance. The meal is exquisite, an ample testament to the wealth of Yasuki Ebi. The bottles contain Friendly Traveler Sake, a gift that can be either enjoyed with dinner or savored for later. (As they are marked for the guests, yet still served with the meal, Ebi has avoided the need for the customary refusals.)

The conversation will be light during the meal. Yasuki Ebi converses about the PCs’ travel, recent events, and other such things. Once dinner is concluded and the tables are cleared, Yasuki Ebi will rise from his seat, straining from the effort. *“Thank you again for coming, samurai-sans. You have been summoned here to assist my magistrate, Yasuki Tora, in an investigation. My city is home to many merchants; Yasuki Mayoki and Yasuki Kumo are two of the more*

prominent. These two have done well for themselves, but it seems that avarice has overtaken them and their... ‘vassals’ fight openly in my streets. This rivalry cannot continue any longer than it already has. I hope that you do not find this too troubling to ask.” A slight grimace crosses his face for the barest moment, the only sign of his discomfort with the situation.

“To ensure your comfort during your investigations, I am happy to provide you with quarters in my castle. For now, please rest and collect yourselves. Tomorrow you will begin your work with Yasuki Tora in restoring peace to Friendly Traveler Village. I will allow him to fill you in on the details before the work actually starts.”

Yasuki Ebi makes an effort to give a short bow to the PCs and then hobbles out leaning on his walking stick. Yasuki Tora walks after him, his own walking stick held self-consciously in his hand.

The dinner breaks up about an hour after sunset; still relatively early by local standards. The PCs should have plenty of time to explore the town if they choose (see the relevant portions of the next section if they decide to go wandering).

Part One: Preliminary Investigations

In the morning, the PCs will be escorted to the magistrate’s residence by two of Yasuki Ebi’s personal servants. It is only a short walk from the daimyo’s manor, but Ebi is clearly going out of his way to demonstrate proper etiquette to his guests. The servants bow low to the PCs and excuse themselves, leaving behind a small hand basket full of snacks, presumably for the PCs’ enjoyment at their leisure.

The magistrate, Yasuki Tora, strides out to meet the PCs, dragging along his walking stick behind him. Alongside him is another Crab samurai, a tall woman better described as “handsome” rather than “pretty”. Yasuki Tora introduces her as Toritaka Hatsue, chief yoriki responsible for policing Friendly Traveler Village. Hatsue gives a reserved smile and a short bow to the PCs and expresses her gratitude for their assistance in putting an end to the merchant war in the city.

Once introductions have been made, Yasuki Tora will brief the PCs on their mission. *“As was stated last night, you have been asked to provide assistance with*

ending what can most accurately be called a merchant war in our fine city. Two merchants, Yasuki Mayoki and Yasuki Kumo, effectively split control this entire city’s commercial sector between them. Their feud has been the cause of a significant increase in crime, inflated values, and general disorder in Friendly Traveler Village. Both have been asked to desist but neither of them has responded to threats of police action. The two are bitter rivals and as a result a great deal of violence and crime occur whenever the two share an interest in any particular business venture.”

Yasuki Tora clears his throat and continues. *“As chance has it, this morning I received a report of a possible escalation in their conflict: there was a fire at an inn where Yasuki Kumo was hosting a party last night. I would ask that you begin your investigation there. See if you can discover the cause of the fire, as I doubt it was entirely natural. Gather any information you can about Yasuki Mayoki and Yasuki Kumo as opportunity presents as well. If you have any questions for me I can be found here. My resources are at your disposal.”*

Questioning the Magistrate

Yasuki Tora and Toritaka Hatsue are both very knowledgeable about recent events in Friendly Traveler Village and can answer nearly any question about finding a particular location or about Yasuki Mayoki and Yasuki Kumo. If the PCs care to ask any of the following questions Tora will answer to the best of his ability.

- *Who is Yasuki Mayoki?* Yasuki Mayoki is an experience merchant patron and has taken up residence in the city at the behest of her lord Yasuki Minoru, daimyo of the Junkin province. Though Tora has little reason to believe that her lord condones Mayoki’s actions in the city, he has done little to help the matter. Mayoki owns many of the businesses on the eastern side of Friendly Traveler Village, and her control over the eastern market is absolute. Her first place of business in the city was the Cherry Blossom, a tea house on the eastern side of the city connected to an inn. Although the Cherry Blossom is considered her headquarters, actually finding Mayoki is a nearly impossible feat unless she wants to be found. She employs a few loyal men who do most of her work for her while Mayoki stays in the background, free from civil penalty.
- *Who is Yasuki Kumo?* Yasuki Kumo has lived in Friendly Traveler Village for most of his life and answers to Yasuki Ebi, at least in theory. In practice Kumo is less than an ideal vassal: he pays

his taxes but does little else for his lord. He controls most of the businesses on the western side of Friendly Traveler Village, and maintains offices above the Spring Waterfall sake house. Although Kumo can usually be found there, arranging a meeting with him is difficult because of the large number of thugs he employs to keep unwelcome visitors such as the magistrate out.

- *Why do the two fight?* Both Kumo and Mayoki are only one step away from controlling the entire town's commercial districts and the only thing keeping them in check is the other merchant. Thus there are constant street brawls, lootings, and acts of vandalism – especially near the center of the town where neither of them has a firm grip on business.
- *What crimes have they committed?* Although Tora regretfully admits he has no testimony to support either men of committing any crimes, it is a well-known fact that both of them extort protection money from local businesses, and that whenever trouble occurs in the city, it was caused by one or more of their employees. It is Tora's hope that the PCs' investigations will turn up evidence that could be used against the merchants at the very least to charge them with conspiracy.
- *What was the name of the inn that was burned last night?* Tora will inform the PCs of the location of Isora's Peace (on the south side of town), an inn named after the Fortune of the seashore Isora, and identifies it as the one that was set on fire the previous night.
- *What is the limit of our authority?* The PCs have been assigned as temporary yoriki for Yasuki Tora. They may make arrests if there is a public disturbance, but must return to Tora to get an Order of Appearance in order to take any Clan samurai into custody.

When the PCs are finished asking the magistrate any questions they might have he will excuse himself to his office, where the PCs can reach him if they need to ask him anything else later.

Notable Locations

There are a variety of places the PCs can visit in order to gather information about the merchants and their whereabouts, including several shops, inns, and the magistrate's residence. Below is a list of the immediately available locations and sources of information.

Questioning the Locals: The townsfolk actually have fairly little information to offer due to their fear of the two powerful merchants. If the PCs spend at least an hour asking around for information they can roll

Courtier (Gossip) / Awareness at TN 5 to pick up one of the following pieces of information at random. Local PCs (those with an Oath of Fealty to Yasuki Ebi) gain a Free Raise on this roll, and automatically know some of the information below.

- Yasuki Ebi is generally very liked by the people of the city. He is best known for his walking sticks, which he is never seen without and when he is accompanied by his vassals they always carry walking sticks as well. Crude peasants laugh a little, saying that his vassals carry walking sticks to try to conceal the fact that their overweight daimyo can't get around without one. (Automatic to locals.)
- Yasuki Ebi is known to have a significant dislike for Crane samurai, even greater than most of the rest of his family. Rumor has it that he once courted a lovely Doji maiden, only to be spurned in a cruel fashion.
- The House of Black Leaves, owned by a peasant named Kyubei, is the largest of the few establishments in Friendly Traveler Village that does not pay protection money to either Yasuki Kumo or Yasuki Mayoki. It is a popular place for the peasants to drink sake and complain about their troubles. Rumors indicate that the rarely seen Yasuki Mayoki was a patron of the House of Black Leaves at some point.
- Most people prefer to stay away from the far western side of Friendly Traveler Village where the Spring Waterfall sake house resides. Most of its patrons are richer peasants and merchants or guests from other clans, but rumors have it that people that fail to pay their protection to Yasuki Kumo go inside the Spring Waterfall and never come back out.
- The southern market has been the location of most of the unrest lately, which has brought the matter to the attention of people outside the city. Both the eastern and western markets 'enjoy' relative quiet, as they are more firmly under the control of one of the two merchant lords; however, there are still occasional instances of violence as one will make a move against the other's territory.
- Many ronin have been making their way through Friendly Traveller Village lately. Some have remained to take up jobs locally, profiting from the unrest and violence in the city, but most travel on. Tales have spread that the Crane are hiring large numbers of ronin mercenaries, though whether to defend their lands against the Lion or for another reason is a matter for speculation.
- Some of the information available from Yasuki Tora can be learned in this fashion, though

obviously the contents of his casefiles are somewhat more confidential.

The Magistrate's Residence: The PCs will find both Yasuki Tora and Toritaka Hatsue here, as well as the peasant clerk Hisui who is responsible for keeping the records organized for the magistrate.

If the PCs need to make an arrest or any other sort of legal action, they will need to come here first and get an Order of Appearance from Yasuki Tora. It should be noted that even should any PCs be Emerald Magistrates, they cannot override this requirement because the investigation is not an inter-clan affair and both merchants are paying their taxes to the Emperor.

If the PCs wish to peruse any of the old case records, they will need to get them from Hisui. Hisui is an old man with no hair left on his head save for a short white beard that he clearly takes good care of. He has worked for the magistrate's office for over twenty years and knows the exact location of every case record the residence keeps, which is roughly three years' worth of records at any given time. He is very proud and knows that the local lord Yasuki Ebi would not permit his mistreatment so he is not afraid to be uncooperative with unruly PCs. If the PCs approach him politely and request records pertaining to Mayoki or Kumo he will leaf through the shelves for a few minutes and place a small stack of files in front of the PCs. If the PCs are impolite or demanding, he will feign senility and pretend to have hearing troubles and memory loss and will ultimately cause the PCs to have to search through the records themselves.

If the PCs find themselves needing to search for records about Kumo or Mayoki without Hisui's help, searching the large set of shelves will require an **Investigation (Search) / Perception** roll at TN 25. Failure means that they still find some of the records, but only case reports about fights and vandalism that have broken out in the streets for the past several months. Success (or having Hisui provide the documents) can net the PCs the following information:

- Dozens of crimes have been committed by employees of both merchants, including street brawls, assaults upon merchants, blackmail, vandalism, and other methods of misconduct. Several of these cases are still open, since Tora has been unable to directly tie any of these crimes to the merchants themselves.
- Mayoki's dossier describes her as a short, thin woman who wears jewelry and expensive clothing. It also identifies her fealty to the daimyo of the Junkin province Yasuki Minoru. There is no place

of residence written in the dossier. The magistrate or his employees can explain that Mayoki never stays in the same place long and so it is impossible to document her whereabouts at any given time.

- Kumo's dossier describes him as an overweight, arrogant merchant with a balding head and a cane which he always takes into public. While most of Yasuki Ebi's vassals carry walking sticks out of respect for their lord, Kumo swings it through the air as though mocking his daimyo's need for assistance getting around. His place of residence is identified as the Spring Waterfall sake house, in which he apparently lives on the upper floor.
- PCs who make it a point to compare the records pertaining to Kumo and Mayoki will note that there are more cases closed for Kumo than for Mayoki, where the suspects were apprehended, given minor beatings, and turned loose again. The few cases that have been closed for Mayoki have had more severe punishments, including imprisonment, beatings, and one employee actually having been put to death for torturing a peasant couple and their child because they did not pay protection money.

If the PCs wish to go through the magistrate's financial records, they will be met with resistance from Hisui. Unless the PCs provide an extremely convincing reason for why they need to see the magistrate's financial records (coupled with an **Etiquette / Awareness** roll, TN at the GM's discretion based on how effective the argument was), he will insist that the records are none of the PCs' business. If they insist on perusing the financial records, Hisui will leave to fetch Yasuki Tora, who will angrily tell the PCs to leave his record room and stop bothering Hisui. He will not hear any excuses.

If the PCs do manage to get hold of the office's financial records, they can spend an hour perusing them and make a **Commerce (Mathematics) / Intelligence** roll at TN 20 to ascertain that the office's expenses mostly go toward paying Tora, Hatsue, and Hisui, with the occasional remodeling or decoration, and that most of the office's income comes from fines and taxes. It is notable, though, that at the beginning of each month, a moderate sum of koku comes into the office but does not have a source cited. This occurs each month for the past five months. Tora and Hisui will refuse to answer any questions about it and will angrily cite that it has nothing to do with the PCs' investigations. Hatsue will be curious about it but will also tell the PCs that they need to focus on the matter of dealing with the merchants.

Isora's Peace: Isora's Peace is a medium sized inn on the southern side of the town. It boasts a decently sized common room with an attached kitchen. Ironically, the

inn dedicated to the Fortune of the seashore is currently under extensive repairs due to being set on fire the previous night. The owner of the inn, a peasant named Juro, is very upset, but can provide the PCs with the following information if they ask for it.

- Yasuki Kumo was throwing a party for some visiting merchants from outside the Crab lands at the inn the previous night. This is actually a common occurrence, and some of them get pretty rowdy, but this is the first time something like this has happened.
- The staff at the inn is well aware of the merchant war going on between Yasuki Mayoki and Yasuki Kumo and blames themselves for allowing Kumo to hold his parties at the inn. "It was only a matter of time before Yasuki Mayoki-sama made a move."
- The fire was started when two ronin men threw lit torches into the inn, quickly setting the common room ablaze. The staff was able to get the fire out, but not before it could cause extensive damage to the inn's interior.
- The innkeeper saw the two ronin start the fire, as did the other servers. They can describe the ronin to the PCs if they ask. They are somewhat fearful about admitting this, but put their fears aside in hope that the PCs will be able to catch the criminals and their boss. They do not know names, but saw the men run off down the street after the deed was done – heading east, presumably back to their employer. (The two ronin are Dama and Burai, two of Mayoki's more loyal retainers, but the locals are largely unwilling or unable to identify them by name.)

The word of a few peasants is not enough to bring down Yasuki Mayoki by any means, but it is enough that the ronin could be brought in for questioning – if they can be located.

The Marketplaces: There are three markets in Friendly Traveler Village: the east and west markets are entirely local merchants and businesses, and the southern market is where merchants from other Clans come to sell their wares. All three are bustling places, constantly in motion even at night. New goods arrive at strange hours and if it is legal in the Empire, it can be found here. There are, of course, some shops that carry an extended selection if the patron is searching for more unique goods, but for the most part the business conducted here is completely legitimate. (Any PC looking for things like poisons, exotic weapons, or other illegal goods may make a **Lore: Underworld / Awareness** roll at a TN of 25; even then, however, they will find a fairly limited, but very expensive, selection.) Unfortunately, the prices here are much higher than one

might usually expect – at least 40% higher than elsewhere in the Empire. PCs who wish to haggle (and lose the appropriate Honor and Glory for the act) will find that the prices are quite stable, but a **Commerce / Awareness** roll at TN 15 can get the price down to 30% above normal. The merchants will be evasive as to why their wares are so expensive, but if pressed will admit that their costs are higher here than elsewhere in the Empire. They will be very nervous about even saying that much, however, and further details will require persuasion – either a **Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness** or **Intimidation (Bullying) / Awareness** at a TN of 25 to admit that they pay protection money to one of two gangs. Yasuki Mayoki controls the eastern market, and Yasuki Kumo the western. The southern, central market is contested, and the local merchants are harried, since they are under pressure from both sides.

PCs who wish to search for a better deal can make a **Commerce / Perception** roll at TN 25. Doing so will allow them to find a few small shops that have mostly stayed out of the town's commercial warfare, or merchants with samurai patrons from other Clans who the feuding factions have been somewhat more cautious toward. These shops do carry some staple goods, and can be haggled down to a mere 10% markup (using the same roll as above).

Temple to Daikoku: Friendly Traveller Village has a few small shrines to Fortunes and ancestors respected by the Crab, but the only temple is a moderately-sized structure devoted to the Fortune of Wealth. While there are many larger temples to Daikoku in the Empire, the one in Friendly Traveller Village is still one of the more successful; nearly every merchant that passes through leaves an offering of some kind, and the temple has profited immensely thereby. The building is almost opulent, with a golden statue of the Fortune in prominent display and exquisite incense hangs in the air around the clock. There are only two monks to oversee the temple, Kobari and Benko. Both are slightly overweight men in their late thirties, who have obviously not taken vows of poverty; they do not have the same sort of ascetic tastes as most monks. The monks of Daikoku know relatively little of use concerning the merchants – both Mayoki and Kumo are generous in their offerings to the Fortunes, as might be expected of such successful businesspersons, and the monks are quite happy to bless them as a result. Even the merchants engaged in their feud do not wish to offend the Fortune.

House of Golden Dreams: A successful geisha house catering to wealthy merchants and samurai, this establishment may well be outside the means of most PCs. It costs five koku simply to get in the door on

short notice; most of its patrons schedule their entertainment weeks in advance. Should any PCs manage to secure an evening, they will be pleasantly parted from as much more money as they are willing to spend in exchange for a delightful evening of tea, songs, and stories in the company of a beautiful companion. There is little practical information to be gained here, however; if the PC speaks with the oka-san (madam), they may learn that Yasuki Mayoki has scandalized the city with the Cherry Blossom Tea House. *“Many of the girls there could not be accepted at any reputable geisha house. The whole business is little more than a brothel catering to those with low tastes and lower standards.”* (Samurai who seek sexual favors from the girls at the House of Golden Dreams will be coldly encouraged to offer their patronage at the Cherry Blossom and made unwelcome at the geisha house.)

Sake Works: The large brewery produces several varieties of sake, and employs a large number of townsfolk. It is, however, firmly in the control of Yasuki Ebi and neither Mayoki nor Kumo have yet sought to challenge his patronage. The compound is kept secure at all times, ensuring that the secret of the city’s most famous export remains closely guarded.

Spring Waterfall Sake House: The Spring Waterfall is located on the far western side of Friendly Traveler Village. From the outside it appears to be a high class location and a couple of well-dressed ronin stand in front of the doorway barring entrance from those that do not appear wealthy or as if they do not have business at the sake house. If only one PC visits the Spring Waterfall and that PC does not have a status of at least 3, the ronin at the door will block the way inside. Otherwise, assuming not all the PCs are ronin, they will step aside and allow the PCs entrance into the establishment. The inside is just as lavish as the outside. The entire first floor seems to be one big open room with a few shoji screens placed to give the appearance of there being smaller rooms connected to the main area. Stairs lead up to the second floor, and a small balcony hangs over the common room area.

Almost immediately upon entering the Spring Waterfall, a smiling peasant acting as host welcomes the PCs into the Spring Waterfall and offers to seat them in one of the private “rooms”.

Although the PCs may possibly only be here for fine wine, they likely will ask about Yasuki Kumo if they know that he is the owner of the Spring Waterfall. The host will bow deeply to the PCs and inform them that he will see if Yasuki Kumo is taking visitors at the

moment. He will offer to seat the PCs at a table while he goes upstairs to request Kumo’s audience with them.

If the PCs allow themselves to be seated they will be placed in one of the larger “rooms” at their own table and a menu sporting a wide variety of sake is placed before them. The host gives a deep bow to the PCs and leaves them to look over the menu.

The selection of sake at the Spring Waterfall is astoundingly broad, and none are cheap. PCs may make a **Commerce / Intelligence** roll at TN 20 or **Lore: Sake / Intelligence** roll at TN 10 to recognize some of the Empire’s finest brands on the menu, though the PCs could doubtfully afford such expensive luxuries unless they pooled their money. Making the roll also gives the PCs the knowledge that, while the sake brands on the menu are indeed fine, the listed prices are all more than a normal consumer would pay for them, sometimes by up to 40%.

After a few minutes the host returns, sliding open the shoji screen to your dining area and bowing low as a paunchy bald man with narrow eyes in an excellent grey-blue kimono enters. The fat man gives a short bow and a shorter smile. “Greetings, samurai-sans. I am Yasuki Kumo, owner of the Spring Waterfall. Welcome to my humble establishment.” He seats himself at the head of your table and snaps his fingers. A servant immediately enters, produces a large bottle of fine sake, and daintily pours a sparkling, clear liquid into enough glasses for the entire table before serving them with grace. The servant bows again and slides the shoji screen shut behind him as he departs. The sweet smell of the rice wine mingles with the scent of heavy perfume wafting from the large Yasuki.

The wine is likely the finest the PCs have ever tasted, and Yasuki Kumo will be unswervingly polite with the PCs. The GM should be careful with this conversation. Kumo is smart enough not to admit to anything and will always deny his involvement in any sort of shady activities going on in the town. He describes himself as a simple merchant who pays his taxes and has been fortunate and skilled enough in business to make a name for himself. He will deny any accusations made against him by the PCs of wrongdoing, apologizing for trouble some of his employees cause and promising to take better care to hire less brutish and more trustworthy employees. He holds tight that he had nothing to do with any previous incidents and that his employees were acting on their own accord. He rolls 6k4 on **Sincerity (Deceit) / Awareness**, and does have the Emphasis. However, even if the PCs catch him in a lie, they have no basis to bring charges against him as

yet. Should they choose to challenge him to a duel for his bald-faced dishonesty, he will sigh and accept, though he will take full advantage of his rights as the challenged party to set the time for as long as possible to “give him a chance to find a champion.” This will, of course, cause him to have a bad impression of all the PCs. (Also, he will not allow the PCs to come upstairs for any reason, and at this point the PCs will not have anything to hold over him to force him to allow such a scene. If PCs do try to bull rush upstairs to raid Kumo’s living quarters they will find themselves met in mere seconds by a force of over twenty tough-looking bouncers who force them back downstairs, albeit as politely as such a situation can be.)

The only sort of real information the PCs can get out of Kumo is his opinion of his rival Yasuki Mayoki. He describes Mayoki as a coward and a thief who takes advantage of the peasantry. *“No doubt she has some shady dealings going on. Why else won’t she show her face in public? Clearly she needs to be found and locked up before anything really bad happens in this town. Surely you know she set fire to an inn I was hosting a simple gathering of friends at last night. What a danger she is! With all respect, I suggest you focus your attention upon her.”*

When the PCs have finished speaking with Kumo he will invite them to stay a while longer. *“Please, take some time to enjoy the fine refreshments this place has to offer. I look forward to seeing the results of your investigation into that villain Mayoki.”* If the PCs were polite and deferential to Kumo throughout the conversation, Kumo will announce that the sake was on the house today and that he hopes to see them again for an evening of fine wine and dining. If the PCs were rude or accusatory, Kumo will smile as he departs back upstairs and as the PCs are leaving the host will return to present them with the bill for the sake... 8 koku. The PCs may charge the amount to their lords or choose to ignore the bill entirely, but they will lose two points of Glory for the former case as they must now explain to their lords why they were using tax money for personal enjoyment or three points of Honor in the latter case for effectively stealing the wine.

Cherry Blossom Tea House: The Cherry Blossom Tea House is an old-fashioned tea house owned by Yasuki Mayoki. It is held in great repute, but first-time visitors might confuse it for a geisha house at a glance. The tea house’s staff is made up of gorgeous, well-dressed peasant women. The ronin guarding the door is nearly as alluring, a trim woman in a somewhat risque kimono who welcomes the PCs as they enter the teahouse and introduces herself as Mutsumi. (Slightly more observant PCs may notice the barest hint of a knife

shaft hiding in her clothes – this requires an **Investigation / Perception** roll at a TN of 20.) If any of the PCs ask about the business they will find out that the Cherry Blossom was built as a gift from the daimyo of the Junkin Province Yasuki Minoru to the local lord Yasuki Ebi. Yasuki Mayoki was placed in charge of the establishment and runs it as her headquarters, although Mayoki herself is a busy woman and is rarely actually seen in the teahouse. The tea here is somewhat expensive, but most would agree the environment is well worth the additional cost. The Cherry Blossom is adjacent to an inn, Blossom’s Petal, which is also owned by Mayoki, and inquisitive PCs who make a **Lore: Underworld / Intelligence** roll at TN 20 will have heard rumors that if a patron of the teahouse is generous enough, they can be ‘served tea’ privately in their room in Blossom’s Petal by one of the pretty serving girls.

Although Yasuki Mayoki is not present, she apparently was generous enough to leave a message with Mutsumi to allow the PCs to look around if they ask to. If they opt to search the offices they can spend an hour and roll **Investigation (Search) / Perception** at TN 20 to unearth a set of receipts for land purchases in Friendly Traveler Village. Apparently Mayoki owns several other establishments, mostly concentrated on the eastern side of town, a couple of warehouses, several residential buildings scattered around the town, and a few buildings outside Friendly Traveler Village as well. The PCs may think to try to find Mayoki based on these clues, but there are too many potential locations Mayoki could be at for the PCs to possibly cover in their short stay in the village, and there is no guarantee that any of the pieces of land in the receipts actually corresponds to Mayoki’s current whereabouts. Perusing Mayoki’s financial records and rolling **Commerce / Intelligence** at TN 15 will tell the PCs beyond a shadow of a doubt that there are no suspicious records kept here.

None of the staff of the Cherry Blossom teahouse have any idea where Mayoki is, including Mutsumi. If questioned she will admit that she has only been working under Mayoki for a couple of months and has only seen her twice in that time; she gets her instructions via messenger. The PCs will have to look elsewhere for better information on the merchant. Mutsumi can provide a bit of information on Mayoki’s doings, but will be relatively unhelpful – aside from being able to identify Dama and Burai by description, she knows little about Mayoki’s organization. Mayoki keeps Mutsumi on to keep order at the Cherry Blossom (and look good doing it), but has little other use for her.

If the PCs ask around in the inside of the Cherry Blossom about the arsonists from the night before, the staff will deny any involvement and will explain that they have not seen the two men since yesterday afternoon.

House of Black Leaves: Interestingly, the House of Black Leaves tea house is one of the few establishments left in Friendly Traveler Village that isn't controlled by Yasuki Mayoki or Yasuki Kumo. Two large tough-looking ronin stand at the entrance to the House of Black Leaves, but they don't even raise an eyebrow as the PCs enter the establishment – they were hired to watch out for Mayoki and Kumo's men. Since the sake house is yet untarnished by the two shady merchants, it is a prime location for gathering rumors about the merchants without concern for information making its way back to them. If the PCs speak to the manager Kyubei or any of the serving staff they can provide a small amount of information.

- On multiple occasions, Yasuki Kumo and Mayoki's men have come to the establishment to try and coerce Kyubei into giving up the rights to the sake house. In rare cases Kumo himself arrives personally. Originally they offered money, but lately the offers have become threatening, demanding that Kyubei give up the rights to the teahouse or it would be ransacked or burned down and Kyubei and his daughter beaten and left on the street. Kyubei is a tough old man, though, and continues to refuse the men. Since a recent incident which left him with a black eye and broken nose, he has hired two ronin to stand watch over the teahouse and not let any of the merchants' goons into the establishment. He does not know how long he will last under the current conditions, however, since he is forced to accept the ever-rising prices in the town in order to keep his products in stock. He expresses great hope for the PCs' mission of ending the merchant war in the city.
- Yasuki Mayoki stayed at the inn next door for a few days, but always had at least three guards standing over her room at all times. She was only seen checking in and checking out again, and Kyubei was glad to see her leave. The patrons of the sake house were very uncomfortable even being near to the inn. He can provide a physical description of Mayoki if the PCs ask for it. Mayoki is a short, thin woman with narrow features. Kyubei remembers seeing Mayoki wearing several pieces of jewelry on her arms and hands. He does not know where Mayoki went to after she checked out of the inn. The room is empty at the moment and if the PCs wish they may search it, but they will find nothing of value to their case.

- The patrons and staff of the sake house can tell the PCs that the two men seen starting the fire in Isora's Peace can probably be found collecting protection money from local shops over the next couple days.

Part Two: Following the Trail

Street Brawl in the Marketplace

As the day turns to evening, Yasuki Kumo's goons will be out in the marketplace looking for the men who set fire to Isora's Peace the previous night. They find their targets collecting protection money from one of the fish stalls and start a fight in the middle of the marketplace. If any PCs are in the marketplace they will see the fight as it starts, but will not be able to reach it as the peasants in the area are all frantically fleeing the scene in every direction.

Two men matching the descriptions provided by the staff at Isora's Peace are speaking in a threatening fashion to a small peasant fishmonger. Suddenly, a group of a dozen peasant thugs bearing short clubs emerge from the crowd. The two ronin fumble for their swords, trying not to drop small bags of money, while their attackers surround them. One of the ronin manages to get his blade out, but is quickly overwhelmed by the sheer number of thugs. He drops his sword and coin bag as the attackers mercilessly beat him to the ground. The other ronin throws the coin bag in his assailant's face and manages to break free, running off down the street. He quickly disappears in the panicked crowd of peasants. The helpless ronin falls to the ground, unconscious, while the thugs pick up the coins off the ground and trot off, laughing. The owner of the fish stall stands horrified at the scene, and looks around hoping for someone to come and deal with the unconscious ronin.

The PCs might try to chase after the thugs that beat the ronin down, but being heimin themselves, they can quickly disperse and join the mob of fleeing peasants if any of the PCs start running after them. If they make a clever effort it is possible to catch one or two of them and arrest them if the PCs so choose, but they will not be much use for making a case against Yasuki Kumo as they are just peasants.

If none of the PCs are in the marketplace they will see the peasant mob running away from the stalls and can easily find out what happened. If they seem particularly uninterested in checking out the scene Toritaka Hatsue

will eventually flag them down and ask them to come to the marketplace with her. Once they have arrived in the marketplace they will see the unconscious ronin on the ground with the peasant fish salesman standing over to the side.

The moment the PCs are in sight, the fishmonger runs over to them, weeping. *“Samurai-samas, please take pity on a simple fish salesman! That ronin over there was threatening me, made me give him all the money I had in my stall, and then a bunch of men arrived and beat him into the state he’s in now. To make things worse, now they have my money!”*

Presumably the PCs will be happy to finally have a chance to meet one of Mayoki’s men (many in town, including the fishmonger, can identify the ronin as such) and will likely either revive him or take him back to the magistrate’s residence for questioning. If he is revived he will refuse to talk even under threat of pain, so the PCs will have no choice but to arrest him and bring him back to the magistrate’s residence if they wish to actually get any information out of him. It may be noted that they have every right to drag him to the magistrate’s residence under the charges of stealing the fish salesman’s money in addition to the arson charges he faces from the night before. Even if they don’t eventually Toritaka Hatsue will arrive and drag the unconscious ronin back to the magistrate’s residence herself. She will send word out to the PCs that she has one of Mayoki’s men in custody and that they should meet her back at the magistrate’s residence.

Back at the Magistrate’s Residence

Yasuki Tora and Toritaka Hatsue will be waiting for the PCs at the magistrate’s residence with the ronin still unconscious in a corner. Tora and Hatsue will identify the ronin as Dama, one of Yasuki Mayoki’s longest-employed yojimbo. Once everyone has arrived, Yasuki Tora will first ask the PCs for a report on what they found so far, and then permits Hatsue to revive the ronin.

The ronin Dama becomes alert only a few seconds once he is revived by a splash of water from Hatsue. He looks around, dazed for a moment, then sneers and spits on the ground. “So you’ve caught me again, eh, magistrate? What’s the punishment this time? Beating? Stockade perhaps? You haven’t had me whipped in public for a while. I was starting to miss it.”

“Silence, scum!” Toritaka Hatsue clenches her fist in anger, but Yasuki Tora quiets her with a gesture. “You will be punished to the furthest extent possible

under the law, I assure you. But first these samurai here would like to ask you a few questions. You will cooperate, or I will add obstruction of justice to your long list of misdeeds.”

The ronin looks around again and smiles. “It won’t do you any good, magistrate. I acted alone. That fishmonger had a lot of money, and I felt the need to get him to share a little. You know I have three kids at home and a wife to feed, not to mention the dog...”

Dama’s insolence trails off when Yasuki Tora and Toritaka Hatsue turn away from him and give a short bow to the PCs. Tora smiles thinly. *“He is all yours, samurai-sans. Perhaps you can find a way to get through this hard-headed scoundrel that we have not in the past.”*

Questioning Dama the Ronin

The PCs are left to question Dama at their leisure, though Hatsue and Tora stand behind them and observe. Dama is used to being questioned by the magistrate, and will laugh off most forms of questioning. He will also mercilessly mock any attempts to sympathize with him or threaten him. Dama has only a little information he can give, but it is crucial that the PCs attain this information if they intend to find Yasuki Mayoki during the adventure.

Below are the possible methods that can end in success in dealing with Dama for the PCs.

- Dama is quite loyal to Yasuki Mayoki, but not so loyal that he can’t appreciate a good deal. He can be convinced to talk with a sufficient bribe, coupled with a skilled attempt at convincing Dama it is in his best interest to accept the money and forsake Mayoki. A bribe of 3 koku plus a **Courtier (Manipulation) / Awareness** roll at TN 40 minus 5 for each koku above the required amount, to a minimum of a TN 20, will convince him.
- Rokugani torture is an extremely efficient, but also extremely distasteful, way to get any kind of information. Yasuki Tora does not condone the use of torture, as he has had bad experiences with the value of testimony acquired under duress. However, he can be convinced to allow it with an **Etiquette / Awareness** roll at TN 25.
- If the PCs insist on trying to intimidate Dama into answering their questions, they will most likely fail as Dama is quite used to such brands of interrogation. They may still try, but the **Intimidation (Bullying) / Willpower** roll must beat a TN of 40 in order to actually be effective.

- The information Dama can offer is actually a physical piece of evidence. A physical search of his body will uncover it if the PCs roll **Investigation (Search) / Perception** at TN 15.
- Dama has a soft spot for women, so any female PC could potentially sweet talk him into giving into the PCs' demand for information. A well roleplayed flattering or seduction attempt coupled with a **Temptation (Seduction) / Awareness** roll at TN 20 will suffice to get him to talk.
- If the PCs think of it, they can bring in eyewitnesses from Isora's Peace that can offer testimony as to Dama's arson. While their words cannot implicate Mayoki, it would be enough to indict Dama. If the PCs suggest to Tora that charges be dropped against Dama in exchange for cooperation, the ronin will turn on Mayoki to save his own life. (Arson is, after all, an Imperial crime and punishable by death.)

If the PCs manage to succeed at one of the above methods of interrogating Dama, he will reluctantly admit that he indeed was out collecting protection money for Yasuki Mayoki. The arson charge is something he is somewhat more cautious about – unless the PCs find the letter by a physical search, he will make them an offer. *“I have something that you might be interested in... but I want to live. What's more important, samurai? Destroying the weapon or the one that wielded it?”* If the PCs agree to let him live, he will reveal that he is actually carrying a letter that he was supposed to destroy and hadn't gotten around to doing yet. He produces the letter, which contains specific orders to set fire to the inn Isora's Peace. The letter is written in the refined manner of a skilled courtier, though it bears no signature or seal. If the PCs do not want to take the deal, he still did just tell them that he has something and the idea of a physical search should come to them at this point...

Yasuki Tora takes the letter from Dama, reads it for a minute, and then considers. “This letter could be the key to finally having a handle on the crimes of Yasuki Mayoki. Though it bears no mark or seal, I should like to see Mayoki presented with this letter so that she may tell us in person that she is not the one who wrote it.” He sighs heavily. “Which is what she will no doubt claim. Still, we must do our due diligence. Samurai-sans, I hereby tak you with finding and apprehending Yasuki Mayoki. I would prefer to see her come quietly if possible, but our first task is to find her.” Tora takes out a quill from his desk and quickly writes up an Order of Appearance. “Show this to her and have her come here. This paper will give you the right to escort her here under Imperial law, as a witness of course, to this ronin's crime.”

The ronin Dama speaks up, clearly feeling defeated at being convinced to betray his employer. “I might as well give you a piece of advice, magistrate. If Mayoki-sama gets wind of the fact that you got hold of that letter, I will not live to see the outside of this city again. So it's in my best interest now to see that you catch her before that happens. She's in the residential district in the southeastern corner of the city. I can give you directions. You'll need to get there a little after dark to have a chance to catch her. She'll have the other bodyguards with her, so expect a fight.”

Dama has nothing else to say to the PCs or the magistrate, but hopefully everything he had to give will be enough to spur the PCs into action. They will have time to prepare weapons or armor if they wish, but if they intend to capture Mayoki this will be their only chance. Yasuki Tora and Toritaka Hatsue will cheer the PCs on and wish them good luck, though if the PCs seem to be in desperate need for bushi Hatsue will offer to go with them.

If the PCs were ultimately unable to convince Dama to talk (each of them have tried a roll and failed) and did not think to search Dama's person they will ultimately be unable to continue their search for Yasuki Mayoki. Yasuki Tora will glumly wish the PCs a good night and send them off to go rest for the night, promising to pick up the trail again in the morning.

Yasuki Mayoki's Safe House

It takes about half an hour to move briskly from the magistrate's residence all the way to where Yasuki Mayoki is hiding out. Mayoki and his bodyguards are all residing in a one-story house surrounded by a low stone wall and only one entrance: the front door. By the time they arrive, the moon will be out in full glow. Four of Mayoki's six bodyguards (one of them is currently at the magistrate's residence and the other is serving as bouncer for the Cherry Blossom teahouse) are here, scattered around the courtyard that is the only approach. They are actively on watch for intruders, so approaching with stealth will prove difficult for the PCs.

When the bodyguards see the PCs they will immediately draw their swords threateningly. One of them calls out to the PCs, *“This here house ain't a tourist attraction, samurai-sans. You'd best about face and go the other direction if you know what's good for ya.”*

Assuming the PCs continue their approach, combat will begin. The four ronin will all fight their hardest to keep

the PCs from entering, but if reduced to the Crippled or Down rank they will try to crawl away if possible. Because the fight takes place at night in the pale moonlight, all physical actions that rely upon sight (such as attack rolls) are at a +5 TN penalty. These penalties apply to both sides of the conflict, but shugenja or other characters may be able to change this situation with appropriately clever thinking.

Burai, Leader of Mayoki's Ronin

Air 2	Earth 3	Fire 2	Water 2	Void 3
Reflexes 3		Agility 3	Strength 3	
Honor 1.2		Status 0	Infamy 1.5	

Initiative: 5k3 **Attack:** 7k3 (katana)
Armor TN: 23 (ashigaru armor) **Damage:** 7k2+3(katana armor)

Wounds: 18 (+0), 27 (+3), 36 (+5), 45 (+10), 54 (+15), 63 (+20), 72 (Down, +40), 81 (Dead)

School/Rank: Forest Killers (Ronin 1 Path), Insight 2

Skills: Athletics 3, Commerce 1, Defense 4, Hunting 4, Iaijutsu 2, Intimidation 3, Jiujutsu 3, Kenjutsu 4, Knives 2, Lore: Law 1, Lore: Underworld 3, Staves 2, Stealth 2, Temptation 1

Mayoki's Ronin (x3)

Air 2	Earth 3	Fire 2	Water 2	Void 2
			Strength 3	
Honor 1.2		Status 0	Infamy 1.5	

Initiative: 3k2 **Attack:** 5k2 (katana)
Armor TN: 18 (ashigaru armor) **Damage:** 7k2(katana armor)

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

School/Rank: None (True Ronin)

Skills: Athletics 2, Commerce 1, Defense 3, Hunting 2, Intimidation 2, Jiujutsu 2, Kenjutsu 3, Knives 2, Lore: Underworld 2, Staves 2, Stealth 2

If the ronin defeat the PCs, any that are still alive are knocked unconscious, placed on a merchant cart in barrels, and are driven out of town. They will wake up a day later inside the barrels to discover that all of their belongings save for their clothing has been taken from them. The PCs' adventure is effectively over, and they will be forced to either find their daisho or be issued a new one by their lord if they are to hold a sword again. Either way, losing one's daisho is a significant shame on a samurai's name. All PCs who normally carry a katana and/or a wakizashi lose two Ranks of Glory and a Rank of Honor for the embarrassment.

If the PCs are able to defeat the bodyguards, they are free to search the house. It is a small dwelling, comprised of only one floor, and the cellar in the front

just contains a few empty bottles. PCs who succeed at a **Investigation (Notice) / Perception** roll at a TN of 20 will catch a faint scent of smoke. The source of the odor is a small chest in the bedroom; flames flicker over the wooden trunk, but appear to have just recently started. If the PCs act quickly, they can put it out and preserve most of the contents of the chest: it is filled with bags of koku, papers, jewelry, and pieces of expensive-looking clothing. The house itself contains a small bedroom with silk sheets, a mirror, and a bedside table with a drawer, and a study with an empty desk, some bookshelves with a few books on them, and a beautiful screen on one wall with likenesses of fish swimming through a shallow stream.

If the PCs think to move the screen to the side or make a general search of the house accompanied by an **Investigation (Search) / Perception** roll at TN 20, they will find, in a small man-sized hole in the wall behind the screen, Yasuki Mayoki, who is using her last resource to try and escape the PCs' clutches.

Yasuki Mayoki, like the reports say, is a short, lean woman. She hisses angry threats at the PCs, insisting that they are invading her privacy, have no right to intrude on her property, and the like. Once the PCs present their Order of Appearance (or just drag her out) she more or less comes along quietly to the magistrate's office. If the PCs wish to take down Mayoki once and for all they will need to bring both Mayoki and the bags with them back to the magistrate's residence. Yasuki Tora and Toritaka Hatsue will be delighted that the PCs were able to find Mayoki before she could disappear again. They take the bags and thank the PCs for their hard work, promising to stay up all night to search through the bags and question Mayoki.

It should be noted that if the PCs do not find Mayoki hiding in the house, she will slip out after they leave and escape the city, fleeing back to her home province. The magistrate will still take the bags the PCs found, but Mayoki will be effectively out of their grasp for the remainder of the adventure. If Mayoki escapes for any reason, the PCs will be able to continue, since early in the morning Toritaka Hatsue will receive a letter signed by Yasuki Mayoki with all of the claims she makes at the end of Part 2 contained within. This letter is written with the intention of making sure that Kumo does not gain further power in Friendly Traveler Village, and was Mayoki's trump card to ensure that if she ever was caught, that she could take down Kumo with her.

Staying Up

While most of the PCs will be glad to be done for the day, one or more may wish to stay at the magistrate's

residence to help Yasuki Tora and Toritaka Hatsue search the bags and question Mayoki. They will accept any such offers by the PCs, and the PCs will have the option of either searching the bags with Yasuki Tora or questioning Yasuki Mayoki with Toritaka Hatsue. Each PC may choose one task to help with. Note that if the adventure is pressed for time, this entire section may be skipped at the option of the GM.

Searching the Bags

Searching Yasuki Mayoki's bags will require multiple rolls in order to ascertain information about the many different items contained therein. The tops of the bags are covered in folded cloths and finely made kimonos. Underneath them are many different pieces of jewelry, all of which appear to be quite valuable. An **Commerce (Appraisal) / Intelligence** roll at TN 20 can estimate that the total value of all of the jewelry contained in the bags is almost 40 koku. Underneath the jewelry are several books full of financial records, and at a glance they appear to be simply basic business records (they appear to be copies of the records the PCs may have found while searching the Cherry Blossom teahouse). However, perusing the records and rolling **Investigation (Notice) / Perception** at TN 20 will allow the PC to notice some subtle differences in the books. There are several listings of shady dealings including opium smuggling, and even a few sales and purchases of illegal gaijin goods in recent months. The last item contained in the bags, deeply buried in one of the larger ones, is what appears to be a daily report of some sort. It extensively details Mayoki's activities in the last two weeks, including several accounts of Mayoki sending her employees out to harass citizens, and a recent one about starting the fire in Isora's Peace. Rolling **Courtier / Intelligence** at TN 25 will ascertain that this report was clearly meant to be sent to a superior, though there is no indication as to whom exactly it was being written to. In any case, a hefty amount of handwritten evidence of foul play by the crafty courtier can be found in these bags. Yasuki Tora is confident that he can finally bring charges against Yasuki Mayoki. Tora will retire after searching the bags, and encourages any PCs with him to do so as well, inviting them to sleep on futons in the common room if they do not wish to walk back to the daimyo's castle.

Questioning Yasuki Mayoki

Toritaka Hatsue handles the initial questioning of Yasuki Mayoki, who, predictably, begins by denying any affiliation to the fire from the previous night, any responsibility for taking peasants' money, and any wrongdoing whatsoever, including the writing of the letter the PCs retrieved from the ronin Dama. Toritaka Hatsue begins to get agitated with the constant

resistance from Yasuki Mayoki, but gets to relieve some of that agitation once the clerk Hisui arrives with the evidence Yasuki Tora and any PCs found in the bags.

Toritaka Hatsue triumphantly begins listing all of the records and reports linked to trouble caused around Friendly Traveler Village, and Yasuki Mayoki's denials get weaker and weaker until she is finally forced to concede defeat, admitting she was the ringleader behind many of the troubles in Friendly Traveler Village. Hatsue issues formal arrest papers and Hisui records the confession, seemingly ending months' worth of work for the tired lawmen.

Before Hatsue is able to leave to tell Yasuki Tora the good news, Yasuki Mayoki makes a surprising request: she wishes to deliver testimony about a different case, but only to Hatsue, not the magistrate. Hatsue is suspicious but agrees to hear Mayoki out. The two women argue back and forth about the value of Mayoki's testimony but in the end Hatsue agrees to recommend a lesser punishment in exchange for information about Yasuki Kumo.

Yasuki Mayoki clears her throat and begins her testimony. *"Yasuki Kumo, that despicable slime, operates much like I do. He lets his men do his work for him and manages to stay out of trouble that way. Like myself, he does not have any room for mistakes, like leaving trails for magistrates to follow. However, I happen to know one weakness, something I picked up while gathering information not long ago, that you should be interested to hear."*

Toritaka Hatsue is cautious but also curious. *"Yes, and as we agreed, if this information truly is worthwhile and can help us catch Yasuki Kumo, then I will recommend a lesser punishment. But if you are lying..."*

"I have little use for lies at this point, Toritaka-san. I am a businesswoman – I know the value of good information, and when a venture has passed the profitable return on its investment. If you really wish to find something to arrest Yasuki Kumo for, I suggest you begin by checking the financial records of this very office." She smiles nastily. "Am I making this clear enough? Yasuki Tora is accepting money from Yasuki Kumo in order to keep Tora's attention on me and off of Kumo. I do believe that both bribing magistrates and accepting bribes are crimes, no? I'm sure Yasuki Tora's case records would corroborate my claim. I suggest you round up your little helpers, issue a search warrant for Kumo's records, and go find the money that is finding its way into your magistrate's

purse. You'll have gotten exactly what you wish for and more: three criminals wrapped in a tidy little package."

Toritaka Hatsue considers for a moment, then replies. *"Even if what you claim is true, Mayoki-san, I have no testimony which would give me the right to write such a warrant to search Yasuki Kumo's residence and offices, so there is no way for me to confirm the truth of your words."*

Yasuki Mayoki smiles. *"You forget, Hatsue-san. I am a samurai of more than sufficient status. My testimony will be all you need to do this entirely legally."*

Toritaka Hatsue rises, indicates to Hisui and any PCs in the room that the questioning is over, and leaves. She waits for the others to follow before locking the door behind her. She will spend the rest of the night with Hisui checking the case report files and financial records of the office. Any PCs with her may join her if they wish, but over the course of the night hours they will find all of the information in the magistrate's office as stated in Part 1. She asks any PCs with her to keep quiet about the post-questioning conversation, as the magistrate would obviously seek to protect himself if he knew that he was now being investigated.

Part Three: Chasing the Money Trail

In the morning, if the PCs were successful in capturing Yasuki Mayoki the night before, Yasuki Tora gathers the PCs and Toritaka Hatsue to announce the conclusions from last night's work. *"You all have performed outstandingly in capturing the criminal Yasuki Mayoki. I am in your debts, samurai-sans. I have spoken to Yasuki Ebi-sama early this morning and we have agreed that you have done enough in the service of our city and that you should enjoy the rest of your stay here. Tonight Yasuki Ebi-sama will hear your report, and then tomorrow we shall bid you farewell. I thank you again."* Tora bows to the PCs and excuses himself into his office. Allow the PCs to roll **Raw Awareness** at TN 20. Any PC who succeeds will notice subtle hints in Tora's speech suggesting that he is nervous about something. He will not say what he is nervous about and will dodge questions about it, stating that he has had a long night and is feeling tired.

If the PCs were unsuccessful in apprehending Yasuki Mayoki, Yasuki Tora will be all business in the

morning. *"Your efforts have unearthed much information which will be useful to our case once we have caught Mayoki. Yasuki Ebi-sama has decided that this will be your last day to assist us in the office. I request that you continue your hard work."*

Once Tora has left, Toritaka Hatsue will request that the PCs stay a short while longer to hear a few words from her. Assuming the PCs are willing, she will check quickly to make sure that Tora has left and then begin. The beginning of Hatsue's speech will differ based on whether Mayoki was apprehended or not. If Mayoki was apprehended, she begins as follows: *"As you may already know, I questioned Yasuki Mayoki thoroughly last night. If the PCs were not able to catch Yasuki Mayoki, she instead begins with the following words: "Samurai-sans, last night I received a letter, signed by Yasuki Mayoki herself."*

Either way, Toritaka Hatsue continues. *"She made a... suggestion that my superior Yasuki Tora has been accepting 'gifts' on behalf of Yasuki Kumo. Though I of course saw little reason to believe her words, I did take the necessary step of checking the finances of this office. It... it would seem that Yasuki Mayoki was correct. I have double checked the records and there are indications that Yasuki Tora-sama is indeed accepting bribes."* Hatsue sighs heavily. *"It saddens me, but I need to formally record the information that we have gathered and prepare the necessary paperwork. This may be the only chance of seeing this city free of the stain the merchants Kumo and Mayoki have left on it. I must request that you find Yasuki Kumo and bring him in for questioning while I prepare letters of arrest for both him and Yasuki Tora. Whatever information or records that you can find about Kumo's dealings will also be necessary. We can take down Yasuki Kumo with these bribery charges, but I don't see any way to do it without also exposing Tora-sama. I want to make this as quick and painless as possible."*

Though her demeanor is outwardly sad, PCs can make a **Raw Awareness** roll at TN 15 to gather that she is not as saddened as she may outwardly appear. The PCs are welcome to ask her any questions they may have.

- If asked for more details about her findings, Hatsue will detail the large payments that Yasuki Tora received at the beginning of each month and the relative leniency afforded to Yasuki Kumo and his associates in the case records.
- If she is asked what will be done with Yasuki Tora, Hatsue will state the following. *"We cannot take any action without arresting the source of the bribes. Without Yasuki Kumo's testimony, there is*

no legal reason to arrest Yasuki Tora-sama yet. There is only enough evidence to investigate further, not make an official arrest."

- If she is asked about where they might find Yasuki Kumo, Hatsue will suggest the Spring Waterfall sake house. She will recommend that the PCs tread carefully, as they may have some difficulty gaining access to his quarters on the second floor of the business, which is where Kumo's personal office resides.

The Spring Waterfall Revisited

Most likely, the PCs will approach the Spring Waterfall with an elaborate plan to gain access to Yasuki Kumo. They will find it open for business and fairly crowded for this time of day. In fact, if the PCs had visited the sake house before, they will find it busier than one would expect even if it were peak time in the evening. The peasant host is quite busy, sorting through a large crowd of peasants, merchants and a few samurai who are all attempting to get a table. Two of Kumo's larger hired men bar entry into the hallway to the common room (and the stairs to the second floor.)

When the PCs first arrive, the sharply dressed peasant from the day before bows low to them. *"Yasuki Kumo-sama welcomes you to the Spring Waterfall. I'm afraid that our common room is quite full at the moment, but I'm sure if you will care to wait a few minutes, a table will open up for you."*

If the PCs skipped out on their bill in their previous encounter with Yasuki Kumo, the host will hesitate to let them in. *"Wait a moment,"* He checks a small notebook. *"Ah yes, I believe that you have a tab running with Yasuki-sama. Before you enter, please settle the bill so we can accurately determine your expenses today. Your total is 9 koku."* The PCs can, of course ignore his demand and enter behind the large ronin who will lead the way. Behind them the maitre d' will follow, move past, and whisper something to Yasuki Kumo before returning to the entry way.

Yasuki Kumo is obviously holding some sort of celebration. Because of this, he has set his prices to 1 bu per cup of sake and the place is quite full with revelers taking advantage of the cheap drink. The PCs will have a difficult time being heard over the crowd, and the crowd will ignore any attempts to order them aside. One of the Yasuki samurai will quip to the PCs *"Someone else already tried that, those bouncers kicked him out quicker than you can say 'Cheap Sake.'"*

The wait to get to the front of the line will take about an hour. The PCs can attempt to get Yasuki Kumo's attention by shouting loudly that they have business and making a **Sincerity / Strength** roll at TN 20 to be heard over the crowd, but if they made a bad impression on a previous visit, Kumo will ignore the PCs and they will need to wait an additional 15 minutes to get his attention at the front of the line. If they do succeed at the roll and they have not earned Kumo's ire, then they will get his attention more quickly and he will call them to the front of the line in a matter of minutes.

The PCs are allowed to pass to the head of the room. The room is full of revelers in various states of drunkenness. Yasuki Kumo sits at one of the tables speaking with several other merchants. As the PCs approach, he will nod in acknowledgment and finish his conversation before rising and making an announcement to the room. *"Ah, these are the most honorable samurai that I was telling you all about. It is because of these great samurai that I am able to treat you to such fine things today. A toast, to my good friends. Kanpai!"* The room will join Yasuki Kumo in his toast and all attention will turn to the PCs.

The PCs have now found themselves to be the center of attention in this party, and they will quickly be swarmed by peasants, merchants and samurai all congratulating them on their hard work in arresting or at least driving off Yasuki Mayoki.

If the PCs let Yasuki Kumo know of their reason for visiting, he will frown. *"But this party is for you, samurai-sans. I have gifts for each of you in recognition of your hard work."* He motions to the servant standing near him, who hands him a small bundle of packages. *"I have taken the liberty of having these made especially for each of you, to represent your individual talents."* He will insist that the PCs accept the packages. Inside each is an idealized version of each of the PCs carved in polished wood. Bushi might be shown in armor, fighting against an unknown enemy. A courtier figure is depicted speaking to an unseen crowd. A shugenja figurine might be praying to the kami. They are all decent likenesses of each of the PCs, a bit rushed but the quality is present. He will gauge each of the PCs reactions by using his **Commerce / Perception** roll of 7k3 against each of the PCs' **Etiquette / Awareness**. Upon his success, he successfully discerns the answer to the question asked at the beginning of the mod – one material thing that the PC wants.

If the PCs insist on examining his office, Yasuki Kumo will rise again. *"Such hard working samurai. Even in the middle of a party in their honor they seek to*

perform their duties for their lords. Another toast, to dutiful vassals, kanpai!” The room will again toast the PCs, refocusing the attention on them as more drinks are brought out, bought by many different merchants and samurai throughout the room.

Yasuki Kumo will sit and study each of the PCs in turn. *“I, of course, cannot stop you from performing your duty to your lords. I commend you for your hard work in these troubled times. I wish to recognize you with more proper gifts, but I cannot do that if you are searching my office. I have prepared more auspicious gifts for each of you but it will take some time to get them ready for you. The paperwork for my gifts is a delicate balance. It takes hard work to get what each of you require. Either you can receive the recognition that you deserve, or you can search my office. Listen, I know you deserve...”*

It is here that Yasuki Kumo will attempt to bribe each of the PCs individually with the item that they desire. This will require careful roleplay by the GM. Yasuki Kumo is quite good at offering just what his targets want and will step clear of actually calling his 'gift' a bribe, but the PCs should understand that if they accept the gift they cannot search his office or arrest him. Be certain to allow the PCs a chance to respond, though Kumo will simply move on to the next character rather than pressing the issue with any individual PC.

Once all of the PCs have been offered their material desire, the PCs need to make an **Etiquette / Willpower** roll to resist his **Temptation (Bribery) / Awareness** roll of 7k4 (re-rolling 1s as he has the emphasis.) PCs who wish to forego the roll and accept the bribe may do so. There are modifiers to the PCs and Kumo's rolls as follows:

- PCs who effectively roleplay their resistance to his offer well will be given a Free Raise added to their result.
- PCs who have the Ascetic disadvantage will receive a Free Raise to their result, as his offer of material goods is not as attractive.
- PCs who made the **Etiquette / Awareness** roll earlier receive a Free Raise to their result, as his offer is just a little off of the mark of what they actually desire.
- Advantages such as Balance and Irreproachable will give the PCs bonuses to their rolls according to their text.
- PCs who possess the Greedy disadvantage give Yasuki Kumo an extra +1k1 when he makes his **Temptation (Bribery) / Awareness** roll against them.

- And, because this is a Temptation roll, all characters add their Honor Rank to the total.

Succeeding at the Contested Roll allows the PC to choose to refuse the bribe without consequence. Failure means they must spend a Void Point in order to act directly against Kumo.

If all of the PCs fail, they are successfully bribed: Yasuki Kumo will rise and announce his gift to each of the PCs, lauding their great service to the Crab and to Friendly Traveler Village. They will gain 1 point of Glory as the guests speak of their great accomplishments, but lose a number of points of Honor equal to their current Honor Rank for accepting a bribe. They can then write the item that they will receive on their Player Report Sheet. This item is of fine quality, customized according to the PCs desires and can be any mundane item. The PCs cannot acquire numerenai, jade items, etc. with this bribe. All of the PCs also gain a Minor Obligation to Yasuki Kumo.

If even one PC successfully resists the offer (or spends the Void Point to force the issue), he or she can demand to examine Kumo's office. Yasuki Kumo will seem a little alarmed, but will lead the PCs up to his office. He will remind the other PCs that they now cannot receive their just rewards. If this starts an argument among the PCs then the GM should wait and see how it plays out. If the other PCs manage to convince their allies to accept the bribe then refer to the previous paragraph for what happens.

If the PCs did not pay their bill the last time they were at the sake house and also didn't pay the host when they arrived, Yasuki Kumo will bring that up as a last resort if he was unable to bribe the PCs. He is unaware that the PCs are essentially closing the case on both him and the magistrate on the bribery charges. If the PCs have mentioned them, it has slipped his mind as he still expects Yasuki Tora to back him up. *“You need to pay your bill; otherwise I will send an assistant to report you to the magistrate for stealing from a samurai. Right now, you owe me twelve koku. Eight for the sake and four for financing and convenience fees according to what is allowed by law. Pay it, or I will have you thrown out and reported regardless of your station.”* PCs can make a **Commerce / Intelligence** roll at TN 15 or **Lore: Law / Intelligence** at TN 20 to determine that his fees are the maximum allowed by local law. He will only accept cash, and will not allow the PCs to charge it to their lords. Clever PCs will realize that if they get the information that they need from Kumo's office, his report to the local magistrate will fall to Toritaka Hatsue instead and they can essentially ignore Yasuki Kumo's threat.

If the PCs prevail against Yasuki Kumo, he will have no choice but to lead them up to his office on the second floor.

Searching the Office

Yasuki Kumo's office is a medium sized room, the right wall of which stands adjacent to a balcony overlooking the common room below. There is a fine linen barrier that stands as a curtain to form the 'wall', but still allow one to view the guests below with some measure of privacy. It is well furnished with a writing desk and a small closet in which there are a few racks of scrolls. Kumo seems to have been interrupted in the middle of something, as a tea set is currently on the desk with a cup half full.

Yasuki Kumo will lead the PCs up to the room, but go back downstairs once they begin searching. If PCs try to stop him, he will inform them that they have no right to hold him. He cannot stop them, however, from sending an escort back downstairs with him, and if they insist on his presence, there is little that he can do about it.

The PCs can begin their search with the scrolls against the wall: they are all financial records and the PCs can make a **Commerce (Mathematics) / Intelligence** roll at TN 15 to determine that these scrolls are records of his day to day business. PCs who make at least 20 will notice that there is some fancy math going on to hide a moderate amount of money, but the purpose of that income and expenditure is not itemized, nor is there a specific time that it comes in or goes out.

Clever PCs will realize that he would not leave his full expenditures out in the open, much like Yasuki Mayoki kept a 'true' record hidden somewhere else. The PCs can then make an **Investigation (Search) / Perception** roll at TN 20 to find a compartment hidden behind the scroll racks in the small closet. The PC that opens the panel must make a **Raw Reflexes** roll at TN 20 or **Reflexes / Defense** at TN 15 to avoid the small booby trap that has been included in the panel. If they fail, they are injected with Night Milk. The PC who is injected with Night Milk must make a **Raw Stamina** roll at TN 25 or be dazed for a minute. That PC must make the same roll every minute for ten minutes or suffer the same effects repeatedly. This can be treated with an **Intelligence / Medicine** roll at TN 25 or it will also wear off on its own in 10 minutes. As the PCs open the panel there is a distant ringing sound, as if a bell is sounding elsewhere in the building.

The inside of the compartment is well kept, and there are three scrolls inside with markings denoting them as 'extraneous funds.'

The inspection of the scrolls will be simple enough, the missing funds noted in his main records are delineated by their purpose.

- Yasuki Kumo receives a good amount of funds as 'protection' from several minor merchants in the western districts weekly. He has recorded from whom he collects, who collected it and how much in painstaking detail.
- The scrolls also mention his payments to Yasuki Tora, itemizing the 'savings' that he has received for the bribes, including cases that were dropped and pressure that he put on merchants who did not pay.

Not long after the PCs open the panel, Yasuki Kumo will reappear followed by several of his bodyguards (or, if forced to remain, the guards will arrive, summoned by the alarm). ***“You have found too much samurai-sans. I am afraid that I cannot let you have that. GET THEM!”***

The guards will all look at the PCs as they ready themselves for combat (or don't) and then look at each other... and shake their heads, cruel grins on their faces. ***“Sorry Yasuki-sama. We are law abiding citizens of the Crab Clan and wouldn't want to impede any investigation. Besides, we'd rather not die for your profit. Good luck, Yasuki-sama.”*** With that, they will head back down the stairs, leaving the PCs with an aghast Yasuki Kumo. Any PC who wishes to survey the moment can roll **Raw Awareness** at TN 15 to sense a distinct sense of fear among the bodyguards directed towards the PCs.

The case is now effectively solved. Yasuki Kumo will not resist the PCs as they take him into custody. In fact he simply mutters quietly to himself the entire trip to the magistrate's office. ***“Had it all... now nothing. Ruined... I cannot... She was gone... I had won... but ruined...”***

When the PCs return to the magistrate's residence Toritaka Hatsue meets them at the gate. She bows low to the PCs in thanks and takes Yasuki Kumo from them, promising to take care of the rest of the work regarding Yasuki Kumo and the magistrate Yasuki Tora.

Conclusion

During the evening, sometime after dinner, the PCs receive a summons from Yasuki Ebi, who wishes for them to report to him with the results of their investigations. How Ebi will respond to the PCs' results will depend on whether they were able to successfully catch and charge the two merchants Yasuki Kumo and Yasuki Mayoki with their various crimes.

They are brought into a waiting hall where they are served tea. The wait is not long, perhaps fifteen minutes, and when Yasuki Ebi appears he greets the PCs with a pained smile. He is accompanied by Yasuki Tora if the PCs failed to pin the bribery charges on him or Toritaka Hatsue otherwise, as Tora has been arrested.

The Fate of Yasuki Mayoki

Yasuki Ebi listens earnestly as the PCs give their reports of their initial investigations. Once they have finished, Ebi thinks for a few minutes, carefully choosing his words before speaking.

If the PCs succeeded in catching and charging Mayoki with his multitude of crimes, Ebi smiles deeply. *“Excellent work in apprehending Yasuki Mayoki. I hope that your lords are as pleased with your work as I am right now. Mayoki has been a thorn in the side of this fine city for too long. Unfortunately, due to her social position and the favor she carries with her lord Yasuki Minoru, I do not have the power to follow through with most of the charges that she has been presented with. However, there is enough here that I can and will expel her from Friendly Traveler Village, not to return for any reason.”*

If Mayoki managed to escape the PCs' grasp, Ebi will be somewhat disappointed but not completely surprised. *“Sadly, Mayoki is quite well connected and thus has been able to escape justice. It would seem that even the help of samurai from outside the Crab clan was not enough. I thank you for your efforts regardless.”*

The Fates of Yasuki Kumo and Yasuki Tora

Similarly to when he listened to the report regarding Yasuki Mayoki, Ebi listens earnestly, but when the report turns to the charges of Yasuki Tora accepting bribes from Yasuki Kumo, he will be more troubled by the news.

If the PCs exposed the bribery going on between the magistrate Yasuki Tora and the merchant Yasuki Kumo, Ebi thinks very carefully while deciding how to respond to the charges. *“I am happy about the arrest of Yasuki Kumo, but also dismayed about the dishonor that my trusted magistrate has brought upon himself and his office. Sadly, when one begins uprooting corruption, one tends to find more weeds than one might intend. You have the thanks of Friendly Traveler Village for the service that you have done in the past two days. As for the fates of Yasuki Kumo and Yasuki Tora, I have decided that the merchant shall be beaten, his property will be stripped from him, and he will be reassigned to a station of my choosing. Yasuki Tora has proven that he can no longer be trusted with any position of responsibility; thus I strip him of his office and demand his seppuku. I will not tolerate my direct vassals falling to the same sin of desire that seems to be plaguing this city. Toritaka Hatsue shall take his place as magistrate for her lengthy and honorable service to my house.”*

If the PCs failed to expose the bribery, Yasuki Ebi will take any information the PCs have gathered and assign Yasuki Tora with the task of finishing the PCs' investigations. *“While I might wish that I could keep you here until all of the investigations have ended, that is not within my power and I must return you to your respective lords so that you may be as useful to them as you have been to my house. I thank you again for your hard work.”* His gratitude that he has fulfilled the requirements his lord Yasuki Oguri gave to him is obvious, as is the fact that he is quite eager to see the PCs on their way.

Rewards for Completing the Adventure

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

Experience Points

Surviving the adventure:	1XP
Good roleplaying:	+1XP
Yasuki Mayoki is apprehended:	+1XP
The bribery between Yasuki Tora and Yasuki Kumo is exposed:	+1XP
Total Possible Experience:	4XP

Honor, Glory, Status, and Allies

Rewards given are based on whether the PCs were able to successfully apprehend Yasuki Mayoki, Yasuki Kumo, or both. If the PCs succeeded in bringing at least one of the two to justice, they have managed to end the merchant war in Friendly Traveler Village.

If the PCs manage to take down both of the merchants, Yasuki Oguri writes a letter to their respective daimyos heralding their glorious deeds and requesting that they be sent again if Oguri is in need of more assistance in the future. They will gain a Favor from the Yasuki family.

Whether they caught one or both merchants, the PCs have a choice: they may keep the nature of the events discrete. This will prevent them from gaining any Glory, but they will gain Yasuki Ebi as an Ally (1 pt Devotion, 2 pt Influence). If they do not keep quiet about the investigation, they will gain 2 points of Glory (unless their Glory Rank is already 3 or higher, in which case they gain 1 point). However, doing so will earn Ebi's enmity and they will gain Yasuki Ebi as a 5-point Sworn Enemy. **This choice is made individually by PC, and they can make different choices from each other.**

If one or more PCs have sworn their fealty to Yasuki Ebi **prior to beginning this adventure**, those PCs also gain 1 point of Status. Any Crab PCs who have not sworn fealty to a lord yet may do so now, but they will not receive the cert.

Complete Failure?

If the PCs did not catch either Yasuki Mayoki or Yasuki Kumo, Ebi will be upset, but will maintain his face in court as he thanks the PCs for their work. After the PCs have departed, Ebi will confer with his lord Oguri, who will write a scathing letter to their daimyos. As it was the PCs' lords' responsibility to expunge their debts of honor owed to Oguri, Oguri will demand further compensation from them. This will reflect on the PCs as their daimyos will be very unhappy with them. All PCs lose half a Rank of Glory and a number of points of Honor equal to their current Honor Rank. If the PCs have a status of 2 or higher, they lose a point of Status as well.

Module Tracking Sheets

Any "favor" gained from Yasuki Kumo must be written on the module tracking sheets and signed by the GM.

Allies, enemies, or Favors may be gained over the course of the module at the discretion of the GM; mark these on the sheet.

GM Reporting

- Was Yasuki Mayoki apprehended?
- Did Toritaka Hatsue become Magistrate?

GM must report this information BEFORE 4/14/2011 for it to have storyline effect.

Appendix #1: NPCs

Yasuki Tora

Yasuki Tora is the magistrate in Friendly Traveler Village. He has a deep appreciation for his duty but at the same time a love of nice things that has recently gotten him directly involved in the merchant war. As long as Yasuki Kumo continues to uphold his agreement to pay a bribe to the magistrate each month, Tora turns a blind eye to all but Kumo's most villainous crimes and focuses his efforts on catching Yasuki Mayoki. The wily merchant has been too sly for Tora to catch him and thus he hopes that the PCs will be able to give him the edge he needs to end the merchant war.

Air 3 Earth 3 Fire 3 Water 3 Void 2

Agility	Perception
4	4

Honor 5.5	Status 3.5	Glory 3.0
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Initiative: 6k3 **Attack:** 9k4 (katana)

Armor TN: 23 (ashigaru armor) **Damage:** 7k2 (katana)

School/Rank: Hiruma Bushi 3

Skills: Athletics 2, Commerce 2, Courtier 2, Craft: Cooking 1, Defense 2, Etiquette 3, Hunting 2, Iaijutsu 3, Intimidation 3, Investigation 3, Kenjutsu (Katana) 4, Kyujutsu 1, Lore: Law 2, Lore: Shadowlands 1, Sincerity 3, Stealth 2.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Social Position (Magistrate)/Obligation to Yasuki Kumo

Toritaka Hatsue

Toritaka Hatsue is the only yoriki serving under magistrate Yasuki Tora. She has been working for the magistrate for over four years and does much of the busywork for upholding justice in Friendly Traveler Village. The recent merchant war in the town has been too much for her to handle alone, but sees the PCs' intervention as more of an opportunity than an insult. Due to her connections she knows much about the underground dealings in the city. Hatsue is tall and thin with a stern face that would best be called "handsome" rather than "pretty". She is easy to talk to about just about anything. Her only real flaw is her deep distrust of shugenja magic; she refuses to use the kami as any sort of excuse for hunting down criminals, preferring to stick to traditional ways of information gathering and testimony.

Air 3 Earth 3 Fire 3 Water 2 Void 2

Intelligence	Perception
4	3

Honor 3.5	Status 2.1	Glory 1.5
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Initiative: 5k3 Attack: 5k3 (yari)

Armor TN: 25 (light armor) **Damage:** 4k2(yari)

School/Rank: Toritaka Bushi 1

Skills: Animal Handling (Falcons) 1, Commerce 2, Etiquette 2, Hunting 2, Intimidation 2, Investigation 2, Lore: Law 2, Lore: Underworld 2, Kenjutsu 2, Lore: Spirit Realms 1, Sincerity 2, Spears 3.

Advantages/Disadvantages: Crafty/Dark Secret

Yasuki Kumo

Yasuki Kumo is a lowlife scum who has managed to wriggle his way into one of the chief commercial positions of power in Friendly Traveler Village. He controls the west side of the city and is openly hostile with Yasuki Mayoki as the only obstacle in his way of controlling the entire city's commercial district. Since the magistrate Yasuki Tora is constantly on patrol trying to break up the merchant war, Kumo has managed to influence Tora's interest in his rival with a steady flow of koku. Kumo is overweight, has a very round head, squinty eyes, and smells like cheap incense. He speaks with a dragging tone and looks at others as though they were objects. He has no particular loyalty to anyone and that passes down to his many employees: peasant thugs with a few ronin mixed in just looking for a way to make money, and as long as Kumo pays, they stay.

Air 2 Earth 3 Fire 3 Water 2 Void 3

Awareness	Intelligence	Perception
4	4	3

Honor 1.0	Status 3.0	Infamy 3.4
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Initiative: 5k2

Attack: 5k3 (knife)

Armor TN: 15

Damage: 3k1(knife)

School/Rank: Yasuki Courtier 3

Skills: Commerce (Appraisal) 4, Courtier 3, Defense 2, Etiquette 3, Knives 2, Intimidation 2, Lore: Underworld 3, Sincerity (Deceit) 2, Temptation (Bribery) 3

Advantages/Disadvantages: Wealthy / Greedy

Yasuki Mayoki

Yasuki Mayoki is a rich merchant who controls the eastern side of Friendly Traveler Village. She employs a number of ronin and peasant thugs who act as her muscle when other merchants don't pay her tribute. She is openly hostile to her rival on the west side of Friendly Traveler Village, Yasuki Kumo. In fact Mayoki is being funded by Yasuki Minoru, daimyo of the Junkin province, who is trying to weaken the power Yasuki Ebi has over the city and take control of it for his own intentions. Mayoki is a short, thin woman with a pinched expression. She wears expensive jewelry and clothing on the rare occasion that she goes out, but she

has been in the business of exploiting the market long enough to know to send an employee to do a job she doesn't have to do herself. She is a clever woman who never stays in the same place for very long, preferring to keep out of the magistrate's clutches. She is intensely loyal to her lord Yasuki Minoru, and will guard her and her lord's intentions firmly, even at the cost of death. She only employs about a half a dozen men, but most are strong ronin who have served her for years and are loyal to their employer.

Air 3	Earth 3	Fire 3	Water 2	Void 3
Awareness		Intelligence	Perception	
4		4	3	

Honor 2.2	Status 3.5	Infamy 3.0
Initiative: 6k3		Attack: 5k3 (knife)
Armor TN: 20		Damage: 3k1(knife)

School/Rank: Yasuki Courtier 3

Skills: Commerce (Appraisal) 4, Courtier 3, Defense 2, Etiquette 3, Knives 2, Intimidation 2, Lore: Underworld 5, Sailing 1, Sincerity (Deceit) 2, Stealth 3, Temptation (Bribery) 2

Advantages/Disadvantages: Ally (Yasuki Minoru), Wealthy/Dark Secret.