

Winter Court: Kyuden Hida

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

Month of Hida through Ryoshun, 1137 (Winter)

Part One of *Pincers and Tail*

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Winter is the season of intrigue and politics as samurai assemble in the great courts of the land. Unfortunately, this year finds you in Kyuden Hida, far from any significant courtly affairs but close to danger of another kind...

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

GM's Information

THIS SCENARIO SHOULD NOT BE RUN COLD!

Please read the scenario thoroughly before attempting to run it.

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

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

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

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

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

- Family name preceds personal name for all characters; Akodo Toturi was a member of the

Akodo family with the personal name of Toturi.

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

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

Glory and Honor Awards and Penalties

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

Reminder

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

Adjusting for Party Strength

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

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

High End Party (more than three combat-capable characters of Rank 2): If the PCs confront Chie in the lower levels, she will raise five zombies instead of three. They will also gain the full benefit of their armor.

Additionally, the GM may increase any TN by 5 for the non-combat encounters. (This should be used with discretion and to increase the challenge to a highly-capable PC rather than to provide a blanket bar to success.)

Adventure Summary and Background

Winter has come, and the PCs have been assigned to spend the season as guests of the Crab, at the stronghold-like castle of Kyuden Hida. As one might expect, this promises to be a mostly unpleasant experience: Hida O-Ushi, the Crab Clan Champion, does not particularly want them there, the Crab Clan does not want them there, and for the most part the PCs should not wish to be there. However, given the political situation in the Empire of the last year, O-Ushi has been convinced by her advisors that an open Winter Court is in the best interests of the Clan. So, invitations were sent out, and low-ranking samurai have been sent from most of the Clans. Entertainment has arranged to keep the Crane from complaining too much (not that the Crab don't expect them to find reasons to complain).

However, other sinister forces are at work at the stronghold of the Crab. An infiltrator from the Shadowlands, a woman going by the name Hida Chie, has recently infiltrated the ranks of the Crab Clan. Her intent is to spread discord and chaos through the ranks of the Hida Elite Guard, who are stationed at Kyuden Hida. To this end, she uses her one natural talent: seduction. The representatives from the other Clans have become secondary targets, to weaken the Crab's standing in the Empire. After all, who is to blame but

the Crab if several of the guests of Winter Court return home with the touch of Jigoku?

During the court, a murder will occur, and it will be the responsibility of the PCs to discover who is responsible. Though all evidence will point to one or another of the other guests, it is possible that they will realize that something more sinister is afoot, leading to the possibility of discovering Chie's true nature...

Relations with other Clans

The Crab Clan is not particularly powerful in the courts. They have few allies among the other Clans, and the more polite samurai of the Empire look down on them for their utter lack of decorum. They get along fairly well with both the Unicorn and Mantis, who also have issues with the traditional Clans; additionally, the Unicorn and Crab have had a few marriage treaties lately (the most significant being that between Hida O-Ushi and Shinjo Yasamura during the War of the Shadow), and while the Yasuki and Yoritomo do have a trade rivalry, the Crab as a whole tend to view the Mantis as sort of "younger brothers". The Lion Clan has been far more understanding toward the Crab since the March to Volturnum, and while the two Clans still have issues due to the Lion's traditional views, they have developed a certain amount of mutual respect. The Dragon and Crab tend to have little in common, and the hostility between the last two Clan Champions did not help this. The Crane, Phoenix, and Scorpion Clans all look down on the Crab for their inability to function in polite society, and this feeling is essentially mutual: the Crab have little respect for the "weaker" Clans.

- **Mechanical Note:** PCs with the Advantage "Oath of Fealty: Shiba Hidekazu (Nanimo Province)" have the stipend of koku provided with their Outfit increased by 3 for this adventure.
- **Note on Kitsu Tsuko:** Kitsu Tsuko is a Player Character in the campaign, and it is entirely possible that some of the PCs may have met him in a previous adventure. He will not make any active attempts to end up in the PCs' way, and by and large should do nothing to earn the PCs' wrath. Barring any specific PC actions, he should survive the adventure.
- **A note on sexuality in this module:** This module contains several adult themes, including the concept that samurai are often (if very discreetly) sexually active. At no point,

however, should any of the events of this mod turn into a rape scene – whether by physical force or by taking away a player’s control of their character through social mechanics. Such content is NOT appropriate for Heroes of Rokugan!

Introduction

It is the first day of the month of Hida (December to gaijin). The PCs are on their way to Kyuden Hida, the ancestral home of the Crab Clan, to attend Winter Court. Clan and Imperial PCs are here as guests of the Crab, while any ronin PCs have heard about an offer of work in exchange for food and shelter for the winter, as well as compensation for their time. For the most part, the Clan Champions and daimyo of the other Clans are hesitant to send any samurai of significance to this gathering, which is why the PCs are there. Their lords will have given them simple instructions: represent the Clan with honor, do not cause any trouble, and see what can be learned about the other Clans’ relations with the Crab. The Crane and Scorpion Clans will be quite apologetic about their more important samurai having had previous commitments at other Winter Courts, while the Lion will speak plainly about learning what they can from the Crab’s hospitality. The other Clans will not have prepared excuses, leaving the PCs to determine for themselves how to explain matters. Crab PCs are present due to their (presumed, as long as this is not their first module) experience dealing with members of the other Clans. They are to serve as guards or advisors, whichever is most appropriate for their character concept. (In the event of an all-Crab table, the GM should be prepared to rely upon the far greater experience with other Clans that any Crab who has travelled away from the Wall will have, compared to most of the NPCs.)

The towering form of Kyuden Hida looms atop a rocky outcropping overlooking Earthquake Fish Bay. Commanding a view of the surrounding area for miles, it is certainly one of the most formidable fortresses in all of Rokugan. The ancestral home of the Hida family stands strong and tall behind thick stone walls engineered over centuries by the finest stoneworkers in the Empire. Full of brutally practical structures, the headquarters of the Crab armies is free of any sort of aesthetic design or decoration, save for an enormous, inhumanly-shaped skull hung over the main gate. The skull, easily large enough to swallow a horse whole, exudes a palpable aura of menace to all who brave the narrow approach. It proudly declares that the Crab have bested foes most of the Empire cannot even imagine, leaving them little fear

for any force the other Clans might bring to bear against them.

The players may roll **Lore: Shadowlands/ Intelligence** (or a suitable skill such as Lore: Crab or Lore: Oni) at TN 15, or **Lore: History/ Intelligence** at TN 20. If they succeed, they are aware that the large skull is that of the Maw, an Oni Lord of considerable power that led the Shadowlands army before their defeat at the Battle of the Cresting Wave when the Wall was first built.

The main keep towers six stories above the walls that hold it safe. As you approach the gatehouse, you are met by a squad of Hida guards in full armor. One of the younger members of the squad, a massive Crab bushi clad in spiked green armor, steps forward with a perfumtury bow. He removes his helmet to glare across your group. His head is shaved bald, and a tattoo of a crab spreads across the back of his skull, with the pincers coiling around his ears to rest at the corners of his eyes and mouth. He regards you with a cold stare, then speaks in a loud, commanding voice. “My brothers of the Crab may continue on. The rest of you, before you join our... hospitality, a few words.”

Crab PCs are free to enter; they will be given a short nod by the burly guard as they pass, and treated to a somewhat more cordial greeting from the rest of the guards. If any of the PCs has the “Warriors of the Wall” cert and mentions their training to serve in Hida Tsuneo’s command now, he will grudgingly allow them to enter as well, though his ferocious scowl will clearly demonstrate his dissatisfaction. *“I am certain that Tsuneo-sama has already given you these warnings in some form.”* (Curious PCs may roll **Lore: Heraldry / Intelligence** at a TN of 30 to identify the unit insignia on the guard as belonging to the First Legion of the Third Crab army, a Legion made up of Hida Berserkers. Crab bushi or characters who have studied Hida field doctrine would not need to make this roll.) If there are no Crab, he will snort and move on.

He takes a moment to study the other PCs with disdain, before barking out what sounds much like a rote-learned speech. *“I am Hida Yoshi, hohei of the First Legion of the Third Crab Army, and you WILL listen to my words, if you wish to have any hope of surviving the winter.”* He glances to another of the Crab guards, who spares him an approving nod.

“This is not like any court you may have attended before. You are expected to carry your weapons at all times, and to wear armor if you possess it. All meals will be eaten in the main hall, and you WILL be

present for all of them. If you are not, we will assume you have fallen to Jigoku's touch and come looking for you. You will sleep in the quarters assigned to you, and only in those quarters. This is no place for romantic distractions; they only serve to get in the way. If the alarm sounds, then of course it means we are under attack. You will report to your rooms, be quiet, and wait for the all-clear: a blue signal arrow." One of the guards behind him clears his throat, and Yoshi flushes. His scowl deepens, and somehow his voice becomes even more abrasive. "I mean yellow. A yellow signal arrow will mark the all-clear. If a blue arrow fires, which has not happened in the history of the Wall, then I suggest that you pray that Emma-Ono-kami judges you kindly and prepare to fight to your last breath. Anyone who is not capable of fighting should be put down, to prevent them being taken by Jigoku or from being a useless mouth to feed in the event of a protracted siege. Finally, any shugenja among you must report to Hida Rohiteki-sama, O-Ushi-dono's spiritual advisor, at your earliest opportunity. By which I mean 'NOW', not 'after you have finished washing the dust of the road off your soft, pampered bodies and doused yourself in perfume'... unless, of course, you want the Kuni to think you have something to hide. Any questions? No? Then get the Hell out of my sight."

Despite his cavalier attitude and drive to prove himself to the more experienced members of his unit, Yoshi is just a hohei. (And, therefore, only Status 1.) It is entirely possible that someone will take offense at Hida Yoshi's words and demand an apology or even a duel. Either way, he will scoff and wave them away. *"I am just the messenger of the Clan Champion's will, fool! If you have an issue with anyone, bring it up with her."* He will not accept a challenge unless the PC is quite insistent (and likely insulting in return), at which point he will smirk and respond, *"Very well. I will meet you tomorrow at mid-day atop the lower gatehouse, and you will learn how such matters are resolved in the Crab lands."*

Either way, as the PCs enter the castle, they will hear raucous laughter coming from the walls above the gate, from several voices. *"Very good, Yoshi-san! That scared 'em good!" "You get seven points for that speech!"* Smart characters may realize that the Crab have made issuing this warning into something of a game in their boredom. (Those who can pass a **Lore: History** or **Lore: War / Intelligence** roll at a TN of 25 will realize that Kyuden Hida has never actually faced the sort of conditions described, as it has never been besieged in its history.) In fact, this is the standard briefing for samurai from other Clans being sent to the

Wall – though the Kaiu Kabe is actually a little less than a day's ride away, the guards have taken it upon themselves to give the same series of instructions.

When the PCs finally do make it into Kyuden Hida, they are met by a group of servants, escorted to their quarters in the main keep, and given an opportunity to bathe and change into appropriate clothes before the evening court.

Shugenja who inquire after Hida Rohiteki will be directed to her study on the fifth floor. Rohiteki is O-Ushi's cousin, a self-possessed young woman in her late teens whose level head and brutal common sense have endeared her to the Champion. She will greet her guests politely enough, though her formalities are a bit awkward. *"I welcome you to Kyuden Hida. Please feel... welcome in these halls."* She clears her throat self-consciously and moves briskly on to business. *"While we are not close enough to the Shadowlands to present a significant difficulty for most shugenja, it is still possible that your prayers may attract the attention of a kansens. If that should happen, you must inform myself or one of the other Kuni-trained shugenja here immediately. That you will ignore the tainted spirit's offers goes without saying. For this reason, I suggest that you refrain from calling upon the spirits for any frivolous reason."* She pauses for a moment to make certain that the message has been received, then pulls a scroll from the shelf behind her desk. *"Now, while I have no wish to offer insult, I must ask to examine your ofuda. Understand that I do not have any reason to suspect you of, well, anything, it is part of the security doctrine of this castle. I make no accusations, but I must serve my Champion in this matter."* Rohiteki is polite but firm on this point; she will examine each spell scroll (for signs of maho, though she will not speak of it unless pressed) and return it. She will take their name and a tally of the number of scrolls each shugenja guest has brought with them. (The PCs can clearly see that all she writes down is their name and a number.) That done, she returns the scrolls with a polite bow. *"I thank you for your patience. The servants will show you to your quarters now; please let them know if you require anything. I will look forward to speaking with you through the rest of the season."* With that clear dismissal, the PCs will be sent on their way.

Part One: Welcome to Kyuden Hida

The court room is about what one could expect from the Crab: the room is very spartan, with absolutely no decoration or ornamentation on the bare stone walls. At the center of the north wall is a large dais, clearly meant for the Clan Champion or whoever might be representing her on a particular day. By the time the PCs get here, there are already many samurai present. See Appendix #1 for the guest-list; the head of each delegation will be introduced when O-Ushi arrives. The PCs should take the opportunity to speak with the other members of their Clans present, however, only Doji Juichi, Kitsu Tsuko, and Ide Fujiko are going out of their way to mingle with Clans other than their own. Of the hosts, Hida Chie is the most outgoing and is already making “friends”.

The First Meal

After the PCs have had a chance to meet with some of the NPCs, the Crab Champion will arrive with her advisors. Hida Kozashi will introduce the Clan delegates officially, and will then invite the court to attend a dinner in honor of the long winter to come. This will be, for most of the samurai present, a terribly unpleasant experience. The main hall is at best austere, and provides a very unwelcoming atmosphere. Guests are placed at a single long table in what appears to be no particular order. Kin-Lao and any “less-polished” PCs will be placed towards the head of the table, along with anyone who seems to appreciate the unenviable duty that the Crab Clan performs (this obviously includes any Crab PCs). Those who specifically complain about being stuck in such an unappealing place, such as Doji Juichi, are placed towards the end of the table as far away from the Crab as possible. Beyond that, the seating order doesn’t make a large difference to the hosts, allowing people to sit essentially wherever they want. (This is just one of the ways that the Crab court will differ from the experience of the other Clans – most such gatherings are highly formal, with seating based on rank.)

PCs may use this as an opportunity to attempt to collect gossip from around the Empire. If they do, they may make a **Courtier (Gossip) / Awareness** roll at TN 10. With a success, they learn one of the following pieces of information at random, plus one for every 5 the roll beats the TN. The rumors include:

- The Imperial Winter Court is being held at Kyuden Doji this year. This came as something of a surprise, since the earliest-

announced location under consideration was Shiro sano Kakita and the Crane Clan is not known for that kind of division. It is rumored that Doji Meihu, the returned spirit general, arranged for this location despite the expectations of Kakita Yoshi, who has been serving as the political leader of the Crane.

- Kakita Toshiken, the Emerald Champion, has not been seen in the Imperial Capitol for months. While the official explanation is that he is investigating the death of the Empress, there are many that whisper he was involved somehow with the tragic events at the Topaz Championship that resulted in her demise.
- With Ide Tadaji’s appointment as Imperial Advisor, the Unicorn Clan Champion Moto Gaheris has named a new Ide Family Daimyo – Ide Gokun, noteworthy as a returned spirit and the son of the original Ide and Otaku. Gokun is known for being more martial than is typical for his family, and actually met his first death fighting against the Shadowlands – a fact that the Crab strongly approve of.
- Yoritomo Aramasu, the Mantis Clan Champion, was invited to this Winter Court as O-Ushi’s personal guest; Aramasu refused politely, claiming other business, but no one seems to know where he did plan on spending the season. The Winter Court at Kyuden Gotei is being overseen in his absence by Yoritomo Hogosha, the premiere courtier of the Clan. Rumors of a failed assassination attempt earlier in the year have been brought up as a possible explanation. The Scorpion Clan, despite their antipathy for the Mantis Champion, have of course denied any involvement.
- The absence from this court of Hida Yasamura, O-Ushi’s husband, has provoked speculation from many. The couple’s twin sons are living in the castle, though they are only brought to those public events appropriate for two-year-old children, but Yasamura is wintering with his troops at the Face of the West castle. While that castle’s proximity to his former Clan the Unicorn might explain his presence there, many of the local servants and samurai will whisper that the Champion and her husband have quarrelled – though no one can agree on the reason.
- The Shadowlands have been relatively quiet for years now, though there are still regular skirmishes. The Crab Clan held a Twenty Goblin Winter four years ago, immediately after their losses during the War Against the

Shadow, but they have suffered fewer casualties in the intervening years than is normal, and it is highly unlikely they will need to call for ronin willing to prove their valor in the near future.

- (This rumor can only be heard by a PC who rolls a 30 or higher.) Though the Crab are not in great need of assistance, there is still among many of them a certain amount of disappointment in Toturi I; after his return through Oblivion's Gate, and his first-hand experience in the Shadowlands, they had believed that more Imperial attention would be forthcoming. Though the Emperor has never spoken against the Crab, some on the Wall just wish he'd do more to help them recover their lands.

The food is plentiful and of good quality, though by no means gourmet fare; it is obvious that the Crab are more concerned about ensuring their warriors are fed enough to fight, not to pamper their palates. At the conclusion of dinner, Hida O-Ushi stands and speaks. *"I know you all have your own expectations for this court. There is a certain perception of the Crab Clan among the rest of the Empire that I wish to correct. I have, therefore, arranged for some... special events to take place at this court." She stops to let the chuckling from the Crab subside. "First, I am pleased to announce that at the conclusion of tonight's meal, some of my more refined vassals will perform an old play, Hiruma Nabuko's 'Closing Night.' Over the coming months, we have arranged a few events to demonstrate how things are done in the Crab lands. Lest you think us selfish in claiming the honor of performance for ourselves, we will introduce you to a long-standing tradition of the Crab armies: that of the Draw Lot play. In the hopes that you may come to understand us better by seeing more of our lands, my hatamoto Hida Kozashi-san and his assistant Kaiu Sanjuro-san will provide tours for you, in small groups, to some of the closer features of... 'interest' to us, and we hope, you." Several of the Crab laugh outright at this, and she waves them down with a small smile. "And, of course, what Winter Court would be complete without a contest or two? I will sponsor a special game of kemari, to provide a chance for you to demonstrate your strength, and my cousin Rohiteki-san will organize a poetry competition of sorts. It is my sincerest hope that by the end of this season, you will have a greater understanding of what the Crab truly are." Raucous applause breaks from the Crab side of the table, while the guests hesitantly put their hands together.*

The Play

The play, titled "Closing Night", is an detailed account of the fall of Hiruma Castle, and the horrors that the Shadowlands can bring forth. The final scene (chronicled in the first edition book "Bearers of Jade") depicts a mother and her two daughters confronting what sounds like the daughters' father (a voice from offstage), though the mother suspects, correctly, that the creature is a beast of the Shadowlands and refuses to let it in. After the older daughter and mother kill each other with naginata, the youngest is tricked into opening the door, and the stage is plunged into darkness. Silence reigns for a heartbeat, then two, then the audience hears screams and slams as she is thrown against the walls and across the floor. The play closes with the sound of tearing meat, signifying the end. While well performed (comparable to a professional performance anywhere but the Crane or Scorpion lands), the play is highly disturbing; most refined and honorable samurai will find it very difficult to watch. In fact, the play has been forbidden for performance in the Empire for nearly two centuries – that fact is only known to those characters who can succeed at a **Lore: History / Intelligence** roll at a TN of 30 (characters with actual ranks in Acting or in an esoteric Lore such as "Theatre" or "Literature" may make this roll using those Skills at a TN of 20; whether Sage applies is entirely at the GM's discretion).

- Ide Fujiko will begin trying to find personal allies during the performance. She will start by fishing for blackmail on someone, and continue doing so through the winter, even if seduction is necessary.
- Juichi looks visibly disturbed by the play, but when it ends he will rise and compliment the actors for their "splendid performance of a moving, if obscure, work."
- Reiko seems to enjoy the play thoroughly, and will talk about it to anyone who seems interested. Should none of the PCs be willing, she will strike up a conversation with Kin-Lao.
- Kitsuki Hatoku and his wife/yojimbo Kayuri will not sit together during the play, demonstrating their estrangement. Both of them look quite lonely, even in the middle of the crowd.

Despite the guards' "warning" speech at the beginning, the Crab largely do not care how their guests entertain themselves. While being present for the meals is preferred, dispensation to eat alone or for other events is readily attainable. Likewise, the Crab do not have any overall bias against courtship – if their samurai

guests are being discreet, there is nothing that the Crab will do to prevent romantic liaisons. Several of the guests will begin forming relationships, and Hida Chie will develop a string of suitors over the next few weeks.

Kyuden Hida

The castle of Kyuden Hida is a fairly typical example of a Rokugani fortress – largely due to the fact that the design has been incorporated by most of the rest of the Empire (though other Clans tend to provide some form of decoration or amenities to soften the overall military effect). The Crab do not bother with such fripperies – there are three gatehouses, on differing levels to make defense easier; it is almost impossible to enter through stealth and bringing an army in through brute force would result in far more casualties for the invaders than the defenders. The main structure is seven stories high and stands next to a barracks that houses the First, Second, and Third Legions of the Third Crab Army. Guests of the court will be given rooms on the third and fourth floors of the main keep, and mostly kept away from the key areas of the castle. The Champion's rooms are on the sixth floor, and her immediate vassals have rooms on the fifth. An entire wing is devoted to the main dojo of the Hida Bushi School, but entry will be difficult to arrange (unless, of course, the character trained in that School); a practice floor has been set aside for the use of the guests, but the rest of the dojo is private. The lower levels are entirely off-limits; they contain storage, holding cells, and a secret exit that the Crab would much prefer remain secret. There are guards on every floor, mostly at the stairways, including the basement and sub-basements.

Many of the things one might expect to find in a castle are simply not present: there is no garden, no large public shrine, no library. Everything in the castle is meant for defense, and virtually no resources have been utilized for anything else. PCs from other Clans should feel quite at a loss, as though the architecture is making them unwelcome as well as the residents. There is a sizable village at the base of the castle – most of the amenities of civilization (shops, a tea house, even a small and largely-neglected shrine) can be found there, but it will require a fifteen-minute walk through snow and ice, and should be uncomfortable enough to avoid unless the PC is really dedicated to their trip.

Warriors of the Wall and Jade Yoriki

PCs with either the “Warriors of the Wall” or the “Jade Yoriki” cert will not have a significantly different experience at Winter Court. The Crab will be somewhat more willing to listen to a samurai who has agreed to help Hida Tsuneo fight on the Wall, but they

will still have to prove themselves to be a worthy warrior – the major difference is that they will be given a chance to do so. A character who neglects their training because of the court will be dismissed, while one who seeks out the benefit of the Hidas' experiences will likely be welcomed. The yoriki are less likely to be welcomed by the Crab as a whole; while Kuni Utagu is a respected Crab daimyo, the Jade Magistrates are still an untested concept in the eyes of the Crab. Again, the yoriki will be given a chance to prove themselves worthy or unworthy – and should bear in mind that the impression they give their hosts will likewise reflect on their organization as a whole.

Part Two: Events at Winter Court

Over the course of Winter Court, there will be several different events that the players will have the opportunity to participate in to make the time pass swifter. These events will take place in the main hall of the castle, which, given the lack of any comfortable alternatives, is where almost all activity through the season will take place. Throughout the winter, the room will be occupied by courtiers conversing with one another and trying to make the time pass more quickly. Servants will provide what refreshments the Crab have to offer (like the meals, they are hearty and filling, but simply-cooked fare). Sake and shochu are served without reservation, and the Crab samurai frequently make a game of betting on how well the “northerners” can handle their liquor. There are a few local musicians and the actors that put on the play on the first evening, but few other artisans or performers.

Should the players wish to organize their own events, they should have some reasonable latitude to do so – the Crab are not averse to festivity, they are just not all that good at the sort that most of the Empire recognizes. Such PC involvement is a good thing, but care should be taken not to let it get out of hand or dominate the table – take the time allotted for the module into account when approving player initiative. Prizes will be limited to whatever the organizing PC actually has immediate access to. The GM may hand out up to 5 points of Glory total to the table for impressive performances in, or organization of, player-sponsored events.

This section will be broken down by the first three months of the winter; several weeks will pass between the highlight events of the court, and the PCs should have a reasonable opportunity to pursue their own agendas and relationships over the course of this time.

Month of Hida

Should any of the PCs successfully challenge Hida Yoshi to a duel, it will be resolved on the second day of the court. Three days later, Doji Juichi, Kakita Gidayu, and Kitsu Tsuko are the first guests that Hida Kozashi takes on the mysterious “tour” that O-Ushi referred to. Speculation runs rampant for why they would brave the winter weather for any sort of travel, but when the Crane and Lion return after two days, they reveal that they were taken on an excursion to the Kaiu Wall itself. Juichi is very vocally disapproving of the trip, calling the Crab’s exposure of their guests to that sort of danger into question, but Gidayu and Tsuko are both somewhat more thoughtful.

In the first few weeks, rumors will spread that the play performed at the start of court was actually banned by an Imperial decree nearly two centuries ago. Doji Juichi is taking some care to be discreet, and the overall tone is “concerned”, rather than directly confrontational, but it is obviously intended to bring some embarrassment to the Crab hosts.

The tension between Ide Fujiko and Hiruma Gochai is impossible to miss, and the nature of their betrothal will become common knowledge.

Several of the guards from the Berserker legion assigned to the castle for the winter will make a point of watching the guests closely; Asako Kiru is made particularly uncomfortable by their constant presence, as his rooms are immediately next to the guard-post on the fourth floor. Hida Yoshi will prove unpopular with most of the guests (until his disappearance).

Hida Chie will prove exceptionally popular, and many of the men of the court will be seen in her company at one time or another. Most of these relationships are simple, relatively innocent flirtations, but rumors of something more scandalous will still circulate; no names are mentioned, but Chie seems to continue without giving any consideration for gossip.

The Duel

Yoshi arrives clad in full armor, with the castle’s hatamoto escorting him. The burly bushi is also carrying two heavy, padded tetsubo. He will smile nastily and throw one at the PC. ***“This is how matters are handled in the Crab lands. No trained Hida bushi can be spared to throw his life away; our war takes too great a toll. So, to prevent any ‘accidents’, we use these.”*** He hefts his padded weapon easily. ***“First to submit, or to fall, is the loser. You want to back down***

on your own, or will I be beating you down?” It is to be expected that any duelist PC will be outraged at this; however, if they protest, Yoshi will scoff. ***“Take it up with my Champion. She has decreed that any duels involving her vassals this Winter Court will be resolved in this fashion.”*** Yoshi is not lying, and Kozashi will confirm it; O-Ushi made this decision after hearing of the challenge. If no one challenged Yoshi in the introduction, she will make the same decree if any other Crab are challenged during the court.

Crab tetsubo dueling (also called “tetsubo-suru”) has one very simple rule: the one left standing wins. Resolve this as a standard skirmish. The weapons do full damage, but combatants cannot be reduced below 1 Wound. If either combatant is knocked off their feet (either due to losing consciousness or from a successful Knockdown attack), they lose.

Yoshi is a Crab Berserker, and will fight to the best of his ability (though he will not frenzy unless it looks like he may actually lose). Should he win, he will gloat in an unseemly fashion, which will in turn earn him a rebuke from Kozashi. ***“You won, Yoshi-san. The matter is done. Don’t preen like some northern fop.”*** Yoshi will be chastened and leave immediately. Both he and the PC will lose Glory – the PC will lose two points of Glory unless they take their loss well and keep face (which will reduce the loss to one point). Should the PC win, they will gain two points of Glory; if they choose to gloat, they will gain Yoshi as a Sworn Enemy (for all of a week, but the players will not know that). If they treat him with respect after defeating him, the Crab will look favorably on them and Kozashi will invite them to a private meal with the Clan Champion and her advisors. (Depending on the PC’s actions, the GM may reward them with up to three points of Honor whether they win or lose – going through with a duel when you are so obviously disadvantaged is highly honorable, after all.)

Hida Yoshi

Air 2	Earth 4	Fire 2	Water 3	Void 3
Reflexes 3		Agility 3	Strength 4	
Honor 1.8		Status 1.5	Glory 3.7	
Initiative: 5k3		Attack: 8k3 (9k4 berserk)		
Armor TN: 30 (Heavy Armor)		Damage: 8k3 (9k4 berserk)		
Reduction: 5 (Heavy Armor)				
Wounds: 20 (+0), 28 (+0), 36 (+2), 44 (+7), 52 (+12), 60 (+17), 68 (Down, +37), 76 (Dead)				
School/Rank: Hida Bushi 1/Crab Berserker				

Techniques: Ignore penalties for Heavy Armor, +1k0 damage with Heavy Weapons; may enter “frenzy” for 4 rounds; ignore Wound Penalties, +1k1 attack/damage.

Skills: Athletics 3, Battle 3, Defense 3, Heavy Weapons (Tetsubo) 5, Intimidation 4, Jiujutsu 5, Kenjutsu 2, Lore: Shadowlands 4.

Mastery Abilities: Heavy Weapons: reduce target’s reduction by 2, Free Raise toward Knockdown;

Jiujutsu: +1k0 damage, Free Raise to initiate Grapple

Advantages/Disadvantages: Large, Strength of the Earth / Benten’s Curse, Obtuse

The Missing Crab

Hida Yoshi will be present throughout the next few weeks, usually staying in the background as just one of the berserkers assigned to garrison duty at Kyuden Hida for the winter. He will almost certainly maintain an antagonistic relationship with the PCs, though obviously the possible duel would make it worse. However, he will be kept on a fairly tight leash by the more experienced guards and will not be able to do more than give the characters baleful looks. About three weeks into the court, he will simply disappear. Unless the PCs are paying attention to him, they will likely not notice his vanishing. The Crab will not undertake an obvious investigation – assuming him to have been taken by the Shadowlands, they will simply increase their vigilance on the castle walls without trying to bother their guests over the matter. (PCs who are paying particular attention to the security of the stronghold may notice this if they roll **Battle / Perception** at a TN of 20.) If asked, the Crab will simply state that they are always at war, and blame “enemy action.”

Yoshi has become Chie’s first victim. As a young bushi new to his posting, he has relatively few local ties, and his relative lack of experience made him a good target. The Lost infiltrator will use him as a quiet first test of the Crab internal defenses; as a result of seeing how they react, she will wait to make further moves until toward the end of winter and will spend the months making preparations. These include developing her clique of samurai “suitsors” to serve as tools and eventually to take the blame for her actions.

Full Contact Kemari

Knowing kemari to be a courtly game, Hida O-Ushi will sponsor a tournament at the end of the first month of court. However, the game she presents will have a rough local twist: while in “normal” kemari, the players are not allowed to touch one another, this will be “Full Contact” kemari. The players will have to try to keep the ball in the air while maintaining a sense of propriety

in their court garb as well as trying to dodge their fellow players.

The first rounds of the tournament will be resolved with a pair of rolls. Have the PCs roll **Games: Kemari / Agility** and **Defense / Reflexes**, and add the total of the rolls. (This represents the difficulty of keeping the ball in the air while dodging the interference of the other players; no damage is being done yet. The GM may choose to allow a character to substitute their ranks of Athletics for the Games: Kemari Skill, but it is still recommended that the roll follow the Unskilled rules.) If their total is higher than 40, they will beat the next-closest entrant (Bayushi Setsuka) to win the tournament. Afterwards, O-Ushi will congratulate them, then invite them to a final demonstration bout against her. (In the event two PCs beat the effective TN of 40, the highest total wins.) *“I am amazed at the skill I’ve seen today, and though I have much to learn of the game, I would appreciate a mentor as obviously skilled as yourself.”* The speech is somewhat marred by her smile of anticipation and the muffled snorts of laughter from the Crab audience.

The “demonstration bout” will be handled somewhat differently: the player will roll **Games: Kemari / Agility**, but this roll will be compared to O-Ushi’s roll of 5k4. The player must also make a separate **Defense / Reflexes** roll against O-Ushi’s **Jiujutsu / Agility** of 9k4. If that roll fails, they will take standard unarmed damage (5k1; she is not attempting to cripple or kill anyone, but she does want them to remember this outcome). Should they fail the Defense roll by 20, they will be knocked down. If the PC manages to remain standing and beats her kemari roll with any Wound Penalties gained from the attack, they will win the match despite her assault.

If the PCs win the game, or if they take the strike in good humor, O-Ushi will be impressed with their spirit and invite them to share a celebratory cup of sake. If, for some foolish reason, the PC chooses to deny this offer in any sort of insulting fashion, O-Ushi will be furious, and the offending character will gain Hida O-Ushi as a Sworn Enemy (worth 8 points).

Victory gains the PC two points of Glory; even if they lose, if they share a drink with the Crab Champion, they will gain one point. After she raises a toast to them, she will make them a gift of the cup used. *“It belonged to a hero of the Crab, a man known for both his strength and his thirst; may it serve you as well as it did him.”* (They gain the “Cup of Hida Atsushige” cert.)

Month of Togashi

The second month passes largely the same as the first; more guests are taken on the tours to the Wall, and while the response is very mixed, no one denies that the experience is memorable. The invitations are essentially impossible to avoid, and even the lowest-ranking guests are taken; Shosuro Tai makes an effort to avoid going, and the Crab reaction makes it clear that doing so will result in giving an unforgivable insult to O-Ushi. The Scorpion diplomat is forced to accept with as much grace as can be mustered.

As the court continues, the non-Crab courtiers will speculate about the odd emphasis O-Ushi gave the poetry contest that she announced at the first dinner. Neither she nor Rohiteki, the contest's sponsor, are particularly forthcoming about details, even to their own Clan. As it is something that most of the trained courtiers have at least some small amount of skill in, it is the most talked-about of the events.

The continued affairs of Hida Chie clearly demonstrate that the Crab policy against romantic relationships at court is not seriously enforced. It becomes clear that her attentions are also not limited exclusively to men, though she proves somewhat less popular with female guests – Bayushi Setsuka is rumored to remain very distant from the beautiful Crab.

The Crab guards will ease off their silent harrassment, but they will frequently speak loudly about anticipating the Draw Lot play in their guests' hearing. Discovering its format (that characters for a play are chosen at "random" from a helmet) is not too difficult, but apart from the Hida bushi speculating on which of the male guests will perform best as the play's female lead, there's little actual information to be had.

Crab "Poetry" Contest

When the day comes, Hida Rohiteki will address the assembled court. *"I thank you all for your interest in this particular event. I know that the Crab do not have a reputation for being skilled with words. I am no exception. However, I have seen what the right words can do for the spirit of samurai – particularly when they are going into battle. The Crab face battle more often than any other Clan, and yet we have few speakers or poets to inspire our bushi as they prepare to fight and die for the Empire. So, what I ask is that you, our guests from all the Great Clans of the Empire, help us to find the right sorts of words. I do not care if you produce a haiku, or wakka, or whatever. Even the travel poetry of our Unicorn*

friends would be acceptable. Who brings me the best and most inspirational poem will be victorious."

Each participating character may roll **Artisan: Poetry / Awareness**; the highest roll wins. At the GM's discretion, other Skills (such as Perform: Oratory, or other niche Artisan writing Skills) can apply. The form does not matter; traditional Rokugani haiku use five syllables in the first line, seven in the second, and five in the third, but anything properly inspirational will be accepted. (Unicorn travel poetry uses five lines, with a sixth to sum it up. It makes use of alliteration – the first with the second line, the fourth with the fifth line, and the third and sixth within themselves.) The GM should award players who write anything at all one Free Raise. If the work is particularly inspirational, they may receive another one or two Free Raises – bear in mind that the judge is a fairly militant Hida. Whatever the character writes, they will have to read aloud, and the Crab will not be shy about expressing their displeasure for works that are too long or too laden with imagery.

If no PC totals (after Raises) more than 30, then Kakita Gidayu will be declared the victor. His poem, though in the traditional haiku form, eschews the normal use of natural imagery and plainly declares that the forces of Jigoku will never defeat the sons of Hida. Most of the Crab applaud it sincerely, with Hida Chie and Hida Rohiteki both praising the handsome yojimbo for his fine understanding of a warrior's heart. Even if a PC's work wins, Gidayu will receive nearly as much acclaim as the victor.

The winner of the contest will receive two points of Glory. If a Crab PC proves victorious, they will gain an additional point of Glory and Rohiteki will applaud them particularly, "grateful to have been proven wrong."

Month of the Ox

The Crab refuse to use the formal religious name of the "Month of Fu Leng" for the eleventh month, referring to it instead as the "Month of the Ox", despite the Fallen One's demise. Some see this as a sign of superstition, but the Crab have absolutely no patience for mockery on this subject.

Kitsu Itsuko goes into seclusion as her pregnancy makes her presence in the court less comfortable (for both her and the other guests, as pregnant women are normally kept out of the public view). The Crab make every accommodation they can for the expecting mother, and Tsuko appears both very happy and somewhat worried.

Yoritomo Tsuboro gets into a friendly duel with Hida Hachiro, one of the Crab guards; O-Ushi decrees it be resolved with testsubo-suru, and he accepts the terms with surprise. He manages to acquit himself fairly well, though he does ultimately lose, and he gladly concedes the light-hearted argument that provided the excuse.

Shiba Yoriko has remained entirely apart from the court for the majority of the season, speaking perhaps twenty words in public all winter. It comes as a bit of a surprise when she suddenly joins the clique of samurai that constantly surround Hida Chie.

A Tour of the Wall

Throughout Winter Court, Hida Kozashi has been taking small groups of NPCs chosen at random on tours to the Kaiu Wall. As this involves roughly a day of travel through the winter weather each way, these excursions have not been popular among the court. Unfortunately, they are impossible to refuse without giving offense to the Crab and the invitations are carefully phrased so as to ensure each guest realize that they cannot avoid what Doji Juichi comes to refer to as “the dreaded tour.” The PCs will be one of the last groups to be invited out by Hida Kozashi (not because of rank or Status, but simply because the invitations are entirely random). Crab PCs are invited along on this particular trip to serve as guards, advisors, or just another friendly face to make the trip go faster. (They will not have been previously assigned to this duty, as it is not terribly popular with the Crab garrison either.)

- Should the table consist entirely of Crab PCs (not recommended, but it can happen), there is no reason for them to be taken on the tour. In this instance, they will skip the section of the module dealing with the Wall itself, and Kozashi will bring them in on the investigation after Hideo goes missing, in order to have Crab who have dealt with outsiders before be in charge.

On the second day of the last, final month of winter, servants deliver your invitations to tour the Kaiu Wall with Hida Kozashi. Mounts and supplies, including winter clothing, are provided, and Kozashi does his best to be pleasant company through what is expected to be a very uncomfortable pair of days. You depart at first light the next day, with a full guntai of Hida bushi accompanying you as guards; their constant vigilance manages to be both alarming and comforting. Though the ride is cold, and snow does still blanket the earth, the southern Crab provinces lie close enough to the ocean that they are much warmer than the northern parts of the Empire. This makes the

excursion merely very uncomfortable, rather than potentially lethal.

Despite the air of ill omen that so much white, the color of death, lends the journey, the ride is uneventful. Shortly after noon, a dark line appears on the horizon. After a few hours, it starts to come into definition as an enormous structure: the Kaiu Kabe, visible for miles on the approach that you are taking. Tales are told of it through the Empire, but the massive stone formation defies description. Four centuries of labor have expanded the original construction to what is inarguably the greatest feat of engineering in the Empire. Viewing it in person makes it impossible to dismiss the Crab's claims as regards the structure itself, and lends credence to their claims of what it was built to defend against. It is about two hours before sunset when you arrive at your destination, and standing in the shadow of the Wall, it is difficult to avoid thinking about what the Crab must face.

The group will be quartered in a watchtower on the Wall. It has enough room for the PCs as well as the guards and the garrison on duty, though it is far from comfortable. The guards seem to take a certain amount of delight in the plight of the “pampered courtiers”, but Hida Kozashi will maintain discipline over the troops, and there should be no serious issues. As a military outpost on the frontier, there are essentially no amenities, so as soon as the group's gear is put away, Kozashi will ask them to meet him atop the Wall.

Kozashi leans on the stone ramparts, gazing out into the blasted and sere winter landscape of the Shadowlands. His expression is grim, but almost resigned. The hatamoto turns and nods as you join him atop the Wall. “I have seen this much more than I would have liked, this last winter. I cannot complain, in truth; my brothers must face it every day. But there is something that is somehow more disheartening, having to return so often.” He sighs and shakes his head, but continues. “I have heard about the little speech you were given upon arriving at Kyuden Hida. While I am certain that it was delivered with a little more emphasis than necessary, let me assure you that the basic principles apply to all duty on the Wall. This close to the Shadowlands, we cannot take any chances.” Kozashi turns back to the desolate vista over the Wall. “This is what my Champion wishes you to see. The snow is deep enough now that goblins have a hard time attacking us in numbers, but there will still be the occasional ogre, or kami help us, oni, that will decide to test our strength. Winter provides us with some respite, but

only some. Come spring, bushi from my Clan will die on that ground.” He turns back, his jaw set. “We do not want your pity. We need neither your compassion nor your contempt. If you are willing to help us, understand that it must be on our terms as we know this foe and its dangers better than any. But if you can do nothing else, advise your lords that they should leave us to our war.”

If the PCs have questions for Kozashi, he will answer them to the best of his ability while trying to stress the importance of the Crab’s duties on the Wall. Kozashi will encourage them to look around, though every PC will have a Hida escort, and advise them to be in their quarters by midnight. Apart from the impressive fortifications, there’s not much to see. The Crab garrison stationed at this watchtower has grown used to the tours by now; while they are not exactly helpful, they are at least resigned and not inclined to make things more difficult than necessary. There are a few wounded troops, from an attack by a small group of ogres the week before, but they will turn aside all but the most insistent offers of medical attention. (If asked about the attack, they will describe it as routine. **“Or at least as routine as the Wall ever gets. Ogres don’t usually work together, but Jigoku is never consistent.”**) The Crab’s arms and equipment are well-maintained, and the garrison operates with absolute discipline and precision – even the intrusion of the tour group is handled without a ripple. The garrison commander, Hida Nizen, is one of Kozashi’s younger brothers, and there are no problems with coordinating between the two groups. (Note that the Crab are not going out of their way to be aggressive, but they will have absolutely no tolerance for any PC who chooses to push the limits – a character who actively decides to violate the strictures placed on them will be placed in chains and dragged back to Kyuden Hida in the morning. They will lose a full Rank of Glory for their stubbornness, and Kozashi will bring them in on the investigation only as a way to save face for themselves.)

Shortly after midnight, the alarm will sound. Any PC who leaves their quarters will see a great deal of activity as the garrison mobilizes to face some threat. Non-Crab (even those with the Warriors of the Wall cert) will be instructed, loudly, to return to their quarters and given one chance to do so under their own power. Crab PCs will be sent to supplement the squads to the north, in case the attack is a diversion for something else. After twenty minutes of furious noise, the yellow all-clear signal will be seen. Crab PCs will be kept with the sentries for another hour, then sent back to bed.

In the morning, Kozashi and Nizen will meet with the PCs before leaving. Kozashi has a pair of deep cuts along one cheek, but appears none the worse for wear. If asked about the attack the previous night, Nizen will respond laconically. **“Single oni on the Wall. Medium-sized, anvil. Second squad went down, but gave the alarm. Third and Fifth squads dealt with it while I sent First and Fourth to make sure something wasn’t coming up on us while we were busy. Light casualties – only twelve dead and twenty-one wounded.”** Despite Nizen’s matter-of-fact attitude, this was a fairly heavy attack. “Anvil” is a term used to refer to oni who can only be injured by jade, and the first bushi who encountered it identified it only after it had killed several of them. If the PCs wish to offer medical assistance, it will not be refused this time (and the PCs will gain a point of Honor for their compassion, particularly in light of being refused before). Nizen will thank any Crab for their assistance and give a relatively polite farewell before going back to his duties. Kozashi will not speak about his wounds, and will in fact act as though he has no idea what any PC who asks is talking about. (He is essentially embarrassed to have leapt into the fray, having been fairly close to the initial attack. His contribution was limited to pulling wounded away from the action, but he still views it as not really having been his place. Determined and friendly PCs could get this story out of him, with an admonishment that such actions are not to be encouraged.)

The trip back to Kyuden Hida goes without incident, though hopefully the PCs will have a bit more to think about. Whether due to the improving weather or because the road back is mostly downhill, the group will arrive back at the Crab stronghold a little after noon. Once they return, however, they will discover that the day has been more eventful there.

Part Three: Murder in the Castle

Kozashi frowns up at the walls as your group rides through the gates, where more guards are on duty than you have seen before. He greets the guard commander curtly, clearly worried about the heightened state of alert. “Hachiro-san. What has happened?” The officer gives a respectful bow, but glances at the group of samurai following his superior with a troubled expression. “Murder in the castle, Kozashi-sama. One of the guests. Tadashi-ro-sama put us on alert.” Kozashi’s head snaps around to look over the group he just led out of the castle, but the shock on his face swiftly fades to something more

speculative. “Excuse me, my friends. I must report to my Champion and determine what has transpired in our absence. Please see me in my office as soon as you are recovered from the trip. Shall we say one hour?”

Though his words are polite, his tone leaves no question that he fully expects the PCs to comply. With a sharp nod, Kozashi will leave them to make their own way into Kyuden Hida. The guards quite obviously have no time to bait the courtiers, and leave the PCs alone.

Kyuden Hida is a Crab stronghold, and even the servants tend to be a grim lot, but word of Kakita Gidayu’s death has spread like wildfire. All the PCs will be able to determine at first is that the body was found in the morning, and all appearances are that he died in the night. However, tales of the gruesome scene have spread and grown; even the practical minds of the Crab and their servants are not immune to a bit of gossip. Tensions are high, as some are concerned about an immediate assault, and some have given a bit of thought to the future political ramifications.

Kozashi has given the PCs time enough to get cleaned up and changed out of their travel clothes while he speaks with O-Ushi. A servant will be sent with a politely-worded reminder to any stragglers. (Refusing this invitation will constitute a great insult to the Crab, and will likely result in the PC being taken into custody to determine the extent of their involvement in the murder. The player should be made aware of how guilty it will make their character appear.)

Kozashi’s office is much like the rest of the castle – it lacks any decorations to soften the cold stone walls, and implements of war are all kept close at hand. Despite his training as a courtier, Kozashi keeps a suit of heavy armor on a stand, ready to don at an instant’s notice, and a spear bearing the mon of the Daidoji family hangs on a wall above his own daisho rack. Kozashi waits until everyone has arrived, reading through a few scrolls impatiently, before he begins. “I do thank you for this meeting. You have probably already heard that Kakita Gidayu has been killed. The castle is on alert; the guards are prepared in the event of an attack. Hideo-san has begun an investigation, while Rohiteki-san and the Kuni are searching for signs of a maho-tsukai in the area. I believe that they will focus their attention on an outside infiltrator, most probably among our own Clan. While I do not necessarily believe it to be an outsider, if this was perpetrated by a member of another Clan, I think that perhaps you would have a better chance to discover it. I know that none of you

are responsible for the crime because you were, after all, out of the castle with me when it took place.” He takes a deep breath and leans back, examining each of you carefully. “I do not wish to cause offense to our guests, but the one responsible for this must be found no matter whose pride suffers. The Crab believe that getting the job done is more important than saving face – for us or for the guilty party.”

This is an opportunity for the characters to gain a fairly significant political favor for their Clan and their lord (or to rectify any major mistakes made to this point in the module), and they should be eager for the chance. Kozashi will give them relatively broad access; the bushi on guard duty will be ordered to allow them to go where they wish in the castle, and to cooperate with reasonable requests. They won’t have the authority to arrest anyone, but they will be instructed to bring any suspicions to Kozashi or Hideo.

Investigations

The PCs have a decent amount of leeway, and a number of places they can start their investigations. Kozashi wishes a speedy resolution to the matter, in the hopes that it will not be the last thing the guests remember of the court.

Scene of the Crime: If the PCs start at Gidayu’s quarters, they will discover that it is under guard but that Yasuki Hideo instructed no one to disturb the scene until he gave orders otherwise. The guards will offer this tentatively; while they will allow the PCs to enter as they have been ordered, they will make sure that they know the magistrate’s wishes.

The scent of blood fills your nostrils as you enter the quarters assigned to Kakita Gidayu, and utter chaos greets your eyes. The room is full of clear signs of a struggle: scrolls lie scattered across the chamber, the futon is a bloody mess, and all of the contents of the desk have been spilled onto the floor. Kakita Gidayu lies in a corner near the futon. His face has been mutilated almost beyond recognition, and he bears multiple stab wounds on his chest. His kimono is ripped in several places, and a tanto rests by his hand.

What the PCs can determine from an examination depends on where they look.

- A general search of the room, and a successful roll of **Investigation (Search) / Perception** at a TN of 15, indicates that Gidayu was most likely woken by his attacker and immediately assaulted – his daisho stand has been knocked over by the struggle, but the blades are

untouched. The tanto at his side bears a mon in the shape of a bird on the pommel; covered with blood, it at first appears to be a Crane, but closer inspection reveals it to be a Phoenix.

- Searching the remains of the desk requires a **Investigation (Search) / Perception** roll at a TN of 20. Success will reveal a hidden packet containing a number of letters. These letters indicate that there was a subtle courtship going on between Gidayu and another, unnamed person at this Winter Court. A PC may roll **Games: Letters / Intelligence** at a TN of 15 to determine that the most recent letter (still unfinished and unsent) was breaking off the relationship, with the overtones that Gidayu believed the other party had dishonorable intentions. Attempting to analyze the handwriting requires a **Calligraphy / Intelligence** roll at a TN of 15 to identify it as a skilled, elegant hand, indicative of one of the more courtly Clans.
- Examining the wounds requires a **Kenjutsu / Intelligence** or **Knives / Intelligence** roll at TN 20. Medicine or Lore: Anatomy may be used as well; if the character has more than two Ranks of that Lore, they do not need to roll. Success will allow them to be certain that the weapon used was definitely not a knife, but a sword – either a katana or wakizashi.

Speaking with the Kami: If a shugenja PC tries to Commune with the spirits in the room, the results they get will depend on the kami that they speak to. Earth or Fire Commune will get a description of a “small person clad in flame.” A Water kami will display a shadowed image of a woman in orange robes entering the room forcefully, waking Gidayu and stabbing him in a brutal melee. Air kami report that “An empty woman came into the room, and then there was fear from the man, then focus, then nothing.”

Looking for the Magistrate: Yasuki Hideo was summoned as soon as the murder was discovered, and began an investigation. However, after his initial examination of the crime scene, he ordered it to be left untouched and went in search of testimony to either confirm or refute his initial theory (that Shiba Yoriko was the killer). Unfortunately, the first person he chose to speak with about this theory was Hida Chie, who promptly seized the opportunity to remove him as an obstacle.

Asking around after him will prove fruitless; while the servants will report seeing him immediately after the

murder was discovered, they do not know where he went. The only guards that do know where he went are those posted to the entrance to the basements – they are out of the way enough that the PCs will have to specifically seek them (or “all the guards”, perhaps) to ask questions. They will report, if asked politely or cleverly (**Etiquette (Courtesy)** or **Investigation (Interrogation) / Awareness** at a TN of 15), that Hideo went into the lower levels several hours ago (not long after the murder was discovered). They have no report indicating he returned. If the PC rolls more than a 25, they will also inform them that Hida Chie was with Hideo.

Seeking other Testimony: Most samurai should consider the evidence found at the scene to be, at best, a place to start, and require testimony from another samurai to actually attempt to bring charges against Shiba Yoriko. (This is what led Yasuki Hideo to seek out Hida Chie, who he thought would know something about Yoriko.) Unfortunately, most of the guests know little that would be of any use. What information the PCs can gather depends on who they choose to talk to:

- Hida Masaki claims to have seen Shiba Yoriko walking through the halls last night in the direction of Gidayu’s rooms. This is not a lie, though a suspicious PC may roll **Investigation (Interrogation) / Awareness** against his **Sincerity / Awareness** (4k3) to determine that he is not being entirely forthcoming. Confronting him on this point will result in adamant denials, however, and he will demand a duel if the PC continues. A Crab PC, or one with a strong tie to the Crab Clan (like the Warriors of the Wall cert), can convince him to admit he believes that Yoriko may have been jealous of Gidayu gaining Chie’s attention (though a simple **Awareness** roll at a TN of 10 will show the PC that Masaki himself was quite jealous of both Yoriko and Gidayu).
- Hida Chie will not be easy to locate. If asked after, the servants will say that they saw her speaking with Yasuki Hideo, but no one knows where she’s been since. Again, the guards to the lower levels will know more.
- Shiba Yoriko will say that she knows nothing of the murder, having retired early the night before. She is not lying, as she does not remember the events of the evening at all. If pressed, she will admit some concern due to a troubling dream (of vicious combat against a

faceless foe), but honestly believes it to have been just a dream.

- Kitsuki Hatoku remembers seeing Yoriko walking back to her room late last night. He only saw her from behind, though she seemed to be panting heavily and he thinks there was something wrong with her. He will not willingly give this as testimony against Yoriko, however (he does not have confidence in either his ability or his estranged yojimbo's willingness to stand against Yoriko in a duel). A sizable percentage of the court will dismiss his claim as well, since the current antipathy between the Dragon and Phoenix is well-known. A suitably roleplayed appeal, combined with a Contested Social Roll (**Couriter (Manipulation)** for persuasion or **Intimidation** for more overt pressure, resisted by his **Ettiquette / Willpower** of 7k4), will convince him to bring his testimony forward. This roll will gain a Free Raise if he is not the only witness.
- Matsu Reiko will be reluctant to gossip about another samurai-ko, but she did see Yoriko in the hallway late last night as the Lion was returning from the bath-house. It seemed that Yoriko was disturbed about something, but Reiko did not inquire after the Phoenix refused to respond to a polite greeting.
- Ide Fujiko, if approached, will hesitantly say that she saw Hiruma Gochai moving stiffly on that floor in the early hours of the morning, but that she has no idea what he was doing. This is a bald-faced lie (Contested with her Sincerity roll of 6k4), as she is still trying to find some way to keep from having to marry Gochai. Gochai is actually moving stiffly, the result of a particularly intensive training session with Masaki, but he will be outraged to have any sort of blame cast upon him. Given his usual attitude toward the other Clans, he will certainly bear a grudge against anyone who indicates he had anything to do with the murder (4pt Sworn Enemy), and unless the PCs can find someone else to testify against him, they will not be able to make any charges stick.
- Doji Juichi knows nothing about the murder, and is quite visibly distraught to have lost his friend and associate. He will admit that he know Gidayu had been exchanging letters with a suitor, but does not know the identity. He will comment somewhat waspishly that he did not think the relationship would amount to

anything, but that he thought his yojimbo had earned some "harmless diversion."

- Asako Kiru was asleep at the time of the murder, and this fact will be confirmed by the guards (who are stationed right outside his room). If questioned, he has noticed that Yoriko has been distracted for the last several weeks, but attributed this to the general oddity of the court.

Searching Rooms: The PCs will be granted access to almost any part of the castle that they request – the guest rooms, the barracks, and even some of the more secure rooms like the armory and gatehouses. They will not be able to search the Champion's quarters (not that they should have a need to). If they decide to search the lower levels, see the "Exposing Chie" section.

Unfortunately, there is very little in any of the rooms that the PCs can search that will be of help to them.

- Shiba Yoriko's room is kept immaculately clean, on the surface. However, a cursory examination of the closet will turn up a bloody kimono, barely concealed among a pile of discarded Crab clothing. (Curious or attentive PCs may recognize this garb as having belonged to Hida Yoshi – an **Investigation (Notice) / Intelligence** roll at a TN of 25 will determine this.) Yoriko has no memory of why these things would be in her closet. If the PCs examine her weapons (causing an Honor loss if done without her consent – one point for a character with an Honor Rank of 5 or higher), they will see that there are a few drops of blood on the tsuba of her wakizashi. (And a Commune will confirm it as the murder weapon, though not be able to provide motive or any other specifics.) Yoriko will be surprised by this; she sharpened and tended her blades the evening before, and has not examined them since.
- If the PCs suspect Hida Chie, they may examine her quarters in the barracks. As a low-ranking officer, she has a private (though not particularly large) room, with a writing desk as well as a futon. The papers in the desk are fairly standard, though there are several intimate letters from a number of suitors hidden in a stack of reports (no roll is necessary to find these, all it should take is a thorough search). Chie's writing is very precise, far better than one would assume from a Crab or ronin; a **Calligraphy / Intelligence** roll at a TN of 20 is required to definitively

identify it as the same hand as that found in the letters in Gidayu's chambers, however. Searching the rest of the room requires **Investigation (Search) / Perception** at a TN of 30 to allow them to find a hidden panel under the futon containing three other scrolls. Examining these scrolls will require a **Lore: Maho / Intelligence** roll at a TN of 20, though a character could substitute Lore: Shadowlands or Spellcraft at a +5 TN. They are, of course, maho scrolls. They are heavily Tainted: any character that either handles or reads them will need to make an Earth roll at the end of the module. The case containing them has enough room for two more scrolls.

No PC will be able to gain an audience with O-Ushi, and they will have to work through Kozashi in order to bring charges against anyone. In the interest of resolving the crime swiftly, Kozashi is willing to listen to the PCs' recommendations.

Condemning Yoriko

It is highly possible that the PCs will find sufficient testimony to bring charges against Shiba Yoriko for Gidayu's death. If the PCs are relying entirely upon their own testimony, Yoriko will challenge them to a duel, and due to the seriousness of the situation, it will have to be to the death. (As a matter of a criminal investigation, waiting for the approval of the characters' daimyo is not necessary – it is assumed that a daimyo would rather their vassal fight to keep their name clear than simply accept a possibly-unjust punishment.) Any of the PCs may accept this challenge, however, even if it is a Crab, O-Ushi's edict of tetsubo-suru will not apply (again, because of the serious charges). Yoriko genuinely believes in her own innocence, and will fight to the best of her ability.

If the PCs have testimony from two other samurai (in addition to their own), Kozashi will have enough legal standing to simply arrest Yoriko over her objections and challenges. She will be tortured until she confesses to the crime. However, if the PCs found the bloody clothes in her room, she will hesitantly admit to killing Gidayu, though she will not be able to explain why. She will ask to commit seppuku, and if one of the PCs has been particularly honorable or considerate, she will ask them to stand as her second. In this event, she still believes in her innocence, but knows that only seppuku will save her family the dishonor from whatever plot she was caught in.

Should the PCs think of it, touching her with jade will cause a small burn to appear on her skin. This will simply confirm that she has been Tainted somehow. Should a PC do this without her consent (which will be very difficult to gain), they will lose a point of Honor. However, this will convince the Crab to torture and execute her without requiring any other testimony.

The Crab will consider Yoriko's Taint sufficient explanation (and even if it is not confirmed, they will assume she was Tainted if she is executed for the murder). They will also assume that the disappearances of the Crab guards and Hideo are her doing under Jigoku's influence. It does leave the question of how she was Tainted in the first place, though again the Crab simply assume it dates back to the March to Volturnum and have no inclination to hold the matter against the Phoenix.

Exposing Chie

Despite her precautions, it is possible that the PCs will be able to uncover enough reason to suspect Hida Chie of being involved. Additionally, if they spend enough of their time looking for the missing magistrate, they may well stumble across Chie's plans on their own. Should the PCs decide to look into the reason for Yoriko's Taint, it will be difficult for Chie to cover up the truth without exposing herself, and she will simply cut and run.

If the PCs enter the lower levels on the day of the murder (whether because they are looking for Hideo or pursuing Chie), they will discover that all of the guards assigned to those levels are not at their posts. The reason for this is on the lowest level, in one of the storage rooms – Chie has begun enacting a ritual that will leave several undead bushi hidden in the lower levels of Kyuden Hida, as preparation for a future attack on the castle. If the PCs report the missing guards to the Crab before exploring further, (or if they've asked for assistance before heading down), Hida Masaki will accompany them. Masaki will insist on better information before involving any other Crab; he is quite afraid of what might be found, and does not want to bring suspicions against Chie unless there is definite proof.

Searching the lower levels will bring the PCs face-to-face with Chie in the middle of her ritual.

A circle of blood has been drawn on the bare stone floor, with a number of bodies arranged in a macabre display – ten large Crab samurai in full armor, and the smaller form of Yasuki Hideo. Hida Chie stands

in the center, scarlet gore streaming through her hair as she chants an unholy prayer to Jigoku. Her once-pale skin is now bleached of all color, and twin points of red fire blaze where her eyes were. A massive form lurks in the doorway across the room from you, clad in spiked armor a putrefying mix of green and black. The face of Hida Yoshi is barely recognizable beneath the decay, but the vibrant and pulsating colors of the crab tattoo on the back of his skull identify the undead warrior as the crass berserker that met you on the first day of winter.

When the PCs make their presence known, Chie will break off her chanting. *“Konban-wa, honorable samurai. How can this one serve you tonight?” Her beautiful face twists in a hideous travesty of a smile, suddenly lit from below by a red, profane light from the circle of blood.*

If given the chance, Chie will gloat about “how easy” it was to manipulate the samurai of the court, and the Crab in particular. She will gleefully admit to forcing Yoriko to kill Gidayu – *“Poor little thing; so lost and out of place, tormented by all those memories of death but not knowing how to live. She was so grateful when I noticed her, so glad to do whatever I asked. It hardly took any power at all to convince her the Crane should die... And then, of course, she didn’t wish to remember that either. All too easy.”* If given enough time, she will lament the dissolution of her plans. *“I did so want to leave the Crab with a gift, but I suppose you’ve ruined that.”*

When the PCs attack, Chie will swiftly sprinkle the bodies around her with blood and raise them as zombies. She will retreat down the passage toward the secret exit, and three zombies will rise from the pile of corpses to delay the PCs. The revenant of Hida Yoshi will also take part, standing in the doorway to cover its mistress’ escape.

If any of the PCs slept with Chie, she will attempt to use her Blood Domination power to get them to delay the rest of the group while she flees. This will require a Contested Willpower roll between them; if the player wins, they are aware of the attempt and are immune to the power for the rest of the day. If she succeeds, they must follow her commands for seven hours. The only command she will give is to “delay them so I can escape”; this will not force the character to kill the other PCs, but they must delay them. If Hida Masaki is with the group, she will use this power successfully on him – he will not attempt to kill any of the PCs, and will even help them against the zombies, but he cannot let them go after Chie.

The zombies are not likely to be a great threat, and are entirely intended as a delaying tactic. They should not be ignored by the PCs, and if the characters attempt to just brush past them without consideration, the zombies should gain a significant bonus to their attack rolls (equivalent to the Full Attack Stance; the zombies should not otherwise use any Stance but the Attack Stance).

Hida Yoshi, Undead Revenant

Air 0	Earth 4	Fire 1	Water 2
Reflexes 3		Agility 3	Strength 4

Initiative: 3k3 **Attack:** 5k3 (tetsubo)

Armor TN: 25 (heavy armor) **Damage:** 8k3 (tetsubo)

Reduction: 10 (heavy armor and undead nature)

Wounds: 96 (Dead)

Taint Rank: 4

Special Abilities:

Beheading: A revenant can normally only be destroyed by breaking it to pieces (reducing it to Dead). However, it can also be destroyed instantly by severing its head. This requires taking three Raises for the Called Shot and then inflicting 24 Wounds.

Fear 3

Undead (Undead creatures do not feel pain, suffer no Wound Penalties, Fear, or any Spell or Technique that affects the mind or emotions)

Crab Guard Zombies

Air 0	Earth 3	Fire 0	Water 1
Reflexes 3		Agility 2	Strength 4

Initiative: 1k1 **Attack:** 4k2 (fist)

Armor TN: 15 (heavy armor) **Damage:** 4k1 (fist)

Reduction: 3 (heavy armor)

Wounds: 72 (Dead)

Taint Rank: 3

Special Abilities:

Beheading: A zombie can normally only be destroyed by breaking it to pieces (reducing it to Dead). However, it can also be destroyed instantly by severing its head. Due to the fact that all of these men were slain by having their throats violently slit, this will only require calling two Raises for the Called Shot and then inflicting 18 Wounds (after Reduction).

Fear 3

Undead (Undead creatures do not feel pain, suffer no Wound Penalties, Fear, or any Spell or Technique that affects the mind or emotions)

Armored: These zombies were slain while on duty, and are still wearing standard Crab heavy armor; however, without the benefit of a trained mind to take full advantage of it, they only gain a +5 bonus to Armor TN and 2 points of Reduction from it.

It is highly likely that “Hida Chie” will escape; unless someone is able to break through the zombies (GM’s discretion, but should probably require a Knockdown attack on any zombie between them and the exit she took, or possibly an **Athletics / Strength** roll with a suggested TN of 25) and give pursuit (succeeding on an **Athletics (Running) / Strength** roll with a TN of 30), she will make it to the exit of the escape tunnel and seal it behind her, preventing further pursuit. By the time it can be opened again, she will be long gone. This should take three combat rounds from the start. Once she has escaped, the zombies will crumple to the ground like puppets with cut strings. The corpse of Hida Yoshi will not fall, but it will cease moving, and any characters Dominated by Chie will snap out of it.

The Crab will be very grateful toward any PCs who drive off or capture the Tainted infiltrator. A great number of questions will be asked of the other recent Moshibaru recruits, and everyone Chie had contact with will be subjected to extended tests for the Taint. This will include Hida Masaki, who will request transfer to the Damned Berserkers when his Taint is revealed. If she is still alive at this point, Shiba Yoriko will not request seppuku: she will ask to join the Crab so that she can join the same unit. O-Ushi will grant her petition, and Hida Yoriko will be born. The Crab will insist on testing even those guests who had regular contact with Chie (Matsu Reiko, Moshi Kashin, and Moto Kin-Lao), regardless of insult. This will include any PCs, however, these preliminary tests will not reveal any indication of the Taint.

If the PCs do not have any leads or pursue them into the lower levels on that day, they will lose the chance to confront Chie directly. If they found the scrolls in her room, she will disappear after concealing the prepared zombies in the storage rooms on the lower levels. Without casting Commune to speak with the stones of the rooms, these will be impossible to locate; however.

If the PCs do not act on any suspicions they may have of Chie, she will stay through the end of the court and continue to establish her assumed identity (allowing for future sabotage).

If Chie is driven off, the PCs may search her room. If the PCs find them, they may turn the scrolls over to the Crab; the Kuni will discover Chie’s plan and dig the zombies out of their basement.

Conclusion

Regardless of the outcome of the investigation, the last month of Winter Court will pass without further incident. The Draw Lot play will be cancelled, due to the unfortunate death of Kakita Gidayu. As Hida Chie was the organizer for that event, if she has been exposed, many of the Crab will wonder what she may have had in mind for the epic tale of Matsu Hitomi, “Honor’s Price”. If she was not exposed, she will express disappointment, but concede that it would “ill suit the memory of poor Gidayu-san.”

When the season comes to an end, the court will celebrate Oshogatsu (the New Year’s Festival) on the first day of the new year. This is usually the largest celebration of the year, and the Crab do make an effort to provide something suitable for their guests. Several small, mobile shrines are set up to allow those who wish to pray for the blessings of their ancestors and the Celestial Heavens in the coming year. (These shrines are actually military shrines carried along with the Crab armies into the field, but at this point, most of the guests are eager enough to put Kyuden Hida behind them that they refrain from comment.) Through the day, a few musicians will perform and the actors will perform a relatively unobjectionable play, “Eyes and Ears”, which tells the tale of the rivalry between Agasha Kitsuki and Bayushi Shiko. (The conflict between the two is handled in a fashion that does not paint either side clearly in the right.) Shortly before sunset, the guests are invited to watch a parade that consists largely of a military procession of Crab soldiers; despite the ornate armor and enormous crustacean puppets (similar to dragon-dancers, but with the theme of the hosting Clan), it is obvious that the Crab are happy to demonstrate their strength for their guests. This is followed by with a large, elaborate dinner; the evening ends in a round of raucous drinking while a fireworks display explodes overhead, putting an end to the year.

- If the PCs were able to condemn Chie for her crimes, they will earn a seat at the Champion’s table. This honor earns the PCs five points of Glory (unless they already have a Glory Rank of 3 or higher, in which case they gain three points of Glory). This will not remove O-Ushi as a Sworn Enemy if they insulted her,

however, though she will not deny them the honor if they exposed Chie.

- Kitsu Tsuko will have a large smile on his face through the entire day. If someone asks him about this, he will inform them that his wife Itsuko gave birth to a son a few days ago, and is on her way back to Lion lands.
- Any and all romance between PCs and NPCs should resolve in their natural progressions by this time. It should be possible for PCs to earn the True Love Disadvantage, or if a romance goes sour, Lost Love. The GM should use good judgment in handing out these Disadvantages, and take the player's actions and motivations into account.

At the end of the festival, the PCs and other guests are free to return home. Save for the Crab NPCs and, surprisingly, Bayushi Setsuka, most of the guests do so quite eagerly.

The End

Rewards for Completing the Adventure

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

Any PC that handled the maho scrolls in Hida Chie's room must make a **Simple Earth** roll at a TN of 10. If the roll is failed, they gain one point of Taint. If they read the scrolls, increase the TN to 15 and they will gain an additional point if they fail.

Any PC who slept with Hida Chie must make a **Simple Earth** roll at a TN of 20 or gain two points of Taint.

Experience Points:

Completing the Adventure	1 XP
Good Roleplaying	+1 XP
Taking Part in at least one Courtly Event	+1 XP
Conclude the Investigation (charges brought against either Yoriko or Chie)	+1 XP
Total Possible	4 XP

Honor and Glory

PCs who condemn Chie will gain a point of Honor. If their Honor is 5 or less, they will earn two points of Honor. If their Honor is 3 or less or they are Crab, they earn 3 points of Honor.

PCs who condemn Yoriko legitimately believing her to be guilty earn a point of Honor.

PCs who do not participate in at least one event at Winter Court will lose two points of Glory.

Other Awards/Penalties

Bringing the investigation to a satisfactory conclusion (with either Chie or Yoriko blamed) will earn the PCs the gratitude of Kozashi and at least the respect of the rest of the Crab. They will gain a Favor from the Crab Clan.

If the PCs drive Chie off, they will gain Hida Kozashi as an Ally (Influence 3, Devotion 2). He will write sincere and glowing letters of recommendation to the PCs' daimyo, who will reward their vassals with more responsibilities and prestige (earning them a point of Status).

Module Tracking Sheets

If the PC has begun marriage negotiations with any NPC, that should be indicated on the module sheet. Likewise, any less formal relationships should be noted.

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 Chie exposed as a Shadowlands infiltrator? Did she escape?

What was Shiba Yoriko's fate? (Executed, Seppuku, or Damned?)

Did Hida Masaki join the Damned?

Did any PC sponsor an event at Winter Court? (And what was it?)

Who won Hida Masatari's cup? (Kakita Gidayu or a PC?)

GM must report this information BEFORE (Expiration date) for it to have storyline effect

Appendix #1: NPCs

This section is intended to facilitate using the host of NPCs present at a major court function (even one as unpopular and remote as Kyuden Hida's Winter Court). Full stats are unnecessary for most of the characters; the GM is encouraged to use their Insight Rank and School to extrapolate if needed (those rolls required by events in the mod are already provided). Each NPC has a few pieces of gossip that a PC can uncover if they start looking into them, but this does require specific investigation (as well as a **Courtier (Gossip) / Awareness** roll; the information given will be based on the result of the roll). These NPCs are here to help flesh out the court, not to provide for major plot points; however, they are also available targets for pursuing romantic relationships should PCs wish.

Hida O-Ushi: Crab Clan Champion. A pretty woman, though somewhat short and stocky. Despite her size, she is nevertheless an extremely intimidating woman, by reputation if nothing else. Her (in)famous hammer never leaves her side, and she will regularly heft it even in court: pointing at someone she wishes to address, gripping it tightly when her patience is being tested, etc.

Honor: 4.2 **Status:** 8.0 **Glory:** 7.0 **School/Rank:** Hida Bushi 5

Goals: See which Clans sent representatives that can be baited; use those representatives for amusement and determine which of the others would make valuable allies.

Gossip: TN10 – O-Ushi's position was unexpected; she became Champion when her brother Yakamo replaced Amaterasu to become the incarnation of the Sun. She has surprised many who thought of her as a simple warrior, though she is still far from being a major force in the court.

TN 20 – She has recently had a shrine built on the top floor of Kyuden Hida, the Shrine of Thunder, Persistence, and the Sun. It is devoted to her ancestor Osano-Wo, her father Kisada, and her brother Yakamo, but it is only open to those of the Hida bloodline.

TN 30 – She and Yasamura quarreled over the trust O-Ushi has placed in the returned spirit Hida Tsuneo, who is leading efforts to recover lands taken from the Hiruma by the Shadowlands. Yasamura has suspicions of the general, and spoke against him privately (unfortunately, paper walls make such privacy chancy at best).

Hida Kozashi: Hida O-Ushi's Hatamoto (personal advisor). Kozashi always seems to be plotting the next big deal even when talking about something as simple as the weather, and is far more in tune with the flow of the courts than his superior. He is missing his left hand, but manages to be smooth enough that many forget his handicap within a short time of speaking with him. Kozashi is in his middle years, but shows no sign of slowing down.

Honor: 3.4 **Status:** 6.0 **Glory:** 4.5 **School/Rank:** Hida Bushi 1/Yasuki Courtier 3

Goals: Kozashi is privately very unhappy with his current position, wishing to be back out in the courts of the Empire where he can "get some real work done". (A sympathetic PC, especially a female who shows romantic interest, may be able to get him to reveal this.)

Gossip: TN 15 – Kozashi lost his left hand only a few weeks after his gempukku; rather than take up a minor post, he appealed for training at the Yasuki Courtier School and now has a long career of service behind him as a diplomat to a variety of Clans.

TN 25 – He comes from a large family; he has brothers in command positions all along the Wall. While his position is ripe for ensuring the advancement of his kin, most of these postings came before his promotion to hatamoto.

Hida Rohiteki: Hida O-Ushi's spiritual advisor. She is the daughter of the late Hida Tsuru, younger brother of Hida Kisada. A young woman, her strong will and practicality serve as a healthy foil to O-Ushi's occasional impulsiveness. Not a conventionally pretty woman, she has little experience with romance but is unlikely to be courted easily – she is too devoted to her cousin to turn away from her duties for such pursuits.

Honor: 2.7 **Status:** 6.0 **Glory:** 4.5 **School/Rank:** Kuni Shugenja 3

Goals: Find a Clan willing to begin marriage negotiations. (Note that such negotiations will take a great deal of time.)

Gossip: TN 15 – Despite her youth, she is a powerful shugenja with a great deal of experience battling the Shadowlands and is very well-respected by the Crab armies.

TN 25 – Rohiteki has had no offers of marriage, from other Clans or from her own. Given her rank and close relation, this is somewhat odd – most speculate that it is because of her father's formidable reputation.

Hida Tadashiro: Commander of the Hida Elite Guard. He is a stern-faced bushi who has spent nearly all of his life defending his Champions. Though reserved, he does have a dry sense of humor and is somewhat more tolerant of the other Clans than most of the rest of the Crab court.

Honor: 5.1 **Status:** 5.0 **Glory:** 6.0 **School/Rank:** Hida Bushi 4/Crab Defender 3

Gossip: TN 15 – Tadashiro is over fifty; while Crab samurai do not typically retire to monasteries, he is concerned that age may be slowing him down and is starting to look for a replacement.

Hiruma Gochai: Scout commander. Gochai is bitter, angry, and sometimes downright rude, especially to those not from his Clan. He knows barely enough about etiquette to avoid providing someone with cause for a duel, but he rarely shows anyone the respect that is due them. Gochai is betrothed to Ide Fujiko, and seems completely uninterested in the idea of marriage, let alone to “some pampered courtier”. He will loudly and publically complain about Fujiko at every opportunity.

Honor: 2.1 **Status:** 4.5 **Glory:** 5.0 **School/Rank:** Hiruma Bushi 5

Goals: Advance through the ranks.

Gossip: TN 15 – He is one of the most experienced Hiruma Scouts still in service to the Crab, following the losses of the Battle at Oblivion’s Gate.

TN 25 – Gochai is highly ambitious. He is constantly training, and seeking opportunities for both military and social advancement. This is why he agreed to a marriage out of the Clan, though it is rumored that he threatened to beat the matchmaker that brought him the arrangement with Fujiko.

Kaiu Sanjuro: Assistant to Kozashi. He is an aspiring young engineer with an eager, enthusiastic manner. Sanjuro is actually rather innocent, only a few weeks out of his gempukku. He will talk to anyone about nearly anything, though he has an unfortunate habit of turning conversations into lectures about engineering.

Honor: 4.3 **Status:** 2.0 **Glory:** 1.0 **School/Rank:** (treat as Hida Bushi 1, with no points spent on combat abilities)

Goals: Try not to cause embarrassment to the Clan or his uncle; gain at least one ally outside the Clan.

Gossip: TN 15 – Sanjuro is one of Kozashi’s many nephews, and gained his position through blatant nepotism.

TN 25 – Though he owes his uncle for his post, Sanjuro is actually a very intelligent samurai and has proven a valuable assistant to the hatamoto.

Yasuki Hideo: Magistrate of Kyuden Hida. Hideo is a small, wiry man with a weatherbeaten face and a somewhat crass manner. He is a returned spirit from the seventh century (a time when things were simpler for the Crab), and would rather be out in the province rounding up smugglers and collecting taxes, but his successes have led to his current position. An experienced magistrate, Hideo is far more comfortable with a rougher element than will be found in court.

Honor: 2.8 **Status:** 4.0 **Glory:** 3.5 **School/Rank:** Hiruma Bushi 3

Goals: Keep the peace and get out of the court in one piece.

Gossip: TN 15 – Hideo spends most of his time in tea-houses and dens of ill repute, but still accomplishes his job and has never been accused of corruption.

Hida Chie (of the Moshibaru): Guard nikutai. Despite being a member of a vassal family, she is considered to be a promising bushi who has received nothing but praise from her commanding officers. Unlike most Crab, she is by all standards a beautiful woman, with voluptuous curves, short and wavy black hair, and a smile that seems to just beg someone to come sweep her off her feet. (In reality, Hida Chie is a Lost samurai infiltrating the ranks of the Crab. See her full writeup in Appendix #2 for more information.)

Gossip: TN 10 – Her beauty has made her a very popular, and she is rumored to have taken several discreet lovers.

TN 20 – She joined the Crab as a result of the last Twenty Goblin Winter (held four years ago), and she actually brought back over forty goblin heads, much to the amazement of the men running the event.

TN 30 – Few speak of it, but there is some indication that her relationship with her superior officer Hida Masaki is closer than appropriate. (Over the course of the court, several other samurai will be linked to her as well.)

Hida Masaki: Hida Elite Guard gunso. Masaki is a decorated veteran of the Clan War and the War Against the Shadow. A huge, scarred, brutal warrior with little patience for courtly intrigue, or for the other Clans in general, Masaki has unfortunately fallen at least partway under Chie’s spell.

Gossip: TN 15 – He is under serious consideration to take command of the Hida Elite Guard when Tadashiro steps down.

TN 25 – Masaki is a skilled officer, but some think that he has feelings for Hida Chie that go beyond their military relationship.

Doji Juichi: Representative of the Crane. Juichi is everything anyone would expect from a Doji Courtier: handsome, smooth-talking, and honorable. His unmarried status is a mystery to most, as someone of his position should have wed many years ago. His only current complaint is being stuck in “such a barbaric excuse for a Court,” which he is surprisingly open about. This antagonism toward the hosting Clan is fairly polite, but fully intentional – he is acting on behalf of Doji Meihu.

Honor: 6.9 **Status:** 3.0 **Glory:** 2.5 **School/Rank:** Doji Courtier 3

Goals: Antagonize the Crab subtly. (This will, understandably, cease when Gidayu is killed.)

Gossip: TN 15 – Juichi is known to be an expert on Rokugani theater; he has some training as an actor, though his career as a diplomat usually keeps him from being more than a member of the audience.

TN 25 – Though it does not carry the same stigma in Rokugan, Juichi makes some effort to keep his homosexuality hidden from the public view. It is known, though it is not the first thing people think of when they speak of him.

Kakita Gidayu: Juichi’s yojimbo. Gidayu is a handsome, reserved young man with a strong devotion to his duty. He does not make a point to talk to anyone unless they speak to him first, and seems to endure Juichi’s complaints about the court with a yojimbo’s stoicism. He is a proud samurai, who makes an effort to come across as the ideal of the warrior-poet.

Honor: 7.1 **Status:** 2.5 **Glory:** 2.5 **School/Rank:** Kakita Bushi 2

Goals: Keep Juichi safe despite his “efforts” with the Crab.

Gossip: TN 15 – Gidayu is an experienced duelist, having bested two Lion in battlefield duels and a Scorpion in a duel to first blood at a Winter Court in the Dragon lands last year.

TN 25 – Gidayu does not share Juichi’s expressed opinion of the Crab, seeming to have a fair amount of respect for the court’s hosts.

Kitsuki Hatoku: Representative of the Dragon. Hatoku is calm and calculating, with hawk-like eyes that seem to catch everything that happens at court. He resents his marriage, as Kayuri’s return prevented him from finding a bride more to his own liking rather than his family’s.

Honor: 4.2 **Status:** 3.0 **Glory:** 2.0 **School/Rank:** Kitsuki Courtier 2

Goals: Prevent the Phoenix from gaining too many allies in the other Clans.

Gossip: TN 15 - Hatoku and Kayuri are stuck in a loveless arranged marriage. (Both are vulnerable to romantic approaches by PCs if they seem sincere in their attempts.)

TN 25 – Hatoku served as a magistrate in the Dragon lands, but lost his appointment after a particularly brutal series of murders went unsolved in his area. The killings stopped, but the case was never closed.

Kitsuki Kayuri: Hatoku’s wife and yojimbo. She is a bright-eyed returned spirit who died during the Clan War, only to be forced back into the marriage arranged for her by her family when she returned through Oblivion’s Gate.

Honor: 4.4 **Status:** 2.5 **Glory:** 1.5 **School/Rank:** Mirumoto Bushi 1

Goals: Avoid Hatoku as much as possible.

Gossip: TN 15 - Hatoku and Kayuri are stuck in a loveless arranged marriage. (Both are vulnerable to romantic approaches by PCs if they seem sincere in their attempts.)

TN 25 – Kayuri has no experience as a duelist, though she was a competent battlefield bushi before her marriage and current posting.

Kitsu Tsuko: Representative of the Lion. He is a quiet young man, with an optimistic, wide-eyed demeanor. Unlike many Kitsu, he is not trained as a shugenja, and in fact wears the mon of the Bayushi Bushi School. Despite this, he gives the impression of being highly honorable. Though he might be expected to indulge in some form of Scorpion trickery, he refrains from such dishonorable conduct throughout the winter, showing himself to be a product of his Clan, not his training.

Honor: 4.3 **Status:** 2.0 **Glory:** 3.0 **School/Rank:** Bayushi Bushi 1

Goals: Determine if the Crab and Unicorn are willing to agree to the proposed nonaggression pact.

Gossip: TN 15 – Though he is not as concerned as his wife, he has still spent some effort in finding a skilled midwife and appropriate precautions for the birth of his child.

Kitsu Itsuko: Tsuko's wife. She is a courtier formerly of the Miya family. She is traditionally pretty, though not overly so, and stays close to her husband at all times. She often jokes at Tsuko about having 'the worst talent at choosing vacation spots', which earns small chuckles from the Crab. Beyond this, she comes off generally as a charming and often flirtatious woman, though her flirtations never go beyond harmless entertainment. As the winter goes on, Itsuko's pregnancy will begin to cause her to become increasingly more bedridden, and chances to interact with her will become few and far between.

Honor: 4.5 **Status:** 1.0 **Glory:** 1.5 **School/Rank:** Otomo Courtier 1

Goals: Do whatever it takes to come through the pregnancy with a healthy child.

Gossip: TN 15 – Her pregnancy was not discovered until after they arrived at Kyuden Hida, and though the Crab have extended every courtesy to her condition, she is still very worried about the birth.

Matsu Reiko: Lion guard, acting as Itsuko's yojimbo. She is a surprisingly friendly young woman of the Matsu. Though she trained with the Matsu Berserkers, she shows none of the characteristic rage associated with the School, and in fact is considered by all respects to be a very charming young lady. (If a male PC wishes to woo her, she will require them to spar and train with her through the winter; her combat stats should be roughly equivalent to theirs, and if they perform adequately, she will agree to begin negotiations for marriage. Under no circumstance will she engage in dishonorable activity with any character.)

Honor: 7.3 **Status:** 1.5 **Glory:** 2.0 **School/Rank:** Matsu Bushi 2

Goals: Keep Itsuko safe; enjoy the Crab hospitality as much as possible. Find a worthy husband.

Gossip: TN 15 – Reiko has sworn the typical oath of chastity for a Matsu samurai-ko, however, she is looking for a husband to be able to honorably set that vow aside.

TN 25 – Reiko will only marry a man who is a strong and skilled bushi (possibly explaining why she requested this assignment); she has tested suitors in the past and met with disappointment.

Yoritomo Tsuboro: Representative of the Mantis. He is a charming man just showing hints of gray in his hair. Unlike many in his Clan, he is unfailingly polite and acts as befits a traditional samurai. Despite his training as a courtier, he has some training as a warrior, and will regularly practice kenjutsu with those willing to teach him.

Honor: 6.9 **Status:** 3.0 **Glory:** 2.0 **School/Rank:** Yoritomo Courtier 2

Goals: Make certain the Mantis are known as more than just pirates or brutes.

Gossip: TN 15 – Tsuboro grew up as a ronin, and joined the Mantis Clan after distinguishing himself during the Clan War. His ability to get along with others made him seek out training as a courtier, but he remains a skilled warrior.

TN 25 – Tsuboro served as an assistant to Yoritomo Kamoko, the liaison between Toturi's Army and Yoritomo's Army during the Clan War. Tsuboro still has many contacts among the Imperial Legions.

Moshi Kashin: Assistant to Tsuboro. On the surface, he seems to be an aging Mantis artisan and shugenja, specializing in puppet work. However, the many years of hardship Kashin has endured have left him mostly insane, and the man literally uses his puppet as a barrier between him and the rest of Rokugan. He will put on impromptu performances regularly, but will shun any actual contact with others unless absolutely required by his duty.

Honor: 3.6 **Status:** 1.0 **Glory:** 1.0 **School/Rank:** Moshi Shugenja 1

Goals: Avoid interacting with others; use "Baka-san" as an excuse or to deflect people.

Gossip: TN 15 – Kashin was once assigned to the Imperial Court in Otosan Uchi as an assistant to the (at the time) Centipede Clan Ambassador. There was some sort of incident with a Scorpion, and he was sent home in shame.

Asako Kiru: Representative of the Phoenix. A returned spirit from the tenth century, he is interested in the changes that have happened in the Empire over the last hundred years. Like many of his family, he is as much a scholar as a courtier: he has an air of knowledge about him, and always seems to know just a little bit about everything. Despite this, he does not come off as snobbish, and actually is a rather friendly individual.

Honor: 4.7 **Status:** 2.5 **Glory:** 1.0 **School/Rank:** Asako Courtier 2

Goals: Learn about the changes to the Empire in the last century; develop contacts for the Phoenix.

Gossip: TN 15 – In Kiru’s first life, he was an assistant to an Asako Inquisitor, and assisted with hunting down maho-tsukai all across the Empire.

TN 25 – The previous rumor is untrue (a confusion stemming from another “Asako Kiru” who lived in the same time), but may explain why he was sent. Kiru himself will make no claims, and if confronted, will laugh a bit about the persistent rumor.

Shiba Yoriko: Kiru’s yojimbo. a plain, unassuming young woman wearing the mon of the Shiba Bushi School. She is a quiet young woman with no experience in court; her shyness makes her susceptible to certain kinds of attention. This trait makes her a target of Chie as the winter progresses, and unfortunately Chie has the persistence and ability to get through Yoriko’s reserve.

Goals: Remain out of the limelight; keep Kiru safe.

Gossip: TN 15 – Yoriko was a yojimbo to a young shugenja during the Battle of Oblivion’s Gate. Her charge had no real business at the battle, but the magnitude of the threat brought them both to the battle, and her shugenja died.

TN 25 – Yoriko suffers from frequent nightmares of the Shadowlands and the March to Volturnum.

Shosuro Tai: Representative of the Scorpion. Tai wears clothing and a mask that are almost completely concealing, leaving her gender a complete mystery. Tai’s mannerisms do not help the matter, and most are unsure of how to react to the Scorpion. These are all deliberate affectations on her part, as she is actively forging a new identity after many of her family were revealed as traitors during the War Against the Shadow.

Honor: 2.2 **Status:** 3.0 **Glory:** 1.5 **School/Rank:** Bayushi Courtier 3

Goals: Learn as much as possible about the other Clans’ intentions toward the Crab and Mantis.

Gossip: TN 15 – Tai is new to the courts, having only been present at one public event during the previous year. They are undeniably skilled, but the fact that no one actually knows even if they are male or female has put a number of people off, and their position as a diplomat make everyone wonder what the Scorpion are up to.

Bayushi Setsuka: Tai’s yojimbo. She is a young and rather pretty young bushi who specializes in fighting with warfans. Setsuka wears a silk veil for a mask, and will speak politely with anyone who approaches her; in typical Scorpion fashion, she is rather personable. She is uninterested in romance with men, however, something about Hida Chie bothers her and she will prove able to resist the “Crab” infiltrator’s advances.

Honor: 2.4 **Status:** 2.5 **Glory:** 2.0 **School/Rank:** Bayushi Bushi 2

Goals: Run interference for Tai and keep the attention of the court on herself.

Gossip: TN 15 – Setsuka has been a fixture at several courts through the Empire, though this is the first time she’s been to the Crab lands. She has never truly distinguished herself, though she has never shamed herself either.

Ide Fujiko: Representative of the Unicorn. She is a very beautiful young woman who always speaks in a soft voice. There is an air of melancholy about her, however. Her new betrothed, Gochai, is a practical manifestation of everything she despises about the Crab, and it seems that he cares little for her as well.

Honor: 3.9 **Status:** 2.5 **Glory:** 2.0 **School/Rank:** Ide Courtier 2

Goals: Find some way (even if it requires dishonorable tactics) to avoid marrying Gochai.

Gossip: TN 15 – Her former betrothed was killed in a border conflict between the Crab and the Crane.

TN 25 – Fujiko was present for the skirmish where her betrothed was killed, and she was injured. Though she recovered, it left her bitter toward both sides of the conflict.

Moto Kin-Lao: Fujiko’s yojimbo. He is a loud, boisterous man with obvious gaijin blood running in his veins. Tall and brutish to the point of being almost thuggish, out of all of the members of the court he actually seems the most at home, and the Crab bushi get along well with his boisterous manner.

Honor: 3.4 **Status:** 2.0 **Glory:** 3.0 **School/Rank:** Moto Bushi 2

Gossip: TN 15 – Kin-Lao is one of the Burning Sands Moto that followed Gaheris to Rokugan. He is fascinated by the courts, and has requested assignment as a yojimbo to several other courtiers.

TN 25 – After an “incident” involving his fists and an unfortunate Crane’s teeth at a winter court last year, Kin-Lao has been exclusively sent to Crab, Mantis, or Unicorn courts.

Appendix #2: NPC Stats

Hida Chie, Tainted Infiltrator

Chie was reborn after the Battle at Oblivion's Gate with the power of Jigoku. She barely remembers her life before, though she knows she was a samurai of the Empire. She has infiltrated the Crab to sow dissension and confusion among the Hida, and will cap this season by placing specially-prepared zombies in the basement of Kyuden Hida in anticipation of a future attack by the Shadowlands. She does not know why she is doing these things; her Dark Lord has wiped her memory of him in the event of her capture...

Air 4 Earth 4 Fire 3 Water 4 Void 3*
 Honor 0.0 (4.0) Agility 4 Status 2.0 Glory 2.5
Initiative: 9k5 **Attack:** 8k4+5
Armor TN: 35 (heavy armor) **Damage:** 8k2+5
Reduction: 9 (armor and Technique)
Shadowlands Taint Rank: 5.0 (as Lost, with the Mind of Darkness power, she gains +5 to the total of all rolls made using a Trait)
Wounds: 20 (+0), 28 (+3), 36 (+5), 44 (+10), 52 (+15), 60 (+20), 68 (Down, +40), 76 (Dead)
School/Rank: Bayushi Bushi 1/Hida Bushi 2 (Insight Rank 5)
Techniques: +1k1 Initiative, +5 TN against lower-Initiative opponents; no penalty for Heavy Armor (other than Stealth), +1k0 Heavy Weapon damage; +4 Reduction
Skills: Athletics 2, Calligraphy (Cipher) 2, Courtier (Manipulation) 5, Defense 3, Etiquette 4, Heavy Weapons (Tetsubo) 2, Iaijutsu 3, Intimidation 2, Jiujutsu 3, Kenjutsu 4, Lore: Shadowlands 5, Sincerity (Deceit) 5, Spellcraft (Maho) 3, Stealth 4, Temptation (Seduction) 6
Advantages/Disadvantages: Dangerous Beauty, Multiple Schools, Percieved Honor II, Silent / Dark Secret (Lost), Lechery
Shadowlands Powers: Blood Knows Blood (Minor), Child of Darkness (Minor), Mind of Darkness (Minor), Sense Purity (Minor), Beside the Darkness (Greater), Blood Domination (Greater), Unholy Beauty (Greater)
Maho Spells: Legacy of the Dark One (Air, ML1, 9k4), Sinful Dreams (Air, ML1, 9k4), Summon Undead Champion (Earth, ML1, 9k4), Puppet Master (Fire, ML2, 8k3), Essence of Undeath (Earth, ML3, 9k4)
Equipment: in addition to the standard gear issued to a Hida Bushi, Chie has a number of Tainted nemuranai in the form of netsuke that would serve as focus items for the zombies she has been tasked with hiding.

Hida Masaki

Masaki was an early conquest of Chie, and though he has deeply buried his suspicions, he is starting to become concerned about their relationship. His growing jealousy of her other lovers and suitors will give him the strength to resist her slightly, though not enough to prevent him from falling under her mental sway.

Air 3 Earth 5 Fire 3 Water 4 Void 3
 Honor 2.1 Agility 4 Status 3.5 Glory 5.0
Initiative: 9k3+5 **Attack:** 8k4 (unarmed)
Armor TN: 30 **Damage:** 4k1 (unarmed)
Reduction: 18
Wounds: 25 (+0), 35 (+3), 45 (+5), 55 (+10), 65 (+15), 75 (+20), 85 (Down, +40), 95 (Dead)
School/Rank: Hida Bushi 4/Defender of the Wall 2
Skills: Athletics 4, Battle 5, Defense 6, Heavy Weapons (Tetsubo) 6, Hunting 2, Intimidation 4, Investigation 2, Jiujutsu 4, Kenjutsu 4, Lore: Shadowlands 5, Medicine 2, Polearms 2.
Advantages/Disadvantages: Crab Hands, Large / Failure of Duty

Shiba Yoriko

Haunted by the March to Voltturnum still, Yoriko becomes an easy target for Chie.

Air 2 Earth 3 Fire 2 Water 3 Void 3
 Reflexes 3 Agility 3 Status 2.0 Glory 2.0
 Honor 5.8
Initiative: 5k3 **Attack:**
Armor TN: 25 (lt armor) **Damage:**
Reduction: 3 (lt armor)
Wounds: 21 (+0), 27 (+2), 33 (+7), 39 (+12), 45 (+17), 51 (Down, +37), 57 (Dead)
School/Rank: Shiba Bushi 2
Techniques: May spend two Void for +2k2; Guard as a Free Action (+5 Armor TN for target); add or subtract 5 from TN of spells
Skills: Battle 2, Defense 3, Iaijutsu 2, Investigation 3, Jiujutsu 2, Kenjutsu 4, Kyujutsu 1, Meditation (Void Recovery) 2, Polearms 3, Theology 4.
Advantages/Disadvantages: Bland, Strength of the Earth / Doubt: Meditation, Frail Mind, Unlucky